



**September 9, 2021**

**To:** Transit Committee

**From:** Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

**Subject:** Grant Award Acceptance for the 2022 Orange County Fair Express Bus Service

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Darrell E. Johnson", is positioned in the upper right area of the document.

**Overview**

The Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee awarded the Orange County Transportation Authority \$289,054 in competitive Major Event Center Transportation Program funding. The grant award will support the 2022 Orange County Fair Express Bus Service.

**Recommendation**

Authorize the Chief Executive Officer, or designee, to accept the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee Major Event Center Transportation Program award for \$289,054, and to negotiate and execute grant-related agreements and documents with the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee.

**Background**

The Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee (MSRC), in partnership with the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), makes grants available to local agencies for programs to seek cost-effective opportunities to reduce automobile trips and associated emissions by shifting attendees of major events out of their personal automobile and into zero and near-zero emission transportation alternatives.

On April 5, 2019, MSRC made available \$6.5 million in 2019-21 Major Event Center Transportation Program (Program) funding. On September 4, 2020, this Program was extended one year to allow events to continue through the end of the calendar year 2022 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Program provides funding to support the operation of transit services at major event venues experiencing high levels of traffic congestion in the SCAQMD region to reduce the number of vehicles traveling to the center.

The Program requires utilizing the cleanest, commercially available zero and/or near-zero emission vehicles to provide alternative transportation service for major events. In March 2021, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) submitted an application requesting \$289,054 to support the Orange County Fair Express Bus Service (service) operations for the 2022 season. The service will utilize eight hydrogen fuel cell electric buses in support of the Program's requirement to utilize the cleanest vehicles available.

OCTA has partnered with the Orange County Fair and Event Center since 2006 to provide public transportation to the OC Fair. When the service began in 2006, there were 1,579 boardings, and in 2019 that had grown to nearly 83,000 boardings, demonstrating the success of the service. The service provides direct connections to the OC Fair from nine transit facilities throughout Orange County. Each of the nine routes provides direct intermodal connectivity to OC Bus, Metrolink and Amtrak services, carpools, and other transit services provided by neighboring counties.

***Discussion***

On June 4, 2021, the SCAQMD awarded OCTA \$289,054 Program grant funding, representing 40 percent of the total cost of the service. The Program requires that OCTA provide the remaining 60 percent of the total project cost in in-kind match, or \$433,581, for a total cost of \$722,635.

With OCTA Board of Directors' (Board) authorization, staff will implement the service in 2022 in anticipation that demand will return to pre-pandemic levels. The service will provide an opportunity to introduce and welcome back OC residents and visitors to the OC Bus transit service and encourage riders to become comfortable with riding public transit.

Staff is requesting the Board authorize acceptance of this grant and further authorize the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and enter into a contract with MSRC, allowing OCTA to seek reimbursement for the costs for the future 2022 service.

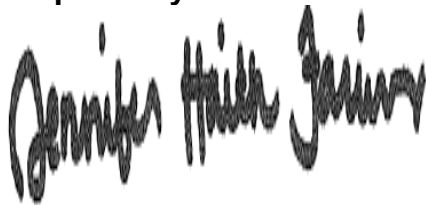
***Summary***

The MSRC awarded OCTA \$289,054 to support operations of the OC Fair Express Bus Service for the 2022 season. Board authorization is requested to receive the grant. As part the grant acceptance, OCTA would provide an in-kind match contribution of \$433,581 toward the total project cost of \$722,635.

***Attachment***

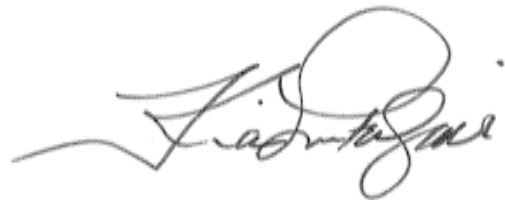
None.

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