



**ITEM ID:** 2026-118-0

**TRANSMITTAL DATE:** January 16, 2026

**MEETING DATE:** January 23, 2026

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Noelia Rodriguez, Chief of Staff

**SUBJECT:** Approval for Board Member Travel

**Issue**

Director O'Connor is requesting Board approval for travel as an elected member of the California Transit Association Executive Committee representing the Authority.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board approve travel for Director O'Connor to attend the California Transit Association (CTA)'s five Executive Committee meetings scheduled in 2026.

**Strategic Commitment**

This report aligns with the Strategic Business Plan commitments of:

- **Connecting and Leveraging Partnerships:** We will forge new and enhanced relationships with our public and private partners to integrate and coordinate connecting services, providing residents throughout Southern California with better, seamless, sustainable alternatives to driving by having Board Members represent the Authority on other professional associations throughout the region.

**Background**

At the June 10, 2016 Board meeting, Finance policy FIN-8.4 – Travel Authorization and Business Expense Reimbursement was revised to include language specific to Board member travel.

The approved policy states:

- Board member Authority-related business travel must be pre-approved by the Board of Directors. Requests must be made in advance to the Board Secretary for inclusion in the next available Board meeting agenda.
  - The Authority will cover the business travel expenses of the Chair and Vice-Chair; or appointed regular Board member that is representing the Authority at a meeting, conference, or other Board-approved event.
- Pre-approval is NOT required for travel to meetings of the Authority's Board and Committee(s).
- Pre-approval is NOT required by the Board, when travel is for the sole purpose of officially representing Authority on its sponsored legislative advocacy trips.
  - For example: Legislative advocacy trips, including, but not limited to, participation with Authority staff for meetings with State and/or Federal elected officials, Transportation Agencies, requests to testify at hearings, etc.
- Following all business travel, the Board member must submit an AB1234 travel report at the next available Board meeting.
  - AB1234 report shall include the agenda (if applicable), a summary of SCRRA related business matters, and the travel costs paid for by the Authority. The member shall work with the Board Secretary for report submission.
- Travel for educational conferences is the responsibility of the Member Agency.

On May 15, 2020, the Board approved Board Member Guidelines Policy BO-1 which established guidelines for Board Members for outside representation. The policy states that Board Members must obtain approval from the Board of Directors prior to expressing any interest of serving on an external transportation-related body as a representative of the Authority. Any such interest shall be communicated to the Board Secretary to ensure an item be added to an upcoming Committee agenda for consideration.

- Board Members will be compensated for attendance at any and all meetings and activities in compliance with FIN-8.9 – Per Diem Compensation for Board Members.

## **Discussion**

At the September 24, 2021, Board Meeting, Director O'Connor was approved to represent the Authority on the CTA Executive Committee.

Attachment A contains proposed dates for the CTA Executive Committee meetings - five in total for calendar year 2026 to be held in various locations throughout California.

Director O'Connor has provided the following justification for the Board's consideration and approval:

The California Transit Association (CTA), <https://caltransit.org>, is the statewide advocacy organization for public transportation. CTA represents more than 250 member organizations including public transit agencies, commuter rail agencies, transit allies/support groups and transit industry suppliers (<https://caltransit.org/resources/member-links>). The purpose of the association is to support fully funded, efficient and effective public transit systems operating in a balanced transportation network and to support the needs of California's public transit systems through advocacy and education.

The Association's leadership is comprised of a diverse group of transit experts with knowledge of state policy and funding issues. Many of these experts bring executive and CEO-level experience from their own organizations, along with an exhaustive resume of transit operations, legal, financial and supplier-side expertise. By serving in a volunteer capacity, they motivate and inspire members to engage and participate in the advocacy of transit. Association leaders are adept at working through the complexities of state and local government and collaborating with industry and non-industry stakeholders, including policy makers, coalition partners and private enterprise, for the betterment of transit.

As a member-governed organization, the Association is directed by an elected Executive Committee comprised of public transit system members, transit industry supplier members, governing board members, and one transit support group representative. Members also have an opportunity to participate in the Association through internal Association policy committees and through member service provider committees. The Southern California Regional Rail Authority has been a member of CTA for many years.

### **Budget Impact**

The amounts for which approval is requested are included in the Adopted Operating Budget for FY2025-26. Funding for FY2026-27 is included in the multi-year forecast and will be requested for adoption through the annual budget process.

### **Next Steps**

If approved, the Board Clerk will coordinate travel arrangements and ensure AB1234 reports are filed upon completion of the conference.

Prepared by: Michelle Pena, Board Clerk

Approved by: Noelia Rodriguez, Chief of Staff

### **Attachment(s)**

[Attachment A - 2026 CTA Schedule Presentation - Approval for Board Member Travel](#)