

SUBJECT

Title VI Service and Fare Equity Analysis for Long Beach Transit's UCLA/Westwood Commuter Express Service (Staff Representative: Debra Johnson)

RECOMMENDED ACTION

To adopt a resolution approving the pilot commuter express service titled UCLA/Westwood Express Service as a permanent service and the corresponding commuter express fare structure.

BACKGROUND

In 2018, LBT underwent a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA), branded the System-wide Transit Analysis and Reassessment (STAR) Initiative, which included a route-by-route analysis of LBT's fixed-route network. The STAR Initiative provided short-, mid- and long-term roadmap recommendations.

One of the long-term roadmap recommendations identified through the STAR Initiative was regional express service between Long Beach and the west side of Los Angeles. This much-needed service would assist in addressing the chronic traffic congestion and lack of a convenient transit bridge that could serve commuters in the greater Long Beach area, particularly from designated Disadvantaged Communities (DAC). This commuter service would also connect customers with employment and education opportunities in the UCLA/Westwood area.

After learning of the STAR Initiative and the recommendation for a regional express service between Long Beach and the west side of Los Angeles, UCLA Department of Transportation (DOT) approached LBT to determine whether this roadmap recommendation could come to fruition sooner than the original projected long-term date.

After a service planning evaluation and a signed agreement with UCLA DOT, LBT implemented a pilot program on April 1, 2019.

This pilot express service provides transportation alternatives for students, staff and faculty, as well as employees of businesses within Westwood Village. In addition, this service makes available a transportation option to employment and education opportunities.

The overall benefits of the express service includes a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, time in traffic in a single occupancy vehicle and dollars spent on parking.

During the pilot phase, LBT has continuously monitored customers' feedback, which indicates overwhelming support and requests for continuation of the service.

LBT's intent is to permanently continue the express service at the end of the pilot phase of June 30, 2020.

To do so, LBT must comply with its 2019–2022 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) Program, specifically its Major Service Change, Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden Policies.

These policies ensure that LBT is in full compliance with Title VI which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin in programs receiving federal funding.

Pursuant to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), transportation agencies must demonstrate compliance with Title VI by completing a Service and Fare Equity (SAFE) Analysis when agencies plan to institute a major service change to include, but not limited to, a new route.

Additionally, agencies are required to complete a fare equity analysis when there is an increase or decrease to fares. The Title VI SAFE Analysis includes statistical evaluation of data based on population or ridership, public participation, onboard customer surveys, adverse effect(s) assessment based on thresholds set in disparate impact and disproportionate burden policies, mitigation recommendations and conclusion.

LBT began its SAFE Analysis in fall 2019. LBT captured customer fare-type usage, conducted onboard customer surveys in November and December 2019, and opened public participation for public comments in January 2020.

This information, along with American Community Survey (ACS) population data, was compiled for statistical evaluation of adverse effects.

LBT's Title VI Program defines disparate impact and/or disproportionate burden on minority and low-income populations at a threshold of greater than 20 percent for adverse effects.

The SAFE Analysis demonstrates LBT's full compliance with the FTA and its transparency as to whether this major service change and fare increase will have any adverse effects or a disproportionate burden on minority and low-income populations.

The UCLA/Westwood Commuter Express SAFE Analysis contains the following elements:

- LBT Organizational Focus
- LBT Service Area
- LBT Minority And Low-Income Data
- UCLA Westwood Express Route Service Area
- UCLA Westwood Express Route Minority And Low-Income Data
- LBT Major Service Change Policy
- Disparate Impact And Disproportionate Burden Policies

- Major Service Change And Fare Equity Analysis Data
- Customer Survey – Fare Type
- Customer Survey – Minority Population Percentage
- Customer Survey – Annual Household Income Percentages
- Fare Equity Analysis
- Public Participation
- Customer Testimony
- Conclusion
- Appendices

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

LBT considered not continuing the UCLA/Westwood Commuter Express Service; however, ridership has steadily increased from approximately 1,300 in April 2019 to 3,000 boardings in February 2020 and has the support of the UCLA Department of Transportation, faculty, staff and students as it provides a transportation alternative that reduces greenhouse gas emissions, time in traffic and dollars spent on a parking pass. LBT staff received comments of overwhelming support and requests for continuation of the service and is subsidized by UCLA in that it contributes 33 percent of the monthly pass for its affiliates.

At the April 23, 2020 Board of Directors meeting, the Board adopted two resolutions enabling LBT to receive funding under the Low-Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP), obligating the agency to utilize LCTOP funds to operate this service.

Additionally, LBT recently was awarded funding from the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) to purchase five zero-emission over-the-road coaches—dedicated to the operation of this service—including the construction of charging infrastructure.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT

The total overall UCLA/Westwood Commuter Express Service project is estimated at \$906,950 annually. LCTOP funds in the amount of \$768,169 for this project will be leveraged for Fiscal Year 2021. The remainder of the project will be funded through Measure M revenues.

Funding for subsequent years will be included in future operating budgets.



Kenneth A. McDonald
President and Chief Executive Officer

Attachment

RESOLUTION OF LONG BEACH TRANSIT**Resolution Authorizing the Adoption of Long Beach Transit's
Commuter Express Service titled UCLA/Westwood Commuter Express Service and
Corresponding Commuter Express Fare Structure**

WHEREAS, Long Beach Transit (LBT) receives federal funds through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA); and

WHEREAS, LBT is required to have in place a Title VI program that ensures that the level and quality of public transportation service is provided in a nondiscriminatory manner, promotes full and fair participation in public transportation decision-making without regard to race, color, or national origin, and ensures meaningful access to transit-related programs and activities by persons with limited-English proficiency; and

WHEREAS, the LBT Board of Directors has specifically considered and is aware that LBT must demonstrate compliance with Title VI by completing a Service and Fare Equity Analysis (SAFE) in order to institute a major service change and fare change. These changes are to occur in the next regularly scheduled service change; and

WHEREAS, LBT has completed the SAFE Analysis and will submit to the FTA during the next Title VI Program Update scheduled June 2022.

The SAFE Analysis is comprised of the following:

- LBT Organizational Focus
- LBT Service Area
- LBT Minority And Low-Income Data
- UCLA Westwood Express Route Service Area
- UCLA Westwood Express Route Minority And Low-Income Data
- LBT Major Service Change Policy
- Disparate Impact And Disproportionate Burden Policies
- Major Service Change And Fare Equity Analysis Data
- Customer Survey – Fare Type
- Customer Survey – Minority Population Percentage
- Customer Survey – Annual Household Income Percentages
- Fare Equity Analysis
- Public Participation
- Customer Testimony
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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Long Beach Transit Board of Directors that it hereby authorizes the pilot commuter express service titled UCLA/Westwood Express Service as a permanent service and the corresponding commuter express fare structure.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned duly appointed Secretary/Treasurer of LBT certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution, adopted at a legally convened meeting of the Long Beach Transit Board of Directors held on May 28, 2020.

Adam Carrillo
Secretary/Treasurer, Board of Directors

Date