

STAFF REPORT

DATE: August 5, 2021
TO: Unitrans Advisory Committee
FROM: Teri Sheets, Unitrans Assistant General Manager-Administration *Teri*
SUBJECT: Proposed Program of Projects for Federal Transit Administration Remaining Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funding, American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funding, and Section 5307/5339 Formula Funding

Recommendation

1. Conduct a public hearing on the proposed Program of Projects for the remaining CARES Act funding, American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding, and 5307/5339 Formula Funds
2. Recommend that the City Council approve the proposed Program of Projects

Fiscal Impact

These grant funds are Federal Transit funds and can only be used for transit activities. The FTA grant funds would be allocated on to Unitrans and the Yolo County Transportation District (YCTD) upon receipt by the city.

Council Goal(s)

Ensure Fiscal Resilience
Fund, Maintain, and Improve Infrastructure

Background and Analysis

On an annual basis, the City of Davis/Unitrans prepares a Program of Projects (POP) that forms the basis for grant applications submitted to FTA for annual transit funding allocated to the City by FTA. The Program of Projects is typically completed once per year in spring with the Unitrans Advisory Committee (UAC) holding a public hearing, making a recommendation to the City Council on the proposed program, and then City Council reviewing and acting on the proposed program. Once approved by Council, city staff submits and executes grant applications and agreements, and then passes funds through to Unitrans through a sub-recipient agreement.

In response to the impact of COVID-19 on transit operators throughout the nation, the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act appropriated \$25 billion to support capital, operating, and other expenses generally eligible under those programs to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. The FTA apportioned \$10,308,599 to the Davis urbanized area to support transit operations and help backfill local and state revenue losses to prevent significant transit service reductions and impacts. In spring and fall 2020, the UAC and City Council approved two POPs that set aside a portion of Davis area CARES Act funds to the Yolo County Transportation District (YCTD) for Yolobus operations within the City of Davis and allocated CARES Act funding for Unitrans to help meet operating expense needs through FY2023. Unitrans operating assistance was allocated through FY2023 in order to provide additional flexibility in current and future City budgets to alleviate pandemic and funding impacts to Davis Community Transit and Public Works.

On March 11, 2021, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) was enacted which appropriated additional funding to the City of Davis to support transit operations, capital, and other expenses to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. Through the ARP, the City was apportioned an additional \$830,050 which has not been dedicated to a specific project, program, or need at this time.

In addition to one-time CARES and ARP Acts funding, the City of Davis receives formula apportionments of federal transit funding based on population, bus ridership, and other factors. In FY 2020, the City also received a discretionary FTA award for the purchase of electric buses for the Unitrans fleet. In total, FTA has apportioned \$3,902,067 in FY 2021 formula funds and awarded \$3,760,000 in discretionary funds to the City to support day-to-day public transit operations and fund capital programs such as fleet replacement and facility rehabilitation to ensure transit service in our community is in a state of good repair.

Proposed Program of Projects

UC Davis is returning to full in-person learning and regular campus operations in Fall 2021, at which time Unitrans would normally return to full, regular service requiring about 175 Unitrans bus drivers. However, Unitrans has struggled to find and train drivers since the pandemic began and expects to have a driver shortage of 40-50 drivers. This once-in-a-generation shortage is expected to last up to nine months. As a result, the University has notified the City of Davis that Unitrans must reduce its Fall 2021 service levels by about 20% compared to pre-pandemic service levels. Consequently, the City is initiating discussions with the Yolo County Transportation District (YCTD) to fill the anticipated service gap on a temporary basis while Unitrans continues its driver recruitment efforts. To pay for the temporary service, at an estimated cost of \$900,000, the proposed POP redistributes CARES Act funding between Unitrans and YCTD as shown in Table 1:

Table 1
Summary of CARES Act Funding Allocations

Operator	Funding/Fiscal Year	Current Allocation	Proposed Allocation
Unitrans	CARES – 2020	\$1,700,000	503,698 **
	CARES – 2021	1,151,201	1,151,201
	CARES – 2022	1,594,891	1,947,604
	CARES – 2023	1,331,411	2,000,000
	CARES – 2024	0	925,000
YCTD-Yolobus	CARES (Fiscal Year NA)	3,711,096	3,711,096 (YCTD Service) 70,000 (City Service)
TOTAL		9,488,599	10,308,599

** Unitrans incurred less expense in FY 2020 and received more student fee revenue than anticipated, resulting in reduced need for CARES Act funds. This enables the City to extend CARES Act funding for Unitrans through FY 2024.

In addition, the proposed POP allocates the entire ARP apportionment of \$830,050 to YCTD to pay for temporary local service coverage for the City of Davis.

Finally, the proposed POP allocates a total of \$7,662,067 in FTA formula and discretionary funds to support day to day Unitrans operations, complete electric bus funding for 14 buses, fund rehabilitation of severely degraded asphalt within Unitrans’ Operations and Maintenance Facility, and fund a new short range transit plan for the City of Davis, among other projects. The complete POP is listed in Attachment 1.

FTA regulatory guidance requires the City and Unitrans to make the proposed POP available for public review and comment prior to its approval by the City Council. The proposed POP was published in the Davis Enterprise and on the Unitrans web site (unitrans.ucdavis.edu) on the week of July 25, 2021, with information on how to ask questions and comment on the proposed POP. The review and comment period will remain open through August 5, 2021.

Staff requests that the Committee conduct a public hearing on the proposed POP, and then adopt a motion that the Committee recommends its approval by the Davis City Council. The Committee's recommendation, in addition to all comments received through the public review period, will be forwarded to the Davis City Council for its Tuesday, August 31, 2021 meeting.

ATTACHMENT 1

PROGRAM OF PROJECTS FOR FEDERAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE FUNDING FOR THE CITY OF DAVIS/UNITRANS

On an annual basis and as needed, the City of Davis prepares a Program of Projects (POP) that forms the basis for grant applications submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for funding. The City submits and executes grant applications and agreements, and then passes funds through to Unitrans through a sub-recipient agreement. FTA regulatory guidance requires the City to make the proposed POP available for public review and comment prior to its approval by the City Council. All comments made on the POP by the deadline will be summarized and provided to the City Council when it reviews and takes action on August 31, 2021.

The deadline for submitting comments on the proposed POP is Thursday, August 5, 2021.

To receive a copy of this notice in another language or alternative formats at no cost, please contact Unitrans by sending an email message to comments@unitrans.ucdavis.edu or by calling Unitrans at (530) 752-2877. The City welcomes all comments from the general public and providers of other transportation services on this proposed program of projects in the most convenient format available. The most common ways in which to submit comments include the following:

- 1) Send an email message with the subject "Program of Projects" to comments@unitrans.ucdavis.edu
- 2) Send a letter addressed to Unitrans ATTN: AGMA, 1 Shields Ave, South Hall Room 5, Davis, CA 95616
- 3) Attend a public hearing on the Program of Projects at the Unitrans Advisory Committee meeting to be held on Thursday, August 5, 2021 at 4pm.

YCTD Operating Assistance

Description: The Yolo County Transportation District (YCTD), as the provider of intercity bus services within Yolo County and to Sacramento, requests funding to pay for a portion of Yolobus services that directly benefit the City of Davis. Once approved in the POP, YCTD will apply directly to FTA for these funds.

Proposed FTA Amount: \$3,781,096 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-CARES Act
\$ 830,050 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-ARP Act
\$ 150,000 - FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY2021

Other Funding: See YCTD Operating Budget

Unitrans Operating Assistance

Description: FTA Section 5307 funds, in combination with a variety of other funding sources, allow Unitrans to operate 18 weekday and seven weekend fixed routes approximately 360 days a year. Unitrans carries about 4.0 million passenger trips annually, which is the second-highest ridership level in the six-county Sacramento metropolitan area.

FY2020 Operating Assistance (for the Period 1/20/2020 through 6/30/2020)

Total Estimated Budget: \$6,430,882
Proposed FTA Amount: \$ 503,698 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-CARES
Other Funding: \$5,927,184 - Covered by FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-CARES Act, ASUCD Student Fees, Transportation Development Act, Fare Revenue, Advertising and Other Misc. Revenue

FY 2021 Operating Assistance (for the Period 7/1/2020 through 6/30/2021)

Total Estimated Budget: \$6,899,894
Proposed FTA Amount: \$1,151,201 – FTA Section 5307 CARES
\$ 874,184 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY2021
Other Funding: \$2,849,124 -- Covered by ASUCD Student Fees, Fare Revenue, Advertising and Other Misc. Revenue

FY 2022 Operating Assistance (for the Period 7/1/2021 through 6/30/2022)

Total Estimated Budget: \$7,730,957
Proposed FTA Amount: \$1,947,604 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-CARES Act

Other Funding: \$ 452,396 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY 2021
\$5,330,957 -- Covered by ASUCD Student Fees, Fare Revenue, Advertising and Other Misc. Revenue

FY 2023 Operating Assistance (for the Period 7/1/2022 through 6/30/2023)

Total Estimated Budget: \$8,041,873
Proposed FTA Amount: \$2,000,000 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-CARES Act
Other Funding: \$6,041,873 - Covered by Future FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds, ASUCD Student Fees, Fare Revenue, Advertising and Other Misc. Revenue

FY 2024 Operating Assistance (for the Period 7/1/2023 through 6/30/2024)

Total Estimated Budget: \$8,283,129
Proposed FTA Amount: \$ 925,000 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-CARES Act
Other Funding: \$7,358,129 - Covered by Future FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds, ASUCD Student Fees, Fare Revenue, Advertising and Other Misc. Revenue

Unitrans Electric Bus Purchase

Description: Purchase 14 electric buses to replace 14 fossil-fuel buses in the Unitrans fleet.

Total Estimated Budget: \$13,912,623 (14 buses)
Prior Fund Allocations: \$2,382,539 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY 2020
\$ 253,717 – FTA Section 5339 Bus Formula Funds-FY 2020
\$1,273,432 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY2019
\$ 243,744 – FTA Section 5339 Bus Formula Funds-FY 2019
\$ 170,429 – State Low Carbon Transit Operations Program-FY 2020
\$ 384,571 - ASUCD Student Fee Funds
Proposed FTA Amount: \$ 233,847 – FTA Section 5339 Bus Formula Funds-FY 2021
\$3,760,000 – FTA Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Award-FY2020
\$2,523,000 – Sacramento Area Council of Governments Regional Program FY2021 Funds (mix of federal/state funding sources to be determined)
Other Funding: \$2,687,344 – ASUCD Student Fee Funds

DCT Paratransit Bus Replacement

Description: Replace one paratransit vehicle to maintain service quality for the City’s complementary ADA paratransit service.

Total Estimated Budget: \$85,000
Proposed FTA Amount: \$68,000 - FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY 2021
Other Funding: \$17,000 - City of Davis Local Funds

Unitrans Miscellaneous Equipment Purchases

Description: Purchase new and replacement maintenance, administration, and operations equipment to efficiently run bus service and maintain/ repair vehicles and facilities.

Total Estimated Cost: \$125,000
Proposed FTA Amount: \$100,000 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY 2021
Other Funding: \$ 25,000 – ASUCD Student Fee Funds

City of Davis Short Range Transit Plan

Description: Update required for the City of Davis’ five-year short range transit plan to cover years 2021-2022 through 2026-2027.

Total Estimated Cost: \$200,000
Proposed FTA Amount: \$160,000 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY 2021
Other Funding: \$ 40,000 – ASUCD Student Fee Funds

Automatic Vehicle Locator / Customer Prediction Information and Related Systems Replacement

Description: The current Unitrans automatic vehicle locator system and automatic passenger counters were installed over a decade ago. The current vendor informed Unitrans that the system will be obsolete in 2022 and needs replacement. Unitrans intends to go out to bid for a replacement system.

Total Estimated Cost: \$400,000

Proposed FTA Amount: \$320,000 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY 2021

Other Funding: \$ 80,000 – ASUCD Student Fee Funds

Payroll & Human Resources System Replacement

Description: Unitrans' 10+ year old payroll, human resources, and operations shift planning/shift picking system is antiquated and in need of replacement with a modern, stable, industry supported system that meets current needs and integrates to the UC's HR and payroll system.

Total Estimated Budget: \$200,000

Proposed FTA Amount: \$160,000 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY 2021

Other Funding: \$ 40,000 – ASUCD Student Fee Funds

Unitrans Maintenance Facility Rehabilitation & Improvement Project – Pavement Rehabilitation & Security Improvements

Description: Major rehabilitation activities at the Unitrans Maintenance Facility including repaving the northern half of the facility with asphalt, replacing six-foot security fencing with taller fencing, mechanizing access gates to secure facility access, and future additional infrastructure to support battery electric buses.

Total Estimated Budget: \$1,729,550

Proposed FTA Amount: \$1,383,640 – FTA Section 5307 Formula Funds-FY 2021

Other Funding: \$ 345,910 – ASUCD Student Fee Funds