City of Santa Barbara
Public Works Department

Interoffice Memorandum

DATE: May 24, 2012

TO: Transportation and Circulation Committee (TCC)

FROM: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager

SUBJECT: Downtown Waterfront and Commuter Lot Shuttle Service

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Transportation and Circulation Committee make a recommendation to Council eliminating financial support for the Commuter Lot's shuttle service and increase the fare for the Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle to $.50.

DISCUSSION:

The City of Santa Barbara has an agreement with Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) to provide shuttle service for downtown employees between the two commuter lots in the downtown area, the downtown business district, and the Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle. Shuttle service for the commuter lots is free to downtown employees who have purchased a monthly parking permit for the two commuter lots. The fare for the Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle is set at $.25.

The Fiscal Year 2012 City subsidy to MTD for these services is estimated to total approximately $1,275,000. Financial support for these services has come from the Measure A, Downtown Parking and City Redevelopment Agency (RDA) funds. Of this total, $300,000 is made possible by RDA funds. The State of California eliminated RDA's as part of the budget balancing measure which went into effect on February 1, 2012.   The City has requested that the Redevelopment Oversight Committee continue to support the RDA funding for this shuttle service. If the committee does not support the continuation of the RDA funding, the City will have to reduce the subsidy to MTD which will result in the reduction in service.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES:

Carrillo Commuter Lot Shuttle

The Carrillo Commuter Lot Shuttle is a weekday peak hour service subsidized by the City as an incentive to attract downtown employees to park in the Carrillo commuter lot. The service is free for commuter lot parkers and $0.25 for other riders.
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In Fiscal Year 2012, the City is providing MTD a fare subsidy of approximately $102,000, for this Shuttle. In Fiscal Year 2011, the annual ridership for this service was 12,123, for an average of

approximately 10 riders per hour, the lowest of any MTD route. The average operating cost for this service was $10.78 per passenger, compared to $3.01 for the Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle.

City and MTD staffs are recommending the elimination of the Carrillo Commuter Lot Shuttle if RDA funds are not appropriated

Crosstown Shuttle

The Crosstown Shuttle connects the east and west sides of Santa Barbara with downtown via Cota and Micheltorena Streets. It also serves the Cota Commuter Lot. The service is free for commuter lot parkers and the standard MTD fare of $1.75 for other riders.

In Fiscal Year 2012, the City is providing MTD a subsidy of approximately $101,000 for the Crosstown Shuttle. Under the agreement between MTD and the City, passengers who park in the Cota Street commuter parking lot are allowed to ride the Crosstown Shuttle for free. Like the Carrillo Commuter Lot Shuttle, the Crosstown Shuttle operates on weekday service days only.

Downtown Parking staff did a visual survey of the commuter lot users to determine where they went after parking their vehicles. The majority of drivers left the parking lot thru the Cota Street entrance and walked towards State Street. Very few of the lot users boarded the Crosstown Shuttle.

In Fiscal Year 2011, the Crosstown Shuttle carried an average of approximately 21 passengers per hour, which placed it in the fourth quartile of MTD's trunk & local routes. In Fiscal Year 2012 the route has boarded an average of approximately 22 passengers per hour to date. This route is scheduled to provide approximately 6,000 hours of service in the current fiscal year.

MTD staff analyzed Crosstown Shuttle ridership by trip for a typical month (October 2011). This analysis suggested that a reduction in midday service from approximately 9:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. would have less of an effect on the passengers than other potential reductions to the route. Currently two buses are in service all day on the Crosstown Shuttle, resulting in headways of approximately 25 minutes. With this change, only one bus would operate at midday, which would result in headways of approximately 50 minutes during that period. This change would reduce the service by an estimated 1,359 revenue hours annually.

In October 2011, a daily average of 203 passengers boarded the Crosstown Shuttle between 9:30 A.M. & 2:30 P.M. An elasticity analysis suggested that a change in headways, as described above, would result in a decrease in midday ridership to 148 daily passengers (a decrease of 55 daily passengers). It is likely that many of those riders would shift to Lines 1 & 2.

City and MTD staffs are recommending that the midday Crosstown Shuttle service be reduced, if RDA funds are not appropriated.

Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle Fare

The Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle operates along State Street, from Sola Street to Cabrillo Boulevard, and the Waterfront service operates along Cabrillo Boulevard, from the harbor to the zoo. The one-way fare is $0.25. Transfers between State Street and the Waterfront are free.

City and MTD staffs concur in recommending that the City Council and MTD increase the Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle fare from the current $0.25 fare for all riders, to a proposed $.50 fare with a $.25 half-fare for persons aged 62 or greater and persons with disabilities. MTD's staff estimates that this fare increase would generate approximately $75,000 in additional fare revenue annually.

Summary

If the $300,000 in current subsidy to MTD that is made possible by the Redevelopment Agency is not available for Fiscal Year 2013, the following actions are recommended:

Eliminate the Carrillo Commuter Lot Shuttle.
- $102,000 in cost savings.

Reduce midday service on the Crosstown Shuttle.
- $101,000 in cost savings

Possible fare increase to $0.50 for the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle.
- Estimated $75,000 in additional revenue

Other City funds.
- Estimated $22,000 provided to MTD.

BA/kts