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OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

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COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Operations Committee recommends approval of cancellation of Bus Development Operations Facilities demonstration shuttle service on Lines 515 (Blue Line Transfer), 545 (High Hummer), 622/623 (Rabbit Transit North/South) and 624 (West Hills Loop) effective June, 1995.

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February 23, 1995



Los Angeles County
Metropolitan
Transportation
Authority

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TO: OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
THROUGH: FRANKLIN E. WHITE
FROM: ARTHUR T. LEAHY *AT Leahy*
SUBJECT: CANCEL FIVE BDOF DEMONSTRATION SHUTTLE SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of Directors cancel Lines 515 (Blue Line Transfer), 545 (Highway Hummer), 621 (Local Limo), 622/623 (Rabbit Transit North/South), and the 624 (West Hills Loop). These services have been funded through a short term federal and local grant. They have performed well below MTA standards and are therefore proposed to be cancelled in June 1995 concurrent with the end of the grant period.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 1. Maintain Service - Status Quo

Maintaining the existing operation is not recommended since funding for the routes expires in June 1995 and all of these services have had very disappointing patronage.
- 2. Cancel Only the Least Productive Lines

Canceling only the least productive lines is not recommended since all of the routes are performing well below MTA standards for ridership and cost per passenger.

IMPACT ON BUDGET AND OBJECTIVES

Since these services were grant funded, there is no immediate impact on the MTA operating budget during the demonstration period. Continuing the operation of any or all of these demonstration services beyond the grant period ending June 1995 would worsen the budget shortfall since funding required to maintain these projects has not been identified.

Cancelling the services will assist in meeting MTA's mandate to develop and operate efficient and effective service according to a balanced budget.

BACKGROUND

In 1993, the MTA received a CMAQ grant in the amount of \$2.7 million to develop and operate five Transportation Demand Management (TDM) shuttles. These funds were matched with \$365,000 in Proposition C Local return money along with \$133,000 in in-kind services. The total of all funds allocated for these shuttles was set at \$3,198,000. Additionally, the shuttles were also conceived as demonstration projects testing experimental service delivery methods under the Business Development Operating Facilities (BDOF) provision of the UTU contract. The first shuttle was implemented on August 23, 1993 and the remaining shuttles in January 1994. They have operated continuously since that time.

The Blue Line Transfer, Line 515, operates direct service from the Blue Lines Artesia Station to the El Segundo Employment Center; the Local Limo, Line 621, operates service from the California State University, Los Angeles Busway Station to the Monterey Park Business Center and connects with the Monterey Park shuttle. The Highway Hummer, Line 545, operates service from the Sylmar/San Fernando Metrolink Station to the Chatsworth area of the San Fernando Valley and is scheduled to meet the Metrolink train arrivals; the Rabbit Transit operates two routes, Line 622, 623, serving the LAX Transit Center, airport parking lots, and nearby business centers in Westchester and El Segundo. Finally, the West Hills Loop, Line 624, operates local service throughout the West Hills area servicing several shopping and business districts.

As indicated in more detail in following sections of the report, the BDOF services have failed to generate ridership anywhere near the levels projected at the inception of the project. Accordingly, the cost per rider has been well above MTA averages.

Line 515 (Blue Line Transfer) will essentially be replaced by the Metro Green Line since a direct link between the Blue Line and the El Segundo Employment area will be maintained as part of the Metro Green Line Bus/Rail Interface Plan. Line 622/623 (Rabbit Transit) passengers will have a variety of services to choose from as the result of the Green Line Interface Plan. Line 545 (Highway Hummer) may be replaced in part by the proposed restructuring of Line 239 and Line 624 (West Hills Shuttle) may be replaced all or in part by new services operated by LADOT, both as part of the San Fernando Valley Restructuring Study. Finally, staff has initiated discussions with the City of Monterey Park to determine if interest exists in providing replacement service through modifications to current Monterey Park shuttles or some other means.

IMPACT ON RIDERSHIP

Collectively, the BDOF services were originally projected to carry up to 3,600 riders daily. Line 515 (Blue Line Transfer) was projected to carry up to 1,100 riders while the remaining 2,500 would be carried by Lines 545, 621, 622, 623 and 624. As indicated below, collective daily ridership generated only amounts to approximately 600 passengers. Obviously, this poor performance is disappointing and clearly unacceptable.

As shown in the following table, the ridership on the five shuttle operations is well below performance guidelines that the MTA uses to evaluate service. Of these services, the Local Limo has shown the best performance. However, even this line which has over twice the productivity of the other four shuttle lines, the cost per boarding is over \$13.00, nearly eight times higher than the MTA system average.

LINE	DAILY RIDERSHIP	REVENUE HOURS	PASSENGERS P/REVENUE HOUR
Blue Line Transfer - 515	70	40	1.7
Highway Hummer - 545	75	21	3.6
Local Limo - 621	346	43	8.0
Rabbit Transit - 622/623	48	44	1.0
West Hills Loop - 624	56	14	4.0
TOTAL	<u>595</u>	<u>162</u>	<u>3.7</u>
MTA AVERAGE BOARDINGS PER HOUR :			55

IMPACT ON COSTS

Since these services were grant funded there is no immediate impact on the MTA's operating budget. The operating cost for these services has been lower than the MTA's regular services due to the use of part-time BDOF operators. However, since the MTA is in the business of moving people (and not simply moving buses), a better measure is the cost per passenger as shown in the following table.

LINE	DAILY EXPENSES	COST/ BUS HOUR	COST/ PASSENGER
Blue Line Transfer - 515	\$2,448.80	\$61.22	\$34.98
Highway Hummer - 545	1,471.68	70.08	19.62
Local Limo - 621	1,801.70	41.91	5.20
Rabbit Transit - 622/623	1,901.68	43.22	39.61
West Hill Loop - 624	696.50	49.75	12.43
TOTAL	\$8,320.36		
MTA AVERAGE		\$92	\$1.65

The combined services average \$51.36 per revenue hour and \$13.98 per passenger boarding. As indicated in the foregoing, the cost per passenger for these services is considerably higher than the MTA average of approximately \$1.65.

The cumulative cost for this project is \$1,819,883 through December 1994. At the current rate of expenditure there appears to be sufficient funds to operate these services through the termination of CMAQ funding in June 1995.

IMPACT ON EQUIPMENT

Equipment used on the BDOF services consists of seventeen-seat vehicles. Seventeen shuttle vehicles are based at Divisions 8, 10 and 18. These vehicles are being leased for \$37,060 per month. The lease will be terminated when these services are canceled.

IMPLEMENTATION

With the approval of the Board of Directors, BDOF Lines 515, 545, 621, 622-623, and 624 will be cancelled effective with the June 25, 1995 service changes. Advance notification will be conducted as appropriate and the process to develop the service alternatives outlined in the report will continue.

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