



*Delta-Sierra Group  
Mother Lode Chapter  
P.O. Box 9258  
Stockton CA 95208*

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

May 2, 2020

RE: San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission's FY 2020 BUILD Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

We are writing in support of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission's (SJRRC) FY 2020 BUILD Grant application for the Stockton Diamond Grade Separation Project. Funding of their request will allow SJRRC to leverage State funds to construct a transformative rail infrastructure project to improve safety on the freight network, increase the efficiency of freight and passenger rail movement, provide improved access to national and worldwide markets, facilitate continued economic growth and competitiveness in the greater-Central Valley and San Francisco Bay areas, and improve air quality and local traffic flows in Stockton, California.

The freight railroad network is a major economic asset to the San Joaquin Valley and Northern California Megaregion. By completing a grade separation at the intersection of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Union Pacific Railroad (UP) in Stockton greater freight rail efficiency through the elimination of freight interference between the two Class I railroads operating in this high-volume area will be achieved. The grade separation will improve freight rail throughput along the region's rail network, resulting in fuel and operating cost savings, as well as reduced traffic delays and improved air quality in our community.

Tens of thousands of residents of the San Joaquin Valley and Northern California rely on the Amtrak *San Joaquins* and Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) passenger services as their source of transportation. Construction of the grade separation will help reduce current delays for these vital passenger rail services, improve on-time performance, and support future expansion of both services.

SJRRC is requesting \$25 million in BUILD funding for the construction of the Stockton Diamond Grade Separation Project. At an estimated cost of \$237 million, a BUILD award would be matched by significant investments in State funding toward Project completion.

Given the many public and private benefits associated with this Project for our region. We urge the Department to approve SJRRC's BUILD Grant application. Thank you for your attention to this request and your efforts to improve our nation's transportation system.

Sincerely,

Mary Elizabeth M.S., R.E.H.S.  
Delta Sierra Group Conservation Chair  
Sierra Club