



April 13, 2017

To: Transit Committee

From: Darrell Johnson, Chief Executive Officer A blue ink signature, likely of Darrell Johnson, is written over the "From:" line and extends into the "Subject:" line.

Subject: Grant Award for the 2017 and 2018 Orange County Fair Express Service

Overview

On April 20, 2017, the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee of the South Coast Air Quality Management District is expected to award the Orange County Transportation Authority \$834,222 in grant funds to support the direct operating costs of the Orange County Fair Express Service for the 2017 and 2018 fair seasons. Authorization is requested to accept the award and execute grant-related agreements.

Recommendation

Authorize the Chief Executive Officer or designee to accept the grant award and execute grant-related agreements with the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee to support the Orange County Fair Express Service.

Background

Signed into law in September 1990, AB 2766 (Chapter 1705, Statutes of 1990) authorized a \$4.00 per vehicle surcharge on annual motor vehicle registration fees to fund programs that reduce motor vehicle air pollution. AB 2766 mandated that 30 cents of every dollar collected be deposited into a discretionary account managed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). To determine which projects to fund, AB 2766 created the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee (MSRC) to establish criteria, evaluate proposed projects, and make final funding recommendations to the SCAQMD Governing Board.

Periodically, the MSRC makes available grant funds on a competitive basis to reduce automobile trips and promote transit usage as a means of reducing

emissions within the South Coast Air Basin, which spans all of Orange County and the urban portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties.

On March 3, 2017, the MSRC announced the two-year Major Event Center Transportation grant program, which made available \$5 million to fund the direct operating costs of transit services that specifically serve major event center venues located within the South Coast Air Basin. The purpose of the grant program is to promote event-specific transit service to mitigate traffic congestion and reduce automobile trips at major events.

Discussion

On April 20, 2017, the MSRC Board is expected to award the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) \$834,222 to support the operating costs of the Orange County (OC) Fair Express for the 2017 and 2018 fair seasons. The service will again serve one of the most popular county fairs in the nation, which attracted well over 1.3 million visitors last year. The OC Fair Express service garnered over 95,000 boardings last year, which is a 20 percent increase over the prior year's service in 2015. Moreover, 63 percent of the riders were first time bus riders, and 98 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the service.

The proposed OC Fair Express has been designed to offer a convenient and attractive alternative to automobile travel by providing reliable and efficient, non-stop express bus service directly to the OC Fair. This year, the service will be available for the five weekends the OC Fair is in operation, starting on Saturday, July 15, 2017, and continuing through Sunday, August 13, 2017. The service will be offered only on Saturday and Sunday, and not on Fridays as in previous years based on other service priorities and vehicle availability.

The OC Fair Express Service will deploy 25 compressed natural gas buses and provide service to the nine transit facilities listed below. The hydrogen fuel cell electric bus will also be used for the service, which will reduce emissions even further. Depending on the route and time of day, the service will be made available every 20 to 40 minutes for 13 hours per day. The first bus will arrive at 11:00 a.m. at the fairgrounds, and the last bus will depart at midnight from the fairgrounds. A map of the nine routes, along with the headways, is presented in Attachment A.

- Fullerton Park and Ride
- Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center
- Anaheim Canyon Metrolink Station
- The Village at Orange
- Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center
- Golden West Transportation Center
- Irvine Transportation Center
- Laguna Hills Transportation Center
- Junipero Serra Park & Ride

As in previous years, the service will require a \$2.00 fare with all applicable fare discounts and passes accepted. The service is expected to generate over 70,000 boardings for the upcoming fair season, which is an estimate based on ridership data available from last year's service provided on Saturdays and Sundays.

To maximize ridership, OCTA will again be undertaking a joint messaging campaign in partnership with the OC Fair and Event Center. This cooperative effort will position the OC Fair Express as the "Official Transportation Provider for the OC Fair," and provide riders with a coupon allowing admission to the fair for \$3.00, which is an \$11.00 discount off the \$14.00 admission price. The marketing campaign will target both current OCTA customers, as well as new users. The campaign will include promotions in newspapers, direct mail, radio, websites and other electronic media, on-board and exterior bus advertisements, and other outreach activities supported by both OCTA and the OC Fair and Event Center.

The MSRC Major Event Center Transportation Grant program requires a local match of cash and/or in-kind services that is equal to or greater than the MSRC funding request amount. These express services have been tailored to meet the funding limitations which require at least a 50 percent local match contribution. The local match contribution, estimated at \$530,799 each year, will be provided in the form of OCTA staff time, marketing costs, fare and admission discounts, and farebox revenue as allowed by the grant program. The local match will be included in the fiscal year 2017-18 budget.

Summary

On April 20, 2017, the MSRC of the SCAQMD is expected to award OCTA \$834,222 in grant funds to support the direct operating costs of providing the OC Fair Express Service for the 2017 and 2018 fair seasons. Authorization is requested to accept the grant awards and execute grant funding agreements.

Attachment

A. OC Fair Express Stations Map

Prepared by:

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