

CALL FOR PROJECTS

2024 TRANSIT AND INTERCITY RAIL CAPITAL PROGRAM

Summary: This call for projects details application requirements and procedures to apply for funding under the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP). The 2024 TIRCP grant cycle will program projects starting with the 2024-25 fiscal year and ending with the 2028-29 fiscal year. The new program cycle will include previously awarded and active Cycle 6 projects that have not been fully allocated by the end of the 2023-24 fiscal year, and new projects from Cycle 7. The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) and SB 1 continue to provide substantial funding available to be programmed toward new projects in the TIRCP. While funding estimates for the program are considered reasonable as of the date of the guidelines, GGRF funds are subject to impacts from market forces and auction proceeds.

Final Filing Date:

Submission of electronic versions of the project cover letter and Project Narrative Document must be complete by July 23, 2024, no later than 5:00 p.m.

Submission Requirements: Applications must be submitted electronically to tircpcomments@dot.ca.gov in printable format.

If submitting multiple applications, each application shall be submitted separately. All relevant information included in the application must be clearly readable in this electronic copy, including but not limited to signatures, color-coding, and oversized documents. The PDF application files will be used for printing materials as needed for the review committees, and thus should be legible and printable on standard paper sizes (letter, legal and ledger). Supporting documentation, such as the quantification calculations required for GHG analysis and the jobs co-benefits tool, should also be submitted in an appropriate electronic form, such as Excel, for ease of review.

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS:

The Program email account (tircpcomments@dot.ca.gov) can receive attachments totaling no more than 40MB. Should attachments total more than 40 MB, multiple emails, clearly numbered in sequence (“Email x of x” as part of the subject line), may be submitted.

Contact Information: For further information regarding this solicitation, please contact the program electronically at: tircpcomments@dot.ca.gov. If prospective applicants would like clarification on any requirements of the project application described in this solicitation, questions submitted prior to 5:00 p.m. May 27, 2024 (for posted responses in mid June 2024) will be considered for response in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section of the TIRCP website located at: <https://calsta.ca.gov/subject-areas/transit-intercity-rail-capital-prog>. Multiple FAQs may be released throughout the project application development period, and applicants are encouraged to regularly check the website for review of FAQs that may be relevant to their application.

Optional pre-application meetings to discuss project concepts and quantification with CalSTA and Caltrans staff: Prospective applicants interested in a pre-application meeting to discuss project concepts and phases, as well as clarification of project application requirements or quantification approaches should consider requesting a virtual meeting on one of the dates indicated below.

- Virtual Consultations: May 13-23, 2024

Meeting requests should be submitted to tircpcomments@dot.ca.gov no later than May 6, 2024, specifying the preferred meeting time and the project or projects the agency would like to discuss, along with a contact person who can be reached prior to the meeting if any details need discussion or clarification. Agencies considering multiple applications or projects with significant project phasing should also specify this in the request. If an agency has flexibility with regards to the meeting date and/or time, indicating this will allow better balancing of available time with requests for meetings. Specific time slots will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Meeting duration will generally be less than 45 minutes and only eligible applicants may request a pre-application meeting.

Applicants desiring feedback on specific questions in the pre-application meetings should submit questions no later than five business days prior to the scheduled meeting date. While not all questions may be addressed in the pre-application meeting, post-meeting Frequently Asked Questions may be developed with both CalSTA, California Air Resources Board or other agencies contributing answers to relevant questions and posted.

Ridership and Revenue Modeling Support of Certain Rail Services:

Caltrans will provide ridership modeling support for projects that will change service levels and are expected to impact ridership on one or more of the three state-supported intercity rail routes, proposed extensions, and/or proposed intercity corridors. While potential projects should focus on the intercity rail corridors themselves, they can also include the impacts of regional commuter rail systems which feed ridership into the intercity rail system, or otherwise have an impact on intercity ridership, where the impact is expected to be significant. In certain cases, bus and other local transit connections could be modeled if they are expected to have a significant ridership impact on the state intercity rail system.

Project types that can be modeled by the Caltrans rail model may include:

- **Amtrak California Incremental Model:** this model estimates the impact of incremental service changes on the three state-supported Amtrak routes in California. This model is best suited for estimating the impact of service changes that do not fundamentally alter the competitive position of rail versus other modes.
- **Amtrak California Mode Share Model:** this model estimates diversion between automobile travel and rail travel for a given level of rail service and also considers parking costs and roadway travel time assumptions. This model is best suited for situations where the proposed changed to the rail service is expected to fundamentally alter the relative attractiveness of rail versus automobile.

Please note that these models were developed before the pandemic based on pre-COVID ridership patterns, trip tables, and socioeconomic forecasts. Given the rapidly evolving situation with COVID, the models have not been – and cannot yet be – explicitly adjusted for COVID-era impacts. Current market research suggests there could be a long-term decline in commuter and/or business-related travel (including by rail) post-pandemic due to increased acceptance of teleworking.

Procedure for submitting ridership modeling requests

The ridership, ticket revenue, and passenger mile impact of a proposed rail service change is established by comparing the demand for rail service with and without this change. The inputs required for ridership, ticket revenue, and passenger mile modeling include:

- A description of the **‘baseline’** rail service that will be offered absent the project for which a TIRCP funding application is being submitted. This is usually provided as a passenger timetable in spreadsheet format. – Example: the most recent pre-pandemic timetable representing the times of day where each train called at each station
- The **‘proposed’** passenger timetable that will be made possible by the project. For example, with faster travel times, new stations, or additional service frequencies. In the event you do not wish to undertake detailed timetable planning at this stage, please provide written descriptions of the envisioned service changes and we can create a passenger timetable for you. – Example: a statement that travel times will reduce by Y minutes between Station A and Station B, or a statement that there will be two additional frequencies to fill out gaps in the afternoon schedule
 - Please note that any timetable we create may not be constrained by operational considerations (e.g., number of train sets available, efficient use of train crews). However, you may review these timetables before the model is run.
- Milestone year(s) of interest for comparison of with/without the proposed service changes.
- The fare levels and fare changes between the baseline and proposed scenarios.
- Any expected network effects, for example new thruway buses or significant local transit options.
- Any new special generators or major developments along the service corridor.

Projects which are not expected to result in intercity rail ridership changes

As described previously, Caltrans’ in-house demand modeling tools are focused in the context of intercity rail travel. We therefore recommend the following alternatives for projects which are focused on urban travel or which are expected to positively impact the delivery of rail service that will not necessarily show in a modeling scenario:

| Project Type | Recommendation | Justification |
|---|--|---|
| Projects focused on urban travel. For example, local light rail, bus service, etc. | Use a local model, for example that of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). | The local MPO model will have a more granular zone system and location-specific behavioral parameters that can better capture the dynamics of travel within the urban region in question. |
| Projects focused on operator benefits. Examples include state of good repair (SOGR) projects or projects to reduced maintenance costs | Financial analysis or benefit-cost analysis to explain the magnitude of cost savings achieved. | These projects do not have a direct impact on ridership. Note: In the case of SOGR projects where deterioration in infrastructure may lead to degraded rail service (e.g., |

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| | | slower trains), we may be able to model the impact on this. |
| Projects with more tangential impacts on customer journey experience, such as new rolling stock or improved station lighting. | Use academic literature or market research to quantify and benchmark the estimated impact of these changes. | These are not parameters within the existing Caltrans models. We will be pleased to support the desk research with our extensive experience or ‘sense checking’ of any parameters that are proposed. |

Request submission timeline

Please be aware that we are expecting a large number of modeling requests given the amount of available funding this year. While we will do our best to revert results to requestors well in advance of the TIRCP Application deadline, we strongly encourage modeling requests to be submitted as early as possible, and no later than 1-2 months before the date by which the model outputs are needed in order to complete your report by the TIRCP deadline. Should your agency anticipate requesting ridership and revenue modeling for multiple projects, we are happy to receive materials in batches. Be aware that your agency and/or its consultants must submit either completed schedules or service patterns as part of your submission by this due date. Therefore, you and your consultants should be engaged well in advance to meet the modeling submission deadline.

Partner agencies who are considering submitting modeling requests must share a brief summary of the proposed service concept(s) with us by **Friday, May 17th**, in advance of the service timetables and other inputs being fully prepared. For example: “extension of Route X to City Y”, “Increase service frequency on Route X from A to B”. Applicants who do not submit project summaries by this date will not be eligible for ridership modeling support. These summaries can be submitted to tircpcomments@dot.ca.gov. Agencies can provide multiple project descriptions if they are still deciding which project(s) to apply for.

Ridership modeling requests must be **submitted by Friday, May 24, 2024**, along with the necessary input materials described in this document. This will allow modeling results to be returned in late June.

Supplementary Information:

CalSTA recommends that project applicants carefully read this solicitation and the 2024 TIRCP Guidelines (Guidelines) in their entirety prior to preparing application materials. Additionally, the CalSTA TIRCP website contains certain application materials, forms, Frequently Asked Questions or additional materials and forms that support this solicitation and the administration of projects.

Section 1: Award Information

1.1 Available Funding

Senate Bill 9 requires this grant cycle to approve a five-year program of projects starting with State Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 and ending with 2028-29. This solicitation utilizes auction proceeds from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) from continuous appropriation based on 10 percent of the

Cap- and-Trade auction proceeds during the programming period of 2024-25 through 2028-29 as well as a specified portion of annual Senate Bill 1 revenues directed to TIRCP for new programming in this cycle. The new capacity available for Cycle 7 is currently estimated at \$900 million, but could be adjusted based on auction proceeds and changing cash flow requirements of already awarded projects between now and the October 2024 award announcement. Senate Bill 9 authorizes CalSTA to enter into a multi-year funding agreement with an eligible applicant for any duration. CalSTA may use this authority to allow an allocation of funds for a project that would depend on revenue received subsequent to the allocation and could include funds received subsequent to the 2028-29 fiscal year thus impacting the total amount of available funding in future cycles.

CalSTA will publish an initial Program Allocation Plan for awarded projects prior to the first Cycle 7 allocations at the California Transportation Commission (Commission), including multiyear projects, tying allocation of funding to available funding in specified fiscal years. The Program Allocation Plan may allow a project with construction over multiple years to have a commitment of funds programmed over a multi-year time span in order to enter into necessary contracts for construction. The plan will be updated prior to Commission allocation actions or at any other time between Commission meetings, as needed.

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, and based on the matching percentage identified at the time of selection, a pro-rata reimbursement agreement (or other suitable agreement) may be established to ensure project savings are equitably distributed and that committed non-TIRCP funds are not supplanted.

1.2 Application Limits

For the 2024 TIRCP solicitation, available funding in the near term of the programming cycle (FY 2024-25 through FY 2026-27) of about \$300 million is best for applicants with ready to build projects that are started within the first three years. However, larger projects that have longer timelines may find pre-construction phases well-aligned with this period, with construction funding being provided in larger amounts beginning in FY 2027-28. Longer-term projects (FY 2027-28 and beyond) should note that the higher funding levels are available for projects with longer delivery timelines. Agencies should consider risks related to potential cost escalation and have the plan and resources to manage projects over the time horizons. Applicants should be clear about any flexibility projects have in terms of when they can receive funding.

Agencies may submit multiple applications and the submitted projects, including any separable components, must be clearly ranked by the applicant based on agency priority. Agency ranking should provide a clear explanation of the agency's ranked prioritization.

Applicants are encouraged to identify separate project components that could provide independent utility to provide CalSTA flexibility in selecting projects or project components. Applicants submitting a high-dollar, single application with no scalability or separable project elements may increase the risk of having an uncompetitive project application; therefore, applicants are advised to submit projects that are scalable and separable. CalSTA may choose to recommend funding for less than the amount requested by the application. At the same time, CalSTA may revise upward the funding available for the programming cycle in the event the available program resources expand prior to the completion of the programming cycle.

CalSTA will recommend awards for projects and may request specific project review and approval milestones as requirements of the award, in consultation with Caltrans and the California Transportation Commission. The funding provided under this program will be made available on a reimbursable basis. Projects eligible for funding is further outlined in Section 8 of the Guidelines.

1.3 Application Review Process

Applications submitted will proceed through a multi-step review process:

1. Basic screening for completeness and eligibility
2. Review of application for potential subdivision into project phases or components, review, and analysis of ridership and GHG quantification, review and analysis of the job's co-benefit modeling tool, and summarization of project to assist technical panel review
3. Initial rating of projects on each primary and secondary evaluation criterion, priority population benefits, and other additional factors described in the guidelines by multi-agency technical panels
4. Consideration of technical panel ratings, geographic equity, and degree of priority population benefits by a senior executive panel, with potential to request additional information from subject matter experts that may result in a revised rating on one or more evaluation criteria or factors
5. Project selection by CalSTA, taking into consideration cross-cutting and comparative selection criteria that consider overall program objectives, geographic equity and exceeding program goals for benefits to disadvantaged, and low-income communities, and/or low-income households consistent with the objectives of SB 535 and AB 1550

The Project Selection Process is further detailed in Section 11 of the Guidelines.

Section 2: Project Application Contents

The project application document shall be submitted as a PDF addressing each of the following items in order:

1. **A signed cover letter**, with signature authorizing and approving the application. If the applicant does not need to specifically go to the agency's Board to request permission to authorize and approve the application, then only the signature of an executive (i.e. General Manager/Executive Director/CEO) authorized to submit is needed. A board resolution or authorized agent form is not required to be filed at the time of application submittal.
2. **Project Narrative Document (maximum 50 pages)**
The following content is required as part of the project narrative. These requirements shall be satisfied through a narrative statement and may be supported by spreadsheets, tables, maps, drawings, and other materials, as appropriate. The project narrative shall include an explanation of the project and its proposed benefits, including the following:
 - A. **Project Summary Data**
 - i. **Project Title**
A brief non-technical description of the project type, scope, and location.
 - ii. **Applicant Name**
Clearly identify the lead applicant and co-applicant organization names.

- iii. Project priority (if agency is submitting multiple applications).
Explain the prioritization, including any state, regional or local planning efforts that support the ranking.
- iv. Project Purpose and Need
A brief summary of the project purpose and need.
- v. Project Location
Project location denoting the project site(s) and denoting disadvantaged communities, low-income communities and/or low-income households that will benefit from the project, as applicable, according to the CARB's 2018 Funding Guidelines. Agencies should also note if a project benefits intercity rail service and is included within one of the selected corridors participating in the FRA's Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP).
- vi. Project Mode (s)
Identify project modes from the following list:
 - 1. Local Bus (inclusive of bus, trolley bus, shuttle bus and rapid bus operating in mixed traffic)
 - 2. Bus Rapid Transit
 - 3. Light Rail
 - 4. Streetcar
 - 5. Heavy Rail (commonly referred to as subway or metro)
 - 6. Commuter Bus
 - 7. Commuter Rail
 - 8. Intercity Rail
 - 9. Feeder Bus associated with Intercity Rail
 - 10. Ferry
 - 11. Vanpool
 - 12. Micro Transit
 - 13. Other (i.e. fixed guideway, monorail, people mover, etc.)
- vii. Multi-Agency Coordination
Clearly identify if there is multi-agency coordination and with which agencies coordination is occurring.
- viii. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions
Include the results of the CARB Quantification Tool.
- ix. Funding Requested
Clearly identify the amount of TIRCP funding requested and proposed non-TIRCP Matching Funds (if any).
- x. Point of Contact
Designate a point of contact for the applicant that is an employee of the eligible applicant, including phone number, mailing address and email address.

B. Project Costs

Narrative on project costs should be included that is consistent with the requirements of Section 9, item 6 in the TIRCP Guidelines. Additional detail, not subject to the page limitation of the Project Narrative Document, can be included in the Statement of Work Document or as Supporting Documentation.

The applicant should identify the specific source of all non-Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program funding, including any requests that are pending approval (such as expected federal

New Starts or Small Starts funding or potential local transit funding measures) and the timeline for approval. Note if any specific funding source requires obligation or expenditure by a particular date. If SB 125 funding is programmed to a project, please indicate the year and amount of funding and it will be treated as a local match for the purposes of project evaluation.

If applicable, describe the leveraging and coordination of funding from other greenhouse gas reduction programs such as Caltrans' Low Carbon Transit Operations Program, the Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Program, the Strategic Growth Council's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities Program or the California Air Resources Board's Low Carbon Transportation funding program.

If applicable, describe the leveraging and coordination of funding from other federal, state, local, regional, or private sources, with indication as to which of those sources are discretionary and which are non-discretionary (including competitive and noncompetitive).

C. Eligibility

Explain how the application meets the applicant eligibility criteria

D. Expanded Project Summary

Provide a brief summary (approximately 200 words or 6 sentences) of the proposed project, capturing the transportation challenges the proposed project aims to address, as well as the intended outcomes and anticipated benefits that will result from the proposed project.

Applicants may wish to see the CalSTA descriptions of previously awarded projects (2015, 2016, 2018, 2020) to use these summaries as a guide for project summaries (<https://calsta.ca.gov/subject-areas/transit-intercity-rail-capital-prog>).

Include a detailed project description that expands on the summary required above. This detailed description should provide, at a minimum, additional background on the transportation challenges the project aims to address, the expected users and beneficiaries of the project (including any benefits to disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and/or low-income households expected as a result of the project), the specific components and elements of the project, and any other information the applicant deems necessary to justify the proposed project.

E. Project Benefits and Impacts

This section should address project benefits and impacts consistent with the requirements of Section 9, Items 8A through 8H, of the Guidelines. Note that this section includes thorough discussion of how the project addresses each of the evaluation criteria (noting where the project does not contribute to particular criteria) in the order provided in Section 10 of the Guidelines. Where secondary evaluation criteria request similar categories of information to categories already covered under primary evaluation criteria, cross-referencing the other category rather than duplicating an explanation is encouraged.

F. Disadvantaged Communities, Low Income Communities, and/or Low-Income Households

This section should emphasize the factors described in Section 9, Item 9 of the Guidelines.

Reference CARB's Priority Population Benefit Criteria Table for the TIRCP Program and specify the particular criteria under which the project qualifies in accordance with the table. The criteria table can be found here: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/auction-proceeds/criteria-table-sustainabletransportation.pdf>

Provide a narrative explanation and supporting documentation stating the important need(s) being addressed for disadvantaged communities, low-income communities and/or low-income households, as well as the direct, meaningful benefits to disadvantaged communities and/or low-income communities provided by the project, indicating the specific and the method for assuring these benefits will be achieved. In the description, clearly identify community outreach efforts used to identify the needs within the communities and households. The Priority Population Benefit Criteria Table for the TIRCP Program should be specifically referenced in the narrative: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/auction-proceeds/criteria-table-sustainabletransportation.pdf>

G. Employment and Workforce Development and Training Benefits

This section should emphasize the factors described in Section 9, Item 10 of the Guidelines. Address the ability to gather and analyze new datasets for public use and benefit as an outcome of the project.

H. Proposed project implementation and project management

Include descriptions of the expected arrangements for project contracting, contract oversight, change-order management, and risk management.

I. Project readiness

In the description, include the following:

- i. Progress towards achieving environmental protection requirements.
- ii. The comprehensiveness and sufficiency of agreements with key partners (particularly infrastructure-owning railroads) that will be involved in implementing the project.

3. Statement of Work Document

The Statement of Work document should contain sufficient detail so that both CalSTA and the applicant can understand the expected outcomes of the proposed project and monitor progress toward completing project tasks and deliverables during the grant's period of performance. A clear explanation should be provided if project documentation related to project programming, schedule, budget, and other items relies on documents that contain outdated numbers or differences in funding sources.

A. The Statement of Work should address:

- i. **Project Scope**
Detailed description of project tasks, deliverables, and milestones.
- ii. **Project Location**
Provide the maps described in Section 9, Item 5 of the Guidelines.
- iii. **Project Costs**
Provide the details described in Section 9, Item 6 of the Guidelines
- iv. **Project Schedule**
Including the project's current status and the completion dates of all major delivery milestones.
- v. **Capital and Operating Financial Plan Details (as applicable).**
 - Each application must include an Electronic Project Programming Request (ePPR) form. A template of this form in Excel may be found at: <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/financial-programming/documents/eppr-instructions-v101-a11y.pdf>
 - Address the requirements of Section 9, Items 12-14 and Item 16, of the TIRCP Guidelines (as applicable).

- All applicants must demonstrate the ability to absorb any cost overruns and deliver the proposed project with no additional funding from this program beyond that provided in initial grant or cooperative agreement, and to fund initial operating costs. Please reference section 9, Item 14 of the Guidelines for additional details.

4. Support Documentation

A. Certification of Cost Estimates

Signed statement certifying that cost estimates used are approved by the Chief Executive Officer or other authorized officer of the implementing agency.

B. Letters of Support

Reflect the requirements of Section 9, Item 15 of the Guidelines.

C. Ridership, Revenue, & Transportation Planning Inputs (Optional)

Applicants are encouraged to provide a description of the considerations and factors used for the inputs and outputs of ridership, revenue, and regional growth calculations, either as a narrative summary, analytical data, or a combination of both. Details for housing and jobs considerations can be provided and the information should provide insights that will assist the evaluation teams and document the basis for both year 1 and year F calculations used for all benefit quantifications. Additional information can also be provided on any regional or local considerations of importance in connection with existing transportation planning processes used as part of the application.

D. Jobs Co-Benefit Modeling Tool

At the time of application, applicants are required to submit a job co-benefit modeling tool, which is based upon a co-benefit assessment methodology developed by CARB. This modeling tool will be required to be submitted with the application. The jobs co-benefit modeling tool can be accessed here: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/ci-methodologies>

E. CARB Quantification Tool

The Excel spreadsheet and any documentation supporting assumptions must be submitted with the application by the due date. An updated draft of the CARB quantification methodology and quantification tool were posted on April 18, 2024, with the final methodology and tool expected by mid-May 2024. Please reference CARB's website for the final versions before submitting your application: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/ci-quantification-benefits-and-reporting-materials>