



Agenda Item No. 2

To: Transportation Committee/Committee of the Whole  
Meeting of October 23, 2008

From: Ron Downing, Principal Planner  
Alan R. Zahradnik, Director of Planning  
Teri M. Mantony, Deputy General Manager, Bus Division  
Celia G. Kupersmith, General Manager

Subject: **AUTHORIZE THE SETTING OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED  
GOLDEN GATE TRANSIT SERVICE CHANGES AND RELATED  
ACTIONS**

### **Recommendation**

The Transportation Committee recommends that the Board of Directors approve the following actions relative to Golden Gate Transit services:

1. Authorize the setting of a public hearing at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2008, in the Board Room of the Golden Gate Bridge Toll Plaza, Administration Building, to receive public comment on a staff proposal to:
  - a. Redeploy unproductive commute service from Routes 8, 9, 60 and 75 to address overcrowding on other routes; and,
  - b. Reconfigure regional basic service on Routes 10 and 80 to improve travel times and service productivity.
2. Endorse guideline of assigning high-capacity buses to trips averaging more than 35 passengers per trip, effective immediately.

### **Summary**

A PowerPoint presentation summarizing the staff proposal is attached and will be presented by staff at the October 23, 2008, Transportation Committee meeting.

### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommendation to make these changes.

Attachment

**Authorize the Setting of a Public  
Hearing on Proposed Golden Gate  
Transit Service Changes and  
Related Actions**

**October 23, 2008**

**Transportation Committee**

**Board of Directors**

# Introduction

## **Three Types of GGT Service**

- Regional Commute (18 Routes) and Ferry Feeder (1 Route)
  - Weekday Peak Period-only Service
- Regional Basic (10/70/80)
- Contract Service
  - Marin Transit Local Service
  - Regional Measure 2 (RM2) Subsidized Service
    - Richmond Bridge Routes 40/42

**Only Regional Commute and Basic Service are addressed in this presentation**

# GGT Regional Transit Service Overview

- Ridership trends vary
  - By Service Type (commute bus vs. basic bus)
  - By Geographic Area
- Ridership growth has occurred due to recent gasoline price increases
  - Higher growth in Marin County to SF travel than other service areas
  - Overloads on high-volume park & ride-oriented commute routes (4, 54 & 56)
  - Local Marin County ridership has increased on U.S. 101 corridor routes (70/80)

# GGT Regional Transit Service Overview

- Budget does not provide for new resources to expand service
- Staff approach focuses on using “cost-neutral” strategies
- Reallocate resources to achieve primary goal – “Better Service to More Customers”

# Service Allocation

- Bus Transit Services are provided to the extent that resources are available
  - 48% of operating cost paid by District funds
  - 21% Fares
  - 31% Outside Revenues
- A guideline of an average of 20 or fewer passengers per bus trip is typically used to determine whether a commute trip should be cancelled or combined

# Current Conditions

- Regional ridership has increased about 7% system-wide over last year
  - High-volume commute routes have seen increases as much as 17%, concentrated on Routes 4, 24, 27, 54 and 56
- However, some other routes have seen little change or declined and these have been on our “watch list” for some time
  - Tiburon Peninsula Routes 8 and 9
  - Route 60 midday commute service
  - Route 75 Sonoma-Marin Commute Service

# Current Conditions

- Local ridership within Marin County on Route 80 is an increasing percentage of overall ridership (now at 36%)
  - Excessive travel time and number of stops discourage regional riders
  - Over time, Marin County has added a large number of local Route 71 buses to handle the overflow of local riders on Route 80
- **Completion of Gap Closure Project will provide a continuous HOV lane through Central Marin in December 2008**
  - Will create opportunities to improve long-haul service from Sonoma County, Novato, and San Rafael to San Francisco via freeway operations

# Commute Service Performance

## Commute Service is Very Productive

- 299 of 334 trips (90%) meet performance threshold of 20 or more regional passengers per bus
- 72 trips (21%) carry 36 or more passengers per bus
- 5 to 6 trips per day (2%) carry more passengers than available seats
- 10 trips (3%) fall well below performance guidelines

# Commute Service Strategies

## **Equipment Assignment – Assign buses based on Ridership Demand**

- Use high-capacity buses on high-volume routes – assign MCI-type coaches where routinely have 35 or more passengers per trip
- Presently have only 52 high-capacity buses
- Delivery of new buses at least one year away
- Staff is exploring opportunities to lease additional MCI coaches until new buses arrive
- Ridership demand versus passenger comfort an issue
  - Riders prefer the larger MCI buses for their extra leg room

# **Commute Service Strategies**

(continued)

## **Service Strategies**

- Identify underperforming services
  - Tiburon Peninsula Commute, Sonoma-Marín Commute, Midday Financial District
  - Any changes to these routes would affect 25% or more of the service and require a Public Hearing
- Redeploy resources/vehicles in more productive areas where overcrowding is present
  - Route 4 (Mill Valley/Manzanita Park & Ride)
  - Routes 54/56 (Novato)
  - Routes 26/27 (San Rafael Transit Center)
  - Route 24 (Sir Francis Drake Blvd. corridor)
- Identify opportunities for a bus and driver to do a second trip
  - Route 4
  - Route 24

# **Tiburon Peninsula Service**

**Route 8 - Commute to SF Financial District**

**Route 9 - Ferry Feeder to Blue & Gold Ferry**

- Declining ridership for past 10 years
- Several different efforts to try to improve ridership
  - Meetings with Town officials and staff
  - Targeted marketing effort in 2007
  - Passenger survey in 2007
  - Moved a trip in response to rider requests

# Tiburon Peninsula Service

## PROPOSAL

- Combine two afternoon Route 8 trips into one trip
  - Ridership on second northbound never developed and averages 11 regional passengers
- Eliminate Route 9
  - Currently averages 3.6 regional passengers per trip

# Route 60

## **Route 60 - Limited early morning and midday service to the SF Financial District**

- No changes proposed to morning trips
  - Redesignate those trips as Route 27, which has similar alignment
- Two early afternoon trips have low ridership (average 5 and 8 regional passengers per trip)

# Route 60

## PROPOSAL

- Eliminate least productive trips
- Redesignate productive trips as Route 27
- Move resources to other routes with higher demand

# Route 75

## Route 75 - Sonoma-Marin Commute

- Approximately 180 passengers on 8 weekday trips
- Several different efforts to improve ridership
  - Targeted Marketing
  - Wi-Fi Demonstration has helped improve these two trips
  - Marin County Employee Benefit Program has also improved ridership
- Ridership response has been mixed
  - Two trips serving “core” work hours have shown improvement and are meeting performance guidelines
  - Two trips outside of core work hours continue to perform poorly

# Route 75

## PROPOSAL

- Eliminate two low-productivity trips
- Move resources to other routes with higher demand

# Proposed Redeployment of Commute Service

## **Move Underperforming Trips from Low-Productivity Routes to High-Volume Routes Where Service is Needed**

### Routes 8 & 9

- Combine two Route 8 evening northbound trips into one trip
- Eliminate Route 9 service (2 morning, 3 evening trips)
- Alternate service available except portions of Tiburon Hills
- Redeploy three buses on Route 4 (Mill Valley and Manzanita P&R)

### Route 60

- Eliminate two northbound trips
- Redeploy resources to Routes 24 and 27
  - Alternate service available on Routes 10/70/80 and Golden Gate Ferries

# **Proposed Redeployment of Commute Service**

**Move Underperforming Trips from Low-Productivity Routes to High-Volume Routes Where Service is Needed**

## **Route 75**

- Eliminate two round trips
- Redeploy buses to overcrowded Route 54 trips

# **Basic Service Strategies**

## **Current Situation**

- Prohibitive travel time between Sonoma and San Francisco is discouraging regional riders from using regional service
- Excessive travel time due to many local stops and passengers
- Local ridership within Marin is an increasing percentage of total ridership on Regional Basic Routes 70/80 (58% on Route 70 and 36% on Route 80)
- Nearly all Route 80 trips have a Marin Local Route 71 bus running in tandem to handle local overloads from 6 am to 7 pm

## **Immediate Strategies**

- Use high-capacity articulated buses for Route 71 trips
- Market other parallel Marin Local routes as alternatives to relieve overcrowding on Routes 70/80, especially Route 71
- Identify underproductive basic service resources that could be redeployed
  - Route 10 basic service on Geary Boulevard averages less than 11 passengers per trip during midday periods
  - Not all passengers destined to Geary Boulevard

# Near-Term Basic Service Strategies

## Route 80 Express Service Concept

- **Goals**
  - Take advantage of Marin HOV Gap Closure project
  - Create an attractive service to generate new riders
  - Fit service to regional travel patterns
  - Use existing regional transit resources
  - Improve revenue collection
  
- **Service Design**
  - Create Express Route through Marin designated “Route 101”
    - No change within Sonoma County
    - Marin County stops at Novato and San Rafael only
    - Routes 70 (Regional) and Route 71 (Local) serve local bus pad stops
    - Move Route 10 Service from Geary Blvd.
    - Reinforce U.S. 101/Lombard St./Van Ness Avenue corridor service
    - Extend Route 10 service to Manzanita Park & Ride/Strawberry
  
- **Proposed Implementation: March 2009**

# **Near-Term Basic Service Strategies**

## **(Continued)**

### **Geary Blvd. Corridor**

- Reverse commute market is a concern
  - Provide weekday peak period commute shuttle (“Route 92”) between Sausalito, GGB Toll Plaza, and Geary Blvd.
    - Would operate in both directions, both a.m. and p.m. peaks
  - Coordinate with SFMTA/Muni
    - Transit Effectiveness Project
    - Fares

# Recommendations

## Commute Service

- Move commute service from unproductive areas to those with high demand (overcrowding)
- Endorse guideline of assigning high-capacity buses to trips averaging more than 35 passengers per trip

## Basic Service

- Reconfigure Regional Route 80 to Express Route 101 service during weekday times when Marin Local Route 71 service is provided
- Move Route 10 Basic Service from unproductive Geary Blvd. corridor
  - Reinforce Van Ness/Lombard/U.S. 101 corridor
  - Provide weekday peak period replacement service
  - Extend to Manzanita Park & Ride to offer all-day service from that location
- **No additional operating cost to make these proposed service changes**

# Next Steps

- Hold Informational Public Workshops in key areas impacted by proposed changes
- Hold Public Hearing on November 20
- Final decision: December 19, 2008
- Proposed implementation: March 8, 2009