

To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 12/28/2021

From: Melody Reeb, Manager of Planning

Reviewed by: *RF*

SUBJECT: Spring Bid Update

Background:

As a result of COVID-19, County Connection staff implemented a major service change in response to shifts in ridership demand, the 10-year financial forecast, and regional equity goals. Implementing this change was also meant to provide a certain level of operational predictability to both the public and our operations department. However, despite increased efforts to hire and train new drivers, there is still an operator shortage, and hiring new operators is imperative to meet currently scheduled service levels and, more importantly, to be able to restore or add any additional service.

Ridership Trends:

Staff has been closely monitoring ridership to assess demand and ensure adequate service capacity. Ridership levels were increasing in the Fall as schools returned to in-person learning and there were several fare promotions to encourage riders to return to transit. However, ridership has dropped again slightly over the past two months, with average weekday ridership down around 50% below baseline levels, and weekend ridership down about 35%.

Spring Bid:

The Spring bid will be implemented on February 20th. Staff analyzed current schedules and ridership levels to find ways to increase efficiency given limited resources. The changes include some reductions in peak service on routes with low ridership, as well as adding trips on high ridership routes and corridors when resources are available, such as when vehicles are deadheading back to the yard. In addition, BART will also be making schedule changes in February, and the Spring bid will include some adjustments to improve those train connections.

Financial Implications:

None. The current FY 2022 budget assumes service levels consistent with the Spring bid.

Recommendation:

None, for information only.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.