



September 21, 2020

To: Members of the Board of Directors
Donna DeMartino

From: Donna DeMartino, Managing Director

Subject: Amendment to Cooperative Agreement No. L-8-0013 for the Rail 2 Rail Program with the North County Transit District and National Railroad Passenger Corporation

Overview

On July 16, 2018, the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Board of Directors approved a cooperative agreement between the North County Transit District and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation for the Rail 2 Rail Program between Pacific Surfliner and COASTER passenger rail services on the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo rail corridor for a period of one year, through July 31, 2019. This agreement was subsequently extended through September 30, 2020. Staff recommends the Board of Directors approve an amendment to extend the existing agreement through June 30, 2021, to allow for continuity of transportation options and time to pursue the development of an alternate program for the Rail 2 Rail Program.

Recommendation

Authorize the Managing Director to negotiate and execute Amendment No. 3 to Cooperative Agreement No. L-8-0013 between the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency, the North County Transit District, and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation to extend the term of the agreement for an additional nine months, through June 30, 2021.

Discussion

The Rail 2 Rail (R2R) Program with the North County Transit District (NCTD) was initiated in August 2013, through a cooperative agreement between the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), NCTD, and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) to allow for Pacific Surfliner and COASTER passengers with certain Amtrak or NCTD tickets to use either service, within the limits of their ticket, at no additional charge. The R2R Program continued in substantially the same format through Fiscal Year 2017-18.

In July 2018, recognizing the ongoing benefits of the R2R Program, the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency (Agency) Board of Directors (Board) approved the terms for the continuance of the R2R Program with NCTD and authorized the Managing Director to enter into an agreement to continue the R2R Program. The R2R Program currently provides for all Amtrak-operated Pacific Surfliner trains to accept valid COASTER Region plus day passes, monthly, or 30-day passes and for all COASTER trains to accept valid Amtrak tickets, within the limits of the ticket, for all shared stations between Oceanside and San Diego.

The R2R Program provides improved passenger rail service along the LOSSAN rail corridor by allowing greater flexibility for rail passengers and making rail transit a more viable alternative. Current statewide and regional policies and guidelines have limited travel due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, resulting in a significant reduction in both COASTER and Pacific Surfliner ridership and service levels. During this unprecedented time, the R2R Program continues to provide mutual benefit for both the Pacific Surfliner and NCTD by allowing additional daily trips to passengers at a fraction of the cost to provide that service independently. Several of the Pacific Surfliner and COASTER trains also provide service during time periods or directions not currently served by the other.

The current R2R agreement expires on September 30, 2020. To ensure continued mutual benefit to passengers and offer additional travel options during the COVID-19 pandemic, staff recommends the continuance of the R2R Program with NCTD for an additional term of nine months, through June 30, 2021, and to continue with the current reimbursement rate of \$4.03 per boarding, that was approved by the Board in June 2020 to remain consistent with the average COASTER revenue per passenger identified in NCTD's Fiscal Year 2018-19 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The reimbursement rate has been adjusted annually to remain consistent to the most recent NCTD CAFR since about 2016.

To continue the development of options for the long-term continuance of the R2R Program and to ensure continued integration efforts on the LOSSAN rail corridor, LOSSAN Agency staff will continue the discussions that have been initiated with NCTD and Amtrak to pursue the development of an alternate program for the R2R Program.

Summary

Staff recommends the Board of Directors authorize the Managing Director to negotiate and execute Amendment No. 3 to Cooperative Agreement No. L-8-0013 between the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency, the North County Transit District, and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation for an additional nine months through June 30, 2021, with no adjustment to the reimbursement rate of \$4.03 per boarding for the Rail 2 Rail program between Pacific Surfliner and COASTER services on the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo rail corridor. Staff will continue to work with the North County Transit District and Amtrak to pursue the development of an alternate program for the Rail 2 Rail Program.

Attachment

- A. North County Transit District and National Railroad Passenger Corporation of the Rail 2 Rail Program Cooperative Agreement No. L-8-0013 Fact Sheet

Prepared by:



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