

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CITY COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: MATTHEW WILCOX, TRANSIT PLANNER
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS, TRANSIT DIVISION
SUBJECT: SANTA ROSA CITYBUS SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN
FINANCIAL SCENARIOS FOR FY 2023 TO FY 2028

AGENDA ACTION: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council, by resolution, adopt the Santa Rosa CityBus Short Range Transit Plan Financial Scenarios for Fiscal Year 2023 to Fiscal Year 2028.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) requires transit operators in the Bay Area to regularly submit Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP) updates to provide a ten-year service and financial plan for transit systems. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, MTC has narrowed the required SRTP scope to a five-year planning horizon with a focus on financial and service delivery outcomes under three specific revenue scenarios. This action seeks Council adoption of the Transit Division's response to this scenario planning exercise consistent with the guidelines set forth by MTC. However, in order to provide a more robust plan to inform future service delivery and a more accurate financial plan reflecting current transit revenue projections, Transit Division staff are working to complete a traditional SRTP service and financial plan, which will be informed by analysis and public engagement that is already underway. This work is in addition to the current SRTP requirements set forth by MTC and will be brought to Council for review and adoption in early 2023.

BACKGROUND

MTC, in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), requires public transit operators that are FTA grantees to prepare and regularly update an SRTP to help inform regional transportation planning and programming activities. The current MTC requirement for SRTPs is a truncated version of the normal process. The primary required deliverable for the current SRTP cycle is the level of service (in revenue hours) CityBus can achieve under three financial scenarios set forth by MTC.

These revenue scenarios include:

- Robust Recovery: There is adequate funding to return overall funding to 100% of pre-pandemic levels, with escalation.
- Revenue Recovery, with Fewer Riders: While most funds return to pre-pandemic levels, fare revenue remains stagnant at 20-50% of pre-pandemic levels.
- Some Progress: Total revenue remains at 15% below pre-pandemic levels.

A draft of the spreadsheet and narrative illustrating projected service outcomes under these financial services was created and submitted to MTC in September of 2022. The draft was returned with minor comments. Staff refined the information provided based on MTC comments.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

At the June 7, 2022 meeting, CityBus staff conducted a study session to review the purpose and content of a Short Range Transit Plan.

At the July 12, 2022 meeting, Council adopted the Short Range Transit Plan's Public Involvement Plan.

At the October 12, 2022 Climate Action Subcommittee meeting, staff provided an update on overall SRTP outreach and work to date.

ANALYSIS

During a traditional Short Range Transit Plan update, CityBus creates a robust ten-year service and financial plan and establishes performance metrics. These components are not required by MTC in the current SRTP update. In this update cycle MTC has asked that all transit operators in the Bay Area provide data and projections responding to the three specific revenue scenarios discussed above. This exercise is intended to give MTC the ability to understand the state of transit operations and potential transit service impacts in the Bay Area depending on trends in transit revenue in the post-pandemic period. Based on current hourly costs to provide transit service, the following projections of service outcomes have been provided for the three scenarios. It should be noted that these are conservative estimates that reflect the fact that CityBus' current hourly cost per revenue hour is somewhat inflated due to staffing shortages impacting our ability to add additional revenue service.

- Robust Recovery: CityBus service returns to approximately 92% of pre-pandemic levels during the planning period.
- Revenue Recovery, with Fewer Riders: CityBus service returns to approximately 90% of pre-pandemic levels during the planning period.
- Some Progress: CityBus service returns to approximately 78% of pre-pandemic levels during the planning period.

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FOR FY 2023 TO FY 2028
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In this exercise, the “Robust Recovery” scenario is closest to Transit Division internal projections.

As discussed above and with Council at the June 2022 Study Session, while the Transit Division will submit these financial scenarios to MTC to meet regional requirements, staff continue to work on several components of a more traditional SRTP including a service plan, financial plan, and updates to performance metrics. This broader SRTP effort is underway and will be brought to Council for review and adoption in early 2023. These additional components will reflect public engagement activities and guide future service and financial planning for the CityBus system.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of this action does not have a fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is not a project which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

- Resolution/Exhibit A - Santa Rosa CityBus Short Range Transit Plan Financial Scenarios

CONTACT

Matthew Wilcox, Transit Planner
mwilcox@srcity.org
(707) 543-3726