

CALL FOR PROJECTS

2026 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 2026 TIRCP grant cycle will program projects starting with the 2026-27 fiscal year and ending with the 2030-31 fiscal year. The new program cycle will include previously awarded and active projects that have not been fully allocated by the end of the 2025-26 fiscal year, and projects selected from Cycle 8. The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) and SB 1 continue to provide substantial funding available to be programmed toward new projects in the TIRCP funding estimates for this program presented by the Administration in the January 10 Proposed Governor's Budget for FY 2026-27 are based on recent auction results and are intended as an example scenario, not a market forecast. Actual GGRF auction proceeds are variable and subject to market forces, and as such may come in higher or lower than the scenario presented. Funding recipients should keep this uncertainty in mind when planning the potential use of any expected FY 26-27 GGRF funding.

Final Filing Date:

Submission of electronic versions of the project cover letter and Project Narrative Document must be completed by May 18, 2026, 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, 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 5:00p.m. May 14, 2026 (for posted responses in mid-June 2026) 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:** March 2 – 13, 2026

Meeting requests should be submitted to tircpcomments@dot.ca.gov no later than Thursday, February 26, 2026, 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 regard 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.

Supplementary Information:

CalSTA recommends that project applicants carefully read this solicitation and the 2026 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

The TIRCP fund estimate, award fund and the adopted program for TIRCP will be based on anticipated revenue through 2030-31 (as specified in the call for projects, subject to update prior to program adoption). Section 75224(d) of the PRC authorizes CalSTA to enter into a multiyear funding agreement with eligible applicants for any duration. CalSTA may use this authority to program funds for a project that would depend on funds received subsequent to the five-year program, primarily intended for projects that have long construction timelines that extend beyond the 2030-31 fiscal year. The goal of such a plan is to allow a project with construction over multiple years to have a commitment of funds programmed over multiple years in order to enter into necessary contracts for construction.

Senate Bill 9 requires this grant cycle to approve a five-year program of projects starting with State Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 and ending with 2030-31. This solicitation utilizes continuous appropriations from the quarterly Cap-and-Invest, formally Cap-and-Trade, auction proceeds deposited into the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) during the programming period of 2026-27 through 2030-31 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 8 is currently estimated at least \$950 million but could be adjusted based on auction proceeds and changing cash flow requirements of already awarded projects between now and the September 2026 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 2030-31 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 8 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 2026 TIRCP solicitation, available funding in the near term of the programming cycle (FY 2026-27 through FY 2028-29) 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 2029-30. Longer-term projects (FY 2029-30 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 2024 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 priority facilities
3. Bus Rapid Transit
4. Light Rail
5. Streetcar
6. Heavy Rail (commonly referred to as subway or metro)
7. Commuter Bus
8. Commuter Rail
9. Intercity Rail
10. Feeder Bus associated with Intercity Rail
11. Ferry
12. Vanpool
13. Micro Transit
14. 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 TIRCP Cycle 8 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 details, 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 Caltrans 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, 2022, 2023, 2024) 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 8D, 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 10.2 Item 6 of the Guidelines.

Reference CARB's Transportation and Equipment Benefit Assessment Table for the TIRCP Program and specify the particular criteria under which the project qualifies in accordance with the table. The assessment table can be found here:

https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/auction-proceeds/transportation_bat.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 Transportation and Equipment Benefit Assessment Table for the TIRCP Program should be specifically referenced in the narrative:

https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/auction-proceeds/transportation_bat.pdf

G. Employment and Workforce Development and Training Benefits

This section should emphasize the factors described in Section 9, Item 9 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. More information can be found here:
<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/financial-programming/office-of-capital-improvement-programming-ocip>
 - Address the requirements of Section 9, Items 12-15, 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 14 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. 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 January 13, 2026, with the final methodology and tool expected by February 12, 2026. Please reference the California Climate Investments Tools webpage for final versions before submitting your application:

<https://www.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov/tools>