

May 1, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
Office of the Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington DC, 20590

Subject: Support for 2024 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Application:
Valley Rail North – Sacramento Extension Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) strongly supports the application by San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRRC) to the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) 2024 Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant (MPDG) competitive grant program for the Valley Rail North – Sacramento Extension Project (Project).

The purpose of the Project is to implement various improvements on Valley Rail North Corridor (extension to Natomas). The network of projects includes construction of new stations, siding upgrades, track extensions, yard rehabilitation, etc. When the Project is completed, it will implement new and increased San Joaquin's passenger and ACE rail service with five new stations between Stockton and Sacramento. The Project will meet regional goals to improve passenger rail ridership and connectivity. The Project aligns with the MPDG program criteria by constructing infrastructure improvements that will increase safety, ensure a state of good repair, contribute economic benefits, improve freight movement, create well-paying jobs, mitigate climate change, bolster resiliency, ensure equity, provide multimodal options, and improve quality of life.

SJRRRC is requesting \$120 million in grant funding for the Project. SJRRRC has secured more than 40% for the matching funding needed to complete this Project.

The Valley Rail Program provides critical connectivity to California's future high-speed rail (HSR) service at the Merced HSR Station and with the Valley Link Project at the North Lathrop Transfer Station. The Valley Rail Program helps implement the 2023 State Rail Plan and is essential to realizing that vision and directly serves over 30% of California's Disadvantaged Communities.

MCTC would like to thank USDOT for its consideration and welcomes the opportunity to support SJRRRC in the pursuit of this Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'PTaylor', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Patricia Taylor
Executive Director
Madera County Transportation Commission