

## STAFF REPORT

**SUBJECT:** National Transit Database (NTD) Reporting and Vanpool Incentive Program

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** (1) Approve the Execution of Agreements with the San Joaquin Regional Transit District (RTD) and Vanpool Providers to Implement a National Transit Database (NTD) Vanpool Reporting Program and; (2) Continue the Current Vanpool Incentive of \$150 per Vanpool from Budgeted CMAQ Funds and the (new) NTD Vanpool Reporting Incentive of \$250 per Vanpool from Budgeted Measure K Program Funds

### DISCUSSION:

### SUMMARY:



In 2015, the SJCOG Board approved a pilot program to modify the *dibs* longstanding vanpool incentive to explore a different model to increase and sustain vanpools long-term. As a result, the program increased the number of vanpools. This staff report discusses the need to re-authorize the \$150/vanpool incentive as the current authorization will expire June 30, 2017.

Simultaneous to the continuance of the base incentive, staff is also seeking authorization to implement an associated National Transit Database (NTD)/Vanpool Reporting program.

As a result, the *dibs* program proposes to partner with RTD and Vanpool providers to implement a NTD reporting program for San Joaquin County. This would also mandate involvement from the vanpool drivers and require an additional incentive of \$250 per vanpool. This incentive is consistent with other TDM operators and is an eligible expenditure of Measure K funds budgeted in the board adopted Measure K Strategic Plan.

### RECOMMENDATION:

For the SJCOG Board to authorize the following:

1. SJCOG enter necessary agreements with partners to execute the NTD reporting program including an MOU with RTD and agreement with vanpool provider to administer vanpool driver data collection and reporting services.
2. To re-authorize the long-term *dibs* base vanpool incentive in the amount of \$150 per vanpool, per month for four fiscal years (FY 2017/18 through FY 2020/21) and authorize an NTD vanpool reporting incentive of \$250 per month for those same fiscal years from the Measure K program.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The base vanpool incentive of \$150 per van, per month for four years for a total of \$200,000 per year (\$800,000 for four years) from the current CMAQ allocation to the *dibs* program. An additional \$250 per van, per month as the additional incentive for NTD reporting for a total of \$250,000 per year (\$1,000,000) from the Measure K Bus Transit Category. Both budgets have been approved by the SJCOG Board as part of the CMAQ Operating Program (for *dibs*) and the Measure K Strategic Plan, respectively.

## **BACKGROUND:**

*dibs* is the regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program serving the counties of San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Merced. The program was established by the San Joaquin Council of Governments to address congestion and air quality issues by promoting smart travel options such as carpooling, vanpooling, transit, biking and walking to work.

The NTD is the nation's primary source for information and statistics on the transit systems of the U.S. Each year, NTD performance data are used to apportion FTA funds to transit agencies in U.S. Census designated Urbanized Areas (UZAs). The UZAs in San Joaquin County are Stockton, Lodi, Manteca (which includes Ripon), and Tracy. Recipients of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5307 formula program are required to submit data to the NTD in uniform categories and are therefore eligible to report vanpool activity as an opportunity to increase funding. The FTA considers vanpool a public transportation mode when a vanpool is subsidized on an ongoing basis and meets certain FTA public transit requirements.

### ***dibs* Base Vanpool Incentive**

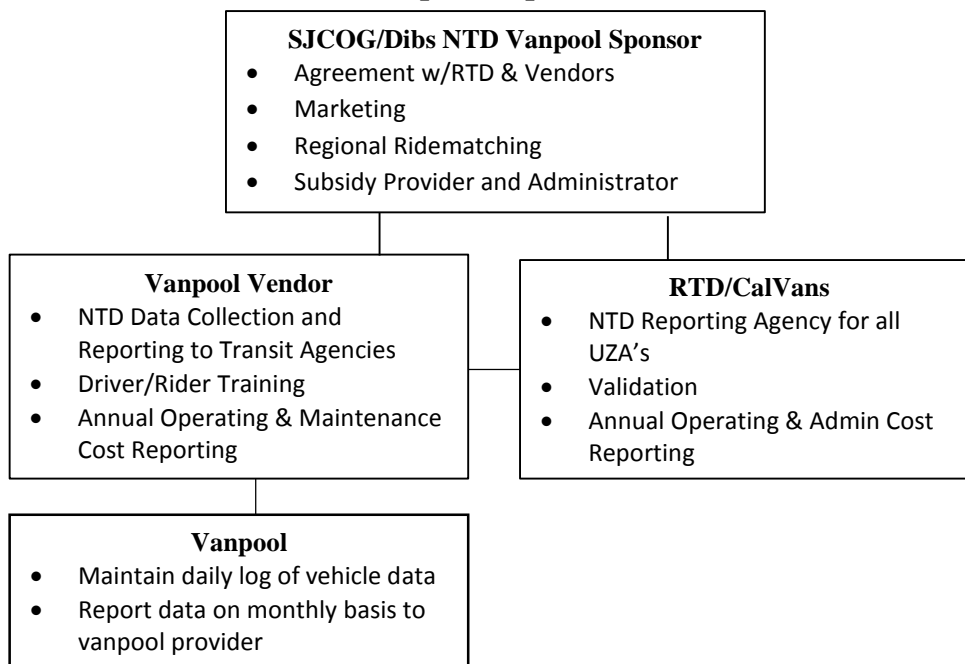
As a cost effective strategy to sustain roadway efficiency and emission reductions over the long term, the *dibs* program has long offered a vanpool incentive. In 2015, the SJCOG Board approved a 2-year pilot program to modify the former vanpool incentive for fiscal years 2015-16 and 2016-17. The program was revamped to include a first year subsidy of \$200 per van, per month and a long-term subsidy in the amount of \$100 per van, per month. To date, the program has added over 20 new vanpools throughout the three counties. For this reason, staff recommends the continuation of the incentive with a minor modification to simplify and streamline the program by offering a flat base incentive of \$150 per van, per month for the life of the van based on funding availability.

### **Proposed NTD/Vanpool Reporting Program**

Since reporting vanpool activity provides the potential to increase funding for 5307 funding, *dibs* would work with the primary 5307 formula funding recipient, RTD to implement a program for

San Joaquin County. Since San Joaquin County transit agencies do not own or operate vanpools, an agreement with private vanpool vendors would be required to capture necessary data. As this effort would require additional work on the part of the vanpool driver, a financial incentive of \$250 per month, per van would be offered additional compensation for their time and effort. This amount coupled with the base incentive would provide the vanpool the potential to benefit from a total of \$400 per van, per month. Starting in fiscal year 2017-18, *dibs* would partner with RTD and Vanpool Providers to devise a system and model to collect and report vanpool data to NTD. The proposed implementation structure is displayed below in Table 1.

**Table 1: NTD/Vanpool Implementation Structure**



Once reported, 5307 funding is returned to the agency approximately two years after submitting annual data into the NTD. It is difficult to produce an actual estimate of potential revenue without specific data; however, based on a scenario developed by the California Vanpool Authority (CalVans), if data was submitted for 25 vanpools, there would be the potential to capture, \$524,000 in additional revenue from 5307 formula funding. This estimate is based on the Stockton UZA population and vanpool miles. There are currently approximately 37 vans originating in the Stockton UZA. Miles will also be reported for vanpools originating in Lodi, Manteca, Tracy UZAs, and the unincorporated areas. SJCOG staff is supporting those miles and when reported, would have revenue channel to RTD. This proposal would still need to go through existing FTA procedures including the development of a locally acceptable methodology for use of federal funds in each UZA and the development of the Program of Projects.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

*dibs* will initiate steps to coordinate necessary documents with FTA and execute necessary

agreements with RTD, Vanpool Providers and Vanpool Drivers. Once documents and agreements have been executed, Dibs will work with all parties to implement an NTD Vanpool Reporting and Incentive Program starting July 1, 2017.

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