



Board Report

File #: 2019-0758, File Type: Application

Agenda Number: 18.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 20, 2019

SUBJECT: TRANSIT AND INTERCITY RAIL CAPITAL PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATIONS

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to prioritize projects, commit funding match and submit grant applications to California's Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program as detailed in Attachment A.

ISSUE

On October 18, 2019, the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) announced its Call for Projects for the 2020 Cycle 4 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP). Grant applications are due by January 16, 2020. CalSTA requires applicants to identify and provide evidence of the amount and sources of funds committed to the projects, as well as to prioritize and explain the prioritization of their applications. CalSTA also requires applicants to use project cost estimates approved by the Chief Executive Officer or other authorized officer. Attachment A details the funding match commitment, prioritization, and costs for the three projects we have identified through our Evaluative Criteria Framework and our assessment of the TIRCP Project Evaluation Criteria as being the most competitive for 2020 Cycle 4 grant awards.

BACKGROUND

The TIRCP was authorized by State of California law to fund transformative capital improvements that modernize California's transit systems, including bus and rail, to achieve all of the following policy objectives:

- reduce emissions of greenhouse gases
- expand and improve transit service to increase ridership
- integrate the rail service of the state's various rail operations (including integration with the high speed rail system); and
- improve transit safety

It is also the goal of the program to maximize benefits to disadvantaged communities and low-income communities and households. At least 25 percent of the available funding must be for projects that

provide a direct, meaningful, and assured benefit to disadvantaged communities.

CalSTA's fund estimate for the TIRCP Cycle 4 Call for Projects is approximately \$450 million to \$500 million. This estimate is based on anticipated revenue through Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 from Senate Bill 1 (Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017) and Cap and Trade Program auction proceeds, plus any additional funds approved through the annual budget.

CalSTA will program projects starting with FY 2020-21 and ending with FY 2024-25. However, CalSTA can enter into a multiyear funding agreement with eligible applicants for any duration through a multiyear funding agreement. CalSTA may also use this authority to program funds for a project that would depend on funds received subsequent to the five-year program, primarily intended for projects that have long construction timelines that extend beyond FY 2024-25. CalSTA intends to fund a small number of transformative projects that will significantly reduce vehicle miles traveled, congestion, and greenhouse gas emissions by:

- creating a new transit system;
- increasing the capacity of an existing transit system; or
- significantly increasing the ridership of a transit system.

CalSTA also seeks to fund projects that link housing with key destinations and improve accessibility to economic opportunities.

Metro has been very successful in securing TIRCP grant awards. In the 2018 Cycle 3 we were awarded about \$1.1 billion (representing 25 percent of total funding awarded statewide) for "pillar" and other Metro capital projects, including:

- West Santa Ana Branch Light Rail Transit Corridor (\$300 million)
- Green Line Light Rail Extension to Torrance (\$231.3 million)
- Gold Line Foothill Extension to Montclair (\$290.2 million)
- Orange/Red Line to Gold Line BRT Connector (\$50 million)
- East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor (\$205 million)
- Vermont Transit Corridor (\$5 million)
- Network System Integration (\$7 million)

In the 2016 Cycle 2 we were awarded \$40 million for the Airport Metro Connector 96th Street Station/Metro Green Lines Extension to LAX and \$69.2 million for the Metro Red Line and Purple Line Core Capacity Improvements projects. In the 2015 Cycle 1, we received about \$38.5 million for the Willowbrook/Rosa Parks Station & Blue Line Light Rail Operational Improvements Project.

DISCUSSION

Findings

To meet CalSTA's deadline and address its grant requirements and funding priorities, as well as its Project Evaluation Criteria, staff employed the Evaluative Criteria Framework (first shared with the

Board in 2017 and again most recently in September 2019) and met with staff from several Metro departments to help identify projects that could be eligible and most competitive for this TIRCP grant opportunity.

In our assessment of potential projects, we also considered the following:

- project status, approval and funding commitment; and
- the Board's October 2016 Resolution that authorizes the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or his/her designee to file applications to secure federal, state, regional and local sources of revenue for "Board-approved projects and activities".

Based on this assessment, staff recommends developing TIRCP grant applications for the following three projects (shown in order of priority):

1. *Zero-Emission Buses and Charging Infrastructure Deployment & System Integration*

The project consists of the procurement and integration in transit revenue service of 220 battery-electric buses and supportive charging infrastructure. The zero-emission buses will replace an equal number of compressed natural gas (CNG) buses that have exceeded their useful life, including CNG tanks. The zero-emission buses will be deployed on several existing routes that are currently served by Metro's Division 9 and Division 18. These routes serve predominantly disadvantaged communities and low-income communities and households ("priority populations"). The project supports the July 2017 prioritization of the Metro Board of Directors of the Strategic Plan for the transition to a zero-emission bus fleet by 2030. The project also supports state's Innovative Clean Transit Regulation that requires transit agencies to transition to a 100% zero-emission bus fleet by 2040 and requires for large transit agencies that starting January 1, 2023, 25% of the total number of new bus purchases in each calendar year must be zero-emission buses with this percent of new purchases growing to 50% by 2026 and 100% by 2029.

The estimated total project cost is \$210 million total and the TIRCP grant request is for \$105 million. The project's funding plan assumes a commitment by Metro of about: \$67.1 M in Regional Improvement Program (RIP) funds, as authorized by the Board of Directors in October 2019 and through prior actions, to be allocated by the California Transportation Commission; \$5.4 million in Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Program funds that staff secured from the Federal Transit Administration; and an additional \$32.5 million in local and other funds planned for ongoing bus replacements in Metro's Short Range Financial Forecast that we need to commit to the project.

2. *Metrolink Antelope Valley Line Capital & Service Improvement Program of Projects*

This project addresses the need to provide faster, safer, more reliable and more frequent rail service for Metrolink's Antelope Valley Line (AVL). The project is responsive to the July 2019 Motion 5.1 that the Metro Board of Directors unanimously approved to support the implementation of a key set of infrastructure improvements that will allow Metrolink to operate an improved level of service through collaboration with Metro, subregional governments, and local jurisdictions. The Program of Projects (POP) consists of two major components:

a. Construction of Capital Improvements (excluding Environmental and Engineering)

- The Balboa Double Track Extension (\$41.9 million)
- Brighton to McGinley Double Track (\$72.9 million)
- Canyon Siding Extension (\$57.7 million)
- Lancaster Terminal Improvements (\$31.1 million)

The estimated total cost of the proposed capital improvements is approximately \$203.6 million. The TIRCP grant request is for \$102 million. The project's funding plan assumes Metro's commitment of up to \$102 million in North County Measure M Transit Multi-year Subregional Program (MSP) funds. Metro staff is continuing to work with Metrolink and the other subregional partners along the AVL corridor to assess opportunities to offset the commitment of North County Measure M Transit MSP funds with other applicable regional and subregional funds that could be available over the project delivery schedule.

b. Implementation of Multiple Unit Train Pilot Project

The Multiple Unit Train Pilot Project will allow testing the application of new technology to deliver potentially more cost-effective solutions for current and potential augmentation of Metrolink service on the AVL. As this pilot project will be the first test of rail multiple unit technology in Los Angeles County, the proposed scope will also provide a general framework for potential future application of the technology along other rail corridors. The estimated total cost of the proposed pilot is dependent upon the scope, which is still being determined at this time. An updated scope, cost, funding plan and recommendation for Metro's commitment will be provided prior to the November Planning Committee meeting.

3. *Los Angeles Metro Light Rail CORE Capacity and System Integration Project*

The project addresses capital, operational, rehabilitation, and expansion (i.e., CORE) needs for the Crenshaw/LAX Line and Green Line necessary to accommodate and allow the operation of three-car trains, including:

- a. Platform expansion at Aviation, Douglas, Mariposa, and Redondo Beach stations;
- b. Rehabilitation work at the El Segundo Station; and
- c. Addition of two new traction power substations (TPSS).

This project is necessary to increase the passenger capacity of trains in anticipation of the opening of the Crenshaw/LAX Line, the Green Line extension to Torrance, and the Airport Metro Connector Station that will serve those light rail transit lines and connect to the LAX Automated People Mover. It is also necessary as it addresses the need for addition capacity to the projected increase in travel demand due to the completion of nearby development projects, mainly the LA Stadium & Entertainment District at Hollywood Park (home of the Rams and Chargers football teams and anticipated to host about 300 major events per year) in the City of Inglewood, as well as other related planned projects, such as the Transit Connector/Automated People Mover that the City of Inglewood is studying for a direct connection to the Metro Crenshaw/LAX Line and to the Metro Green Line. This project also supports Metro's commitment to deliver a robust State of Good Repair (SGR) Program that invests in modernization and enhancements to renew asset life and reduce asset breakdowns

that impact daily service and customer experience. Major rehabilitation of the Green Line is necessary to prevent service degradation, improve passenger experience, and bring its 25-year old assets up to current Metro SGR standards.

The estimated total project cost is \$200 million total and the TIRCP grant request is for \$70 million. The project's funding plan assumes Metro's commitment of \$130 million in local and other funds planned for ongoing state of good repair in Metro's Short Range Financial Forecast that we need to commit to the project.

Consideration of Twenty-Eight by '28 Initiative Pillar Projects

At the February 2019 Board meeting, the Metro Board approved Motion 32.4 by Directors Garcetti, Butts, Solis and Hahn that affirmed the Board's support for the Twenty-Eight by '28 Initiative and established four "pillar projects" that would be prioritized for acceleration. These projects are the following:

- Gold Line Eastside Extension 2
- Green Line Extension to Torrance
- Sepulveda Transit Corridor
- West Santa Ana Branch to Downtown LA

Staff considered all four of these projects for this TIRCP cycle and determined that these four projects would not be eligible or ready to submit for this current cycle.

CalSTA requires applicants to demonstrate their ability to absorb any cost overruns and deliver the proposed project with no additional funding from the TIRCP beyond its grant award, as well as to fund initial operating costs.

In the 2018 TIRCP Cycle 3, Metro secured funding for two pillar projects - the West Santa Ana Branch to Downtown LA and the Green Line Extension to Torrance. As a result of securing these funds, Metro will not be able to apply for additional funding through TIRCP.

The remaining two pillar projects-the Gold Line Eastside Extension 2 and the Sepulveda Transit Corridor-are not at a strong enough level of "project readiness" to allow Metro to submit competitive applications for these projects in Cycle 4, which funds projects from FY 21 to FY 25.

Staff remains committed to identifying other funding opportunities across other state and federal programs for the four pillar projects. Developing the scope and advancing the Gold Line Eastside Extension 2 and the Sepulveda Transit Corridor in a timely manner will be vital to allowing Metro to pursue these funding opportunities in future cycles.

Other Considerations

Project readiness was a key consideration in our assessment. CalSTA indicated that the most highly rated projects are those with an approved environmental document. With this into consideration, we could not identify Measure M projects and other priorities identified in the Long Range Transportation

that could be competitive for this grant cycle.

While CalSTA does not restrict the number of grant applications an agency may submit, it advises submitting projects that are scalable where practical. CalSTA indicated that it may evaluate projects with clear phases or scalability for a project component that would receive the highest rating if partial funding for the project is under consideration. Due to the relatively limited funding available for Cycle 4 to make grant awards compared to Cycle 3, we limited the number of our agency's grant applications to a total of three. However, each application includes several components and is scalable.

Also, while CalSTA does not require a minimum match requirement, it considers funding leverage as being desirable and to be considered in the evaluation of expected project benefits. If a project is awarded funds, all funds identified as committed to the project may be required as a funding match at the time of project selection. CalSTA may also make some funding available for demonstration projects that are smaller scale efforts with great potential to be expanded.

Equity Platform -

The Evaluative Criteria Framework we used for identifying potential projects comprises six main project assessment parameters focused on developing competitive grant applications, while addressing equity both directly through project priorities and through the emphasis on consistency with Board policies and directives. The first and primary parameter is focused on sustaining Measure M and other pre-Measure M/Long Range Transportation Plan priorities and schedules. Equity-related factors were also considered as part of the five performance measures developed to assess and prioritize projects in the Measure M Expenditure Plan. Specifically, the "Economy" and "Sustainability/Quality of Life" themes included metrics attached to investments in disadvantaged communities. We also incorporated in our assessment the third pillar ("Focus and Deliver") of Metro's Equity Platform, which emphasizes investment decisions that advance outcomes that promote and sustain opportunities in underserved communities. This pillar aligns with one of the goals of the TIRCP aimed at maximizing the benefits to "priority populations", which include disadvantaged communities, low-income communities and low-income households. Almost all of the service areas of the proposed projects for the TIRCP grant opportunity comprise these priority populations.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

The three projects recommended for TIRCP Cycle 4 applications, if selected for grant awards and implemented, will have a positive impact on Metro's safety standards, as well of Metrolink (as applicable to the AVL). These buses are designed to comply with all applicable federal, state and local safety standards. The zero-emission buses will include improved safety features and amenities, including enhanced ADA securement provisions, operator barriers, and enhanced video surveillance capabilities. These buses will also replace buses that have reached the end of their useful life and have expiring CNG fuel tanks that are impractical to replace. The POP for Metrolink's AVL and the Los Angeles Metro Light Rail CORE Capacity and System Integration Project will both result in safer and more reliable service, therefore improving the overall customer experience.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Adoption of the recommended action could result in the award of \$277 million to our agency. A grant award for the procurement of zero-emission buses and charging infrastructure will support funding Modification No. 2 to Contract OP28367-002, Part C with BYD Coach & Bus, LLC (BYD) to purchase 40 Contract Option forty-foot ZE buses that the Board of Directors approved in September 2019 in anticipation of receiving state and federal grants. It will also support the procurement and deployment of an additional 180 buses and necessary charging infrastructure. With bus option deliveries not anticipated until FY 2021, and those from new contracts starting to be delivered in FY 2023, there will be no impact to our agency's FY 2020 budget. Similarly, there will be no impact to our agency's FY 2020 budget from the other two projects included in the Recommended Action, as construction activities and Pilot implementation will start after FY 2022.

Since the projects will be implemented through multi-year contracts, the Cost Center Managers and Chief Operations Officer will be responsible for budgeting the costs in future years.

Impact to Budget

There will be no impact to our agency's FY 2020 budget. Any funding committed by our agency for TIRCP Cycle 4 grant applications will be included in future year budgets.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The Recommended Action supports multiple goals of the Strategic Plan:

- Goal # 1 to provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling; and
- Goal # 3 to enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity.

The proposed projects expand and integrate transit options, as well as improve the quality of the transit network, service and assets. The proposed investments will also benefit those with the greatest mobility needs, as almost all of their service areas comprise disadvantaged communities, low-income communities and low-income households. TIRCP grant awards for the proposed projects will also expedite the delivery of a multimodal program of projects that includes bus, light rail, and commuter rail service in time for the 2028 Summer Olympics. The investment in a world-class bus, light rail, and commuter rail system will result in more reliable and convenient transit service that will attract new users (including those shifting from driving), increase overall ridership, and improve access to jobs and job-related opportunities as well as to educational, health, and recreational destinations.

The proposed Program of Projects for the AVL also implements an action of the first goal of the Vision 2028 Strategic Plan that specifically asks to partner with Metrolink to increase the capacity of the regional transportation system. Overall, the proposed projects will provide access to high-quality transit options to driving, therefore serving not only transit-dependent members of our community but also those who currently depend on their own vehicles for their travel.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Staff considered not submitting grant applications for TIRCP Cycle 4. We do not suggest this alternative as it will preclude our agency from applying for a major capital discretionary grant program that could fund some of our identified needs (i.e., procurement of zero-emission buses and charging infrastructure), as well unfunded needs we have identified through our assessment of potential projects (i.e., the AVL POP and the Metro Light Rail CORE Capacity and System Integration Project). As there is no formula or target of funding to be allocated to LA County in TIRCP Cycle 4, any funding not realized by Metro will not be carried over into future cycles.

NEXT STEPS

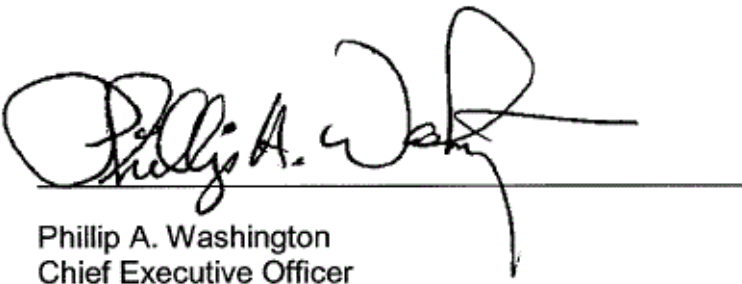
Upon approval of the Recommended Action by the Board of Directors, staff will expand its stakeholder outreach and seek letters of support for our grant applications. We will finalize and submit the grant applications to CalSTA by the January 16, 2020 deadline.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Recommended Projects, Funding Match and Priority for TIRCP Cycle 4

Prepared by: James Andrew, Transportation Planning Manager, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 922-2086
Chirag Rabari, Transportation Planning Manager, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 922-5538
Ashad Hamideh, Senior Director, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 922-5539
Michael Cano, Deputy Executive Officer, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 418-3010
Wil Ridder, Executive Officer, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 922-2887
Laurie Lombardi, Senior Executive Officer, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 418-3251

Reviewed by: James de la Loza, Chief Planning Officer, (213) 922-2920



Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer