



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SunLine Awarded \$1.5M for Zero Emission Bus Workforce Training Program

(Thousand Palms, CA) SunLine Transit Agency has been awarded \$1.5 million from the Federal Transit Administration's "Low and No Emission Bus Program" to build the country's first transit maintenance bay designed from the ground up for zero emission buses (ZEB) to support SunLine's growing ZEB fleet. The state-of-the-art facility will also serve as an interactive-learning center for ZEB-maintenance, known as the SunLine Center of Excellence in Zero Emission Technology (CoEZET).

The award follows another recent allocation of federal funding from the National Fuel Cell Bus Program for \$270,000 to SunLine to develop CoEZET. Lauren Skiver, SunLine CEO/General Manager, stated "SunLine has been committed to establishing the Center of Excellence in Zero Emission Technology for years. We have taken small steps toward establishing the Center with each award, but now due to these funding opportunities we can finally build a much needed asset for the industry."

CoEZET is a collaboration between public and private organizations, including transit agencies, colleges, private industry and government agencies that ensures the development of excellence in the maintenance of ZEBs. SunLine Transit Agency partnered with College of the Desert, Rio Hondo College, California Community College-Doing What Matters, Orange County Transportation Authority, BAE Systems, Ballard Power Systems, BYD Coach and Bus, Hydrogenics, and Proterra to develop the Center of Excellence in Zero Emission Technology. SunLine will be fostering additional partnerships with local economic development organizations, transit agencies, colleges, government agencies, workforce development groups and industry to enhance the program's effectiveness and reach.

CoEZET will provide a comprehensive workforce training program in zero emission transportation technologies that supports *commercial* operation of ZEBs. Since there are limited resources and curriculum available on ZEB technology, SunLine staff will work with its partners to develop comprehensive curriculum and resources that addresses all aspects of in-service management for ZEBs. "It is vital to ready the transit workforce to maintain and plan for the influx of zero emission technology

into revenue service. SunLine is ensuring with its partners that the transit industry has the resources and skillsets to operate zero emission buses commercially,” said CEO/General Manager Skiver.

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About SunLine Transit Agency

SunLine Transit Agency is a joint powers authority formed in 1977 to operate the Coachella Valley’s public transportation system. Its fixed route and paratransit vehicles travel more than 4 million miles per year, covering over 619 bus stops located throughout a 1,120 mile-service area, carrying approximately 4.82 million riders. SunLine offers fixed route bus service and curb-to-curb paratransit for the mobility impaired. SunLine Services Group regulates three taxi franchises who provide taxi services throughout the valley. SunFuels alternative fueling stations offer compressed natural gas and hydrogen for SunLine and the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To learn more, please visit www.sunline.org.