



## Board Report

File #: 2019-0807, File Type: Program

Agenda Number: 9.

### PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE JANUARY 15, 2020

**SUBJECT: FUNDING AWARD RECOMMENDATION FOR FEDERAL TRANSIT  
ADMINISTRATION SECTION 5310 GRANT PROGRAM FUNDS**

**ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS**

**RECOMMENDATION**

CONSIDER:

- A. APPROVING the federal Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (“Program”) recommended funding awards totaling up to \$9,926,791 for Traditional Capital and Other Capital Projects, as shown in Attachments A and B;
- B. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or his designee to (1) negotiate and execute pass-through agreements with the agencies approved for funding, and (2) apply \$194,400 of unused funds from past awards to the recommended funding awards;
- C. DELEGATING to the CEO or his designee the authority to administratively approve minor changes to the scope of previously-approved Section 5310 funding awards;
- D. CERTIFYING that the Section 5310 funds are fairly and equitably allocated to eligible sub-recipients and, where feasible, projects are coordinated with transportation services assisted by other federal agencies; and
- E. CERTIFYING that the projects proposed for Section 5310 funding are included in the locally-developed 2016-2019 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Los Angeles County (“Coordinated Plan”) that was developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors and individuals with disabilities, as well as by representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human service providers and other members of the public.

## **ISSUE**

In April 2019, the Board approved the competitive FY 2019 solicitation process and allocation of funds for Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2018, 2019, and 2020 Section 5310. Applications were due on July 31, 2019. This report presents the resulting funding recommendations for Board review and approval and summarizes the evaluation process in response to this solicitation.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) is the Designated Recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Program funds in urbanized areas of Los Angeles County. As such, Metro is responsible for fund planning, programming, distribution, management and sub-recipient oversight.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Program Description

The Section 5310 Program provides operating and capital assistance for public transportation projects that i) are planned, designed and carried out to meet the special needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, inappropriate, or unavailable; ii) exceed the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990; iii) improve access to fixed-route service and decrease reliance on complementary paratransit, and/or iv) provide alternatives to public transportation projects that assist seniors and individuals with disabilities.

### Funding Availability

A total of \$10,396,358 in Section 5310 funds were made available through the solicitation process, with specific amounts allocated to the following Urbanized Areas (UZAs): \$9,843,284 for Los Angeles -Long Beach, \$232,964 for Santa Clarita, and \$320,110 for Lancaster- Palmdale. These available Section 5310 funds include FTA funds apportioned for FFY 2018, 2019 and 2020 as authorized under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.

### Application Process

On April 30, 2019, a notice of funding availability with a link to the Board-approved application package was transmitted by Metro Community Relations to nearly 4,000 interested parties and potential applicants. The solicitation information was also posted on the Metro website. Metro hosted two informational workshops attended by more than 70 agencies to review program requirements, the application package, project evaluation and the selection process. Forty-three responsive applications requesting over \$13.5 million in federal grants were received by the July 31, 2019 deadline.

### Evaluation and Ranking

Two evaluation panels were convened to evaluate the applications. The panels were comprised of

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Metro staff and volunteers representing public transit agencies, the Bus Operations Subcommittee, the Southern California Association of Governments and a private non-profit organization (Aging and Disability Transportation Network). The average score of each evaluation panel and corresponding ranking for each project is shown in Attachments A and B. Funding was allocated to the applications ranked highest until the funds were depleted. Attachment C contains the Board-approved evaluation criteria applied by panel members in scoring the proposals.

Consistent with Board-approved guidelines, funding awards are limited to proposals with a final competitive score of 70-100. However, due to the competitive nature of this solicitation, a number of projects scoring above 70 were not recommended for funding. Preliminary funding recommendations were distributed to proposing agencies on October 17, 2019. A total of 28 projects were recommended for funding, including one that was partially funded, and 15 projects were not recommended for funding.

#### Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Appeals

On November 6, 2019, TAC heard applicant appeals from five agencies supporting their preliminary fund award. After hearing the presentations, TAC approved a motion supporting the preliminary funding recommendation and recommended further that the City of Manhattan Beach receive full funding for their project, and that the City of Whittier be offered a partial award with the remaining unallocated Section 5310 balance for the LA-Long Beach UZA.

#### Administrative Scope Changes

Grant sub-recipients may request to re-scope their project(s) from what was approved by the Board. The proposed recommendation will delegate to the CEO or his designee the authority to administratively approve minor changes to the scope of work. Minor changes include those which meet all the following criteria: 1) The scope change is consistent with the defined project limits as approved by the Board; 2) the scope of work, as modified, continues to meet the original intent of the approved project scope; 3) to the extent that the scope change results in a reduced total project cost, the new total project cost shall be within 20% of the original total project cost; and 4) the parties shall maintain the original grant to grantee funding commitment ratio (for example, if the grantee originally committed 20% of the total project cost, with the remaining 80% comprised of Section 5310 funds, those percentages shall apply to the new total project cost).

#### Equity Platform

Consistent with Metro's Equity Platform, projects eligible under Section 5310 program guidelines are inherently intended to improve equity by increasing access to opportunity. Transportation is an essential lever to enable access to jobs, housing, education, health and safety. Eligible projects include those that are planned, designed, and carried out to meet the specific needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, unavailable, or inappropriate. Further, the solicitation process and workshops create a forum to engage the community.

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## **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

Approval of the recommendation will have no impact on safety.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The FY20 budget includes a total of \$4,685,270 for the federal Section 5310 Program in Cost Center 0441, Subsidies to Others, under Project 500005 (Seniors and Disabilities - S5310).

Since these are multi-year projects, the cost center manager and the Chief Planning Officer will be responsible for budgeting project expenses in future years.

### **Impact to Budget**

The sources of funds for this Program is Federal Section 5310, which is not eligible for Metro's bus and rail operating and capital budgets.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

Recommendation supports the following goals of the Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: Provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling; and  
Goal 3: Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The Board may choose not to approve all or some of the recommended actions. Staff does not recommend this alternative because, without Board approval, Metro cannot fulfill its responsibilities as the Designated Recipient of Section 5310 Program funds and the projects recommended for funding awards in Attachments A and B would not be implemented. Without Board approval, Metro could risk losing about \$7.4 million in Section 5310 Program funds that will lapse, if not obligated through the FTA approval process by September 30, 2020.

## **NEXT STEPS**

With Board approval, staff will send a notification of final funding award to each project sponsor and will submit the Section 5310 grant applications to the FTA on their behalf. Once the FTA awards the grants, staff will develop and execute grant pass-through agreements with those agencies as sub-recipients. As the Designated Recipient for these funds, staff will work to ensure that sub-recipients comply with all federal rules, regulations and requirements. At the conclusion of this programming cycle, there will be remaining balances in Section 5310 fund apportionments for the Lancaster-Palmdale UZA (approx. \$236,603) and Santa Clarita UZA (approx. \$232,964). Appropriate steps to further program these balances will be pursued and reported to the Board.

**ATTACHMENTS**

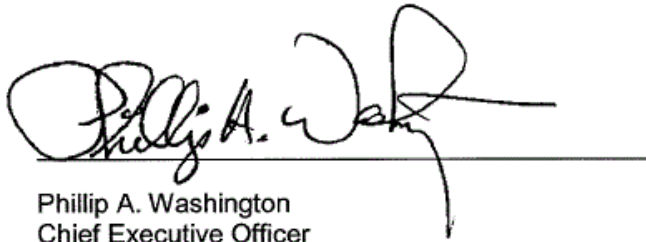
Attachment A - Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim Urbanized Areas

Attachment B - Lancaster-Palmdale Urbanized Areas

Attachment C - Evaluation Criteria

Prepared by: Anne Flores, Senior Manager, Transportation Planning, (213) 922-4894  
Fanny Pan, DEO, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 418-3433  
Shawn Atlow, Executive Officer, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 418-3327  
Laurie Lombardi, SEO, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 418-3251

Reviewed by: James de la Loza, Chief Planning Officer, (213) 922-2920



Phillip A. Washington  
Chief Executive Officer