



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NORTHBOUND I-405 CARPOOL LANE AMONG WESTSIDE
CALL FOR PROJECTS PROPOSALS APPROVED BY MTA BOARD**

The MTA has programmed funding to construct a 3.6 mile carpool lane on the north side of the San Diego Freeway between the Marina and Santa Monica freeways, one of 15 Westside transportation improvement projects slated to receive Call for Projects funding, it was announced Wednesday.

The MTA's Call for Projects program occurs every two years and determines which of the hundreds of transportation improvement project proposals submitted by 88 cities, Los Angeles County and state agencies receives funding. This particular Call for Projects saw 414 proposals vie for approximately \$666.3 million. In all, 157 were approved following a four-month evaluation and ranking period involving MTA planning staff and the Board.

"Approving this \$73.1 million San Diego Freeway project made perfect sense since state funding for a southbound carpool lane has already been approved," said Interim MTA CEO Linda Bohlinger.

Since the program's inception in 1991, the MTA has allocated nearly \$1.4 billion for such projects as freeway carpool lanes, major street widening, freeway ramps, traffic signal synchronization, bus system improvements such as bus lanes, ridesharing incentives, transit centers and park-n-ride lots and regional bikeways. Funds were also available for televillages, a new concept where local residents use mass transit to reach a transit station featuring computer equipment with Internet access and other equipment so they can

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telecommunicate to work.

Other projects approved include \$3.2 million for a transit center at Wilshire Boulevard and Western Avenue, the Metro Red Line subway station site, a project that will make it much easier for Metro System riders to connect with Metro Buses or Metro Rail. Santa Monica Municipal Bus Lines will receive a total of \$2.4 million to equip or upgrade its buses with magnetic fare debit card systems.

In addition, the City of Culver City will receive \$250,000 to rebuild a pedestrian bridge over Ballona Creek at Ocean Drive and Westwood Boulevard, a project designed to ensure child safety and reduce traffic congestion around schools and Sepulveda Boulevard.

“The reconstruction of this pedestrian bridge will provide children with safe access from the residential community to three schools, a city park, a daycare center and the Ballona Creek Regional Bikeway,” said Los Angeles County Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke. “Not only does this represent a major safety improvement for children but it will help the disabled community as well with the construction of new handicap access ramps.”

Some of the projects that MTA has helped provide funding for in past Call for Projects range from a Los Angeles River bike path/bridge; shuttle services in South Central Los Angeles; widening of Magic Mountain Parkway in Valencia; extending the Route 30 Freeway in La Verne by 6.2 miles; synchronization of traffic signals on the Westside and in the South Bay; rail freight improvements along the Alameda Corridor; and placing bike racks on buses in the San Gabriel Valley, to mention a few.

A little more than 50 percent of the funding comes from monies raised from Proposition C (the Los Angeles County one-half cent sales tax), the balance from the state and federal government.

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