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June 14, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE–9th Floor
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

Thank you for your leadership in implementing the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act; P.L. 114-094). I request your support for the grant applications that the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) recently submitted for the Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) and the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) programs.

The FAST Act created a new Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program, now called FASTLANE, funded nationally at $800 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. Under the FASTLANE Program, Caltrans is permitted to submit no more than three applications for projects statewide this year. Caltrans conducted a statewide outreach effort that included the California State Transportation Agency, the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans' district offices and local Metropolitan Planning Organizations to develop a prioritized list of FASTLANE projects. As a result of this statewide outreach effort, Caltrans submitted applications for the following projects:

Interstate (I)-80/I-680 State Route (SR) 12 Interchange Project: This project reflects Phase I of a collaborative effort between Caltrans and the Solano Transportation Authority to improve the 50 year old Interstate (I)-80, I-680, and State Route (SR) 12 interchange complex near Fairfield. This first phase is comprised of the following components: improvements to the I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange; realignment of I-680; a new interchange at I-680 and Red Top Road; a new road connecting theI-80/Red Top Road Interchange to Business Center Drive; a new interchange at SR 12W and the new Red Top Road alignment; a modified interchange at I-80 and Green Valley Road; new I-80 bridges over Green Valley Creek; widening of I-80, a new lane on eastbound SR 12E; and widening of the SR 12E bridge over Ledgewood Creek. The proposed improvements are designed to reduce congestion, accommodate anticipated increases in traffic demand, and address safety concerns, while preserving the existing network of interchanges serving local land uses.

Rosecrans/Marquardt Avenue Grade Separation Project: This project will provide a grade separation at the intersection of Rosecrans and Marquardt Avenues from the BNSF Railway mainline tracks located in Santa Fe Springs in Los Angeles County. The Rosecrans/Marquardt project will address nationally and regionally significant safety challenges: The California Public Utilities Commission considers the Rosecrans/Marquardt intersection to be the highest priority railroad grade crossing in California, as rated in the 2016-2017 California Grade Separation Program priority list, which is based on safety-related and other measures. The Rosecrans/Marquardt project will also address nationally and regionally significant freight and passenger rail operational capacity issues. This single project is the last grade separation project required in order to complete 15 miles of third main track between Los Angeles and Fullerton–the Triple Track Project–a comprehensive $400 million project to grade separate six at-grade crossings between the cities of Commerce (Los Angeles County) and Fullerton (Orange County). Because this crossing is located along the second busiest intercity passenger rail corridor in the nation and connects the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach with distant domestic and international destinations, this efficiency-increasing project will benefit many partners, users, and communities.

SR 11 Enrico Fermi to Otay Mesa East Port of Entry Improvements Project: This project will construct the final segment of the new SR 11 freeway system to the Otay Mesa East Port of Entry at the California-Mexico border and two freeway to freeway connectors (Southbound SR 125 to Southbound SR 905 and Southbound SR 125 to Eastbound SR 11), providing critical linkages between San Diego's primary freight corridors in the border region. This joint project with the San Diego Association of Governments will facilitate increased efficiency and reliability of both freight and passenger movement by reducing delays at the border and increase competitiveness, generating national and regional economic benefits.

Likewise, under the TIGER Program, funded nationally at $500 million in FY 2016, Caltrans is permitted to submit no more than three applications for projects statewide this year. Caltrans district offices developed a geographically diverse, multimodal prioritized list of TIGER projects including:

SR 116/121 Intersection Improvements Project: The SR 116/121 intersection, in its existing condition with a four-way stop, has become unable to function efficiently because of an increased volume of traffic on both highways. The intersection experiences congestion and extended three hour peak delays due to high traffic volume. Additionally, the most recent three-year accident data available shows a higher than average total accident rate on SR 121 at the project location as compared to the statewide average. The design of the existing intersection does not adequately accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access. This project will reconfigure the SR 116/121 intersection by adding a roundabout, thereby improving safety by reducing the number and severity of vehicle crashes; and it will also add new facilities to enhance bicycle and pedestrian access.

SR 156 Improvement Project: This project is located in San Benito County, a small rural community that serves as a crossroads for large scale interregional mobility for California's most productive farm industries. The project proposes to convert five miles of a two-lane conventional highway to a four-lane divided expressway while retaining the existing SR 156 as a two-lane frontage road. This project is one component of a long-term corridor-wide vision to improve interregional freight mobility and provide multi-modal transportation choices to improve the quality of life for the community. In the short-term, the project will enhance local connectivity and access to adjacent active farming operations and vastly improve interregional travel. In the long-term, this enables the rural communities of San Benito County, the cities of San Juan Bautista and Hollister, and the local transit agencies to realize their long-term unified goals of constructing a five-mile multimodal trail, improving local fixed-transit services and expanding county transit express services.

I-5 Union Pacific Redding to Anderson Six-Lane Project and Multi-Modal Food Hub: This project will replace the 50-year-old, functionally obsolete, I-5 structure, South Anderson Overhead, at the Union Pacific Railroad in Anderson, California while widening I-5 from four to six lanes in the median for 7.9 miles from Redding to Anderson. While traffic at the South Anderson Overhead structure consisting of commuters, interregional travelers, local and long-haul trucks, rail freight, and passenger rail is projected to increase across all travel modes by approximately 50 percent in 20 years, efficient traffic operations on this portion of I-5 are currently diminished by five existing interchanges that are in close proximity to each other. These improvements will open up other transportation investments in the area, serving an adjacent, recently annexed brownfield area that is slated for redevelopment.

For additional information about these projects, please contact Giles Giovinazzi, Federal Transportation Liaison, Caltrans, and the California High-Speed Rail Authority at giles.giovinazzi@dot.ca.gov or (916) 214–6144. To view the list of other California FASTLANE and TIGER projects that Caltrans is supporting, or for other information regarding Caltrans' efforts to implement the FAST Act, please visit the Caltrans FAST Act/MAP-21 Implementation Website at:
http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/map21/map21_implementation.htm

Thank you again for your leadership, and I urge you to support these critical projects.

Sincerely,

MALCOLM DOUGHERTY
Director