



City of Santa Barbara Transportation & Circulation Committee Staff Report

DATE: May 23, 2013

TO: Transportation & Circulation Committee (TCC) Members

FROM: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager

SUBJECT: Downtown Waterfront Shuttle

Recommendation:

That the Transportation and Circulation Committee provide a recommendation to the City Council regarding a preferred option to address the \$40,000 revenue shortfall for the Downtown Waterfront Shuttle operated by Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District.

DISCUSSION:

The City currently has an Agreement with the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) for the Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle that expires on June 30, 2013. The former City Redevelopment Agency (RDA) was providing \$300,000 through the end of fiscal year 2012, toward the agreement to support the traffic mitigation requirement of the Central Redevelopment Area. In acknowledgment that these funds were no longer available as of July 1, 2012, the City and MTD eliminated the shuttle service to the Carrillo Commuter Lot, reduced the midday service on the Crosstown Shuttle, and increased the fare on the Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle from \$0.25 to \$0.50.

MTD estimated that the fare increase would generate an estimated \$75,000 in additional revenue that would partially offset the loss of RDA funding. The total estimated savings resulting from these changes was \$278,000, leaving a \$22,000 shortfall in addressing the loss of RDA funds. At the time the fare increase was proposed, City and MTD staff were optimistic that the increase in fare would not cause a significant decrease in ridership and that additional increased fare revenue might be realized, and offset the \$22,000 shortfall. Staff reviewed the fare box revenue during the first nine months of this fiscal year and discovered that the fare box revenue was coming in less than expected which resulted in a projected revenue shortfall of \$40,000 for Fiscal Year 2013 and a projected revenue shortfall of \$40,000 for Fiscal Year 2014.

In discussing the revenue shortfall with MTD staff, it was determined that the drop off in ridership as a result of the fare increase was greater than expected. Staff has been working with MTD to develop options to address the revenue shortfall. In reviewing options for addressing the budget shortfall, staff focused on the Waterfront portion of the service which

has low ridership. The average ridership on the Wharf to Harbor service is 3.3 passengers per trip and 5.7 passengers per trip for the entire Waterfront service between 10:00 AM. and 11:00 AM. The summer ridership on the Waterfront service is 6.2 passengers per trip. In comparison, the average passenger per trip on the State Street service is 23.9.

The following are the options that City and MTD has developed to address the revenue shortfall.

Option	Savings
1. Remove 9-10 AM for Downtown Shuttle	\$43,400
2. Remove Wharf to Harbor Shuttle	\$67,929
3. Remove 10-11 AM for Waterfront Shuttle	\$36,620
4. 30 minute headways on Waterfront Shuttle during Summer instead of 15 minute headways (except for 6PM – 9 PM Friday and Saturday, which stays at 15 minutes due to State Street “dog leg”	\$40,000
5. Funding from the Waterfront Fund to maintain current level of service	\$40,000

Staff recommended Option 4, changing the headways during the summer to 30 minutes on the Waterfront service, to Council during the Public Works Department budget presentation on Monday May 6, 2013. Council expressed a desire to keep the headway on the waterfront service at 15 minutes and referred this item to the TCC for a recommendation.