

To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 05/02/2018

From: Bill Churchill, Assistant General Manager of Administration

SUBJECT: GPS Based Advertising Equipment

Background:

At the APTA annual conference and Expo in Atlanta this last fall a couple of Board members and staff received a demonstration of a relatively new technology that allows for GPS based, on board advertising. The system works by mounting a high definition TV flat screen inside a bus in a prominent location for passengers to view as well as some specialized equipment that can display advertising on the screen based on the location of the bus. The manufacturers of the equipment believe this may be valuable to advertisers and transit agencies since it allows advertisers to more accurately target their customers by matching the advertising to the location.

In addition to advertising, the system can display GPS based points of interest to passengers. For example when a bus enters a specific city and approaches a point of interest a video could be played that directs passenger's attention to that location providing information such as how to visit or hours of operation. The displays can also provide rider alerts and generalized information about County Connection or information regarding local events and social services.

Staff has been conducting research into the viability of these systems as well as the potential for generating advertising revenue, such that the cost to purchase the equipment is justified. This is proving to be a challenging task since Lamar, County Connection's bus ad provider, requires a large volume of vehicles equipped with the GPS systems in order to implement this type of advertising.

Recognizing this challenge, Hanover Displays, one of the manufacturers that sells the GPS display equipment, has offered to fully equip one bus with their product. Additionally, Hanover will help staff develop content and locate an advertiser at no cost to the Authority as a pilot project to demonstrate the efficacy of the product.

Recommendation:

For information only.

Financial Implications:

The systems range in cost from \$7,000 to \$9,000 per installation depending on screen size and number of screens. For this potential demonstration project there are no direct costs to the Authority since Hanover would cover the cost of equipment, installation and loading of content.

Action Requested:

None at this time, if the demonstration project proves to be successful staff will report back to the committee and seek further direction.