



METROPOLITAN
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COMMISSION

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Memorandum

TO: Policy Advisory Council Equity & Access Subcommittee

DATE: February 6, 2014

FR: Drennen Shelton

W.I. 1518

RE: New Freedom Cycle 5 Update

Background

The Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) New Freedom Program provides grants for new capital and operating projects aimed at reducing transportation barriers faced by individuals with disabilities beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Funds are apportioned by formula to large urbanized areas (UAs), small UAs, and rural areas based on the population of persons with disabilities. Funds are required to be spent on projects that provide transportation services within those areas. (See attached Bay Area Urbanized Area Map.)

Designated recipients of the funds are responsible for conducting a competitive selection process to determine which projects should receive funding. MTC is the designated recipient for the Bay Area's large UA funds. Caltrans is the designated recipient for the state's small UA and rural area funds.¹

According to federal requirements, projects selected for funding under the New Freedom program must be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan ("Coordinated Plan"). The Bay Area's Coordinated Plan was updated in March 2013 (www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/pths/), and part of that effort involved identifying strategies to enhance coordination of service delivery in the region. One of the key strategies identified in the plan is to "strengthen mobility management in the Bay Area." The plan further recommends that future New Freedom funds be prioritized for implementing projects and activities consistent with the plan's strategies.

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¹ Last year Caltrans completed a call for projects for small UA and rural New Freedom funds. Additional information about the small UA and rural program can be found on the Caltrans website:
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/5317.html>

New Freedom Cycle 5 Project Selection

Last July, staff brought the proposed framework and a proposed regional mobility management “roadmap” study² before the Equity & Access Subcommittee, and proposed the following timeline for the New Freedom Cycle 5 Projects:

- July-August 2013: Outreach to working groups and Policy Advisory Council
- September 2013: Cycle 5 Program Guidelines to PAC & Commission
- Sept.-Dec. 2013: Call for Projects
- January 2014: Project Selection
- February 2014: Program of Projects to working groups and Policy Advisory Council
- March 2014: Program of Projects to PAC & Commission

Staff will be at your February 12 subcommittee meeting to give an update on the Cycle 5 Call for Projects and the progress of the project selection.

Please contact Drennen Shelton at dshelton@mtc.ca.gov or (510) 817-5909 with questions or comments.

² The federal New Freedom guidance allows MTC to use up to 10 percent of the total fiscal year New Freedom apportionment to fund program administration costs including administration, planning and technical assistance. In Cycle 5, MTC is proposing to set aside five percent for MTC program administration and an additional five percent for a mobility management “Roadmap” study.