

MEETING NOTES

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Implementation Intercity Passenger Rail Sub Working Group Meeting #2

February 15, 2022

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Opening remarks:

1. Welcome and Review of Agenda
2. Housekeeping Items and Action Items Review
3. Draft Intercity Rail Sub-Working Group Charter
4. Statewide Intercity Rail Project List
5. Recap and Action Items

Updates from Sub-Working Group:

- Kick off on Jan 28th for Transit and Commuter Rail SWG
- Next few meetings we will focus on statewide project list
- We're looking to advance strong projects that meet statewide and regional goals that are also competitive for federal grants
- Tackle ZEV implementation challenges
- The IIJA transition roll out plan
- Some concerns around and the lack of operating and maintenance funding
- Dedicated meeting to discuss Covid related issues- ridership/ bus driver shortage
- NEPA delegation- solution
- NTD reporting

Upcoming IIJA:

- Next meeting w/ CalSTA and other sub-working groups tomorrow 2/16 @ 11 am
- Freight/Goods Movement sub-working group meeting on 2/17 @ 1 pm
- Next meeting for Transit and Commuter Rail on 2/23 @ 1 pm (2nd meeting)
- Webinar- IIJA link in chat sponsored by legal group

Corridor ID and Development Plan:

- Deadline 3/9/22
- CA passenger SPRC- taking lead to submit response on issue areas
- Caltrans is taking lead on drafting this response with CCJPA, SJPA and LOSSAN Agency
- RFI- Corridor Identification -16 different questions- roles and responsibilities, service dev., project pipeline, criteria, selectivity.

Robert Padgette:

- we will meet this week to discuss strategy on other state's response in D.C. meeting for this initiative
- FRA program used to prioritize intercity rail in the state partnership
- Has Caltrans started drafting this response? – JPAs are meeting this afternoon- set up time and meet with JPAs by Friday this week- at least set up an initial conversation.

Action Item Tracker:

- Fill in as necessary for your respective projects

Roster Info:

- Reach out to Charles.Roberts@dot.ca.gov

Project Charter V2:

- Overview
- Updated charter goals 7-13
- Brainstorm ideas to leverage federal, state, and local funding
- Discuss mega projects and agree on definition

Idea- to add to goals*

- Resiliency, climate change, state of good repair and protecting infrastructure especially in mega projects

Key Milestones and due dates:

- Overview
- Next meeting- finalize template, charter, and action plan
- 3rd meeting- discuss lack of operating and maintenance funds discussion
- Address moral shift- increase attractiveness of services
- Build statewide project list- for rail programs
- Determine whether new state implementing legislation is necessary

Chad Edison:

- NOFO Roll outs will be on a monthly cadence- and soon we will start seeing them
- We need to be getting to a consensus on where we have most competitive projects each year
- State funding/ supplemental funding will help- it's important we are ready
- We need to be ready for NOFOs early May and more as summer goes on

Robert Padgette:

- It would be helpful for state to set up funds for prioritization
- Safety risk- for Grade Separation Projects
- Love to see the state organize and get on the same page to get projects selected
- Old section 130 program – 100% federal funding and other programs require 20% match

- All these different pieces that we need to weave together so we can have a chance at these federal grants
- Clarity about staff resources to organize efforts
- We need to endorse the resources that will be used so there is support for Caltrans

Chad Edison:

- Our contingent award language could help improve securing state funding and position ourselves to leverage federal funding for various programs.

Momo T:

- Heavy lift would be done here at Caltrans
- Charter is a living document as we look at legislation and tackle ongoing challenges- we will continue to update

Assumptions:

- Intercity Rail sub-working group will meet once a month for 60 minutes. Some meeting may need to extend to 90 minutes depending on topics. There was no questions

Coordination:

- Equity- we will talk about it here and share with Caltrans CORE
- FGM- we need to look at freight action plan- to align- work with Yatman K.
- Transit and Commuter Rail- updates will be shared during the house keeping items of each meeting
- ZEV- we will hold specific topic meeting at #4 in April – invite T. Dang will be invited
- Safety- Grade crossing projects in our list we will need to be coordinated with Safety SWG as well

Risks and Implementation and Mitigation Strategy:

- Agencies competing for funds
- Purchase of ROW
- Lack of funds
- Lack of state/local match

Michael Cano

- Add a risk associated with Host RR coordination

Momo T:

- FTA small agency- long time to process NEPA documents
- Will tap SMEs to tackle issues and concerns/risks/ strategy

Chad Edison.

- Add a risk regarding environmental considerations
- Are these projects supported with the environmental documents that are necessary for this purpose?

- NEPA delegation/ the ability to get NEPA done across projects need to be added as a risk
- FRA could have similar issues- ensuring projects get through NEPA timely

Robert Padgette:

- Any risks associated with cost escalation?
- When we pour funding to an area that hasn't had it for a while, it is hard to do good cost estimates because of supply chain issues, etc.

Carrie Schindler.

- We are having to comply with FTA 54.
- Although we are FRA regulated
- We need add a risk associated with conflicting/Overlapping efforts compliance issues by two federal agencies- risk
- This should also be brought up in SWG commuter rail

Statewide Project List:

- NOFO
- Mega Projects
- Letter of Support from Caltrans
- We want to keep list consolidated and ensure these projects have consistent descriptions that are being circulated to other agencies/ stakeholders
- Overview of "Combined Master Rail Project" list
- We would like to use this list to start collecting information- template that you have seen before
- NOFO- extend project information to us via spreadsheet
- We will ensure the projects are aligned with state rail plan
- We need to add column to note RTIP or FTIP?

Jay Fuhrman:

- Will the list you just showed us be available through SharePoint?
- Andy and Chad will be in charge of this
- We need to make sure spreadsheet is accurate before we share- maybe a google form that we can distribute
- Share fields and get information
- Andy- working on intake form now

Danny Veeh:

- LoSSAN groups- will send over info that will help track project list

Kenneth Kao:

- Regional transportation plan consistency- most projects should already be in RTP but there are some projects in overall rail plan that are not regional
- Intercity rail funds not covered by MPO process
- We need to ensure we are coordinating on these projects

Momo T:

- Mega projects- if you have any projects, please come forward with ideas for approach since it's a large funding requirement
- Is there a capital funding threshold around mega project?
 - Definition- no but a lot had to do with size and the amount of cooperation
- Chad to do more research on Mega Projects definitions and propositions

Recap and Action Items:

- Finalize draft charter by next SWG meeting- doodle poll coming soon
- Complete doodle poll
- Start thinking about the ideas/recommendations to address modal shift and lack of adequate funding.