

**To:** Marketing, Planning & Legislative Committee

**Date:** 8/13/2018

**From:** Ruby Horta, Director of Planning & Marketing

**Reviewed by:** 

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**SUBJECT: IDEA Grants in Concord and Walnut Creek**

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**Background:**

At the June Marketing Planning & Legislative (MP&L) Committee, staff discussed a wide range of advanced public transit initiatives dating back to the 1980s. It is evident that jurisdictions and agencies throughout our service area are interested in implementing technology-driven programs that may significantly reduce congestion. We believe public transit must play an important role in these developments to maximize investments and ensure a cohesive approach. Given developments surrounding public transit, it is important for County Connection's voice to be part of the conversation both locally and at a regional level.

**Innovative Deployments to Enhance Arterials (IDEA):**

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) developed a regional initiative called the Innovative Deployments to Enhance Arterial (IDEA) Grant Program. IDEA is designed to provide a funding opportunity to support cities, counties and transit agencies to deploy advanced technologies along their arterials to enhance mobility, sustainability and safety across all modes. The core goals of the IDEA program are to improve travel time and travel time reliability along arterials for autos and transit vehicles, improve safety for all users, decrease emissions and fuel consumption, and improve knowledge of and proficiency in the use of advanced technologies for arterial operations.

The cities of Concord and Walnut Creek were each awarded close to \$800,000 to install transit signal priority (TSP) systems along specific corridors. The grant also includes funds to install the equipment on a limited number of County Connection vehicles, which would allow buses to trigger the signal priority, under certain circumstances to improve on-time performance.

County Connection staff is fully supportive of these types of projects, and has been an advocate for TSP on public transit since the early 90s. Staff has been involved in the development of these two projects and has been a strong advocate for system compatibility between the two projects. Although these are two separate grants, in two different cities, the equipment on our vehicles should be the same. Concord and Walnut Creek staff recognize the importance of deploying compatible systems and County Connection is well positioned to play a leading role.

Staff believes that other cities in our service area will pursue these types of opportunities and cities should be encouraged to work with County Connection in the development and deployment of these technologies to ensure system compatibility. County, city and transit partnerships are critical when pursuing grants that promote technology solutions to reduce congestion, a common goal throughout the Bay Area.

**Innovate 680:**

Successful TSP projects at various cities throughout our service area, will provide the foundation for Contra Costa Transportation Authority's (CCTA) Innovate 680 Program. The program promotes an integrated approach to redefining mobility through seven strategies: completing HOV/express lanes, cooling corridor "hot spots", increasing efficiency of bus service, enhancing travel demand management strategies, providing first mile/last mile connections, implementing innovative operational strategies and preparing the corridor for the future. County Connection recognizes transit will have a role in each of the strategies and will pursue partnerships and funding opportunities to ensure thorough and thoughtful deployments with long-term benefits.

**Financial Implications:**

Staff has agreed to contribute to the project with in-kind services.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends that the MP&L Committee forward the projects presented to the Board for discussion and further direction.