

**TO:** A & F Committee and Board of Directors

**DATE:** November 8, 2016

**FROM:** Rick Ramacier  
General Manager

**SUBJECT: Authorization to sign an agreement with the Center for Transportation & the Environment (CTE) for management and consulting services in support of County Connection's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Low or No Emission Grant Program (Low-No).**

### Background

With CTE's assistance, County Connection applied for and received a Low-No grant from the FTA this past August. As part of these FTA programs, project management and consulting services are available as a grant expense from CTE. To that end, up to \$390,000 of FTA Low-No funding has been awarded to County Connection for these purposes. The Low-No grant will help County Connection replace four diesel powered buses that have reached the end of their useful life with four battery electric buses.

CTE will offer County Connection expertise in all facets of a battery electric bus project, including working with crucial exterior partners, staff training, vehicle deployment to maximize bus efficiency and effectiveness, among other things.

### The Low-No Program

The Fixing America's Transportation Surface Act (FAST) contains \$55 million annually in competitive funding to assist transit systems in purchasing and implementing zero or near zero emission (at the tailpipe) buses. Often transit systems use this program to augment funding from traditional FTA formula sources to bridge the gap between the cost of a traditional diesel powered bus and a zero emission based bus (ZEB). This promotes the replacement of diesel buses with ZEB buses upon the end of the useful life of a diesel bus.

FTA has contracted with CTE to offer Low-No grantees technical assistance with projects funded by the program. Because Low-No is meant to spur advances in relatively new technologies, the whole granting and procurement approach is different from processes used under normal FTA rules. For example, in the County Connection Low-No application that was awarded, vendors, suppliers, etc. were named (Gillig, BAE, WAVE). And, part of the Low-No grant application review by FTA includes a review of the proposed vendors with respect to their ability to deliver a successful product, etc.

### CTE

CTE is a non-profit organization out of Atlanta, GA, with an office in Berkeley, CA. They are the leading organization in the area of managing, analyzing, planning, and advising transit systems on procuring and implementing zero emission bus projects. Over the past 20 years, they have been heavily involved in projects across the country with many different types of transit organizations. Among others, this includes AC Transit and Long Beach Transit. Currently, they are working with Solano Transit (SolTrans),

and the Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA). CTE has expertise in the area of project planning, project managing, grant writing, vehicle routing/deployment, and staff training. They also have effective working relationships with FTA, the power utilities, various vendors, as well as other useful resources. All this will be offered to County Connection as part of this project.

### **County Connection & CTE Agreement**

The proposed agreement is for CTE to offer its menu of services to County Connection in support of the Low-No project. This project is to replace four diesel buses with four battery electric buses. These four buses will be built and work exactly as the four recently procured electric trolleys sans the trolley skin. Thus, the same vendors (Gillig, BAE, and WAVE) will be the suppliers.

With the grant award happening this past August, we are at the beginning stages of this project. The timeframe for the agreement with CTE is three years into late 2019. The buses are anticipated to be delivered and put into service in late 2017 or possibly early 2018. CTE is attached to the project through 2019 to supply ongoing staff training, performance analysis & evaluation and related recommendations, and performance tracking and reporting.

Prior to those activities, CTE will assist in technology evaluation, project management and planning, an evaluation of which routes would be the most effective and efficient for four battery electric buses to run on within our system, and to assist us in working with the utilities and FTA.

A draft agreement is under review by our legal counsel at Hanson & Bridgett.

### **Financial Impact**

The agreement with CTE will be written to not exceed \$390,000. The Low-No grant includes the \$390,000 budgeted for the agreement. Using this funding for another expense within the project would require FTA approval which would be far from certain.

### **Action Requested**

#### A&F Committee

Staff respectfully requests that the A&F Committee forward Resolution No. 2017-006 to the full board for adoption at its meeting on Thursday, November 17, 2016. This Resolution would authorize the General Manager to execute an agreement with CTE for an amount not to exceed \$390,000 for management and consulting services related to the County Connection Low-No battery electric bus project.

#### Board of Directors

Should the A&F Committee take the action referenced above, the Board of Directors is asked to adopt Resolution No. 2017-006, authorizing the General Manager to execute an agreement as described in this memo and as to form per County Connection legal counsel.