



**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Valley Link Achieves New Milestone: Advances Into Federal Funding Pipeline**

**Livermore, CA, June 1, 2022** – Today, the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority (Authority) announced that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has approved entry of the Valley Link Rail Project Phase 1 into Project Development of the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program.

“Acceptance of Valley Link in to the CIG program marks a key milestone in advancing this transformational project forward,” said Veronica Vargas, Chair of the Authority Board of Directors. “This is the first, but critical step, in positioning Valley Link to compete for federal funding during a time when once-in-a-generation transit funding is available on the federal level.”

The 26-mile Valley Link Rail Project Phase 1 between the Dublin/Pleasanton Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station in Alameda County and the Mountain House station in San Joaquin County, will connect tens of thousands of Northern San Joaquin Valley workers to the Tri-Valley at the center of the Northern California Megaregion – one of the fastest growing and economically significant areas in the state of California.

“The Valley Link project has the potential to help thousands of commuters get out of traffic and more quickly back to their homes and families,” Senator Alex Padilla said. “The San Joaquin Valley and Bay Area have become increasingly linked as more Californians live in one region and work in another. I look forward to continuing to work with the Federal Transit Administration to support this vital project, reduce pollution and congestion, and improve quality of life in the region.”

Congressman Eric Swalwell said, “I am so pleased that the Tri-Valley Cities’ Valley Link project was approved by the Federal Transit Administration. This will start the process for designing and operating a critical link between BART and the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE). Approval of this project could translate to 30,000 fewer cars on the road each day. By reducing congestion and improving air quality, this would be the biggest climate rescue project ever in the Tri-Valley.”

“I’m incredibly excited that Valley Link was approved by the Federal Transit Administration, a huge step forward in getting this project across the finish line,” said Congressman Josh Harder. “Right now, commuters in Tracy and across the Valley have no choice but to spend hours a day stuck in traffic and away from their families. Valley Link will save our workers the stress, time, and money that comes from these ridiculously long commutes. I can’t wait to see it up and running.”

“Valley Link will provide congestion relief to more than 100,000 daily commuters now traversing through the Altamont/I-580 Corridor. I thank Senator Padilla and Representatives Swalwell, Harder, DeSaulnier and McNerney for their support of Valley Link as a priority for federal funding and recognize this Valley Link delegation for their continued leadership in advancing this important Megaregional project,” said Chair Vargas.

The FTA approval of Valley Link into the CIG pipeline follows the March 23, 2022 unanimous adoption of Valley Link as part of the regional project priorities for the CIG Program by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

“There is clear and overwhelming support for Valley Link as evidenced by all of the comments from community leaders, organizations, and MTC Commissioners as part of the March MTC action on federal funding priorities as well as the recent support from congressional offices across the corridor in gaining entry into the CIG process,” remarked Tim Sbranti, Director of Strategic Initiatives for Innovation Tri-Valley Leadership Group. “Improvement of transportation systems between the Tri-Valley and broader megaregion is essential to the state of California and national economy, environment and the quality of life of its residents and work force.”

Melissa Hernandez, Vice-Chair of the Authority Board of Directors stated, “I too thank each of our delegation members for their support of Valley Link as a priority for federal funding. This is a tremendous step towards realizing a vision shared across the megaregion – a vision of a robust and sustainable passenger rail system that will equitably serve our residents and work force with a better quality of life and access to jobs, educational opportunities and health care facilities. Valley Link will have immeasurable benefit to the megaregion and will increase the megaregional housing supply through the advancement of transit-oriented development at stations along the corridor.”

“We appreciate FTA’s approval and to now be working with them to achieve near-term mobility, accessibility, environmental, and health benefit for the more than 100,000 Bay Area workers now commuting daily from their homes in the Northern San Joaquin Valley – a region recognized as one of the California’s largest areas of California Climate Investments Priority Populations for both State designated disadvantage communities and low-income communities,” said Authority Executive Director Kevin Sheridan.

Valley Link will ultimately close a critical gap in the statewide rail system with a 42-mile, 7 station rail connection between the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station and the North Lathrop ACE station with all day service on BART frequencies during peak periods. With 33,000 daily riders projected by 2040, Valley Link would remove tens of thousands of cars off Interstates 580 and 205 and connect nearly 500 miles of passenger rail with more than 130 stations in the Northern California Megaregion – removing up to 42,650 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions, creating 22,000 jobs, and supporting national goods movement by reducing heavy truck conflicts with cars on Interstates 580 and 205 that serve as life lines between the Port of Oakland and both domestic and international markets. Overall traffic on Interstate 580 is projected

to increase by an estimated 60 percent from 2016 to 2040 and truck traffic is expected to increase by 58 percent.

FTA's action provides a unique leveraging opportunity for state funding as well. The California State Legislature is currently considering the FY 2022-23 State Budget, as proposed by Governor Newsom, which contains a \$2 billion augmentation of the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program for transformative public transportation investments. That figure could increase to \$11 billion if the State Senate's proposal is adopted. The legislature must approve a budget by June 15, with final action on any budget trailer bills by August 31.

## Background on Valley Link

The full Valley Link rail project will provide a new 42-mile, 7 station rail connection between the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station in Alameda County and the North Lathrop Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) station in San Joaquin County with all day service on BART frequencies during peak periods – providing an estimated 33,000 daily rides in 2040. The Valley Link Project Phase 1 between the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station and the Mountain House station, including the Isabel and South Front Road stations in Livermore, is targeted for construction in 2025. The Valley Link rail project is also leading innovation with a vision to be a model of sustainability connecting the Northern California megaregion with the first passenger rail system in California running on self-produced green hydrogen and a hydrogen fuel production facility able to support other transit and heavy truck operators. In addition to the use of zero emissions vehicle and green energy production technologies, the Valley Link Board-adopted Sustainability Policy identifies implementing strategies to achieve a zero emissions system through innovative station access. This includes electric autonomous shuttles, shared mobility, and support for local transit operator alternative vehicle technology.

Additional information on the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority, is available on the Regional Rail Authority's website at [www.valleylinkrail.com](http://www.valleylinkrail.com).



Valley Link Rail Project Map



*Valley Link Train Concept*

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