

Date: March 11, 2008

Committee Meeting Date: March 20, 2008

Board Meeting Date: April 3, 2008

**BOARD MEMORANDUM**

**ACTION ITEM**

**TO:** Congestion Management Program and Planning Committee  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
Board of Directors

**THROUGH:** Michael T. Burns  
General Manager

**FROM:** John H. Ristow  
Chief CMA Officer

**SUBJECT:** VTA Discretionary Funding Programs: Composition of Project Scoring  
Committees

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**Policy-Related Action: Yes**

**Government Code Section 84308 Applies: No**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve "Option A" as VTA's process for selecting project review and scoring committees for VTA Congestion Management Program Discretionary Funding programs.

**BACKGROUND:**

VTA, in its capacity as the Congestion Management Agency for Santa Clara County, is responsible for prioritizing and programming a variety of federal, state and local grant funds to transportation projects. These funds include, but are not limited to, Federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Transportation Enhancements (TE), State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) and Transportation Development Act Article 3 (TDA 3) funds.

As funds become available, the VTA Congestion Management Program (CMP) solicits projects from eligible sponsors, including the VTA member agencies. VTA CMP staff then evaluates these projects with assistance of scoring committees, composed of member agency staff, using criteria adopted by the Board of Directors for each specific program.

The Board-adopted process and criteria, generally but not always, identifies the scoring committee that is to perform the staff evaluations. The standard practice, unless otherwise specified by the Board, has been to form a scoring committee composed of VTA staff and Member Agency staff. Whenever possible, the committee is geographically balanced by selecting one volunteer from

each of the five city and county groupings. These volunteers generally come from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Working Group and are usually mid-to-senior level planning and/or public works staff. If no volunteers can be found for a city group, the position is usually left vacant.

When VTA CMP staff determines that a funding program is of particular interest to one of the other VTA Advisory Committees such as the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) or the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC), VTA staff will occasionally include a representative from that Advisory Committee as part of the evaluation and ranking process

### **DISCUSSION:**

While this informal process has served VTA well for the past decade, the VTA staff recommendation is to formalize and document a set of Congestion Management Program project evaluation procedures that will apply, unless the VTA Board specifies otherwise via Board action for a particular program. Doing so will create consistent expectations for all parties with respect to the process.

VTA Staff recommends that the Board adopt the following "Option A" as the standard procedure for creating project evaluation and scoring committees for all VTA Congestion Management Program grant project solicitations.

#### *Option A (Current VTA Programming & Grants Practice):*

- In order to assure geographic balance, scoring committees shall be composed of VTA CMP staff and VTA Member Agency staff, with one member agency representative for each of the five-city/county groupings as specified in Section 2-13 of the VTA administrative code.
- If no member agency staff person is available to serve on the scoring committee for any of the city groupings, the position shall remain vacant.
- Consistent with VTA Administrative Code Sections 2-69 through 2-72, no VTA or Member Agency staff person serving on a VTA scoring committee may evaluate or rank a project if it directly affects real property and/or a business in which he or she has direct personal interests.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) initially reviewed and discussed Option A at its' August 9, 2007. TAC members developed two additional alternatives for discussion, and requested that VTA staff document and present them at a subsequent (March 13, 2008) meeting.

#### *Option B:*

- Scoring Committees shall be composed of VTA CMP staff and VTA Member Agency staff, with representation reflecting TAC's composition.
- Any TAC member agency, which wishes to serve on the scoring committee, may serve, regardless of geographic location or scoring committee size. Conversely, no entity shall be required to serve.

- Consistent with VTA Administrative Code Sections 2-69 through 2-72, no VTA or Member Agency staff person serving on a VTA scoring committee may evaluate or rank a project if it directly affects real property and/or a business in which he or she has direct personal interests.

Option C:

- Scoring Committees shall be composed exclusively of technically qualified VTA and/or regional agency staff.
- Project sponsors shall make presentations to VTA staff as part of the scoring process.
- Consistent with VTA Administrative Code Sections 2-69 through 2-72, no VTA or regional agency staff person serving on a VTA scoring committee may evaluate or rank a project if it directly affects real property and/or a business in which he or she has direct personal interests.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The VTA Board may consider other alternatives.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact to VTA as a result of this action.