



For Immediate Release
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January 29, 2021

State of California Awards SMART \$1.45M for Freight Rail Investments

On Thursday, January 28, the California Transportation Commission approved SMART's request for \$1.45 million to fund a \$2.9 million freight rail investment package from the State's Short Line Railroad Improvement Program, a program to support investments in smaller freight railroad systems. These funds support transitioning freight transportation off of highways and onto railroads, reducing congestion impacts, improving traffic safety, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the movement of goods.

With this State investment, SMART will be able to provide additional public benefit from the SMART-publicly owned railroad through investing in freight improvements with funds specifically intended for freight rail projects. These funds will be matched with local private investment and will be used to construct modern freight rail spurs, complete with Federal Railroad Administration-required Positive Train Control systems improvements and repairs to the Black Point Rail Bridge over the Petaluma River. (These freight improvements will be made without the diversion of resources from the passenger rail and pathway systems.)

The State's investment supports its efforts to combat climate change while transitioning to a more environmentally friendly transportation system and reflects a commitment to supporting SMART in its new role facilitating freight rail transportation.

"This is great news for the North Bay and exactly why we've pushed so hard to get freight rail into public hands with our landmark Great Redwood Trail project," said Sen. Mike McGuire (D-North Coast). "This \$1.5 million down payment will be put to work connecting rail to businesses along the SMART line to help bolster freight rail activity in Marin and Sonoma counties."

David Rabbitt, SMART chair of the Board of Directors, welcomed another great public-private partnership to enhance businesses in North Bay while combating climate change and reducing congestion on our roadways.

Deb Fudge, SMART long time board member and Windsor Council member where some of these projects could take place, said: "I am ecstatic that we are providing our businesses with a great opportunity to use our Railroad right-of-way to increase their business in a more efficient and environmentally sound way."

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