

Communities Can Breathe Easier

Higher Cap-and-Trade Proceeds Likely to Fund More Low-Carbon Transit Projects

California is investing in cleaner and more accessible transit opportunities through Caltrans' Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP), aided by a boost in auction proceeds from California's "Cap-and-Trade" Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund.

In 2017-18, about \$100 million is expected to be allocated through LCTOP for projects that continue California's effort to cut greenhouse gas emissions, and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities.

To qualify for approval, project proposals must describe how greenhouse gas emissions will be curbed. Caltrans works closely with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to estimate greenhouse gas emissions before funding is authorized.

The nearly \$100 million to be allocated would almost triple last year's \$34 million award, and is likely to help fund larger projects. The carbon reduction program has awarded \$133 million to 353 projects over the last three years.

In 2016-17, 85 percent of the money distributed through the program benefited disadvantaged communities. There were 125 [projects](#) throughout the state that received funds in the past fiscal year.

LCTOP was established by Senate Bill 862 in 2014, and is one of several state programs funded through auction proceeds from CARB's Cap-and-Trade Program, created under Assembly Bill 32 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions attributed to climate change.

Approved LCTOP projects can expand or start new bus or rail services, or improve intermodal transit facilities. Other eligible projects can finance equipment acquisition, fueling, and maintenance and other costs to operate these services or facilities.

Among the allocations for projects approved in 2016-2017:


- Almost \$6 million to the Los Angeles County Met-



Photo courtesy of Visalia Transit

Visalia Express offers six round-trips daily between the Central Valley city and Fresno. The V-Line service has received \$583,772 since 2014 from Caltrans' Low Carbon Transit Operations Program.

ropolitan Transportation Authority to add service to six new stations that extend light rail transit operations in the San Gabriel Valley.

- \$3.7 million to San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency to expand service on Route 9R San Bruno Rapid Line.
- \$255,000 to the city of Modesto to improve the downtown transit center to increase the safety and comfort of Modesto Area Express public transit customers.
- \$243,290 to Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District to purchase one zero-emission, battery-electric public transit bus and related charging infrastructure to replace one diesel-fueled bus. This project will benefit the disadvantaged communities within Watsonville by reducing environmental impacts associated with public transit buses operating in the community.
- \$42,739 to the city of Davis to install 12 bicycle lockers available to people using a prepaid smart card. 

Source: Amar Azucena Cid, Branch Chief, Caltrans Low Carbon Transit Operations Program