

12. ADVOCACY

Major improvement or expansion of the San Joaquins will require additional funding. To increase the frequency of the San Joaquins and improve travel times, a significant investment in the existing freight infrastructure will be required. A key to funding the future growth of the San Joaquins is developing a much stronger political base of support. One of the primary advantages of a regional governance, or Joint Powers Authority (JPA) model, is the ability for active advocacy at the local, regional, state, and federal levels. Where state agencies are often limited in terms of advocacy, SJJPA can bring the full collective power of the Member Agencies and communities served by the San Joaquins in support of the service.

SJJPA and affiliated agencies have been working hard to advocate for increased funding, improvements, and support for the CIPRP. SJJPA has already elevated the improvement of the San Joaquins as an issue of importance. Through the SJJPA's efforts, more than 60 agencies and organizations throughout the San Joaquins Corridor have already signed on as supporters for the San Joaquins and the CIPRP – and this number will continue to grow. In addition, SJJPA has gotten both the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley and the San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council to adopt improving the San Joaquins as a key priority for the San Joaquin Valley.

A key role of SJJPA is its active participation in the "CIPRP Leadership Coalition." SJJPA, CCJPA, LOSSAN JPA, the Coast Rail Coordinating Council, and the Coachella Valley – San Geronio Pass Rail Corridor Service comprise the CIPRP Leadership Coalition. This coalition works together for the purpose of jointly advocating for the improvement of the CIPRP. Staff from each agency participates in bi-weekly conference calls, with in-person meetings held with the Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and staff quarterly. The coalition organizes annual lobby days in Sacramento, and an annual Rail Advocacy Forum in support of the CIPRP. The coalition also works in coordination to educate elected officials, agencies, organizations, and the public about the CIPRP in an effort to gain widespread support for the program. The CIPRP Leadership Coalition worked with Members of the Legislature to organize a "Select Committee" for rail support in the CA Senate and in the CA Assembly in 2015. The purpose of the Select Committee is best described in the Mission Statement below, which was developed by the CIPRP Leadership Coalition with input from Members of the Legislature:

"California's State Legislative Passenger Select Committee promotes policies to ensure a premier, customer-focused conventional rail system that successfully moves people and goods in a manner that is cost-efficient, maximizes public benefits, and protects the environment. The Select Committee works to engage decision makers and to protect and grow the investment in the state's conventional passenger rail network that will ensure its continued utilization and success. The Select Committee will work to increase state funding to improve and expand the program and to leverage these investments by advocating for additional federal rail funds."

The CIPRP Leadership Coalition has also developed statewide "California Passenger Rail Program Guiding Principles" (Guiding Principles) that have been adopted by the SJJPA, the CCJPA, the LOSSAN JPA, the Coast Rail Coordination Council as well as several other agencies and organizations. These Guiding Principles are being used for joint efforts to gain support for rail programs and improvements at the local, regional, state, and federal levels. The Guiding Principles are:

- *Protect and enhance California's investment in the existing successful passenger rail system, including sustainable and recurring sources of funds at both the state and federal levels.*

Specifically support:

- A new recurring state source of capital, equipment, and operations funds to cover the existing passenger rail corridors and emerging corridors throughout the state.*
- A new program for state of good repair improvements to existing rail corridors that facilitate the movement of passengers and freight.*
- Allocations of State Propositions 1A, 1B, and other current and future funds to transit services, including commuter and state-supported intercity passenger rail, that connect with the state's planned high-speed train system.*
- "High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR)" programs title in federal surface transportation reauthorization, funded by other than the current Highway Trust Fund revenues.*
- The American Public Transportation Association's (APTA's) recommendation for*

\$50 billion in federal funding over an initial six year period for the development of a nationwide HSIPR network.

- *Support priority investments in integrated passenger rail networks that connect both existing services and future high-speed service which can in turn influence mode shift to be more sustainable and efficient and have positive impacts on the environment.*
- *Procure a fleet of state-owned, standardized, bi-level rolling stock to support existing and future intercity passenger service.*
- *Continue partnerships at the federal, state, regional, and local levels in support of future passenger rail investments which support safety, reliability, goods movement, job creation, sustainability, economic development, and quality of life.*
- *Support lowering voter approval thresholds at the regional level in order to create new sources for passenger rail investments.*
- *Support state efforts to dedicate a portion of cap and trade funds for public transportation systems and specifically for the development and improvement of an integrated passenger rail network.*
- *Support streamlining of existing programs and policies to expedite efficient development of passenger rail improvements (e.g. RRIF, TIFIA).*

The CIPRP Leadership Coalition worked hard to successfully ensure that intercity rail was included as an important component of Cap & Trade allocations. Intercity passenger rail's inclusion in Cap & Trade is a critical milestone for the CIPRP since this provides an ongoing source of capital funding for the CIPRP. The CIPRP Leadership Coalition worked with Members of the Legislature and their staff and the Administration in support of the Cap & Trade allocation program that was approved by the Legislature on June 15, 2014. The CIPRP is now working to increase the dedicated 10% of Cap & Trade allocations to intercity rail to 20% so many needed projects can be accelerated.

Throughout FY 16/17, the CIPRP Leadership Coalition advocated for additional funding sources for intercity rail be included as part of Senate Bill 1 (SB 1). Efforts to this end helped result in significant resources available to passenger rail with the passage of SB 1 and its signature by the Governor. SB 1 provides an estimated \$20 million per year in direct funding to intercity rail of which the San Joaquins will get at least 25%. SB 1 also dedicates \$245 million per year to the Transit and Intercity Rail

Capital Program (TIRCP) to fund capital improvements and expansions for statewide rail projects. An additional \$236 million was also added to TIRCP from loan repayment. Additionally, SB 1 includes \$250 million for the Congested Corridor program, which can also be utilized for improvements to intercity rail corridors. These SB 1 funding programs provide a stable funding source for the CIPRP program to pursue the improvements and capital access fees needed to increase/expand service.

While SJJPA was established to manage the San Joaquins, many San Joaquins passengers utilize multiple rail and bus services in their travels throughout the State, a focus on coordination between the systems is critical for the success of all services. Coordination of schedules, fares, ticketing, trip planning, and connecting buses will be a focus of future advocacy efforts and complement the intent of the statewide Guiding Principles.

The San Joaquins are in a unique position related to the proposed California High Speed Rail (HSR) program. With HSR construction underway in the Central Valley, there have been many differing opinions on the potential impacts to the San Joaquins. After much consultation with the affected communities and the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA), SJJPA adopted and signed the "Joint Policy Statement" between SJJPA, CHSRA, and Caltrans (shown as Figure 4.1). This agreement ensures SJJPA and the affected communities will be actively involved in any coordination, decisions, and/or service adjustments between the San Joaquins and the proposed HSR service. In addition, the CHSRA and Caltrans have acknowledged the importance of the San Joaquins to the communities it services and have committed to working to "maintain and improve the San Joaquins in conjunction with the implementation of high-speed rail." The continued coordination with CHSRA and Caltrans is a high priority for SJJPA as part of its advocacy efforts to protect and improve the entire San Joaquins.

Although SJJPA has made significant progress in its efforts to advocate for the San Joaquins since its formation in March of 2013, this work has just begun and will be an ongoing priority for SJJPA. The San Joaquins is currently the 6th busiest intercity rail service in the nation. The recent addition of the 7th Daily Round Trip marks the first time in 14 years that service on the San Joaquins has been expanded, with the additional frequency from Oakland to Bakersfield being the first new service in nearly 24 years. Advocacy for the San Joaquins and the CIPRP is critical for developing the much stronger political base of support needed to fund the future growth of the San Joaquins.