



November 4, 2021

To: Members of the Technical Advisory Committee

From: Donna DeMartino, Managing Director

Subject: 2022 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program Call for Projects

Overview

The California State Transportation Agency plans to issue a call for projects in November 2021 for the 2022 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 2022 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) on September 30, 2021. 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. Assembly Bill (AB) 398 (Chapter 135, Statutes of 2017) extended the Cap-and-Trade Program that supports the TIRCP from 2020 through 2030. SB 1 (Chapter 5, Statutes of 2017) continues to provide a historic funding increase for transportation with funds directed to the TIRCP from the Public Transportation Account for new programming in this cycle.

In 2019 and 2020, Governor Newsom signed two executive orders—E.O. N-19-19 and E.O. N-79-20—both of which empower CalSTA to leverage discretionary state transportation funds to reduce transportation-related Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and to adapt to climate change. E.O. N-79-20 required CalSTA to identify

specific near-term actions and investment strategies to combat and prepare for climate change, which resulted in the creation of the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI).

The CAPTI was developed by CalSTA through a robust stakeholder engagement process and was adopted in July 2021. CAPTI puts forth a set of guiding principles which serve as a framework for state discretionary transportation investment and includes a suite of implementation strategies and actions meant to align transportation infrastructure investments with the overall investment framework. TIRCP is closely linked to CAPTI and serves as a means by which to implement the higher-level policy developed in the plan. The TIRCP Guidelines include updates that work to implement actions listed in CAPTI.

The overall 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 2022 TIRCP Guidelines are available at <https://calsta.ca.gov/subject-areas/transit-intercity-rail-capital-prog>.

This call for projects represents the fifth round of the TIRCP, and the LOSSAN Agency has been successful in receiving funding in each of the prior four 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 \$188.3 million to design and implement capitalized access and incentive programs, design and implement security fencing and upgrade the signal system along the rail corridor in San Diego County, and design and construct capacity enhancing projects along the corridor north of Los Angeles. In 2020, LOSSAN was awarded \$38.7 million for the construction of layover facilities in San Luis Obispo and San Diego.

Discussion

CalSTA is required to approve a new five-year program of TIRCP projects no later than April 1, 2022. The 2022 TIRCP grant cycle will program projects starting in fiscal year (FY) 2022-23 and ending in FY 2026-27 and will include previously awarded projects from the 2020 TIRCP cycle that have not been fully allocated by the end of FY 2021-22, 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 November 19, 2021.

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. Although there is no local match requirement for the TIRCP, use of existing funding to leverage TIRCP funds is desirable and 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 and recently approved CAPTI.

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 LOSSAN Strategic Plan and 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 November 19, 2021, with applications due on March 3, 2022. Projects

recommended for award are currently scheduled to be announced by June 2022. The Managing Director is authorized through the LOSSAN Agency bylaws to submit grant applications on behalf of the LOSSAN Agency. 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 2022 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program is expected to be issued in November 2021. 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 an application to fund improvement along the Los Angeles – San Diego – San Luis Obispo rail corridor that would directly benefit the Pacific Surfliner service.

Attachment

None.

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