

## STAFF REPORT

**SUBJECT:** Reverse Commute Vanpool Project

**MEETING DATE:** May 15, 2008

**AGENDA ITEM:** 4F

**STAFF CONTACT:** Kent Epperson, Scott Spaulding

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Authorize staff to submit a grant application for federal Job Access—Reverse Commute (JARC) funding for vanpool service from South Coast to North County.

**SUMMARY:**

No daily transit service currently operates in the reverse commute direction from Santa Barbara and Goleta to North County, leaving low income and transit dependent individuals in these areas with no practical way to access jobs or services in North County. Traffic Solutions has received Federal Job Access--Reverse Commute funding (JARC) to launch a North County Reverse Commute Vanpool pilot program. This program was launched earlier this month and provides reverse commute mobility by making available a \$400 monthly subsidy for individuals operating vanpools between the South Coast and North County. The pilot program serves as an assessment of the demand for implementing fixed route reverse commute transit service in these areas. The funding for this program runs through December of this year. Another allocation of JARC funds will be available for FY08-09, with applications due to SBCAG on June 2, 2008. Traffic Solutions is requesting Board authorization to submit a grant application for additional JARC funds to implement a phase II North County Reverse Commute program. The phase II program will enable Traffic Solutions to continue the pilot vanpool program through FY09-10.

**DISCUSSION:**

No daily transit service currently operates in the reverse commute direction from Santa Barbara and Goleta to North County, leaving low income and transit dependent individuals in these areas with no practical way to access jobs or services in North County. Requests have been made during the unmet transit needs process for transit service from the South Coast to the North County. The 2008 Transit Needs Assessment includes a finding that this is an unmet transit need that is not reasonable to meet, but identifies the North County Reverse Commute Vanpool pilot program that will serve to test the viability of the reverse commute service.

Traffic Solutions received Federal Job Access Reverse Commute funding (JARC) to implement a North County Reverse Commute Vanpool pilot program. This program was launched earlier this month and provides reverse commute mobility by making available a \$400 monthly subsidy

for individuals operating vanpools between the South Coast and North County. The funding for this program runs through December of this year.

Another allocation of JARC funds will be available for FY08-09, with applications due to SBCAG on June 2, 2008. Staff is requesting authorization to submit a grant application for additional JARC funds to implement a phase II North County Reverse Commute program. The phase II program will be a continuation of the existing pilot vanpool program and will provide flexibility to use the funding for reverse commute transit service if the vanpool program is successful. Reverse commute transit service could be provided by an existing regional bus service such as the Clean Air Express. However, since future funding of the Clean Air Express service is contingent on the passage of a Measure A, expansion of the Clean Air Express is problematic at this time. Any use of the JARC funds for reverse commute transit service would be contingent on the passage of Measure A and would be considered during future service planning efforts for the Clean Air Express.

**COMMITTEE REVIEW:**

None