

**AGENDA:** November 1, 2007

**TO:** Regional Transportation Commission  
**FROM:** Karena Pushnik, Senior Transportation Planner  
**RE:** Agricultural Worker Transportation Program Grant Application

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)

1. Approve submittal of a Caltrans Community Outreach/Planning grant application in the amount of \$77,000 on behalf of Community Bridges for the Agricultural Worker Transportation Program ([Attachment 1](#)); and
  2. Authorize a resolution authorizing submittal of the grant application ([Attachment 2](#)).
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## **BACKGROUND**

The California State Legislature appropriated \$20 million from the Public Transportation Account in FY06-07 for grants to public agencies statewide, seeking to provide transit services specifically for farmworkers. Enabling legislation for the state authorizes Caltrans to administer the Agricultural Worker Transportation Program (AWTP) which will expand the Agricultural Industries Transportation Services (AITS) Project model to agricultural areas statewide. The legislation sunsets on June 30, 2010.

According to Caltrans, “the AITS demonstration project (2001-2004) administered by the Division of Mass Transportation, has evolved into a compelling model for the provision of safe, efficient, reliable and affordable transportation services for farmworkers. Operated by Ron Hughes, Transit Manager for [Kings County Area Public Transportation Agency](#), the success of the \$6 million AITS project in Fresno, Kings, and Tulare counties has helped frame the AWTP legislation.”

## **DISCUSSION**

Community Bridges, who also serves as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency, communicated with staff about their interest in seeking a grant for the AWTP in the context of developing the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. Community Bridges has gained support of their approach by Commissioner Campos representing Supervisorial District Four, staff from the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District, the Pajaro Valley Transportation Management Association and neighboring area entities. A copy of the grant application is attached ([Attachment 1](#)).

As shown in their application, the goal of the planning grant is to assess the transportation needs of agricultural workers and whether they would be better served by a vanpool program similar to the successful program operated in Kings County. The Kings County agricultural vanpool program is fully self supporting (without subsidy), reduces vehicle miles traveled and reduces the number of trips made in potentially unlicensed or uninsured vehicles. The grant amount is set at \$77,000 and requires a local match. Community Bridges has secured the \$7,000 in matching funds from their unrestricted funding sources.

The majority of agricultural areas in the county are located in the southern region, however the study area includes all of the county to cover the worker's residences and also a 30-mile radius. For this reason, the study area covers the three county region just south of the county including Monterey and San Benito Counties. Monterey County is also submitting a grant application for agricultural worker transportation to/from Greenfield in the southern portion of the county.

**Staff recommends that the RTC approve the application for a Caltrans Community Planning Grant on behalf of Community Bridges for the Agricultural Worker Transportation Program.**

The grant application is due November 1, the same day as the Regional Transportation Commission meeting. Community Bridges, therefore has submitted the grant application, contingent upon the RTC approval to act as the claimant. Because the grant application requires a resolution authorizing the agency to apply and receive grant funds, the attached resolution will be faxed to Caltrans following this meeting (Attachment 2). Grant awards are expected to be announced in December 2007. If Community Bridges is awarded an AWTP grant, staff will amend the RTC budget and develop a memorandum of understanding between Community Bridges and the RTC to formalize pass-through payment and project completion requirements.

## **SUMMARY**

Community Bridges is interested in assessing the need for coordinated agricultural worker transportation and is submitting a grant application, contingent upon the Regional Transportation Commission agreeing to be the claimant.

### Attachments:

1. Agricultural Worker Transportation Program application by the RTC on behalf of Community Bridges
2. Resolution authorizing the RTC to submit the grant application