

RIVERSIDE TRANSIT AGENCY
1825 Third Street
Riverside, CA 92507

November 19, 2009

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THRU: Larry Rubio, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Mark Stanley, Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Authorization to Implement Proposed Service Reductions on Fixed Routes 29 and 49 and Reclassification of Route 149

Summary: At the October 22, 2009, Board of Directors meeting, staff received Board approval to conduct a public hearing for the proposed service reductions on Routes 29 and 49 which will result in a greater span of service daily by spreading the headways allowing for the routes to be interlined. Secondly, approval to reclassify Route 149 to a CommuterLink enhanced route which increases the base fare by 10 cents for inter-county trips and eliminates the intra-county fare. The recommendations are being made following an analysis of ways to make existing service more efficient in the face of projected operating revenue declines. Staff used adopted performance measurements and the Performance Improvement Program (PIP) to evaluate service.

No dial-a-ride service will be affected by these changes.

As required by the FTA (FTA Circular 9030.1C, Chapter V., Section 5.0) and RTA's *Public Hearing Guidelines*, a public hearing, published 30 days in advance, must be held if 25 percent or more of a service will be reduced.

A community meeting was held on November 9, 2009, and a public hearing is being conducted during the Board of Directors meeting today. Via an advertisement published October 16, 2009, the public was provided notice of the two meetings and the opportunity to provide comments on the recommended service modifications by email, fax, postal mail, in person or phone.

The results of the public hearing were reviewed by staff. At the time of writing this report, comments received centered on whether the schedule of the Route 149 would be impacted and concerns about the proposed frequency reduction on Route 49 given the level of ridership. The proposal

for the Route 149 does not include changes to the schedule. The Route 49 passengers per hour averages 24.2 in the month of October and 26.1 in October 2008, the highest ridership month. This represents per service hour maximum capacity of approximately 65 percent in October 2008. At minimum the route has an available seating capacity of over 35 percent per service hour.

The service reductions and route reclassification proposed are described below and the financial impact is outlined in Attachment A. For a summary of the public comments received, see Attachment B.

Productivity Improvements on Routes 29 and 49

A continuing staff goal is to look for ways to contain cost growth in this difficult revenue climate while remaining compliant with the Riverside County Transportation Commission's (RCTC) Productivity Improvement Program (PIP). Service analysis concludes that modifying Routes 29 and 49 at this time would help in meeting that goal based on the following rationale:

Interlining Routes 29 and 49 - connecting service together at the end of the line to reduce overall time between trips creates a more efficient service with the least amount of trip reduction.

The change has the benefit of elongating the number of hours operated during the day. The elongation in the service duration during the day allows Routes 29 and 49 to be linked together at their common destination point, Tequesquite and Pine. This does spread the service frequency to 70 minutes on both routes decreasing the number of hours operated by 2,279 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010.

The combination of the aforementioned changes implemented January 10, 2010 will save \$85,713 in FY 2010. Annualized saving for FY 2011 is estimated at \$191,803.

Reclassify Route 149 to CommuterLink Service and Re-number the Route to 216

Route 149 has operated for a number of years as a connection from the City of Riverside to Orange County. It is the only such service in the RTA system that makes limited stops and connects to a neighboring County that is not a CommuterLink-class route. The reclassified service will continue to operate using Highways 91 and 55 with stops at the Downtown Riverside Bus Terminal, the Galleria at Tyler, Grand and Main in Corona and the Village of Orange in the City of Orange. The route will provide

CommuterLink level service at the new base fare of \$3 regardless of the trip origin or destination. Currently, the route provides basic fixed route service at a base fare rate of \$2.90 for trips to and from Orange County and \$1.50 base fare charge for trips within Riverside County. The new CommuterLink name is recommended to be named the Route 216.

The proposed Route 216 will be operated using CommuterLink buses within the existing fleet that have enhanced amenities. Service schedules and operating cost are not impacted by this recommendation. At the October Board of Directors meeting, a recommendation came forth to implement the change with the start of the new 2011 fiscal year in July. This will allow opportune time to advertise the change to the public.

Fiscal Impact:

If approved, these service modifications will result in an overall decrease in the revenue service hours of 2,279 and for an operating savings of \$85,713 in FY 2010. Projected annualized savings for FY 2011 is \$191,862.

Recommendation:

- Authorize service reductions on Routes 29 and 49 effective January 10, 2010.
- Authorize a service classification change to Route 149 to CommuterLink 216 which includes a fare change effective with the start of Fiscal Year 2011.

Attachment A: Summary of Financial Impact

Proposed Route 149 Reclassification	January 10- June 30		Annualized	
Proposed CommuterLink 216	Rev Hours	Operating Cost-Direct	Rev Hours *	Operating Cost-Direct *
Route 149: Downtown Terminal to Village at Orange				
Proposed to be renamed to Route 216. Service will travel from the City of Riverside Downtown along Highway 91 to the Galleria at Tyler and the Village of Orange in the City of Orange in Orange County.	0	\$0	18.90	\$941
Total	0	\$0	18.90	\$941

Proposed Route 29 & 49 Interlining	January 10- June 30		Annualized	
Productivity Improvements	Rev Hours	Operating Cost-Direct	Rev Hours	Operating Cost-Direct
Route 29: Downtown Terminal to Hamner & Limonite				
Inrerline with Route 49 for operating efficiency	(711)	(\$26,741)	(1491)	(\$60,002)
Route 49: Downtown Terminal to Country Village				
Inrerline with Route 29 for operating efficiency	(1,568)	(\$58,972)	(3300)	(\$132,801)
Total	(2,279)	(\$85,713)	(4791)	(\$192,803)

Overall Savings due to changes	(2,279)	(\$85,713)	(4,772)	(\$191,862)
---------------------------------------	----------------	-------------------	----------------	--------------------

* The increase in the number of weekday operating days in Fiscal Year 2011 over Fiscal Year 2010 is reflected in the increase service hours and cost.

Attachment B: Customer Comments on Proposed Service Modifications

Comments received between October 16, 2009 and November 12, 2009.

Emails

Melody Walker (Rt. 49) - Concerns regarding decreasing the frequency of service and number of trips on the route. Wrote that they could cause bus overcrowding and she dislikes having to wait so long for a bus. Would like to see more frequent service.

Catherine Bloom (Rts. 29 and 49) - Concerns regarding the effect of decreasing the service frequency will have on students riding these routes to school. Wants to be sure RTA schedules meet school schedules.

The Transit Coalition (Rts. 49 and 149) - Commented on early morning connectivity from Rt. 49 to Rt. 1 and 16. The Transit Coalition Agreed with suggested changes to Rt. 149. The group proposed that Rt. 149 eventually be extended to the planned Anaheim Regional Transportation Intermodal Center at sometime in the future.

Phone Calls/Interfacing with Public

Jose Melendez (Rt. 149)- Would like to have the route keep the Rt. 149 designator, see more weekend trips on the route and implement zone fares on the route so that those travelling within Riverside County would pay less than those going to Orange County.

Chris Matthews (Rt. 149) - Requests that weekend service on the Rt. 149 continue as now.

Public Meeting on November 9, 2009

Justin Nelson (Rts. 29, 49, 149) - Likes the proposed simplified Rt., 149 fare structure. Requested that Rt. 149 weekend service continue as now. Concerned that RTA would begin using smaller buses on Rt. 149, but was satisfied when told that large buses would continue to be used. Asked if RTA will decrease service to peak hours only like other CommuterLink routes, but was told that no changes in service hours or frequency are currently being discussed. Expressed concern that Rt. 29 and 49 riders could not attend the evening public meeting at RTA because of bus schedules, but he was told that they could submit comments via telephone, email and postal mail or could attend the public hearing at the Board meeting.