



Item #06-2-7
Consent

Transportation Committee

February 9, 2006

Allocation Requests for Bus Replacements under the Sacramento Emergency Clean Air and Transportation (SECAT) Program

Issue: The SECAT program has received requests from transit districts to help fund bus replacements

Recommendation: The Transportation Committee recommends that the SACOG Board of Directors approve approximately \$3.0 million in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds and \$3.5 million in SECAT funds for bus replacements region-wide.

Committee Action/Discussion: In October 2005, the California Transportation Commission approved \$10.9 million in state funds for the SECAT program. Prior to this approval, the SECAT program had been on hold for the last two years because of the State's budget crisis. The SACOG Board in fall 2003 programmed approximately \$3.05 million in CMAQ funds to keep a minimal program open in the absence of state funding. In December 2003, SACOG received tentative approval from the Federal Highway Administration to use Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds for engine replacements under the SECAT program. Subsequently, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency disallowed the use of CMAQ funds for engine replacements, and then after Congress authorized diesel engine replacement as part of SAFETEA-LU, indicated it would reconsider the matter. To date, no further ruling has come out.

Caltrans has asked why the CMAQ funds obligated for SECAT in 2004 have not been spent. If not used soon, there is a slight chance that the state could reclaim these funds. To prevent this from happening, staff is recommending that these monies be reallocated to bus replacements under the SECAT program, which would not require any further action by the EPA or any other federal agency.

When the SECAT program was first set up, criteria were established that allowed staff to approve any project that came in under a cost-effectiveness of \$50,000 per one-year ton of NOx reduced. Any project submitted that would cost more per ton than this standard, which includes bus replacements, would require SACOG Board review and approval. Transit agencies within the SACOG region need to replace at least 138 heavy-duty transit vehicles over the next two years, because they are at the end of their useful life. When the SECAT program originally began in December 2000, the SACOG Board approved bus replacements at approximately \$200,000 per one-year ton cost-effectiveness. Staff is recommending that the SACOG Board approve an allocation of \$52,000 per bus that equates to a one-year cost-effectiveness of approximately \$200,000 per ton, the same cost-effectiveness approved in December 2000.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Executive Director

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