



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Public Works
Department No.: 054
For Agenda Of: March 13, 2012
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director Scott D. McGolpin, Director of Public Works, 568-3010
Contact Info: Eric Pearson, Interim Deputy Director, Transportation 568-3064
SUBJECT: Memorandum of Understanding for the Wine Country Express Lompoc to Solvang Transit Service

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

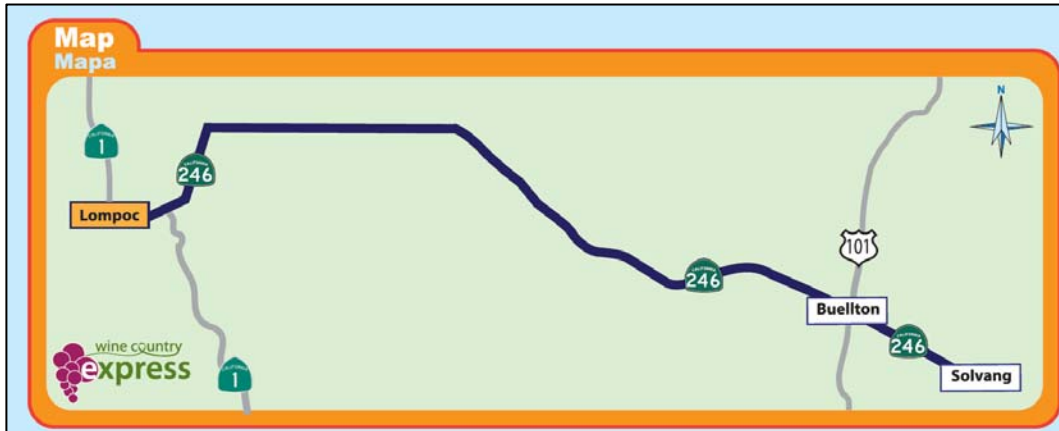
- A. Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the Memorandum of Understanding between the Cities of Lompoc, Solvang, Buellton and the County of Santa Barbara to continue regular, fixed-route transit service on the Highway 246 corridor between Lompoc and Solvang; and
- B. Find that the proposed action(s) do not constitute a "Project" within the meaning of CEQA, pursuant to 14 CCR 15378(b)(2) (continuing administrative or maintenance activities, such as purchases for supplies, personnel-related actions, general policy and procedure making), and approve the filing of a Notice of Exemption on that basis.

Summary Text:

The Wine Country Express (WCE) transit service was developed in 2008 to provide connections with the City of Lompoc Transit (COLT), Santa Ynez Valley Transit (SYVT) and the Breeze Intercommunity Service. WCE serves the communities of the Cities of Lompoc, Buellton and Solvang and the unincorporated County with three roundtrips every weekday (morning, mid-day and afternoon) between Lompoc and Solvang with a stop in Buellton (see map).

The MOU under which this service operates is ending and needs to be renewed. The new MOU was developed by a working group composed of staff from the Cities of Lompoc, Buellton, Solvang, the County of Santa Barbara and the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG). The

MOU states that the City of Lompoc Transit (COLT) will continue to operate the service until August 30, 2014.



Map of area served by the Wine Country Express

Background:

Requests for transit service from the Santa Ynez Valley to the City of Lompoc for employment, medical, and social service trips steadily increased prior to 2007. Based on projected ridership and operating costs, the SBCAG Board determined in May 2007, there was an unmet need that was reasonable to meet for transit service between the cities of Lompoc, Buellton, Solvang and the unincorporated areas of the County of Santa Barbara. To address those findings, the Wine Country Express was inaugurated in 2008.

When the WCE started in 2008, the cities of Lompoc, Buellton and Solvang and the County of Santa Barbara developed and executed an MOU stating COLT would operate the service. The service provides three daily weekday roundtrips in the morning, mid-day and afternoon, from Lompoc to Solvang, with a stop in Buellton. The new MOU will continue the current service and address changes to funding needs of the WCE. Costs to each equal partner cover bus purchase needs, as well as operating needs.

In 2008, the original commitment from each partner was a one-time cost for bus purchase and \$20,000 per year for operating costs. Subsequently, COLT staff applied for, and received a JARC (Jobs Access Reverse Commute) grant for 50% of the operating costs for the first three (3) years of the service. This grant reduced the contribution needed from each partner to an estimated \$10,000 per year for operating costs. However, the actual average annual cost per partner has been approximately \$7,000 per year. The extra \$3,000 collected from each partner each year has been held in a reserve account to help save the required funds for the local match to purchase a new bus.

An additional JARC grant covering 80% of the cost of a new bus has been received by COLT. The anticipated delivery date for the new bus is July 2012. As noted above, funds have been saved for the past three (3) years to raise adequate funding to cover the required 20% local match to purchase the new bus. Therefore, no additional local funding is required for the purchase of the new bus. COLT Staff has applied for another JARC operating grant for FY 2013/14 and 2014/15 to assist with the future operating costs of this service.

With the JARC grant, estimated capital costs and County shares are shown in the table below.

Cost	Frequency	Estimated Cost	JARC Grant %	JARC Grant \$	Remainder	Estimated County Portion (25%)
Bus	one time cost	\$120,000	80%	\$96,000	\$24,000	Paid via savings from lower operational costs

The attached MOU extends the same Wine Country Express transit service contained in the original MOU established when the service first began in 2008. This MOU stipulates that it may be amended by the written consent of all parties, and may also be terminated by any party within 90 days, upon written notification to the other parties. This MOU extending the Wine Country Express service will terminate on August 30, 2014.

The target fare box ratio at the end of the first three years of the pilot service was 10%. The first year of service ended with a ridership of 4,696 and a fare box ratio of over 17%. The second year ended with a ridership of 8,189 and a fare box ratio of 26%. During FY 2011/12 the service is on track to exceed last fiscal year's ridership and the current fare box ratio is approximately 30%. This will result in a further reduction of the required local match from each participating agency. It is anticipated that the local match will be reduced from \$7,000 annually to approximately \$5,000 annually per partner.

The previous MOU established in 2008 required the formation of a Technical Committee consisting of representatives from the four agencies to review service performance at periodic intervals, and to make a recommendation to their governing bodies for extension or cancelation of the Wine Country Express. That Technical Committee met and reviewed the past two years of operation and determined the Wine Country Express MOU merits an extension of three more years, at which time the service would be evaluated for further extension. The Technical Committee will continue to review service performance through August 30, 2014 when the MOU will expire.

Staff recommends that your Board find the approval of the MOU exempt pursuant to 14 CCR 15378(b)(2) because the term project refers to the activity that is being approved, and which may be subject to several discretionary approvals by governmental agencies. The term project does not mean each separate governmental approval.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>
County TDA	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 5,000.00

Narrative:

This work will be funded by Transportation Development Act (TDA) budget in Dept. 054, Fund 0019.

Special Instructions:

Please return three original executed MOU documents and a certified, stamped Minute Order to the attention of Gena Valentine-Felix, Public Works, Transportation, x3064.

Attachments:

1. MOU between the Cities of Buellton, Lompoc, Solvang and the County of Santa Barbara (4 originals)
2. Categorical Exemption

Authored by:

Matt Dobberteen, Alternative Transportation Manager, 568-3576