

INTER OFFICE MEMO

To: Marketing, Planning, & Legislative Committee

Date: 03/27/2024

From: Ryan Jones, Manager of Marketing & Communications

Reviewed by: MR

SUBJECT: Final Draft 2024 County Connection Federal Legislative Advocacy Program

Background:

County Connection's Federal Advocacy Program highlights the Authority's top priorities for 2024. The need for an on-going reliable federally funded transit program remains crucial to the ability of County Connection to provide reliable, safe, and effective service to its communities.

Congressional Office Meeting Visits:

As we enter the new legislative session, staff recognizes the difficulties a divided Congress will pose. Nonetheless, it is important to continue to advocate for the needs of public transit and County Connection as we continue to restore service, transition to a zero-emission bus fleet, and strengthen collaboration with neighboring transportation partners to better serve our community. In April, County Connection's General Manager Bill Churchill and Assistant General Manager Ruby Horta will meet with our legislative leaders during the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Legislative Conference in Washington D.C.

Updated Materials:

At the March meeting, staff presented an initial draft of the revised the Federal Advocacy Program brochure for 2024, which includes stats from a 2023 passenger survey, updated language for priorities #1 and #4, as well as new images with focus on our passengers and operating staff. On the back panel of the printed brochure there is a QR code, which directs to a companion webpage that mirrors the priorities contained in the brochure. The webpage also includes links to various financial, planning, and research documents, including County Connection's Operating and Capital Budget, Short-Range Transit Plan, Zero Emission Bus Rollout Plan, and Title VI Program Report, as well as an embedded video to our One Seat Regional Ride promotion video.

The MP&L Committee and Board of Directors have reviewed the drafts of this brochure and provided guidance and feedback on its content. Staff received additional input at the March Board of Directors meeting and is presenting a draft for final review.

Financial Implications:

None.

Recommendation:

Staff recommend approval of the draft 2024 Federal Advocacy Program.

Action Requested:

Staff requests that the MP&L Committee review, provide any final feedback, and approve the draft 2024 Federal Advocacy Program.

Attachments:

1. Draft 2024 Federal Advocacy Program brochure

COMMITTED TO SERVING OUR COMMUNITY



LOCAL ECONOMY

Many of our riders are essential workers. Without them and an ability to travel to work, our economy suffers.



QUALITY OF LIFE

We give seniors and our disabled community freedom to safely travel throughout the region.



EDUCATION

We offer the only public bus service for Middle and High Schools in Central Contra Costa, as well as provide service to Diablo Valley College and Saint Mary's College. When our area students go to school, we make sure there's an affordable transit option to get there.



SEAMLESS SUPPORT

When our Bay Area transit partners have service interruptions, we provide a bus bridge connection to ensure riders can safely reach their destinations.



REDUCED TRAFFIC CONGESTION

We keep roughly 3K vehicles off the road each day, which helps reduce daily carbon emissions in the region.



Paratransit Operator, Stan Levine with passenger, Tim.

REGIONAL TRANSIT BENEFITS THROUGH COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

PARATRANSIT ONE-SEAT REGIONAL PILOT

Area transit agencies handle cross-regional paratransit logistics, so our customers don't have to.

JOINT CONTRACT FOR PROVISION OF ADA PARATRANSIT SERVICES

A partnership with the Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority to improve paratransit efficiencies.

FUEL CELL BUSES FOR COMMUTER SERVICE

A partnership with Contra Costa Transportation Authority and Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority will provide express service along the congested I-680 commuter corridor.

LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT MAKES COUNTY CONNECTION STAND OUT!

- Short-Range Transit Plan FY23-28
- Zero Emission Bus Rollout Plan
- Operating and Capital Budget FY24
- One Seat Regional Ride promo video
- Title VI Program Report



THANK YOU!

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County Connection

2024 FEDERAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY ★ CA



Serving Contra Costa County communities of
Clayton - Concord - Danville - Lafayette - Martinez - Moraga
Orinda - Pleasant Hill - San Ramon - Walnut Creek
and Unincorporated communities in Central Contra Costa County

OUR BUS SERVICE AT A GLANCE

County Connection provides vital local transit service for communities in Central Contra Costa County.

CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

- RIDERSHIP**
~2.36 M in 2023
- POPULATION**
540,000
- SERVICE AREA**
200 Sq Miles

**OUR RIDERSHIP
BASED ON 2023 SURVEY DATA**

BY CATEGORY	COUNTY CONNECTION RIDERS	COUNTY RESIDENTS
No car	28%	5%
Minority Population	63%	39%
Household Income <\$50k/yr	59%	17%
Ages 19-34	37%	16%

LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRIPS

San Francisco Bay Area

2023 CAPITAL FUNDING

Federal funding accounts for an estimated 73% on an annualized basis.

PRIORITIES OF THE FEDERAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM



INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT REAUTHORIZATION

County Connection relies on vital federal funds to support essential programs such as conversion to a Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) fleet, ADA paratransit and lifeline services. A fully funded appropriation of the IIJA is imperative to keep these programs moving forward and functioning. Additionally, the Authority strongly supports the re-authorization of the IIJA to ensure a strong funding platform supporting public transit into the future.



ENACT APTA'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON MOBILITY & INNOVATION

County Connection supports innovative mobility solutions to increase public transportation use. Innovations should prepare the next generation of public transportation employees through workforce development.



RESTORE THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY & MASS TRANSIT FUND

Without a reliable and sustainable trust fund, many transit projects will be at risk.



COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING REQUEST

County Connection is committed to converting the existing fleet of diesel buses to Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV's) in compliance with the California ICT regulation. The current fleet of Battery Electric buses rely on the local electric utility to charge the vehicles. The Authority is seeking a community project grant to fund the installation of a Hydrogen Fuel Cell Generator, allowing for the ability to continue to operate battery electric buses in the event of a natural disaster or when the local utility is incapable of providing power.



(L to R) Father with kids aboard Route 15 to Concord, passengers aboard Route 6 with service between Orinda and Lafayette BART stations, boy in Walnut Creek greeting bus operator.