



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Valley Rail Project Receives Major Grant Funding Today by State – Will Fund Series of New Stations and Track Improvements to Increase Connectivity and Frequency of Passenger Rail Service to Sacramento**

**April 26, 2018, Sacramento, CA** – Today the California State Transportation Agency announced a series of grant awards under the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), and selected the Valley Rail Project as a major awardee providing \$500,500,000 to fund a series of new stations and track improvements to increase connectivity and frequency of service to the Sacramento region. The Valley Rail Project is a joint proposal by the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority and the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission to dramatically improve passenger rail service to the Sacramento region with both Amtrak San Joaquins and Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) service.

The Valley Rail project will implement a new transportation vision for serving the Sacramento region with integrated intercity and commuter rail service. The grant funds will help perform track improvements on the existing Union Pacific Railroad Sacramento subdivision freight corridor that runs just east of Interstate 5 to make it usable for passenger service, and build new shared San Joaquins and ACE stations in Lodi, Elk Grove, Sacramento City College, Sacramento Midtown, Old North Sacramento, and Natomas which will include a shuttle connection to the Sacramento International Airport.

“The Sacramento community is very excited about this project,” said Sacramento Vice Mayor Steve Hansen. “Right now we have train tracks that run through midtown without providing any benefit to the local area. By building a new station in midtown we will now tap into that existing infrastructure, bringing customers to our local businesses, giving business travelers access to the Capitol without clogging up our roads, and providing new easy access for our local residents to reach key parts of the Bay Area or destinations throughout the Central Valley.”

“This TIRCP grant will revolutionize the way that the SJRRC can grow by adding new service that would now include Sacramento for ACE and adding additional trains for the Amtrak San Joaquins. The State of California recognizes the important part the SJRRC plays in connecting

the Central Valley, Bay Area, and State Capital, and we are grateful for their support,” says Steve Dresser, Chair, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission

Additional new stations will also be constructed along the ACE and San Joaquins routes as a result of this award: on the San Joaquins line, new stations will be built in Madera and Oakley; on the ACE route, new stations will be built in Ceres, Modesto, Ripon, Manteca, and North Lathrop.

The TIRCP grant program receives significant funding from SB 1, the state’s gas tax program that provides critical resources to improve California’s highways and local streets, bridges, and transit systems – providing broad benefits to every community in California.

“This project would not be possible without SB 1,” said Vito Chiesa, Chair of the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority and Stanislaus County Supervisor. “With this funding, we will be able to move quickly in implementing an incredibly important transportation project that will better connect communities, improve mobility, reduce congestion, improve air quality, and support a good quality of life.”

The Valley Rail project is a transformational, megaregional initiative. Valley rail results in the initiation of San Jose bound commuter service from Sacramento using existing commuter rail equipment (expected by 2020). Four trains from Ceres are included in the proposal, with three heading up to Sacramento (with a transfer to San Jose in Lathrop) and one direct route to San Jose by no later than 2023. Feeder electric bus service will connect to Ceres from Merced. Valley Rail also adds two new San Joaquins round-trips between Fresno and Sacramento, on top of the two round-trips currently available. Total rail service between Stockton and Sacramento will be nine round-trips across all available routes and service providers, including one Sacramento to Stockton only round-trip.

The award also includes funds for ACE to procure zero emission buses to support feeder service between Merced and Ceres, and rolling stock for both corridors to support service increase. The grant is coordinated with 2016 TIRCP investments that are already being implemented in order to expand platforms to accommodate longer 10-car trains to add capacity on the four ACE round trips that currently cross the Altamont Pass.

In addition, Valley Rail funding will help convert the entire fleet including the thruway bus network to renewable diesel fuel, providing greenhouse gas (GHG) benefits across the entire existing (449 track miles) and proposed expanded (119 track miles) San Joaquins and ACE services.

“Improved passenger rail is an integral part of Sacramento and the Valley’s regional transportation network. It is essential to support travel and economic growth in this interconnected economy, and connect communities in ways that are convenient and sustainable,” said Chiesa.

# Project Overview:

