



Information Item

Date: May 2, 2012

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Edward F. King, Director of Transit Services
Subject: Big Blue Bus June 17, 2012 Service Change

Introduction

The Big Blue Bus (BBB) will implement service changes on June 17, 2012 to improve service reliability to our customers and provide convenient connections to the Exposition (EXPO) Line Culver City Station. These changes are consistent with the public outreach conducted in March, August and September of 2011. They are based on an analysis of schedule adherence, as well as efforts to coordinate routing and schedule service to the Culver City EXPO Line Station at Venice and Robertson to ensure that BBB service is in place to connect with EXPO Line trains serving the station opening later this summer.

Background

BBB will undertake service modifications to Routes 5, 12, Super 12, Crosstown Ride and Sunset Ride that were vetted at a series of five public outreach meetings held throughout the service area in March, August and September of 2011. Although these changes were targeted for implementation in February 2012, they were placed on hold until staff completed a systematic prioritization of overall service improvements and a service improvement plan was developed. A two-step process that will improve service to our customers, provide efficiencies in corridors where there is redundant service, and provide coordinated service from Routes 5, 12 and Super 12 to the Culver City Expo Line Rail Station, is planned.

Discussion

Step 1: June 17, 2012 Service Change

Route 5, Route 12, and Super 12 Service to Culver City Expo Station: Route 5 service currently operates from Downtown Santa Monica to the Rimpau Transit Center via Olympic and Pico Boulevards. The eastern end of the Route 5 will be realigned at Pico and Robertson to operate along Robertson to the new Culver City EXPO Line Station at Venice and Robertson. This means Route 5 will no longer operate along Pico between Robertson and Rimpau Boulevards. Service along the Pico corridor to the Rimpau Transit Center will continue to be provided by Route 7, Rapid 7 and Route 13. Route 12 service east of National Boulevard will also terminate at the EXPO Line Culver City Station. These modifications will also resolve a long standing challenge with finding a suitable recovery and turn-around for Route 12 east of Pico Boulevard.

There is no impact to the operating budget to implement these changes. With the elimination of redundant service hours and miles on Pico Boulevard as well as the additional miles now associated with operating Route 12 service east of Robertson, BBB will reallocate that running time to Route 12 and Super 12 without incurring additional operating costs. These changes will also help improve poor schedule adherence (current on-time performance for these routes is 60%).

The Crosstown and Sunset Ride schedules will undergo a minor adjustment so that schedule adherence may be addressed. Running time will be added to the Crosstown Ride schedule and service will operate every 20 minutes to improve reliability (the current on-time performance for these services is 76%). The Sunset Ride will be operated with reduced frequency to coincide with the decreased ridership demand during the Santa Monica College summer class session.

At the request of UCLA, all BBB Routes serving the campus will operate to Ackerman Transit terminal instead of the Hilgard Transit Terminal after 8:00 PM on weekdays. This change will have minimal impact on campus service as the terminals are located

less than half of a mile apart. Routes 1, 2, 8 and 12 will continue to serve both Ackerman and Hilgard Terminals from 7:00 a.m. through 8:00 p.m. on weekdays. Weekend service will not be impacted.

The Downtown Ride, a parking shuttle that has operated Downtown since August 2011 to provide monthly parking pass holders free transportation from the Civic parking lots and structure will be discontinued on June 15 due to very poor ridership. Shuttle ridership for the last seven months of service totaled 2,631 trips or 2.7 Passengers per Vehicle Revenue Hour, ranking this route as the least productive service in the BBB system. The BBB system wide average for the same period was 39 Passengers per Vehicle Revenue Hour. The operating cost was \$210,000 annually. There is very frequent fixed route service (Routes 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9) along the corridors between the Civic parking lot and structure and downtown, and parking pass holders will continue to be able to ride all BBB fixed route service for free through 2014. Almost fifty percent of the current parking pass holders have ridden BBB fixed route service during this period. BBB staff will continue to participate in collaborative efforts with stakeholders and other City departments in the overall effort to manage mobility Downtown, including providing options for fixed route service, researching Downtown circulator concepts, and helping identify revenue sources to fund new service.

Finally, Community and Cultural Services and BBB will no longer sponsor and operate the Beach Ride to the Annenberg Community Beach House. This shuttle service previously operated on different days and along different routes in June, July and August for approximately seven hours daily. Despite testing several different routes and schedules, total ridership on the route last summer was 146 customers, which was a 30% decrease in ridership from the 2010 service. Route productivity was 2.14 riders per revenue service hour (compared to an average of 39 on all other BBB fixed route and shuttle service).

Step 2: August 26, 2012 Service Change

Staff is working on several proposed changes that will take place in August, including potential modifications to Routes 1, 2 and Rapid 10. Although a public hearing will not be required due to the minor nature of these changes, BBB will hold community outreach meetings to obtain feedback from customers and stakeholders in early May with a staff report to council on June 12 articulating the service changes.

Summary

The goals of the June 17, 2012 service change are to:

- Improve regional circulation by providing direct connections to the EXPO Light Rail Line's Culver City Station via BBB Routes 5, 12 and Super 12.
- Improve relations with UCLA and their surrounding neighborhoods by moving service from the Hilgard Terminal to Ackerman Terminal after 8:00 p.m. on weeknights.
- Reallocate underutilized resources to routes with higher ridership and overcrowding by no longer operating the Beach Ride to the Annenberg Community Beach House this summer.

Prepared By: Edward F. King, Director of Transit Services