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Major Employers Join Caltrain Executive Director Jim Hartnett in Washington D.C. to Advocate for Caltrain Electrification

Supporters encouraged by Trump Administration Announcement that infrastructure investment will focus on nation's most ready-to-go projects

After spending the week meeting with key decision makers and influencers in Washington, D.C., Caltrain's executive director is optimistic that the agency's [Electrification Project](#) is exactly the kind of investment that the Trump Administration is hoping to move forward with as part of their focus in infrastructure investment.

"Since we've been here we have met with supporters from both sides of the aisle who understand that when it comes to investing in infrastructure, this project checks all of the boxes," said Caltrain Executive Director Jim Hartnett. "Caltrain electrification upgrades service on an existing system that serves the country's fastest growing companies, the rest of the funding is already lined up, it creates thousands of jobs nationwide, and if the goal is to focus on projects that are ready to go, we aren't just shovel ready, our shovels are in the ground waiting for the OK from Washington to turn some dirt."

Before construction can start, Caltrain needs approval of a \$647 million funding commitment from the Federal Transit Administration to match \$1.3 billion that has already been secured from other sources. The federal grant was expected to be approved last month, but the newly-seated Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao delayed the decision until the Administration releases its budget recommendations to Congress later this spring.

Despite the delay, the Trump Administration announced this week that they intend to prioritize Federal investment for projects that can begin construction within 90-days of receiving the funds.

"Caltrain has already awarded contracts to complete the project and is prepared to issue a notice to proceed with construction immediately after the federal grant agreement is signed," said Hartnett.

The delay has resulted in great concern among Bay Area businesses and riders who depend on Caltrain to support the economy of Silicon Valley and beyond. Caltrain's

efforts are supported by dozens of private sector employers that depend on Caltrain to provide their employees with a faster commute alternative in the wake of increasing congestion on the region's highways. Representatives from these employers including Facebook, Google, Genentech and Stanford joined Caltrain on the trip to Washington to advocate for approval of the federal investment.

Caltrain and the agency's partners have been working diligently to ensure the federal delay does not hinder the project's future, but it has presented tremendous additional challenges. Last week, Caltrain negotiated an extension of the deadline for contractors to begin construction, while the agency awaits the federal decision about the execution of the funding agreement. The contractors agreed to extend the deadline for four months, from March 1 to June 30.

"I have personally invited the Secretary of Transportation to come San Carlos to see this project first-hand and hear from the companies and communities that depend upon this work to keep the economy rolling," said Hartnett. "Moving forward with this decision will not only benefit Caltrain riders, but it will also benefit the thousands of American workers standing by to build the project."

Leaders from throughout California, including Governor Jerry Brown have all expressed their support for advancing the project. As Governor Brown has stated "It's ready to go, it's an obvious project, if you're not for that, you're not for infrastructure. That's a no brainer. It speeds it up, takes cars off the road, reduces the noise, it cleans up the air, it's based on American renewable energy."

To learn more about the Electrification Project, click [HERE](#).

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About Caltrain: Owned and operated by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, Caltrain provides commuter rail service from San Francisco to San Jose, with limited commute service to Gilroy. Caltrain enjoyed five years of consecutive monthly ridership increases, surpassing more than 60,000 average weekday riders. While the Joint Powers Board assumed operating responsibilities for the service in 1992, the railroad celebrated 150 years of continuous passenger service in 2014. Planning for the next 150 years of Peninsula rail service, Caltrain is on pace to electrify the corridor, reduce diesel emissions by 97 percent by 2040 and add more service to more stations.