



ECOS

ENVIRONMENTAL
♦ COUNCIL ♦
OF SACRAMENTO

Post Office Box 1526 | Sacramento, CA 95812-1526

April 17, 2024

Acting Administrator Veronica Vanterpool
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Support for SacRT's 2024 LoNo Application for a Hydrogen-based Bus
Maintenance Facility

Dear Acting Administrator Vanterpool:

The Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS) writes in support of the Sacramento Regional Transit District's (SacRT) application to the Federal Transit Administration's fiscal year 2023-24 Low or No Emission (5339(c)) and the Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive program (5339(b)) for the Zero-Emission Buses, Fueling, and Workforce Development Project. SacRT envisions a future with cleaner air for the Sacramento region, where the bus fleet – on which so many people rely – no longer contributes to global climate change, and the region no longer suffers from some of the highest childhood asthma rates in the country.

The project includes the conversion of an existing bus maintenance facility at the former McClellan Air Force Base in north-east Sacramento into a zero-emission maintenance facility, the design and construction of a new hydrogen fueling station, and the acquisition of zero-emission buses (ZEBs). These components are integral to SacRT's strategy to comply with California's Innovation Clean Transit (ICT) regulation adopted in 2018, which mandates a full transition to zero-emission fleets by 2040. The hydrogen fueling station would be capable of fueling up to 85 buses. SacRT also plans to replace 29 compressed natural gas buses that have reached the end of their useful life with 29 hydrogen fuel cell electric buses (FCEBs). The project would also include maintenance facility upgrades, maintenance training, and workforce development opportunities to support the conversion to a zero-emission fleet.

While SacRT has already taken steps to electrify its fleet with battery electric buses, an incoming wave of scheduled bus retirements will raise the number of replacement buses needed to 41 by the end of 2024 and to 134 by the end of 2028. At an average cost of \$1.25 million per ZEB, addressing the backlog in 2024 alone will cost \$51.25 million, with costs rising to \$167.5 million by 2028. SacRT views this significant vehicle replacement challenge as an opportunity to transition to a fully ZEB fleet sooner rather than later and plans to utilize every available avenue to achieve this goal. Federal support in this effort

will enable SacRT to devote existing operating funds to serving constituents who rely on bus service, while accelerating the transition to a zero-emission fleet.

ECOS was founded in 1971 as a visionary and action-oriented coalition for the region. Today the organizational and individual members of ECOS work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, promote smart growth land use and transportation principles, promote equity in housing, promote sustainable regional water supply for all users, public health and opportunities, and promote regional habitat conservation.

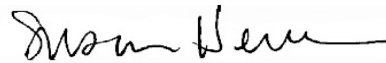
The Sacramento region is facing a serious challenge in addressing transportation-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions under both State and Federal mandates, the most pressing of which is a 19% reduction in GHG by 2035. SacRT's plan to transition to a ZEB fleet will help improve overall health and the quality of life in the Capital of California, which now boasts the fifth-largest economy in the world. The introduction of ZEB fleet will also entice more people to use public transit.

As an advocate for clean air and sustainable transportation, ECOS is deeply committed to supporting initiatives that improve air quality and promote sustainable mobility. We firmly believe that SacRT's plan to convert its McClellan Bus Maintenance Facility and buses into hydrogen-based operations will have a transformative impact on Sacramento, benefiting residents, visitors, and the environment alike. We urge you to give their LoNo/Bus Grant application all due consideration and to fully fund their request.

Sincerely,



Sam Rice
Transportation Team Lead



Susan Herre AIA AICP
President of the Board of Directors