

Lamorinda Program Management Committee

LAMORINDA PROGRAM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, May 6, 2013, 1:30 PM

Lafayette City Offices
3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Conference Room 265
Lafayette, CA 94549

LPMC AGENDA

1. Call to Order the Lamorinda Program Management Committee
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of the LPMC Agenda
4. Public Comment
5. Old Business:
 - a. Consideration of Proposed Lamorinda Transit Access and Connectivity Study (aka Lamorinda Shuttle Assessment Study)
Recommendation: Direct staff to develop an RFP for LPMC's consideration.
6. Adjourn LPMC Meeting

I, Leah Greenblat declare under penalty of perjury that this agenda has been posted at least 72 hours in advance at the Lafayette City Offices, 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, CA 94549 in the glass case and on the City website at www.ci.lafayette.ca.us.



Leah Greenblat, Transportation Planner

Location of Agendas and Agenda Packets: Agenda and packets are available for review by the public during regular work hours at the Lafayette City Offices, 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 210, Lafayette, CA 94549. Agendas and packets shall be made available at least 72 hours in advance of regular meetings and 24 hours in advance of special meetings.

Any writings or documents pertaining to an open session item provided to a majority of the Lamorinda Program Management Committee less than 72 hours prior to the meeting, shall be made available for public inspection at the Lafayette City Offices, 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 210, Lafayette, CA 94549 during normal business hours.

Lamorinda Program Management Committee

To: Lamorinda Program Management Committee

From: LPMC TAC

Meeting Date: May 6, 2013

RE: Consideration of a Lamorinda Transit Access and Connectivity Study

Background:

Over the last several years, County Connection has steadily reduced transit service in Lamorinda. This is due to a combination of lack of ridership, lack of service, and diminishing operation budgets; all play off of each other to the detriment of the other. In addition, the existing routes are not close or convenient to neighborhoods or neighborhood destinations. The large buses are also less desirable on residential streets and/or are too large for the narrow, winding streets common in Lamorinda.

Also within the past few years, the parking lots at BART Stations in Lamorinda have filled up earlier in the morning and parking fees have been implemented. Both discourage BART usage by local residents. Further, local residents who drive to BART use the same limited, arterial street network in Lamorinda as drivers heading towards the freeway. So even though some of the drivers will end up BARTing, they are still contributing to congestion on local roads. In addition, Lamorinda's BART stations are located near its downtowns which already experience a shortage of long-term parking options.

The SR24 Transit Capacity Study acknowledged that neither Lafayette nor Orinda sought to bring more vehicles into the SR24 corridor by increasing BART parking at its stations. The SR24 Transit Capacity Study identified local feeder shuttles to BART as an option to bring more local riders to BART, but the study did not pursue this option further as its primary focus was service along the SR24 corridor.

More recently Lafayette's and Moraga's Downtown Specific Plans have identified circulator shuttles and feeder shuttles as desirable circulation options worthy of further investigation. All three Lamorinda jurisdictions now have Priority Development Areas which require minimum levels of transit and are predicated on future, increased transit usage. A functional transit system linking the three PDA's could serve as a model for other suburban communities where traditional transit has been found to be inappropriate due to lower densities or unsustainable because of irregular ridership. More importantly for Lamorinda, a functional transit system linking the three PDA's and the two BART stations could reduce area congestion, increase BART ridership, and contribute to the three cities' economic health.

TRANSPAC has funded a County Connection Study to look at neighborhoods where traditional fixed-route, bus transit service is not working well and an alternative form of service may perform better. Excerpts from this study's RFP and the selected consultant's

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proposal are included at the end of this staff report.

Anne Muzzini, County Connection's Director of Planning and Marketing met with the LPMC TAC and reviewed the variety of types of shuttle service and the on-going, TRANSPAC study. In addition to the traditional shuttle service that runs along a fixed-route, some of the various types of adaptive shuttle transit service include on-demand-response, flex-routes, subscription, and deviated fixed route. The TRANSPAC study spends considerable resources focusing on public outreach. LPMC TAC proposes a study that focuses more on the technical analysis of service.

Issues for Study:

This study would investigate non-traditional methods of shuttle transit and explore different options for what might be best suited for Lamorinda.

Some of the questions the study could answer:

- Are there new transit service operational models that are better suited to the development patterns in Lamorinda?
- What neighborhoods, districts and destinations would be served?
- Are there sufficient service markets to support service?
- How should peak service demands be matched with the appropriate type of service?
- Can one type of service occur during peak commute times, another mid-day and/or in the evening?
- What type or combination of types of service would best serve Lamorinda's needs?
- What would the service look like:
 - number of unique routes and alignment of routes,
 - frequency of service/response time,
 - days and hours of operation,
 - type and quantity of transport equipment,
 - infrastructure needs (dispatch and on-street),
 - staff levels required.
- What are the start-up costs?
- What is the estimated annual cost for service?
- Do fares need to be charged?
- What are the financing options?
- Are there more cost-effective and feasible options?
- Should the system use a private operator or County Connection?
- What are the short-term funding options?
- What are some long-term funding options?
- Could a pilot program test the market? If so, how long would it need to operate to give useful information?
- Can new development be charged an impact fee related to such a service?
- How could conditions of approval on new development finance its operations?

- What effect could such a system have on vehicle miles travelled? What about congestion and wait times at signals and intersections?
- Could such a system be integrated with other regular potential users?
- Are there examples of similar successful shuttle services and how was it promoted to the public?
- How should this service be marketed to the public?

Study Cost, Funding and Management:

Based on feedback LPMC TAC has received from County Connection, San Ramon, Danville, TRANSPAC and CCTA staffs, a quality, in-depth study of the type the LPMC TAC foresees would cost approximately \$100,000. While the LPMC TAC was preliminarily discussing the need for the study, a variety of grant funding sources became available. The SWAT TAC has recommended that through a combination of two of its programs, the SWAT TDM program could provide approximately \$75,000 towards the study. Informally, Ms. Muzzini offered that County Connection could contribute \$20,000 towards a Lamorinda shuttle study.

Ms. Muzzini explained that regardless of the type of service, County Connection wants to serve as the agency performing transit planning in its service area. Ms. Muzzini offered to bring her expertise to the study by serving as its project manager. The LPMC TAC supports this. If LPMC decides to pursue the study, the LPMC TAC would need to determine whether there would be a fee for Ms. Muzzini's services. While she offered to amend the TRANSPAC contract on the existing study to include Lamorinda, the LPMC TAC believes a separate consultant contract would better serve LPMC so that the Lamorinda study focuses on its unique issues and incorporates local oversight. The LPMC TAC foresees developing a draft RFP for LPMC's review that clearly explains the roles of the various parties.

LPMC TAC Recommendation:

Direct LPMC TAC to pursue development of a draft RFP to be reviewed by LPMC for a Lamorinda Transit Access and Connectivity Study.

Excerpts from the CCCTA's RFP:

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CCCTA is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to develop an Adaptive Service Analysis Plan. The project is aimed at improving transit ridership, service quality, and cost effectiveness by developing alternative service options for communities where fixed-route performance has been low.

The Adaptive Service Analysis Plan will address the lack of productivity in select suburban neighborhoods and the high cost per passenger of providing traditional fixed route service by developing new service strategies. Strategies for providing service should include these modes: general public demand-response, flex-routes, and custom designed neighborhood shuttles. The consultant will be responsible for identifying alternatives that have produced successful results (as measured in terms of cost per passenger and customer satisfaction) in similar suburban neighborhoods.

CCCTA's currently only operates two modes of service: traditional fixed-route and ADA demand-response services and is interested in diversifying to provide service that is scaled to meet the needs of the community. Fixed route service is provided with large transit coaches using union employees while the ADA service is provided with 15 passenger vans through a contract with First Transit. It will be necessary for the plan to identify steps that need to be taken to implement a new mode such as same day dispatch, changes to union rules, fleet changes, etc...

The project will culminate in a report that includes: a set of performance standards for evaluating the success of suburban routes, identification of neighborhoods within the plan area that are ripe for non-traditional transit service, a description of the pros and cons of various service alternatives, and a detailed implementation plans for two selected communities.

Task 4: Matrix of Options for Four Neighborhoods

The consultant shall create a matrix showing the pros and cons from the transit operator and rider perspective of various non-traditional modes in each of 4 selected neighborhoods where fixed route service is not achieving the threshold for performance developed in Task 3 or where CCCTA does not currently operate service. The matrix will also include projections for how the service alternatives would perform in the specified community. Based on the results of the matrix and input from staff two neighborhoods will be selected for further analysis.

Task 5:

A detailed implementation plan will be developed that identifies the steps required by administration, marketing, operations, and fleet management departments. For instance changes in operating procedures, driver education, dispatch methodology will be described. The implementation plan will recommended specific time schedules, frequency, anticipated ridership, and the operating and capital expenditures required to sustain the service. Expected cost savings and ridership changes will be delineated. Policies and Board actions necessary to implement the preferred alternative service should also be included.

Excerpt from TRANSPAC's Study Consultant Nelson/Nygaard's Proposal

INTRODUCTION

Providing efficient and cost-effective service remains an immense challenge for suburban public transit agencies throughout the U.S. To a large degree, their ability to provide productive service is dictated by factors that are simply beyond their control such as:

1. Challenging topography that limits a person's ability to walk to/from stops
2. Sidewalk and roadway networks that often discourage walking
3. Road networks that are often circuitous and challenging for large buses to navigate
4. Land uses and residential/employment development densities that simply can't support frequent and direct transit services

Put all of these factors together and it's no surprise that a typical suburban bus system transports fewer than 17 passengers per revenue hour while its urban counterparts carry upwards of 40 or 50 passengers per hour. It's precisely because of these factors that suburban transit agencies must rely so heavily on market-driven assessments of potential demand. In most urban areas there are simply so many potential passengers that just about any type of transit service has a decent chance of performing well. In the suburbs however, the fact that there are far few people living and working per square mile compared to urban areas means that the margin of error for success can be razor thin. This is by no means a statement that transit service isn't important in the suburbs. We are simply saying that expectations for "need" and "effectiveness" must be very realistic.

"Adaptive Transit Service" isn't necessarily a new concept. Non-traditional options such as deviated fixed routes, flex buses and general public dial-a-ride have been tried by many suburban operators over the last three decades. Some of these have been successful as long-term options; some have served as "jumping off points" for a later generation of traditional fixed route services; and some have sadly been failures.

At Nelson\Nygaard, we believe there are two critical factors that drive the success or failure of suburban transit systems, regardless of whether they use traditional fixed routes or Adaptive Services:

1. Developing clear and concise goals/objectives/expectations
2. Understanding the service markets, including targeted origins/destinations

In urban areas, a transit system can capture a mere 1-2% of a market and still carry a large number of passengers. In the suburbs however, the markets are so much smaller that transit agencies need to capture 5-7% of a market just to have an opportunity to meet minimum performance thresholds. One of the reasons that supplemental school services in the suburbs perform as well as they do is because the routes capture an incredibly large percentage of the market. There is a clearly defined market/destination and some significant incentives for using the service.

For suburban transit services to be effective and efficient they must find other opportunities (like school services) where the service objectives are clear and the markets are, for the most part, well defined. Unfortunately, what often happens in the suburbs is that when traditional fixed route services don't work they are either eliminated or replaced with some type of adaptive service with the expectation that the adaptive service will automatically solve the efficiency problem. Sometimes it does, but more often it doesn't because the agency still doesn't fully understand the demand within the area served by these adaptive services. Gaining a strong understanding of the potential markets will be the foundation for Nelson\Nygaard's approach to this project.