



Agenda Item No. 3

To: Transportation Committee/Committee of the Whole
Meeting of November 9, 2006

From: Gayle Prior, Capital and Grant Programs Manager
Alan Zahradnik, Director of Planning
Joseph M. Wire, Auditor-Controller
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Subject: **DISCUSSION ON THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION'S TRIENNIAL PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

Recommendation

The following report is provided for informational purposes and does not require any action.

Summary

Transportation Development Act (TDA) statewide sales tax revenues, and State Transit Assistance Act (STA) gasoline and diesel fuel sales tax revenues, are made available annually to the District for transit (bus and ferry) capital and operating purposes through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). The District claims \$12-\$15 million TDA and \$2-\$3 million STA funds annually for various transit operating purposes.

Public Utilities Code Section 99246 requires that all transit operators receiving TDA Article 4 funds undergo a performance audit every three years. As the regional transportation planning agency for the San Francisco Bay Area, MTC is responsible for overseeing the triennial performance audits of Bay Area operators.

The District's Triennial Performance Audit for FYs 2003, 2004 and 2005 was conducted earlier this year. The final audit report, completed in June 2006, consisted of six recommendations related to District transit services. A copy of the report's Executive Summary is attached for your information. A copy of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Triennial Performance Audit report in its entirety is available from the Office of the District Secretary. The following is a list of the recommendations and the District's plan to address the recommendations:

1. **Establish a Set of Quantifiable Performance Standards for GGBHTD's Goals and Objectives:**

The District's Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) contains goals, objectives, measures and standards for Golden Gate Transit (GGT) bus, Golden Gate Ferry (GGF) and

complementary paratransit services. The next full update of the SRTP is scheduled for FY 2007/2008. Currently, some of the District's transit performance measures and standards are not quantified. Staff will address this audit recommendation in the upcoming SRTP.

2. Complete the Efforts to Develop a Comprehensive Performance Monitoring System:

Transit service performance is reported every four years in the SRTP and monthly to management and the Board via a variety of reports. Staff is in the process of developing a comprehensive system (Transtat) for compiling transit service data, analyzing transit performance and reporting performance in a routine, uniformly formatted report. GGT bus performance is currently reported by Transtat. Staff will complete this enhanced system by adding GGF, club bus and complementary paratransit service, as recommended.

3. Investigate the Decrease in Bus On-Time Performance and Develop an Improvement Plan:

The District has a 90% on-time performance standard for GGT bus system. During the audit period, performance dropped from 85% to just under 81%. However, more recently in 2006, performance has improved to nearly 90%.

The District underwent a significant downsizing and reorganization of remaining bus routes in 2002/2003. Approximately 22% of our service was eliminated due to significant funding shortfalls. In order to minimize the impact of the service reductions to our passengers, we implemented substantial re-routings and mergings of various bus routes. As a result of the substantial change to our bus system routes and schedules, we saw on-time performance fall as bus operators and passengers each had to learn the new system of routes. Our direction to bus operators was to maximize the opportunity for passengers to use the new service routes and in many cases, this caused drivers to hold up service while waiting for passengers to get to the correct bus. Also, over time, the new routes' scheduling needs became clearer and schedules were adjusted to reflect the operating realities encountered on the new routes.

On-time performance has improved substantially over the past year and we recently saw a return to 90% on-time performance this past summer. Due to substantial reorganization of the local Marin bus service routes effective this past September, we expect to see a dip in our numbers again but also expect to see them rebound. Once the route structure fully stabilizes, we expect to see continued success in this area. The District has plans to develop an Automatic Vehicle Location System to track actual bus running times during varying traffic conditions so more accurate schedules can be created. Other factors affecting on-time performance will be investigated and plans will be developed to address these factors, as recommended.

4. Investigate the Increase in Complaints in the Bus and Ferry Divisions and Develop a Plan to Reduce Complaints:

The District underwent a significant downsizing and reorganization of remaining bus routes in 2002/2003. Approximately 22% of our service was eliminated during this time period due to significant funding shortfalls. In 2004, ferry services were restructured to reduce operating cost as well. It was due to this substantial amount of change that we saw a substantial increase in the total number of complaints received. As customers have become more comfortable in their new routines, complaints have decreased but still remain high and reflect in part the loss of services previously provided. We have recently developed a more comprehensive complaint tracking system that will allow us to more finely tune our attention to repeated problem areas to ensure that fixes are found and problems eliminated.

5. Investigate the Increase in Bus Operator Absences and Develop a Plan to Reduce those Absences:

The District underwent a significant reduction in the Bus Operators' workforce in 2003. The Bus Operators have a negotiated attendance control program to minimize attendance problems; however, several mandated laws such as FMLA and Family Sick have increased the number of allowable absences. Recently, there was a change in the tracking and reporting of absences which may have affected the results of this audit period. Staff is reviewing the reporting practices. Maintaining an adequate number in the workforce impacts driver absences and this milestone has been accomplished over the last two years. This should help reduce attendance-related problems. The District will continue to monitor this measurement in an effort to catch trends early and make necessary adjustments.

6. Establish Procedures to Track Bus Mechanic Absences on a Regular Basis:

The District is currently working with its Payroll and IT departments to develop an automated report within our new Integrated Financial Accounting System that will allow for tracking of bus mechanic absences. This report will provide detailed information including the type of absence, i.e., sick, vacation, industrial injury, personal leave, jury duty, etc. It is anticipated that this report will be completed and available in June 2007.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item. TDA and STA funds in the amount of \$18.3 million were included in the FY 2006/2007 operating budget. Due to higher than expected prices for diesel fuel, the District's share of state operating assistance in FY 2006/2007 increased by \$2.5 million and, in August 2006, the operating budget was increased.

Attachment