



Agenda Item No. 3

To: Finance-Auditing Committee/Committee of the Whole
Meeting of July 7, 2005

From: Alan Zahradnik, Director of Planning
Celia G. Kupersmith, General Manager

Subject: **AUTHORIZE THE SETTING OF A PUBLIC HEARING RELATIVE TO
MARIN COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT'S PROPOSAL TO INCREASE
THE YOUTH DISCOUNT TO 50% OF THE ADULT CASH FARE FOR
LOCAL MARIN TRAVEL ON GOLDEN GATE TRANSIT BUS ROUTES**

Recommendation

To complement and coordinate with Marin County Transit District (MCTD) actions pertaining to proposed youth fare changes on Golden Gate Transit (GGT) bus routes, the Finance-Auditing Committee recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the setting of a public hearing on Friday, July 22, 2005, at 9:00 a.m., in the Board Room, Administration Building, Golden Gate Bridge Toll Plaza, to receive public comment on the proposal by MCTD to increase the youth discount for local Marin travel on the District's regional bus routes from 25% to 50% of the adult cash fare. This will result in a youth fare of \$1.00 per ride.

This matter will be presented to the Board of Directors at its July 8, 2005, meeting for appropriate action.

Summary

On December 8, 2004, the District and MCTD executed an Agreement for Intra-County Public Bus Transit Service in Marin County effective November 1, 2004, through April 30, 2006. Under the terms of this Agreement, MCTD is responsible for setting fares and service levels of 20 local bus routes operated by GGT. MCTD can expand local bus service at an additional cost to MCTD as prescribed in the Agreement. MCTD can also reduce local bus service to achieve cost savings. The Agreement also acknowledges the benefit to the public of having a highly coordinated local and regional bus network.

The District has received a request from MCTD to make the following fare and service changes effective at the beginning of the 2005/2006 school year in late August 2005, and at the September 11, 2005, quarterly bus schedule sign-up:

- Reduce the fare for local youth riders, ages 6 to 18, by increasing the existing adult cash fare discount from the current 25% to 50%. The resulting local youth cash fare would be \$1.00. Reduce the price of local Marin youth ticket books to \$1.00 per ticket or \$20 per book from \$1.50 per ticket or \$30 per book. Work with MCTD to develop a new annual youth pass which would be produced and distributed by MCTD.
- Add three local bus routes, Routes 117, 123 and 127 formerly provided by the District under direct agreements with Ross Valley and Larkspur school districts, to the MCTD local bus system, bringing the number of local bus routes in the Agreement which are operated by GGT to a total of 23. MCTD proposes concurrent reduction to the level of service on 7 routes of the existing 20 local routes and elimination of 1 entire route.

On August 2, 2005, MCTD will hold a public hearing on its fare and service proposal.

Staff finds the request to be consistent with the Agreement between the two agencies, and recommends that the Finance-Auditing Committee take the following action to implement the requested local bus fare and service changes.

- Set a public hearing on Friday, July 22, 2005, at 9:00 a.m., to receive public comment on the proposed increase in the youth discount for local Marin travel on the District's regional bus routes to 50% of the adult cash fare to complement and coordinate with parallel MCTD actions pertaining to local bus routes. Following the public hearing, staff would prepare a subsequent staff report and schedule for Finance-Auditing Committee consideration at its August 11, 2005, meeting. Final action by the Board of Directors to implement the local youth discount fare change would occur on August 12, 2005. Staff acknowledges the compressed timeline for the public outreach on this action, but finds this schedule to be necessary to implement the MCTD request without incurring additional cost to the District for holding special meetings of the Board.
- Once MCTD has taken action regarding their service proposal, staff will be bringing forward a request to amend the Agreement between MCTD and District to add Routes 117, 123, and 127 to and subtract Route 132 from the list of MCTD local bus routes operated by GGT and update estimates of local bus service hours, service costs, and revenues identified in the Agreement.

Fiscal Impact

To coordinate local and regional bus fares, the District would concurrently increase the youth discount to 50% or a \$1.00 fare for local rides on regional bus routes. Since many local youth riders on regional bus routes, in particular on the transition local bus routes, have been using Ride & Roll tickets to ride free, staff anticipates a modest increase in fare revenue of less than \$100,000 to the District resulting from the discounted \$1.00 youth cash fare proposed by MCTD.