



DATE: SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

MEMO TO: TRANSIT OPERATORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TRANSCOM)

FROM: PETER DE HAAN, PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: APPROVE TRANSIT PROJECT PRIORITY RANKING FOR CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY (CMAQ) CALL FOR PROJECTS

RECOMMENDATION:

- Recommend the Commission program \$6,345,283 in CMAQ funds to the transit projects prioritized “above the line” in Attachment B.
- Recommend the Commission approve for the Shelf List the unfunded balance of the Gold Coast Transit Bus Service Life Extension project, followed by the third year of funds for the Gold Coast Ventura Road Route project, should the funds become available in FY 2018/19 or before, with the stipulation that TRANSCOM need not be consulted again for this project to be approved from the shelf list.

BACKGROUND:

TRANSCOM at its April 13, 2017 meeting approved the guidelines for the combined CMAQ/TDA Article 3 Bicycle & Pedestrian Call-for-Projects and VCTC approved the guidelines on June 2nd. The guidelines provide for separate scoring of transit and non-transit (primarily bicycle and pedestrian) projects, with TRANSCOM to review the transit projects and TTAC and CTAC the non-transit projects, based on the policy that each of two categories receive half of the CMAQ funds.

When the guidelines were adopted, staff provided estimated funding amounts for each category, which took into account some projects for each category that had been committed for “off-the-top” funding. The result was that there was estimated to be \$5,847,000 available in the Call for the non-transit category, and \$3,390,000 for the transit category. Staff has recently updated the funding amounts based on prior-year carryover and updated revenue estimates, with the result that the available amounts are significantly increased, to \$8,862,000 for non-transit and \$6,150,000 for transit, for a total of \$15,012,000.

As specified in the guidelines, project applications were due to VCTC on August 21st. VCTC received a total of 12 transit projects with a total funding request of \$10,501,617. These projects included five (5) alternate-fueled transit vehicle projects, two (2) bus stop improvement projects, two (2) new transit service (operations) projects, one (1) outreach project, one (1) study, and one (1) rail car refurbishment project.

As provided in the approved guidelines, the first step in reviewing the applications was to review the eligibility of the projects based on CMAQ eligibility, financial feasibility, and planning consistency. This review resulted in one project, the Simi Valley Transit Center Feasibility Study, being deemed ineligible because it was a general planning study which is ineligible for CMAQ. There are, however, planning grant programs available for which Simi Valley might be able to compete for the proposed study.

Attachment A summarizes the projects that were nominated along with the results of the feasibility review.

The initial scoring of projects was done by VCTC staff, with the exception of the Air Quality criterion which was scored by APCD staff. TRANSCOM selected a subcommittee to review scores consisting of Ben Cacatian, APCD; Treena Gonzalez, County Public Works; and Vanessa Rauschenberger, Gold Coast Transit District (GCTD). The subcommittee review took place on August 31st. Although the recommendations of the subcommittee were for the most part incorporated into the VCTC staff recommendation, a subsequent staff review took place that resulted in some changes being made, and these changes are detailed in Attachment B. Attachment C provides the staff-recommended scores and funding cutoff, incorporating the changes made per Attachment B subsequent to the subcommittee meeting. It is important to note that the post-subcommittee staff review resulted in one project, the Wells Road Bus Stop Improvement in Ventura, moving from above the line to below.

The funding cutoff for the non-transit projects left a residual balance of \$195,283 which is not enough for the next project on that list. Staff has therefore increased by \$195,283 the amount available for the transit project list.

As in prior CMAQ programming actions, it is recommended that a shelf of projects be established consisting of the \$1,255,812 unfunded portion of the GCTD project to rehabilitate buses followed by the third year of funding for the Ventura Road Service.

As anticipated, there is a significant concern regarding insufficient funding to address sorely-needed transit vehicle rehabilitation projects, including those submitted by the GCTD, SCRRA, and Thousand Oaks. TRANSCOM and VCTC will need to make a priority of seeking additional funds from any available to source to address these needs.