



PROMOTIONAL FARE-FREE DAYS ON TRANSIT

City Council Meeting
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CURRENT

- COVID pandemic continues to impact recovery of transit services and ridership
- 2019 *Transit Integration and Efficiency Study* (TIES) recommends further county-wide transit coordination, including on fare policy and marketing
- Council approved fare-free service days on Santa Rosa CityBus for special events in 2017 and 2018

CURRENT

- Fare-free days are widely used to raise the profile of public transit and allow the general public the opportunity to try using transit
- Fare-free days offer an opportunity to elevate CityBus' community profile post-pandemic and support significant community events with enhanced transit access

PROPOSED

- Council delegates authority to City Manager to approve up to six fare-free service days/year to be identified in coordination with transit partners to promote transit use and support significant community events
- First multi-operator fare-free day proposed for Earth Day observation on April 23, 2022, in coordination with Santa Rosa Annual Earth Day Festival and Petaluma Butter and Egg Days

PROPOSED

- At current ridership levels and depending on how many and which fare-free days are offered, Transit Division expects to forgo \$4,000-6,000 in fare revenue annually
- With ridership increase to pre-pandemic levels, lost fare revenue would increase to \$7,000-10,000
- Proposed revenue loss is acceptable to Transit Division as marketing expense given effectiveness of fare-free days in promoting public transit

BENEFIT

- Elevates CityBus' community profile
- Promotes transit ridership recovery from the pandemic
- Supports community initiatives and events
- Implements an integrated countywide transit initiative with partner transit operators
- Promotes mode-shifting and sustainability
- Improves access to affordable and sustainable public service for both residents and visitors

RECOMMENDATION

- It is recommended by the Transportation and Public Works Department that the Council, by resolution, authorize the City Manager or designee to approve up to six fare-free service days per year on Santa Rosa CityBus to support community events and promote transit ridership recovery in coordination with county-wide transit operators.
- Questions?