

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	December 10, 2019
SUBJECT:	Receive Intercity Bus Update and Authorize Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Grant Application
AGENDA ITEM:	12
STAFF CONTACT:	Jennifer Pollom, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

Cycle 4 of the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) is open for project applications and offers the opportunity to design and acquire Salmon Runner buses that meet the ideal service requirements.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors authorize submittal of a TIRCP grant application to partner with 1) a manufacturer for the design, engineering, and building of one or more prototype fuel cell motorcoaches and 2) a vendor for related hydrogen fueling infrastructure in Redding and Sacramento.

DISCUSSION:

Background - TIRCP is funded by the Air Resources Board Cap-and-Trade Program and by Senate Bill 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017. It provides funds for, "transformative capital improvements" that modernize and better connect California's intercity rail, bus, and ferry transit systems. The program's objective is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, vehicle miles traveled, and congestion. The 2020 Cycle 4 applications are due January 16, 2020. Approximately \$500 million is available.

In 2018, SRTA was awarded over \$8.6 million in TIRCP capital funding for a zero-emission intercity bus service between Redding and Sacramento – the Salmon Runner – including a valley feeder that connects the cities of Corning, Orland, Willows, and Chico. Ideally, Salmon Runner buses need to travel at interstate speeds and reliably complete the 175-mile one-way trip on a single charge or a single fueling in the case of hydrogen; under strenuous loads (max passenger load, HVAC); and over the expected life of the vehicle. In January, SRTA released a request for proposals (RFP) for Salmon Runner buses, but independent modeling showed that the proposed vehicles would not reliably meet the range and power needs. In June, the board of directors cancelled the RFP. A history of actions is attached.

Going forward, staff plans to use the 2018 TIRCP award to purchase Salmon Runner buses through a new Department of General Services Procurement for Zero-Emission Transit Buses. SRTA will modify the Salmon Runner service if the purchased buses do not meet Salmon Runner requirements. Alternatives include on-route charging or splitting the route into two segments.

Hydrogen Fuel Cell Motorcoach and Fueling Infrastructure - Staff recommends submittal of a TIRCP Cycle 4 grant application to partner with a manufacturer for the design, engineering, and building of one or more prototype fuel cell motorcoaches and to partner with a vendor for the related hydrogen fueling infrastructure in Redding and Sacramento. To strengthen the application, SRTA is seeking letters of interest from bus manufacturers to partner with SRTA on a prototype fuel cell motorcoach and from interested hydrogen fuel vendors.

Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles have a longer range than battery electric vehicles but are not offered in a motorcoach (high floor) platform. In pursuing the current TIRCP solicitation, SRTA is developing a long-term solution to the range and power challenges of the Salmon Runner service, while also solidifying state support for hydrogen fueling infrastructure in the North State. Other agencies are interested in purchasing long-range, higher-powered, fuel cell electric motorcoaches once developed, including:

- Golden Gate Transit
- Caltrans (Amtrak)
- Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
- Additional national and international transit providers
- Private corporate companies

If awarded, the state is further committing to the Salmon Runner service and the research and development of long-range, higher-powered, fuel cell electric motorcoaches. This includes hydrogen fueling infrastructure along Interstate 5 (I-5) in the region with the added potential benefit to address heavy duty freight; agency fleet requirements; and other non-profit and private desires to transition to a less carbon intensive fuel. A TIRCP award could be a catalyst for further hydrogen investment, thereby meeting regional and state goals while creating added economic opportunity in the region.

Building and delivery of a successful prototype fuel cell motorcoach would ensure ideal Salmon Runner service. SRTA could apply for future TIRCP grants to replace the initial fleet with the commercially available fuel cell motorcoach and transition the older zero-emission buses to shorter feeder routes connecting to the I-5 corridor.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may decline to submit the TIRCP grant application.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Caltrans, in collaboration with the California State Transportation Agency, administers the TIRCP. The grant application details will be developed in coordination with transportation and transit agency partners in the North State and Sacramento. The proposed grant application was discussed with the Technical Advisory Committee.

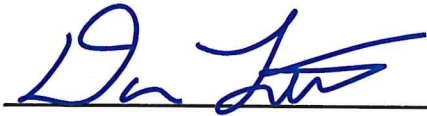
FISCAL IMPACT:

Capital – There is no fiscal impact related to submittal of a grant application; no match is required. Staff and consultant time for project planning, environmental review, consultant/vendor selection, partnership agreements, and program administration will be included in the grant.

Operation – Given broad regional and state interest, there is a high likelihood that the Federal Transit Administration Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus Program could provide subsidy. In addition, Tehama County has committed to contributing Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds for operations.

SRTA will continue to work with partners to receive state intercity bus funding, including allocations the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority receives to connect the North State to California's intercity rail network and the State Rail Assistance program funding that is intended to fill rail service gaps.

A fallback for operational funding is the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program annual regional allocations from both the Shasta Region and other North State Super Region counties. No local Transportation Development Act funds are proposed to be used for operations.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dan Little', is written over a horizontal line.

Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

Attachments: History of Related SRTA Board of Directors Agenda Items

HISTORY OF RELATED SRTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AGENDA ITEMS

2015

MEETING ON APRIL 28, 2015, AGENDA ITEM 11

ADOPT RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMITTAL OF 2015 FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION SECTION 5311(F) INTERCITY BUS PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION(S)

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. ...; and
2. Adopt Resolution 15-06 authorizing SRTA to submit a 2015 FTA Section 5311(f) application to study public transportation services to Sacramento, the Sacramento International Airport, and to possibly connect to major ground transit and airport facilities in the Bay Area.

The staff recommendations passed unanimously.

MEETING ON OCTOBER 13, 2015, AGENDA ITEM 5-9

AUTHORIZE TECHNICAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH CONSULTANT FOR SHASTA INTERCITY TRANSPORTATION TO SACRAMENTO AND BAY AREA STUDY

It is recommended that the board of directors authorize the executive director to sign a technical services agreement (attached) with The Center for Business and Policy Research at the University of the Pacific to prepare the *Shasta Intercity Transportation to Sacramento and the Bay Area Study*, for a term ending June 30, 2016, not to exceed \$26,700.

The consent calendar was approved.

2016

MEETING ON FEBRUARY 23, 2016, AGENDA ITEM 21

UPDATE REGARDING TRANSIT AND INTERCITY RAIL CAPITAL PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION – REVIEW AND POSSIBLE ACTION

It is recommended that the board of directors receive an update on the development of a FY 2016/17 TIRCP grant application and provide further direction, if any, to staff.

The board gave no further direction to staff.

MEETING ON APRIL 26, 2016, AGENDA ITEM 8

APPROVE THE TRANSIT AND INTERCITY RAIL CAPITAL PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION FOR BUS SERVICE BETWEEN REDDING AND SACRAMENTO

It is recommended that the board of directors approve the attached 2016/17 TIRCP grant application.

The staff recommendation passed unanimously.

MEETING ON DECEMBER 13, 2016, AGENDA ITEM 9

ACCEPT SHASTA INTERCITY TRANSPORTATION TO SACRAMENTO AND THE BAY AREA STUDY FINAL REPORT

It is recommended that the board of directors accept the *Shasta Intercity Transportation to Sacramento and the Bay Area Study* final report (attached).

The staff recommendation passed unanimously.

2017

MEETING ON APRIL 25, 2017, AGENDA ITEM 14

AUTHORIZE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE NORTH STATE EXPRESS CONNECT BUSINESS PLAN FOR INTERCITY BUS SERVICE BETWEEN REDDING AND SACRAMENTO

It is recommended that the board of directors authorize the executive director to issue an RFP for the *North State Express Connect Business Plan* (attached), pending award of a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant.

The staff recommendation passed unanimously.

MEETING ON JUNE 27, 2017, AGENDA ITEM 14

AUTHORIZE TECHNICAL SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR NORTH STATE EXPRESS CONNECT BUSINESS PLAN FOR INTERCITY BUS SERVICE BETWEEN REDDING AND SACRAMENTO

It is recommended that the board of directors authorize the chair to sign a technical services agreement (TSA) with Green DOT Transportation Solutions (Green DOT) to complete the *North State Express Connect Business Plan*, for a term ending June 30, 2020, not to exceed \$205,852.

The staff recommendation passed unanimously.

MEETING ON OCTOBER 10, 2017, AGENDA ITEM 9

APPROVE SUBMITTAL OF A TRANSIT AND INTERCITY RAIL CAPITAL PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION FOR BUS SERVICE BETWEEN REDDING AND SACRAMENTO AND AUTHORIZE SOLICITATION OF PROJECT PARTNERSHIPS

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Authorize the executive director to issue multiple requests for proposals (RFPs) for intercity buses, charging facilities, and passenger and bus parking; and
2. Approve submittal of a Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program grant application utilizing results from the RFP process.

The staff recommendation passed unanimously.

2018

MEETING ON JUNE 19, 2018

APPROVE THE NORTH STATE INTERCITY BUS SYSTEM BUSINESS PLAN AND DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PERFORM RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Approve the North State Intercity Bus System Business Plan;
2. Adopt Resolution #18-11 delegating authority the executive director to perform all administrative actions necessary to obtain Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) funds, including agreements with Caltrans and other project partners of the North State Intercity Bus System.

The staff recommendation passed unanimously.

2019

MEETING ON FEBRUARY 26, 2019

NORTH STATE INTERCITY BUS PROGRESS REPORT

It is recommended that the board of directors receive an update on the North State Intercity Bus Project, and provide any additional comments and/or direction to staff.

The staff recommendation passed unanimously.

CANCEL EXISTING SALMON RUNNER BUS PROCUREMENT, DEVELOP AND RELEASE NEW BUS PROCUREMENT, AND AMEND CONTRACT WITH CENTER FOR TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Cancel Procurement 2019-01 – Request for Proposals for Battery-Electric Vehicle Procurement for Salmon Runner and North Valley Feeder;
2. Authorize the executive director to release a new zero-emission bus procurement for the Salmon Runner intercity bus service, including the valley feeder service; and
3. Authorize the executive director to amend contract #2018-06 with Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) for Project Management for Procurement of Battery-Electric Buses and Charging Stations, increasing the budget by \$12,500, for a total amount of \$62,500 to assist SRTA with the new procurement.

The staff recommendation passed unanimously.