

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 1/13/2021

Staff Report No. 21-022

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
SUBJECT: Dumbarton Express Request For Proposals (RFP)

BRIEFING ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving a report on the timeline for the release of a Request For Proposals to operate the Dumbarton Express bus service effective January 1, 2022.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Convenient and Reliable Service
Initiative - Service Quality

The Dumbarton Express is a vital transit service that principally serves the journey-to-work travel market between the East Bay and the Peninsula. It has been in operation since 1984 and continues to be an important commute alternative in the increasingly congested Dumbarton Bridge corridor. Issuing a new RFP is a major step in ensuring continuity of the Dumbarton Express service.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

The Dumbarton Express operation is funded entirely through revenues from Regional Measure 2 bridge tolls and AC Transit EasyPass sales to Stanford University. Aside from a minor amount of staff time to administer the service contract, no other District funds or resources are used to support the Dumbarton Express.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The Dumbarton Express service has been in operation since 1984. Over the course of its existence, it has primarily been operated by a private contractor with AC Transit serving as the administrator on behalf of the Dumbarton Bridge Regional Operations Consortium (DBROC). Currently, the service is operated by MV Transportation, beginning with an initial five-year contract from 2011 to 2016 and five exercised single-year options since. The last single-year option was exercised for calendar year 2021 and a service provider needs to be in place prior to calendar year 2022 in order to continue service without interruption.

The Dumbarton Express service is overseen by the DBROC, a group of five Bay Area transit agencies of which AC Transit is a member. The other DBROC member agencies are BART, SamTrans, the City of Union City (acting for Union City Transit), and VTA. AC Transit has been the administrator of the service for the entire term of the current contract with MV Transportation as the service provider (from 2011 onward).

The DBROC met on July 28, 2020 and agreed to continue the Dumbarton Express service at the conclusion of the fifth one-year option. The DBROC solicited its members for an agency to lead the effort to issue a RFP for the Dumbarton Express service provider beginning in calendar 2022. The City of Union City accepted the responsibility to lead the RFP and award process.

While Union City will lead the RFP process, it will not assume administrator responsibilities. Following precedent set in 2011 at the last contract award, AC Transit will assume the contract upon award and continue to act as administrator.

Using the 2011 RFP process as a guide, the draft timeline for this RFP process is as follows:

- Scoping by Consortium: January-March 2021
- Draft RFP: March 2021
- Release RFP: early April 2021
- Pre-proposal meeting: early May 2021
- Request for clarifications and questions due: mid-May 2021
- Responses to clarifications and questions posed: late May 2021
- Bus fleet inspection by proposers (if requested): June 2021
- Proposals due: early June 2021
- Interviews (if required): late June 2021-early July 2021
- Contract award: September 2021
- Effective date of contract: October 2021
- Notice to proceed: mid-December 2021
- Assignment, assumption, and release agreement: mid-December 2021.
- First day of service under new contract: January 3, 2022

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

The advantage of issuing the RFP is that it is an important step in ensuring continuity of the Dumbarton Express service. As in the past, having an agency other than AC Transit issue the RFP gives AC Transit the option to submit a proposal to operate the service. There are no known disadvantages.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

The alternative would be to let the final option expire on December 31, 2021 with no path forward for continued service after that date. Absent a renegotiation with the existing service provider, this would result in an interruption in service for an unknown amount of time. This alternative is not recommended as the DBROC believes that such an outcome is not desirable for the travelling public. The DBROC also believes that in the interest of fairness, the opportunity should be afforded to other potential service providers to bid on operating the Dumbarton Express service after a single provider has done so for ten years.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

Staff Report 11-256i Dumbarton Express Operations

ATTACHMENTS:

None

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