



NEWS

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Air District awards \$20 million for Caltrain electrification project

SAN FRANCISCO – Today, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District’s Board of Directors approved the allocation of \$20 million dollars to help fund the electrification of the Caltrain corridor.

Transitioning to electric-powered trains will result in zero emissions locally and the ability to increase service. Caltrain currently serves more than 61,000 weekday riders between San Francisco and San Jose, and is projected to reach 100,000 weekday riders by 2040.

“This is the one of the most significant air pollution reduction funding projects the Air District has undertaken in recent years,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “By replacing diesel-powered trains with electric, air quality will be substantially improved for everyone along the Peninsula train corridor.”

Exposure to diesel exhaust can irritate the eyes, nose, throat and lungs, and cause coughs, headaches, and nausea. Because fine particles bypass the respiratory system’s natural defenses they also aggravate chronic respiratory symptoms, and may contribute to more serious health impacts.

Key benefits associated with electrifying the 51 miles of rail line between San Francisco and San Jose also include a reduction of greenhouse gases, increased frequency and speed of train service, reduced engine noise, and reduced traffic congestion from automobiles along US 101 and interstate 280.

“The Air District has been a vocal leader and a strong ally in support of Caltrain’s electrification project,” said Jim Hartnett, Caltrain’s Executive Director. “We are honored that the Air District is redoubling its commitment to the environmental benefits of electrification through the award of this \$20 million grant.”

The total project cost is estimated to be \$1.53 billion and will be supported through a combination of local, regional, state and federal sources. The Air District allocation of \$5 million per year over the next four years is being funded through the Mobile Source Incentive Fund, which is collected from a \$2 fee on motor vehicles registered in the Bay Area.

This project is a continuation of the Air District’s effort to support zero-emissions technologies in the Bay Area. Recent projects have included funding for the installation of shore power at the ports of Oakland and San Francisco, electric vehicles and infrastructure, electric airport equipment, electric lawnmowers, and hydrogen fueling stations.

Caltrain expects to start operating the electric trains by the winter of 2020. Switching to electrified track will reduce diesel fuel consumption by existing trains by approximately 3.4 million gallons, and 500 tons of associated particulates per year. After full implementation, total emissions will be reduced by over 97 percent.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

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