



LOSSAN Working Group

April 28, 2026



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Review Recommendations for Policy Area A from March meeting

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Welcome and Opening Remarks



Review of Policy Recommendations for A & D from March 2026 Meeting



Policy Area A – Strategies to increase rail service coordination and reduce disruptions or delays

1. Led by Caltrans and CalSTA and in coordination with the LOSSAN working group, develop a written fleet and asset management plan that aligns equipment, facilities, and infrastructure needs with funding.
2. Leverage the Rail Fleet Consortium being led by the Caltrans Division of Rail as a primary vehicle for coordination. Use this venue to explore joint procurements and service contracting to attract more bidders and aggregate buying power statewide — broadening vendor competition, reducing unit costs, improving equipment interoperability, and strengthening overall fleet reliability and availability.
3. Allow SGR rail projects to be eligible for state funding grant programs where feasible. Program guidelines should develop and incorporate specific scoring criteria for SGR eligibility, emphasizing safety, reliability, and maintaining existing infrastructure.
4. Programs should encourage and prioritize projects that include meaningful non-state local and federal funding contributions, while also recognizing circumstances where state investment may be necessary to address critical needs that exceed local fiscal capacity.
5. Develop administrative solutions, where feasible, by incorporating timely use of funds exceptions for extraordinary and unforeseeable circumstances into state program guidelines.
6. Program criteria should allow for the prioritization of projects that demonstrate significant non-state local/federal funding contributions, recognizing local commitment as an indicator of project readiness and shared investment.

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Policy Area A – Strategies to increase rail service coordination and reduce disruptions or delays

7. In coordination with the LOSSAN Working Group, the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) and the California Coastal Commission (CCC) should develop a cooperative agreement or Memorandum of Understanding to identify where streamlining solutions for rail projects in the coastal zone can be identified and other solutions to assist in the delivery of rail projects. For example, if a federal nexus is identified project sponsors may coordinate with the Coastal Commission to determine whether the project can proceed through the federal consistency process in lieu of the traditional Coastal Development Permit (CDP). Utilizing the federal consistency pathway can streamline permitting. Additional clarity from the Coastal Commission on when each process applies would help project sponsors make informed decisions early and further improve permitting efficiency.
8. Develop a corridor-wide playbook that defines roles, decision thresholds, and timelines for agencies when bluff instability is detected. Include pre-defined triggers (e.g., erosion rates, track exposure, geotechnical warnings) to reduce ad hoc decision-making. This should include a standardized communication protocols across agencies and to the public to avoid fragmented messaging during closures.
9. CalSTA, in coordination with Caltrans, may develop a state emergency response protocol that mirrors the state's established role in freeway incidents for emergency incidents that exceeds a defined threshold. This may include but is not limited to, Caltrans activating a standardized incident command structure for rail-related emergencies, including rapid deployment of field crews, engineers, and operations coordination. Utilize pre-positioned emergency contracts and resources to immediately stabilize infrastructure and protect the rail right-of-way. Coordinate directly with regional partners with authority to elevate issues to the Caltrans Director or CalSTA Secretary of Transportation.

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Policy Area A – Strategies to increase rail service coordination and reduce disruptions or delays

10. Establish a Vision Zero framework for rail within the LOSSAN Corridor, with the explicit goal of eliminating passenger and vehicle strike incidents through a combination of data-driven prioritization, targeted infrastructure investment, and coordinated interagency action.
11. Compile and maintain a unified safety dataset to identify and map high-risk locations with the greatest frequency and severity of incidents. Use that analysis to prioritize a ranked pipeline of targeted improvements: grade separations, enhanced barriers and fencing, upgraded crossing controls, and visibility and warning enhancements.
12. Implement ongoing performance monitoring to ensure continuous reduction of risk and measurable progress toward eliminating strikes corridor-wide.
13. Establish a corridor-wide standard for earlier and more consistent confirmation of AWWs, aligning toward 60–90 day confirmation where feasible, while continuing annual and long-range AWW planning to preserve operational flexibility.
14. Expand coordination within existing monthly coordination calls to prioritize alignment of work windows — shifting where possible to nighttime or weekday closures that minimize intercity passenger impacts.
15. Proactively consolidate maintenance activities across operators to reduce the frequency and overlap of disruptions.

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Policy Area D – Coordination of Planning and Project Development through the Federal CIDP

1. Acknowledging that Caltrans serves as the lead agency and primary coordinator for California's participation in the CID Program, LOSSAN member agencies and the LOSSAN Agency will support and actively engage in the CIDP process by providing timely data, participating in federally required planning activities, and coordinating local project development work with the state-led corridor planning effort. Compile and maintain a unified safety dataset to identify and map high-risk locations with the greatest frequency and severity of incidents. Use that analysis to prioritize a ranked pipeline of targeted improvements: grade separations, enhanced barriers and fencing, upgraded crossing controls, and visibility and warning enhancements.
2. To the extent possible, CalSTA and Caltrans should endeavor to align state grant programs such as TIRCP, TCEP, SCCP, with the project priorities established through the CIDP process. Inclusion of projects on the CIDP capital project list should be an explicit selection consideration in grant evaluations, recognizing that CIDP inclusion reflects a rigorous, federally coordinated prioritization process. Establish a corridor-wide standard for earlier and more consistent confirmation of AWWs, aligning toward 60–90 day confirmation where feasible, while continuing annual and long-range AWW planning to preserve operational flexibility.

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Policy Area D – Coordination of Planning and Project Development through the Federal CIDP

3. Recommend that the LOSSAN member agencies, in coordination with Caltrans, establish a standing interagency coordination structure specifically organized around stage 2 CID Program milestones and deliverables. This structure will provide regular touchpoints aligned with FRA's staged development process, with clear expectations for member agency participation and data contribution at each stage.
4. CalSTA, Caltrans and the LOSSAN member agencies should actively leverage California's participation in the CID Program as a foundation for federal legislative and advocacy on behalf of the LOSSAN Corridor. Corridors with formal CIDP status occupy a recognized position within FRA's national passenger rail framework, and that status should be used strategically in engagements with FRA leadership, the Office of the Secretary of Transportation, and California's congressional delegation. Advocacy efforts should connect corridor-specific investment needs to national policy priorities and should seek to advance LOSSAN Corridor projects in FRA budget discussions and competitive program design.

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Policy Area B

Alternative management and operations models or structures that improve intercity and regional rail services.

NOTE: The following recommendations are still in deliberative draft form and are not considered final for the purposes of the SB 1098 report.



Alternative management and operations models or structures

Challenge

Lack of an enforceable, corridor-wide decision-making forum or process, which often results in a reduced ability to align varying priorities, funding, interests between owners, operators, planners, regulators. As a result, corridor-wide outcomes are dependent on coordination that is largely voluntary and not always aligned with overall system performance.

Recommendations from Working Group Members:

- Establish a formal corridor operating review process focused on schedule development, optimization and approvals, and work window development coordination and approvals.
- Formalize the SB 1098 Working group into a permanent standing body. Designate board-appointed primary and alternate membership with authority to act on the agency's behalf. The Working Group may adopt a charter establishing purpose, quorum, scope, and an established voting mechanism, which can define voting thresholds by decision type.

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Alternative management and operations models or structures

Challenge

There is a need for enhanced coordination at key transfer points between intercity and regional services in order to further improve the passenger experience across jurisdictions.

Recommendations from Working Group Members:

- Commission an independent study to look at the most cost-effective way to implement work windows for all services across the corridor.
- Pursuant to the recommendation in Policy Area A, require that the written fleet and facilities plan analyzes opportunities for future shared equipment, maintenance and layover facilities and processes that can drive efficiencies across all operators in the corridor.
- Require that all planned schedule changes across corridor operators take effect on a single, coordinated date, established in advance on a fixed cycle. Coordinating changes across operators preserves timed connections, reduces missed transfers and allows crews and equipment to be scheduled against a stable, system-wide timetable. This also ensures that passengers experience the corridor as a unified system and prevents unilateral schedule shifts from degrading connections for riders transferring between services.

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Alternative management and operations models or structures

Challenge

There is a need for enhanced coordination at key transfer points between intercity and regional services in order to further improve the passenger experience across jurisdictions.

Recommendations from Working Group Members:

- Require regular updates and revisions to the LOSSAN schedule optimization study, on a fixed cadence established in advance, to ensure that operations across corridor services are continually optimized.
- Add the LOSSAN Agency as an Ex-Officio member to the Metrolink board of directors; add Metrolink as an Ex-Officio member to the LOSSAN Agency board of directors.

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Alternative management and operations models or structures

Challenge

Passenger rail operations on the LOSSAN corridor are constrained by private freight railroad control over much of the infrastructure used by public operators. Dispatching authority on key corridor segments are retained by the private infrastructure owners, leaving public agencies without direct control over on-time performance and scheduling flexibility.

Recommendations from Working Group Members:

- Led by CalSTA/Caltrans, mandate the establishment a unified corridor negotiation body that can engage the freight railroads on behalf of all LOSSAN corridors agencies collectively with a specific focus on improving on time performance outcomes. A fragmented approach where individual public agencies negotiate independently limits the corridor's leverage and produces inconsistent outcomes. The body could be a specific subcommittee of the SB 1098 Working Group.

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Policy Area C

Changes to state statutes, rules, or funding necessary to improve the quality, performance, usage, management, or frequency of passenger rail services with a focus on streamlining, clarifying, and improving existing processes or procedures.

NOTE: The following recommendations are still in deliberative draft form and are not considered final for the purposes of the SB 1098 report.



Changes to state statutes, rules, or funding

Challenge

There are opportunities to streamline or clarify CEQA requirements as they apply to passenger rail projects, in ways that maintain environmental protection while reducing time and cost.

Recommendations from Working Group Members:

- Establish review deadlines for agency comments and approvals and create a formal conflict resolution protocol when multiple jurisdictions impose conflicting requirements.
- Consider making permanent the CEQA streamlining judicial review for certain transportation-related projects introduced with SB 149 (statutes of 2023) once all ten authorized letters have been used and outcomes have been evaluated.

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Changes to state statutes, rules, or funding

Challenge

Improve the stability and continuity of existing funding sources.

Recommendations from Working Group Members:

- Consistent with approved recommendations in the Transit Transformation Task force:
 - Remove the farebox recovery penalty, which is currently suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but is set to resume beginning in fiscal year 2027.
 - Require the development of new metrics and performance measures that replace the farebox recovery penalty and update these measures on a regular cadence.
 - Update TDA to better align with criteria in State discretionary investment programs
 - Update other formulaic funding programs (i.e., LCTOP, SGR) to align with revisions to TDA reporting requirements and incentives.

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Changes to state statutes, rules, or funding

Challenge

Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) and models do not accurately account for the benefits of intercity passenger rail, which often accrue beyond discreet regions. This means that the Surfliner service, as the second busiest intercity service in the country, isn't consistently captured in SB 375 accounting.

Recommendations from Working Group Members:

- Statewide guidance should be issued to establish a common framework for how passenger rail is described and coordinated in RTPs.
- This may include: expectations for baseline documentation of existing and planned rail services, key corridor characteristics, and coordination with operators and state agencies, as well as clarifying roles when corridors span multiple MPOs.
- Statewide guidance should be issued for how MPOs should reference corridor-level resiliency needs, such as common data sources, definitions, and high-level assessment expectations.
- Aligning guidance with existing state resilience funding programs to help ensure that identified needs can more easily move from planning into project development.

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Open Discussion and Next Steps



Next Steps

1

Next meeting: May 11th, virtual. Discussion of draft report and public comment.

2

Aim for transmittal of report content to governing boards thereafter.

3

Transmit draft report to legislature after board feedback is received.

4

Host robust public comment meetings and small group outreach as needed.

5

Resume regular quarterly cadence for future Working Group meetings, starting in July.