



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

DOWNTOWN PARKING COMMITTEE REPORT

AGENDA DATE: October 13, 2016

TO: Downtown Parking Committee

FROM: Transportation Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Ad-Hoc Committee

RECOMMENDATION: That the committee hear an update on City Council direction for the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle and discuss the formation of an ad-hoc committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On Tuesday, September 27, 2016 City Council assigned the Downtown Parking Committee (DPC) as the City's advisory committee to provide recommendations to Council on the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle (Shuttle) contract renewal. The Shuttle has been a successful part of the Downtown and Waterfront experience for 25 years. With ridership down and a new electric shuttle being procured by MTD, a fresh look at the goals of the Shuttle service is timely. The City's contract with the Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) runs through June 2017. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the DPC have expressed interest in forming an ad-hoc committee with stakeholder involvement to develop goals for future Shuttle service.

HISTORY OF SHUTTLE:

The City has contracted with the MTD to provide the shuttle service since 1989. The shuttle service was provided as a mitigation measure to the Central City Redevelopment Environmental Impact Report conducted by the Redevelopment Agency (1977) with the intent to improve traffic circulation, reduce congestion and optimize parking resources in the City's Central Business District. Upon the removal of the traffic signals on Highway 101 in 1992, the shuttle service was expanded to include the Waterfront route on Cabrillo Boulevard. At that time, MTD also procured an electric vehicle that mimicked the look and feel of the original circa 1900 trolley car with open windows, perimeter seating, and a single mid-vehicle entrance.

The shuttle initially was operated for free to the public. A \$.25 fare was added to eliminate all day riders. In 2011, shuttle costs shifted to Measure A, Downtown Parking, and the Waterfront Fund as the Redevelopment Agency and related funding was eliminated by the State of California. The City then raised the shuttle fare to \$.50 in an attempt to cover a greater share of the operating costs. One of the tasks for staff will be to work with MTD on potential fare modifications in relation to ridership.

The current cost of the Shuttle is \$1,112,000 per year with DTP contributing \$369,000, the Waterfront Department \$81,000, and the Street Fund \$635,000. Council will be considering a first quarter shift of funding that will increase DTP and the Waterfront Department's costs to 80%/20%, respectively.

CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT

Staff will need to work with MTD directly to iron out the details of a new contract. Staff's direction for the contract, however, will be based on the goals for future Shuttle service. Because the ridership is currently in decline and MTD is procuring a new electric Shuttle service, a conversation about the goals and objectives of the service with Downtown and Waterfront stakeholders is timely. Some of the important questions to establishing goals of the service are:

- What need does the Shuttle service fulfill for the Downtown and Waterfront areas?
- What are the existing unmet needs that are related to the Shuttle?
- What long-term needs are important to consider?
- What role does the Shuttle serve for parking, transportation, and economic vitality?
- What are the goals and outcomes that the Shuttle service should strive towards?
- What are the measurable targets?

AD-HOC COMMITTEE:

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the DPC have expressed interest in forming an ad-hoc committee with stakeholder involvement to answer these questions and to develop goals for future Shuttle service. Effective stakeholder involvement will be key to developing commonly shared goals for Shuttle service. Staff is meeting with a professional facilitator this week to develop process options for the DPC to consider. We are also interested in understanding who are the appropriate stakeholders for creating the vision and goals for the Shuttle service.

At the meeting, staff will discuss various options for an ad-hoc committee, solicit options for stakeholder outreach, and receive general input regarding the process of developing future Shuttle service goals.