



**CITY of CALABASAS**  
**TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT**

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**DATE:** NOVEMBER 17, 2022

**TO:** TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**FROM:** TRA'A BEZDECNY, ASSISTANT ENGINEER

**SUBJECT:** DEMAND RESPONSE WEEKEND TRANSIT SERVICE

**MEETING**

**DATE:** NOVEMBER 22, 2022

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**BACKGROUND:**

Since 2010, the City has made numerous service changes to the Calabasas Trolley, operated by Ventura Transit Services (VTS), due to the high cost of service and changes to ridership over time. Service has been reduced from 3 days to 1 day and hours have been modified multiple times since 2010. Recently, Staff reduced trolley hours to seasonal "Winter Hours" due to low ridership outside of peak hours.

Staff began to look into transit options for weekend service and found Demand Response (also known as Microtransit) to be a great option for the City. The City would implement the existing Dial-A-Ride (DAR) program and modify it to a Demand Response Service, open to the public, on weekends only to replace the weekend Trolley Program during the off-season.

**DISCUSSION:**

According to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the definition of Demand Response System is "one where passenger trips are generated by calls from passengers or their agents to the transit operator, who then dispatches a vehicle to pick the passengers up and transport them to their destinations" (1988 FTA Circular 2710.2A). The existing Dial-A-Ride Program is classified as a Demand Response where approved passengers call a day in advance to make a request for a trip. This is in contrast to the existing Trolley Program which operates on a fixed route to set locations throughout the City at set times. Demand Response allows for greater flexibility in our transit program and for our riders.

The leading factor in this change involves ridership. Outside of the summer, the trolley receives very few riders. The trolley is not a comfortable ride during the cold season

due to the open cab and fewer people are traveling around the City during the weekends. Since ridership during the summer is higher, the Trolley Program will switch to a summer-only program, following the same 10-week schedule as the Beach Bus. This 10-week schedule falls between the end and beginning of school for LVUSD students.

Trolley maintenance is also a large factor in our decision to make this shift. Since service resumed in August 2021, maintenance costs for the trolley has totaled \$5,705.80. Maintenance for Ideal's Dial-A-Ride vans are covered by Ideal instead of by the City.

Currently, the trolley is operating its seasonal "Winter Hours" 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM on Saturdays and has been experiencing an average of 5 riders each week since October 29 when this schedule change went into effect. Dial-A-Ride operates 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Saturdays and 10:00AM to 4:00 PM on Sundays. The proposed Demand Response Service would operate Saturday and Sunday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

Weekend passengers would be allowed to request a trip from anywhere in the City to anywhere in the City for the standard Dial-A-Ride fare of \$2.50. Passengers can also travel from anywhere in the City to one of the set out of city locations for a \$4.00 fare. The existing out of city stops that the Dial-A-Ride program already utilizes are as follows:

- Kaiser Permanente, Woodland Hills
- West Hills Medical Center
- Tarzana Regional Medical Center
- Fallbrook Center, West Hills
- Topanga Plaza, Canoga Park
- The Village, Woodland Hills
- St. Mel Catholic Church/Adult Club, Woodland Hills
- West Valley Jewish Community Center, West Hills
- Woodland Hills Community Church/Primetimers Club

Staff would like to an additional stop to the G (Orange) Line Canoga Station to better connect passengers with Metro's service.

In order to improve response times, 2 drivers would be utilized (instead of the 1 driver we typically have on the weekend) and the drivers would wait for calls on opposite sides of the City. The Trolley operates on a 1-hour route, but utilizing a Demand Response program with 2 drivers could allow for 15-minute response, saving time for passengers.

The trolley would still remain available for use for special events such as the Hidden Hills Parade, Jolly Trolley, and the Red Trolley Tour.

**FISCAL IMPACT / SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

The cost to operate the trolley weekly is around \$812, including gas. By replacing the Trolley Program with the proposed Demand Response Program, a savings of approximately \$40,000 is expected per year. If the Trolley Program is continued through the summer as proposed, the program will save approximately \$26,000 a year (excluding maintenance costs and fare revenue). Table 1.1 shows the savings calculations for completely eliminating the weekend trolley service and Table 1.2 shows the savings calculations for only operating the trolley during the summer.

*Table 1.1 Weekend Replacement Cost*

Weekend Replacement						
	drivers	hours	admin hours	cost/week	cost/year	*savings/year
DAR	1	16	14.5	\$ 825.50	\$ 42,926.00	
VTS	1	12	16	\$ 1,425.76	\$ 74,139.52	
Demand-Response	2	16	17	\$ 1,471.00	\$ 76,492.00	<b>\$ 40,573.52</b>

*Table 2.2 Weekend Replacement and Summer Trolley Cost*

Summer Trolley						
	drivers	hours	admin hours	cost/week	cost/year	*savings/year
DAR	1	16	14.5	\$ 825.50	\$ 42,926.00	
VTS	1	12	16	\$ 1,425.76	\$ 74,139.52	
VTS - Summer	1	12	16	\$ 1,425.76	\$ 14,257.60	
Demand-Response	2	16	17	\$ 1,471.00	\$ 76,492.00	<b>\$ 26,315.92</b>

\*Calculated savings may not be equal to actual savings

The Dial-A-Ride and Trolley programs are both funded by LACMTA’s Proposition A and Proposition C. As this new program would save money there is no negative impact to our source of transit funding.

**REQUESTED ACTION:**

Review proposed changes to transit service and provide comments.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment A - LA County Access Services Application
- Attachment B - FTA’s Demand-Response Fact Sheet