



**METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION**

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter  
101 Eighth Street  
Oakland, CA 94607-4700  
TEL 510.817.5700  
TTY/TDD 510.817.5769  
FAX 510.817.5848  
E-MAIL [info@mtc.ca.gov](mailto:info@mtc.ca.gov)  
WEB [www.mtc.ca.gov](http://www.mtc.ca.gov)

## **Regional vs. Local Administration of the Lifeline Program: Summary of Interim Program Evaluation Results**

This handout summarizes some of the advantages and drawbacks of administering the Lifeline Transportation Program locally by the nine Bay Area county Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs), versus regionally by MTC. The current interim Lifeline program is administered locally by CMAs under policy direction from MTC. The draft Interim Lifeline Transportation Program Evaluation recently completed by MTC staff recommends a continuation of this arrangement, where MTC sets policy guidance for the program but implementation occurs locally at the county level. The evaluation also recommends some modifications to the program guidelines to streamline the program's administration.

At their March 27 meeting, MCAC's Lifeline/EJ Subcommittee endorsed staff's evaluation report and its recommendations, with a request that staff provide a comparison of the advantages and drawbacks of administering the Lifeline program locally versus regionally. The following matrix summarizes these considerations:

<b>Administrative Implementation</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Drawbacks</b>
CMAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local administration went smoothly and effectively during project outreach, application, and selection phases.</li> <li>• Coordination with CBTP Program administration to prioritize local needs</li> <li>• Flexibility with local transportation funds in some counties to enhance/augment program funding</li> <li>• Local perspective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not eligible recipients of any future program funding sources (STA, JARC, Prop 1B); funding will be allocated directly to eligible sponsors or via MTC</li> <li>• Not in customer- and service-delivery business (compared to transit providers, for example)</li> </ul>
MTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligible recipient for all funding sources (except small UA JARC funds administered by Caltrans)</li> <li>• Regional perspective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not as responsive to local needs</li> <li>• Likely to require much more staff time to administer than LIFT program did</li> <li>• Counter to "bottom up" process envisioned through Community Based Transportation Plans</li> <li>• Difficult to provide same level of oversight and public involvement in project selection process</li> <li>• Counter to MTC Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Even further removed from customer- and service-delivery business</li> </ul>

## **Draft Lifeline Interim Program Evaluation**

### **Minority Citizens Advisory Committee Lifeline/EJ Subcommittee Recommendations**

The Lifeline/EJ Subcommittee met on Thursday, March 27, 2008, for the purpose of discussing the Draft Lifeline Interim Program Evaluation and making a recommendation to the full Minority Citizens Advisory Committee at its April 8, 2008 meeting. The evaluation covers the administration of the Lifeline program during its initial phase.

The Lifeline Transportation Program began as an interim program, funded regionally, but implemented locally by the nine Bay Area county congestion management agencies (and jointly with the county in Santa Clara County). The program is intended to address locally prioritized transportation gaps and barriers with new or expanded services, or improved transportation choices that provide low-income residents and communities a "lifeline" to accessing employment, services, and other activities that are considered essential to daily life. The Lifeline program has funded a variety of projects throughout the region based on locally prioritized needs, including fixed route transit, deviating-route shuttles, pedestrian safety improvements, taxi vouchers, demand-response programs, auto loan programs and others.

It is important to note that this is an interim program evaluation that was requested by the Commission at the start of the Lifeline program. The program has been administered by each of the Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) for the nine Bay Area counties. This initial report is an evaluation of that administration process for the past three years. At issue is whether to continue the administration of the program by the CMAs or suggest another alternative.

The subcommittee felt the report is very thorough and objective in nature. There were, however, some concerns expressed, and the subcommittee recommends MCAC make these concerns known to the Commission.

The subcommittee recommends the following statement be forwarded to the Commission from the MCAC regarding the Draft Lifeline Interim Program Evaluation:

MCAC has reviewed the Draft Lifeline Interim Program Evaluation and finds it to be an objective and thorough report. We would, however, like to express two concerns with the Lifeline Program in general.

1. MTC needs to measure improvements to low-income communities as a result of the Lifeline program. Are the gaps in the transportation network being closed as a result of the program? At present, there does not seem to be a regional approach to answering that question.
2. Since the focus of this administrative evaluation is to determine whether the CMAs should continue to oversee Lifeline projects at the local level, it seems appropriate that prior to making that long-term decision MTC take a look at the pros and cons of administering the program at the regional level versus at the local level through the CMAs.

MCAC Members Present at the 3/27/08 Meeting were Bill Allen, Jacquee Castain, Michael D'Augelli, Michael Lopez and Dawn Love