

**ORANGE COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**ACTION AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT**

**Meeting Date:** April 21, 2009

**Action Agenda**

**Item No.** 4-5

**SUBJECT:** Unobligated 2006-2012 Triangle Area Rural Planning Organization (TARPO)  
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Funds

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**DEPARTMENT:** Planning and Inspections

**PUBLIC HEARING:** (Y/N)

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

**INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Karen Lincoln, 245-2594

Craig Benedict, 245-2592

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**PURPOSE:** To consider releasing Orange County's \$33,558 unused portion of 2006 – 2012 CMAQ funds from the Triangle Area Rural Planning Organization (TARPO) for use by Chatham County.

**BACKGROUND:** Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grants are available to jurisdictions in air quality non-attainment areas designated by the State and the Environmental Protection Agency. The CMAQ Program requires a minimum 20% local match and reimburses jurisdictions for project costs through conditions in a Memorandum of Agreement. Projects must show quantifiable emissions reduction to benefit quality.

TARPO allocated \$378,499 (approximately 60% of the total \$639,141 in CMAQ funds allocated to TARPO for 2006-2012) to Orange County and allocated the remainder to Chatham County. Orange County has an approved project using \$344,941 of its TARPO allocation for transit amenities and for three years' operating assistance for a new intra-Hillsborough transit route to provide primary service between the park-and-ride lot at the Durham Technical Community College at Waterstone and the Justice Complex in downtown Hillsborough. That project, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project number C-4932, is scheduled to begin this year and has been approved for the 2009 fast-track process for 100 % funding.

Applications for using the remaining \$33,558 of Orange County's 2006-2012 TARPO CMAQ funds must be submitted to NCDOT by May 1, 2009. Planning staff and Orange Public Transportation staff have conferred and do not have a project that would be a good match for the \$33,558. Staff does not recommend applying for the unused \$33,558 CMAQ funds because of the local match at a time when there is no pressing need for any proposed project.

The County already has an obligation of a minimum additional \$67,320 a year for years 2010 and 2011 for the existing CMAQ project. TARPO anticipates a yearly CMAQ allocation

estimated at \$171,849 for years 2013 - 2017 (based on anticipated \$859,243 CMAQ allocation which is subject to change based on availability of funds). Using the previous funding split, TARPO would allocate approximately \$101,769 each year (2013 - 2017) for Orange County projects. Applications for those funds are due this September.

The Town of Pittsboro has an application for Chatham County's TARPO CMAQ funds to construct sidewalks along NC 87 from US 64 to a roundabout and continuing to a new library location on the campus of the Chatham County Community College. Pittsboro also has an unfunded project to add a crosswalk and signal timing with pedestrian "ped" heads at a busy pedestrian location at the intersection of US 64 and NC 87 that would greatly enhance safety for users of the new sidewalk project. Orange County's approval of releasing the \$33,558 TARPO CMAQ allocation would enable Pittsboro to construct the crosswalk improvements.

Orange County has two options:

1. Release unused TARPO CMAQ funds for use in Chatham County; or
2. Submit an application for using the \$33,558 in CMAQ funds and determine the source of the required matching funds.

A potential project is the "future parking area" at Cedar Grove Park that could be used for a park-and-ride lot. The estimated cost is between \$45,000 and \$50,000. That project would require a local match between \$11,400 and \$16,400 (24% - 33% of project costs). It should be noted there are already approximately 75 parking spaces available that could be used for park and ride on weekdays and it is not anticipated that Phase I of the park will need additional parking.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:** There is no financial impact if Orange County releases the unused funds.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):** The Manager recommends the Board release Orange County's \$33,558 unused portion of 2006 – 2012 CMAQ funds from the Triangle Area Rural Planning Organization (TARPO) for use by Chatham County.