



**October 21, 2019**

**To:** Members of the Board of Directors

**From:** Jennifer L. Bergener, Managing Director

**Subject:** 2020 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Call for Projects

### **Overview**

The California State Transportation Agency plans to issue a call for projects in October 2019 for the 2020 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program, which provides funding for transit, commuter rail, and intercity rail projects that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. An overview of the program and the strategy for submission of projects on the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo rail corridor is provided for review.

### **Recommendation**

Receive and file as an information item.

### **Background**

The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) released draft guidelines for the 2020 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) on September 13, 2019. The TIRCP was created by Senate Bill (SB) 862 (Chapter 36, Statutes of 2014) and modified by SB 9 (Chapter 710, Statutes of 2015) to provide grants from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to support transformative capital improvements that will modernize California's intercity, commuter, and urban rail systems, and bus and ferry transit systems, while significantly reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, vehicle miles traveled, and traffic congestion.

The goal of the TIRCP is to provide funding for capital improvements and operational enhancements on public transit services in California that achieve the following objectives:

- Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases
- Expand and improve transit service to increase ridership
- Integrate service of the state's various rail operations, including integration with the high-speed rail system
- Improve transit safety

At least 25 percent of available TIRCP funding is expected to fund projects that provide a direct, meaningful, and assured benefit to disadvantaged communities. Assembly Bill 1550 (Chapter 369, Statutes of 2016) provides further requirements to ensure TIRCP investments meet the needs of priority populations, including disadvantaged communities, low-income communities and low-income households.

Eligible TIRCP applicants include public agencies and joint powers authorities that operate, or have planning responsibility for, existing or planned intercity rail (and associated feeder bus service), commuter rail, commuter bus, bus and urban rail transit, vanpool, and ferry transit services. In addition, private companies may partner with eligible applicants to propose and deliver projects. The Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency (Agency), as well each of its member agencies, are eligible to apply for TIRCP funding. The complete draft 2020 TIRCP Guidelines are available at <https://calsta.ca.gov/subject-areas/transit-intercity-rail-capital-prog>.

This call for projects represents the fourth round of the TIRCP, and the LOSSAN Agency has been successful in receiving funding in each of the prior three TIRCP cycles. In 2015 and 2016, the LOSSAN Agency submitted successful TIRCP applications and was awarded a combined total of \$83.7 million. The funding awarded for these two years supported the initiation of the Pacific Surfliner Transit Transfer Program, which was launched in July 2016, and the design and construction of a package of projects, including high-priority capital improvements in San Diego and Orange counties, as well as funding for planning studies. In 2018, the LOSSAN Agency was awarded \$147.9 million to design and implement capitalized access and incentive programs, design and implement security fencing along the rail corridor in San Diego County, and design and construct capacity enhancing projects along the corridor north of Los Angeles. The 2018 TIRCP award represented the largest grant award received by the LOSSAN Agency to date.

### ***Discussion***

CalSTA is required to approve a new five-year program of TIRCP projects no later than April 1, 2020. The 2020 TIRCP grant cycle will program projects starting in fiscal year (FY) 2020-21 and ending in FY 2024-25, and will include previously awarded projects from the 2018 TIRCP cycle that have not been fully allocated by the end of FY 2019-20, as well as new projects. An estimate of the total funding available in this TIRCP cycle will be released when the final call for projects is issued on October 18, 2019.

CalSTA intends to fund a small number of transformative projects that will highlight travel and fuel cost savings and significantly reduce vehicle miles traveled, congestion, and greenhouse gas emissions by creating a new transit or rail system, increasing the capacity of an existing transit or rail system, or otherwise significantly increasing the ridership of a transit or rail system. There is no local

match requirement for the TIRCP, though use of existing funding to leverage TIRCP funds will be considered in the evaluation process.

During past meetings and TIRCP workshops, CalSTA has indicated that higher consideration will be given to grant applications that maximize greenhouse gas reductions and travel benefits by combining multiple smaller projects into a comprehensive, regional program of scalable projects that encompasses multiple agencies, with a focus on improving network integration. The current TIRCP cycle also seeks projects that link housing with key destinations that improve accessibility to economic opportunities, as well as projects that are consistent with the goals of the 2018 California State Rail Plan.

The LOSSAN Agency intends to work with member agencies to support TIRCP applications for improvements that have a corridor-wide benefit, furthering efforts already underway to increase capacity, improve reliability and safety, and ultimately reduce greenhouse gas emissions by making the Pacific Surfliner a more attractive travel alternative. In addition, results of the ongoing Corridor Optimization Study may be used to help prioritize candidate projects for TIRCP funding.

CalSTA is scheduled to release final TIRCP guidelines and issue a formal call for projects on October 18, 2019, with applications due on January 16, 2020. Projects recommended for award are currently scheduled to be announced by April 1, 2020.

The Managing Director is authorized through the LOSSAN Agency bylaws to submit grant applications on behalf of the LOSSAN Agency. An initial discussion regarding the 2020 TIRCP program was held at the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting on September 5, 2019. LOSSAN Agency staff will be following up with member agencies to finalize a package of candidate projects, as well as a timeline and process for completing the TIRCP applications, and will return to the TAC and Board of Directors with an update prior to submittal.

### ***Summary***

A call for projects to be funded by the 2020 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program is expected to be issued in October 2019. Staff will be working with the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency member agencies and rail corridor right-of-way owners to submit one or more applications to fund improvement along the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo rail corridor that would directly benefit the Pacific Surfliner service.

***Attachment***

None.

**Prepared by:**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Litschi".

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