



Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority

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PRESS RELEASE

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QUECHAN INDIAN TRIBE AND COCOPAH INDIAN TRIBE AWARDED FUNDING FOR YUMA COUNTY AREA TRANSIT IN 2014

YUMA, AZ (March 19, 2014) - The Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (YCIPTA) received notification from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) that the Quechan Indian Tribe was awarded \$150,000 in discretionary funding as well as \$15,324 in formula funding to continue public transit services on the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation connecting Yuma, Winterhaven and Andrade and the Cocopah Indian Tribe was awarded \$37,772 in formula funding to continue public transit services connecting the three Cocopah Indian Reservations with the Cities of Yuma and Somerton.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced the award of \$5 million in competitive funds to 42 American Indian and Alaska Native tribes in 19 states for projects to improve transit service. The funds complement \$25 million allocated by formula to eligible tribal recipients for FY 2014, as announced last week. The combined \$30 million investment – double the amount available in prior years – supports efforts to enhance public transit service on rural tribal lands and better connect tribal members and other residents with jobs, education, and other ladders of opportunity. A formal notification will be published in the *Federal Register* in the coming weeks.

“The Obama Administration is proud to partner with tribal governments throughout the United States to create new ladders of opportunity for hard-working families and seniors hoping to improve their quality of life,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “Access to affordable transportation goes hand-in-hand with ensuring that American Indians, Alaskan natives and other rural residents have a chance to succeed and pursue their goals.”

“We fully recognize that residents on tribal lands and in surrounding communities often face significant transportation challenges, as many cannot afford to own a vehicle, or fill the tank, and yet must travel long distances to reach basic

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John Andoh, Transit Director

services,” said FTA Deputy Administrator Therese McMillan. “We want to ensure that everyone who needs a ride to earn a paycheck, attend school, see the doctor, or buy groceries has that opportunity.”

Through FTA’s Tribal Transit Program, the competitively awarded FY 2013 funds will allow tribes to continue or enhance existing transit service, launch new public transportation or plan for future transit needs. Projects awarded competitive funds include the following:

- The Quechan Indian Tribe will receive funding to continue operating existing transit service which connects tribe members on the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation and surrounding areas of Winterhaven with El Centro in Imperial County, located in southern California. This is their third year successfully receiving competitive grant funds to support public transit services.
- The Cocopah Indian Tribe will receive funding to complement YCIPTA's award of FTA Section 5311 rural funds awarded by the Arizona Department of Transportation in October 2013 to continue to fund a bus route known as the Purple Route 6, which travels between the North Cocopah Reservation, Cocopah Casino, East Cocopah Reservation, Somerton and West Cocopah Reservation Monday through Saturday. The Cocopah Indian Tribe has successfully received this funding since 2006.

Under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act, FTA’s Tribal Transit Program roughly doubled the amount of available funding from amounts awarded in recent years, but changed from an entirely discretionary program to a mostly formula-based one. Formula funds are awarded based on such factors as the miles a transit vehicle travels while in active service and the number of low-income individuals that reside on tribal lands. The FY 2014 formula funds, allocated to 112 tribes in 26 states, will help tribes continue to provide existing transit services that many rural residents depend on every day. The criteria for awarding competitive funds includes, among other things, project readiness; benefits to riders, such as increased reliability; economic benefits to the community; and a tribe’s financial commitment to the project and to transit.

Under the prior authorization, SAFETEA-LU, approximately 200 tribal transit programs received a total of approximately \$107 million to enhance, launch, or plan for transit service on tribal lands under the FTA Tribal Transit Program.

"With the participation of the Cocopah and Quechan Indian Tribes in the YCAT system, YCIPTA has been able to provide quality service to these tribal members as well as Yuma County population without increasing local government subsidies" said John Andoh, Transit Director. "These grants from FTA has expanded mobility to El Centro, Andrade, Paradise Casino, Quechan Casino Resort and improved the frequency of transit service on the Cocopah Reservations from 2 hours to 1 hour".

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"YCIPTA and the tribes are very grateful that FTA, ADOT and the Imperial County Transportation Commission has been able collectively fund these tribal transit routes to enhance mobility for all" added Andoh.

For YCAT transit information and YCAT OnCall reservations call 928-783-2235. Interested parties can also visit the YCAT online at www.ycat.az.gov.

About Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority

YCIPTA is the public transportation provider for Yuma County, formed as an intergovernmental public transportation authority as defined in the Arizona Revised Statutes by the Yuma County Board of Supervisors, YCIPTA is governed by a nine member Board of Directors consisting of all of the municipalities, the County government, Indian tribes and higher educational institution in Yuma County. 381,000 passengers' trips were made on YCAT buses in FY 2013. YCIPTA operates, maintains and administers Yuma County Area Transit (YCAT) fixed route, deviated fixed route, vanpool and paratransit services and contracts services to Transportation Concepts of Irvine, CA, vRide of Troy, MI and Enterprise Rideshare of Tempe, AZ. See where it takes you at www.ycat.az.gov or call 928.783.2235.

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