



City Council Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: MAY 21, 2024

FROM: PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF THE CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES AND AUTHORIZED AGENT FORM AND AUTHORIZING THE SUBMITTAL OF AN ALLOCATION REQUEST FOR THE LOW CARBON TRANSIT OPERATIONS PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$48,938 FOR A THREE-YEAR FREE FARE PROGRAM OFFERED BY THE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

ISSUES:

Review and approve a Resolution authorizing the execution of the certifications and assurances and authorized agent form; and authorize the submittal of an allocation request for the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) in the amount of \$48,938 for the Free Fare Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Adopt Resolution 2024-XX, authorizing the City Manager or his designee, to execute the FY2023-2024 LCTOP Certification and Assurances and the Authorized Agent Form; and,
2. Approve the submittal of an allocation request to the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program for the Free Fare Program in the amount of \$48,938; and,
3. Upon award, approve the acceptance of Low Carbon Transit Operations Program funds totaling \$48,938; and,
4. With at least five affirmative votes, authorize the Chief Financial Officer, or designee, to record an increase in revenue in the amount of \$48,938 and appropriate an equal amount in expenditures in the Special Transit Fund, Low Carbon Transit Ops Program revenue and expenditure accounts.

BACKGROUND:

The Low Carbon Transit Operations Program is one of several programs that are part of the Transit, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Communities Program established by the California Legislature in 2014, by Senate Bill 862.

LCTOP was created to provide operating and capital assistance for transit agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities. Approved projects in LCTOP are intended to support new or expanded bus or rail services, expand intermodal transit facilities, and may include equipment acquisition, fueling, maintenance and other costs to operate those services or facilities, with each project reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Free Fare Program is intended to support transit operations and promote the use of public transportation. The Free Fare Program meets the LCTOP's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving mobility within many disadvantaged communities and low-income populations within Riverside.

DISCUSSION:

Prior to the pandemic, Riverside Connect was averaging 650 rides per day. As with most transit agencies across the state and country since COVID-19, Riverside Connect ridership has drastically declined and now averages 350 rides per day. Despite outreach efforts, any increase in ridership over the past three years has been minimal. While there are several reasons for this decline, such as virtual doctor visits, telecommuting, and the availability of grocery and home goods delivery services, it is still important to encourage the use of public transportation and inform the senior and disabled residents of how Riverside Connect can improve their mobility.

Using the LCTOP allocation for a three-year Free Fare Program, Riverside Connect's goal is to increase ridership by providing free ride vouchers to qualified new riders and offering free ride days over a 36-month period. A portion of the allocation will also be used for promotional and large-scale marketing purposes to spread awareness and communicate the benefits of using Riverside Connect.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The Free Fare Program contributes to **Strategic Priority 6 – Infrastructure, Mobility and Connectivity** and **Goal 6.1** in addressing the transportation needs of the senior and disabled residents.

This action aligns with the following Cross-Cutting Threads:

1. **Community Trust** – Special Transportation benefits the City's diverse populations, and results in greater public good.
2. **Equity** – Special Transportation's Free Fare Program will ensure that equitable transportation is available to all seniors and disabled residents within the city limits of Riverside.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – Special Transportation is a prudent steward of public funds and ensures responsible management of the City's financial resources while providing quality

public services to its riders.

4. **Innovation** – Special Transportation looks at a variety of funding resources to assist its operations and benefit its riders. Funding to provide the Free Fare Program is new way to increase ridership and enhance mobility across Riverside for seniors and disabled riders living in priority populations.
5. **Sustainability and Resiliency** – Special Transportation is committed to helping the environment by reducing greenhouse gases through encouraging ridership on public transportation and reducing vehicle miles traveled by automobiles.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total fiscal impact of this action is \$48,938. Upon Council approval, an increase in revenue in the amount of \$48,938 will be recorded and an equal amount appropriated in the Special Transit Fund, Low Carbon Transit Ops Program revenue account number 9351400-334100 and expenditure account number 9351400-440210.

Prepared by: Ron Profeta, Transit Manager
Approved by: Pamela M. Galera, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director
Certified as to availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by: Kris Martinez, Assistant City Manager
Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. LCTOP FY 2023-2024 Certifications and Assurances
3. LCTOP Authorized Agent Form
4. LCTOP Allocation Request