



Solano Transportation Authority

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Members:

- Benicia
- Dixon
- Fairfield
- Rio Vista
- Solano County
- Suisun City
- Vacaville
- Vallejo

TRANSIT COMMITTEE

12:00 p.m., Monday, June 26, 2006

**Solano Transportation Authority (STA)
Conference Room
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585**

MEETING AGENDA

Committee Members:

- Mary Ann Courville, Committee Chair, City of Dixon
- Steve Messina, City of Benicia
- Jack Batson, City of Fairfield
- Mike Segala, City of Suisun City
- Tony Intintoli, City of Vallejo

Invited Participants:

SolanoLinks Intercity Transit Consortium, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Members, Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC) Members, Senior Representative, MTC, Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA), Chamber of Commerce, SolanoEDC, Elected State Officials

STA Staff:

- Dan Christians, Assistant Executive Director/Director of Planning
- Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services

I. INTRODUCTIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA Chair Courville

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. ACTION ITEMS

A. 2006 Lifeline Transportation Funding Program Elizabeth Richards

Recommendation:

Recommend to the STA Board to:

1. *Approve the attached (Attachment B) 2006 Lifeline Project Funding Plan;*
2. *Authorize the Executive Director to submit the Lifeline Project Funding Plan to MTC.*

B. Countywide Transit Ridership and Financial Assessment

Elizabeth Richards

Recommendation:

Recommend to the STA Board to authorize the Executive Director to:

1. *Release a Request for Proposals for a Countywide Ridership Survey, and execute a contract with a consultant for a Countywide Transit Ridership Survey not to exceed \$100,000;*
2. *Release a Request for Proposals for a Countywide Transit Finance Assessment Study and execute a contract with a consultant for a Countywide Transit Finance Assessment Study not-to-exceed \$60,000.*

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IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Transit Service Change Calendar

Elizabeth Richards

Informational

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B. Solano Transit Consolidation Study Status

Elizabeth Richards

Informational

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C. Solano Paratransit Assessment Study Status

Elizabeth Richards

Informational

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V. COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will be scheduled in Fall 2006.



DATE: June 19, 2006
TO: STA Transit Subcommittee
FROM: Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
SUBJECT: 2006 Lifeline Transportation Funding Program

Background:

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Lifeline Transportation Program funding is intended to improve mobility for residents of low-income communities and, more specifically, to fund solutions identified through the community-based transportation plans. Each community's needs are unique and will therefore require different solutions to address local circumstances. In Solano and other counties, these funds have been used to fund Welfare to Work and Community Based Transportation Planning priority projects.

Funds for three years will be allocated by MTC for Solano Lifeline Transportation Projects in the amount of \$1,076,866. The funding will be derived from a variety of sources including Congestion Management Air Quality (CMAQ), Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and State Transit Assistance Funds (STAF). Each of these funding sources have guidelines on how the funds may be spent which, in total, will influence the types of Lifeline projects that may be funded.

For the first time, the STA will be managing the Lifeline funds. STA will select the Solano Lifeline projects for funding and submit these to MTC. STA staff worked with MTC staff to transition the program to the STA from the issuance of the Call for Projects, establishing evaluation criteria jointly with MTC, approving projects for funding as well as monitoring and overseeing projects and programs. In December 2005 the STA Board approved the establishment of a Lifeline Advisory Committee to evaluate Solano project proposals. The Committee representation reflects organizations most familiar with this segment of transportation users and the types of transportation projects needed. (See Attachment A for list of Committee member agencies).

The Lifeline Advisory Committee initially met in March 2006 to review and provide input on the Call for Projects materials and overall schedule. The first Call for Projects was released on March 27, 2006 with applications due May 26, 2006. The Call for Projects was distributed to all Solano transit operators and over 50 other organizations throughout Solano County and was available on the STA website.

Discussion:

Six Lifeline Project Proposals were received: three from transit operators, two from Community Action Councils (CAC), and one from a non-profit children's shuttle. Up to three years of funding could be requested and requests could range from \$25,000 to \$200,000.

Applicants were advised that this Call for Projects would be the first of two Calls to allocate the \$1.08 million with up to \$400,000 to be allocated in this first call. A total of \$723,879 in requests were received.

The Lifeline Advisory Committee reviewed the proposals and heard the project applicants presented their proposals at their meeting on June 19, 2006. The committee evaluated the projects and developed a consensus recommendation. See Attachment B for Lifeline Advisory Committee Project Funding Recommendations.. The funding recommendation is summarized below:

	Applicant	Project	Recommended by Committee
1	Benicia CAC	Countywide vehicle purchase program	\$ 30,000
2	Fairfield CAC	Bus, taxi, gas voucher program	\$ 38,000
3	City of Benicia	Industrial park shuttle	\$ 26,000
4	City of Dixon	Saturday local & intercity bus	\$150,000
5	City of Rio Vista	Peak period Rt. 50 (RV-FF) service	\$ 25,000
6	Kids Xpress	Children's shuttle expansion	\$ 90,000
			\$359,000

The Lifeline Advisory Committee and STA staff recommends that \$359,000 of the \$1.08 million of Lifeline funds be allocated for this cycle. This would leave a reasonable balance of Lifeline funds for allocation in about a year when two additional Community Based Transportation Plans (CBTPs) in Cordelia/Fairfield and Vallejo will have been conducted. The Call for Projects would remain countywide and applicants who applied for funding under this first cycle would be eligible to apply again. Staff's recommendations incorporate the Lifeline Advisory Committee's recommendation and complementary actions.

At this time, staff is seeking the Transit Subcommittee review and recommendation of approval. This item will also be reviewed for action at the June Intercity Transit Consortium and TAC meetings before submitting to the STA Board in July for final approval and submittal to MTC.

Recommendation:

Recommend to the STA Board to:

1. Approve the attached (Attachment B) 2006 Solano Lifeline Project Funding Plan;
2. Authorize the Executive Director to submit the Lifeline Project Funding Plan to MTC.

Attachments:

- A. Lifeline Committee Members
- B. 2006 Solano Lifeline Project Funding Plan Recommendations



LIFELINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The STA's Lifeline Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives from the following entities:

- Mary Frances Kelly Poh, Benicia Community Action Council (CAC)
- Kim Johnson, Children's Network
- Gail Jack, County of Solano, Health and Social Services
- Richard Broaddus, Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC)
- Vacant, Member At- Large
- Jeff Matheson, STA Intercity Transit Consortium

2006 Solano Lifeline Project Funding Plan

Project Applicant	Project Description	Funding Request	Duration of Project	Funding Recommendations	Other Funds	Comments
1 Benicia Community Action Council (CAC)	Vehicle Loan Program	\$ 30,000	3	\$ 30,000		Meets goals of countywide Welfare to Work Plan and Dixon Community Based Transportation Plan. Minimum grant is \$25,000. Match funds secured first two years; third year contingent upon securing third-yr match.
2 Fairfield CAC	TRACs (Transportation Assistance for Central Solano)	\$ 175,000	3	\$ 38,000		Proposed funding will fund element of proposal that meets identified goals of Welfare to Work Plan (emergency taxi, bus, gas voucher programs). Opportunity to refine proposal and resubmit for funding following Cordelia/Fairfield Community Based Transportation Plan
3 City of Benicia	Industrial Park Service	\$ 80,389	3	\$ 26,000	Two-yr of funding from BAAQMD TFCA PM funds already approved.	Meets a need in the Welfare to Work Plan. One-year of funding via Lifeline
4 City of Dixon	Dixon Saturday Local and Intercity Transit Service	\$ 150,000	2	\$ 150,000		Meets Welfare to Work and Dixon Community Based Transportation Plan goals.
5 City of Rio Vista	RV-FF Peak Service Rt. 50	\$ 113,490	3	\$ 25,000	Shift existing LIFT grant from commuter vanpool (\$70,495) and supplement with \$25,000 Lifeline	Meets same Welfare to Work goal as commuter vanpool project. Rio Vista, MTC and other Commuter Vanpool project partner agencies' staff in agreement.
6 Kids Xpress	Kids Shuttle	\$ 175,000	3	\$ 90,000		Meets goals of Welfare to Work Plan. Maximum grant possible based on secured (vs. unsecured) match and to be used for expansion of service rather than maintenance of service. Opportunity to resubmit for additional Lifeline funds during next funding cycle and secure further matching funds for expansion.
TOTAL		\$ 723,879		\$ 359,000		

The Lifeline Advisory Committee recommends that Lifeline Funding applicants all show proof that matching funds are secured before receiving Lifeline Funds.

Jun-06



DATE: June 21, 2006
TO: STA Transit Subcommittee
FROM: Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
RE: Countywide Transit Ridership and Financial Assessment

Background:

In FY 2005-06 the Solano Transportation Authority (STA) led an effort to develop a consistent methodology for cost-sharing of Solano intercity transit routes. All Solano intercity transit services are operated by just a few local jurisdictions, yet all local jurisdictions contribute Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds to at least one intercity route. The Intercity Transit Funding (ITF) working group was formed by representatives from all Solano cities and the County of Solano to work on this multi-jurisdictional project.

The original purpose of the ITF Working Group was to develop a uniform methodology for shared funding of Intercity Transit Services. This was complicated due to the issue of overall rising costs and potential service changes. To maintain the ITF Working Group's focus, three principles were developed and the STA Board approved. After many months of work to determine intercity route costs, revenues, ridership, service changes, cost-sharing options and more, a comprehensive Intercity Transit Agreement was reached for one year. In June 2006, the STA Board approved an Intercity Transit Funding Agreement for FY 2006-07.

Discussion:

The Intercity Transit Funding Agreement was secured for only one year. The third approved principle concerned long-term cost-sharing which needs to be addressed in FY 2006-07. To secure a longer-term agreement, additional data needs to be collected to address several concerns that came up during the development of the first Intercity Transit Funding Agreement.

The two most primary pieces of data that need to be collected are ridership and financial. Ridership data needs to be collected on at least two levels. All routes (local and intercity) need to have comprehensive stop-by-stop ridership counts (on/off) collected at the same time. This data will capture a complete picture of where the ridership is and how it compares across routes and systems. Route level passenger performance, actual boardings by jurisdiction and relative boardings by jurisdiction can be determined. In addition, an on-board survey will need to be conducted to collect passenger residence, ultimate destination, access to transit data, and other information. This will offer more information that could potentially be used for cost-sharing factors in a long-term intercity cost-sharing methodology. The target to collect this data is late October/early November

2006. This is to give a little time for ridership to settle after several fare and service changes throughout the county while allowing time to compile the data early enough in the fiscal year so that there is time to use it in the development of a new intercity transit route cost-sharing methodology.

The second study that needs to be completed is a Countywide Transit Assessment Study. Throughout the development of the FY 2006-07 Intercity Transit Funding Agreement, there were a number of issues raised related to costs of routes: how costs are allocated among routes, how costs are allocated between local vs. intercity routes, how overhead rates are applied and what is included. This study would provide a third-party review of these and other financial issues to increase the level of understanding and confidence of costs among intercity transit funding partners. Completing this study early in the fiscal year is critical so that the results are available before determining the cost-sharing methodology.

For both these efforts, STA staff would plan to continue to coordinate with the Intercity Transit Funding Group to refine the survey tools and scopes of work. To secure consultants in a timely manner and meet the overall schedule of the multi-year intercity transit funding agreement effort, at this time, staff is requesting authorization to release Requests for Proposals for a Countywide Transit Ridership Survey and a Countywide Transit Finance Assessment Study.

Recommendations:

Recommend to the STA Board to authorize the Executive Director to:

1. Release a Request for Proposals for a Countywide Ridership Survey, and execute a contract with a consultant for a Countywide Transit Ridership Survey not to exceed \$100,000;
2. Release a Request for Proposals for a Countywide Transit Finance Assessment Study and execute a contract with a consultant for a Countywide Transit Finance Assessment Study not-to-exceed \$60,000.

Attachments:

- A. Countywide Transit Ridership Survey Preliminary Draft Scope of Work
- B. Countywide Transit Finance Assessment Study Preliminary Draft Scope of Work (to be provided at meeting).



INTERCITY TRANSIT RIDERSHIP STUDY

Preliminary Draft SCOPE OF SERVICES

Introduction

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) is a joint powers authority with members including the cities of Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville, and Vallejo and the County of Solano. The STA serves as the Congestion Management Agency for Solano County and is responsible for countywide transportation planning and programming of State and Federal funding for transportation projects within the county. Through its SolanoLinks Transit Consortium, the STA coordinates various fixed route and Solano Paratransit Services.

Background

Twelve intercity transit routes are currently operated in Solano County by four different public transit operators. The subsidies required to operate these routes are shared by the eight local jurisdictions in the County. Over the past year, STA, the transit operators and local jurisdictions (the Intercity Transit Funding Group) began developing an intercity transit funding agreement. After considering different formulas for subsidy sharing using several factors, the Intercity Transit Funding Group agreed to use a formula for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006-07, and agreed that additional study would be required for future year funding agreements. Specifically, the group determined that a ridership survey was necessary to meet the goals set forth for developing the formula underlying the Intercity Transit Funding Agreement. STA will manage the ridership study, relying on the Intercity Transit Funding Group for input to the study scope, survey methods and instruments, and coordination of fieldwork. The results of the ridership study are needed for development of a multi year intercity transit funding agreement beginning in FY 2007-08.

A description of the transit services included in the current Intercity Transit Funding Agreement is included in Attachment 1. A list of all existing intercity transit routes and local routes are included in Attachment 2. Between July and October 1st, a series of fare and service changes will be implemented throughout Solano County.

Draft Work Tasks

The purpose of the ridership study is to determine where and when customers use transit, and who uses transit. As currently envisioned, the study will include a count of passenger boardings and alightings (on/off counts) and an on-board survey. In addition to serving as data input to an intercity transit funding formula, the ridership study will assist STA and the transit operators in measuring route performance, route planning and scheduling.

The scope of the ridership study includes all local and intercity transit routes and the Vallejo ferry/bus route to San Francisco as described in Attachment 2. All ridership counts are expected to be conducted within a two week period and include all trips on all days of service. The current goal is to collect data late October/early November 2006.

On-board survey questions shall include origin and destination, rider demographics, trip purpose, fare payment, and access to the intercity transit route. A sample of the types of questions that might be considered for an on-board survey are shown in Attachment 3. It will be conducted within the same time period as the ridership accounts.

Tasks

The tasks listed below may be performed in parallel, or may be re-sequenced. Respondents to this RFP should present their proposal for sequencing tasks and any additional or substitute tasks that may be necessary for the ridership study.

1. Confirm Project Goals and Finalize Scope of Services and Work Plan
2. Identify Related Transit Survey Activities and Coordinate.
3. Identify Passenger Counting, Survey Techniques and Recommend Approach
4. Draft/Finalize On-Board Survey and Review with ITF Group
5. Prepare On-Board Survey Plan and Passenger Count Plan
 - a. Study Population
 - b. Sample Size
 - c. Operations Coordination
 - d. Passenger Notification
 - e. Staffing/Supervision Plan
 - f. Quality Control
 - g. Data Compilation
6. Identify Format of Reports from Surveys and Counts
7. Conduct On-Board Survey and Passenger Counts
8. Review Survey Results for Completeness and Tabulate Data
9. Prepare Ridership Study Reports
10. Summarize Results for Presentation STA staff, ITF Group to Governing Boards

All Solano Operated Intercity Transit Routes in Proposed Funding Agreement

Only routes between two cities in Solano County

Eight (8) Total Intercity Service		
	75 (70)	Benicia- Vallejo- Pleasant Hill BART station
	20 30 40	Fairfield- Vacaville Fairfield- Vacaville- Dixon- Davis- Sacramento Fairfield- Vacaville- Pleasant Hill BART station
	50	Rio Vista- Suisun City- Fairfield- Isleton
	85 90 91	Vallejo- Fairfield (Solano Community College) Vallejo- Fairfield- El Cerrito del Norte BART Vacaville- Fairfield- El Cerrito del Norte BART

**Summary of Solano Operated
Local and Intercity Fixed-route Transit Services**

Transit Operator	Local	Intercity
Benicia Breeze	15,16,17,18	23, 75
Dixon Redit-Ride	N/a	N/a
Fairfield Suisun Transit	1a/1b, 2, 3a/b,4,5,6,7	20,30,40,90
Delta Breeze (Rio Vista)	51	50, 52
Vacaville City Coach	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,	N/a
Vallejo Transit	1,2,3,4,5/7, 6/8,9	80,85,92, Baylink Ferry, 200
TOTAL	26	13

Attachment 3: Draft On-Board Transit Survey



RT Op/# _____
Day _____
Trip _____
Dir _____

2006 ON BOARD TRANSIT SURVEY

The Solano Transportation Authority, and your local operators, want your help to improve transit service by answering the questions below and returning this form before you get off the bus. All responses are confidential.

Please fill out this form each time you get one.

Thank you.

PLEASE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS FIRST

1. Where are you coming from?

- 1. Home
- 2. Work
- 3. School
- 4. Shopping
- 5. Recreation/visit friends
- 6. Other (specify: _____)

2. What is the address of that place?
(Specify street name **AND** cross street **OR** address)

Street No. Street Name

Nearest Cross StreetCity

3. What is the zip code where you live? _____

4. Where are you going?

- 1. Home
- 2. Work
- 3. School
- 4. Shopping
- 5. Recreation/visit friends
- 6. Other (specify: _____)

5. What is the address of that place?
(Specify street name **AND** cross street **OR** address)

Street No. Street Name

Nearest Cross StreetCity

6. Where did you get on THIS bus?
(Specify street name **AND** cross street **OR** address)

7. How did you get to THIS bus?

- | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| 1. Home | 5. Drove alone |
| 2. Work | 6. Carpooled, then parked |
| 3. School | 7. Was dropped off |
| 4. Walked | 8. Other (specify: _____) |

8. Where will you get off THIS bus?

(Specify street name AND cross street OR address)

9. After you get off THIS bus, will you:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Transfer to bus route _____ | 5. Drive alone |
| 2. Transfer to rail | 6. Carpool (ride with others) |
| 3. Transfer to ferry | 7. Be picked up |
| 4. Walk _____ blocks | 8. Other (specify: _____) |

10. Did you have a car that you could have used today instead of the bus?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. No |
|--------|-------|

11. How did you pay to use THIS bus?

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Transfer slip | 3. Monthly pass |
| 2. Cash | 4. Other (specify: _____) |

12. How often do you ride the bus?

_____ days a week Less than one day per week

13. Are you:

- | | |
|---------|-----------|
| 1. Male | 2. Female |
|---------|-----------|

14. Do you consider yourself:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Hispanic | 3. Asian (non-hispanic) |
| 2. White (non-hispanic) | 4. African-American (non-hispanic) |
| | 5. Other (specify: _____) |

15. What is your age? _____

16. What is the total yearly income of all the people in your home?

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Under \$10,000 | 5. \$40,000 - \$49,999 |
| 2. \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 6. \$50,000 - \$59,999 |
| 3. \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 7. \$60,000 or more |
| 4. \$30,000 - \$39,999 | |

17. How do you rate transit service in your area?

- | | | |
|---------|------------|---------|
| 1. Good | 2. Average | 3. Poor |
|---------|------------|---------|

18. How many vehicles are available for use by all the people in your home?

_____ vehicles

19. Have you previously filled out this form for THIS bus route?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 2. No |
|--------|-------|

20. Comments:



DATE: June 19, 2006
TO: STA Transit Subcommittee
FROM: Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
SUBJECT: Information Items IV.A & IV.B

Background/ Discussion:

There are three Informational items on this Transit Subcommittee agenda:

Item IV.A Transit Service Change Calendar

Over the next several months a series of transit service changes, notices to the public, public hearings and meetings to present proposed fare and service changes, Council meetings, and the implementation of approved changes will occur. For the Committee's information, a summary calendar of these activities has been prepared (Attachment A) and will be reviewed by staff at the meeting.

Item IV. B Solano Transit Consolidation Study Status

A Scope of Work (Attachment B) was approved by the STA Board in the Fall of 2005 along with the authorization for the release of a Request for Proposal (RFP). Due to competing projects, an RFP has not yet been released. The RFP is planned to be released this summer.

Recommendation:

Informational

Attachments:

- A. Transit Service Change Calendar
- B. Transit Consolidation approved Scope of Work

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Solano Transit Consolidation Study Scope of Work

Introduction:

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) is a joint powers authority with members including the cities of Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville, and Vallejo and the County of Solano. The STA serves as the Congestion Management Agency for Solano County and is responsible for countywide transportation planning and programming of State and Federal funding for transportation projects within the county and through its SolanoLinks Transit Consortium, coordinates various fixed route and Solano Paratransit services.

Background:

In Solano County, each City and the County fund and/or operate transit services. This includes local and intercity transit services as well as general public and American Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit services. A subsidized taxi program and other special transportation services are also funded with local transit funds and operated through local jurisdictions. Over the past several years, the issue of consolidating some of all of the services has been discussed and proposed.

The STA Board has expressed interest in transit service becoming more convenient through a seamless systems, that there would be a reasonable level of service through the county, and local transit issues and needs would be addressed. In March 2005 the STA Board gave direction to initiate a countywide Transit Consolidation Study.

Draft Work Tasks

Transit Operators' Input

Interview transit operators/cities throughout Solano County and STA staff to review current existing fixed-route and paratransit public transit services in Solano County, services funded by transit funds, transit planning documents and issues of concern relating to consolidation. Compile, contrast and compare the following among the various services:

- a. Service area and characteristics
- b. Governance structures, resources, and responsibilities
- c. Costs: Operating and capital
- d. Funding sources and obligations
- e. Financial and operational performance

Public Official and Public Input

Maintain a high level of communication with public officials to understand and incorporate their interests, concerns, and direction. Collect and incorporate the interests of the public.

- a. Collect and identify initial transit consolidation needs and concerns from public officials and the public
- b. Make presentations to 10 public input meetings including City Council and Board of Supervisors Board meetings as well as public workshops throughout the county. Collect public input through other means as needed.
- c. Meet with the Transit Subcommittee/Steering Committee at least four times.
- d. Meet with the Intercity Transit Consortium at least four times.

Transit Funding Partners' Input

Confer with key partner and funding agencies to identify potential issues, procedures, and concerns; including the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Caltrans, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Water Transit Authority (WTA), and others.

Develop and Evaluate Alternatives

Identify and present a variety of organizational models and governing structures for the consolidation of Solano County's transit services including, but not limited to the following: existing conditions, full consolidation, and alternatives for an "opt out" option by local jurisdictions or services they prefer to continue to operate.

- a. Evaluate service models using the criteria established by the STA Board:
 - a. Cost Effectiveness
 - b. Efficient use of resources – equipment, facilities, personnel
 - c. Service efficiency
 - d. Improved governance – accountability to the public and the community
 - e. Streamline decision-making
 - f. Ridership and productivity impacts
 - g. Service coordination
 - h. Recognize local community needs and priorities
 - i. Protect local transit service as determined by local jurisdictions
 - j. Flexibility to meet local needs
 - k. Capacity to deliver new service while maintaining existing service
 - l. Ability to leverage additional funding
 - m. Implementation needs/requirements (e.g. legal, financial)

Build Consensus toward a Preferred Alternative

Work with public officials, transit staff, and the public to develop consensus on a preferred alternative.

- a. Present a range of alternatives and recommend a preferred alternative(s) to transit staff for their review and input.

- b. Present a range of alternatives and recommend a preferred alternative(s), along with transit staff input, to Transit Consortium and Transit Committee/Steering Committee.
- c. Make presentations to 10 public input meetings including City Council and Board of Supervisors Board meetings as well as public workshops throughout the county. Collect public input through other means as needed.

Develop Implementation Plan, Cost Estimate, and Funding Plan for Preferred Alternative

Advance the preferred alternative by developing and recommending operational, financial, and governance implementation plans.

- a. Develop a detailed implementation plan and potential phasing of consolidated services.
- b. Develop cost estimates for capital and operating.
- c. Recommend a funding plan from available and proposed funding sources
- d. Recommend timelines and necessary agreements needed to implement.

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DATE: June 22, 2006
TO: STA Transit Subcommittee
FROM: Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
RE: Solano Paratransit Assessment Study Status

Background:

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) administers and Fairfield-Suisun Transit (FST) operates Solano Paratransit. Solano Paratransit operates Monday-Saturday providing intercity paratransit service between the cities of Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville, and the unincorporated areas in the central and eastern portion of Solano County.

Solano Paratransit is funded by Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds from Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville, and the County of Solano. Over the years, the STA has secured a variety of other funds for this service including 5310 grants for new buses and Regional Paratransit State Transit Assistance Funds. A multi-year funding and service agreement was executed in FY2005-06 and will be amended to update the funding distribution for upcoming years.

Discussion:

The STA has administered intercity paratransit since the early 1990s. The Americans for Disabilities Act (ADA) was approved in 1990 and set basic standards on how transit services would accommodate the disabled. Before 1995, intercity paratransit and Vallejo intracity paratransit services for the elderly and handicapped were operated, under contract with the STA, by a non-profit organization – the Solano County Economic Opportunity Council (SCEOC). When SCEOC was suddenly unable to provide the service, STA has maintained the Solano Paratransit service through a contract with Fairfield-Suisun Transit which operates the service on behalf of the STA and partner agencies.

Solano Paratransit began operating countywide paratransit while local transit operators developed their own local paratransit services for trips *within* their cities. At the same time, Vallejo Runabout began operating both intracity and intercity paratransit services for the Vallejo and Benicia Transit users. Subsequently, Benicia began to directly contract for their intercity paratransit service via Vallejo Runabout. At this time, all three intercity paratransit services contract with the same provider – MV Transportation. Nevertheless, there are differences in how the service is delivered. ADA requirements are more strictly applied in some areas than others. This highlights the issue that ADA and general paratransit service can be delivered in more than one manner to meet the legal requirements of ADA. Policies on how services are delivered also impact the increasing cost of paratransit services.

Ten years ago, the last of a series of ADA Compliance Plans was completed by the STA in conjunction with the Solano transit operators. There has not been a thorough analysis of Solano Paratransit service since. The demand for paratransit service has increased over the years and is expected to continue to increase. As the new multi-year funding agreement was set in place in FY 2005-06, the issue of existing and future costs and service delivery levels was raised. This was an opportune time to analyze existing Solano Paratransit service, future service options, and priorities.

Per the direction of the STA Board, a consulting firm, Nelson/Nygaard, was retained to conduct the Solano Paratransit Assessment Study. They have been working diligently on this and are nearing completion. Staff will provide the committee with a verbal report on the status of this effort.

Recommendation:

Informational