



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 10

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE MARCH 16, 2016

SUBJECT: METRO COUNTYWIDE BIKESHARE EQUITY INITIATIVES

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the initiation and implementation of the following **Metro Countywide Bike Share equity initiatives**:

- A. WAIVE the \$40 annual sign-up fee for Flex passes to make a single Metro Bike Share ride cost the same as a ride on Metro transit (\$1.75) for the following groups:
1. Metro Rider Relief customers for the summer 2016 launch;
 2. Reduced Fare TAP card-holders (Senior 62+/Disabled/Medicare, College/Vocational student, Student 9-12 grade) as part of Interoperability Step 3 approved in November 2015 (Attachment A); and
- B. AUTHORIZE the CEO to commit a 10% required hard local match of \$10,000 and a 15% required in-kind match of \$15,000 to develop a competitive Better Bike Share Partnership Grant (BBSP) application.
- C. AUTHORIZE the CEO to enter into a partnership with the City of Los Angeles for a Mobility Hubs FTA JARC grant.

ISSUE

At the June 2015 meeting, the Board awarded a two-year contract to Bicycle Transit Systems (BTS) for provision of the equipment, installation and operations of the Metro Countywide Bike Share Phase 1 Pilot in greater downtown Los Angeles (DTLA Pilot). At the November 2015 meeting, the Metro Board approved a fare structure for the Metro Bike Share system (Attachment A) that is flexible and streamlined to meet the diverse needs of communities. The equity initiatives proposed in this report are expected to bolster the fare structure by increasing options to disadvantaged communities and potentially increasing ridership by discounting passes to those who otherwise may not participate due to financial constraints. Board approval and authorization are needed to proceed with the proposed

Metro Countywide Bike Share equity initiatives.

DISCUSSION

Bike share systems all across the US have struggled to be inclusive to disadvantaged communities, especially low-income communities of color and women. However, based on the research from existing bike share systems in North America, options for monthly passes, fare relief and outreach are the best approaches to ensuring the system is accessible to all (Attachment B). The proposed equity initiatives are expected to increase ridership by enrolling those who wouldn't otherwise participate due to financial constraints and ensuring long-term diversity of the user base.

\$0 Fee Annual Flex Pass - Rider Relief & Reduced Fare TAP Card-Holders

At the November 2015 meeting, the Metro Board approved a fare structure for the Metro Bike Share system (Attachment A). The fare structure's three proposed pass options (\$20 Monthly, \$40 Annual Flex/\$1.75 per 30 minute ride and \$3.50 Walk-Up/per 30 minute ride) are flexible and streamlined to meet the needs of frequent, occasional and casual users. The fare structure includes a "Flex" pass for a \$40 annual fee that allows for a \$1.75 charge per 30 min trip. The proposed initiative would waive the \$40 annual sign-up fee for Flex passes to make a single Metro Bike Share ride to cost the same as a ride on Metro Transit (\$1.75). The following groups would be eligible:

1. Metro Rider Relief participants for the summer 2016 launch.
 - i. Rider Relief participants are eligible for reduced rate transit passes based on a qualifying set of income criteria. The participants are screened and recertified annually through Metro Rider Relief participating social service providers that meet selection criteria.
 - ii. Participants would receive a bike share coupon code in their June 2016 recertification process.
 - iii. The coupon code can be used to register for a bike share pass at metro.net/bikeshare. Bicycle Transit Systems will recognize the bike share coupon code and waive the \$40 Flex pass fee. A credit card will be required for registration.
2. Reduced Fare TAP card-holders (Senior 62+/Disabled/Medicare, College/Vocational student, Student 9-12 grade) as part of the development of Step 3 Interoperability (Seamless User Interoperability). Step 3 Interoperability was approved by the board in November 2015 as the last step in a phased Regional Bike Share Interoperability Strategy (Attachment A).
 - i. The \$40 Flex pass fee will be automatically waived with an eligible TAP card number upon registration at metro.net/bikeshare. When registering online for a bike share pass a user will be prompted to enter the TAP number and a fee reduction will automatically be issued when the system recognizes it as a Reduced Fare TAP number. A credit card will be required for registration.
 - ii. This option will utilize software infrastructure developed in order to facilitate the

exchange of information between Metro and BTS.

- iii. Reduced Fare Students K-8 TAP card-holders will not be eligible for the discount since bike share users must be 16 to ride the bikes and requires a guardian's permission.

Bike share programs typically require that users provide a credit card to be kept on file. The credit card allows the contractor to charge a bike share participant for usage of the system. Keeping a credit card on file also serves as insurance against theft of the bicycle, in essence serving as a deterrent. While this is an important business feature of the bike share industry, we also recognize that this creates a barrier to participating in the bike share program, particularly for the unbanked population. Staff is exploring opportunities to implement cash payment options, similar to Philadelphia Indego's Pay Near Me program. We will return to the Board once the policy and administrative details are developed, as well as funding has been identified.

JARC Partnership

The city of Los Angeles was awarded a grant for \$7,950,000 (capital and operating) in 2010 from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Jobs Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC) to implement an Integrated Mobility Hubs Project. The project is 100% federally funded (i.e. no local match required). The Project's Scope of Work includes secure bicycle parking, bicycle sharing, and demand responsive service in DTLA, Hollywood and other cities in Los Angeles County. Metro and the city of Los Angeles have been working to integrate the Metro Countywide Bike Share Program into the Project due to the similarities in scope and schedule. The City of Los Angeles has requested Metro become a partner in order to utilize some of the JARC grant for eligible capital and operating costs in DTLA and Hollywood. In order to move forward with a partnership, and as required by the FTA, Metro must be listed as a partner agency and funding recipient on the grant. The Board's approval of the staff recommendation would support the implementation of Metro's Regional Bike Share Program in DTLA and in future proposed expansion phases.

Better Bike Share Partnership Grant

Metro, the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition (LACBC) and the Multicultural Communities for Mobility (MCM) have been invited to jointly apply for the Better Bike Share Partnership (BBSP) grant. The BBSP is a collaboration funded by The JPB Foundation to build equitable and replicable bike share systems. The BBSP partners include The City of Philadelphia <<http://www.phila.gov/Pages/default.aspx>>, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia <<http://bicyclecoalition.org/>>, the National Association of City Transportation Officials <<http://nacto.org/>> (NACTO) and the People For Bikes Foundation <<http://www.peopleforbikes.org/>>. The grant will serve to build upon Metro's efforts to establish an equitable program and will help fund Metro Bike Share outreach efforts to disadvantaged communities in and around the DTLA pilot service area. Staff is requesting the Board allocate a 10% required hard local match of \$10,000 and a 15% in-kind match of \$15,000 for a potential \$75,000 grant from the BBSP for the total programmatic cost of \$100,000.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Implementing a Metro Countywide Bike Share Equity Initiatives will not have any adverse safety impacts on Metro employees and patrons.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Twenty percent of the proposed grant match (\$2,000 of hard match and \$3,000 in-kind match) is expected to be needed in FY16 if the grant is awarded, which will be absorbed by the FY16 bikeshare project budget of \$7.78M. The remaining local match (\$8,000 of hard match and \$12,000 in-kind match) will be requested by the Project Manager during the FY17 budget development process.

The \$0 annual sign-up fee offer is expected to have a positive financial impact to user revenue since it will bring in new users that would otherwise not participate.

Impact to Budget

The source of funds for the hard local match is General Funds or other eligible and available local funds, which is eligible for bus/rail operating or capital expense.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may choose not to approve a Metro Countywide Bike Share Equity Initiatives. This alternative is not recommended, as it is not in line with previous Board direction.

NEXT STEPS

Contingent upon Metro Board approval, the FTA JARC grant will be amended to include the Metro and City of Los Angeles and City of Long Beach partnership. Staff will return to the Board in May 2016 with an update on TAP Interoperability Step 3.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Metro Bike Share Fare Structure Metro Board Report November 2015

Attachment B - NACTO Report on Bike Share Equity

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