

MEMORANDUM - CITY OF PASADENA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DATE: September 10, 2013

TO: Municipal Services Committee

FROM: Frederick C. Dock, Director 

SUBJECT: PASADENA SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

INFORMATION ITEM

This report on the Pasadena Short Range Transit Plan is provided for the Municipal Services Committee's information.

BACKGROUND

The Pasadena Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) is intended to guide short range programming of transit services and outlines future operating programs and capital projects that support the policy goals for local transit services in the City of Pasadena. The SRTP is a management tool to guide on-going improvements to the City-operated local transit system. Minor changes to the transit service operations identified through the SRTP are implemented annually by staff. Larger changes require review and approval from the City Council, either through the annual operating and capital improvement budgets adoption process or specific review of improvements that include receiving grant funds or which require budget changes outside of the adopted budget.

A note on the nomenclature of the SRTP: federal funding requirements for transit agencies require recipient agencies to prepare two types of plans on a recurring basis – a long-range plan with a 25-year planning horizon and a short-range plan with a five-year horizon. Although Pasadena is not subject to the federal requirements since ARTS is operated using local funds, staff elected to use the SRTP format for a five-year operations plan to provide consistency with Metro's process, since Metro is the source of any federal and regional funds that ARTS receives.

The Department of Transportation has developed this Short Range Transit Plan as an operations and management tool for the Pasadena Area Rapid Transit System (ARTS) and Pasadena Dial-A-Ride (DAR) service covering the period of Fiscal Year 2012 through Fiscal Year 2017. This major work effort examined the performance of the service and the existing and short term service deficiencies and needs, and provided:

- An overview of the existing transit system;
- An evaluation of Pasadena ARTS and Pasadena DAR existing performance;
- An assessment of existing unmet needs; consideration of alternatives to improve system performance and address the unmet needs;

- A recommended fiscally-constrained transit service operation plan for the next five years;
- A recommended fiscally-constrained transit capital improvement program; and
- A financial plan that examines funding alternatives to support both operating and capital program needs.

The update of the SRTP began in 2008 and the majority of the work products were completed by the end of Fiscal Year 2011. The Plan process was held back in order to better align its schedule with the General Plan Land Use and Mobility Element update effort and the Complete Streets Plan.

The SRTP outreach and public participation occurred over a multi-year period and included direct customer feedback, bus operator comments, an online survey, General Plan Mobility Element comments, and input from three Stakeholder work groups.

The three Stakeholder work groups reviewed ARTS passenger load data, provided feedback based on direct field observations, and participated in table top exercises. These three Stakeholder work groups included the following:

- Transportation Advisory Commission's Transit Subcommittee
 - This working group invited participation and input from various City Commissions and Business Districts, including, but not limited to the Accessibility and Disability Commission, Northwest Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission, Senior Commission, Old Pasadena Management District, Playhouse District, South Lake Business Association, as well as representatives from the Pasadena Transportation Management Association (i.e., Art Center, JPL, Caltech, etc.)
- Technical Advisory Group
 - This working group included participants from various City Departments and Divisions, including, but not limited to, Transportation, Public Works, Planning, Economic Development, Housing, Human Services and Recreation, Arts and Cultural Affairs, etc.
- Pasadena Youth Council
 - This working group was made up of the official advisory body for the City that represented the youth of Pasadena. This working group was introduced to this process through Human Services and Recreation.

Staff worked with the Stakeholder groups to define the guiding principles that were used to identify the following ARTS fixed-route service improvements:

- **Improvement 1**
 - Route 10 to operate at a 15 minute frequency.
 - Route 20 and Route 31/32 to operate at 20 minute frequency.

- **Improvement 2**
 - New Route on Orange Grove Blvd. between Fair Oaks Ave. and the Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line Station.
- **Improvement 3**
 - Restructure Route 40 to travel south on Allen Ave. and east on Foothill Blvd. to the Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line Station.
- **Improvement 4**
 - New Route that would provide direct service between the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Memorial Park Gold Line Station, and Caltech. This route would replace the existing Route 52 which operates between the South Raymond corridor and JPL.
- **Improvement 5**
 - New Route that would travel eastbound and westbound between Huntington Hospital, Caltech, Huntington Library and the Allen Gold Line Station.

Current funding limitations restrict the ability of the ARTS fixed-route system to implement any of these improvement concepts in a timely fashion. Cost information that is included in the SRTP for each of the above improvement concepts is being used to seek funding for implementation.

The SRTP did not identify any needed structural changes to the Dial-A-Ride program; however, a performance analysis is provided, including current levels of service, performance trends, and a comparison to other agencies within Los Angeles County.

CONSISTENCY WITH COMPLETE STREETS PLAN

The goal of the Complete Streets Plan is to develop a street type system that reflects both land use context and multi-modal function of streets as a means to prioritize decision-making about intensity and kind of investment appropriate to each.

The Complete Streets Plan consists of two components:

- **Function:** The primary travel function of each street in terms of connectivity (regional, citywide, neighborhood, local) and accessibility needs.
- **Modal Emphasis Overlays:** Multi-modal factors that define those parts of the street network which require special consideration to provide the connectivity necessary for the transit, pedestrian and bicycle systems to serve the community.

The SRTP is included as a modal emphasis overlay in the Complete Streets Plan. Since the Complete Streets Plan considers all users when designing streets, the SRTP identifies streets with transit emphasis. Transit system improvements will not be limited to the designations in the Complete Streets Plan; it solely serves as guidance for the

identification and development of a comprehensive transit system. The SRTP and Complete Streets policy will allow staff and decision makers to look at all streets for potential transit improvements when feasible.

CONCLUSION

The on-going financial constraints facing the Pasadena ARTS budget limit the Department's ability to implement the recommendations identified in this SRTP. For the five recommended service improvements noted above, the total estimated additional annual operating costs are just over \$4.5 million and the total estimated capital costs are nearly \$6 million.

The Department has been actively seeking grant funds to implement the SRTP recommendations. In Fiscal Year 2013 the Department was awarded a nearly \$2,000,000 Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) federal grant that provides funding for a portion of Improvement 1, improved frequency on Route 20 for the next three years. The JARC grant provides for the purchase of one new bus and increased operating funds to achieve a weekday frequency of 25 minutes. This new service began in Fiscal Year 2014.

The Department will continue to explore funding options, and look at opportunities to maintain and expand the Pasadena ARTS service.

ATTACHMENT:

Draft Pasadena Short Range Transit Plan