



TO: Board of Directors

DATE: March 28, 2012

FROM: David Melko, Senior Transportation Planner

SUBJECT: PROCEDURE FOR SOLICITING AND CONSIDERING PUBLIC COMMENT PRIOR TO A FARE INCREASE AN/OR MAJOR SERVICE CHANGE

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve procedure for soliciting and considering public comment prior to a fare increase and/or a major service change for the Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (WPCTSA), shown in Attachment 1.

BACKGROUND

WPCTSA is a grant recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5317 New Freedom funds. These funds are currently used to support the non-emergency medical transportation service known as Health Express. To remain eligible for future federal capital and operation funding, WPCTSA is required to develop a local process to solicit and consider public comment prior to a fare increase and/or a major service change. FTA also requires each grantee to develop a definition of "major service change."

DISCUSSION

WPCTSA does not currently have an approved procedure for soliciting and considering public comment prior to a fare increase and/or major service change. WPCTSA has previously relied, when necessary, upon the public participation process used by the PCTPA.

Attached for Board consideration is a draft procedure for soliciting and considering public comment prior to a fare increase and/or a major service change for the WPCTSA. The procedure describes when an opportunity for a public hearing will be provided, how hearings will be conducted, and how the results of hearings will be considered in the decision-making process. The proposed procedure establishes a noticed public hearing requirement for a fare increase and/or a major service change, defines a major service change, and relies on the Brown Act and WPCTSA administrative procedures for public hearing, public comment, and other process provisions.

Staff recommends that the Board approve the procedure for soliciting public comment prior to a fare increase and/or a major service change.



**WESTERN PLACER CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AGENCY
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURE
FOR SOLICITING AND CONSIDERING PUBLIC COMMENT
PRIOR TO A TRANSIT FARE INCREASE AND/OR MAJOR SERVICE CHANGE**

1. Major Service Change or Fare Increase Defined

A fare increase and/or a major service change is defined as:

- a. Any permanent change which increases fares on non-emergency medical transportation services; or
- b. A 25 percent or greater reduction in the service area, service miles, or service hours for non-emergency medical transportation services.

WPCTSA may temporarily change service levels for non-emergency medical transportation services to reflect emergency or other operating conditions without providing for public participation. Except in those situations where advanced notification is impractical, the WPCTSA will notify the public of the changes by requiring notices be posted in all vehicles and other means designed to inform the public.

2. Solicitation and Consideration of Public Comment

WPCTSA shall solicit and consider public comments prior to implementing a transit fare increase and/or a major service change in the manner provided herein.

3. Public Hearing Required

At least one public hearing before the Board of Directors shall be conducted prior to the implementation of a transit fare increase and/or a major service change. The public hearing shall be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and WPCTSA administrative procedures, including the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code §§54950 et seq.).

Notice of the public hearing time and place shall be given by publication in a local newspaper of general circulation at least 10 calendar days in advance of the public hearing. The notice shall generally describe the nature of the proposed action, shall state that public comments will be accepted prior to and at the public hearing, shall provide an address for the submission of comments prior to the public hearing, and shall describe the means of obtaining and/or the location of additional information about the proposed action.

Direct-mail notices will also be sent to appropriate agencies and stakeholders that are deemed by WPCTSA to be directly affected or involved with the proposed action; and to persons who have filed written requests with the WPCTSA for such notices. The WPCTSA may provide additional public notice at locations expected to be viewed by the users of WPCTSA transportation services.

The WPCTSA may also at its discretion conduct one or more public workshops prior to the public hearing to inform users and the general public of a proposed fare increase and/or a major service change and to accept and consider public comment on the proposed changes.