



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 3, 2020

### **Stockton Diamond Grade Separation Project Wins \$100 Million TCEP Grant from State of California Helping Unlock Largest Rail Bottleneck in the California**

STOCKTON, CA – The California Transportation Commission (CTC) has awarded a \$100 Million Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP) grant for the Stockton Diamond Grade Separation Project. The TCEP grant application was prepared by the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRC) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The \$237 million project would improve mobility through the busiest, most congested at-grade rail junction in California. The construction of a grade separation at this at-grade crossing will make this rail infrastructure more efficient and predictable for both current and future use.

“We greatly appreciate the CTC recognizing the critical nature of the Stockton Diamond Grade Separation project,” said Christina Fugazi, Chair of the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRC). “Matched with our recent \$20 million federal BUILD award, the \$100 Million TCEP award will go to untangling the largest freight bottleneck in California allowing improved, efficient goods movement through our region, state, and nation. The project will also impact our Stockton community by improving several at grade crossings for cars, bicycles, and pedestrians.”

“The San Joaquin Valley region plays an important role in California’s transportation system,” said Caltrans Director Toks Omishakin. “This critical project will help facilitate economic growth, reduce dependence on fuel, improve air quality in the region and reduce delays affecting freight and passenger rail.”

The purpose of the Trade Corridor Enhancement Program is to provide funding for infrastructure improvements on federally designated Trade Corridors of National and Regional Significance. The Stockton Diamond is located just south of Downtown Stockton, where two major railroads (BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad) intersect at-grade or at the same elevation. This intersection is the busiest, most congested rail

bottleneck in California. At the Stockton Diamond is where both freight and passenger rail move through the at-grade crossing causing significant congestion and delays to service that moves valuable goods and people throughout the Central Valley, Sacramento, Bay Area and Silicon Valley for freight, out to the larger national network.

The Stockton Diamond impacts the frequency, reliability and potential expansion opportunity of the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE®) and Amtrak® San Joaquins passenger rail services that operate on the same rail lines. Train backups also cause local travel delays at crossings and potential vehicle/rail/bike and pedestrian conflicts.

"The CTC's investment in this project is a ringing endorsement to the important role rail plays in expanding the reach of Central Valley industry to the rest of the nation," said Union Pacific General Director Adrian Guerrero. "We look forward to working with local, state and federal agencies as well as our partners at SJRRC, Caltrans and BNSF Railway on this important rail infrastructure effort."

A collaboration between the SJRRC, Caltrans, and the private entities BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad as well as regional and local partner agencies, the Stockton Diamond Grade Separation project proposes to grade separate the two rail lines with a flyover bridge at the Stockton Diamond to create uninterrupted flow of rail traffic through the crossing. The flyover, grade separation would essentially unlock the bottleneck and allow for much improved operation efficiencies for the freight railroads and passenger rail services.

On August 19, 2020, the [SJRRC launched the Environmental Review process for the project](#), in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration and the California High Speed Rail Authority. For more information about the project and the environmental process underway, visit [stocktondiamond.com](http://stocktondiamond.com).

The Stockton Diamond Grade Separation project is a critical element in SJRRC's vision to expand intercity and commuter rail service between the San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento, and the Bay Area. SJRRC is currently in the planning and environmental phase of its over \$1 billion "Valley Rail" service expansion program for both the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) and Amtrak San Joaquins. [The Valley Rail Program](#) will implement additional daily round-trips for the Amtrak San Joaquins service and extend the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) service between Sacramento and Merced. It also supports converting the San Joaquins train and thruway bus network to renewable diesel fuel and is a key component to improving air quality in the region.

"This project is a critical step in unlocking freight and passenger rail mobility in Northern California. The Stockton Diamond Grade Separation will fix one of the most congested rail corridors, enhance safety, reduce emissions and provide faster, more reliable passenger rail options for our riders," said Vito Chiesa, Chair of the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority.

Seen as a priority for the Northern California Megaregion, the state grant application was supported by numerous local, regional, and state agencies and organizations throughout the San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento Region, and Bay Area. [[Click Here to View Supporter List](#)].

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*Governed by a Board of Directors consisting of six full-voting members from San Joaquin County and two special-voting members from Alameda County, SJRRC owns, operates and is the policy-making body for the Altamont Corridor Express (ACE) service, which has been transporting passengers between the Central Valley and Bay Area since 1999. It is also the managing agency of the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority which manages the Amtrak San Joaquins service. For more information about SJRRC and ACE, visit [acerail.com](http://acerail.com) or connect through Facebook (@AltamontCorridorExpress) and Twitter (@ACE\_train).*