



For Immediate Release

April 23, 2020

Mary-Michal Rawling, MPA
Public Affairs Manager
(209) 723-3153 x 119
mary-michal.rawling@mcagov.org

The Bus awarded \$3.1 million for Electric Buses

MERCED – On the eve of Earth Day, the California State Transportation Agency announced that The Bus will receive more than \$3.1 million in state funding for the purchase of three electric buses to transport Merced County residents.

The three new zero-emission vehicles will be in operation in 18-24 months and represent an expansion of service rather than replacing buses scheduled for retirement. Two of the buses will be used to increase the frequency of service on routes between Merced and the communities of Planada and Le Grand. The other bus will serve the residential areas of Merced that are located north of Merced College. Service to both of these areas were identified as 'Unmet Transit Needs' by the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) in 2019. The SSTAC is composed of private citizens who depend on transit along with representatives from both social services agencies and the transportation industry. The group assesses the regional transit system every year and makes recommendations on transit services that they believe should be provided to the public.

"The addition of these vehicles to The Bus' fleet is not only important because of what they mean to the collective efforts aimed at improving air quality in our region, but also because they will allow us to expand service in communities who don't have the access to transportation they need," said Stacie Guzman, Executive Director of Merced County Association of Governments.

This is the third grant award to purchase electric buses that the Agency has received in the last year; the first was submitted in cooperation with the City of Merced. The full award announcement can be found here: <https://calsta.ca.gov/-/media/calsta-media/documents/2020-tircp-award-list.pdf>. In total, all of the grant funding equates to the addition of nine electric buses that will be put in service throughout the County.

All bus schedules and hours of operation can be found at www.mercedthebus.com or by calling (209) 723-3100. Real-time information regarding bus locations, services and arrival times can be found at www.thebuslive.com or by downloading 'The Bus Live' app on your smart phone for free. All fares are currently suspended due to the COVID-19 emergency. Passengers are asked to only use The Bus to provide or receive essential services and to wear a mask while on board as well as comply with social distancing requirements. All buses are equipped with bike racks and are wheelchair accessible.

The Bus is the single public transportation service provider for all of Merced County and is administered by the Transit Joint Powers Authority for Merced County and managed by the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG). For more information, please visit www.mercedthebus.com and www.mcagov.org.

##