

## Flatiron-led JV to deliver innovative Caltrans Middle-Mile Broadband Network providing broadband to underserved communities



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The California Department of Transportation has approved the award of two preconstruction services contracts to a Flatiron-led joint venture of Flatiron and LTS Managed Technical Services (Ledcor) to create middle-mile broadband infrastructure for unserved and underserved California communities.

Estimated at more than \$191 million at full build, the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) projects will deliver high-speed broadband service to homes and businesses. The projects are part of the Caltrans' Middle-Mile Broadband Network initiative to provide affordable, open-access broadband infrastructure to enable last-mile network connectivity throughout California.

California is strengthening broadband connections to improve access to education, health services and employment opportunities throughout the state. These innovative projects are initial steps in bringing high-speed broadband service to unserved and underserved communities, on equal economic and service terms.

"We welcome this opportunity to collaborate with Ledcor, Caltrans, the California Department of Technology and other stakeholders on projects focused on inclusiveness – bringing the capabilities of broadband to more people in these regions," said Richard Grabinski, Flatiron Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer. "With a commitment to environmental sustainability and innovative approaches, we will bring together the right project teams to achieve success."

The District 5 project focuses on communities throughout San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties. Through approximately half of the 208-mile project route, the construction team will face challenging rocky-soil conditions. A majority of the route along State Route 1 is located within the jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission, with large portions in areas deemed as "critical coastal areas" requiring significant biological and aquatic mitigation. The route also crosses historic bridge structures, major river crossings, railroad lines, canals and overpasses.

The District 2 project focuses on communities throughout Lassen, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou and Tehama counties. The 250-mile project route requires 48 bridge crossings including the Pit River Bridge over Lake Shasta plus challenging installation through sloping rocky terrain and near Rock Creek Reservoir Dam.

Such challenges will require continuous coordination with federal, state and local stakeholders, including the Bureau of Land Management, California Coastal Commission, county administrations, and several railroad companies. The CM/GC delivery method is ideal for such projects – providing the opportunity for early and ongoing collaboration with Caltrans and other stakeholders. Among other initiatives, Flatiron will assist Caltrans with alignment optimization, constructability reviews, environmental permitting and right-of-way verification during the preconstruction period.

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