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BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Citizens Advisory Committee
 Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
 Board of Directors

THROUGH: Michael T. Burns *Michael T. Burns*
 General Manager

FROM: Carolyn M. Gonot *Carolyn M Gonot*
 Chief Development Officer

SUBJECT: Draft Service Design Guidelines

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

At the September and October 2006 meetings, the committee was presented with a set of Core Principles and a Policy Evaluation and Recommendation Process proposed for the Transit Sustainability Policy (TSP). As the third part of the TSP, VTA staff will present the committee with an overview of the draft Service Design Guidelines (SDG). The guidelines are designed to support the TSP and VTA's long-term goals of developing ridership and a more productive and sustainable transit system.

DISCUSSION:

The Service Design Guidelines will include performance standards to guide the evaluation and implementation of existing service, potential service changes, and proposed new services. They are also designed to address somewhat more qualitative issues such as route and system design, mode-specific operational requirements, and the integration of land use and transportation.

Services will be evaluated using a set of ridership thresholds established for each transit mode (e.g. Community Bus, Local Bus, Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail Transit). The primary metrics are boardings per revenue hour and boardings per route mile. The ridership thresholds were developed with consultant assistance using a combination of an analysis of VTA's existing system and a peer review of transit agencies in North America that have similar land-use characteristics as Santa Clara County.

In addition to addressing ridership, the guidelines offer a set of planning, operating and design criteria. This information allows both VTA and local governments to understand the conditions and timeframes needed to implement service.

Lastly, the guidelines will provide information for comparing operating and capital costs for the transit modes and technologies covered in the guidelines. This information may be used in the TSP evaluation and recommendation process when more than one mode or technology meet the ridership standards of a specific corridor.

NEXT STEPS:

VTA staff will present a summary of the proposed Service Design Guidelines at the committee meeting, and the committee will be asked to review and comment on the guidelines thresholds. In addition, staff will provide the committee with a handout of the appendices of Draft Bus Rapid Transit design guidelines for review and comment.

At the December committee meeting, VTA staff will present the entire Transit Sustainability Policy package that will include the unifying policy language, the Core Principles, the Evaluation and Recommendation Process, and the Service Design Guidelines for approval. The Transit Sustainability Policy and the guidelines will be used as an evaluation tool for the Comprehensive Operational Analysis work being conducted in early 2007.

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