

# Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: January 25-26, 2024

From: TANISHA TAYLOR, Executive Director

Reference Number: 4.3, Information

Prepared By: Matthew Yosgott  
Deputy Director

Published Date: January 12, 2024

Subject: Presentation on the Interstate 15 Corridor in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties

## **Summary:**

At the December 6-7, 2023 Commission meeting, staff were directed to report back on multi-modal projects being delivered along the Interstate 15 Corridor in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

Representatives from the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, including Executive Director Ray Wolfe, will provide a presentation outlining the managed lane network along the Interstate 15 Corridor in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, multi-modal projects that are being delivered along that corridor, and the importance of allocating funds for the Interstate 15 Corridor Auxiliary Lanes and Express Lanes Project.

## **Background:**

The Interstate 15 Corridor Auxiliary Lanes and Express Lanes Project is programmed with \$202,567,000 in the 2020 Trade Corridor Enhancement Program, the Local Partnership Formulaic Program, and the State Transportation Improvement Program. The project has completed environmental clearances, as well as all pre-construction phases, and is ready to go to construction.

At the December 6-7, 2023 Commission meeting, Commission staff recommended approval of a multi-funded allocation of \$202,567,000 for the construction phase of the project. While the Commission's allocation vote resulted in a tie, Commissioners requested staff to agendaize the allocation request at a future Commission meeting and provide additional project information. The allocation request is under Reference 2.5s.(5), following this item. Attachment A includes several letters received from California legislators, regional partners, and other stakeholders regarding the allocation.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Comment Letters

STATE CAPITOL  
P.O. BOX 942849  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0058  
(916) 319-2058  
FAX (916) 319-2158

DISTRICT OFFICE  
391 N MAIN STREET, SUITE 210  
CORONA, CA 92878  
(951) 371-6860  
FAX (951) 734-4160

E-MAIL  
Assemblymember.Cervantes@assembly.ca.gov



**SABRINA CERVANTES**  
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, 58<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT  
CHAIR, CALIFORNIA LATINO LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

COMMITTEES  
AGING AND LONG-TERM CARE  
BANKING AND FINANCE  
ELECTIONS  
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION  
RULES

SELECT COMMITTEES  
CHAIR: CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION  
AND BUILDING A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY  
WORKFORCE

January 3, 2024

Lee Ann Eager  
Chair, California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: I-15 Express Lanes & Freight Improvement Project**

Chair Eager:

As a member of the Legislature who represents a portion of San Bernardino County, I write to express my disappointment and frustration with the actions taken by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) at its December 7 meeting regarding item number 99.

The item, which would provide for the allocation of funds for the I-15 Express Lanes & Freight Improvement Project (the Project) in San Bernardino County, was pulled from a group of CTC staff-recommended approvals by Commissioner Joseph Lyou in order to debate the merits of the Project. The Commissioner's request came despite the fact that the merits of the Project have already been well-established as a result of the CTC project evaluation process.

Ultimately, this last minute action resulted in the item failing passage by a vote of 3-3. The implications of failing to approve this allocation at such a late stage could create a lack of confidence that CTC can remain focused on its role of "programming and allocating funds for the construction of highway, passenger rail, transit and active transportation improvements throughout California," as is stated on CTC's website. Indeed, the credibility of CTC is at stake, and the implications of that fact extend well beyond the Project.

The San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) received a Senate Bill 1 Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP) grant award in December 2020. This award was based on a competitive process that recognized the importance of continuing to build the Southern California multimodal express and managed lane network by extending the existing express lanes on I-15 in Riverside County by an additional 11 miles northward. SBCTA combined this \$118.7 million in SB 1 TCEP funds with \$83.8 million of the SBCTA formula share of SB 1 Local Partnership Program (LPP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, which were also previously

approved by CTC. SBCTA has spent nearly \$26 million in Measure I funds and countless staff hours since these programming actions involve multiple agreements, permits, and environmental mitigation credits to prepare the Project for construction.

Nearly a decade of design, planning, and partnership between SBCTA, the California Department of Transportation, the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and local jurisdictions have gone into advancing the I-15 Express Lanes & Freight Improvement Project. The planned regional network of express and managed lanes must operate as an integrated system to improve air quality and facilitate goods movement throughout Southern California.

With the innovative transit projects being delivered in San Bernardino County, it is troubling that Commissioner Lyou suggested that many other SBCTA projects are irrelevant to the I-15 Express Lanes & Freight Improvement Project because they were “not committed to in terms of the environmental document.” Those comments were, unfortunately, dismissive of the incredible work that is still in progress to meet the unique transportation, air quality, and economic conditions in the Inland Empire.

I urge the Commission to, at its January meeting, approve the I-15 Express Lanes & Freight Improvement Project item as originally committed to by CTC on December 2, 2020. In addition, I respectfully request a review of the administrative process that award recipients are subjected to by the Commission. Unfortunately, that process appears to be inefficient, slows the disbursement of already-approved funds, and can create chaos and uncertainty for recipient agencies like that created by the December 7 vote on the Project.

If you have any questions or concerns about this letter, please contact my Legislative Director, Paco Torres, at [Paco.Torres@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Paco.Torres@asm.ca.gov) or at 916-319-2058.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sabrina Cervantes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SABRINA CERVANTES  
Assemblymember, 58<sup>th</sup> District

CAPITOL OFFICE  
1021 O STREET  
SUITE 7510  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
TEL (916) 651-4031  
FAX (916) 651-4931

DISTRICT OFFICES  
3737 MAIN STREET  
SUITE 104  
RIVERSIDE, CA 92501  
TEL (951) 680-6750  
FAX (951) 680-6757

8353 SIERRA AVENUE  
SUITE 142  
FONTANA, CA 92335  
TEL (909) 574-4120  
FAX (909) 574-4122

# California State Senate

SENATOR  
RICHARD D. ROTH  
THIRTY-FIRST DISTRICT



SENATOR.ROTH@SENATE.CA.GOV

January 4, 2023

Lee Ann Eager, Chair  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## RE: SUPPORT FOR ALLOCATION OF FUNDING I-15 EXPRESS LANES AND FREIGHT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IN SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Dear Ms. Eager:

I was very disappointed to learn that the California Transportation Commission ("Commission") failed to approve an allocation of construction funding for the I-15 Express Lanes and Freight Improvement Project in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties – a construction project that was originally approved on December 2, 2020 ("Project"). I write to express my concern over that process and the result.

Specifically, it is my understanding that on December 7, 2023, the Commission was slated to consider and approve a \$200 million allocation of construction funding for the previously approved Project. It is my further understanding that the project had cleared the environmental process, was programmed into the State Transportation Improvement Program, was already receiving funding from State and Federal sources, and had been approved for future funding consideration by the Commission at its October 2023 meeting. Unfortunately, one or more of the commissioners still present at the hearing apparently pulled the item from the list of funding allocations to be approved in order to debate the merits of the entire project, specifically on the basis that the Project will result in additional "vehicle miles traveled" – "...This project adds 31.9 new lane miles to I-15 in a very congested corridor where there are a lot of problems..."). The continued funding allocation request subsequently failed on a 3-3 vote, a policy discussion, and a vote that, from my perspective, illustrates a dramatic conflict in our State's housing, economic development, climate, and transportation policies.

For decades, State policies have, at least in part, encouraged the recruitment of new businesses and the expansion of existing business operations in our urban/coastal areas through grants, subsidies, and tax credits, without imposing a requirement that those areas have adequate worker housing available to house the new workers or a requirement that such housing be built as a condition of the State investment. As a consequence, Inland Southern California has been subjected to periodic increases in its Regional Housing Needs Assessment ("RHNA") allocation, to, in effect, provide worker housing for the urban/coastal areas of our State. For example, the most recent Southern California Association of Governments 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA Allocation Plan allocates a total of 167,351 additional housing units to Riverside County (including a total of 18,458 units to the City of Riverside) and a total of 138,110 to San Bernardino County (including a total of 8,123 units to the City of San Bernardino). This represents 15% of the State's total 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA allocation goal of 2.1 million units (the population share of Inland Southern California is 11% of the State). 126,038 units out of the total 305,461 units for our region represent the very low-income and low-income unit categories.

The impact of these economic development and housing policies has resulted in large numbers of workers having long commutes from home to work between Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and the coastal areas on a daily basis. In that regard, a recent analysis of census data by the Los Angeles Times states: "...From 2016 to 2020 there were 60,000 more commuters driving from Riverside County to Orange County each day than those going in the opposite direction, a difference that has grown steadily since 2005... In the same period, 24,000 more workers commuted daily from San Bernardino to Orange County than those going in the opposite direction, a gap that has also grown since 2005..." And, those most impacted by this transportation dilemma are our low-income, disadvantaged households.

Coupled with these long (often described as "hellish") commutes is the fact that our region has historically suffered from an acute underfunding of critically needed transportation infrastructure, a situation that has only recently begun to be remedied. In that regard, the rail access between Inland Southern California and the urban/coastal areas is limited (certainly from Riverside County) and the transit connectivity for home-to-work commutes is virtually non-existent. Obviously, bike access to job locations in Los Angeles and Orange County from Inland Southern California is not an option, at least at present.

At the same time as our State policies and the cost of housing drive workers further and further from their jobs (and increase the length of the average commute in terms of vehicle miles traveled), our current State transportation policies certainly discourage if not prohibit the approval of new transportation projects that increase vehicle miles traveled. The dilemma – how to efficiently and effectively move Inland Southern California residents (and my constituents) from home to job. Frankly, our State policies are not coordinated and for that reason, do not work. It's great to talk about "induced traffic", "hot spots analysis" and "alternative transportation" projects, but without actually advocating for, and providing "real-time" substantial and immediate funding for alternative modes of transportation that will efficiently and effectively move Inland Southern California residents from home to job (including the "last mile"), all we are doing by continuing the State's VMT policy is imposing pain on Inland Southern California commuters without providing a viable alternative. This is simply unacceptable. If I have learned anything during my 11 years in the Legislature, it's that "one size fits all" does not work as a solution for the myriad of issues we face in California....and transportation is no exception.

For the reasons set forth above, I respectfully urge the Commission to reverse its December 7, 2023 decision and vote to fund the previously approved allocation for the Project. If you have any questions, I would be pleased to discuss these issues further with you at your convenience.

Sincerely,



**RICHARD D. ROTH**  
Senator, 31<sup>st</sup> District

Cc: Governor Gavin Newsom



# California Legislature

January 4, 2024

Lee Ann Eager, Chair  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Eager,

As Members of the Legislature representing San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, we write today to express our disappointment and frustration with the actions taken related to Item Number 99 at the December 7, 2023 California Transportation Commission (CTC) meeting.

The item, slated for the allocation of funds for the I-15 Express Lanes & Freight Improvement Project in San Bernardino County, was pulled from a grouping of CTC staff-recommended approvals by Commissioner Lyou for a debate on the merits of the project, when its merits had already been well-established through the CTC project evaluation process. It was a debate based on revisiting policy and not carrying out the normally expected process of allocation.

Ultimately, this eleventh hour action resulted in the item failing to pass by a 3-3 vote. We encourage the CTC to take the opportunity to rectify this action during your upcoming January meeting, safeguarding both your mission and credibility for the future.

Case in point, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) received a Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP) grant award in December 2020 based on a competitive process that recognized the importance of continuing to build the Southern California multimodal express/managed lane network by extending the existing express lanes on I-15 in Riverside County by an additional 11 miles northward. SBCTA coupled this \$118.7 million in SB 1 TCEP

Chair Eager  
January 4, 2024  
Page 2

funds with \$83.8 million of the SBCTA formula share of SB 1 Local Partnership Program (LPP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, also previously approved for programming by the CTC. SBCTA has spent nearly \$26 million in Measure I funds and countless staff hours since these programming actions securing multiple agreements, permits, and environmental mitigation credits to ready the project for construction.

If this can all be undone through a vote by the CTC years after being first approved for consideration of future funding in March 2019, and four subsequent programming approvals by the Commission, one of those being a competitive award, it would apply extreme risk to the local agencies seeking to advance these much needed projects to a status of readiness for our constituents. Couple that risk with the inevitable delays caused by that uncertainty and the Commission starts to devalue the award due to inflation and other time-related costs.

A great deal of thought, planning, and design has gone into this project, representing nearly a decade of partnership among SBCTA and the California Department of Transportation, the Riverside County Transportation Commission, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and local jurisdictions in the corridor. The planned regional network of express/managed lanes needs to operate as an integrated system to provide incentives for transit, support shared rides, improve air quality, and help goods move more efficiently and safely. This project is part of a multimodal vision to move people and freight more efficiently in the San Bernardino Valley.

The vision includes: improvements on Metrolink, the zero-emission West Valley Connector Bus Rapid Transit system, a robust vanpool/rideshare program, bicycle/pedestrian improvements to enhance access to transit stations, and the most recent zero-emission Brightline High Speed Rail System to Las Vegas that ties into the regional rail network in Rancho Cucamonga. And to take it even one step further, SBCTA has also incorporated a clean truck element that is focused on accelerating the transition to zero-emission trucks.

With all of the innovative transit projects being delivered in San Bernardino County, it troubles us that Commissioner Lyou suggested that the projects noted above were irrelevant to this project because they were “not committed to in terms of the environmental document”. Those comments were uninformed and dismissive of the incredible work that is in progress to meet this region’s unique challenges. For example, we are faced with balancing the needs of our growing residential community, who seek a more affordable quality of life, with our role in building a more efficient supply chain to keep the state economically competitive, as described in the California Sustainable Freight Action Plan (CSFAP) and other state plans.

Chair Eager  
January 4, 2024  
Page 3

In closing, we urge the Commission to approve item as originally committed to on December 2, 2020 at your January, 2024 meeting. In addition, we respectfully request a review of the administrative process that subjects the award recipients to the risk noted above. That process appears inefficient, slows the movement of funds and allows for the type of uncertainty created by the vote on the I-15 project last week.

Sincerely,



---

Greg Wallis  
Assemblymember, 47th District



---

Tom Lackey  
Assemblymember, 34th District



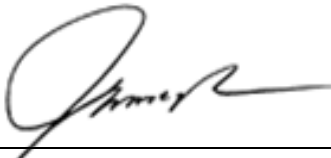
---

Eduardo Garcia  
Assemblymember, 36th District



---

Juan Carrillo  
Assemblymember, 39th District



---

James C. Ramos  
Assemblymember, 45th District



---

Eloise Gómez Reyes  
Assemblymember, 50th District



---

Freddie Rodriguez  
Assemblymember, 53rd District



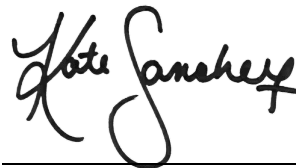
---

Philip Chen  
Assemblymember, 59th District



---

Bill Essayli  
Assemblymember, 63rd District



---

Kate A. Sanchez  
Assemblymember, 71st District



Chair Eager  
January 4, 2024  
Page 4



---

Scott Wilk  
Senator, 21st District



---

Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh  
Senator, 23rd District



---

Kelly Seyarto  
Senator, 32nd District

- cc. Members, California Transportation Committee  
Hon. Toni Atkins, President Pro Tempore, California State Senate  
Hon. Robert Rivas, Speaker, California State Assembly  
Hon. Lena Gonzalez, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee  
Hon. Lori Wilson, Chair, Assembly Transportation Committee  
Hon. Dawn Rowe, Chair, San Bernardino County Transportation Authority



4080 Lemon St. 3rd Fl. Riverside, CA 92501  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 12008 Riverside, CA 92502-2208  
951.787.7141 • rctc.org

January 5, 2024

Lee Ann Eager, Chair  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Support for Reconsideration of Allocation of SB 1 TCEP/SB 1 LPP (Formulaic)/STIP to the Interstate 15 Corridor Freight Improvement Project: Auxiliary Lanes and Express Lanes – Construction Project (PPNO 0167M)**

Dear Chair Eager:

On behalf of the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), I write to strongly urge the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to reconsider the Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) recommendation to allocate of \$202,567,000 to the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) for the Interstate 15 Express Lanes & Freight Improvement Project (Project). RCTC is fully supportive of the project, which would extend our region's express lanes network with a direct connection to RCTC's 15 Express Lanes. RCTC was disappointed that the CTC did not approve Item #99 at their December 7 meeting and is concerned about the negative precedent that could be set by the CTC renegeing on previously approved funds.

As you know, SBCTA followed a competitive process and received their Senate Bill (SB) 1-funded Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP) grant award in December 2020. SBCTA supplemented this \$118.7 million TCEP award with \$83.8 million of their formula share of SB 1-funded Local Partnership Program (LPP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, both of which were also previously approved for programming by the CTC. SBCTA has leveraged nearly \$26 million in Measure I funds and subsequently secured multiple agreements, permits, and environmental mitigation credits to ready the project for construction. This includes an approved, legally compliant California Environmental Quality Act document.

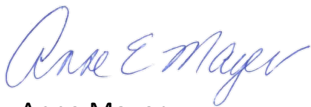
From SB 1 to Measure I in San Bernardino County and Measure A in Riverside County, the voters have entrusted our agencies to partner in delivering mobility solutions. For decades, the CTC and the State of California have relied on self-help counties such as San Bernardino and Riverside to advance the state's transportation system; we have done this through a partnership built on trust. Action by CTC Commissioners to reverse course nearly five years after SBCTA received its first CTC approvals in March 2019 threatens our collective ability to meet our legal mandates and maintain the confidence of the residents we serve. If the December 7, 2023 vote on Item #99 is not rectified, the diverse communities of the Inland Empire will be hit hardest.

Lee Ann Eagar, Chair  
January 5, 2024  
Page 2

Given the continued concentration of jobs centers in coastal areas, the exponential growth of goods movement through our region, and our region's vast commitments in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), Riverside County residents do not have the luxury to wait for mobility solutions. Our projects are directly linked to their ability to make a living, pursue an education, and spend quality time with their families.

RCTC believes it is imperative for the credibility of the CTC and all of your project partners, as well as the faith of Californians to approve the Project. Should you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [amayer@rctc.org](mailto:amayer@rctc.org) or (951) 787-7141.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anne E. Mayer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anne Mayer  
Executive Director

January 8, 2024

The Honorable Lee Ann Eager  
Chair, California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Support for I-15 Express Lanes and Freight Improvement Project**

Dear Chair Eager,

Transportation California and our undersigned member organizations and associations, representing the transportation industry and workforce that builds, repairs, and maintains California's statewide multimodal transportation system, write in support of the I-15 Express Lanes and Freight Improvement Project in San Bernardino County and urge the California Transportation Commission's allocation of funds for this project at its January 2024 meeting.

Interstate 15 is an economic lifeline connecting San Bernardino County and the nation. Daily vehicle traffic averages about 223,000 and this number is expected to increase significantly during the coming decades as the population and economic standing of the High Desert continues to grow. To address these challenges, the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) will provide motorists a choice when traveling along I-15. When completed, the I-15 Corridor Project will add one to two Express Lanes in each direction, thereby increasing freight throughput and travel time reliability, increasing safety, reducing negative air quality impacts, and improving overall quality of life in the region. The I-15 Corridor Project is part of the region's California Air Resources Board approved sustainable communities strategy that meets the state's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

This project is part of a multimodal vision to move people and freight more efficiently in the region. In addition to the I-15 Corridor Project, SBCTA's vision includes improvements to Metrolink, the zero-emission West Valley Connector Bus Rapid Transit system, a robust vanpool/rideshare program, bicycle/pedestrian improvements to enhance access to transit stations, and the most recent zero-emission Brightline High Speed Rail System to Las Vegas that ties into the regional rail network in

Rancho Cucamonga. SBCTA has also incorporated a clean truck element that is focused on accelerating the transition to zero-emission trucks.

SBCTA received a Trade Corridor Enhancement Program grant award in December 2020 based on a competitive process that considered many factors including freight system throughput and reliability, the safety of the traveling public, the inclusion of multimodal strategies, air quality impacts, and jobs and economic growth, just to name a few. The I-15 Corridor Project was one of 35 highly competitive projects to be selected for an award – demonstrating that it not only met TCEP goals and objectives but also scored well in terms of delivering significant other positive community benefits. Moreover, SBCTA is combining its TCEP award with \$83.8 million from the formula share of the Local Partnership Program and State Transportation Improvement Program funds. SBCTA has spent nearly \$26 million in Measure I funds and countless staff hours since these programming actions securing multiple agreements, permits, and environmental mitigation credits to ready the project for construction.

The statewide transportation construction industry is extremely concerned that despite having gone through rigorous evaluation by CTC staff and meeting every state and federal statutory and regulatory requirement, allocation of TCEP funds was not approved during the December meeting. The lack of support for a previously approved project at this late-stage casts doubt on the CTC allocation process and could engender significant skepticism of the Commission’s work. Multimodal transportation projects take years to plan, develop, and build. Projects need to be able to rely on timely approval of funds to maintain trust with taxpayers and motorists, mitigate project delays, and deliver projects in a cost-effective manner.

For these reasons, we urge the Commission to approve allocation of funds at the January 2024 meeting – keeping faith with its past programming decisions and to its regional partners that are building the state’s multimodal future.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mark Watts  
Transportation California

Michael Quigley  
California Alliance for Jobs

Matt Cremins  
International Union of Operating Engineers

Emily Cohen  
United Contractors

Ron Rowlett  
Nor Cal Carpenters Union

John Gasparo  
Southern California Contractors Association

James Thuerwachter  
California State Council of Laborers

Peter Tateishi  
Associated General Contractors of California

Jon Switalski  
Rebuild SoCal Partnership

Brad Diede  
American Council of Engineering Companies,  
California

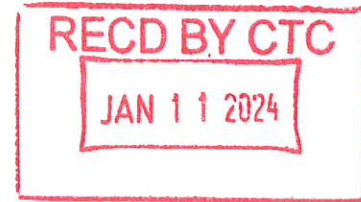
Robert Dugan  
California Construction and Industrial Materials  
Association

Russell Snyder  
California Asphalt Pavement Association

Matthew Conarro  
Western Regional Association for Pavement  
Preservation

January 5, 2024

Ms. Lee Ann Eager, Chair  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814



Dear Chair Eager:

As you are aware, Inland Action is a non-profit, non-partisan corporation of spirited leaders who are engaged in issues and initiatives that help advance the economic well-being of the Inland Empire. Since 1962, we have actively monitored projects and programs which serve to make our region move and improve for the benefit of our growing communities. The actions taken related to Item #99 at the December 7<sup>th</sup> California Transportation Commission (CTC) meeting neither move nor improve our transportation systems, and we are deeply concerned that a project of this level of regional significance could be jeopardized, particularly after so much progress, investment, and effort has been made.

The item, slated for the allocation of funds for the I-15 Express Lanes & Freight Improvement Project in San Bernardino County, was pulled from a grouping of CTC staff-recommended approvals by Commissioner Lyou for a debate on the merits of the project, when its merits had already been well-established through the CTC project evaluation process. It was a debate based on revisiting policy and not carrying out the established process of allocation.

Ultimately, this late and untimely action resulted in the item failing to pass by a 3-3 vote. As an organization that supports regional projects in self-help counties, the CTC's established role of programming and allocating funds is paramount to the effective delivery of regional transportation infrastructure. Decisions like this undermine the ability of our transportation agencies to perform while adding undue strain and cost to our transportation systems.

San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) received a Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP) grant award in December 2020 based on a competitive process that recognized the importance of continuing to build the Southern California multimodal express/managed lane network by extending the existing express lanes on I-15 in Riverside County by an additional 11 miles northward. SBCTA coupled this \$118.7 million in SB 1 TCEP funds with \$83.8 million of the SBCTA formula share of SB 1 Local Partnership Program (LPP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, also previously approved for programming by the CTC. SBCTA has spent nearly \$26 million in Measure I local sales tax funds and countless staff hours since these programming actions securing multiple agreements, permits, and environmental mitigation credits to ready the project for construction.

A great deal of planning, collaboration, and design has gone into this project, representing nearly a decade of partnership among SBCTA and the California Department of Transportation, the Riverside County Transportation Commission, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and local jurisdictions in the corridor. The regional network of express/managed lanes needs to operate as an integrated system to provide incentives for transit, support shared rides, improve air quality, and help goods move more efficiently and safely. This project is part of a multimodal vision to move people and freight more efficiently in the San Bernardino Valley.

Having delivered improvements on Metrolink, the zero-emission West Valley Connector Bus Rapid Transit system, a robust vanpool/rideshare program, bicycle/pedestrian improvements to enhance access to transit stations, the most recent zero-emission Brightline High Speed Rail System to Las Vegas that ties into the regional rail network in Rancho Cucamonga, and incorporating a clean truck element focused on accelerating the transition to zero-emission trucks, SBCTA is an agency that has proven that it can collaborate and innovate. It is working to continue to do so with this project.

Since 2019, SBCTA has followed the appropriate processes to advance this project and received multiple programming approvals including a competitive award. In the words of William E. Leonard, a former CTC Commissioner and one of Inland Action's founding members, "Wait broke the bridge..." At a time when every transportation dollar matters, we strongly urge immediate reconsideration and approval of this important project. Corridors that don't connect will never move our region or our State forward.

With all the innovative transit projects being delivered in San Bernardino County, it troubles us that Commissioner Lyou suggested that the projects noted above were irrelevant to this project because they were "not committed to in terms of the environmental document." Those comments seem to represent a prescribed agenda and were uninformed and dismissive of the incredible work that is in progress to meet this region's unique challenges. We are faced with balancing the needs of our growing residential community, who seek a more affordable quality of life, with our role in building a more efficient supply chain to keep the State economically competitive, as described in the California Sustainable Freight Action Plan (CSFAP) and other State plans.

In closing, SBCTA is preparing for the item to be reconsidered at the Commission's next meeting in January 2024, and we expect it to be approved as committed to on December 2, 2020. In addition, we respectfully request a review of the administrative process that subjects the award recipients to the risk to which this project has been subjected. That process appears inefficient, slows the movement of funds and project delivery, and allows for the type of uncertainty created by the vote on the I-15 project.

Inland Action seeks the Commission's careful consideration and swift approval of fund allocation for this critical system enhancement project which will serve local, regional, and interstate needs.

Sincerely,



Carole Beswick  
CEO