

MEMORANDUM

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CTC Meeting: August 20-21, 2026

From: STEVEN KECK, Chief Financial Officer

Reference Number: 2.8c.(8), Action Item

Prepared By: Jeffrey Wyly, Chief (Acting)
Division of Mass Transportation

Subject: **REQUEST TO EXTEND THE PERIOD OF PROJECT COMPLETION FOR A
STATE-ADMINISTERED SHORT-LINE RAILROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
PROJECT, PER SLRIP GUIDELINES
WAIVER 26-180**

ISSUE:

Should the California Transportation Commission (Commission) extend the period of project completion for the State-Administered Short-Line Railroad Improvement Program (SLRIP) SMART Freight Rail State of Good Repair Project (PPNO TC129A), in Sonoma County, for the time period as identified in the attachment?

RECOMMENDATION:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) recommends that the Commission extend the period of project completion for the State-Administered SLRIP SMART Freight Rail State of Good Repair Project (PPNO TC129A), in Sonoma County, for the time period as identified in the attachment.

BACKGROUND:

In June 2023, the Commission allocated \$1,250,000 in SLRIP funds for the Construction phase of the State-Administered SMART Freight Rail State of Good Repair Project (PPNO TC129A). The project was awarded in November 2023. In accordance with SLRIP Guidelines (Guidelines), the deadline to complete the Construction Contract Acceptance for projects awarded in November 2023 is November 30, 2026. The Department is requesting additional time to complete the project. The attachment provides the project details and the explanation for the delay.

Guidelines stipulate that the agency implementing a project may request a time extension if the project will not be completed within 36 months of project award. The Commission may approve a waiver to the timely use of funds deadline, one time only, for up to 20 months.

Attachment

**Time Extension/Waiver – Project Completion
Short-Line Railroad Improvement Program**

Project Number: 1
Applicant: Department of Transportation
County: Sonoma
District: 75
PPNO: TC129A
Allocation Amount: \$1,250,000
Phase: Construction
Allocation Date: 06/29/2023
Allocation Resolution: SRP-22-01
Award Date: 11/09/2023
Number of Months Requested: 20 Months
Extended Deadline: 07/31/2028
Department Recommendation: Support

SMART Freight Rail State of Good Repair Project

The Department requests a 20-month time extension to complete the Construction phase of the SMART Freight Rail State of Good Repair Project. Extraordinary delays have impacted on the completion schedule for the project.

Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) is the public agency owner and provider of federally regulated freight rail service along 24 miles of in-service, largely unmodernized rail along its Brazos Branch, as well as the owner of 21 miles of out-of-service, unimproved rail north of Healdsburg to the Sonoma-Mendocino county line. The project consists of railroad tie replacement, railroad crossings repair, timber bridge repair, and capital maintenance of the Right of Way.

SMART experienced delays in completing the project due to extreme weather impacts to the railroad and bridge equipment failures during 2024-2026 requiring repurposing of SMART freight staff to cover the emergency work, which took them away from completion of the contract's scope of work.

The winter seasons have been devastating for the rail line the past few years, particularly because of the railroad's wetland location, thus the need to repurpose staff towards solving weather-related track washouts, etc., resulting in the delay of project completion.

Based upon the weather forecasts and SMART's season experience since taking over the public short line freight railroad responsibility, there is every reason to expect this upcoming winter to be a fierce one also. If that comes to fruition, SMART will again be forced to address immediate track needs due to weather impacts as it has in the past two winters,

further delaying the completion of the project. Additionally, the extended winter weather impacts will likely cause a later start to the regular summer work windows. SMART will need the full dry season to complete the project.

Therefore, the Department is requesting a 20-month time extension for the period of project completion from November 30, 2026 to July 31, 2028.