

Per California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 548.5, the following information will be posted to CalHR's Career Executive Assignment Action Proposals website for 30 calendar days when departments propose new CEA concepts or major revisions to existing CEA concepts. Presence of the department-submitted CEA Action Proposal information on CalHR's website does not indicate CalHR support for the proposal.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Date

February 6, 2026

2. Department

Department of Transportation

3. Organizational Placement (Division/Branch/Office Name)

Rail and Transit Programs

4. CEA Position Title

Deputy Director, Transit & Rail Programs

5. Summary of proposed position description and how it relates to the program's mission or purpose. (2-3 sentences)

The proposed position will provide strategic direction, policy oversight, and executive leadership across all rail and transit programs. This role directly supports the Department's mission to "improve lives and communities through transportation" by advancing integrated, sustainable, and equitable mobility solutions across the state.

6. Reports to: (Class Title/Level)

Chief Deputy Director

7. Relationship with Department Director (Select one)

- Member of department's Executive Management Team, and has frequent contact with director on a wide range of department-wide issues.
- Not a member of department's Executive Management Team but has frequent contact with the Executive Management Team on policy issues.

(Explain): This position will have direct influence on transit and associated activities. This is a priority for the Department. This position will have frequent contact with the Planning and Modal Programs Deputy Director and CalSTA Deputy Secretary.

8. Organizational Level (Select one)

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th (mega departments only - 17,001+ allocated positions)

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

Under the general direction of the Director/Chief Deputy Director, the incumbent is responsible for planning, organizing, and directing program activities and staff, and providing policy and procedural recommendations related to statewide rail and transit initiatives. This includes oversight of Data and Digital Services that support customer-focused mobility solutions, and the administration and program management of the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) to expand and enhance multi-modal transportation options across California.

Provides executive leadership in shaping the short- and long-term strategic direction and policies for California's intercity rail and transit networks—ensuring alignment with the State Highway System and seamless connections across the broader multi-modal transportation system. Oversees the development, evaluation, and negotiation of statewide goals, objectives, policies, regulations, standards, plans, and actions related to assigned programs. Ensures the effective and efficient administration of rail and transit funds to local, regional agencies, and rail joint powers authorities. Leads the development and implementation of Program-Level Action Plans that advance Caltrans' goals, strategic objectives, and performance measures for rail and transit services.

Responsible under certain state and federal law for developing and maintaining comprehensive plans and policies related to rail and transit. Provides policy leadership and strategic planning to expand sustainable, accessible mobility options throughout California. Advises the Director and Chief Deputy Director on complex technical, administrative, and priority issues affecting rail and transit initiatives.

Establishes statewide strategic direction and program priorities that advance Caltrans' broader multi-modal and customer-focused policy objectives. Oversees rail and transit policies and advises District Directors, the Chief Counsel, and executive leadership on critical issues. Maintains strong collaboration and communication with district management and staff to ensure program consistency, integration, and operational alignment.

Strengthens partnerships with local and regional agencies to deliver rail and transit plans, projects, and initiatives on and off the State Highway System. Demonstrates ongoing leadership commitment to quality by modeling continuous improvement practices, supporting required resources, prioritizing safety, efficiency, equity, and effectiveness in service delivery, and applying performance-based quality expectations in evaluations and promotions. Encourages innovation and intelligent risk management by empowering employees to identify improvements and adopt creative solutions that enhance mobility for all Californians.

Represents the Department on policy matters within the assigned program areas. Acts on behalf of the Director in coordination with Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Regional Transportation Planning Agencies, Rail Joint Powers Authorities, and a wide range of public and private stakeholders. When delegated, represents the Department before state boards, commissions, and committees, and serves as a member on assigned organizations and advisory bodies. Participates in national forums such as the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Council on Public Transportation and Council on Rail Transportation. Promotes high-quality customer service by proactively engaging partners, understanding their needs, and fostering open, positive communication.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- Program is directly related to department's primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- Program plays a supporting role in achieving department's mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

Description: The program's mission is highly critical to Caltrans' overall mission of providing a safe, equitable, and sustainable transportation system that improves mobility and enhances quality of life across California. By advancing rail and transit initiatives, the program supports statewide goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve access and safety for all users, and promote multimodal connectivity. These efforts are central to achieving the California Transportation Plan, Caltrans Strategic Management Plan, the California State Rail Plan, State Transit Strategic Plan, Caltrans' Transit Policy, and state climate and equity goals—making the program essential to the Department's success.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

There is a need for focused executive leadership, at the Deputy Director level, within Caltrans on rail and transit initiatives based on the following: 1) Implementation of SB 125, SB 960, and the Caltrans Director's Transit Policy, including advancing the recommendations of the Transit Transformation Task Force; 2) State's commitment to elevate transit and rail as key components of California's multimodal transportation system; 3) Focused executive-level communication and engagement with stakeholders, legislature, CalSTA, and federal partners including Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA); 4) Unique challenges associated with rail and transit that are not shared by other programs within Caltrans, including unique standards, processes, and procedures; rail equipment acquisition and maintenance; policies and guidance; federal grant responsibilities; and unique relationship with rail and transit stakeholders (e.g., passenger rail agencies, transit agencies, host railroads, etc.); and 5) Improve management and oversight of Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), which Caltrans administers on CalSTA's behalf.

Caltrans plays a critical statewide role in overseeing and delivering California's rail and transit programs. The Department administers FTA grant programs and typically awards/allocates approximately \$80 million annually to transit agencies. It also manages the TIRCP on behalf of CalSTA and provides project oversight. Over seven cycles, CalSTA has awarded \$11 billion to 159 projects. Caltrans also leads statewide transit policy and planning, including development of the Statewide Transit Strategic Plan, implementation of the Director's Transit Policy, and district transit plans. Through the Intercity Passenger Rail Program (IPRP), Caltrans manages \$234 million annually, oversees three Intercity Passenger Rail JPAs, directs rail fleet procurement and maintenance, advances zero-emission rail innovation, and develops and implements the State Rail Plan. Caltrans, through the Division of Data and Digital Services, leads statewide efforts related to transit data standards, real-time information and contactless payments, and technical assistance to transit and rail agencies.

As part of establishing this new Deputy Director of Rail and Transit Programs, Caltrans intends to reorganize its rail and transit functions by establishing a Division Chief of Transit (new CEA), establish a TIRCP Program Manager (new CEA), and the Division of Data and Digital Services (new CEA), and realign the Division of Rail under the new Deputy Director of Rail and Transit Programs. Currently, the Division of Rail reports directly to Deputy Director of Planning and Modal Programs.

This will create a robust executive structure to fulfill statutory responsibilities, enhance statewide coordination, and elevate transit and rail mobility as integral elements of California's multi-modal transportation system.

This framework provides clear accountability, consistent policy direction, and streamlined communication internally and externally. It also enhances communication and collaboration with Caltrans HQ divisions/programs and district offices, federal, state, regional, and local partners; improves support for more than 270 transit agencies, three Intercity Passenger Rail JPAs, and other commuter rail agencies; and provides the necessary leadership to effectively implement the Director's Transit Policy, the State Rail Plan, the Statewide Transit Strategic Plan, and related state policies and legislative mandates.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE

12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

Transit Policy

Policy Example: Caltrans leads statewide transit policy through the development and implementation Caltrans' Transit Policy, which is required under SB 960 (2024), Statewide Transit Strategic Plan (STSP), and CalSTA's SB 125 Transit Transformation Task Force Final Report, which will inform transit policy, planning, operations, and project delivery. This includes establishing statewide mobility standards for transit integration on the State Highway System, advancing zero-emission transit deployment, and improving coordination with local and regional transit providers.

Statewide Impact: This policy direction will transform how Californians move, by improving frequency, reliability, and connectivity of multi-modal travel options statewide. It will strengthen transit access in both urban and rural communities, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled, and ensure a safer, more equitable, and customer-focused transportation network that supports the state's climate and mobility goals.

Intercity Rail and Transit Grant Policy & Strategic Oversight

Policy Example: Establishes allocation criteria, investment priorities, and performance metrics for the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP)—a major statewide competitive program governed by SB 862 and delegated to Caltrans by CalSTA—as well as for Federal Transit Administration formula grant programs through which Caltrans administers approximately \$80 million annually. These policies guide how projects are selected, how outcomes are measured, and how transit agencies statewide advance zero-emission transitions, corridor improvements, and multimodal integration.

Statewide Impact: Directly shapes billions of dollars in state and federal transit investments, determining which communities receive funding for cleaner buses and trains, increased service levels, improved passenger amenities, and expanded mobility options. These investment decisions reduce emissions, enhance equity in underserved areas, strengthen regional transit connectivity, and improve the overall reliability and resilience of California's public transportation network.

Intercity Passenger Rail Policy

Policy Example: Caltrans executes statewide policy direction for intercity passenger rail in accordance with Public Utilities Code Sections 14000–14082, which govern the State Rail Program and Joint Powers Authority (JPA) relationships. This includes managing approximately \$234 million annually to support operations, directing procurement and maintenance of California's state-supported rail fleet, advancing zero-emission rail technology and corridor modernization, and developing and implementing the California State Rail Plan—the federally required blueprint guiding long-term rail investment and network integration.

Statewide Impact: Improves passenger mobility across California by increasing train frequency, reliability, and system connectivity; expands zero-emission rail service to support climate goals; strengthens economic and tourism corridors between metropolitan and rural regions; and reduces roadway congestion and greenhouse gas emissions through a growing, customer-focused statewide rail network.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)

13. What is the CEA position's scope and nature of decision-making authority?

Under the direction of the Chief Deputy Director, the CEA will serve as Caltrans' principal policy-maker for statewide rail and transit programs and projects, with authority to set strategic direction, establish priorities, and approve policies that guide rail and transit investments and operations across California. This role carries broad discretion to interpret and implement state and federal laws, allocate resources, and determine programmatic approaches for high-profile initiatives such as the California State Rail Plan, State Transit Plan, Caltrans Transit Policy, and CalSTA-delegated grant programs (e.g., TIRCP, LCTOP). The CEA will possess full authority to make commitments on behalf of the Director and will represent and serve as the delegate for the Director, as needed.

Further, the CEA will represent the State on rail and transit policy discussions on the national, state, and regional level. In this capacity, the CEA will serve as liaison to stakeholder agencies as needed.

Within the Department, the CEA is responsible for providing policy direction and guidance to Caltrans districts, programs, and staff at all organizational levels. This includes supporting strategic program and project development across districts, ensuring appropriate financial and staffing resources are available to assist external partners, and advancing the integration of rail and transit considerations into policy, planning, operations, and project delivery management practices.

The CEA may also be responsible for completion of assignments and special projects from CalSTA on a wide range of politically sensitive rail and transit-related issues with the review and approval of the Director and Chief Deputy Director.

14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?

Yes. The CEA will both develop and implement new policy and interpret and apply existing policy for rail and transit initiatives, programs, and projects. This includes creating statewide strategies, standards, and funding criteria; advancing initiatives such as integrated fare systems and Complete Streets implementation; and ensuring compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. The position translates legislative and regulatory requirements into actionable guidance for Caltrans districts and partners, coordinates with agencies at all levels, and ensures policies are aligned with state climate, equity, and mobility goals.