

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Saturday Service Accommodation for ACE

FROM: Tony McCaulay, Director of Planning and Marketing
Cyrus Sheik, Senior Transit Planner

DATE: May 28, 2019

Action Requested

Review proposed service and forward a recommendation to the Board of Directors.

Background

The Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) is a service of the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA), providing commuter rail operation between Stockton and San José. Intermediate stations in the Tri-Valley include Vasco Road (Livermore), downtown Livermore, and downtown Pleasanton. Service is limited to weekdays, with four train departures toward San José in the morning, and four train departures toward Stockton in the afternoon.

ACE contracts with multiple transit providers to ensure bus connector service to and from key ACE stations. In the Tri-Valley, LAVTA operates Wheels routes 53 and 54, both of which connect transferring ACE passengers with areas of employment within Pleasanton as well as with the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART). Route 53 operates between the Pleasanton ACE station and the West Dublin/Pleasanton BART station via I-680 and Stoneridge, while Route 54 operates between the Pleasanton ACE station and the East Dublin/Pleasanton BART station via the Hacienda Business Park.

ACE underwrites 60 percent of the fully allocated cost to operate the #53 and #54 service. As a concession, passengers with a validated ACE train ticket can board LAVTA buses for free.

Discussion

Having run weekend service only on a special-event basis in the past, ACE has now received a two-year grant to provide regular service on Saturdays. Two San José-bound trains would be operated in the mid-morning hours, with two return trips toward Stockton in the late afternoon.

Although passengers' use of the Saturday ACE service is expected to be related primarily to sporting and other special events in Santa Clara County, ACE wants to provide a viable

connection to BART as well, and has reached out to LAVTA staff regarding potential options for this.

The staffs of ACE and LAVTA have determined that expanding the existing Route 53 service to Saturdays likely would be the most straightforward option for this purpose, as the #53 provides the most direct and expeditious link between ACE and BART. It is proposed that, based on ACE committing to underwrite the additional service, two morning trips and two afternoon trips be provided between Pleasanton ACE and West Dublin/ Pleasanton BART on Saturdays, using one bus. All trips would be timed to the ACE train schedule at Pleasanton.

The following table summarizes the parameters of the proposed service:

| ROUTE 53 PROPOSED SATURDAY SERVICE | |
|---|--|
| General service parameters | |
| <i>Days operated</i> | Saturdays |
| <i>Hours of operation</i> | 8:40a--10:10a, 4:15p--5:50p |
| <i>Frequency</i> | 2x AM and 2x PM trips |
| <i># Buses</i> | 1 |
| <i>Termini</i> | Pleasanton ACE - West Dublin/Pleasanton BART |
| <i>via</i> | I-680 and Stoneridge |
| <i>Fare</i> | Regular Wheels fare; free w/validated ACE ticket |

Unlike the weekday 53/54 service that is reimbursed at 60%, it is proposed that ACE would underwrite 100% of the fully allocated cost to operate the Saturday #53. As a concession and similar to the existing weekday service, however, passengers with a validated ACE ticket would not need to pay an additional fare when boarding Wheels.

The following table summarizes the estimated annualized costs and reimbursements of the proposed service addition:

| ROUTE 53 PROPOSED SATURDAY SERVICE | |
|---|----------|
| Cost estimate | |
| Revenue hours per day operated (Saturday) | 2.98 |
| Number of days operated per year | 52 |
| Total revenue hours | 155.13 |
| Total fully allocated cost | \$17 916 |
| Reimbursement from ACE | 100%* |
| LAVTA cost | \$0* |

* Similar to the existing weekday service, LAVTA would provide as a concession free rides to passengers with a validated ACE train ticket

The grant to ACE for the new Saturday train service is for two years; however, should the service be successful, ACE’s intention is to make the service permanent.

ACE has not stated what their ridership expectation for a Saturday Route 53 is. But the MoU would be written to give ACE reasonable flexibility to expand, reduce, or discontinue the service, as long as proper lead time is provided to for public notice and for scheduling such in conjunction with the LAVTA fixed-route contractor's regular driver sign-up periods.

Budget

If approved by the Board, this item will be included with the FY2020 budget.

Next Steps

If approved by the governing boards of both parties, each entity would sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for LAVTA to supply the additional Saturday service on a reimbursement basis from ACE. The first day of service would be expected to occur on July 27, 2019.

Recommendation

Staff asks that the Projects & Services Committee forward a recommendation to the Board of Directors to approve new Saturday service for Wheels Route 53, as outlined above, to be billed to ACE at the fully allocated cost also shown above, with a target implementation date of July 27, 2019.