



Approve Low Carbon Transit Operations Funds Allocations and Transit Operator Projects for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Consent

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Attachments: Yes

Approved by: James Corless

Referring Committee: Policy & Innovation

Issue:

Each year the State Controller publishes allocations for the Local Carbon Transit Operations Fund (LCTOP) and transit operators in the four-county region submit projects for SACOG board to approve.

Recommendation:

The Policy and Innovation Committee recommended that the board: (1) adopt the allocations, (2) approve proposed eligible operator projects and (3) authorize the executive director to sign required documents and report LCTOP funding to Caltrans.

Background/Analysis:

In 2014, the California Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 862 to establish the Transit, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Communities Program. Within this program, the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) was established to provide operating and capital assistance for transit agencies to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities. LCTOP is administered by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in coordination with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the State Controller's Office (SCO).

In compliance with LCTOP guidelines and Caltrans requirements, the board has authorized SACOG's executive director to act as the Authorized Agent and Contributing Sponsor responsible for distributing regional LCTOP funds to local transit agencies in the four counties of Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba. This allows SACOG to release funds to each project lead by signing off on the Project Description and Allocation Request form.

Transit agency projects proposals are due to Caltrans in May 2024. Staff, in coordination with the transit operators submit project proposals for board approval ahead of the deadline. Once the board acts, projects will be submitted to Caltrans where Caltrans and CARB will review the applications to ensure compliance with SB 862 requirements and LCTOP guidelines. The approved projects will then be submitted to the State Controller's Office (SCO) in May and funds will be available for allocation in June 2024.

The El Dorado County Transportation Commission and Placer County Transportation Planning Agency administer LCTOP funding for their respective counties.

Discussion/Analysis:

For FY 2023-2024, the State is appropriating \$5,231,238 in regional LCTOP funds (PUC Section 99313) and \$1,787,558 in operator funds (PUC Section 99314) in the four-county SACOG region. Since the establishment of the program, it has been SACOG's standing policy and practice to distribute the funding by a population-based formula to eligible transit operators.

Staff propose distributing \$128,363 in available regional funds not allocated to any specific transit operator to Unitrans for the purchase of four-electric buses. The unallocated portion has been assigned to operators on a yearly rotation basis.

Sacramento County is contributing \$21,530 of its operator LCTOP allocation (99314) to Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) for the Light Rail Stations Conversions project. SacRT will report project progress and expenditures to Caltrans as stipulated in the LCTOP guidelines.

Attachment A shows the allocations under Public Utility Codes (PUC) 99313 and 99314 and combined allocation for each operator. Attachments B is a list of projects submitted by each operator as approved by their respective governing boards. The attached SACOG board resolution will be submitted to Caltrans for funding.

Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:

There is no fiscal impact to SACOG's operating budget. The funds are allocated by formula to local transit operators. Staff time for administering the program is reflected in the agency's budget and Overall Work Program (OWP).