

Legislation Details (With Text)

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Transit Introduction and Review

Issue/Request:

Discuss potential transit service improvements and contract proposals for 2019-2020.

Key Issues:

- The City of Lee’s Summit contracts annually with KCATA to provide transit service
- The City receives federal funds for transit, with a local funding match of \$250,000 to \$325,000 from the Transportation Sales Tax
- Current transit is on-demand with no fixed routes except a commuter express service with limited operation to/from downtown Kansas City
- Current local funding cannot maintain the status quo of current levels of service
- Current ridership can be supported without increasing costs by re-structuring current services

Background:

This presentation intends to generate awareness regarding existing transit services provided by the City of Lee's Summit, highlight those operations, describe ridership experience, identify the demand, outline funding, and summarize the Public Works Committee’s discussion in preparation for the Council consideration of 2019 transit contracts.

In October and November 2018, City staff presented existing transit services and potential options to continue to the Public Works Committee. The Committee directed staff to present options to restructure transit to meet demand and manage increasing costs, evaluate options to expand transit service, and work with the Kansas City Area Transit Authority (KCATA) to draft the 2019 annual transit contracts.

The Public Works Committee recommended researching the following contract options for Council consideration:

- A contract for transit service that continues the existing demand response transit service operated by OATS (RideKC Lee's Summit) without change in operation or capacity.
- A contract for continued commuter express transit service operated by KCATA (RideKC Lee's Summit Express) with modifications that reduce vehicle capacity while meeting current ridership needs to more efficiently manage the service and release funding that may be used for other projected transit cost increases.
- Staff present a contract for the same commuter express service without a reduction in vehicle capacity for Council consideration.

The Committee expressed support for transit and the need to further consider transit options that meet new and increasing ridership demands. Although transit is a priority, the lack of identified funds to support and sustain any new or expanded transit service(s) has deferred any direction to propose such new or expanded transit service(s). The Committee was committed to seek out potential funding to achieve the main goal of adding fixed route services.

The more immediate need for 2019 is to offset the increasing costs of existing services. The current on-demand local service and commuter routes will require the City's local match to increase in excess of the approved program budget if no changes are made. The current commuter route services can be restructured to save about \$30,000 and still meet the ridership demands. KCATA will provide additional studies to better optimize schedules and costs to achieve these goals for 2019.

Michael Park, PE, PTOE, City Traffic Engineer