



November 16, 2020

To: Members of the Board of Directors
Donna DeMartino
From: Donna DeMartino, Managing Director
Subject: Draft 2021 Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Legislative Program

Overview

Annually, the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency adopts a Legislative Program of strategic goals to guide its legislative activities for the upcoming session. A draft of the 2021 Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Legislative Program has been prepared for consideration by the Board of Directors.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Discussion

The Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor Agency's (Agency) Board of Directors (Board) annually adopts a Legislative Program (Program) that outlines broad policy positions to guide staff when engaging in legislative activities. Official LOSSAN Agency positions not addressed by the Program are brought to the Board for separate action during the legislative sessions of the United States Congress and the California State Legislature. The Board last updated the Program on November 18, 2019.

The 2021 Program outlines principles aligned with the LOSSAN Agency's role while also advancing the goals outlined in the LOSSAN Agency's annual business plan. The Program is organized into four major categories, which are discussed in greater detail below but can be outlined as follows:

1. Sustainable Funding
2. Implementation of Transportation Policies
3. Connectivity and Integration
4. Infrastructure, Service, and Safety Improvements

The 2021 Program is included as a strikethrough version in Attachment A, with a clean copy included as Attachment B. The 2021 Program retains key provisions from the 2020 Program, while also updating the language to reflect the significant shift resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Staff recommends the following changes:

- Staff recommends adding language to section I, entitled “Sustainable Funding,” to recognize the need for LOSSAN Agency staff to pursue funding and policy flexibilities to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, and restore ridership post-pandemic. With the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic likely altering the transportation landscape for the foreseeable future, staff also recommends that this language be added to the “Top Priorities” section, positioning the LOSSAN Agency to take the necessary steps to continue providing passenger rail service during these difficult times.
- Staff recommends reorganizing the document by creating section II, entitled “Implementation of Transportation Policies,” focused on policies that relate to the development of overarching transportation goals and objectives. Section II is made up of two subsections from section I and a new provision on equity. Changes to previously adopted language are detailed as follows:
 - Staff recommends minor changes to subsection (a) regarding the implementation of federal surface transportation programs. These changes are to focus the language on seeking long-term surface transportation reauthorization, rather than on implementation. Similarly, staff recommends deleting what was subsection (h) of section I since this new, more comprehensive section on authorization legislation removes the need for a provision specific to the federal rail title.
 - Staff is recommending a new provision, subsection (b), to ensure that LOSSAN Agency staff can engage in the increasingly important equity discussions taking place amongst policymakers, supporting efforts to facilitate such policies in LOSSAN Agency services, programs and projects.

To ensure the maximum applicability of the 2021 Program, the Board may review and amend the Program as legislation or legislative issues arise when deemed appropriate. In addition, to most effectively advocate for the Program’s goals and principles, LOSSAN Agency staff will continue to explore and identify opportunities where the legislative resources and expertise of LOSSAN Agency’s member agencies can be leveraged to advance the positions and goals outlined in the Program.

Summary

The draft 2021 Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Legislative Program is presented for consideration before being presented to the Board of Directors for review and approval.

Attachment

- A. 2021 Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Legislative Program (Strikethrough Version)
- B. 2021 Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo Rail Corridor Agency Legislative Program (Clean Version)

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