



January 12, 2006

**PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT ON
A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NEW REGIONAL BUS FARE FOR TRAVEL
BETWEEN THE EAST BAY AND SAN FRANCISCO AND
BETWEEN THE EAST BAY AND SONOMA COUNTY**

Proposed New Fare

It is proposed to set new bus fares between the East Bay and San Francisco (Fare Zone 1) and between the East Bay and Sonoma County (Fare Zones 5 and 6) as follows:

For Travel Between these areas	Adult Cash Fares Effective December 11, 2005	Proposed Adult Cash Fares Effective January 15, 2006	Adult Cash Fares Prior To December 11, 2005
East Bay/ Sonoma	\$3.25	\$6.00, an increase of \$2.75	\$6.00 to \$6.90
East Bay/ San Francisco	\$3.25	\$6.00, an increase of \$2.75	\$6.35
East Bay/ Marin	\$3.25	No change, remains at \$3.25	\$3.25 to \$3.95

The cash fare for persons with disabilities, seniors and youth would be \$3.00, a 50% discount off the adult cash fare. A 20% discount off the adult cash fare is available with purchase of Ride Value Ticket Books, with an effective price per ticket of \$4.80.

Summary

On October 14, 2005, the Board of Directors approved a staff proposal to simplify the District's regional transit fare system by implementing a regional bus and ferry fare restructure program on December 11, 2005. Included in the program was the establishment of a single set of fares for travel on Golden Gate Transit bus service across the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge between the East Bay and Marin (Fare Zones 2, 3 and 4), Sonoma (Fare Zones 5 and 6) and San Francisco (Fare Zone 1) The adult cash fare was set at \$3.25, with a 50% discount for persons with disabilities, seniors and youth (\$1.60) and a 20% discount for Ride Value Tickets (\$2.60). Free transfer privileges were continued in this program.

Subsequent to this Board action, staff realized that a significant "loophole" was created in the bus system fare structure by which customers could misuse East Bay transfer privileges to underpay a bus fare for travel between Sonoma County and Marin County and between San Francisco and Marin County. Specifically, a customer from Sonoma County could pay for a

\$3.25 trip to the East Bay and instead make a \$3.95 (Zone 5) or \$4.80 (Zone 6) trip to Marin County (Zone 3), or a customer from San Francisco could pay for a \$3.25 trip to the East Bay and instead make a \$3.95 trip to Marin County (Zone 3). It is estimated that over 500,000 passengers travel annually between the affected fare zones, thus the risk of exposure to reduced fare revenue resulting from this “loophole” is significant.

Unfortunately, action to address this “loophole” could not be initiated before the new fare restructure program went into effect on December 11, 2005. Staff now proposes to set adult cash fares between the East Bay and Sonoma County and San Francisco at \$6.00, the approximate price prior to the fare restructure, effective January 15, 2006. This new fare would eliminate the current problem.

Next Steps

Following the public hearing, the staff recommendation, along with a summary of key comments made by the public, will be presented to the Finance-Auditing Committee at its regular meeting of January 12, 2006. The Finance-Auditing Committee’s recommendation will be referred to the Board of Directors for action the following day at its regular meeting.