



County of El Dorado

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Legislation Text

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Supervisor Santiago and Transportation Department recommending Resolution **265-2008** authorizing the South Tahoe Area Transit Authority to implement BlueGO Service and Fare Modifications effective Sunday, November 23, 2008.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.

Supervisor Santiago serves as a board member on the South Tahoe Area Transit Authority (STATA). STATA, as the primary transit provider in the El Dorado County portion of the Lake Tahoe Basin, is operating under a participation agreement which pools funding from 11 member agencies to operate transit services on the south and west shores of Lake Tahoe. As a result of pooling funds, STATA has determined that additional services can be provided within the unincorporated El Dorado County areas utilizing existing private, State and Federal transit funds. As a result, the County's contribution to this transit system will consist of Transportation Development Act (TDA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) revenues only. No additional revenues are required to implement the proposed service modifications.

There is no Fiscal Impact associated with this agenda item. There is no cost to the County General Fund.

After the STATA Board workshop on March 14, 2008, the Board directed staff to develop routing and service options to reinvent BlueGO. Staff has spent the last three months reviewing ridership data, riding bus routes, talking with bus riders, bus operators and reviewing unmet transit needs comments and other relevant documentation to develop the draft transit service concepts. Staff also took into consideration issues and concerns brought up by each BlueGO stakeholder related to the provision of their transit service. At the July and August Board meetings, the Board directed staff to conduct community outreach to gauge response from the public on route and fare modifications. As a result, staff conducted seven public workshops, ten listening sessions and made twenty five presentations to community groups to present the proposed route and fare modifications. Staff also received telephone calls, emails and written correspondences related to the route and fare modifications. The changes that are proposed in are in accordance with STATA Board policy which governs route, fare and schedule changes.

Listed below is a description of participation from the public related to the proposed fare and service modifications:

Date	Location	Picked Up Materials	Received Comment - Had Discussion
8/4	Stateline Transit Center	12	4
8/6	Library	6	6
8/8	South Y Transit Station	22	9
8/11	Gardnerville	1	1
8/12	Stateline Transit Center	18	6
8/13	Senior Center	6	6
8/14	Stateline Transit Center	9	5
8/18	South Y Transit Station	4	2
8/18	Kingsbury Transit Ctr	1	1
8/19	LTCC	12	12

8/20	South Y Transit Station	6	6
8/21	Meyers	22	18
8/21	Stateline Transit Center	4	2
8/22	Harveys Bus Center	10	10
9/1	South Y Transit Station	18	18
9/2	Stateline Transit Center	25	25
	TOTALS	170	131

In addition staff received 106 email messages, 72 calls, 865 hits to the website related to the proposed changes with 753 downloads on the proposed modifications. Staff was on RSN, the radio, made presentations on the community access channel, conducted seven special presentations to the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, Chamber of Commerce, Care Collation, Tahoe Coordinating Council for the Disabled, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Oliver Park General Improvement District, distributed three press releases published inside the Tahoe Daily Tribune and Mountain News and posted Rider Alerts on board buses, at transit centers and major points of interests served by transit riders.

Based on the information received from the public - there was overwhelming support for the service modifications, particularly related to new neighborhood shuttles, service to Carson City, swing shift service on Kingsbury Express, frequent, faster service on US Highway 50, service to connect with TART on the north shore and service to Meyers. There was a request for 10 residents along south Benjamin Drive to relocate all bus traffic onto Tramway Drive due to concerns of the potential of accidents on their street, A request from 12 residents in the Oliver Park General Improvement District regarding the elimination of bus service on Michelle Drive and Irwin Drive and to add some form of connecting transit service to the VA Hospital in Minden or Reno, NV.

While there was an understanding that a fare increase was needed, passengers did express concern related to an increase in fare and why BlueGO waited so long to having a fare increase. There was a concern on the price of the day pass, however once explained, passengers understood. There was a concern related to charging for additional children beyond two, a need to reduce flex deviations on the neighborhood shuttle and the need to have additional pass outlets throughout the service area to purchase bus passes, especially if there is a discount for frequent users. Finally, there was overwhelming support to retain day passes and eliminate transfers. Based on the feedback received, as shown the proposed fare structure, staff is recommending adopting the proposed structure, with approval to increase the fares based on CPI each year to ensure that revenues are equal to operational expenses, similar to what RTC Washoe County implemented two years ago with the following modifications:

- Allow additional children to ride free under the age of 5.
- Eliminate transfers and retain day passes with a 6 month evaluation period related to the impact of day passes related to revenues realized and fraud.
- Increase Kingsbury Express fares in January 2009, since this ridership group had a fare increase in June of 2008.
- Continue to add more pass outlets to sell monthly passes and 10-ride passes & tokens. Once additional outlets are added, discontinue pass sales on the buses.
- Reprint all bus passes to ensure that they are counterfeit proof and to maintain strict control over the inventory.
- Enter into transfer agreements with Alpine Mountain Transit, Eastern Sierra Transit Authority, DART, RTC, Amtrak California, Capitol Corridor, South Tahoe Express, TART and JAC to foster interregional travel beyond the Tahoe Basin.
- Reduce flex deviation fares on the neighborhood shuttles from \$4.00 to \$3.00 (includes base fare plus \$1.00).

The public overwhelming supported numbering the routes by geography area while retaining numbers and colors for the ski shuttle routes and supported the routes meeting each other at the transit centers so that seamless

transfer could be made.

Based on the comments received from the public related to service modifications, staff is making the following recommendations for BlueGO transit service:

RECOMMENDED SERVICE MODIFICATIONS

New Route	Current Route	Funder	Description
Red Route 10	Red Route	Heavenly	Operate every 20 minutes instead of every 30 minutes by adding the bus from the former yellow route. Holiday Inn Express served by request.
Orange Route 11	Orange Route	Heavenly	No changes.
Green Route 12	Green Route	Heavenly	Add service on Park Avenue, Pine Avenue, Lakeshore Drive, Stateline Avenue to Stateline Transit Center and also serve Kingsbury Transit Center.
Gold Route 13	Gold Route	Heavenly	Add on request service to Barivian Village instead of Red Route 10.
Purple Route 14	Purple Route	Heavenly	Add service to The Ridge Resorts.
Blue Route 15	Blue Route	Heavenly	Add service to Kingsbury Transit Center.
Black Route 16X	Employee Shuttle	Heavenly	Advertised service between South Y Transit Station and Heavenly California Lodge operating between 5:30 am and 8:30 am and again from 4:30 pm and 6:30 pm every 20-30 minutes along US Hwy 50, Ski Run Blvd and Pioneer Trail.
20X	Kingsbury Express	Douglas County Big George Ventures FTA	Add swing shift trips at 11:30 pm and 12:30 am. Eliminate all reverse trips in the AM and PM, except the 8:45 am trip from Stateline and the 3:30 pm trip from Gardnerville. Add a new 2:30 pm trip from Gardnerville.
21X	NONE	Carson City RTC Douglas County FTA	New service to Carson City operating 4 AM and 4 PM trips in both directions, 7 days a week.
22	Nevada Flex	Douglas County FTA	Operate service as a flex route between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm every 30 minutes. Service to 7-Eleven and Tahoe Shores is discontinued. Service to Nevada Beach is served on request. Service prior to 9:00 am or after 3:00 pm is available on Routes 21X or 23. Extend service to Kingsbury Elementary School. Service would be extended down Kahle Drive once the project at the end of Kahle Drive replace Tahoe Shores has been constructed and a new bus turnaround has been built.
23	Kingsbury Timeshare	Douglas Cty Casinos The Ridge	Retain service on Tramway Drive in both directions and operate as a flex route.
30	Route D	SNLPMA Sponsorships TTD	Extend service to Tahoma to connect with TART and add service to U.S. Forest Service facilities such as Pope Beach, Beacon Restaurant, Kiva Beach, Baldwin Beach and Meeks Bay Resort.

40	NONE	El Dorado County City of South Lake Tahoe	New flex route starting at South Y Transit Station serving Meyers, Upper Truckee Road, LTCC, Pioneer Trail operating every 60 minutes between 7:30 am and 7:30 pm, 7 days a week. Service is added to Lake Tahoe Airport.
41X	NONE	El Dorado County City of South Lake Tahoe	New express route connecting Meyers and Kingsbury Transit Center via Pioneer Trail and US Hwy 50 operating one trip in the AM and PM peak.
50	Route A Route E Club Route Diamond Route	City of South Lake Tahoe Casinos	New bus route operating every 20-30 minutes between 5:30 am and 12:30 am, Sunday-Thursday and until 1:30 am on Friday and Saturday on a route between South Y Transit Station and Kingsbury Transit Center along US Highway 50.
51	Route A Route H	City of South Lake Tahoe	New flexible bus route operating every 30 minutes between 7:30 am and 7:30 pm, Sunday-Thursday and until 9:30 pm on a route serving the South Y area, starting at South Y Transit Station with service to Lake Tahoe Airport, South Tahoe High School, South Lake Tahoe Industrial Area, Julie Lane area, Tahoe Keys, Barton Memorial Hospital, Tahoe Senior Plaza and Garner Mountain area.
52	Route B	City of South Lake Tahoe	New flexible bus route operating every 30 minutes between 7:30 am and 7:30 pm, Sunday-Thursday and until 9:30 pm on a route starting at South Y Transit Station serving the Sierra Tract, Bijou, Al Tahoe areas, LTCC and Al Tahoe Blvd.
53	Route B Route E Club Route Yellow Route	City of South Lake Tahoe Casinos	New bus route operating every 30 minutes between 5:30 am and 12:30 am, Sunday-Thursday and until 1:30 am on Friday and Saturday on a route between Kingsbury Transit Center and LTCC via the Bijou area. Service to Tahoe Seasons Resort is provided on request
55 (Contingent on funding)	NONE	HUD FTA	New flexible bus route operating between South Y Transit Station serving Sky Forest Acres, Tahoe Senior Plaza, Kelly Ridge, Senior Center, South Lake Tahoe Recreation Area, LTCC, Safeway, Tahoe Keys, Barton Memorial Hospital, South Y Center and Factory Stores at the Y.
BlueGO OnCall	BlueGO Curb to Curb	City of South Lake Tahoe El Dorado County Casinos	Implement new door to door transit service that is in compliance with the ADA as it related to providing complementary Paratransit Service within a ¾ mile boundary of BlueGO fixed routes, adding an additional peak vehicle Monday-Friday and to implement 24 hour door to door service throughout the entire BlueGO service area.

DISCONTINUED ROUTES

Current Route	Replacement Route	Description
Yellow	Green Route 12	Service covered by Yellow is now included on Green Route 12 along Park Avenue, Pine Avenue, Lakeshore Drive and Stateline Avenue.

Club	Route 53	Service covered by Club is now included on Route 53 with service along Park Avenue, Pine Avenue, Lakeshore Drive, Stateline Avenue, the five casinos, Pioneer Trail and Ski Run Blvd.
Diamond	Route 50	Service covered by Diamond is now included on Route 50 with service along US Highway 50 serving Campground By The Lake to the five casinos.
C	Route 50 Route 52 Route 53	Service covered by Route C is now included on Route 50 along US Highway 50, Route 53 for service along Park Avenue, Pine Avenue, Lakeshore Drive and Stateline Avenue and Route 52 for service to Regan Beach along Lakeview Avenue, Sacramento Avenue, Los Angeles Avenue and Tallac Avenue.

The STATA Board of Directors (which the County is a member of) approved the proposed service changes and fare increases at its meeting after conducting a public hearing on Friday, September 5, 2008. STATA has received approvals from Douglas County, Lake Tahoe Gaming Alliance and Heavenly Mountain Resort to implement the necessary service and fare changes to the BlueGO system. The City of South Lake Tahoe is scheduled to take action on this matter at their October 7, 2008 City Council meeting.

The next steps after approving the implementation of the proposed service recommendations is for staff to work towards implementing the new services, which includes making contract amendments with Area Transit Management and El Camino Trailways, add, remove and relocate bus stops, develop new passes, signage, Rider's Guide, system map and marketing materials, update website and make presentations to community groups to ensure that passengers are aware of the proposed changes.

The proposed fare increase would take effect on November 1, 2008 and the express fare structure fare increase would take effect on January 1, 2009, as shown in Attachment A

The proposed service modifications would take effect on Sunday, November 23, 2008 when the BlueGO Heavenly Ski Shuttles begin.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adopt Resolution modifying route changes and fare increases.