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For Immediate Release

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Proposed Fare Increases for County Express and Medical Shopping Assistance Program

On February 21, 2013, the San Benito County Local Transportation Authority Board of Directors opened the public comment period on proposed fare increases for County Express bus service and the Medical Shopping Assistance Program (MSAP)

Due to decreases in funding and increasing operating costs, the LTA is raising its fares for all of County Express services and the Medical Shopping Assistance Program. The LTA experienced a decrease in operational funding from the State of California in 2009. Federal funding has been unpredictable as it has decreased during the last four fiscal years. Estimates for Federal Fiscal Year 2013 increased due to changes in the new transportation funding bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). However, MAP-21 is a two year funding bill which makes federal funding estimates unpredictable.

During the same time, the LTA experienced increased costs in fuel and contractor costs.

As part of the fare increase process, the LTA sought feedback from the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council at its September 28, 2012 meeting. Based upon the comments received at the meeting, the LTA analyzed six additional scenarios to determine other alternatives. Scenarios that negatively impacted riders without increased fare revenues were eliminated. A fare equity analysis has been prepared and offers more details on the proposed increase.

Scenario A – Two Small Incremental Fare Increase

Under Scenario A, fares would increase 5% annually for two years. Prices for tokens and monthly passes were adjusted accordingly. County Express would continue to provide a Regular and Discount Fare for all its services. At the end of the fare increase, the LTA projects \$24,700 to \$27,400 in additional revenue. Ridership loss due to increased fares is estimated between 1.5% and 2.3% for each year. The projected revenue takes the decreased ridership into consideration.

Year 1: 5 % Increase	Fixed Route	Intercounty	Dial-A-Ride	Paratransit	MSAP
Cash					
Regular	\$1.05	\$2.10	\$2.10	None	None
Discount	\$0.80	\$1.30	\$1.30	\$1.30	\$1.30
Tokens					
Regular	\$8.50	\$19.00	\$19.00	None	None
Discount	\$6.00	\$11.50	\$11.50	\$11.50	None
Monthly Pass					
Regular	\$28.25	\$63.00	None	None	None
Discount	\$19.50	\$42.00	None	None	None

Year 2: 5 % Increase	Fixed Route	Intercounty	Dial-A-Ride	Paratransit	MSAP
Cash					
Regular	\$1.10	\$2.20	\$2.20	None	None
Discount	\$0.85	\$1.35	\$1.35	\$1.35	\$1.35
Tokens					
Regular	\$9.00	\$20.00	\$20.00	None	None
Discount	\$6.50	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50	None
Monthly Pass					
Regular	\$29.75	\$66.00	None	None	None
Discount	\$20.50	\$44.00	None	None	None

Scenario B – One Large Fare Increase

Unlike the first scenario, Scenario B would be a one-time fare increase of 25%. Prices for tokens and the monthly passes will be adjusted accordingly. Regular and discounted fares would be continued for County Express services. Under this scenario the projected additional fare revenue would be \$25,800 to \$27,000. Ridership loss is projected to be higher at 7.5% to 8.30%. The projected revenue takes the decreased ridership into consideration.

25% Increase	Fixed Route	Intercounty	Dial-A-Ride	Paratransit	MSAP
Cash					
Regular	\$1.25	\$2.50	\$2.50	None	None
Discount	\$0.95	\$1.55	\$1.55	\$1.55	\$1.55
Tokens					
Regular	\$12.00	\$23.00	\$23.00	None	None
Discount	\$9.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	None
Monthly Pass					
Regular	\$34.00	\$75.00	None	None	None
Discount	\$23.00	\$50.00	None	None	None

Public Comment Period

The public is invited to provide written or verbal comments on the scenarios. Written comments can be submitted by e-mail to betty@sanbenitocog.org or by mail at 330 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C7, Hollister, CA 95023. Verbal comments may be submitted to 831.637.7665.

A public hearing will be conducted at 3:15 p.m. on April 18, 2013 located at the Board of Supervisors Chamber, 481- 4th Street in Hollister, CA.

The fare equity analysis mentioned on the previous page can be found at www.SanBenitoCountyExpress.org.

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