

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: BART Early-Morning Service Plan and Bus Bridge
FROM: Cyrus Sheik, Senior Transit Planner
DATE: October 1, 2018

Action Requested

Approve in concept the request by the BART District for LAVTA to operate an early-morning bus bridge route on weekdays between the East Dublin / Pleasanton and Bay Fair stations, and direct staff to negotiate a draft agreement with BART District that fully compensates LAVTA for the additional services rendered.

Background

The San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) has embarked on a multi-year program to rehabilitate aging infrastructure, including track replacements and seismic upgrades to the Transbay Tube and other line sections. In order to be able to carry out the necessary work, the District plans to increase its night time out-of-service window by starting the service day on weekdays one hour later in the morning, systemwide. The change, which is anticipated to take effect in February 2019 and to last for 3 ½ years, would see the train service ramp-up begin at 5AM as opposed to the current 4AM.

Discussion

The BART District estimates that approximately 2,900 riders would be impacted across its system by starting the weekday service one hour later. Although this number is small compared with total BART ridership, the profiles of the early-morning riders tend to be that of lower-income commuters who lack alternative means of getting to their jobs. With that in mind, the District has reached out to all BART-connecting bus transit operators and asked for their potential participation in a regional bus bridge network.

The early-morning bus bridge network would serve 9 of the 48 BART system stations, including *one* of the two Tri-Valley stations – (East) Dublin/Pleasanton. Most, but not all, routes would operate to the new Salesforce Transit Center (STC) in downtown San Francisco, and would be point-to-point express service with no intermediate stops. The map on the following page shows the conceptual network:



The BART District staff has proposed two routes from the East Dublin/Pleasanton station – one that would go nonstop to the STC in the City, and one that would go nonstop to the Bay Fair BART station in San Leandro. The route to the STC would operate eight (8) inbound trips and no outbound trips, while the route to Bay Fair would operate two (2) inbound and two (2) outbound trips each weekday morning.

Of those two routes from Dublin/Pleasanton, *BART would only be asking LAVTA to provide the operation of the service to Bay Fair*, while AC Transit would be asked operate the longer route to SF/STC. Details are subject to finalization, but the basic assumptions are for the Bay Fair service running approximately between 3:40a and 5:40a each weekday morning, requiring two buses to operate. This service is not anticipated to add to the peak vehicle requirement for LAVTA, as it occurs in the early hours prior to ramp-up of the local Wheels and Rapid service, to which the buses can then be linked (interlined).

The following table outlines the basic parameters of the proposed route between East Dublin/Pleasanton and Bay Fair:

POTENTIAL LAVTA-OPERATED BUS BRIDGE TO BAY FAIR	
General service parameters	
<i>Days operated</i>	Weekdays, starting February, 2019
<i>Hours of operation</i>	3:40a--5:40a
<i>Frequency / # trips</i>	30 min, 2 roundtrips
<i># Buses</i>	2
<i>Termini</i>	E Dublin/ Pleasanton BART Bay Fair BART
<i>via</i>	(nonstop freeway express)
<i>Fare</i>	Regular Wheels fixed route local fare

Budget

BART has stated that it will draft proposed agreements with bus bridge operators such that they cover the full cost of providing the service. In order to keep agreements simple and manageable, no separate fare structure would be required; rather, LAVTA would be able to apply its own local fare, the revenues from which would be credited back to BART.

LAVTA staff’s internal estimate shows that the service would require approximately 4.3 gate-to-gate vehicle hours per day – or 1,100 hours annually – to operate. Typically, a LAVTA billable service rate would be based only on revenue time; however, due to the large proportion of deadhead time involved with this type of service, the regular revenue hour rate would likely not be suitable; rather an agreement would entail a blended rate of revenue and deadhead time that represents fair compensation to LAVTA.

Next Steps

Should the Committee approve in concept LAVTA’s participation in the early-morning bus bridge as outlined above, Staff would proceed to discuss a business agreement with BART for this purpose, and return to the full Board with a final recommendation. Due to the relatively limited time remaining for an 02/2019 start, BART staff is planning to go to their Board in September to request authorization for the General Manager to enter into agreements with the bus operators, with signing targeted for November.

Recommendation

Approve in concept the request by the BART District for LAVTA to operate an early-morning bus bridge route on weekdays between the East Dublin / Pleasanton and Bay Fair stations, and direct staff to negotiate a draft agreement with BART District that fully compensates LAVTA for the additional services rendered. It is anticipated that the draft agreement would be considered by the LAVTA Board at a future meeting.

Approved: _____