

TO: MP&L Committee

DATE: December 28, 2011

FROM: Rick Ramacier
General Manager

SUBJECT: Draft 2012 CCCTA Legislative
Program

Summary

Enclosed is the draft 2012 CCCTA Legislative Program. It is drafted in the form of a booklet as has been the case in recent years. The draft combines the federal and state program for the first time in a few years.

Federal

The federal items are focused on the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill. It also includes a position on FY13 transit appropriations.

State

The state items focus on the budget, Proposition 1B bond sales, paratransit coordination, and local options for new revenue sources.

Action Requested

Staff would like to review and discuss both the format and the content of the draft legislative program with you at your meeting on January 4, 2012. Staff also seeks to have you forward this to the Board for review and discussion, and possible action.

2012 Federal Legislative Program



Central Contra Costa Transit Authority

(County Connection) is a joint powers agency of eleven communities serving a population of nearly 500,000 people who take over 3.6 million transit trips annually.

County Connection serves a dynamic and diverse modern suburban area that is geographically spread out. Serving such an area is both challenging and rewarding. County Connection patrons are ethnically and economically diverse, and often transit dependent. Without County Connection services, many central Contra Costa County residents would have no transportation available for work, school, medical appointments, or to take advantage of recreational opportunities. For them County Connection is a life sustaining service!

County Connection Customers Are

- Commuters going to work
- Students going to school
- Seniors and persons with disabilities who are dependent on transit
- Low wage earners productively participating in the community
- Residents who want to connect to their life activities in a green and economical manner

County Connection Faces Financial Challenges

- County Connection has lost over 15% of its operating funds due to the economy. Any further erosion of funding will lead to more service cuts.
- County Connection employees have agreed to long term wage freezes and benefit reductions.
- County Connection has eliminated and restructured its least productive services.

County Connection Innovation

- County Connection uses green hybrid Gillig buses that are manufactured locally.
- County Connection maintains a nationally recognized public-private partnership with the Bishop Ranch Business Park to provide frequent and fast shuttles between Bishop Ranch and two regional rail systems- BART and the ACE Train. This features significant operating cost reimbursement as well as full fare subsidy from Bishop Ranch.
- County Connection is implementing a real time bus stop information system that will allow people to access real time bus information from their laptops and smart phones.
- County Connection will implement the regional smart chip based fare payment card, Clipper in 2012 or 2013.

Federal Positions

A. Reauthorization of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) with the following principles:

1. Ensuring the financial integrity of the Mass Transit Account with the Highway Trust Fund.
2. Double the size of the federal investment in transit over six years to meet at least 50% of the estimated \$60 billion in annual critical public transit capital needs by the end of the six years, and to support a projected doubling of ridership over the next 20 years.
3. Continue to allow the use of federal formula funds for preventive maintenance and allow greater use of federal funds to maintain present levels of service through direct operating assistance options.
4. Authorize individual programs within the transit title at increasing levels that are sufficient to address current and future transit needs.
5. Collapse the New Freedom, Job Access/Reverse Commute, and 5310 Formula programs into one program for persons with specialized transportation needs, and keep related coordination requirements.
6. Create any Metro Mobility program as a flexible program funded out of FHWA funds in addition to any transit 5307 program. Ensure equal access to such funds for suburban transit systems in large urban areas.
7. Maintain the ADA set-a-side option in the 5307 program.

County Connection relies on over \$5 million dollars on an annualized basis in federal transit funding for critical things like

bus replacement and preventative maintenance. Without this funding, County Connection will have to permanently reduce its services by at least 33%. Thus, a strong and robust reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU is crucial to the core mission of County Connection.

B. FY2013 transit appropriations funded to authorized levels including:

1. Funding transit at a level that is greater than FY12 levels.
2. Funding that is provided in a timely basis and without unnecessary or overly burdensome review.

A full FY13 transit appropriations bill is needed to ensure that County Connection receives the federal funding it is counting on to maintain services and to keep its capital equipment in a state of good repair.

C. Public transit safety oversight legislation should contain the following principles:

1. Call for a collaborative process between federal, state, and local agency partners.
2. Any new federal safety standards should be built on industry standards, and developed with significant input from public transit systems.
3. Public transit systems must be given adequate time to achieve compliance with any new safety standards before penalties or sanctions take effect.
4. New federally mandated safety program related costs should be supported by the federal government outside the existing transit funding programs.

STATE POSITIONS

- A. Fully fund the State Transit Assistance (STA) in FY13 by maintaining the sales tax on diesel fuel rates, and by ensuring that all of those proceeds are deposited in the Public Transportation Account (PTA) as called for by current law.

STA is expected to provide County Connection with approximately \$3.2 million in FY 13 which represents nearly 10% of its projected operating budget in FY13. With this revenue, County Connection can avoid further cutbacks in FY13. Without it, an additional service cut of up to 15% would be necessary.

- B. Fully appropriate the highest possible level of Proposition 1B (Prop 1B) bond revenue as a part of the FY13 state budget. Ensure that bonds are issued in a timely manner by the Treasurer's Office so that Proposition 1B projects are not delayed.

County Connection is programmed to receive federal grants in FY13 to replace old buses and paratransit vehicles. The required local match is 20%, and Proposition 1B funds have been targeted. Receipt of Prop B funds is dependent on bond sales and if bonds are not sold in a timely manner, these crucial vehicle replacement projects are at risk. Second, a lack of Prop 1B match funds will jeopardize County Connection's ability to obtain the federal funds. Finally, without Prop1B funding, County Connection will have to keep less reliable and less energy efficient vehicles on the road, driving up operating

costs, and resulting in less reliable service to the public.

- C. Improve Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) coordination with public transit service by allowing public transit operators to act as Medi-Cal transportation brokers and allowing Medi-Cal users to be reimbursed for using fixed route transit to and from medical services.

This will allow County Connection to better coordinate overly expensive Medi-Cal trips with ADA paratransit trips thereby increasing overall productivity and paratransit coordination. This will allow County Connection to be reimbursed at greater rate for trips already being provided. Allowing Medi-Cal users to use existing fixed route services and be reimbursed will save the state significant money.

- D. Provide local or regional areas greater ability and flexibility to seek voter approval for additional tax or fee revenues to support transit capital and operations.

County Connection faces a budget shortfall as early as FY16 at current service levels. Without additional revenue support, County Connection will not be in position to help its communities implement AB32 or SB375, or to help meet the growing transportation needs of seniors.

County Connection Benefits The Community By

- Providing direct connections to shopping via shuttles from neighborhoods and BART.
- Providing commuter shuttles that reduce travel time, relieve congestion, and connect to regional transportation services.
- Providing comprehensive local services that allow students to use public transit to go to and from school.
- Providing direct and convenient service between communities of concern like the Monument Corridor in Concord and medical facilities like the County Hospital.
- Providing over 200 good paying blue collar jobs and by indirectly supporting hundreds more through the purchase of vehicles and supplies.
- Providing alternative modes of transportation that support economic enhancement, environmental improvements, promote energy independence, senior mobility, student transportation, and connections to the Bay Area region for all activities.

The County Connection

CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

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The information in this brochure is available on the
County Connection website - www.cccta.org