

MEMORANDUM

To: Amy Van Doren
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From: Bonnie Nelson

Date: June 24, 2005

Subject: Immediate Term School Service Adjustments

While the Short Range Transit Plan will provide a comprehensive plan for a sustainable local transit system over the next five years, there is a narrow “window of opportunity” for making immediate term changes to school services in time for the September 2005 school semester. Golden Gate Transit has given MCTD a June 30th deadline for providing any service changes to be made for the September sign-up. This deadline is especially crucial because without MCTD action, three routes, currently contracted directly between Golden Gate and the schools, will be discontinued by Golden Gate Transit, leaving a number of schools with high transit ridership unserved.

At the June 14th MCTD workshop, Nelson\Nygaard proposed, and the Board agreed, to move forward with an initial set of standards for school service. These were:

- Each trip provided specifically to serve a school should carry a minimum of 20 students to be continued.
- School service will be focused on middle and high schools.
- A standard for service will be transit provided within ¼ mile and 20 minutes of bell time.

Modifying Existing Service for September 2005

Looking at the existing school services provided by MCTD and Golden Gate Transit, we find that the routes provided by Golden Gate, especially those serving White Hill School, are among the strongest in the County. In order to integrate those services into the MCTD system at minimal cost, we recommend deleting all special school trips that are not currently carrying at least 20 passengers, and adding trips from the three current Golden Gate routes that meet the proposed MCTD standard.

The following tables show which trips would be eliminated and which trips would be added to MCTD service. Figure 1 shows current MCTD service, and the deletion of unproductive trips. Figure 2 shows service that is currently Golden Gate Transit service that will be discontinued if MCTD does not take it over. It should be noted that where eliminating trips is recommended, no school will lose all of its service; rather the deletions focus on unproductive trips within a given service. The only exception to is the Route 132 from Glenwood to the San Rafael Transit Center, serving San Rafael High School. This route is so unproductive that it is recommended for elimination.

The average passengers per trip data, shown on Figure 1 is based on an average of three months of data taken from automated farebox data and confirmed by on-board counting during the Short Range Transit Plan.

The recommendations would result in 75 trips being eliminated each week, while 110 trips per week would be retained. As trips are eliminated, some overcrowding may occur on the remaining school trips and/or on underlying all day routes. These routes should be monitored carefully to assess the need for service additions at the next sign-up in December. While some crowding may be expected, the addition of a youth fare replacing free Ride and Roll tickets is expected to reduce overall demand, mitigating most crowding problems.

Three existing trips are at or over capacity currently, and may require additional service. No additional service is recommended at this time, until the impact of Ride and Roll changes can be evaluated.

Figure 1
MCTD School Trips – Recommended Changes to CURRENT MCTD ROUTES

Route	Serving Schools/Neighborhoods	Start time/days		Average Passengers per Trip	Alt. Service Available	Recommended Change?
107	Sausalito to Tam HS, St. Hillary's	708a	M-F	40.80		
		726a	M-F	13.35	Rt. 107 @ 708A	DELETE TRIP
		310p	M-F	16.67	Rt. 107 @ 310P	DELETE TRIP
		310p	M-F	31.27		
113	Corte Madera Paradise Cay to Redwood High	225p	Thursday	22.00		
		330p	M/Tu/We/F	35.79		
		728a	M-F	16.02		MAINTAIN AS ONLY AM SERVICE AVAIL.
115	Tiburon to Redwood HS	658a	M-F	44.45		MONITOR FOR ADDED SERVICE
		140p	We/Th	30.67		
		225p	Thursday	22.89		
		235p	M/T/F	12.82	Rt. 115 @ 225P or 330P	DELETE TRIP
		330p	M/T/We/F	42.16		
		330p	M/T/We/F	32.87		
125	Lagunitas to Drake HS	210p	Wednesday	29.67		
		305p	M/Tu/Th/F	27.56		
		321p	We/Fr	4.50	Rt. 125 @ 252P or 305P	DELETE TRIP
		401p	M/Tu/Th	6.43	Rt. 24 @ 306P or Rt. 125 @ 305P	DELETE TRIP

Route	Serving Schools/Neighborhoods	Start time/days		Average Passengers per Trip	Alt. Service Available	Recommended Change?
		144p	Wednesday	14.00	Rt. 23 @152P or Rt. 125 @210P	DELETE TRIP
		239p	M/Tu/Th/F	9.44	Rt. 23 @252P or Rt. 125 @305P	DELETE TRIP
		252p	We/F	32.25		
		332p	M/Tu/Th	39.74		
126	San Anselmo to Brookside Schools	816a	M-F	3.06	None	DELETE TRIP
		201p	Wednesday	40.33		
		204p	Wednesday	38.11		
		257p	M-F	41.44		
		302p	M/Tu/Th/F	30.23		
		345p	M-F	8.68	Rt. 126 @ 257P or 302P	DELETE TRIP
		741a	M-F	62.02		MONITOR FOR ADDED SERVICE
		750a	M-F	17.47		Move to immediately follow 741 if possible.
		147p	M-F	15.50	Rt. 126 @ 200P	DELETE TRIP
		200p	M-F	35.50		
		247p	M-F	12.63		Retain and consolidate 3 PM trips to one.
		240p	M-F	10.76	Rt. 126 @247P	DELETE TRIP
		332p	M-F	6.00	Rt. 126 @ 247P	DELETE TRIP
131	Santa Venetia to SRTC and SRHS	741a	M-F	20.00		
132	Peacock Gap to SRHS	348p	M-F	5.12	None	DELETE ROUTE
		422p	M-F	1.96	None	DELETE ROUTE
139	Lucas Valley to Terra Linda HS	225p	Tu/We/Th	11.44	Rt. 139 @ 240P, 320P or 340	DELETE TRIP
		240p	Mon/Fri	31.17		
		320p	M/We/Fr	35.40		
		340p	M-F	49.67		MONITOR FOR ADDED SERVICE
		145p	Tu/Th	1.57	Rt. 139 @340P	DELETE TRIP
		240p	Mon/Fri	31.17		
143	Sausalito to Tam HS	244p	We/Fr	13.55	Rt. 15 @240P	DELETE TRIP
		324p	Mon/Tu/Th	28.19		
		255p	We/Fr	34.90		
		335p	M/Tu/Th	41.56		
153	Novato to San Marin HS	814a	M-F	3.41	Rt. 53 @ 740A or 836A	DELETE TRIP
		758a	M-F	32.98		
		236p	M-F	38.97		
		220p	M-F	9.76	Rt. 153 @ 236P or Rt. 53 @220P	DELETE TRIP

Figure 2
Current GGT School Trips – Recommended for Continued Service

Route	Serving Schools/Neighborhoods	Start time/days		Average Passengers per Trip	Alt. Service Avail.	Recommended Change?
117	East Corte Madera to Hall Middle School and Neil Cummins	151p	Wednesday	6.00	Rt. 117 @ 320P	DELETE TRIP
		311p	M/Tu/Th/F	8.77	Rt. 117 @ 320P	DELETE TRIP
		320p	M-F	34.57		
		324p	M-F	36.84		
		754a	M-F	10.04	Rt. 117 @805A or 825A	DELETE TRIP
		805a	M/Tu/Th/Fr	35.79		
		825a	Wednesday	32.80		
123	San Anselmo to White Hill School	217p	Wednesday	40.64		
		217p	Wednesday	49.17		Monitor for added service
		217p	Wednesday	48.45		Monitor for added service
		227p	Wednesday	32.18		
		227p	Wednesday	36.45		
		227p	Wednesday	36.36		
		227p.	Wednesday	32.36		
		317p	M/Tu/Th/F	41.41		
		317p	M/Tu/Th/F	33.70		
		322p	M/Tu/Th/F	44.95		Monitor for added service
		322p	M/Tu/Th/F	31.81		
		322p	M/Tu/Th/F	42.38		
		327p	M/Tu/Th/F	33.78		
		327p	M/Tu/Th/F	37.05		
		327p	M/Tu/Th/F	27.76		
		720a	M-F	50.46		
		725a	M-F	35.73		
		736a	M-F	24.04		
		804a	M-F	41.83		
		816a	M-F	41.23		
		819a	M-F	37.54		
127	Sleepy Hollow to White Hill School	212p	Wednesday	27.09		
		217p	Wednesday	35.45		
		217p	M/Tu/Th/F	31.09		
		312p	M/Tu/Th/F	20.84		
		317p	M/Tu/Th/F	33.46		
		317p	M/Tu/Th/F	28.41		
		710a	M-F	31.31		
		719a	M-F	26.19		
		807a	M-F	40.17		
		820a	M-F	22.23		

Routes 123 and 127, which serve White Hill School, are recommended to be retained in their entirety. The majority of trips on Route 117, which serves both elementary and middle school students, meets the ridership criteria proposed to MCTD. Adding this service is considered optional since the majority of riders are elementary school students.

Adding the full number of recommended trips on all three routes will add 122 weekly trips to the MCTD service schedule. Even with the deletion of unproductive trips from the current school service, this will increase service hours and, therefore, service costs slightly. School service costs are expected to increase by about \$175,000 to a total of about \$675,000 annually for school services if all recommendations are implemented. Adding this service WITHOUT deleting unproductive trips would add about \$500,000 per year in operating costs.

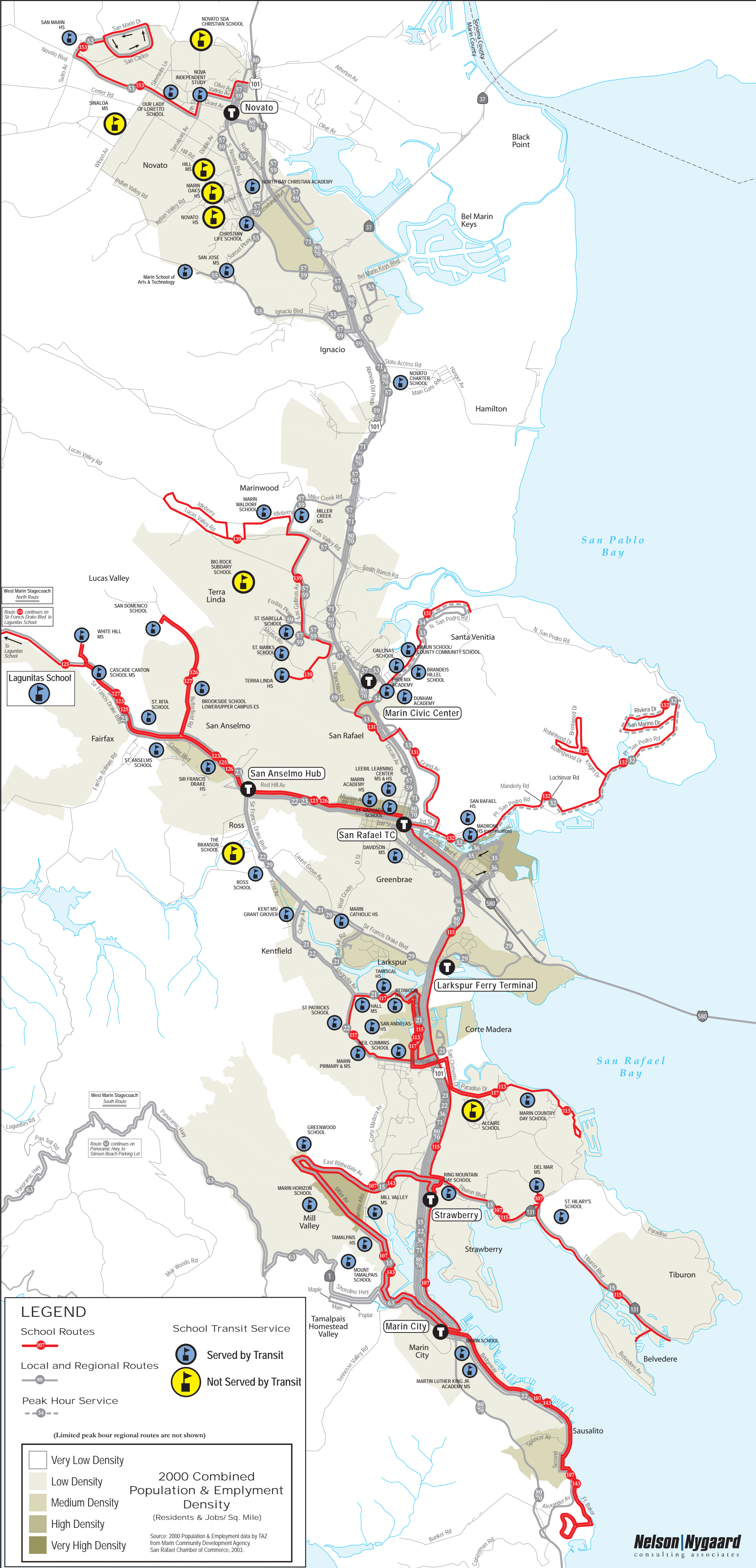
Unserved Schools

Figure 3 shows the locations of Middle and High Schools in Marin County, and highlights the school service network. All-day routes serving the schools are also shown on the route in grey. The map shows only whether a school has service within ¼ mile. Whether the service is within 20 minutes of school bell time is not known definitively at this time, although any school receiving special school service can be assumed to have very timely service.

As might be expected, there are a number of schools in Novato that do not meet the ¼ mile standard. These schools do already generate transit ridership; students are simply walking farther to reach a transit route.

While the time is too short to add service to these schools for September, we recommend working with the Novato Schools and staff and parents at these schools to develop improved service as soon as possible.

Schools Served by Local Transit



Ride and Roll Recommendations

These changes in school service should be considered only in the context of making fare changes in the Ride and Roll program. As recommended previously, Ride and Roll would essentially be replaced by a youth discount program. This program would include the following:

1. \$1.00 youth fare, or 50% discount off the full adult cash fare on all local routes. After April 2006 when the four remaining transition routes transfer from Golden Gate Transit to MCTD, this discount will be extended only to MCTD's local routes. The \$1.00 fare will not require a pre-paid ticket and will be payable on board the bus.
2. A \$350 annual pass to be offered as a convenience to parents. Details of where to purchase the pass have yet to be addressed.
3. A free annual pass provided to students receiving free lunch at school. MCTD will provide passes to the schools responsible for administering the program.
4. This discounted fare program will be good for all trip purposes at all times of day and will replace the current \$15.00, 10-ride youth ticket book as well as Ride and Roll tickets.
5. This program will replace the annual pass programs established by the schools served directly by Golden Gate, as the GGT contracted service will be replaced by MCTD service

Figure 4 shows the projected change in revenue available to MCTD assuming both the service and Ride and Roll fare recommendations are adopted. The figures conservatively assume that ridership on all school routes will decrease by 20% when fares are instituted. The revenue projections also consider the fact that while students who now receive Ride and Roll tickets will be required to pay a fare, other youth riders, who previously purchased ticket books or paid cash will experience a decrease in fares. Youth riders on the non-school service are expected to increase by 10% responding to the reduction in their fare.

It should be noted that the revenue and cost figures included in this memo are high level estimates which will be verified after Golden Gate Transit completes their scheduling for the fall, and after all policies are finalized by the MCTD Board. Figure 4 describes the revenue assumptions associated with our recommendations. Please refer to the Figure 4 notes for additional explanation.

Figure 4
Youth Fare Differential

Ride and Roll Tickets Redeemed Est. 2005 School Year on MCTD routes (1)	264,750
Fare Revenue Paid to GGT for Redemption of Ride and Roll Tickets on GGT Routes (by agreement)	-(\$71,000)
Youth fares paid at an average of \$1.75 (2)	210,000 x \$1.75 = \$367,500
Total Current Revenue from Youth Riders	\$296,500
Estimated youth riders on current MCTD school routes WITH proposed changes (3)	105,000 annual boardings @ \$1.00 = \$105,000
Estimated youth riders on 117, 123, 127 after changes (3)	130,000 annual boardings @ \$1.00 = \$130,000
Estimated revenue from youth riders on non-school routes paying \$1.00 fare (4)	231,000 x \$1.00 = \$231,000
Total Revenue Generated from Youth Riders in Proposal	\$466,000
NET REVENUE From all youth riders on current MCTD routes and 3- GGT contracted school routes	\$169,500 (5)

NOTES:

(1) Assumes 75% of Ride and Roll Tickets are redeemed on MCTD Routes. Ride and Roll use based on 5 months of Ride and Roll redemption data from Golden Gate Transit.

(2) 210,000 youth riders estimated on current MCTD non-school routes NOT currently paying with Ride and Roll tickets. \$1.75 average includes \$1.50 youth tickets and \$2.00 cash fares paid by youth.

(3) Assumes a 20% reduction in school riders with \$1.00 fare on all routes.

(4) Assumes a 10% increase in youth riders from those currently paying \$1.50 ticket and \$2.00 full fare revised to \$1.00 fare.

(5) \$100,000 in new revenue from youth riders already assumed in final MCTD budget for FY 2005/2006.

Summary of Immediate Term Recommendations:

1. Eliminate unproductive trips on all existing school routes. This will require a public hearing process that must begin immediately to meet the GGT timeframe for scheduling service changes.
2. Continue service on the three school routes that are currently contracted by GGT directly to local schools.
3. Implement \$1.00 youth fare and annual pass provisions to replace all other youth fare options.
4. Work with Novato Schools to consider additional service to Novato High School, Marin Oaks High School and Hill Middle School, which are beyond the ¼ mile coverage rule, but within reasonable distance for service.
5. Work with other schools not covered by current standard.
6. Consider yellow school bus options for 2006-07 school year to reduce costs.