

SUBJECT

Bus Stop ePaper Digital Information Signs (Staff Representative: Debra Johnson)

RECOMMENDED ACTION

To authorize the President and CEO to enter into a contract with ETA Transit for the supply and installation of 18 solar-powered, ePaper digital information signs at selected City of Signal Hill bus stops for an amount of \$260,619 with a five percent contingency of \$13,031, for a total authorization amount not to exceed \$273,650.

BACKGROUND

In June 2019, Long Beach Transit (LBT) launched its digital engagement pilot project to discern what available technological mediums would best serve LBT's customers at its primary transit center – The First Street Transit Gallery. This technology and associated signage would assist customers in determining which transit shelter one should access for an LBT-specific route or that of another transit service, as well as enhance bus stop information and improve customer communications throughout the system.

The pilot included an interactive kiosk, bus stop information and an ePaper sign, a digital bus stop customer information solution utilizing a solar-powered wireless electronic paper (ePaper) display. The pilot location, at the corner of Anaheim Street and Cherry Avenue, was selected due to its high ridership level as Routes 21/22 and 45/46 are some of the most heavily utilized in LBT's network and is a major transfer point. Moreover, staff could readily monitor customers' reactions to the communication mediums; as well as temper long-term expectations regarding implementing this digital engagement format.

Nearly one year earlier, in the summer of 2018, the City of Signal Hill (Signal Hill) approached LBT to discuss the possibility of upgrading its bus stops, specifically to enhance bus stop accessibility, as well as improve customer amenities (e.g., shelters, bus stop information signs and benches) within Signal Hill. LBT staff coordinated with Signal Hill to develop a robust customer amenities improvement program that would address its customer amenities needs.

In December 2018, LBT began planning its February 2019 Service Change which allowed for the modification of existing route alignments, schedule and bus stops facilities improvements (including those in Signal Hill), in order to achieve more efficient bus route service.

LBT submitted the improvement plan to Signal Hill for review at the end of February 2019. In March 2019, following the acceptance and review of the improvement plan, Signal Hill informed LBT it would fund the improvement project with its Proposition A (Prop A) Local Return fund allocation identified in its Fiscal Year (FY) 2018–2019 budget. Signal Hill began

the process of transferring its Prop A funds to LBT. This effort was coordinated through the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), and in May 2019, LBT and Signal Hill executed a Fund Exchange Agreement in the amount of \$380,000.

Following the launch of the pilot project, LBT presented its digital engagement pilot program to Signal Hill, which indicated its interest in the ePaper signs and requested inclusion with the other amenities LBT proposed.

LBT staff conducted an assessment of bus stops and determined that 94 percent of the bus stops in Signal Hill were found to have met or exceeded their useful life. The assessment was based on an average useful life standard of 20 years for amenities such as shelters and benches.

LBT staff also developed a two-phased improvement plan that included the ePaper solar signage and categorized the improvements into Phase I – Minor Improvements and Phase II – Major Improvements.

Phase 1 - Minor Improvement (18 Bus Stops)	
Amenities	Quantity
Solar Light	18
Benches	25
ePaper	18

On March 30, 2020, LBT began Phase 1 of the Improvement Plan. On April 25, 2020, a majority of work was completed with the installation of 18 solar light units and 25 benches, with the exception of the ePaper sign installation.

The ePaper sign is a means of customer communications, as it provides customers with real-time bus information and offers LBT enhanced messaging tools. The ePaper digital technology affords customers the ability to have bus service arrival/departure information, accessible travel guides, information on bus stop closures, and route detours at a faster rate than traditional signage. They also provide a seamless travel experience to customers without the need for them to text, call or refresh an application for up-to-date service information.

PROCUREMENT

LBT issued an Invitation for Bid (IFB) to several firms to provide and install ePaper systems at LBT bus stops within Signal Hill. LBT received three proposals, which were reviewed for compliance with the solicitation requirements.

ETA Transit, located in Boca Raton, Florida, provided the best solution for LBT’s established specifications and was found to be responsive and responsible by LBT’s Purchasing department.

A cost analysis was performed and ETA Transit's price was deemed fair and reasonable. ETA Transit's cost proposal includes materials, installation, configurations, as well as testing, for a total of \$260,619 with a five percent contingency amount of \$13,031, for a total authorization amount not to exceed \$273,650.

DBE/SBE PARTICIPATION

A Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal of 17 percent was established for the solicitation. ETA Transit is utilizing Thomas International, a DBE-certified firm, to install signs at a DBE participation level of 1.23 percent of the contract cost; hence, ETA Transit established DBE Good Faith Efforts (GFE).

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

No alternatives were considered as LBT was approached by Signal Hill to coordinate its customer amenities improvement program as a subject matter expert. Moreover, LBT has entered into a Fund Exchange Agreement with Signal Hill in the amount of \$380,000 to improve its customer amenities.

LBT seeks to utilize this opportunity in direct response to address the FY 2020 Annual Customer and Potential Customer Evaluation Survey, which cited the need for improved bus stop information at LBT bus stops.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT

Staff is requesting LBT's Board of Directors to authorize the President and CEO to enter into a contract with ETA Transit for the supply and installation of 18 solar-powered, ePaper digital information signs for an amount of \$260,619 with a five percent contingency of \$13,031, for a total authorization amount not to exceed \$273,650.

Funds for this project were included in the FY 2019 Capital Budget. Federal Transit Administration funds will be leveraged as the funding source for this procurement.



Kenneth A. McDonald
President and Chief Executive Officer