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March 4, 2020

TDA Article 8 Hearing Board Chair
c/o Armineh Saint, Program Manager
Metropolitan Transit Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, California 90012

RE: Fiscal Year 2018/19 TDA Article 8 Unmet Needs Hearings

Dear Ms. Saint:

At the 2019 TDA Article 8 Unmet Needs Hearing, the Board found that the Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA) had no unmet needs that could not be addressed through existing funding sources. The Hearing provided recommendations that are addressed in this letter. As a result of a continued focus during the last 12 months on enhancements in technology, capital improvements, and service reliability, the AVTA has had several accomplishments in these areas.

Responses to Public Testimony and Written Comments
Item # 1, General increase in service, including longer hours, higher frequency, and/or more days of operation.

Item # 1.2, Morning/evening commuter bus with limited stops to/from AV College to West Lancaster: Our recently completed year long Regional Transit Study did not find adequate ridership to support this service, however as we design and move towards implementation of our on demand micro-transit service we will continue to evaluate whether the expansion of that service would be a solution to this limited need.

Item # 1.3, Develop Stronger TOD districts adjacent to regional rail stations with comprehensive bus network connecting station downtowns with outlying communities: AVTA is very active in working and coordinating with our jurisdiction partners Palmdale, Lancaster, and the County of Los Angeles in

developing new and improved transit hubs adjacent to Metrolink stations. AVTA has made dramatic capital improvements in its bus charging infrastructure at Palmdale Regional Transportation Center (PTC) as well as awarding a contract to develop a new transit hub/charging stations at the North Metrolink station located at Lancaster Blvd. and Sierra Highway. With an anticipated completion in August 2020 these improvements will provide for increased interconnectivity with the Metrolink stations and efficient transfers to bus routes.

Item #2, Scheduling, Reliability, Transfer Coordination: As discussed previously AVTA commissioned a system wide Regional Transit Study which has resulted in recommendations for sweeping system wide improvements to routes, schedules and service enhancements. A major element in these recommendations is to increase frequency of service and move to a “clock facing” scheduling philosophy. The plan was adopted by a unanimous vote of our Board of Directors on February 25, 2020 and after an extensive public outreach and education effort is conducted between March 1, through August 31, 2020. The new system will begin service on September 1st 2020. We have already entered the new route system into our scheduling and run cut software and confirmed we have the necessary buses to adequately provide the enhanced services. To validate the study results and test expected results we conducted an early adoption plan on our heaviest ridership route, our route 1, shifting from an erratic schedule that fluctuated from 30 minutes to one hour frequency over to clock facing 15 minute headways. Ridership increased from the very first month and accumulated to over 80,000 additional boardings over the six months ending Jan 31st, 2020.

Item #3 Demand responsive service, Dial-a-ride availability: AVTA provides an agency funded DAR service in parallel to DAR service provided by Access Services. Throughout the balance of this year we will be introducing our customers to an enhanced feature for our DAR system that will enable them to schedule their rides, monitor the arrival of their rides and receive schedule updates using their smart phones. For customers that do not own a smart phone or prefer the traditional call center appointment method, that will still be available to them. We are also going to implement a demand response micro transit system for our east county area including Lake Los Angeles and Sun Village. This system will use an “Uber-like” hailing software to provide faster, more convenient service reducing wait times from the current 1 ½ hour headways on the fixed route service down to 20 to 40 minutes.

Item #4 Bus maintenance issues: Our transition to maintaining an all-electric fleet has been smooth with no issues to report.

Item #5 Security issues: Keeping our bus operators and our customers safe is a top priority. In response to operator concerns we have added armed security officers at both our Palmdale Transportation Center and our Steve Owens Memorial Park transit hub 7 days per week from 4:00 PM until midnight which affords the operators a measure of peace of mind. In addition we installed 12” monitors above the drivers head so that boarding passengers can see they are being recorded. A final security program involves putting operator barriers in five buses as a demonstration/evaluation program. The feedback has been overwhelmingly

positive and we have funding set aside to retrofit all of our local transit buses. AVTA is committed to providing a safe and desirable work environment for all employees and our riding public.

Item # 7, Park-N-Ride, Bus Stop, bus shelter issues, signage and amenities: We have begun our annual review of our stops to determine which stops have reached our criteria to be upgraded from sign only to sign and bench or sign and full shelter. Once our review is complete we will begin our upgrades keeping the emerging new bus routes as a key component of our evaluation.

Item # 9 Other issues: Better public information needed, bus improvements, upgrades, increased fleet, bus tokens, transit center.

Item # 9.1 Easier wheelchair accessibility at bus stop on Sierra Highway and 0 - 8: We have closely examined this stop and find it to be ADA compliant.

Item # 9.2 Not enough room for wheelchairs on bus: AVTA is continually working to ensure all of its vehicles and services are in compliance with the American with Disabilities act. We are confident our fleet is ADA compliant.

Capital Improvements:

Over the past year, AVTA made significant progress towards reaching our goal of electrifying our entire fleet of 79 buses. Our local transit service now runs most days with all electric buses and AVTA is now utilizing its 60' articulated electric buses on our Route 1, the heaviest ridership route, allowing for more seating capacity. The buses, which have the ability to accommodate an additional 30 passengers, have been assigned to Route 1, the backbone of the AVTA system, allowing us to now improve service to 15 minute headways at peak service intervals. The buses have already proven to provide an improved customer experience by decreasing overcrowding along that busy corridor.

Enroute charging infrastructure is another component of the 100% battery-electric fleet transformation,—utilizing wireless inductive chargers to help extend the range of the new zero-emission buses. These chargers allow the electric buses to charge wirelessly simply by driving the vehicles over charging pads embedded into the ground. During 2018, the first of the new 250KW wireless inductive charging stations have been installed and made operational at Sgt. Steve Owen Memorial Park (OMP) and the Palmdale Transportation Center (PTC). In anticipation of the delivery of additional electric buses this year, construction for two more wireless inductive charging stations at each of these locations is now underway. AVTA continues to expand the scope and locations of new charging centers. Construction is underway for chargers at the Antelope Valley South Valley Clinic, located at the intersection of Palmdale Blvd. and 40th East, and at Boeing Plaza adjacent to and just north of the Lancaster Metrolink Station. These two new stations will support AVTA in increasing vehicle range, and provide enhanced and connectivity of routes. Construction will begin on our fifth site located at the Antelope Valley College campus by late August.

Service Improvements:

AVTA management has initiated a new service to Edwards Air Force Base. The route 747 was created to service the contractor and military members of our community that work and live on the base. In addition, the service to the Mojave Air & Space Port commenced as scheduled. While initial ridership has been below expectations we remain committed to these destinations and continue our awareness efforts. Based on the Regional Transit Study the agency will be working towards the implementation of enhanced commuter service to Santa Clarita region, specifically the key employments centers, which would greatly benefit the estimated 1,200 employees currently commuting to those locations from Lancaster and Palmdale.

Service Reliability:

Staff continued its aggressive monitoring of local service performance of the agency's contract with Transdev. Improved coordination and communication with the contractor and operator is an essential component for improved On-Time-performance. This focus on customer satisfaction along with the recommendations from the Regional Transit Plan combine to address and correct concerns regarding appropriate driver/operator layover times, addresses changing needs associated with the electric bus fleet, and has provided improved intra-service connectivity.

Ongoing work is being done with service to Antelope Valley College to improve students' access to both the Lancaster and Palmdale campuses. AVTA implemented a new Route 8 which is now servicing the students, faculty and general public that need to ride between the Lancaster College campus and the new center in Palmdale. The express route has been very successful and well received within the community. Ridership information shows steady increases in ridership.

Technology:

AVTA recently upgraded our route planning and scheduling software to a product that is capable of factoring electric bus battery sizes, range expectations along with the location of each on-route opportunity chargers. These variables allow the software to execute algorithms to optimize bus-route-layover-and charging opportunities to maximize range and eliminate buses running low on state of charge.

Future Capital Improvements:

AVTA will continue the coordination with the new Antelope Valley Mall management to create a new bus stop at the facility. The proposed new stop would be coordinated with the planned redesign of the Mall and be adjacent to one of the main entrances, allowing for improved customer accessibility and rider safety than the current stops which are located in the far Southwest parking area along the outer-ring road. The proposed stops, being much closer to one of the main entrances is only possible due to the AVTA commitment to utilize zero-emission buses for all of our fleet. AVTA anticipates the relocation of this bus stop will enhance ridership for the routes that service the Mall location, and more

importantly, positively impact rider experience with the AVTA system. The schedule to implement this relocation of the stop will be made in conjunction with the Mall construction time frame.

In a longer planning horizon, AVTA is exploring the possibility of partnering with local bus manufacture to connect the two downtown civic-center areas of the cities of Palmdale and Lancaster with the development of a monorail system. The above ground battery-electric monorail system, called BYD "Sky Rail" would be aimed at substantially easing traffic congestion and enhancing connectivity between the two cities. The system would be constructed with a very small footprint along major road arterials and done so with far superior cost efficiencies than current light-rail systems. The system would have the capacity to carry 10,000 to 30,000 passengers per hour. This type of modern Sky Rail would replace the need for planning and development of a BRT system.

Community Outreach Efforts:

AVTA is dedicated to the community and to providing excellent customer service. Community outreach is a high priority goal and we continually seek to improve our efforts.

- As previously noted, AVTA has concluded a year-long Regional Transit Plan (RTP) development project that will be the strategic plan for the authority for the next 5 to 10 years in the future.
- Our Travel Training program allows us to reach out to those who may not feel comfortable using the bus, and we have conducted sessions with many groups this year including veterans, seniors, those with disabilities and students.
- AVTA continues its participation in numerous community events such as the annual Senior Expo and the Veterans Stand Down, increasing awareness of AVTA's services and processing applications at the events to help riders avoid the additional trip to the office.

AVTA values the input of our customers and stakeholders and continues to take a proactive approach to address the transit needs in the Antelope Valley. If have you questions, please contact me at (661) 729-2206.

Sincerely,

Macy Neshati, CEO/Executive Director
Antelope Valley Transit Authority



City of
SANTA CLARITA
TRANSIT

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Santa Clarita Valley Area
TDA Article 8 Hearings
March 25, 2020
Presented by Adrian Aguilar, City of Santa Clarita Transit Manager

The City of Santa Clarita continues its efforts to promote public transportation as a viable alternative to the automobile. Because of this continued effort, the only recommendation that resulted from the 2019 TDA Article 8 hearings was for the City to continue to evaluate funding opportunities for transit services.

In the twelve months since the last hearing, the City of Santa Clarita has accomplished a number of key milestones such as:

- Adoption of the City's Transit Development Plan.
- Broke ground on the Vista Canyon Transit Center. Construction began in late January and is scheduled to be completed late summer 2020.
- Completed the design of the Vista Canyon Metrolink Station. The City has also hired an environmental compliance and project management consultant to assist with this project. The City has released the bid documents for the construction of the Vista Canyon Metrolink Station and we expect to select a contractor and award a contract early this summer (2020).
- Introduced a new on-demand transit service in the eastern Santa Clarita Valley named Go! Santa Clarita. This pilot program allows riders to book trips using a mobile app and a vehicle will arrive within 15 minutes of the trip being scheduled.
- Taken delivery of two CNG powered commuter buses and four CNG powered transit buses.
- Awarded a contract for the purchase of four transit buses.
- Began the next phase of the City's bus stop improvement project. This phase includes the installation of new solar lighting fixtures for improved safety, new e-ink bus arrival displays, and the installation of new benches and shelters at 21 locations within the Santa Clarita Valley. The project is scheduled to be completed by June 30.

These are just a few of the many Santa Clarita Transit accomplishments over the past 12 months.

In the coming year, Santa Clarita Transit will be working toward:

- Adjusting the current route network to serve recently developed area within the Santa Clarita valley including the new Vista Canyon Transit Center.
- Implementing the recommendations outlined in the new Transit Development Plan.
- Undertake the next phase of our bus stop improvement project designed to improve access and amenities at bus stops throughout the Santa Clarita Valley.
- Take delivery of new local, commuter and dial-a-ride buses.
- Adopt a plan for the transition to a zero-emission bus fleet.

The City of Santa Clarita will continue to take a proactive approach to addressing the transit needs of our residents and is committed to providing effective and efficient service that improves the quality of life for all residents within the Santa Clarita Valley.

Thank you.

