

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Federal Transit Administration Funding

MEETING DATE: July 17, 2008

AGENDA ITEM: 6C

STAFF CONTACT: Sarkes Khachek

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on the call for projects for the FTA 5310, 5316 and 5317 programs.

SUMMARY:

In California, Caltrans is the designated administrator of three federal transit funding programs: Elderly and Disabled Transportation (FTA 5310), Jobs Access Reverse Commute - JARC (Section 5316) and New Freedom (Section 5317). These programs provide federal funding for capital and operating costs associated with transit service for low-income, elderly and persons with disabilities. Caltrans has announced a call for projects for the programs for Fiscal Year 2008. SBCAG, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Santa Barbara County, is responsible for conducting a regional or "first level" scoring of projects submitted from within the county before they are submitted to Caltrans to be included in a statewide competitive selection process and scored by a statewide scoring committee.

SBCAG received six applications for the three grant programs which were scored by a regional scoring committee. The committee is composed of two members of the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC), along with SBCAG staff and Caltrans District 5 staff.

SBCTAC reviewed the applications and discussed the preliminary scores given each project at their July 8th meeting and decided to allow applicants the opportunity to provide additional information to improve their chances of achieving high scores in the statewide competition. The regional scoring committee will reconvene and rescore applications in late July or early August. In August, SBCTAC will recommend that the SBCAG Board adopt the regional scores and authorize their submittal to Caltrans for consideration in the statewide competition.

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

Member Agencies

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

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

SBCAG, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, conducted the regional competitive process. This selection process is a “first-level” review and scoring of the Elderly & Disabled/JARC/NF grant 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.

By the June 2nd deadline, applications from six agencies were received by SBCAG. To assist in the competitive selection process, SBCAG utilized a regional scoring committee composed of two committee members of SBCTAC, along with SBCAG and Caltrans District 5 staff.

The scoring committee convened on Monday, June 23rd to review and score each grant application received based on project scoring criteria provided by Caltrans. The following are the preliminary local scores for applications received by funding category:

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 Transit Service	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	65

FTA 5317 – New Freedom Program

Agency	Project	FTA Funding Requested	Score
Community Partners in Caring	Volunteer Driver Program	Operations*: \$62,500/yr for 3 years	94

*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.

Projects that received high preliminary scores met the goals of their respective programs and provided the detailed information requested in the grant applications. Projects with low preliminary scores met the goals of their respective programs but did not provide all the necessary information to achieve the highest potential score per section. Project applicants were notified of their scores on June 23rd.

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 on July 8 that applicants be provided with an opportunity to resubmit their grant applications to SBCAG with additional information that would boost their scores done at the regional level and help a statewide scoring committee understand the projects. The supplemental information received by the applicants will be considered by the regional scoring committee before the applications and scores are adopted locally by the SBCAG board and submitted to Caltrans in August.

Remaining Schedule for FY 2008 Call for Projects

SBCTAC and the SBCAG Board of Directors will be asked to adopt the regional scores for Santa Barbara County at their respective August meetings. Applications will then be forwarded to Caltrans by the August 29th due date.

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

Applications due to SBCAG:	Monday, June 2, 2008
Applications scored by Regional Committee:	Monday, June 23 rd
Applicants notified of scores:	Wednesday, June 25 th
Applicant Response to Preliminary Score:	Monday, July 7 th
Preliminary scores reviewed by SBCTAC:	Tuesday, July 8 th
Preliminary scores reviewed by SBCAG Board:	Thursday, July 17 th
Supplemental application items due to SBCAG:	Tuesday, July 22nd
Supplemental items reviewed by Regional Committee:	Week of July 28th
Local Applications adopted by SBCTAC:	Tuesday, August 12 th
SBCAG Board Adopts Local Applications:	Thursday, August 21 st
Application due to Caltrans on or before:	Friday, August 29, 2008

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information item to receive an update on the call for projects for the FTA 5310, 5316 and 5317 programs. No action is required of the SBCAG board in July. Applications will be adopted by the board in August and then submitted to Caltrans for statewide scoring.