

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Dublin Student Transit Service Study and Recommendations

FROM: Michael Tree, Executive Director
Cyrus Sheik, Senior Transit Planner

DATE: June 4, 2018

Action Requested

Approval of recommended Phase I modifications and extensions to the Wheels supplemental fixed-route service in Dublin.

Background

As a supplement to its Wheels mainline service, LAVTA provides school-focused routes to middle- and high schools in Dublin and Pleasanton. With residential developments in eastern Dublin continuing to be completed at a fast pace, demand and ridership on the Wheels supplemental (school-focused) routes to and from Dublin High School in particular have continued to increase.

Staff asked Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates to conduct outreach and to gather information on the distribution and projected growth in school enrollment in Dublin, and to develop a small service- and capacity plan that could be implemented in a first phase this coming fall 2018, and in a second phase beyond that time.

The following table summarizes the existing Wheels routes in Dublin that serve students at area middle- and high schools.

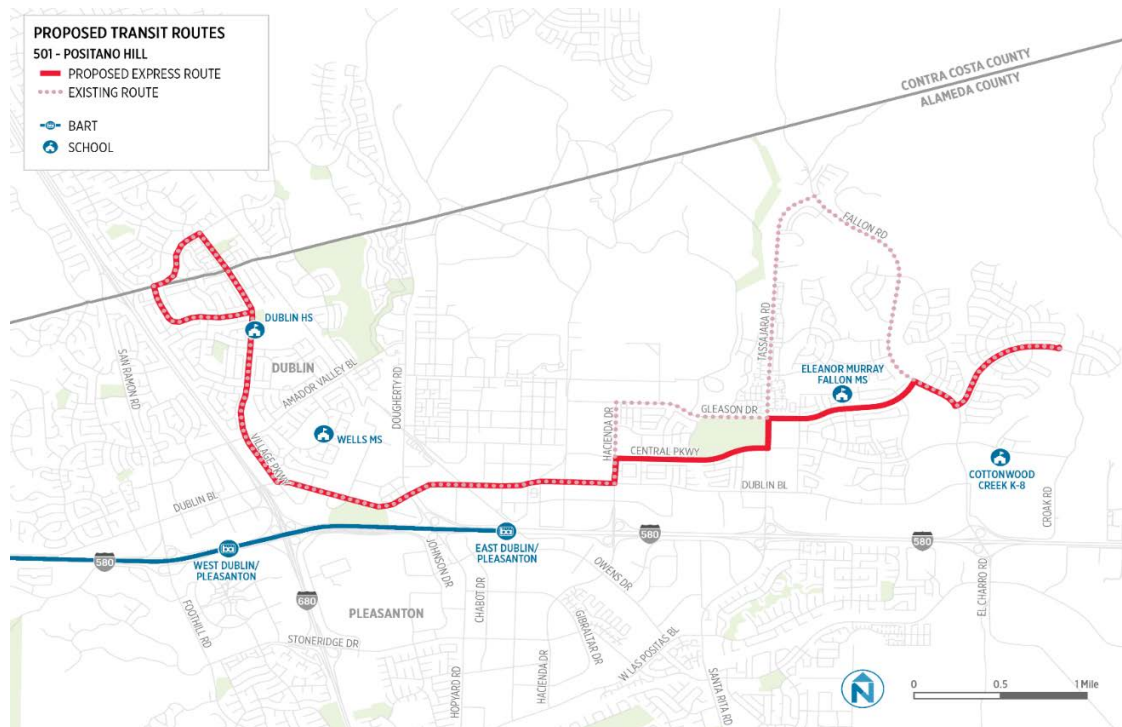
WHEELS SUPPLEMENTAL ROUTES IN DUBLIN		
Route	Neighborhood(s) served	School(s) served
2	Positano Hill, Signal Hill, Silvera Ranch, Wallis Ranch, Emerald Glen	Fallon Middle School
501	Positano Hill, Signal Hill, Silvera Ranch, Wallis Ranch, Emerald Glen	Dublin High School
502	Bray Park, Emerald Glen, Wildwood Road	Dublin High School
503	Shannon Park	Dublin High School, Wells Middle School
504	Dublin Ranch	Dublin High School
Sweeper	Dynamic AM route covering Positano Hill, Dublin Ranch, Emerald Glen	Dublin High School

Discussion: Phase I

At its May 7 meeting, the Board of Directors received a presentation by the Consultant, outlining the draft recommendations of the study, which were also published on the Wheels website. Following input on those, the full draft study document has been completed and is attached to this staff report. Staff recommends that the Phase I elements of the report – which are operationally cost-neutral in total – be implemented with the fall 2018 schedule sign-up, as follows:

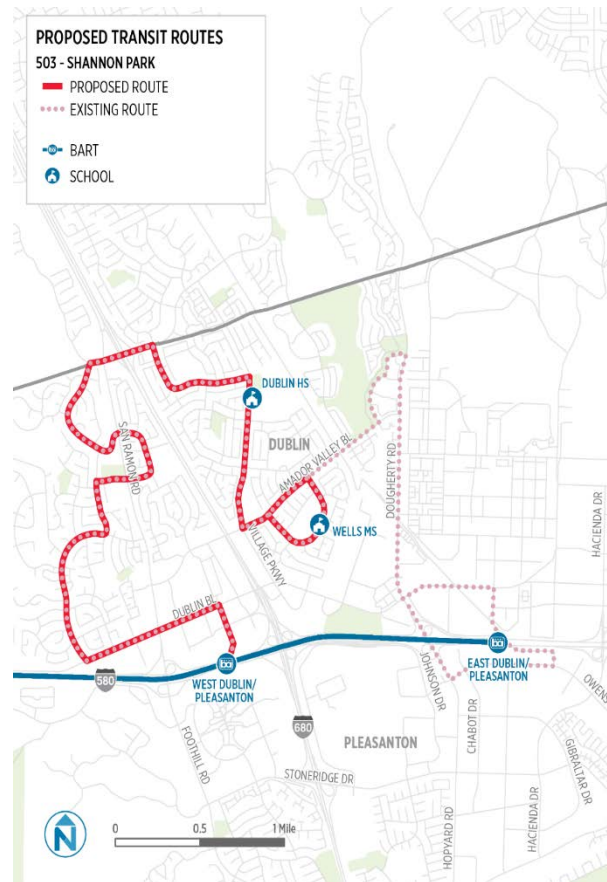
Route 501. As a pilot service, “early-bird” AM and “late-bird” PM trips were added to the schedule last year, in order to test the ridership potential for trips that fall outside the high peaks and that therefore place a lesser burden onto the peak bus requirement of the Wheels service. The early-bird morning trip arrives at DHS approximately 30 minutes prior to the other buses, whereas the late-bird afternoon trip departs DHS approximately 20 minutes after the other buses. Based on the ridership seen on the early/late-bird service, and based on input from DHS, it is recommended that the early-bird trip be discontinued, and that the late-bird trip be moved to depart DHS at approximately 5PM (80 minutes after the other buses).

One of the feedback elements received as part of the study is that travel times on the existing #501 can be quite long – especially to/from subdivisions furthest to the east of the city. It is recommended that a new, expedited variant of route 501 be provided, traveling to/from DHS on a routing of Positano Parkway – Fallon Road – Gleason Drive – Tassajara Road – Central Parkway – Hacienda Drive – Dublin Boulevard – Village Parkway v.v. In conjunction with this, the separate sweeper bus that is operated in the AM would be discontinued. A map illustration of this alignment, which would be serviced in addition to the regular #501 routing, is shown below.



Route 503. This service, anchored at the West Dublin/Pleasanton BART station, is geared toward bringing students from the Silvergate and Shannon Park areas to/from Dublin High School and Wells Middle School. Although technically a supplemental route that only operates on school days, the #503 is currently set up to also serve as a limited BART feeder option, by way of the route continuing east to/from Dougherty Road and the East Dublin/ Pleasanton station, as well as by providing an extra afternoon trip during the 5PM hour.

The commute elements of the route, however, carry negligible ridership as there is currently only one user in the morning and zero users in the afternoon. It is recommended that the #503 service east of WMS, including Wildwood Road and Dougherty Road, be discontinued per the adjacent map, along with the trip that currently departs East Dublin/Pleasanton BART at 5:03p. Service to/from the Wildwood Road and Dougherty Road areas to DHS would continue to be provided by the existing #502.



Overflow capacity. One of the tasks of the study was to extensively analyze current service capacity and passenger loads against the projected growth in student enrollment, in order to be able to proactively plan for capacity additions in accordance with the LAVTA overflow bus policy. The study recommends deployment of two additional buses in the PM to supplement capacity on routes #501 and #504, as well as some reassignment of capacity; the attached report contains details on current and anticipated capacity needs by route and service window (AM/PM).

The following table summarizes the preceding-page Phase I recommendations.

FALL 2018 RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICE MODIFICATIONS	
Route	Description of change
501	Partially re-assign overflow capacity to new (additional) expedited trips Discontinue "early-bird" morning trip Move "late-bird" afternoon trip from 4p to 5p
502	Extend route to Jordan Ranch
503	Discontinue segments east of WMS Discontinue late afternoon trip
504	Add overflow capacity
Sweeper	Discontinue and replace with additional, expedited trips as part of #501

Discussion: Phase II

The plan is also providing recommendations for service improvements that could be made in the medium-term. These items – for which Staff is *not* asking approval at this time - include:

- Further streamlining modifications to routes #501 and #504
- Potential modifications to mainline service such as routes #1 and #2 to better serve student - as well as commuter - transportation needs
- A new, dedicated supplemental route serving Fallon Middle School
- Extension of service to new subdivision off Palisades Drive

The medium-term plan also calls for LAVTA to procure and deploy articulated (60-foot) buses on routes 501, 502, and 504, in order to increase efficiency and reduce peak pull requirements. It also recommends the agency to advise and support member jurisdictions to approve development patterns that better enable public transit service, including school tripper service.

Staff will return to ask for approval of the Phase II elements separately at a future point.

Budget

The main resources needed to implement the plan relate to peak vehicle and manpower requirements, but in total, Phase I of the plan is designed to be *cost neutral* in terms of vehicle hours. For the medium-term plan, however, other types of offsets or service trade-offs would be required. For both, additional fare revenues are expected to help underwrite incremental service.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Directors approve the *Phase I* recommendations as outlined above, with a target implementation date of August 13, 2018.

Attachments:

1. Dublin Student Transit Service Study (DRAFT) by Nelson\Nygaard & Assoc.

Approved: _____