

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: Karena Pushnik, Senior Transportation Planner
RE: Public Agency Sponsorship of Green Wheels Hybrid Vanpool Program

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission grant public agency sponsorship to Community Bridges in their funding solicitation efforts for the proposed Green Wheels Hybrid Vanpool Program to serve senior meal sites.

DISCUSSION

Community Bridges has submitted a letter ([Attachment 1](#)) requesting the RTC's public agency sponsorship for a grant funding application to the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District's (MBUAPCD) AB 2766 program. The proposed Green Wheels Hybrid Vanpool Program seeks \$96,000 for a two-year program that would receive \$45,885 in secured and unsecured matching funds from Community Bridges, for a \$141,363 program total. [Attachment 2](#) outlines the program's budget and schedule including activities scheduled for implementation phases.

The Green Wheels Hybrid Vanpool program would provide for the purchase of two gas/electric hybrid vans to serve the five senior meal sites throughout the county – San Lorenzo Valley, Downtown Santa Cruz, Mid-County, Capitola and Watsonville. The hybrid vans would decrease fuel consumption and air pollutant emissions. Incentives would be offered to participants in the meal program who drive their own vehicles to encourage them to ride in the hybrid vans, in essence encouraging vanpooling. Program administration and implementation would be structured in similar fashion to the Transportation Development Act funded programs that are administered and implemented by Community Bridges through RTC funding and the City of Santa Cruz public agency sponsorship.

Due to timing, the Regional Transportation Commission's Elderly & Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee did not have a chance to review this proposal or make a recommendation.

The Commission's public agency sponsorship would involve passing the funds through the Commission's budget. No Commission funds would be involved.

[Attachment 3](#) provides logistical information on the proposed Green Wheels Hybrid Vanpool program and its aim of increasing ridesharing and reducing air contaminants. In addition to encouraging vanpooling, the provision of door-to-door transportation to senior meal sites would

have the added benefits of encouraging additional camaraderie between seniors and preparing those with diminishing driving skills to be comfortable using paratransit.

Community Bridges anticipates receiving additional hybrid vehicles through their previously approved Section 5310 grant applications and will need to begin training its staff on hybrid vehicle maintenance.

Although the applications for AB 2766 grants are due to the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District on June 1, Air District staff has assured Community Bridges that they may submit an application conditioned on RTC approval.

If this funding application is approved by the Air District in August, the RTC will need to include this pass through funding in their FY 2005-06 budget.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission support the proposed Green Wheels Hybrid Vanpool Program and grant Community Bridges public agency sponsorship in their efforts to seek \$96,000 from the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District's AB2766 grant funding program. An application will be submitted to the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District on June 1 conditioned upon RTC approval. **Staff recommends authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with the MBUAPCD should the application be successful and execute a contract with Community Bridges for program implementation.**

Attachment 1: Letter from Community Bridges

Attachment 2: Draft Green Wheels Hybrid Vanpool Program Budget and Schedule

Attachment 3: Draft Green Wheels Hybrid Vanpool Program Description

Attachment 4: Resolution