2020 FHWA REGIONAL COMPETITION: PROJECT SPONSOR FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

AGENCY: Community Transit
PROJECT: Swift Blue Line Expansion Buses

Question #1: Please explain the relationship of this bus purchase request between the Blue Line extension from Aurora Village Transit Center to the 185th Street Link Light Rail Station, and operation of the full route from Everett Station.

Answer #1:
Expansion buses are required on this project because we will extending the route south to serve the 185th Link Light Rail station and are currently modeling headways to see if during peak times of the day (when light rail service comes to Shoreline) the need to increase frequencies. For example 6-8 minute frequency instead of 10 minute frequency during peak times. These expansion buses will serve the full Swift BRT Blue Line including the extension to Shoreline.

Question #2: The application mentions several potential improvements, including TDM, Bus On Shoulder, Business Access Transit lanes, and increased frequency of service. How committed are these elements as part of the Blue Line expansion project?

Answer #2:
Community Transit is currently scoping these elements and working with our partner jurisdictions on these elements. We are very committed to doing these components because without them it will be very difficult for us to improve speed and reliability improvements along the corridor. We will be submitting a Regional Mobility Grant Application in late summer of this year for $10 million dollars with a local match of $2 million dollars for these improvements.

Question #3: Please clarify if the project is reliant on Sound Transit funding, and if so, are the funds secured through an agreement.

Answer #3:
This project is not reliant on Sound Transit funding, there is no Sound Transit funding in this project.
Question #4: Were electric buses considered, and if not, why not?

Answer #4:
There is currently not an electric bus on the market that would work for Swift BRT due to the charging constraints. In order to use electric buses to serve this route we would have to add additional buses into the fleet just to maintain service level, while buses would sit and charge. This would not be cost effective or make a good business case for Community Transit. Community Transit continues to monitor electric bus technology to find a bus that would be suitable for the service characteristics of BRT.

Question #5: The application references a Title VI analysis, the results of which suggested the project will highly benefit Title VI populations; can you provide more details on what is included in this analysis?

Answer #5:
Community Transit’s 2019-2022 Title VI Program includes data collection on the current Swift Blue Line route, it is designated as a Title VI route in our program. Included with our Title VI Program analysis is our 2017 On-Board Survey which shows data for the Swift Blue Line designating it as a minority and low-income route. This Title VI Analysis and On-Board Survey analysis includes census block data for the route area as well as a four factor analysis for designation of Title VI routes. The Four Factor Analysis considers:
1) The number or proportion of limited English persons (LEP) eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by Community Transit
2) The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with Community Transit
3) The nature and importance of Community Transit service to people’s lives
4) The resources available for LEP outreach, and the costs associated with that outreach