

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA WATERFRONT DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 20, 2016
To: Harbor Commission
From: Scott Riedman, Waterfront Director
Subject: **Downtown/ Waterfront Ad-Hoc Electric Shuttle Committee**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Harbor Commission Chair appoint one, two, or three Harbor Commissioners to serve on an ad-hoc committee to work with the Downtown Parking Committee and other groups regarding the fund shifts to the Downtown Parking Enterprise Fund and the Waterfront Enterprise Fund and other possible changes to the shuttle service.

DISCUSSION:

On Tuesday, September 27, 2016, City Council assigned the Downtown Parking Committee (DPC) to be the City's advisory committee to the Council on the Downtown-Waterfront Electric Shuttle (shuttle). With the City's contract with the Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) expiring in June 2017, declining ridership, declining fare box revenue and a redesigned, less appealing, larger "bus-like" shuttle, the time is appropriate to review the goals and operation of the shuttle. Harbor Commission Chair Jim Sloan and I attended the October 13, 2016 meeting to kick off the process of reviewing the shuttle's performance.

BACKGROUND:

The City contracted with MTD to provide the shuttle service in 1989. Originally the shuttle was free to the public. In 2011 shuttle funding shifted to measure A, Downtown Parking, and the Waterfront Enterprise Fund as Redevelopment Agency and related funding was eliminated by the State of California. The current cost of the shuttle is \$1,112,000 per year with DPC contributing \$369,000, Waterfront paying \$81,000 and the Street Fund contributing \$635,000. Council will be considering a shift of funding that will increase the DTP and Waterfronts costs 80% / 20%, respectively. This fund shift is expected to take place during the first quarter of the current fiscal year; i.e., the increased payment would be retroactive to September 30, 2016.

NEW CONTRACT:

Staff will work directly with MTD to work out the details of a new contract. Some of the important questions to establishing goals of the new service are:

1. What need does the shuttle service provide for the Downtown and Waterfront areas? (Attachment)
2. What are the existing unmet needs of the shuttle?
3. What long-term needs are important to consider?
4. What role does the shuttle serve for parking, transportation, and economic vitality?

AD-HOC COMMITTEE

Stakeholder involvement will be critical to developing commonly shared goals for shuttle service. Organizations under consideration are included but not limited to:

- MTD
- Downtown Parking Committee
- Waterfront Department
- Stearns Wharf Merchants Association
- Harbor Merchants Association
- Visit Santa Barbara
- Downtown Santa Barbara
- Chamber of Commerce
- Paseo Nuevo Merchants Association
- Santa Barbara Zoo

The Committee will meet with a professional facilitator and develop a pool shortly to get the process started.

Attachment: Revenue and ridership

Prepared by: Scott Riedman, Waterfront Director

MTD Report to Santa Barbara On the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle

Monthly Report August 2016

Prepared by the

Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District



October 5, 2016

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MTD Report to Santa Barbara On the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle August 2016 Monthly Report

The City of Santa Barbara provides funding to the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) to assist in supporting MTD's Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle service. This report, prepared pursuant to Agreement No. 24,534, provides the City with data regarding this service.

DOWNTOWN-WATERFRONT SHUTTLE

The City provides a fare-buydown subsidy to MTD for the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle for clean and quiet 22-ft. electric shuttle service to meet downtown Santa Barbara traffic-reduction goals. The Downtown service operates along State Street between Sola Street and Cabrillo Boulevard, and the Waterfront service operates along Cabrillo Boulevard between the harbor (West Beach) and the zoo (East Beach). The one-way fare is \$0.50, with a \$0.25 fare for seniors, Medicare card holders, and persons with disabilities. Transfers between the State Street and Waterfront routes are free.

Table 1 presents the ridership of the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle for August 2016, as well as fiscal year (FY) 2017 year-to-date ridership. (The MTD fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30.) The table also presents ridership for the corresponding periods of the previous fiscal year, as well as the percent change in ridership over the previous year. August 2016 had 23 weekday service days and 8 weekend service days, and August 2015 had 21 weekday service days and 10 weekend service days.

Table 2 shows the number of revenue hours that MTD operated on the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle in August 2016 and FY 2017 revenue hours year-to-date, along with corresponding data from the previous fiscal year for comparison. The table also presents ridership per revenue hour for each route for the current month and the corresponding month of the previous fiscal year.

As shown in Table 1, total ridership on the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle decreased from 44,916 passengers in August 2015 to 43,125 in August 2016. Ridership decreased on both State Street and the Waterfront.

Table 2 shows that revenue hours operated on the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle decreased slightly, from 1,747 hours in August 2015 to 1,729 hours in August 2016. Average riders decreased from 25.7 in August 2015 to 24.9 in August 2016. Estimated fare revenue decreased from \$17,857.50 in August 2015 to \$16,571.50 in August 2016. The percentage of passengers who paid the \$0.25 half-fare increased from 12.8 percent in August 2015 to 18.6 percent in August 2016.

TABLE 1
MTD Routes Assisted by Santa Barbara - Ridership

Line	Current Month		Fiscal Year To Date		Percent Change	
	FY 2017 Aug 2016	FY 2016 Aug 2015	FY 2017 Jul-Aug	FY 2016 Jul-Aug	Current Month	FY Total
Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Ridership (Total)						
Line 30 - State Street	34,663	35,905	73,693	71,858	-3.5%	2.6%
Line 31 - East Beach	6,009	5,820	12,091	12,867	3.2%	-6.0%
Line 32 - West Beach	2,453	3,191	5,190	6,654	-23.1%	-22.0%
<i>Downtown-Waterfront Total</i>	<i>43,125</i>	<i>44,916</i>	<i>90,974</i>	<i>91,379</i>	<i>-4.0%</i>	<i>-0.4%</i>

Source: Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District.

TABLE 2
MTD Routes Assisted by Santa Barbara - Revenue Hours

Line	Current Month		Fiscal Year To Date		Riders per Hour	
	FY 2017 Aug 2016	FY 2016 Aug 2015	FY 2017 Jul-Aug	FY 2016 Jul-Aug	FY 2017 Aug 2016	FY 2016 Aug 2015
Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Revenue Hours (Total)						
Line 30 - State Street	1,240	1,255	2,538	2,526	28.0	28.6
Line 31 - East Beach	337	340	679	678	17.8	17.1
Line 32 - West Beach	152	152	305	305	16.1	21.0
<i>Downtown-Waterfront Total</i>	<i>1,729</i>	<i>1,747</i>	<i>3,522</i>	<i>3,509</i>	<i>24.9</i>	<i>25.7</i>

Source: Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District.

It is likely that the multiple construction projects underway on lower State Street and Cabrillo Boulevard have depressed overall ridership on the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle. MTD will continue to monitor ridership trends.

Ten-Year Trend

Tables 3A, 3B, and 3C present ten-year Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle trends in ridership, revenue hours, and passengers per revenue hour, respectively. The tables show that, prior to the fare increase of July 1, 2012 (i.e., FY 2013), annual ridership in the ten-year period varied from approximately 525,000 to 544,000 passengers. Ridership following the fare increase has been substantially lower than this prior trend.

The primary market for the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle differs from that for a typical public transportation service. In general terms, the primary market for this shuttle service is tourists and local residents who are shopping, dining, sightseeing, or enjoying other recreational activities downtown and on the waterfront. Thus, shuttle ridership is heavily dependent on the convenience of the service and on the number of persons spending leisure time in these areas.

The time required to complete a trip on the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle has increased over time as traffic congestion has worsened. A round trip on the State Street portion of the service (i.e., from the Dolphin Fountain to Sola Street and

back to the Dolphin Fountain), for example, formerly required ~~from 30 to 35~~ minutes, depending on the season and the time of day. Now, a round trip requires up to 45 minutes at peak times. Because MTD operates the same number of vehicles and approximately the same number of revenue hours annually, the number of trips provided during a typical day has decreased due to the increase in congestion and in the time required for each trip. Thus, over the ten-year period, the travel time has increased and the frequency of service has decreased.

Marketing & Public Information

- Passenger information cards are distributed at many locations along the route, including lodging establishments and the Visitors' Center. During the summer, the Downtown Organization hands out the cards as part of their "Downtown Hosts" program.
- The shuttle route is featured in all Santa Barbara Car Free collateral. Flyers are available on Amtrak Pacific Surfliner trains.
- The Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle and the Crosstown Shuttle are featured on the map in the "Explore" section of Santa Barbara Seasons magazine.
- The City Waterfront Department's "Illustrated Map of the Santa Barbara Waterfront" features the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle.
- Partnership website links are provided by Visit Santa Barbara (formerly the Santa Barbara Conference & Visitors Bureau and Film Commission), Santa Barbara Car Free, and the Downtown Organization.
- The Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle route is featured in the "Downtown Map & Guide" produced by the Downtown Organization.
- MTD is an active member of Visit Santa Barbara, the Santa Barbara Downtown Organization, and the Santa Barbara Region Chamber of Commerce, and works with these organizations to publicize the shuttle.
- All Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle vehicles display City of Santa Barbara seals.

TABLE 3A: Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Ridership

Month	Fiscal Year										
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Jul.	73,310	75,727	77,887	78,777	75,620	77,684	62,441	57,628	54,658	46,463	47,849
Aug.	66,978	70,257	82,138	71,549	72,370	68,232	55,143	53,889	51,828	44,916	43,125
Sep.	47,491	45,967	46,286	48,034	46,939	45,034	39,882	35,605	33,348	35,362	
Oct.	36,864	39,422	41,480	37,068	37,584	40,471	33,699	32,628	32,026	30,956	
Nov.	32,350	33,210	33,044	32,677	31,884	28,978	23,931	23,282	23,349	24,314	
Dec.	30,473	30,298	28,375	28,586	27,415	31,745	21,863	24,204	20,141	19,878	
Jan.	30,698	28,370	33,527	32,152	34,229	35,236	23,269	27,947	24,576	22,215	
Feb.	30,898	30,575	27,233	31,372	28,823	34,481	23,595	23,527	21,101	25,264	
Mar.	35,999	41,274	34,380	39,381	32,626	36,286	27,764	30,739	25,645	27,752	
Apr.	37,436	38,653	40,821	39,387	41,618	41,360	30,484	36,492	28,970	31,156	
May	43,587	43,347	44,631	44,166	44,456	45,742	35,186	33,276	25,015	27,610	
Jun.	59,194	63,083	54,150	56,535	52,381	56,181	46,670	42,037	32,865	35,296	
Total	525,278	540,183	543,952	539,684	525,945	541,430	423,927	421,254	373,522	371,182	

TABLE 3B: Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Revenue Hours

Month	Fiscal Year										
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Jul.	1,586	1,682	1,785	1,791	1,830	1,836	1,724	1,743	1,729	1,762	1,794
Aug.	1,615	1,673	1,806	1,765	1,773	1,766	1,717	1,743	1,759	1,747	1,729
Sep.	1,173	1,192	1,086	1,237	1,188	1,182	1,149	1,121	1,106	1,298	
Oct.	1,114	1,122	1,093	1,114	1,100	1,116	1,087	1,133	1,131	1,266	
Nov.	1,042	1,070	1,072	1,064	1,043	1,043	1,040	1,069	1,086	1,184	
Dec.	1,067	1,105	1,076	1,081	1,088	1,046	1,100	1,086	1,072	1,073	
Jan.	1,119	1,128	1,135	1,155	1,115	1,119	1,103	1,126	1,127	1,159	
Feb.	1,011	1,043	1,013	1,013	993	1,029	996	1,000	1,010	1,050	
Mar.	1,113	1,121	1,109	1,101	1,074	1,089	1,103	1,173	1,111	1,151	
Apr.	1,079	1,062	1,065	1,063	1,058	1,047	1,129	1,214	1,132	1,158	
May	1,234	1,297	1,342	1,235	1,218	1,215	1,382	1,331	1,323	1,192	
Jun.	1,685	1,705	1,715	1,707	1,710	1,678	1,842	1,694	1,673	1,676	
Total	14,838	15,200	15,297	15,326	15,190	15,166	15,372	15,433	15,259	15,716	

TABLE 3C: Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Passengers per Hour

Month	Fiscal Year										
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Jul.	46.2	45.0	43.6	44.0	41.3	42.3	36.2	33.1	31.6	26.4	26.7
Aug.	41.5	42.0	45.5	40.5	40.8	38.6	32.1	30.9	29.5	25.7	24.9
Sep.	40.5	38.6	42.6	38.8	39.5	38.1	34.7	31.8	30.2	27.2	
Oct.	33.1	35.1	38.0	33.3	34.2	36.3	31.0	28.8	28.3	24.5	
Nov.	31.0	31.0	30.8	30.7	30.6	27.8	23.0	21.8	21.5	20.5	
Dec.	28.6	27.4	26.4	26.4	25.2	30.3	19.9	22.3	18.8	18.5	
Jan.	27.4	25.2	29.5	27.8	30.7	31.5	21.1	24.8	21.8	19.2	
Feb.	30.6	29.3	26.9	31.0	29.0	33.5	23.7	23.5	20.9	24.1	
Mar.	32.3	36.8	31.0	35.8	30.4	33.3	25.2	26.2	23.1	24.1	
Apr.	34.7	36.4	38.3	37.1	39.3	39.5	27.0	30.1	25.6	26.9	
May	35.3	33.4	33.3	35.8	36.5	37.6	25.5	25.0	18.9	23.2	
Jun.	35.1	37.0	31.6	33.1	30.6	33.5	25.3	24.8	19.6	21.1	
Avg.	35.4	35.5	35.6	35.2	34.6	35.7	27.6	27.3	24.5	23.6	

Source: Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District.