

# **MTD Report to Santa Barbara On the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle**

**Quarterly Report  
July 1 - September 30, 2018**

*Prepared by the*

Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District



November 28, 2018

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**On the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle**  
**July 1 - September 30, 2018 Quarterly 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. 25,901, 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 electric shuttle service to meet downtown Santa Barbara traffic-reduction and economic development 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 (62 and up), Medicare cardholders, and persons with disabilities. As of October 1<sup>st</sup>, MTD is offering a one-day pass for \$1, good for unlimited rides in any direction, in one calendar day on the Downtown and Waterfront Shuttles. Transfers between the State Street and Waterfront routes are free.

Table 1 presents the ridership of the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle for the period from July through September 2018, corresponding to the first quarter of fiscal year (FY) 2019. (The MTD fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30.) The table also presents ridership for the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year, as well as the percent change in ridership compared to the previous year. The first quarter of both the current fiscal year and the previous one had 63 weekday service days and 29 weekend service days.

Table 2 shows the number of revenue hours that MTD operated on the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle in the first quarter of FY 2019, along with corresponding data from the previous fiscal year. The table also presents ridership per revenue hour for each route for the current quarter and the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal year.

As shown in Table 1, total ridership on the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle decreased from 120,551 passengers in the first quarter of FY 2018 to 93,648 in the same quarter of FY 2019. Ridership decreased on both State Street and the Waterfront. Table 2 shows that fourth quarter revenue hours also decreased, with 4,627 hours in FY 2018 and 4,563 hours in FY 2019. Average riders per revenue hour decreased from 26.1 in FY 2018 to 20.5 in FY 2019. Quarterly estimated fare revenue decreased from \$48,044.75 in FY 2018 to \$35,868.25 in FY 2019. The

percentage of passengers who paid the \$0.25 half-fare increased from 16.1 percent in FY 2018 to 19.3 percent in FY 2019.

**TABLE 1**  
**Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Ridership**

Line	Current Quarter		Fiscal Year To-Date		Percent Change	
	FY 2019 Jul-Sep	FY 2018 Jul-Sep	FY 2019 Jul-Sep	FY 2018 Jul-Sep	Current Quarter	FY To-Date
Line 30 - State Street	74,390	94,909	74,390	94,909	-21.6%	-21.6%
Line 31 - East Beach	11,403	16,930	11,403	16,930	-32.6%	-32.6%
Line 32 - West Beach	7,855	8,712	7,855	8,712	-9.8%	-9.8%
<i>Downtown-Waterfront Total</i>	<i>93,648</i>	<i>120,551</i>	<i>93,648</i>	<i>120,551</i>	<i>-22.3%</i>	<i>-22.3%</i>

Source: Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District.

**TABLE 2**  
**Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Revenue Hours**

Line	Current Quarter		Fiscal Year To-Date		Riders per Hour	
	FY 2019 Jul-Sep	FY 2018 Jul-Sep	FY 2019 Jul-Sep	FY 2018 Jul-Sep	FY 2019 Jul-Sep	FY 2018 Jul-Sep
Line 30 - State Street	3,308	3,358	3,308	3,358	22.5	28.3
Line 31 - East Beach	861	874	861	874	13.2	19.4
Line 32 - West Beach	394	395	394	395	19.9	22.1
<i>Downtown-Waterfront Total</i>	<i>4,563</i>	<i>4,627</i>	<i>4,563</i>	<i>4,627</i>	<i>20.5</i>	<i>26.1</i>

Source: Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District.

In 2017, MTD and the City agreed to eliminate the 9:00-10:00 A.M. State Street service that averaged approximately 40 riders per day, and MTD implemented that change on August 21, 2017. The elimination of this service may have decreased ridership by approximately 2,040 passengers on the State Street service in July and August.

Twelve of MTD's fourteen replacement battery-electric vehicles have arrived and are now in service. The new vehicles with modern battery technology are replacing 18-year-old shuttles. The new vehicles are longer than the current fleet while maintaining the narrower width of the current shuttles, and come equipped with MTD's new real-time bus arrival technology and updated fareboxes.

### Five-Year Trend

Tables 3A, 3B, and 3C present five-year Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle trends in ridership, revenue hours, and passengers per revenue hour, respectively. Figure 1 is a chart showing total passengers, total revenue hours, and average passengers per revenue hour for each month of the previous fiscal year and the current fiscal year to date.

The primary market for the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle differs from that for a typical public transportation service. In general, 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 changing state of retail in our Downtown area has had an impact on the activity on State Street. The new activity in the Funk Zone and the resurgence of activity in the area on lower State Street and the Waterfront in the past year due to new hotel and restaurant offerings has also changed the focal point for visitors and residents. In the three-month period, Downtown Parking revenue and occupancy, and hotel occupancy in the City of Santa Barbara were also down.

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 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. MTD operates the same number of vehicles and approximately the same number of revenue hours annually. Thus, due to the increased travel time, the frequency of service has decreased.

#### Marketing & Public Information

- The new Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Day Pass has been marketed extensively through outreach and partnerships with Visit Santa Barbara and Downtown Santa Barbara. Several locations around town are selling the passes.
- The Day Pass and Shuttle have been advertised on KTYD and in Voice Magazine, and passes were supplied to participants in the Architectours event downtown.
- Passenger information cards are distributed at many locations along the route, including lodging establishments and the Visitors' Center.
- The shuttle route is featured in all Santa Barbara Car Free collateral. Flyers are available on Pacific Surfliner trains.
- The City Waterfront Department's "Illustrated Map of the Santa Barbara Waterfront" features the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle.
- MTD maintains active social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, often featuring the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle and the locations it serves.
- Partnership website links are provided by Visit Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara Car Free, and Downtown Santa Barbara.
- The Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle route is featured on the back panel of the "Downtown Map & Guide" produced by Downtown Santa Barbara.
- MTD is an active member of Visit Santa Barbara, Downtown Santa Barbara, 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					
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Jul.	57,628	54,658	46,463	47,849	50,867	37,253
Aug.	53,889	51,828	44,916	43,125	40,542	31,649
Sep.	35,605	33,348	35,362	33,675	29,142	24,746
Oct.	32,628	32,026	30,956	32,684	25,574	19,304
Nov.	23,282	23,349	24,314	23,033	19,393	
Dec.	24,204	20,141	19,878	18,022	13,360	
Jan.	27,947	24,576	22,215	18,934	18,539	
Feb.	23,527	21,101	25,264	16,870	19,631	
Mar.	30,739	25,645	27,752	24,179	19,048	
Apr.	36,492	28,970	31,156	28,493	22,677	
May	33,276	25,015	27,610	26,196	22,120	
Jun.	42,037	32,865	35,296	36,444	25,472	
Total	421,254	373,522	371,182	349,504	306,365	

**TABLE 3B: Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Revenue Hours**

Month	Fiscal Year					
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Jul.	1,743	1,729	1,762	1,794	1,793	1,734
Aug.	1,743	1,759	1,747	1,729	1,698	1,706
Sep.	1,121	1,106	1,298	1,208	1,136	1,122
Oct.	1,133	1,131	1,266	1,125	1,060	1,046
Nov.	1,069	1,086	1,184	1,044	1,013	
Dec.	1,086	1,072	1,073	1,059	878	
Jan.	1,126	1,127	1,159	1,120	1,051	
Feb.	1,000	1,010	1,050	997	969	
Mar.	1,173	1,111	1,151	1,070	1,059	
Apr.	1,214	1,132	1,158	1,082	1,033	
May	1,331	1,323	1,192	1,193	1,183	
Jun.	1,694	1,673	1,676	1,671	1,676	
Total	15,433	15,259	15,716	15,092	14,549	

**TABLE 3C: Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle Passengers per Hour**

Month	Fiscal Year					
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Jul.	33.1	31.6	26.4	26.7	28.4	21.5
Aug.	30.9	29.5	25.7	24.9	23.9	18.6
Sep.	31.8	30.2	27.2	27.9	25.7	22.1
Oct.	28.8	28.3	24.5	29.1	24.1	18.5
Nov.	21.8	21.5	20.5	22.1	19.1	
Dec.	22.3	18.8	18.5	17.0	15.2	
Jan.	24.8	21.8	19.2	16.9	17.6	
Feb.	23.5	20.9	24.1	16.9	20.3	
Mar.	26.2	23.1	24.1	22.6	18.0	
Apr.	30.1	25.6	26.9	26.3	22.0	
May	25.0	18.9	23.2	22.0	18.7	
Jun.	24.8	19.6	21.1	21.8	15.2	
Avg.	27.3	24.5	23.6	23.2	21.1	

Source: Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District.

**FIGURE 1**  
**FY 2018 & FY 2019 Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle by Month**

