



December XX, 2022

Toks Omishakin, Secretary
California State Transportation Agency
400 Capitol Mall, Suite 2340
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for Caltrain's application to the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program

Dear Secretary Omishakin:

As elected officials representing the communities that Caltrain serves, we are writing to express our strong support for Caltrain's application to the Cycle 6 Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Existing Projects Reserve to complete the Caltrain Electrification Project. It is critical that Caltrain receive these resources to ensure this once in a generation project is completed by fall 2024, address the immediate cash flow needs and create a more sustainable future for Caltrain and the communities it serves.

The Caltrain Electrification Project (Project) is at the forefront of commuter rail innovation, transitioning from a legacy diesel rail line to a cutting edge, electrified line that mitigates climate impacts while creating thousands of jobs. The project has been in construction since 2017 and will modernize a nearly 160-year-old diesel commuter rail line by increasing capacity and improving performance and safety while providing cleaner and more sustainable service. Spanning 51 miles between San Francisco and San Jose, this project will replace 75 percent of Caltrain's 30-year-old diesel fleet with high-performance electric trains. Caltrain will become California's first electrified commuter rail system and North America's first commuter rail system in 30 years to transition its trains and infrastructure from diesel to

an electrified system. The local, regional, and state level benefits of this endeavor, some of which we've listed below, are significant.

- **Construction Nearly Complete:** The Caltrain Electrification Project began construction in 2017 and continued throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Four of the new electric trains have already been delivered to the corridor and started testing. Caltrain is well on the way to providing electrified service in less than two years if additional resources are secured.
- **Fighting Climate Change:** Caltrain Electrification and the future service vision expansion will deliver tremendous environmental benefits to the region by replacing a 30-year-old, polluting diesel fleet and expanding capacity to carry more riders and remove vehicles from the road. Electrification will directly improve air quality along the corridor and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Equity:** Caltrain Electrification will enhance access and benefit equity priority communities and as well as help Caltrain serve a more diverse group of riders, including people with lower incomes and members of racial and ethnic minority groups. The new electric train trains will significantly decrease emissions and noise pollution in the equity priority communities along the corridor. The Electrification Program will help Caltrain continue to expand midday and off-peak service levels to better serve essential workers, improve access for equity priority communities, and attract customers whose work schedules do not conform to historic peak commute hours.
- **Job Creation and Economic Growth:** The project has created thousands of jobs in California and contributed to job creation in 36 states across the county. In addition to supporting manufacturing jobs, the Caltrain Electrification Project is a vital contributor to the continued economic growth and quality of life for Silicon Valley and the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Caltrain service to the communities in which these companies are located will enable them to help drive the economy of our state, not to mention the nation.
- **Ridership and Community:** The new high-performance trains will offer a better experience for riders and the community. They will generate less noise than their diesel equivalent, making the trip more enjoyable both for riders and residents that live near Caltrain tracks. The new vehicles also offer enhanced amenities, including new digital onboard displays, power outlets at each seat, energy-efficient lighting, coat hooks, security cameras, expanded storage and ADA restrooms with baby changing tables.
- **Fiscal Benefit:** The COVID-19 pandemic's effect on Caltrain's overall financial health has been significant. Pre-pandemic, Caltrain counted on ridership to cover approximately ~70 percent of the operating budget, as of October 2022 ridership is at 30%. Additional resources are critical because the Electrification Project will run out of funds in June 2023. Securing additional funding for the Electrification Project will not only keep this important capital project on track, but it will also help with the agency's overall financial health by making sure Caltrain isn't overly burdened with debt and that key funding sources such as Measure RR and the Low Carbon Fuel Standard that were intended for operating, safety repairs and expansion support aren't diverted to the Electrification Project. By securing \$410M for the Electrification project, Caltrain estimates the operating fiscal cliff would be move from fiscal year 2024 (July 2023) to fiscal year 2027 (July 2026). With additional resources, the Electrification Project can be completed and Caltrain will

have more financial stability to continue providing quality, reliable service and expansion projects to communities along the corridor.

We are close to the finish line for this transformational project. We urge for your leadership to fully fund this project to ensure Caltrain stays on track to deliver a project that will leave a legacy for the region, state and nation. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our important request.

Most gratefully,

Alison Hicks, Mountain View Vice Mayor
Ann O'Brien Keighran, Burlingame Councilmember
Betsy Nash, Menlo Park Councilmember
Charles Stone, Belmont Councilmember
Cliff Lentz, Brisbane Councilmember
Dave Pine, San Mateo County Supervisor
David Canepa, San Mateo County Supervisor
Davina Hurt, Belmont Councilmember
Dev Davis, San Jose Councilmember
Emily Beach, Burlingame Councilmember
Flor Nicolas, Vice Mayor South San Francisco
Gina Papen, Millbrae Councilmember
Glenn Hendricks, Sunnyvale Councilmember
Gustav Larsson, Sunnyvale Councilmember
Jen Wolosin, Menlo Park Vice Mayor
John Dugan, San Carlos Councilmember
Julia Mates, Belmont Mayor
Kathy Watanabe, Santa Clara Councilmember
Larry Klein, Sunnyvale Mayor
Margaret Abe-Koga, Mountain View Councilmember
Mark Nagales, South San Francisco Mayor
Michale Salazar, San Bruno Councilmember
Pat Showalter, Mountain View Councilmember
Peter Leroe-Munoz, Gilroy Councilmember
Rebeca Armendariz, Gilroy Councilmember
Richard Ortiz, Burlingame Mayor
Rick Bonilla, San Mateo Mayor
Ron Collins, San Carlos Councilmember
Russ Melton, Sunnyvale Councilmember
Sally Lieber, Mountain View Councilmember
Sara McDowell, San Carlos Mayor
Tom Hamilton, San Bruno Councilmember
Town of Atherton