



City of Lake Forest City of Laguna Hills

Transit Needs Assessment Study

Submitted By:

 **THE SOLIS GROUP**

234 N. El Molino Avenue
Suite 202
Pasadena
California
91101

Telephone: (626) 685-6989
Fax: (626) 685-6985

PP&A

Patti Post & Associates

1014 Bienvenida Avenue
Pacific Palisades
California
90272

Telephone: (310) 230-4400
Fax: (310) 230-4480

OCTA

GO LOCAL PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT

Park and Ride Metrolink Shuttle



City of Lake Forest/City of Laguna Hills

OCTA Go Local Program

Final Report – Park and Ride Metrolink Shuttle

CITY OF LAKE FOREST / CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS

OCTA Go Local Program

Final Report

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1. SUMMARY OF PROJECT

In August 2007, the City of Lake Forest (City) and the City of Laguna Hills executed a Partnering Agreement to conduct a Transit Needs Assessment Study (Study) under the auspices of the OCTA Go Local Program. The City of Lake Forest served as the lead city to administer the study. The scope of the Transit Needs Assessment Study included:

- Identifying existing transit services and facilities available to local residents and businesses;
- Conducting public outreach with residents, commuters, and business with respect to transit demand, as well as soliciting input from stakeholder groups including major Homeowners Associations and the Chamber of Commerce;
- Recommending improvements that will improve the use of transit to access Metrolink stations.

Existing transit services and unmet transit needs were evaluated in order to develop a local vision for future projects and services that would be useful to the City. The Transit Needs Assessment Study emphasized connections to Metrolink while also encompassing a larger vision for transit improvements to make those connections to Metrolink more attractive and accessible.

The Study was conducted in several stages (tasks):

- Task 1: Study existing transit service conditions, obtain background information, and refine the scope of the project
- ▶ *Focused on obtaining background information and existing transit data; researched and catalogued existing transit services available to Lake Forest and Laguna Hills including bus routes, taxi vouchers, public information programs, employer pass programs and park and ride facilities; serves as a snapshot of existing conditions and transit services available today within the cities of Lake Forest and Laguna Hills.*
- Task 2: Perform public outreach, including identifying and surveying stakeholders, which included city residents, business representatives, and representatives of City destinations;
- ▶ *The Study Team conducted stakeholder outreach in order to assess perceptions of unmet transit needs in the Cities of Lake Forest and Laguna Hills among resident, business, and city destination stakeholder groups. Toward this end, a series of focus group meetings were held with the afore-mentioned stakeholder groups.*



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- Task 3: Identify and evaluate potential transit service options that meet the identified needs;
- ▶ *As a result of the findings that derived from Task 1 and Task 2, the Study Team proposed a transit service option that was the most viable option for the City to pursue based upon the study analysis.*
- Task 4: Evaluate the likely costs of the service options identified in Task 3;
- ▶ *The Study Team evaluated the likely costs associated with the proposed transit service option.*
- Task 5: Evaluate potential funding sources available to assist with the cost of new service setup and operations; and
- ▶ *Task 5 details applicable funding sources, including those at the county, state, and federal levels. It also provides some guidance as to the applicability of each source to our project, as well as the steps required to establish eligibility and apply for funds.*
- Task 6: Collect and report on findings.
- ▶ *This report, the OCTA Go Local Program Final Report, serves as the Task 6 deliverable.*

In addition to the above-stated Go Local Transit Needs Assessment Study tasks, the City of Laguna Hills requested that the study team conduct a separate analysis of its population of senior and persons with disabilities in order to better understand their transit needs. This analysis was conducted separate from the joint Laguna Hills/Lake Forest partnership, and no Lake Forest Go Local funds or staff resources were expended as part of the Laguna Hills *Senior & Disabled Transit Needs Assessment Study*. Though not part of the Laguna Hills/Lake Forest partnership study, this report does include information on the Laguna Hills *Senior & Disabled Transit Needs Assessment*, which entailed Task 1, Task 2 (stakeholder groups identified were only seniors and the disabled), and Task 6 from above.



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2. STUDY QUESTIONS

The Study was designed to address the following areas:

1. Examine transit needs/opportunities within the City of Lake Forest

What existing transit service and infrastructure exists within the City? What travel patterns do residents, employees, and people traveling to City destinations use? What transit service improvements do stakeholders desire?

2. Identify necessary Metrolink connections

How do Metrolink riders currently get to and from the train stations from the City of Lake Forest? What connections are needed to enable Metrolink riders to use public transit to access the stations?

3. Focus on transit links/improvements that are needed to reach underserved areas

What are the local destinations that need transit service (Northern Lake Forest employment areas, shopping centers, population centers, new developments, city service locations, and recreational areas)? How could transit serve them better?

4. Consider the particular needs of senior citizens and the disabled through a supplemental study authorized by OCTA

Do seniors and the disabled have a need for additional transportation options, and how can those needs best be met?



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3. METHODOLOGY

OCTA GO LOCAL TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

The Transit Needs Assessment Study focused on assessing transit demand from stakeholder groups within the Cities of Lake Forest and Laguna Hills. The primary stakeholder groups were identified as follows:

- City residents
- Employees, customers, and clients of city businesses
- Management of businesses
- Management and patrons of city destinations (such as major shopping destinations, medical facilities, City Hall, libraries, and recreational facilities)

Members from these groups were recruited to participate in a series of focus group meetings designed to solicit input about transit demand and perceptions of unmet transit needs within the Cities. Three focus group meetings were held in Lake Forest during October 2007 and three focus group meetings were held in Laguna Hills during November 2007. In each city, there was one meeting each for City residents, business, and destination stakeholder groups. Participants were recruited through a variety of approaches, such as mail, phone, flyers, newspaper advertisement, advertisement at Metrolink stations, City- and AQMD-provided lists of employers, and Yellow Page listings.

Questionnaires were distributed to attendees at each focus group meeting and other interested stakeholders, containing questions about personal transit experiences and perceptions, and suggested recommendations for City-initiated transit improvements. Supplementary questions were added for the business and destination meetings, focusing specifically on how transit serves employees, customers, clients, and visitors traveling to and from City businesses or destinations.

The results of the focus group discussions were compiled into a narrative, and combined with the quantitative results from the questionnaires to give the fullest possible picture of transit demand within the Cities. The combined results provided qualitative indicators of ridership demand to and from the Metrolink stations. A review of existing transit services indicated that current transit routes do not sufficiently connect Lake Forest or Laguna Hills to Metrolink stations or coordinate with the Metrolink train schedules. It was also made clear by the results from the City of Laguna Hills' *Citizen Survey* that residents feel that transportation services for seniors and disabled citizens are a very high priority for new City transit initiatives.

Based on input received from the outreach effort, City staff, phone interviews with Lake Forest Council Members, and meetings with Laguna Hills Traffic Commissioners, transit



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service options were developed. The menu of transit service options to improve the connections to Metrolink were provided to the cities, and with consultation from the Study Team, the cities expressed preference to further evaluate the viability of implementing the following project for Go Local Step Two consideration:

► **Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle**

A scheduled shuttle service from a Park & Ride lot within Laguna Hills and another possible one in Lake Forest that will travel to/from the Irvine Metrolink Station, serving city residents from both cities that commute via Metrolink.

The proposed transit service option became the basis of the findings presented in Section 5 of this report.

SENIOR & DISABLED TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

The Senior & Disabled Transit Needs Assessment Study focused on assessing transit demand from Laguna Hills residents that identified as seniors or persons with disabilities. The study was conducted in two phases: Phase One entailed administering a survey (via mass mailing) to seniors and persons with disabilities; Phase Two entailed conducting a focus group meeting to discuss transit needs in greater depth.

For Phase One, the Study Team developed a two-page survey and asked seniors and those with disabilities about current travel modes, interest in a specialized transit service, trip types that might be taken on transit, likely destination for transit trips and willingness to pay a fare for a specialized transit service. Surveys were due back to the City by April 23, 2008 by return mail. To further encourage participation, respondents were entered into a raffle for gift cards accepted at local businesses.

The survey was distributed to about 10,000 single-family households within Laguna Hills, and to a variety of other senior residences and locations that service seniors and the disabled. Over 600 survey responses were received, which represents a significant proportion of the target group. The survey also asked people if they were willing to participate in a focus group meeting to discuss local transportation issues. Over 100 people indicated interest in attending the focus group meeting.

As part of Phase Two of the Senior & Disabled Transit Needs Assessment Study, the focus group meeting was designed to solicit input about transit demand and perceptions of unmet transit needs within the City. Specifically, topics of discussion included existing transit use, perceptions of current services, identification of most frequent trip origins and destinations, daily travel patterns and stresses, Metrolink accessibility, and desired transit improvement recommendations. The focus group meeting was held in the Laguna Hills Community Center on May 13, 2008 and participants were compensated for their time with gift cards to major retail shops located within the City.



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The results of the focus group discussions were compiled into a narrative, and combined with the quantitative results from the questionnaires to give the fullest possible picture of transit demand within the City. An analysis of transit needs and recommendations on how to move forward were provided in a narrative to the City.

Although a supplemental Senior & Disabled study was completed, the City of Laguna Hills does not anticipate having a project ready to be developed in time for Go Local Step Two consideration.



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4. FINDINGS / PROPOSED PROJECT CONCEPT

A review of existing transit services indicated that current transit routes do not sufficiently connect Lake Forest or Laguna Hills to Metrolink stations or coordinate with the Metrolink train schedules. The Lake Forest/Laguna Hills Transit Needs Assessment analysis indicates support for the transit service recommendation identified below:

- ▶ **PARK & RIDE METROLINK SHUTTLE:** A scheduled shuttle service from a Park & Ride lot within Laguna Hills and another in Lake Forest that will travel to/from the Irvine Metrolink Station, serving city residents that commute via Metrolink.

The *Senior & Disabled Transit Needs Assessment Study* is not going to Go Local Step Two as no project has been defined by the City; therefore this section will not include a discussion of that study's findings.

4.1 TARGET MARKET

The Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle would provide scheduled service to the Irvine Metrolink Station for residents of Laguna Hills and Lake Forest who board morning Metrolink trains and require return service in the afternoon rush hours. Focus group and survey results indicated that the Irvine Metrolink station was the preferred station of choice for Laguna Hills residents and employees, since it is closer to the City than the Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo station and has more frequent train service. Therefore, the City's proposed Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle will only serve the Irvine station.

Shuttle service could serve two Park & Ride lots, one within Laguna Hills and another in Lake Forest close to the Laguna Hills border. The shuttle will also transport patrons from the Irvine Metrolink station to the cities respective Park & Ride lots within the rush hour designated running times. However, few patrons are expected to ride the shuttle service in the off-peak direction.

4.2 SERVICE

A small shuttle bus would operate on a fixed schedule to pick up patrons at Park & Ride lots within the cities of Laguna Hills and Lake Forest. The shuttle service will take people to the Irvine Metrolink Station during the morning rush hours and back to the Park & Ride lots in the afternoon rush hours. Since the trip will take at least 15 minutes each way and some peak-hour train arrivals are less than 30 minutes apart, the City will need to choose between minimizing the number of vehicles needed and connecting with all the rush hour trains.



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Furthermore, Metrolink changes its train schedules twice a year, in the fall and in the spring. Although SCRRA has announced its intent to expand Metrolink commuter train service, it is not possible to predict future train schedules. Currently, Metrolink runs seven (7) northbound trains that stop in Irvine between 6:00 am and 9:00 am on weekdays. Patrons headed southbound would most likely prefer to board their trains at the Laguna Niguel/Mission Viejo Metrolink Station; they would therefore be less likely to use the proposed transit service if they had the option of driving.

Laguna Hills has two Park & Ride lots, both near the Laguna Hills Mall. The lot at the OCTA Laguna Hills Transportation Center has 180 spaces. Historically and during a field check conducted in December 2007, that lot was about half-filled. Anecdotally, it has been observed to be full at other times. The other lot, to the east of the Mall, officially has 153 spaces and is shown in Caltrans reports as “overfull;” however, there appears to be plenty of parking spaces available nearby in the mall parking lot. Laguna Hills Mall management has not been officially asked if it will make additional spaces available for Park & Ride lot overflow. During the Laguna Hills *Destinations* focus group meeting, the Laguna Hills Mall Assistant Manager informally stated that the Mall’s parking lot capacity is generally under-utilized and would be available for Park & Ride overflow parking if an agreement were negotiated. Whatever lot the City wishes to use will require permission of the owner.

There are two Caltrans-designated Park & Ride lots in Lake Forest; one is located at Saddleback Valley Church and the other at Grace Community Church on Trabuco Road. The lot at Grace Community Church has been considered as a potential location for a Lake Forest shuttle destination. Additionally, Lake Forest staff has preliminarily identified other locations within the city that are closer to the Laguna Hills Mall and could potentially be used as a Park & Ride lot.

According to a Metrolink-conducted survey, on an average weekday 17 people from Laguna Hills board trains at the Irvine Station between 6:00 and 9:00 am. It is not possible to predict how many people would choose to ride a shuttle to the station from a Park & Ride lot; however, parking is severely limited at the station, which gives commuters an incentive to park remotely and ride a shuttle to the station.

Since the proposed service will only have two stops, a small, lift-equipped bus would be the most cost-effective option. However, if the City has another purpose for a vehicle(s) during the day, this service could be operated with smaller vehicles.



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4.3 AREAS TO BE SERVED

Individuals will drive themselves to the Park & Ride lot(s); thus, even though the primary target market will be Laguna Hills and Lake Forest residents, all regional areas can theoretically be served.

4.4 INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The City of Irvine owns and operates the Irvine Transportation Center, which is where the Irvine Metrolink station is located; therefore, permission from the City of Irvine will be needed in order to use bus loading zones to pick-up and drop-off patrons at the station. The City of Irvine has provided a letter of support for this project.

Lake Forest will have to make arrangements to establish a new lot in Lake Forest (near the Laguna Hills border). Caltrans has a sample contract available for establishing a new Park & Ride lot. There is an existing Park & Ride lot in the City of Lake Forest on Trabuco Road at Grace Community Church that may be a candidate for the new shuttle service. Additionally, the City of Lake Forest may be interested in looking for a cluster of parking spaces unused during the day near El Toro Road, Muirlands Boulevard or Rockfield Boulevard, so the shuttle could stop at the lot without diverting too far from a direct route between the Laguna Hills Park & Ride lot and the Irvine Station.

4.5 OPERATIONS

It is the intention of the cities of Lake Forest and Laguna Hills to utilize the services of a vehicle contractor for vehicle operational purposes. The contractor can also provide the vehicles.

The cities would pay for the service by the hour. The cities will explore the feasibility of charging a nominal fare for the shuttle service, but the fares would not cover the total cost of the service. Full operations funding is yet to be determined.

Posted signs and city publications would show the shuttle service's operational schedule.

Vehicles used for the shuttle service could be available for other uses during the middle of the day when shuttle service is non-operational.



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4.6 COST

Contractors charge for scheduled shuttle service by the hour. If the service ran for three hours in the morning and two and one-half hours in the afternoon, that would be 5.5 hours per weekday. With no service on weekends or holidays, (for a total of 255 service days per year) there would be about 1,400 hours annually. Assuming a cost of \$80 per hour, the cost of operating the service would be about \$112,000 per year. This figure includes vehicles, drivers, supervision and insurance. It does not include City staff time to oversee the contract or promote the service.

The operating costs may be partially off-set by any fares collected, or the sale of advertising on the vehicle or at the Park & Ride lots. It may be possible for the cities to solicit contributions from local businesses or organizations that wish to support transit. A dedicated source of operating funds will need to be identified in order to implement this project. The cities of Laguna Hills and Lake Forest would negotiate a cost-sharing agreement relative to the benefits for each city.

4.7 ADVANTAGES OF THIS OPTION

Scheduled shuttle service is easy to operate and market. Most potential riders will know what to expect and how to use the service.

The strongest incentives to use the Park & Ride shuttle service are the ease of finding a parking place at the Park & Ride lot and the knowledge that a shuttle will arrive at the Irvine Metrolink station in time to board the desired train. Currently, parking demand at the Irvine station exceeds parking supply. Although additional parking is under construction, more train service is being planned as well. If parking demand continues to outstrip supply, or, if the time it takes to find a space and walk to the station is unattractive, there will be an increased interest in a shuttle service.

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

The cities of Laguna Hills and Lake Forest will negotiate a cooperative agreement in order to implement the Laguna Hills Park & Ride Lot Shuttle Service, which is proposed to travel through both cities, if this project is supported for OCTA Step Two.



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5. RESULTS

The results of our Transit Needs Assessment Study are presented herein against the Go Local Program Evaluation Criteria provided by OCTA.

1. LOCAL JURISDICTION FUNDING COMMITMENTS

The Cities of Lake Forest and Laguna Hills are willing to invest City resources to further refine the proposed project concept (Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle) in Step Two of the Go Local process. Both cities understand that OCTA requires a 10% match for this effort.

2. PROVEN ABILITY TO ATTRACT OTHER FUNDING PARTNERS

In order to attract other funding partners to support the Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle, as part of Go Local's Step Two process, the Cities will approach local organizations and destinations to solicit partnerships. These could include, but are not limited to, the Laguna Hills Mall, Saddleback Hospital, and businesses within The Arbor at Lake Forest.

3. PROXIMITY TO JOBS AND POPULATION CENTERS

According to City of Lake Forest demographic data, there are nearly 110,000 households and over 290,000 within a five mile radius of the intersection of El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard, in close proximity to the Laguna Hills Park & Ride lot and a potential Park & Ride lot in Lake Forest. Two major employment centers within Laguna Hills (Laguna Hills Mall and Saddleback Hospital) are immediately adjacent to one another and less than a mile from another large shopping district, The Arbor at Lake Forest. A shuttle transit service would be able to serve a high percentage of the city's businesses with few stops. Currently, only one OCTA bus line (Route 188) serves the Irvine Metrolink station from these major employment centers. During commuter hours, this line takes an average of 33 minutes to travel from the Laguna Hills Transportation Center (which is adjacent to Laguna Hills' major employment centers and Park & Ride lot) to the Metrolink station, which is an impractical option for commuters wishing to utilize transit to get to the Metrolink station from these population centers. Further, data collected during the analysis and outreach indicates that existing OCTA bus service is not well synchronized with Metrolink arrivals and departures.

4. REGIONAL BENEFITS

The proposed shuttle project will serve the cities of Laguna Hills and Lake Forest, with service radiating into and out of the City of Irvine. The shuttle will be able to draw people from a wide area given its central location and ample parking availability, so as



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to require only two stops: one within Laguna Hills and another in Lake Forest, just across the border from Laguna Hills. This, in addition to the proposed transit service's ability to use convenient loading areas closer to the Metrolink station train-boarding areas (in comparison to where the parking spaces are located), will make the service time very competitive in comparison to the option of driving the same route.

Additionally, the proposed shuttle has a stop serving the regional activity centers of the Laguna Hills Mall and Saddleback Hospital. Though the project is intended to serve Metrolink commuters, it may also be able to serve some visitors to those locations who wish to travel during the shuttle's hours of operation.

5. EASE AND SIMPLICITY OF CONNECTIONS

The Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle will close gaps in existing transit services to the Irvine Metrolink station. Currently, only one OCTA bus line (Route 188) serves the Irvine Metrolink station from Laguna Hills' major employment centers. During commuter hours, this line takes an average of 33 minutes to travel from the Laguna Hills Transportation Center to the Metrolink station, which is an impractical option for commuters wishing to utilize transit to get to the Metrolink station from these employment centers; therefore, the Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle will create new transit connections at the designated Park & Ride lots and will bolster Metrolink ridership by enhancing reliability and convenience. As the shuttle would be a direct line between Laguna Hills Transportation Center and Irvine Transportation Center, travel time would be comparable to driving private vehicles, and would be a significant savings over the current transit option. Quantitative time savings estimates will be evaluated in Step 2.

Connections will be simple; the vehicles will use existing transfer locations at the Irvine Transit Center/Metrolink station, and travel directly to marked Park & Ride lots within Laguna Hills and in Lake Forest. In addition, as part of Step Two, the City will work to establish a transfer agreement with Metrolink to simplify and streamline fare payment.

6. COST-EFFECTIVENESS

The proposed project is cost-effective. During the initial period of operation, the operations contractor will provide the transit service vehicles, which will require no initial capital investment on behalf of the City. When the service proves to be a success, the City can determine whether to purchase vehicles or to continue to have their contractor provide them.

There are no ridership projections at this time, so it is not possible to estimate the cost per new passenger or per passenger mile; however, costs should be similar to other feeder projects using small vehicles and should be lower than the average cost per passenger for OCTA.



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7. TRAFFIC CONGESTION RELIEF

The Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle will contribute to the reduction of congestion near the Irvine Metrolink station during peak travel times. It will also reduce traffic on the major regional corridors, as commuters elect to take Metrolink instead of driving directly to work from surrounding cities.

Ridership projections are not available at this time. It is anticipated that some riders will be existing Metrolink users and others will be new to the system. Pedestrian benefits will be realized as users of the Park & Ride shuttle walk to the nearby Laguna Hills Mall and Saddleback Memorial Medical Center.

The Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle will deliver and pick up passengers within the station, close to the boarding platform; transit riders will therefore have priority access to the station compared to drivers, who will have to search and find a place to park and walk some distance to the boarding area. This project should reduce vehicle-miles-traveled and congestion in the station area by eliminating the mileage within the parking area as patrons search for parking.

8. RIGHT-OF-WAY AVAILABILITY

The proposed project uses existing roadways; therefore, it does not require the acquisition of any right-of-way. The City of Lake Forest will need to negotiate an agreement for use of a Park & Ride lot in Lake Forest, and a letter agreement with Irvine is likely needed for use of the bus loading zones at the Metrolink Station. Irvine officials have expressed willingness to enter into an agreement for this purpose.

9. SOUND LONG-TERM OPERATING PLAN

As part of Step Two, a long-term operating plan will be developed for the proposed transit project, as more project details must be developed to understand ridership base and costs. Then, fares can be set, sponsors can be recruited and future funding sources identified and pursued.

10. COMPATIBLE AND APPROVED LAND USE

The proposed project does not have a direct impact on land use. The proposed shuttle project will enhance the ability of transportation and land use to work together by creating opportunities for access to Metrolink without the use of individual automobiles. It will create a link between the Laguna Hills Transportation Center, which serves OCTA buses, and the Irvine Transportation Center, which serves buses, Metrolink, and Amtrak.



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The project will serve existing land uses; therefore, it will not create new land uses or transit facilities, with the exception of a new Park & Ride lot within the City of Lake Forest. Preliminary research shows there are several potential locations for the Lake Forest Park & Ride lot that would be well-suited for encouraging use by Lake Forest commuters while also achieving the goal of being conveniently located to the Laguna Hills lot and the likely route to the Irvine Metrolink Station. The project will make pedestrian connectivity easier by delivering passengers close to the Metrolink train boarding areas, thus eliminating the need for people to walk through the parking area or station to gain access to the trains.

Due to the nature of the project, no letters of support from affected interests are required.

11. PROJECT READINESS

The project can be ready to begin service as soon as funding is available. In Step Two of the Go Local process, the project will be refined and evaluated on a phased basis. The initial step will be confirming ridership demand and coordinating with OCTA to ensure compatibility with existing bus routes. From there, once funding for operations is secured, the City can engage contractors, implement its marketing plans and begin service in a very short time.

No right-of-way is needed, and the operations contractor will provide the vehicles. Thus, the project will be ready to be implemented fairly quickly.

12. SAFE AND MODERN TECHNOLOGIES

No new, untested technologies will be used in the proposed project. Everything has been utilized before on other projects and found to be reliable. There is no risk to public safety.

Technology that enhances the appeal of the project without adding undue cost will be evaluated for inclusion. For example, tracking technology to allow riders to get up-to-the-minute departure information on their computers or PDA's will be considered.



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6. NEXT STEPS

The proposed Park and Ride Metrolink Shuttle Project can be ready to go quickly, but some further planning and data collection does need to be done. The next steps required to further define the proposed Park and Ride Metrolink Shuttle Project to the point where it can be easily implemented are provided below. The goal is to phase the additional steps to ensure ridership demand and operations cost feasibility prior to committing funds for detailed route planning, securing contracts with potential operators, and developing a marketing plan. The steps identified below are provided for informational purposes. The cities understand that OCTA may take the lead in retaining consultants for the analyses that will be required for Step Two. Additionally, we provided an estimate of approximate costs to refine the project concept in Step Two.

A. PARK & RIDE LOT ACQUISITION

A natural destination for the shuttle would be the existing Park & Ride lots at the Laguna Hills Mall and the adjacent Laguna Hills Transportation Center, which have 153 and 180 spaces, respectively. If additional spaces in this area are needed, locations can be determined and expansion negotiated with the Laguna Hills Mall or OCTA, which control the areas surrounding the lots.

The cities of Laguna Hills and Lake Forest will enter into an agreement in order to establish a new lot in Lake Forest near the Laguna Hills border and the I-5 freeway, which is directly en route to the Irvine Metrolink station from the existing Laguna Hills Park & Ride lot.

B. DETERMINE OPERATING PARAMETERS

The Park & Ride Metrolink shuttle is intended to operate during commuter hours, approximately 6:00 am to 9:00 am and 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Exact scheduled running times will be determined by the Metrolink trains the shuttle is designed to meet. Since one vehicle (or set of vehicles) will not be able to travel back and forth quickly enough to meet every train, a decision will need to be made whether to lease additional vehicles or to meet only selected trains within the planned shuttle hours of operation. Depending on the number of riders at one time or the distribution of destinations, a set of vehicles may be required for this service.

C. FINALIZE ROUTE

The shuttle's destinations are reasonably well established, but the route will need to be finalized. The identified route would serve the Park & Ride lots in both Laguna Hills and in Lake Forest, as efficiently as possible. Since the shuttle has no other



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stops, the defined route can vary according to morning and afternoon traffic patterns for efficiency purposes. The proposed route should be coordinated with OCTA to minimize interference and enhance transfers at the Laguna Hills Transportation Center between shuttle and bus service, and a daily schedule should be drawn up.

D. OPERATIONS CONTRACTOR

As the service will be operated by an outside agency, a process of selecting a service operator will be required. It is possible that a local private transportation operator such as Laguna Woods Village would be interested in operating this service as well. The cities will draft a Request for Proposals (RFP), if appropriate, and make such choices with potential operators as to what kinds of vehicles will be employed. If there are uses for the vehicles during the middle of the day, this might affect the choice of vehicle or operations contractor desired. Finally, the City will need to draft and finalize a contract with the service provider that is ultimately chosen via the RFP process.

E. DEVELOP A MARKETING PLAN

A key to the success of the shuttle service will be public perception and awareness of its existence. It will have to be marketed widely in such a way that both residents and employees are aware of its existence and consider it a convenient and reliable way to get to Metrolink. The two cities will work cooperatively in order to develop an effective marketing plan that achieves the cities' mutual goals.

F. SET A FARE

An appropriate fare will have to be decided upon that helps offset the cost of the system without dissuading potential riders. Efficiency and convenience will also be considerations here; for example, allowing passengers to pay online or selling a monthly pass. Ideally, transfer arrangements would be made with Metrolink so that riders do not have to pay once upon boarding the shuttle and then again to board the train. If possible, a transfer agreement with OCTA should be negotiated as well.

G. STATION ACCESS

The Irvine Transportation Center is owned by the City of Irvine. The City will have to make the proper institutional arrangements with Irvine so that the shuttle can use the existing transportation loading areas. If the City wishes to use space controlled by OCTA such as the Laguna Hills Transportation Center, arrangements will have to be pursued with OCTA as well.



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H. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

As this project serves the City of Laguna Hills and the City of Lake Forest, the two cities will have to draft and adopt a Memorandum of Understanding regarding this project. The MOU will need to clearly define the roles and responsibilities that each city will assume as co-sponsor of the service.

I. LONG-TERM OPERATIONS PLAN

The City would like to take the appropriate steps early on to make sure that the service is sustainable for the future, as well as flexible enough to take into account such factors as changes in demand and expanded Metrolink schedules. Furthermore, the City will be conscious of which funding sources are intended only for capital costs and which can be used for operations.

J. PROPOSED STEP TWO BUDGET FOR PARK & RIDE LOT METROLINK SHUTTLE:

Below is a proposed consultant fee (Table 1) to conduct Go Local Step Two work identified in items A through I above.

Table 1. Proposed Budget for Go Local Step Two Work Laguna Hills Park & Ride Metrolink Shuttle		
Task Description	Total Hours	Consultant Fee
a. Park and Ride Lot Acquisition	58	9,300
b. Determine Operating Parameters	53	8,400
c. Finalize Route	47	7,500
d. Operations Contractor	80	9,300
e. Develop Marketing Plan	120	14,000
f. Set Fare	48	5,600
g. Station Access	32	3,700
h. Long-term Operations Plan	148	17,200
Total Hours	586	
Total Fee (Average Rate: \$160 per hour):		\$75,000.00
Direct Costs/Expenses - mileage, production, delivery, etc.		\$5,000
City Staff / Legal Services		\$20,000
TOTAL FEE:		\$100,000.00