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September 6, 2023

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

RE: Support for the Brightline West and Nevada Department of Transportation's Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the City of Rancho Cucamonga, California, we are writing in support of the Brightline West and Nevada Department of Transportation's Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Rancho Cucamonga is situated in the Inland Empire region, which is as large as the State of South Carolina, both in size and population. The region is expected to grow in population by another 20% by 2048, and according to a recent article in the Orange County Register, the Inland Empire's population has grown by 29% since 2003. Additionally, according to the same article, over the last 20 years the Inland Empire's economy and business output has grown 133% to \$213 billion. Out of the 20 largest regional economies, only five have grown faster than the Inland Empire over that time frame (San Jose, Seattle, San Francisco, Dallas, and Houston).¹

The Brightline West project will positively impact the Inland Empire region by connecting Las Vegas and Southern California with the first true high-speed passenger rail system in the nation. The 218-mile, all-electric high-speed rail service will include a flagship station in Las Vegas, with additional stations in Apple Valley, Hesperia, and Rancho Cucamonga. The Rancho Cucamonga station, known as Cucamonga Station, will connect to Southern California's regional Metrolink service, allowing for seamless connectivity into downtown Los Angeles, Riverside County and beyond. Cucamonga Station will be a multi-modal transportation hub and the first such station in the United States that will provide direct connections to Ontario International Airport (four miles from Cucamonga Station), bus rapid transit service via Omnitrans, and Metrolink local passenger rail all in one place.

The project also continues to achieve critical milestones. For example, two weeks ago, the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank ("IBank") approved the issuance of bond financing to construct portions of the high-speed rail line in California and its related stations. This signifies a

¹ Jonathan Lansner, "What the OC got wrong about the Inland Empire's 'dirtbag' economy", The Orange County Register, August 23, 2023.

significant investment in the project's future and a next step toward another critical milestone, the decision on the project's application for the Intercity Passenger Rail Grant.

Upon completion, the project will bolster economic activity for Nevada and Southern California, with an estimated \$10 billion in economic impact and \$1 billion in tax revenue. According to Brightline West's current plan, the project is expected to create over 35,000 construction jobs and approximately 1,000 permanent jobs, creating pathways for workforce development, training, and access to quality jobs. The development of a new transit system will provide opportunities for ancillary development around station areas, spurring additional economic activity for communities along the corridor. High-speed rail connecting Nevada and California also has the potential to significantly increase visitors to both states, boosting travel and tourism across the region as well as increasing use of mass transit for daily commuters.

The system will align with the Administration's climate goals by diverting millions of automobile users from I-15 onto a faster, more efficient, zero-emission transportation option. Each year, Brightline West operations will remove an estimated 3 million vehicles and over 700 million vehicle miles traveled from the highway, as well as 400,000 tons of CO2 emissions from the atmosphere, supporting California's and Nevada's respective greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals and leading the way for cleaner travel options for Americans.

This added convenience will not only benefit local residents, but also encourage new visitors to explore the region and all it has to offer. The increased connectivity and accessibility will undoubtedly enhance the economic growth and development of our city and surrounding areas.

For the above reasons, the City of Corona is pleased to support this application.

Sincerely,

Tony Daddario
Mayor
City of Corona