

To: Board of Directors

Date: 3/13/2019

From: Sean Hedgpeth, Manager of Planning

Reviewed by: *Ref*

SUBJECT: Early Bird Express Update

Background:

At the November 2018 Board meeting, the Board authorized the General Manager to enter into an agreement with BART to provide early morning bus service. The service started in February 2019 and is expected to last for three and a half years. BART's weekday service was cut back in order for BART to conduct needed long-term maintenance on the Transbay Tube. Many transit agencies throughout BART's service area are part of the "Early Bird Express" (EBX) service set in place to cover the transit needs of early morning BART passengers in the 4am to 5am hour.

County Connection's Early Bird Express Routes

These routes are operated with standard County Connection fares, with two trips from Pittsburg/Baypoint BART to 19th St. BART in Oakland via Pleasant Hill BART (Route 712) and one trip from North Concord BART to Lafayette BART, serving all BART stations in between (Route 715). Service started on February 11th, operating on weekdays when BART is running weekday service. The 4am-5am service operated by bus operators will not be available on weekday holidays when BART runs on a holiday schedule.

Ridership through the end of February is displayed on the next page. It should be noted that the 4:05am Route 712 provides a return trip from the 19th St. BART station in Oakland direct to Pleasant Hill BART. The rest of the service is one-way.

BART Early Bird Express Ridership				
Date	712		715	Total
	4:05 AM	4:20 AM	4:05 AM	
2/11/2019	17	6	13	36
2/12/2019	21	5	9	35
2/13/2019	15	13	5	33
2/14/2019	18	7	6	31
2/15/2019	11	2	8	21
2/19/2019	13	4	4	21
2/20/2019	18	5	8	31
2/21/2019	16	4	6	26
2/22/2019	9	9	6	24
2/25/2019	15	6	3	24
2/26/2019	16	6	6	28
2/27/2019	13	6	7	26
2/28/2019	15	6	7	21
Total	328	116	111	555
Average	15.2	6.1	6.8	27.5

While it appears some of the ridership numbers are on the lower side, typically, new routes take a while to build ridership and February is one of our lower productivity months in the context of seasonal variability. Also, BART staff has reported a number of their early morning riders have adjusted their schedules and wait for the first train.

Staff will continue to monitor to ongoing ridership, and we will make modifications if BART deems necessary throughout the period of the contract.

Recommendation:

For information only.

Financial Implications:

All costs associated with operating the service are paid for by BART via contract.