



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT



October 12, 2021

ITEM TITLE

Grant Award and Program Implementation: Accept Grants and Implement the Chula Vista Community Shuttle Pilot Project

Report Number: 21-0074

Location: No specific geographic location

Department: Economic Development

Environmental Notice: The activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines; therefore, pursuant to State Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) no environmental review is required. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the activity qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines.

Recommended Action

Adopt a resolution to: 1) accept grant funds in the amount of \$997,833 and approve mobility project voucher agreement with the California Air Resources Board for the Community Shuttle Program; 2) accept grant funds in an amount not-to-exceed \$1,000,000 and approve a grant agreement with Community Congregational Development Corporation for the Community Shuttle Program; 3) approve an agreement with Circuit Transit, Inc. to implement and provide services for the Community Shuttle Program; and 4) appropriate funds for these purposes **(4/5 vote required)**.

SUMMARY

To support Chula Vista’s efforts of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and meeting public transportation needs for all ages, the City of Chula Vista, in conjunction with Circuit Transit Inc., applied for the Clean Mobility Options (CMO) grant in October of 2020. The CMO program is a statewide initiative funded by California Climate Investments and administered by California Air Resource Board’s Program Administrator team to provide funding for zero-emission shared mobility options to under-resourced communities in California. In June 2021, the City was awarded a \$997,833 grant through the CMO program to launch the Chula Vista (CV) Community Shuttle Pilot program (Community Shuttle Program) to provide clean transportation to seniors in northwest Chula Vista. In addition, the City received a Community

Resources Contribution grant award not-to-exceed \$1,000,000 as supplemental funding from Community Congregational Development Corporation (CCDC) to expand the original Community Shuttle Program service area and add an additional sedan to the Community Shuttle Program. This item accepts funds and approves grant agreements for both grants, approves an agreement with service provider, authorizes the City Manager to execute all agreements necessary to implement the Community Shuttle Program, and appropriates grant funds therefor.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The Director of Development Services has reviewed the proposed activity for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has determined that the activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines because it will not result in a physical change to the environment; therefore, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the activity is not subject to CEQA. In addition, notwithstanding the foregoing, the Director of Development Services has also determined that the activity qualifies for an Exemption pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines. Thus, no environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Not applicable.

DISCUSSION

In September 2017, City Council adopted the 2017 Climate Action Plan (CAP) to help address the local threat of climate change by reducing GHG emissions. The CAP encourages the expansion of car-sharing services in the City and includes strategies to incentivize clean transportation and vehicle charging with the goal to increase citywide alternative commute rates to 9% by 2035. The CAP also has goals for the City to review “last mile” transportation infrastructure (including technology-based solutions) and propose needed programs or policies to City Council for consideration. The CAP further directs staff to explore opportunities to expand use of alternative fuels and high efficiency/alternative fuel vehicles (AFV) including electric, biodiesel, ethanol, hybrid, hydrogen, and compressed natural gas (CNG) based on appropriateness for vehicle task, fueling infrastructure, petroleum displacement, overall cost, and environmental benefit.

To support the Chula Vista’s efforts of reducing GHG emissions while meeting public transportation needs, the Chula Vista and Circuit Transit Inc. applied for the CMO grant in October of 2020. The CMO program is a statewide initiative funded by California Climate Investments and administered by California Air Resource Board’s Program Administrator team to provide funding for zero-emission shared mobility options to under-resourced communities in California. In June 2021, the Chula Vista was awarded a \$997,833 grant through the CMO program to launch the Community Shuttle Program to provide clean transportation to seniors in northwest Chula Vista.

The goal of the Community Shuttle Program is to improve mobility options for the senior communities, provide connections to public transit and key community services, improve social determinants of health related to transportation accessibility, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and reduce congestion. The Community Shuttle Program will operate as an on-demand service using a fleet of 5 dedicated all-electric vehicles funded by the CMO grant. Riders can request rides within a geo-fenced

coverage zone through a mobile ride request app available on iOS and Android, by call in or text, by kiosks available at key destinations and public spaces.

The City participated in various needs assessment efforts to identify transportation needs for seniors across Chula Vista which helped provide guidance for the Community Shuttle Program. In 2016, the adopted a Healthy Chula Vista Action Plan identifying strategy to promote overall wellness and address public health issues within the community. That same year the City was the 99th jurisdiction in the U.S. to join the Age-Friendly Communities network through the World Health Organization and AARP. Transportation was a key issue addressed in both plans, with a specific interest identified by the community to provide neighborhood-based shuttle services for both daily trips and for access to community events.

The 2018 Chula Vista Age-Friendly Action Plan identified several goals related to senior transportation based on feedback received during the development of the plan with residents and stakeholders. These included goals to increase ridesharing options for seniors in the community and provide shuttles for community events. In collaboration with the City, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) administered a survey in August - September 2020 to assess the needs of the community and gather information on a proposed Chula Vista Mobility HUB in northwest Chula Vista. The survey was provided in English and Spanish and was distributed by the City and community-based organizations. The 2020 SANDAG Mobility Survey is the most recent and comprehensive effort to reach seniors in the northwest area of Chula Vista in relation to transportation needs and was therefore used for the majority of the needs assessment towards this grant.

CV Community Shuttle Pilot Program Launch:

The Community Shuttle Program will provide all-electric on-demand door-to-door shuttle services catered to the needs of the local senior community in the northwest part of Chula Vista. The Community Shuttle Program has been designed with the community’s input and participation to provide safe, convenient, affordable, and accessible first/last mile connections. The goals of the program will be to improve mobility options for the senior community, provide connections to public transit and key community services, improve social determinants of health related to transportation accessibility, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and reduce congestion.

The Community Shuttle Program launch will be divided into several phases, allowing the project team to prepare, set up, start operation, learn and improve. This also allows Circuit to make sure that all employees are working to the highest levels possible, consistent with the company’s best practices. Circuit will incorporate regional resources and staff from its nearby operations to the extent possible to the new program to ensure a smooth launch and ongoing operations. The project team expects to launch shuttle service within 100-120 days of contract execution with CARB and operate the service for the remaining duration of the grant term.

Launch date	Timeline	
Fall 2021	Planning & Pre-launch: 100 - 120 days after execution of contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire vehicles and outfit with customizations for service, hiring & recruitment of staff, including drivers, development and launch the App, launching of Marketing & Outreach plan (Circuit will work with City and Community Partner to

		develop and execute a marketing and outreach plan to announce launch of new service to the community).
Spring 2022	Project Kickoff & Launch. Year 1, Opening Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circuit will kick off the Year1 initial service (open only to seniors for free) on the designated launch date and execute its marketing plan announcing the launch of the new pilot, including any launch event or ribbon cutting with the City. Circuit will conduct ride alongs and on-job training with new staff to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of service.
Spring 2022	Monitoring & Reporting and Adjusting - Initial Service - Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circuit will operate the service and maintain vehicles. During this time, Circuit will monitor key metrics and feedback, conduct rider surveys, implement ongoing marketing strategy, engage in ongoing community outreach, sell and execute advertising campaigns, communicate with and submit regular reports to the City team, and make any adjustments to the service as needed/requested*Only available for seniors for free
Spring 2023	Service Expansion to General Public - Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning for Service Expansion - Circuit will work with the City and Community Partner to plan for service extension to the general public, including rollout timeline. Circuit will collaborate with City and Community Partner/(s) to prepare and implement a marketing and outreach plan for announcing service expansion to existing and potential riders. • Available for general public for a fee, free for seniors
2023 - 2024	Monitoring, Reporting and Adjusting - Expanded Service - Years 2 - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Monitoring & monthly reporting - Circuit will study developing ridership trends to learn busiest ridership times, request hotspots, etc. Circuit will also conduct rider surveys to learn about rider preferences, needs, and report back to the City with data collected to refine service. • Available for general public for a fee, free for seniors

Circuit will provide regular data reports to the City as the Community Shuttle Program launches. In addition, the shuttle service will be reviewed by the project team monthly, quarterly, and on an as needed basis. Hours, vehicles, and/or service territory will be reviewed and may be adjusted as needed according to service data and input from the community. Vehicles will be stored, maintained, and charged at a local facility.

CV Community Shuttle Pilot Program Operation:

The Community Shuttle Program will be administered by the City and operated by Circuit Transit Inc. (Circuit). Circuit will provide a turn-key service, including employing and training a team of local driver ambassadors, providing and maintaining electric vehicles for service, obtaining appropriate storage and charging facilities with assistance from the City, providing technology for the service, and insuring the service. Circuit will leverage its regional Southern California team and resources to quickly launch new services in Chula Vista. Circuit has 10 years of experience providing last mile transportation services. They

have operated in California since 2013 and in San Diego since 2016. Circuit currently has a contract for neighborhood electric vehicle (NEV) services for Downtown San Diego with the City of San Diego.

The Community Shuttle Program will operate as an on-demand service using a fleet of six (6) dedicated all-electric vehicles funded by CMO and CCDC. Riders can request rides within a geo-fenced coverage zone through a mobile ride request app available on iOS and Android, by call in or text, by kiosks available at key destinations and public spaces. Caregivers, senior living community staff, and others can also make requests on behalf of riders. The service will include an ADA accessible vehicle for riders requiring ADA assistance, which can be indicated in the ride request app, the kiosk, or when requesting by phone. For the first year of operation, service will launch as a free transportation service to seniors. The focus of the service territory will be on key destinations for this population, including healthcare, grocery, senior living facilities and senior centers, and other destinations as determined through community feedback. Over this period, the service will be adjusted and honed to the needs of this community.

After the first year of operation, service will be opened to the general public for a low fare but remain free for seniors. This will help offset the costs of the service and provide for continuing support for the program. A contactless fare program will be implemented and will accept payment via credit card, debit card, or prepaid card. The service will operate at least 12 hours per day, 5 days a week. The service schedule will be aligned with the needs of the community and adjusted with feedback from the community and City and as data from the service comes in.

The Community Shuttle Program service will be provided in the northwest portion of Chula Vista. The target population lives in (11) census tracts as defined by AB1550-designated low-income communities. This includes the following census tracts 6073012502, 6073012501, 6073012600, 6073012401, 6073012402, 6073012700, 6073013000, 6073012302, 6073012303, and 6073012304, which are identified by CalEnviroScreen as having 41,801 residents. The Community Shuttle Program is specifically targeting service for senior residents living in senior living and affordable housing communities at seven mobile home parks, which have a total of 750 spaces and two affordable housing complexes with 228 units and will provide service to additional senior housing facilities and those living in single family homes within the service area,. Service will be designed for these community members but will be open to the general public after the first year for a fare to provide ongoing sustainability, further reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce congestion. Circuit, the City, and community partners, including San Ysidro Health, will work with the community to identify key hot spots within this geofenced zone. Riders will be able to request rides to/from anywhere within a specified geofenced coverage zone, which has been designed to focus on trips to/from healthcare, grocery, senior living facilities and centers, city and community service, retail, social and entertainment, public transportation stops/hubs, and other locations as identified by the community.



The service will be operated as a single coverage area supported by funding from CMO and CCDC with a seamless experience for seniors and riders.

Additional Grant Funding – Community Congregational Development Corporation (CCDC)

On June 24, 2021, the City received a commitment for an additional up to \$1,000,000 Community Resource Contribution (CRC) as supplemental funding from CCDC to expand the original project service area for the Community Shuttle Project and add an additional sedan to the service. The main conditions for the additional up to \$1,000,000 pledge from CCDC was to (1) allow seniors to ride free so long as CCDC is funding the program; (2) allow program shuttles to operate seamlessly between the geographic areas funded by the CMO grant and the CCDC grant; and 3) service the greatest number of seniors possible within operating parameters. The City will work with CCDC to fully meet all conditions.

DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the real property holdings of the City Council members do not create a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov't Code § 87100, et seq.). Staff is not independently aware and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision-maker conflict of interest in this matter.

CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT

The Chula Vista (CV) Community Shuttle Pilot program is funded through CMO and CCDC grant funding for the first three (3) years, thus there is no new General Fund impact.

ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT

There are no ongoing fiscal impacts associated with the Chula Vista (CV) Community Shuttle Pilot program. The Chula Vista (CV) Community Shuttle Pilot program is funded through CMO and CCDC grant funding for the first three (3) years and a portion of revenues generated via fares/advertising through the first 3 years, in addition to other funding sources, will be applied to fund year four (4) operations. The service will not operate after year three (3) if funding is not identified and secured. To ensure continuation of the shuttle service, the City will work collaboratively with stakeholders to identify revenue generation opportunities through fares, advertising or other grant opportunities. The City will aid Circuit Transit Inc. with appropriate storage of vehicles and charging facilities.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Service Area Map
2. CMO Application
3. CMO Agreement
4. CCDC Application
5. CCDC Agreement
6. Needs Assessment - 2020 SANDAG Mobility Survey
7. 2-Party Agreement with Circuit Transit, Inc.

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