

**To:** Advisory Committee

**Date:** 10/4/2018

**From:** Sean Hedgpeth, Manager of Planning & Marketing

**Reviewed by:**



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**SUBJECT: Leadership in Sustainability Awards, Sustainable Contra Costa**

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### **Background:**

Back in July, the City of Walnut Creek nominated County Connection for a Leadership in Sustainability Award, presented by Sustainable Contra Costa. This nomination was for Sustainable Resource Management, which includes waste and pollution reduction, air quality, energy conservation, efficiency, and generation. County Connection received this award for The Downtown Walnut Creek Trolley, which was recently upgraded with our new electric trolley buses.

As part of a long standing partnership, The City of Walnut Creek has subsidized the fares for the Downtown Trolley, which is operated as County Connection Route 4. The route operates seven days a week with 15-minute weekday service and every 20 minutes on weekends. The free route circulates through the city's downtown core, with layovers at BART and Broadway Plaza. The Downtown Trolley is one of the most successful routes in our entire bus system in terms of ridership, carrying 256,615 passengers in fiscal year 2018.

### **Introducing Battery Electric Buses on the Downtown Trolley**

In 2012, the Federal Transportation Administration awarded County Connection a total of \$4.32 million from the Clean Fuels Grant Program, which County Connection used to purchase four all-electric Gillig buses and two wireless electric vehicle charging stations, one being an inductive charger installed at the BART station. The four trolley-replica electric buses all operate on Route 4 and replaced a fleet of diesel trolleys that had reached the end of their useful life. As a result, County Connection became one of the first public transit authorities in the Bay Area to implement electric buses, and one of the first in the nation to implement a fleet of in-route inductively charged electric buses.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Sustainable Contra Costa Awards Gala**

As part of accepting this reward, County Connection staff were invited to attend an awards gala hosted at the Pleasant Hill Community Center on September 20th. About 200 people attended including representatives from several non-profits, city and county government, and local businesses. County Connection staff accepted the reward after an introduction from Cindy Silva, Mayor Pro Tem of Walnut Creek. She presented us with signed certificates of recognition from the offices of County Supervisor Karen Mitchoff, House Representative Mark DeSaulnier, and

State Senator Steven Glazier. A glass plaque was also presented to County Connection by Sustainable Contra Costa.

In addition to receiving this award at the gala, County Connection was also publicly recognized for our commitment to water recycling efforts at our facility from Central Sanitary District for the fourth year going. Our facility staff participates in this program by collecting, sampling, filtering, and recycling both rainwater and bus wash water for treatment, which negates the need for a sewer discharge permit.

**Financial Implications:**

None.