

TO: Board of Directors

DATE: April 7, 2021

FROM: Rick Ramacier



SUBJ: Federal Community Project Funding (Earmarks) in the FY22 Federal Appropriations and in the Federal Transportation Reauthorization

Background

County Connection was invited to consider submitting a project(s) as a Community Project Funding (earmark) request for the FY22 federal appropriations bill and/or to the federal transportation reauthorization mark up. These invitations come from the offices of Congressmen DeSaulnier and Swalwell.

These invitations have also gone out to our partners, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and the Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA). Since all of us are working on improving non-driving mobility in the I-680 corridor, we are all talking about how best to take advantage of these new federal opportunities.

Early discussions that each of us have had with the two congressional offices strongly suggest that projects that work to implement a new “one seat” express bus ride in the corridor have a lot of general support. Also, projects that would help County Connection & LAVTA conduct a joint Hydrogen Fuel Cell bus pilot project in an express bus service along the I-680 corridor are receiving strong interest.

To that end, the General Manager signed letters of support for two requests – one from CCTA and from the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) relative to the projects mentioned above. The letters are attached for your reference.

This was done with the informal support of the MP&L Committee where this was discussed at their meeting April 1, 2021.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that County Connection not directly request an earmark at this time. Rather, we believe it is a better course of action to support requests from our partners like CCTA and ACTC. Both transportation planning agencies are strong partners relative to improving services in the I-680 corridor and in assisting East Bay transit operators advance projects that will help

us move to Zero Emission Based Buses (ZEB). Both of these agencies also have full time federal lobbyists which are important partners in navigating the earmark process successfully.

Staff further recommends that we take appropriate actions over the next many months to prepare ourselves to make direct earmark requests should later opportunities to do so arrive as expected.

MP&L Committee Recommendation

The MP&L Committee agreed informally with the staff recommendation and asked that this be sent to the full Board.

Action Request

Staff seeks your feedback and discussion on our recommendations. No formal action is requested, unless the Board wishes us to formally request our own earmark(s) in addition to our supporting the requests of our partners noted above.

County Connection

2477 Arnold Industrial Way Concord, CA 94520-5326 (925) 676-7500 countyconnection.org

April 4, 2021

The Honorable Eric Swalwell
United States House of Representatives
174 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: SUPPORT - COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING – STRATEGY TO ADVANCE HYDROGEN FUELS AND SUPPORT THE GREEN ECONOMY

Dear Congressman Swalwell:

On behalf of the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (County Connection), I am writing to support the Alameda County (ACTC) request for \$2.5 M in Community Project Funding for the Strategy to Advance Hydrogen Fuels and Support the Green Economy. This project is a critical piece of our effort to effectively convert our fleets to Zero Emission Based Buses (ZEBs) as required under California state law. In addition, converting our fleets to ZEBs will help move forward, the green economy. ZEBs include Battery Electric Buses (BEBs) and Hydrogen Fuel Cell Buses (HFCs). County Connection will need a mix of both BEBs and HFCs as it transitions to ZEBs in manner that matches the variety of services we will provide over the next 20 years.

To assist County Connection, LAVTA, and AC Transit in this critical effort, ACTC has requested an appropriation earmark for the Strategy to Advance Hydrogen Fuels and Support the Green Economy (Strategy) from Congressman Swalwell's office. This will help develop a comprehensive strategy and implementation plan for advancing hydrogen fuel opportunities that support a clean energy economy and address climate change.

The Strategy will support the implementation of ZEB transit vehicles, including buses, and rail. The Strategy will focus on advancing opportunities for hydrogen transit including supporting the existing AC Transit hydrogen bus program and future zero-emissions operations for LAVTA, County Connection, and Valley Link rail.

Finally, opportunities for synergies between the transit needs and goods movement will also be explored given that the I-580 and I-680 corridor is a vital link in the state's goods movement network and the importance of reducing emissions in the goods movement sector. The Strategy will also include a focus on research and development opportunities and partnerships with key stakeholders, including transit agencies, local bus manufacturers, academic experts, and industry groups.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely, 

Rick Ramacier
General Manager/CEO
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cc. Kyle Alagood, Staff to Congressman Swaelwell
Allison Johnson, Staff to Congressman DeSaulnier
County Connection Board of Directors
Tim Halie, CCTA
Michael Tree LAVTA
Carolyn Clevenger, ACTC

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CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

County Connection

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March 30, 2021

The Honorable Eric Swalwell
United States House of Representatives
174 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: SUPPORT - COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING – SAN RAMON SHARED MOBILITY HUB

Dear Congressman Swalwell:

On behalf of the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (County Connection), I am writing to support the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) request for \$1.5 M in Community Project Funding for the San Ramon Shared Mobility Hub. This project is a critical piece of our effort to greatly improve reliable, fast, and convenient express bus service between the Martinez Amtrak station and the Dublin BART station via I-680.

This is also a key part of the CCTA Innovate 680 Program, which County Connection greatly supports as Innovate 680 is integral to our effort to greatly improve the ability of the customer to travel in and around the I-680 corridor without driving alone.

This funding request will support the development of a Shared Mobility Hub in San Ramon, which is also home to a regional employment center, the Bishop Ranch Business Park. Thus, this will be a key stop along any robust express bus service delivered in the I-680 corridor. These mobility hubs will facilitate reduced dependence on single-occupant vehicles, while improving the experiences of those using alternative transportation, helping to reach mode shift goals as well as reduce greenhouses gases.

The Shared Mobility Hub will also promote the use of innovate technology-based shuttles between the hub and both Bishop Ranch and the San Ramon City Center housing development. One of the key features of this 4,000 plus unit housing proposal, is the offer of free transit to all residents. The hub will be critical in getting these new transit users to improved mainline transit services in the I-680 corridor.

Finally, the San Ramon Shared Mobility Hub will serve as a key connection for residential areas between alternative modes of transportation, such as carpooling and vanpooling, ride sharing, and micro-transit such as bikes, walking, and scooters. The Shared Mobility Hub will also serve as a key stop for the Interstate 680 Express Bus Service “One Seat Ride” currently proposed by CCTA, the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC), LAVTA and County Connection.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Rick Ramacier
General Manager/CEO

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