



**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
MAY 19, 2004**

**SUBJECT: PROGRAMMING OF FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)
SECTION 5311 FUNDS**

**ACTION: APPROVE SIX-YEAR PROGRAMMING OF FTA SECTION 5311 FUNDS
FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the programming of \$1,092,000 in FTA Section 5311 funds for Los Angeles County for a six-year period and authorize the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or his designee to identify projects annually.

ISSUE

Each year federal transit funds are made available to enhance public transit services in non-urbanized areas with populations under 50,000. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for Los Angeles County, is responsible for planning and programming the area's Section 5311 regional apportionment.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The MTA, as the RTPA for Los Angeles County, is responsible for planning, programming and assigning subsidies for the efficient utilization of the region's Section 5311 funds. Once the MTA Board of Directors approves the six-year programming of these funds, MTA staff will immediately program the funds in the next available Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment. MTA staff also will solicit annually eligible recipients for program proposals and recommend annual projects to the CEO. This process will ensure that the funds will continue to be available for the delivery of public transit services to the county's non-urbanized area constituents.

OPTIONS

Rather than authorizing the programming of the funds for a six-year period, the Board could authorize a lesser time period of programming, including annual authorizations. Concurrently, the Board also could choose to reserve the annual identification of projects to itself rather than delegating this responsibility to the CEO. Staff does not recommend these

options. Caltrans' annual funding cycles and the TIP process operate on radically different and very tight timelines. Given the necessary time requirements for solicitation and identification of projects once Caltrans issues its regional allocations, annual authorizations would delay the inclusion of the project(s) in the TIP, potentially resulting in the disruption of service to the county's non-urbanized areas. By proactively programming the funds for a six-year period and streamlining the project identification process, the MTA will be ensuring that the transit services funded by the Section 5311 Program continue uninterrupted.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

A combined total of approximately \$1,092,000 in FTA Section 5311 funds is recommended for programming over a six-year period. The estimated funds being recommended for programming are based on the MTA Financial Forecasting Model's use of a 1.4% historical annual growth rate of the Highway Trust Fund. As all of these funds are assigned to subrecipients, they entail no direct financial impact on the MTA.

BACKGROUND

The FTA, on behalf of the U. S. Secretary of Transportation, annually allocates apportioned Section 5311 funds to the governor of each state. In California, the Governor's Office has established the State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as the designated recipient of these funds. Each year, the total appropriated funds are distributed statewide as mandated by federal statute.

The regional apportionments are allocated to counties based on the population of their rural areas. In Los Angeles County, these areas are located entirely within the North County area adjacent to and surrounding the Lancaster-Palmdale and Santa Clarita Urbanized Areas. The MTA, as the RTPA for Los Angeles County, is responsible for the planning and programming of the funds within the county. These funds must be used for public transit projects serving areas outside of an urban boundary with a population of 50,000 or less and are intended to provide access to employment, education, health care, shopping and recreation. Historically, the MTA has programmed the funds to the County of Los Angeles to defray the costs of operating both fixed-route and dial-a-ride transit services to the residents of the unincorporated areas of the Antelope Valley.

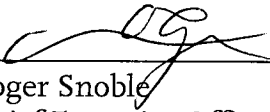
NEXT STEPS

Staff will prepare the appropriate documents to program the funds in the TIP and administer the program cooperatively with Caltrans.

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