



Information Item

Date: June 20, 2013

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Edward F. King, Director of Transit Services
Subject: Big Blue Bus June 2013 Service Changes

Introduction

The Big Blue Bus (BBB) continually studies the performance of its routes and schedules to ensure efficiencies and to assure that limited resources are applied strategically. Informed by the performance and resource allocation data collected throughout the year, BBB engages in a service planning process resulting in three service changes in order to implement schedule modifications responsive to the needs identified through the process. These service changes take place in February, June and August. Depending upon the time of year, these changes may be permanent and therefore would not change unless a service standard is not achieved or demand/market conditions take place along the route; or the change may be subtle due to seasonal (school) modifications that are targeted as efficiencies (temporary suspension of operating Route 6 during the summer months).

On Sunday, June 16, and Monday, June 17, BBB launched changes to some routes and schedules based on recommendations from the service planning process and based on known shifts in travel habits as the school season ends and the summer season begins. BBB evaluated routes to develop a set of service changes to take effect June 16 in order to improve service efficiency and reliability for BBB customers. The driving forces behind the changes for June are two-fold – to simplify the scheduling system and to adapt BBB services to changing conditions.

The June service change is the first step toward the transformation to a more simplified, memory-based scheduling system. Lines 7 and Rapid 7 will now feature memory schedules, whereby the bus leaves both ends of the line at the same time, and at the

same time each hour all day during the weekday. Once passengers familiarize themselves with the schedule for one hour of the day, there is no need to check it again as the service repeats each hour. BBB hopes to adapt this service design principal to other lines once feedback from the public has been obtained, and an understanding of how best to incorporate this change into the service. Additional peak AM and PM trips will be added to eliminate overcrowding and capacity issues, as well as improve schedule adherence.

The second underlying aspect of the service change is an effort to adapt BBB services to a multitude of changing conditions in the service area, and to continue to refine schedules and routes in pursuit of optimizing performance. Examples of this include adding extra running time on Line 3 on the weekend to address the lateness caused by intense beach traffic in Venice, rerouting around closed gates at the VA, and the addition of more night service on Line 3 on Thursday nights in support of the Pier Twilight Concert Series.

The June service changes are relatively minor and incremental, but together they substantiate a significant increase in passenger comfort and convenience.

Background

At the start of each summer, the Big Blue Bus takes advantage of shifts in riders' travel patterns from taking more school and work trips to more leisure trips by making relevant route and schedule adjustments. The route and schedule adjustments reflected in the June service change detailed below will remain in effect until the next scheduled service change on August 25 and 26, 2013.

Discussion

Delineated below are the changes that will go into effect on Sunday, June 16, and Monday, June 17. The collective effect of these changes will be improved rider experiences as a result of streamlining service, reducing overcrowding, improving timeliness, and simplifying schedules.

Route 1

- Trip cancellation: Weekday trip departing at 9:54am from Venice Blvd. at Walgrove Ave. to Santa Monica Blvd. at 4th St. will no longer operate. Trips leaving that stop at 9:39am and 10:09am will still be available.

Routes 2 & 3

- Summer only: Additional evening trips from Santa Monica to Green Line Station, Thursday through Sunday only.
- Weekday trip cancellations going towards Green Line Station:
 - Trip departing at 3:23pm from eastbound 4th St. at Civic Center Way will no longer operate. Trips leaving that stop at 3:15pm and 3:31pm will still be available.
 - Trip departing at 5:09pm from Arizona Ave. at 5th St. will no longer operate. Trips leaving 4th St. at Santa Monica Blvd. at 5:02 and 5:17pm will still be available.
- Bus stop removal: Stop on northbound 4th St. at Civic Center Way (mid-block) will no longer be in service. Instead, customers will board/alight at 4th St. at Pico Blvd.

Rapid 3

- New bus stop: Will now serve Lincoln Blvd. at Mindanao Way in both directions.

Route 4

- Route and schedule changes: Will no longer serve the VA's North Campus in both directions. Buses departing from Santa Monica traveling toward the Westside Pavilion will remain on San Vicente Blvd. and no longer travel on Montana Ave. to Bringham St.
- Bus stop removals:
 - Eastbound stops on Montana Ave. at Barrington Ave., and Eisenhower Ave. at Dewey Ave., Bldg. 217, Bldg. 218 and Bonsall Ave. will no longer operate.
 - Westbound stops on Eisenhower Ave. at Bonsall Ave., Bldg. 218, Bldg. 217, Dewey Ave. and VA Westgate will no longer operate.
- New bus stops: Will now serve eastbound San Vicente Blvd. at Montana Ave. (before the intersection), San Vicente Blvd. at Barrington Ave. (before the intersection) and San Vicente Blvd. at Mayfield Ave. (after the intersection).

Routes 4 & 9

- Minor route and schedules changes: Weekday buses traveling toward Downtown Santa Monica (Civic Center) will now use the weekend routing. Buses traveling southbound on 4th St. will now make a right on Colorado Ave., left on Main St., left on Olympic Blvd. to Avenida Mazatlan.
- Bus stop removals: Stops on southbound 4th St. at Civic Center Way, westbound Pico Blvd. at 4th St. and northbound Main St. at Pico Blvd. will no longer be in

service. Instead, customers will alight on 4th St. at Santa Monica Place or Olympic Blvd. at Avenida Mazatlan.

Route 6

- Will not operate during summer.

Route 7

- Weekday schedule changes: Will now operate every 12 minutes from approximately 6:30am to 6:30pm to increase frequency and reduce overcrowding.
- Weekend schedule changes: Minor adjustments to Saturday and Sunday schedules.

Rapid 7

- Bus stop removal: The Rimpau Transit Center stop will no longer operate in both directions. Instead, customers going westbound can board at Pico Blvd. at Mullen Ave. and eastbound at Pico Blvd. at San Vicente Blvd.
- Schedule changes: Weekday schedule will now operate every 12 minutes from approximately 6:30am to 6:00pm instead of current schedule of every 15 minutes to increase frequency and reduce overcrowding.

Rapid 10

- Trip cancellation: SMC Express trip at 6:30am from Union Station will not operate during the summer.

Route 12

- Trip cancellations: Weekday trips departing northbound Robertson Blvd. at Venice Blvd. at 7:45am, 7:59am, 9:17am and 9:32am will no longer operate. Trips leaving that stop at 7:48am, 8:03am, 9:21am and 9:36am will still be available.

Rapid 12

- New trip added: Afternoon trip departing northbound Robertson Blvd. at Venice Blvd. at 3:18pm will now be available.

Sunset Ride

- Schedule changes: Will now operate every 30 minutes from 7:30am to 3:30pm.

Public Outreach

BBB conducted outreach to customers and the general public through various means to ensure that the June service change details were available in advance of the

implementation dates. Detailed below is a summary of the service change public outreach efforts.

- Worked with SMC and UCLA staff to post changes on each campus and send Email blasts to students and faculty – May 15 – June 10.
- Posted service change details on BBB website – May 28.
- Placed City TV ad – May 29.
- Posted transit mall digital announcement – May 29.
- Stocked service change “take one” brochures in each motor coach – June 2.
- Installed interior car cards in each motor coach – June 3.
- Posted temporary signage, including stop closure signs, notices for altered trips, and cancelled trips – June 3 - 4.
- Sent Email blasts to BBB Alerts subscribers – June 6, 12 and 15.
- Posted new “eyelevels” with new schedule information at bus stops – June 11-17.
- Posted service change web link on Facebook and Twitter – June 12, 15 and 16.
- Printed new schedules and placed on each motor coach – June 16.

Summary

June 2013 service changes, in addition to other service related information, are posted on the Big Blue Bus website at www.bigbluebus.com.

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