

News

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SANBAG



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Nearly \$1.8 Million in Grants awarded to SANBAG for Van Pool Program and Veteran's 211 Service

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY – Two Federal Transit Authority (FTA) grants totaling nearly \$1.8 million were awarded to San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG), it was announced by SANBAG President Larry McCallon at their December Board meeting.

The first grant was a FTA Bus Livability Grant in the amount of \$1.5 million for a Victor Valley Transit Authority (VVTA) van pool program. The project is sponsored by SANBAG and the VVTA for development, start-up, and operation of a van pool program originating from the Victor Valley.

This program will provide an added transportation opportunity for the Victor Valley residents, addressing the work trip transportation needs of long distance commuters. The grant will include 75 van pools during the first year, 155 in year two, and 255 van pools by year three. It will also provide for development of a county-wide van pool program in the future.

“Veterans will soon find it easier to get information on transportation and other essential resources, thanks to the second FTA grant for \$284,000,” reported McCallon, “This grant is a ‘Veterans Transportation initiative, One Call/One-Click Project’ under FTA’s discretionary Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative.” The project will help veterans and their family members connect with transportation services in San Bernardino and Riverside County via the United Way 211 program.

The grant process was highly competitive and this was one of only two awarded throughout California.

“This project demonstrates our vision to assist Inland Empire veterans and their families by investing in United Way’s 211 system, which offers a service information center,” stated McCallon. “Matching funds from VTrans (a new San Bernardino Valley consolidated transportation services agency) and JARC (Job Access Reverse Commute) brought the total to \$655,418 for the program.”

The project will support the call-taking and internet capabilities of United Way 211 to directly connect veterans and their families with transportation services, as well as linking them to other types of services they may need. Funded for three years, the project provides for expanding the United Way 211 operations and hiring a veteran into a full-time position to assist with handling veteran information requests.

The grant proposal received overwhelming support from 25 elected leaders and agencies in the region, including the Twentynine Palms Marine Corp Base, Congressman Joe Baca, Assemblyman Paul Cook, and the VA Hospital in Loma Linda, among others.

“We are excited about this project and thankful to the incredible coalition of partners coming together to make it possible,” said Gary Madden, Director of 211, the 24-hour hotline. “As a society, we spend a lot of money helping people. The 211 system is a highly efficient evolution in connecting people to available resources, and this grant will expand our capacity to serve those who have served our country.”

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