



August 8, 2019

To: Transit Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Measure M2 Community-Based Transit Circulators Program
Project V Ridership Report

Overview

Measure M2 establishes a competitive program through Project V to fund community-based local transit circulators, designed to complement regional transit services. A ridership report on 19 active Project V services operating through the second and third quarters of fiscal year 2018-2019 is provided for Board of Director's information.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

The Community-Based Transit Circulators Program (Project V) is a competitive program under Measure M2 (M2), which provides funding to develop, implement, and operate local transit services. Services eligible under the program include community-based circulators, shuttles, trolleys, and demand-responsive services intended to complement regional transit, while also better suiting local needs in areas not adequately served by regional transit.

M2 Project V services are required to meet (or exceed) minimum performance standards. If services are not meeting, or are trending toward not meeting, minimum performance standards, Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) staff will meet with the local agency and recommend adjustments, with an overall goal of attempting to improve ridership (i.e. boardings per revenue vehicle hour [B/RVH]). If a service continues to perform below minimum performance standards, it will be cancelled, consistent with Board of Director (Board)-approved program guidelines. If a service is cancelled, local agencies can still participate in future funding cycles with new service concepts that are anticipated to be more productive.

Project V-funded service performance is evaluated quarterly and is reported to the OCTA Board semi-annually. This reporting period includes ridership information for the first and second quarters of fiscal year 2018-2019 (i.e. October 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019) and reports on 19 active services.

Discussion

Current Project V services include a combination of special event, commuter, fixed-route, and demand-response projects, which meet a variety of community needs. The prior ridership report reflected 18 services in operation. Since that time, the City of Huntington Beach's Seasonal Local Transit Service was discontinued due to low productivity, and two new routes were initiated in February 2019 in the City of Irvine. As such, the current ridership report reflects 19 active services.

All active services must achieve or exceed six B/RVH by the end of year one and ten B/RVH by the end of year two. After year two, ten B/RVH must be maintained (or exceeded) through the remainder of the Project V grant period.

During this reporting period, most services either met or exceeded their respective performance standards. Productivity for special event services averaged 35 B/RVH, commuter services averaged ten B/RVH, fixed-route services averaged eight B/RVH, and the demand-response service averaged nine boardings per hour of service.

Active Project V services are identified below, and complete ridership details and next steps for services that are not meeting performance standards are provided in Attachment A.

Seasonal services – with no service hours reported during this period include the following:

- Dana Point - Pacific Coast Highway and Special Event Trolley,
- Huntington Beach - Holiday and Event Shuttle,
- Laguna Beach - Summer Breeze Bus Service,
- Newport Beach - Balboa Peninsula Seasonal Trolley,
- Newport Beach - Balboa Peninsula Seasonal Trolley Expansion,
- San Clemente - Summer Weekend Trolley and Seasonal Service,
- San Clemente - Summer Weekday Trolley and Seasonal Service Expansion.

Services meeting or exceeding their respective minimum performance standards include the following:

- Dana Point - Summer Trolley and Seasonal Shuttle,
- La Habra - Special Event Service,
- Laguna Beach - Summer Weekend Trolley and Seasonal Service,
- Lake Forest - Commuter Vanpool Service Irvine Station and Ossur,
- Lake Forest - Commuter Shuttle Service Irvine Station and Panasonic,
- San Clemente – Demand-Response Service¹,
- San Juan Capistrano - Special Event and Weekend Summer Trolley.

Services not at their respective minimum performance standard requirement include the following:

- County of Orange - Local Circulator and Special Event Service, Center Service,
- Laguna Beach - Residential Trolley Year-Round and Seasonal Service, and
- Mission Viejo - Local Community Circulator.

The County of Orange started service in June 2017. The service is currently trending just below the required performance target for this reporting period. However, the service has previously met the ten B/RVH performance target. Staff will continue to monitor this service and work with the County of Orange to discuss ideas and concepts to reduce unproductive service hours. However, if these efforts do not work, this service would be subject to cancellation during the next reporting period.

The City of Laguna Beach (Laguna Beach) Residential Trolley Year-Round and Seasonal Service² did not meet the minimum performance target in the timeframe required, and M2-funded Project V support for this service is scheduled to be cancelled, effective September 30, 2019. Laguna Beach is currently considering applying for an alternative service model, which could potentially be included in a future Project V call. Moving forward, staff will work with Laguna Beach throughout the summer to bring the current service to an appropriate conclusion, as well as keeping Laguna Beach apprised of future Project V call opportunities.

¹ The City of San Clemente's minimum performance standard was modified in early 2019 in order to better reflect the dynamics of this unique program. As such, its performance standard is reported as boardings per hour of service (no minimum), so long as the cost per boarding remains under OCTA's specified \$9.00 per boarding.

² This service's performance difficulties were reported to the Board in the last two M2 Community-Based Transit Circulators Program Project V ridership reports, which were presented in July 2018 and April 2019.

The City of Mission Viejo's (Mission Viejo) service began in October 2016 and is currently reporting eight B/RVH, which is below the ten B/RVH performance threshold required for year two (and the subsequent remaining years) of the grant period. However, on May 13, 2019, the Board, in recognition of several complex issues and challenges confronting this service, authorized a policy exception to the minimum performance standard in order to give Mission Viejo an additional year to modify the service and meet performance targets. OCTA staff is working with Mission Viejo to implement these changes when school resumes on August 20, 2019. If by the end of June 2020, Mission Viejo has not achieved ten B/RVH, the service will be cancelled.

Services in Start-Up Period:

- Irvine - Irvine iShuttle Route E - Irvine Metrolink Station Service,
- Irvine - Irvine iShuttle Route F - Tustin Metrolink Station/Irvine Business Complex.

The City of Irvine's (Irvine) two new iShuttle routes were launched in February 2019 and are still in the start-up period. Irvine has through January 2020 to meet the first-year service requirement of six B/RVH. Ridership is expected to increase over time.

OCTA staff will continue to closely monitor services that are below minimum performance standards and will meet with local agency staff on ideas and concepts to improve service productivity and ridership, when appropriate. Staff will also continue to provide twice yearly updates to the Board on overall Project V status and performance.

Summary

A status report on Project V services is provided for information purposes. Staff will continue to work with local agencies and monitor these services. The next M2 Community-Based Transit Circulators Program Project V Ridership Report is scheduled for January 2020.

Attachment

- A. Project V Services – Ridership Report

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