

October 20, 2024

Tanisha Taylor, Executive Director
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, MS 52
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Letter of Support for TCEP Grant Application – Advanced Back Office and Freight Technology Integration for Otay Mesa East Port of Entry

Dear Ms. Taylor:

The International Border Community Steering Committee is writing to express support for the *Advanced Back Office and Freight Technology Integration for Otay Mesa East Port of Entry* (Project). The International Border Community encompasses parts of San Ysidro and Otay Mesa East. It was added to the Community Air Protection Program (CAPP or AB 617) by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) in 2022. Led by the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) in San Diego County, this first-of-its-kind effort involves communities working together to develop and implement strategies to measure air pollution and reduce health impacts. Funding the *Advanced Back Office and Freight Technology Integration for Otay Mesa East Port of Entry* (Project) is in alignment with emissions reductions strategies included in the Community Emissions Reduction Program developed by the International Border Community Steering Committee.

This innovative project submitted by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) is seeking funding consideration under the 2024 Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP), Cycle 4. The \$1.3 billion SR 11/Otay Mesa East Port of Entry Project represents a transformative approach to land border crossings. By integrating these technologies, the Project aims to significantly reduce border wait times for individuals and goods, enhance binational economic productivity, provide resilience to the border freight network, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This flagship port of entry will facilitate efficient and secure border crossings in a region that serves as a national gateway for over \$48.3 billion in annual cross-border trade. Moreover, it will positively impact community health by mitigating freight-related effects on surrounding environmental justice communities. The Project aligns with and implements strategies from key plans such as the 2021 Regional Plan, 2021 California-Baja California Border Master Plan, California Freight Mobility Plan 2020, and California Sustainable Freight Action Plan. It aims to make California's freight system more efficient, competitive, environmentally sustainable, and equitable.

The Advanced Back Office and Freight Technology Integration will provide crucial technological infrastructure for smart border crossing systems, enhanced security measures, optimized traffic flow, and data-driven border management. This includes implementing a Back Office System, binational technology integration, and pilot projects to make the border more efficient, such as an appointment system for trucks and other innovative solutions.

The International Border Community Steering Committee would like to express our strong support for SANDAG's *Advanced Back Office and Freight Technology Integration for Otay Mesa East Port of Entry* application. Thank you for your leadership on the TCEP Program and consideration for this project.

Sincerely,

International Border Community Steering Committee Members

<https://www.sdapcd.org/content/sdapcd/community/community-air-protection-program/international-border-community.html>