



For Immediate Release

Contact:

Barbara Nelson, President of FCF
bnelson@fairmead.org
(510) 915-3035

Cresencio Rodriguez-Delgado
crdelgado@leadershipcounsel.org
(559) 412-9015

Community of Fairmead Secures Investments as High Speed Rail Seeks to Pass Through

MADERA COUNTY -- For more than a decade, Fairmead Community and Friends (FCF) have had a consistent message: if High Speed Rail (HSR) passes through Fairmead the HSR Authority must listen to residents, invest in Fairmead's future, and commit to improve the community.

Fairmead is a majority Hispanic/Latino and historically African American community. An economically disadvantaged community, it was established more than a century ago and is home to residents who care deeply about its future. Fourteen years ago founder Barbara Nelson organized FCF, and today's board members Elaine Moore, Caroline Williams, Norma Bustillos and Vickie Ortiz continue to make Fairmead a better community by advocating for health justice, safer environments, and community resources.

In late 2016, FCF provided a list of community-identified mitigation measures to HSR. On May 21, 2021 — after years of outreach, community meetings, and negotiations — FCF secured community benefits agreements that include commitments from HSR, Madera County, and the Chowchilla that will advance nearly all of these community-identified priorities and address years of disinvestment. The agreements include all of the following:

- HSR will fund construction of a Fairmead community center/library & park. Madera County will own and operate the facility and provide access to the community.
- HSR will provide funding to extend sewer from the Chowchilla to Fairmead, and pay residents' sewer bills for 10 years.
- HSR will provide funding to improve the stability of the Fairmead water system. Madera County will forgive water customer debt up to March 31, 2021.
- HSR will repair Fairmead roads, install sidewalks and storm drainage, improve landscaping, and make other beautification improvements.
- HSR to support Fairmead's efforts to develop new quality affordable housing.

We are proud of what the residents of Fairmead have accomplished and thank HSR, Madera County, and Chowchilla for these commitments. We could not have done this without the support of Leslie Martinez, Madeline Harris and Michael Claiborne and others at Leadership Counsel, and appreciate the assistance of Self Help Enterprises. And we thank God for providing vision to Fairmead Community & Friends, and for these accomplishments. We look forward to continuing to work with all parties to implement these agreements.