

## STAFF REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Federal Grants for Specialized Transit Programs

**MEETING DATE:** August 21, 2008

**AGENDA ITEM:** 6C

**STAFF CONTACT:** Sarkes Khachek

### RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Federal Fiscal Year 2008 grant applications for Federal Elderly and Disabled Transportation (FTA 5310), Jobs Access Reverse Commute (FTA 5316), and New Freedom (FTA 5317) and regional scores and authorize their submittal to Caltrans.

### SUMMARY:

Caltrans has announced a call for projects for three federal transit funding programs which provide grant funding for capital and operating costs associated with transit service for low-income, elderly and persons with disabilities. SBCAG is responsible for conducting a regional evaluation and scoring of project applications submitted by transit providers within the county before they are submitted to Caltrans. For the Fiscal Year 2008 Call for Projects, SBCAG received six applications for the three grant programs. The applications were scored by a regional scoring committee composed of two committee members of SBCTAC, along with SBCAG and Caltrans District 5 staff. SBCAG staff and SBCTAC are recommending that the SBCAG board approve the grant applications and regional scores and authorize their submittal to Caltrans. Caltrans will include the projects in a statewide competitive selection process and will determine which projects will be approved for funding.

### DISCUSSION:

#### Federal Fiscal Year 2008 FTA 5310, 5316 and 5317 Call for Projects

Caltrans announced a call for projects on January 31, 2008 for the following Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant programs for Federal Fiscal Year 2008:

FTA Section 5310 - Elderly and Disabled Specialized Transit Program  
FTA Section 5316 - Jobs Access/Reverse Commute Program (JARC)  
FTA Section 5317 – New Freedom Program

The programs provide local transit operators and public agencies with funding for planning, capital and operations of public and private transportation services.

#### Member Agencies

Buellton ■ Carpinteria ■ Goleta ■ Guadalupe ■ Lompoc ■ Santa Barbara ■ Santa Maria ■ Solvang ■ Santa Barbara County

SBCAG, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, must conduct the regional scoring process for the small-urbanized areas in Santa Barbara County for applications received for the three programs. This selection process is a “first-level” review and scoring of the applications before they are forwarded to Caltrans Division of Mass Transportation (DMT) for final review and a statewide competitive selection process. Eligible projects must be derived from the locally adopted coordinated plan, which in SBCAG’s case is *Transportation Connections*, and meet the intent of the respective grant programs.

To assist in the local review and scoring process, SBCAG utilized a Regional Scoring Committee and SBCTAC. The regional scoring committee was composed of two committee members of SBCTAC, along with SBCAG and Caltrans District 5 staff.

### **Fiscal Year 2008 FTA 5310, 5316 and 5317 Grant Applications and Final Scores**

By the June 2nd deadline, applications from six agencies were received by SBCAG. Applications were reviewed and scored by the regional scoring committee on June 23<sup>rd</sup> based on criteria provided by Caltrans and were derived from the locally developed coordinated plan, *Transportation Connections*.

Project applicants were notified of their scores on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and were provided with an opportunity to respond to the scores for their respective projects by Monday, July 7<sup>th</sup>.

Projects that received high preliminary scores met the goals of the JARC or New Freedom Programs and provided the detailed information requested in the grant applications. Projects with low preliminary scores did not provide all the necessary information to achieve the highest potential score per section, although projects did meet the goals of the JARC or New Freedom Programs.

In July, SBCTAC reviewed and discussed preliminary scores. Given the grant applications will ultimately be forwarded to Caltrans for a statewide competitive process, it is not assured that all projects, even those with high scores, will be awarded funding. To ensure that projects in the Santa Barbara County region compete well at the statewide level, SBCTAC recommended that applicants be provided with an opportunity to provide additional information to their project applications and that the regional scoring committee re-evaluate the projects for which supplemental information is provided.

Two agencies, SMAT and Community Partners In Caring, provided additional information for their respective project applications. The supplemental information received by the applicants was reviewed by the regional scoring committee on July 30<sup>th</sup> and applicants were notified of their revised scores shortly thereafter. These scores will replace the preliminary scores from the respective agencies and will be included in the regionally adopted list of projects for Santa Barbara County. Scores for other agencies that submitted applications will not change.

The following are the final local scores for applications recommended for approval:

**FTA 5310 – Elderly and Disabled Transportation Program**

Agency	Project	FTA Funding Requested	Score
Easy Lift Transportation	Two (2) Expansion Vehicles	\$100,000	90
SMOOTH, Inc.	Two (2) Replacement Vehicles and Mobile Radios	\$132,000	Vehicles: 75 Radios: 80

**FTA 5316 – Jobs Access/Reverse Commute Program**

Agency	Project	FTA Funding Requested	Score
City of Lompoc Transit (COLT)	Lompoc to Solvang Transit Service Operations and Capital	Operations*: Year 1: \$36,400 Year 2: \$38,650 Year 3: \$40,900 Capital: \$92,086	88
SBCAG Traffic Solutions	Reverse Commute Vanpool Program	Operations*: Year 2: \$33,333 Year 3: \$66,666	87
Santa Maria Area Transit (SMAT)	Nighttime and Saturday Service	Operations*: Year 2: \$50,000 Year 3: \$50,000	91

**FTA 5317 – New Freedom Program**

Agency	Project	FTA Funding Requested	Score
Community Partners in Caring	Volunteer Driver Program	Operations*: \$62,500/year	96

**Remaining Schedule for FY 2008 Call for Projects**

With the completion of scoring by the Regional Scoring Committee and SBCTAC, the projects and project scores are scheduled for review and adoption by the SBCAG Board of Directors.

Following adoption by the SBCAG Board of Directors at the August 21<sup>st</sup> meeting the applications will then be forwarded to Caltrans by August 29<sup>th</sup> due date.

The remaining schedule for the FY 2008 Call for Projects is provided below.

SBCAG Board Adopts Local Applications:	Thursday, August 21 <sup>st</sup>
Application due to Caltrans on or before:	Friday, August 29, 2008
Caltrans releases statewide application scores:	September or October 2008

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\*Eligible JARC/New Freedom projects may request up to three years of operating funding per project. Projects approved for multi-year funding will require yearly application updates to ensure compliance with the original project scope. Funding commitments in the second and third year are not guaranteed, but will be granted pending the level of federal appropriations to Caltrans Division of Mass Transportation.

## **Committee Review**

At their August 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, SBCTAC recommended that the SBCAG board approve the Federal Fiscal Year 2008 FTA 5310, 5316 and 5317 grant applications and regional scores and authorize their submittal to Caltrans.