

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: March 29, 1999

FROM: City Manager

RE: Lease/Purchase of 5 Used Buses

RECOMMENDATION :

It is recommended that the City Council authorize the City Manager to:

1. authorize Laidlaw Transit to purchase 5 used buses from A-Z Bus sales in an amount not to exceed \$425,000;
2. enter into a lease/purchase relationship with Laidlaw Transit for purchase of these 5 used transit buses in three payments, one in FY 1999 (\$145,000), one in FY 2000 (\$140,000) and one in FY 2001(\$140,000); and
3. appropriate \$145,000 for FY 1999 payment from unencumbered Proposition C balance to budget #8107 - 209763314

BACKGROUND :

In order to respond to continuing requests for expanded and new ARTS service, the "Story Bus" project for the General Plan and Mobility Element updates, and the increasing requests for special event (eg. Rose Bowl, Police Olympics, Family Fest) and charter (eg. Christmas and Sister City tours, Gamble House) services, additional transit vehicles must be added to the 10 existing ARTS buses. Staff has identified 5 used transit vehicles which would greatly assist in the City responding to expanded service requests. These vehicles are available now and would require minimal maintenance attention prior to placement in service. Buses #1, #2 and #3 are fully factory warrantied for 5 years. A letter of intent has been forwarded to Laidlaw Transit Services and A-Z Bus Sales to hold the buses and prices pending City Council action on March 29, 1999

#1	<u>1997 OBRE</u> - loaded sales demo - 28 psgr /22 with 2 wheelchairs	\$145,000 (\$250,000 new)
#2	<u>1998 QCSRE</u> - loaded sales demo - 30 psgr/24 with 2 wheelchairs	\$145,000 (\$210,000 new)
#3	<u>1998 TranShuttle</u> - sales demo - 24 pasgr and 2 wheelchairs	\$ 65,000 (\$130,000 new)
#4	<u>(2) 1994 Blue Bird CS</u> - 24 psgr with 2 wheelchair in rear.	\$ 40,000 total both as is

Buses #1 and #2 would be ideal for placement into ARTS service. With the vehicles configuration, "kneeling capability" and easy wheelchair accessibility, staff would be able to either add new ARTS service or supplement and enhance existing service as follows:

New Routes:

- South Lake - as committed to in the South Lake Forest City Area Wide Traffic Control Plan; encompassing Caltech, PCC and Ritz Carlton.
- South Fair Oaks - to encompass Blair High School, Jacobs Engineering, Biotech Corridor, Del Mar Light Rail Station with possible connection to South Pasadena.

Existing ARTS Service:

- Additional buses in service along the Uptown route, increasing frequency and adding capacity to the service.
- Develop spares/backup vehicles to allow for service to continue in the event of overcrowding, vehicle breakdowns and/or maintenance needs.
- Modify routes to include PCC, PCC Skills Center, JPL, Earthlink, east Colorado Blvd area and Rose Bowl.

Modifications to Existing ARTS service:

- Enable a “revamp or redistribution” of existing service to incorporate new routes and modifications as included above.

Buses #3, #4 and #5 would best serve in the special event/charter type service as they have single door exit/entry capability and rear, manual wheelchair accessibility, which would create significant loading/offloading delays within the ARTS service. Although these buses could be used as discharge only service during “at capacity” times in ARTS service and would be used in the ARTS service as back-ups should it become necessary. Currently, the City can only accommodate special service requests if they are during times when existing fleet is not in regular service or having maintenance done. This leaves very little room to provide special services. Special event/charter services, which should capture their own operating expenditures, are described as:

“Story Bus”

In conjunction with the Planning Department, this project will utilize a transit vehicle as a forum for community outreach and discussion within neighborhoods on the General Plan and Mobility Element updates. Utilizing a transit vehicle exemplifies the concept of land use and transportation planning as a coordinated effort and goal for the City. The “Story Bus” project is expected to be ongoing over the next two years and needs regular access to a vehicle for community meetings. The vehicle would be equipped with removal displays, photos and other materials and travel to specific GPME outreach and established community/neighborhood meetings furthering citizen participation in the updates. Planning anticipates contributing approximately \$10,000 to this project which would be used for operation and for artwork graphics on the exterior of the bus.

Special Events

Buses would be scheduled in advance, without impact to the existing service, to accommodate requests such as Police Summer Olympics, Millennium events, Rose Parade Events (Family Fest, Float Viewing service), Rose Bowl activities such as Women’s World Cup soccer. Costs for provision of this service would be covered by fees paid by the organization requesting service. The fees would include costs for insurance, fuel, driver from Contractor and an administrative fee for processing information and invoices. The costs for this type of service would still be minimal compared to a regular charter bus company.

Charter Service

Currently, charter service requests are received weekly by staff. These range from a senior citizen group going to the Crystal Cathedral to Sister City visitor tours, Parks Commissioners tour, and the annual Gamble House MOTA tour. Special service for holiday events such as tours of the Christmas Lights, Mayor's Volunteer Recognition Dinner are included in this category. There are also internal City Department requests for group service to La Casita and City Yards for meetings/holiday events and for Light Rail line and RFP site visit tours. The majority of these are requested with very little notice. Adding these three buses to the fleet will more readily enable provision of these types of services. Again, the costs for this type of service would be minimal compared to a regular charter bus company.

Other Special Services

Additionally, there have been instances where we have had to lease vehicles for short term use for extra Holiday service, for employee service (eg. Jacobs) and for the MTA strike. When vehicles have been found for these short term uses, it has been at a minimum cost of \$2000 per month. These buses could respond to these types of services and solicit further service such as employee noon-time service for Earthlink, satellite parking shuttles for employers or Rose Bowl activities from city garages.

OTHER PURCHASE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

In the initial stages of this proposed bus acquisition, staff was considering only four (4) buses (#1,#2, #4 and #5). However, further discussions with A-Z Bus Sales provided the City with a special offer to lower the original negotiated prices for the other 4 buses and include bus #3 within the deal for what amounted to only an additional \$16,000. Although the recommendation to purchase all five of the vehicles is in the best interest of the City, other options analyzed were:

Purchase Bus #1,#4 and #5 - Acquisition of bus #1 would enable some minimal enhancement of existing ARTS service and provide some back-up to the ARTS service. Buses #4,5 would allow for implementation of the "Story Bus" project and special event/charter service. This option, while improving access to special service, would not give us as much flexibility in addressing current ARTS concerns.

Purchase Bus #1 and #2 Only - Acquisition of these two buses would provide the best option for addressing existing ARTS concerns or total revamp of ARTS service. However, it would not improve the availability of vehicles for special service requests as the buses would be "in service" on the ARTS route. "Story Bus" not "dedicated" but could be accommodated possibly at the risk of impacting any increased ARTS service. Additionally, the cost for acquiring the additional 3 buses is nominal considering their potential usage.

Purchase Buses #4 and #5 Only - While the most inexpensive options, these vehicles' benefit to addressing existing ARTS service concerns or to expansion of ARTS service would not be cost effective by themselves. The buses passenger capacity, one door entry/exit, and manual, rear wheelchair lift system would cause significant delays in passenger loading/offloading, creating longer headways. Additionally, they do not have the type of engine and transmission which would survive the 8 hour, heavy daily use required in the ARTS system. They would be of great benefit in providing "dedicated Story Bus" and special service, which may not be in the best interest of the total ARTS system.

FISCAL IMPACT

Sufficient funds are available in the unencumbered fund balances of the Proposition A Transportation Sales Tax Fund and the Proposition C Transportation Sales Tax Fund. The payments to Laidlaw will be made over a three year period in the following amounts:


- First payment to be made in FY 1999 in the amount of \$145,000
- Second payment to be made in FY 2000 in the amount of \$140,000
- Third and final payment to be made in FY 2001 in the amount of \$140,000

The initial payment of \$145,000 will come from the unencumbered fund balance of the Proposition C Fund (Fund 209), the final two payments will come from the fund balance of Proposition A.

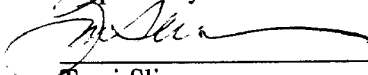
Operating expenditures for these buses will be realized through:

- Charter Services which pay for themselves
- A redistribution of existing service and hours (such as rerouting and adjusting hours of operation)
- A review and reallocation of existing Proposition A and C budgeted programs to determine whether they are absolute or if new and/or expanded ARTS service or City Charter Services can offer more cost effective use of funds (such as Student, Senior, Disabled, Homeless Bus Pass Subsidy Programs and Transit Street Maintenance)
- Traffic and transportation mitigation requirements funded through new development (such as South Lake Forest City)
- Use of unencumbered fund balances in future Proposition A and C Transportation Sales Tax operating budgets

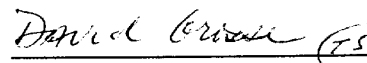
Respectfully submitted,


 for CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
 City Manager

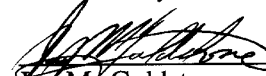
Prepared by:


 Terri Slimmer
 Transportation Services Manager

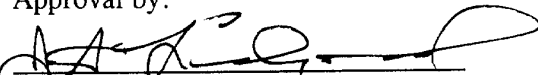
Review and Concurrence by:


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