



City of Santa Barbara
Public Works Department

Interoffice Memorandum

DATE: January 26, 2006
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager *BA*
SUBJECT: ENHANCED TRANSIT SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation:

Planning Commission submit a recommendation to the Council supporting the recommendations made by the Enhanced Transit Subcommittee (ETS) regarding enhanced transit for Priority 1- Lines 1 and 2, Priority 2- Lines 6 and 11 and Priority 3- Line 3.

Background:

During the Public Works Budget discussion with the Council Finance Committee on May 17, 2005, it was requested that staff identify alternative funding options and sources to provide increased support for transit services in the local area. Some options discussed include: reprogramming existing appropriations for the MyRide program (mitigation measure for the Granada Garage) and bus passes; increasing Downtown Shuttle fares; allocating additional funds from Measure D and back filling with funds from other programs; seeking funding support from other local jurisdictions and a Downtown Parking Program fee increase above the \$1.8 million increase already scheduled, effective January 1, 2006.

The issue of improving transit and the need to find funding for improved transit was also discussed with Council during the Public Works Department budget presentation on May 21, 2005. During that presentation, staff suggested that a workshop be held to discuss transit. Council concurred with the recommendation, and the work session was held on July 20, 2005. The work session included Council, the Downtown Parking Committee (DPC), the Transportation and Circulation Committee (TCC), the Planning Commission (PC) and the Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) Board. At this workshop, the Enhanced Transit Subcommittee (ETS) was created. The subcommittee was comprised of two members each from the DPC, TCC, and PC, and liaisons were selected from Council and the MTD Board. The purpose of the subcommittee was to review options for enhancement to transit and to identify potential funding sources. The ETS held its first meeting on August 3, 2005, and met every other Wednesday evening. The ETS concluded its work on November 9, 2005, and identified three priority transit lines for enhancements. The subcommittee's recommendation is being taken to the TCC, DPC, PC and Harbor Commission for review and recommendation to Council. It is anticipated that the transit recommendation will be presented to the Finance Committee in March 2006, and to Council either in March or April 2006.

The Subcommittee's recommendations focus on the following Lines and their recommendations follow.

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Priority 1 – Lines 1 and 2 connect upper Westside and the lower Eastside to the downtown. The headways during a.m. and p.m. peak hours would be 10 minutes instead of the current 15 minutes. This change would require 3 new busses and an annual operating subsidy of \$238,400.

Priority 2 – Lines 6 and 11 connect the State Street/Hollister corridor with Goleta and UCSB. The headways during a.m. and p.m. peak hours would also be reduced to 10 minute headways instead of the current 15 minutes. This change would require 4 new buses and an annual operating subsidy of \$324,900. The Subcommittee felt that this was a regional issue and that other local jurisdictions should contribute to the funding. If getting other regional support was unsuccessful the Subcommittee felt that the City should take that funding and spend it on the Line 3 enhancements.

Priority 3 – Line 3 connects downtown Santa Barbara to La Cumbre Plaza and the upper State Street area. This route also services Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital. The headways would be 20 minutes all day long instead of the current 30 minutes. This change would require 1 new bus and an operating subsidy of \$189,500. The Subcommittee recommended that possible funding for this could be obtained by shifting Measure D funds from other places.

The following are the possible sources of funding that were considered by the ETS:

- Shifting Granada Garage mitigation funding from the MyRide Program to service enhancement
- Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle fare increase by 25¢
- Increasing the Downtown Parking rates beyond the 50% increase that went into effect on January 2, 2006
- Measure D funds – shifting funds currently used for other projects to enhanced transit
- Waterfront funds used to fund the Waterfront portion of the Downtown/Waterfront shuttle freeing up Measure D funds
- Redevelopment Agency
- MTD fare increase
- General Fund

The following are the recommendations made by the Enhanced Transit Subcommittee.

Enhanced Transit Subcommittee Recommendations

Priority 1 - (Lines 1 and 2) Operational costs, \$238,400, be funded from the \$350,000 MyRide funds that are set aside for the Granada Garage mitigation.

Priority 2 - (Lines 6 and 11) be funded for \$162,450 (City share) for annual operational costs, pursue regional support within 18 months from the County of Santa Barbara, the City of Goleta, and UCSB and consider placing a cap on the 10-ride bus pass program. The remainder of the MyRide mitigation funds of approximately \$111,600 would be applied and consider using Waterfront funds to fund a portion of the Downtown Waterfront Shuttle (to free up Measure D funds).

Priority 3 - (Line 3) annual operational costs (\$189,500) be funded by considering shifting Measure D funding City wide to Line 3.

It was recommended that the City develop evaluation criteria for any transit service that is added.

It was also recommended that the City consider implementing development impact fees for developers within the City to mitigate parking and traffic impacts. Fees would be earmarked for use

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for transit. Institute a procedure for compliance to make sure developers or employers are offering bus passes to downtown employees per their conditions of approval.

The funding for the capital (purchase of buses) that is required for the enhanced service has not yet been identified. Staff will work with MTD prior to taking the ETS recommendation to Council to identify the cost to the City for capital and will identify a funding source. In addressing the ETS recommendation for evaluation criteria for the service, staff will ask MTD to provide monthly ridership reports and an annual report that will be reviewed by the DPC and TCC on a regular basis. The reports will be similar to the Downtown Waterfront Shuttle monthly reports and will be spelled out in the agreement between the City and MTD.

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