County Connection

INTER OFFICE MEMO

To: Operations and Scheduling Committee   Date: May 29, 2015

From: Anne Muzzini, Director of Planning and Marketing   Reviewed by:

Subject: Wi Fi On Buses

Background:
We currently have unlimited Sprint data plans on 19 buses offering free WiFi to our passengers (Bishop Ranch service). This is being used quite a bit based on our data consumption on those lines. All buses are equipped with routers and WiFi service that enables Clever Devices system to transmit real time information to BusTracker and dispatch. The average data usage on a bus that is only transmitting Clever data is 8-14 Mb. Passenger Wifi enabled buses are averaging 3,500 Mb of data usage per month.

Implementation on Entire Fixed Route Fleet:
The cost difference between the 500 Mb limited plan and the unlimited plan is $18 per month, per bus. Converting all buses to passenger Wifi-enabled would amount to a total of $1,818 per month, or $21,816 per year. I would use a budgeting figure of $30k per year for this project to allow room for any Sprint increases and data modem replacement.

Customer experience of this service, as far as data speeds, will vary greatly based on signal strength, location, how many devices are connected, and what those passengers are using the connection for. The modems on the bus support 4G, but our IT Manager is looking into upgrading those to the newest LTE service, which is much faster. There may be a small increase in monthly charge for the faster service, which is another reason to have some contingency in the budget. The data modems needed for the faster service would be provided by Sprint free-of-charge, due to our WSCA (government) account with them.

Recommendation:
Review cost for implementing WiFi on the entire fleet and if desired direct General Manager to implement the program. The cost is less than $100,000 there it does not require Board approval.