

Item No. 12



September 5, 2012

TO: GCT Board of Directors

FROM: Steven P. Brown
General Manager *Steve*

RE: **Pending Implementation of Regional Transit Study
Recommendations**

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) staff is in the process of drafting a report to be presented to the VCTC at its September meeting that is anticipated to make recommendations about implementation of the Regional Transit Study. As discussed with the GCT Board in January this year and at subsequent meetings, the Regional Transit Study was conducted in response to SB716, which changed the way Transportation Development Act funds can be spent after July 1, 2014. The legislation also enabled Ventura County to submit a report to the legislature detailing how the county would organize transit services to be more efficient and provide better connectivity for passengers.

The implementation details and recommendations expected to be contained in the upcoming VCTC staff report are not available as of the writing of this report. The VCTC report will likely be available prior to the GCT Board meeting and, if so, will be made available to all Directors as soon as possible.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Board of Directors discuss the issues contained in this report, along with the VCTC staff report, and provide input to the General Manager as well as to Directors that concurrently serve on the VCTC Board about key issues regarding implementation of the Regional Transit Study.

II. DISCUSSION

During discussions with VCTC staff, it has become apparent that the VCTC staff desires to implement the recommendations contained in the Regional Transit Study beginning in July, 2013, a year earlier than expected. SB716 has a date

of July 1, 2014 for implementing the TDA funding requirements. However, with the unanticipated change in how VISTA is being operated since July 30th, the schedule for implementing Regional Transit Study recommendations has been moved up a year.

One key recommendation of the Regional Transit Study is to have VISTA service taken over by GCT and an MOU representing the cities of the East County. In anticipation of our inheriting some or all of the VISTA services on or around July 1, 2013, GCT staff has begun working on a number of items.

Given the short timeframe for VCTC to replace its contract with Coach (CUSA), the contract between VCTC and Roadrunner is only for eleven (11) months. After that time, it is expected that whoever takes over the operation of VISTA will need to initiate a new contract for operations, maintenance and other functions associated with the VISTA service.

To that end, staff is drafting an RFP for the operation of VISTA service, which will need to be prepared very quickly. The scope of work is anticipated to include, but not be limited to, vehicles, drivers, maintenance personnel as well as a location to house the vehicles. Staff will continue to keep the Board informed as this process moves forward.

Key issues to be addressed:

A number of issues and concerns have been raised by staff that we will continue to work with the VCTC staff to address. These items include:

- Responsibility for management and oversight of the VISTA service. Currently, there is a lack of clarity from VCTC staff about exactly which services would be included in the package turned over to GCT to manage.
- Funding to provide the service needs to incorporate staffing and administration and oversight of the service as well as for costs incurred to implement the accelerated transition.
- Management and oversight of numerous on-board technology systems. These are currently managed and maintained by VCTC, but it is unclear how this will be handled and/or funded after the transition. Many of these systems are near, or at, the end of their useful lives, such as the GoVentura Smartcard system and the Automatic Passenger Counters. Other systems such as NextBus may be in need of upgrading in the near-future. Early discussions with VCTC have indicated that GCT or another operator will become the responsible party for these systems. Capital funding to replace or update these systems will be needed, as will on-going operational funding. Other systems, such as updated farebox

systems and automated voice enunciator systems, are being planned for joint implementation by GCT and several other county transit providers. Funding would also be required to include the VISTA fleet in this implementation.

- Funding for capital equipment must also be addressed as GCT works to assess and evaluate the various options available for the long-term viability of the VISTA service. GCT staff is currently working to develop an RFP for this service, but a number of questions must be answered in order for us to complete this process and advertise the RFP in time for vendors to adequately prepare proposals.

Given the relatively short timeframe for the transition of VISTA services out of VCTC's responsibility, GCT staff has been meeting regularly with colleagues from the East County transit providers as well as with staff from the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (co-provider of the VISTA Coastal Express and Coastal Express Limited). Through these meetings, we are exploring joint purchase opportunities, determining how best to accommodate the support functions that will likely be devolved to the new providers of VISTA service, and coordinating input on the draft RFP. As we know more about VCTC's plans to transition VISTA, we will be briefing our Board and seeking input and authorization to move forward.

III. RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Board of Directors discuss the issues contained in this report, along with the VCTC staff report, and provide input to the General Manager as well as to Directors that concurrently serve on the VCTC Board about key issues regarding implementation of the Regional Transit Study.