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June 26, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Wieben Stock
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: Orange County Rail Crossing Safety: Snapshot of a Process

Dear Judge Wieben Stock,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide responses to the Orange County Grand Jury's findings and recommendations on the report "Orange County Rail Crossings Safety: Snapshot of a Process". In Mr. Penn's letter to the City he required that the City Council provide a response to each of the findings and recommendations of the report directed to the City of San Clemente, in compliance with *Penal Code 933.05(a)* and (b). The letter specifically directs the City Council of San Clemente to respond to Findings F2 and F3 and Recommendation R3.

Provided below is the City Council's responses to the findings and recommendation.

Finding F2: Impacted cities are strongly concerned about noise from OCTA/Metrolink train horns at railroad crossings. The cost of totally eliminating train horns county-wide through quiet zone corridor treatments could be in the range of \$50-\$60 million.

Response: The City of San Clemente concurs with this finding. The City Council established the creation of a quiet zone as the number one Vital Few Priority of the City. There are a total of nine (seven (7) pedestrian, two (2) vehicular) at-grade crossings within a two mile stretch of the railroad corridor that runs along the San Clemente coast. This corridor is adjacent to coastal neighborhoods with a population of approximately 30,000 people (2006 Orange County Projections) who live within a half mile of the railroad. Excessive train horn noise is an overriding concern of the citizens of San Clemente and the City Council.

Regarding the statement that the cost of totally eliminating train horns county-wide through quiet zone corridor treatments could be in the range of \$50-\$60 million: The City understands that the seven pedestrian crossings in the City of San Clemente have yet to be included in the OCTA program. As such, it is the opinion of the City that the estimated \$50-\$60 million cost may be low.

On a different note, as the county and region move toward a multi modal transportation system, which will include transit oriented development, OCTA and SCRRA should be commended for their efforts to plan for and expand rail oriented service. The problems and issues that are raised (i.e. train noise) should be addressed, but should not become a reason to abandon multi modal and transit oriented planning efforts.

Finding F-3: It is unclear how the burden of cost for upgraded crossings will be shared by OCTA and impacted cities.

Response: The City of San Clemente City Council concurs that the burden for cost is presently undefined. The City will have difficulty funding the cost of construction of the improvements necessary to establish a quiet zone in the near term if the majority of them are placed on the City.

Recommendation R-3: The burden of construction and inspection cost for these grade crossings treatments need to be shared by the OCTA and impacted cities according to an agreed formula.

Response: The City of San Clemente City Council agrees that the burden of construction and inspection cost should be shared.

Sincerely,

Jim Dahl
Mayor