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REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

September 1, 2016

FROM: Brian R. Marshall, Director
Department of Transportation

SUBJECT

WORKSHOP - Fresno Area Express (FAX) Strategic Services Evaluation

RECOMMENDATION

For the Council to conceptually approve the proposed FAX restructuring pursuant to the Public Transportation Strategic Services Evaluation Study and for the department to move forward with community outreach requirements as stipulated by the Federal Transit Administration.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fresno Council of Governments (FCOG) approved the Fresno Clovis Metropolitan Area Public Transportation Strategic Service Evaluation. This study was commissioned by the FCOG to examine metro travel patterns through extensive origin and destination studies; transit ride check and transfer studies; and public and stakeholder input with a goal of reducing transit travel times, increasing service reliability, and improving linkages to major trip generators. This plan was presented to the Transportation Committee. The committee presented alternatives to the service structure in southwest Fresno and approved of moving the plan forward to Council. Prior to implementing the recommended changes FAX will need to complete public outreach and a Title VI Service Equity

Analysis.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the FCMA Strategic Service Evaluation was to examine metro travel patterns through extensive origin and destination studies; transit ride check and transfer studies; and public and stakeholder input with a goal of reducing transit travel times, increasing service reliability, and improving linkages to major trip generators. Improving transit travel time, reliability and responsiveness to community needs is critically necessary for making transit a viable alternative in contemporary urban environments.

The data gathering as well as significant evaluation of the various data including:

- Stakeholder interviews (elected officials, policy makers, community leaders, service providers);
- Completed review of transit operations policies and practices;
- Completed a system performance assessment for FAX and Clovis Transit;
- Analyzed automatic passenger counter (APC) data for FAX;
- Completed onboard survey for origin and destination information (more than 4,200 surveys of FAX and Clovis passengers);
- Completed AirSage (anonymous cell phone data) data used to identify major origins and destination within the FCMA;
- Three workshops were held (Fresno City College, Fresno State College, and Fresno City Hall) to review the findings and collect input to assist in the development of transit network alternatives;
- At the request of the City of Fresno, additional workshops were held with the Mayor, City Manager, and City Council;
- A series of transit network alternatives was developed based on data and opinions collected; and
- Existing transit policies were evaluated and a detailed set of policy recommendations was developed.

The Strategic Services Evaluation identified a preferred transit system network for the City of Fresno (FAS Short Term Network-Attached), and recommends what is referred to as a “Frequent Service Network.” The proposed Frequent Service Network emphasizes 15-minute or more frequent service on key corridors serving the densest development. This would be the foundation for multi-directional travel, and have the most promise to increase productivity throughout the system. Other network strategies include a coverage strategy that would emphasize serving a larger area with less frequent service, but would attract fewer riders and promise lower productivity.

The Transportation Committee reviewed the proposed changes, and from a policy perspective, supports the preferred transit system network. Prior to implementing any changes to the existing service, FAX is required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to complete a service equity analysis as part of the Title VI requirements, which at a minimum, will include an extensive public outreach effort to identify any disparate or disproportionate impacts on minority or low income populations. These stakeholders represent large percentage of the FAX ridership. FAX will be going to bid to solicit a consultant specializing in the Title VI procedures, as well as public outreach and communication plan. Once a notice to proceed is issued, it will take approximately six months to

complete the process.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS

NA

LOCAL PREFERENCE

NA

FISCAL IMPACT

NA

Attachment:

PowerPoint: FAX Strategic Services Evaluation