



Item #11

UPDATED TEXT IN RED

DATE April 1st, 2020

TO GCTD Board of Directors

FROM Vanessa Rauschenberger, Director of Planning and Marketing *R*
Margaret Health, Paratransit and Special Projects Manager *M S*

SUBJECT **Receive Update on Actions Taken in Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency on Fixed-Route and Paratransit (ACCESS) AND Adopt Resolution 2020-02 of the Gold Coast Transit District Proclaiming A Local Emergency**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This item provides an update on GCTD's response to the emerging COVID-19 Public Health emergency and staff's efforts to reduce exposure risk to employees and the public. Public Transit is an essential service and as such, we will continue to operate to the maximum extent possible. Based on the declaration of a State of Emergency in the County of Ventura, including Statewide and Local Order to "Stay Home", GCTD's General Manager, Steve Brown issued a declaration of emergency on March 20th, 2020 to enable staff to take actions needed to carry out our mission during this time.

Staff is also recommending the Board of Directors adopt Resolution 2020-02 of Gold Coast Transit District Proclaiming A Local Emergency.

BACKGROUND

On Thursday evening, March 19th, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced a statewide shelter-in-place order, directing all California residents to stay home to help combat further spread of COVID-19, with the exception of essential service. To further combat the spread of COVID-19 locally, Ventura County Public Health issued a "Stay Well at Home" emergency order on Friday, March 20th. Public Health ordered all residents of the County of Ventura to stay inside their residences, and immediately limit all movement outside of their homes beyond what is absolutely necessary to take care of essential needs. GCTD strives to deliver safe, reliable, efficient service to the communities we serve, and we remain committed to continuing to do so to the furthest extent possible during this transformative event. Public Transportation is defined as an essential service, and therefore "exempt" from this order.

COVID-19 RESPONSIVE ACTIONS

Immediately after being notified by VC Public Health to prepare for social distancing, GCTD assembled an internal Task Force that meets weekly to monitor the evolving situation and take actions as needed. The General Manager sends weekly updates to employees via memo and office postings. Staff is also participating on weekly calls with other Ventura County Transit

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Operators. We continue to also monitor any and all emergency funding, that would help GCTD offset the costs incurred during this emergency.

Fixed-Route Operations - Bus Operators are provided with wipes / spray cleaner and gloves at check in and encouraged to stay home if sick or symptomatic. While physical distancing on buses poses a challenge, in order to maximize the physical distance between passengers and operators GCTD has taken action to eliminate fare collection, encourage rear door boarding when possible. Ridership on fixed-route buses is down by approx. 50% from our usual March ridership. This decrease in ridership allows for greater physical distancing.

Though public transit will remain operational during this time, we plan to adjust service levels to ensure we have adequate staffing coverage available to cover any sick and vacation requests we receive. Staff met and conferred with SEIU on the process for implementing an “expedited bid”, and will implement “modified Sunday Service levels” effective Sunday March 29, 2020. This reduced schedule would remain in effect through Saturday, May 2, 2020. GCTD will continually review conditions to determine when resumption of full service is possible. Human Resources is working with individual employees, including those with risk factors such as age to provide options for taking time off as needed. To minimize impact on service reduction to employees, we have added 5 full time detailer / ambassador positions to help with cleaning bus interiors, as well as four daily “stand-by” shifts to cover unexpected sick calls. GCTD will also be covering the gap in health benefits for people who lost full time status. Human Resources staff has been available for bus operator questions and assistance.

Maintenance - The maintenance department has implemented additional protocols for cleaning and disinfection of rolling stock, vehicles and all facilities daily. Stop checks are conducted in the AM and PM to ensure buses are sanitized before deployment. The recent addition of hand sanitizer stations, and wipes assist employees in their vigilance to practice safe protocols. High touch surfaces are cleaned regularly. Physical distancing is achieved in the operator break area by removal of excess furniture.

Customer Service Center - The Customer Service Center staff continues to operate during normal business hours (Monday-Friday, 7am -7pm) **via phone and email only**. Consistent with social distancing guidelines, no walk-up sales or transactions of any kind are available; however, questions may be fielded through the service window. Customers may also communicate by phone, 805-487-4222 or via email at customerservice@goldcoasttransit.org. For monthly pass holders, GCTD will publicize information on all available options at a later date.

Administration Office - Employees who have work that can be done from home are set up with remote access to work from home. If essential work is taking place in the office, employees are advised to maintain a physical distance of 6’ from other employees. The lobby is closed to visitors, except by appointment, and no meetings are scheduled on site. Teleconference is offered for

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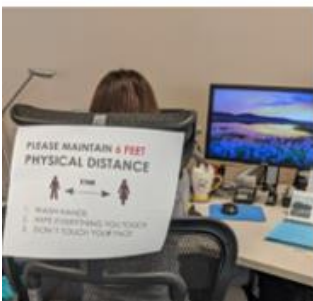
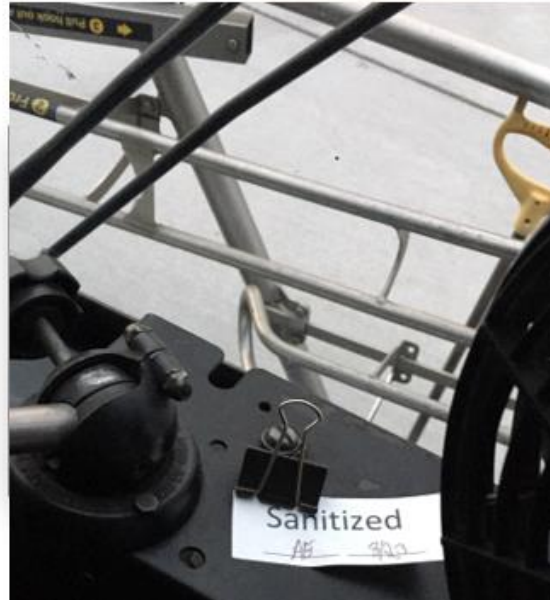
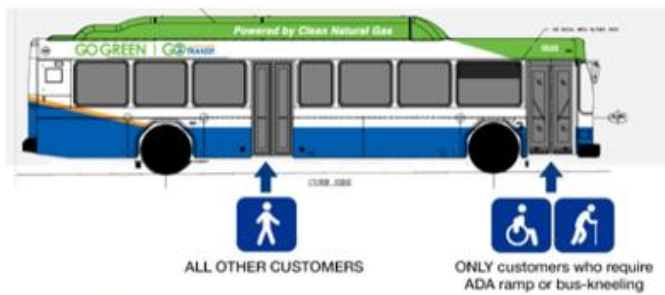
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group meetings, and employee meetings that do take place, are located in the Board room to facilitate physical distance.

Communications – GCTD created a COVID-19 information page on its website and is updated with the latest information. We are providing updates across social media channels and answers to passenger questions and concerns. A video documenting the additional cleaning activities of the buses was recorded and uploaded to social media and received positive reviews (viewed 2.6k times). On board information includes over 3,000 flyers (with more underway), along with posters with information on hygiene and other guidance. The customer service center remains open for phone calls from 7am to 7pm and is continuing to answer questions.



EXAMPLES OF COVID-19 RESPONSE AT GCTD

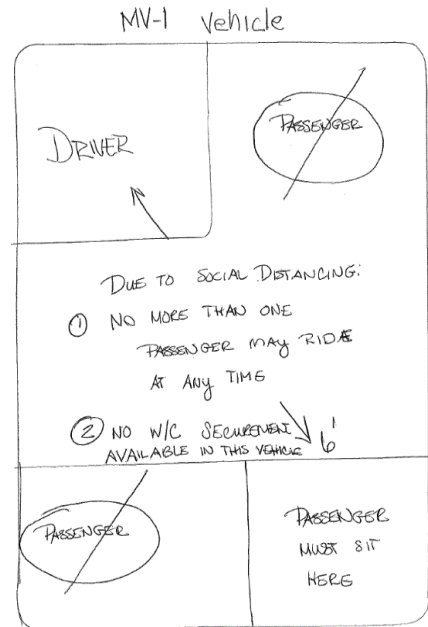


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Paratransit Operations (ACCESS) - Social distancing efforts are in place with our paratransit services as well. MV Transportation has implemented several actions aimed at protecting employees and passengers. Many ACCESS passengers have underlying conditions and are extremely vulnerable to complications that may arise from possible COVID-19 exposure.

- The “shared” ride model has been temporarily removed. Limits on passengers riding at one time in each vehicle type have been established to assure social distancing guidelines are followed to the maximum extent possible. Drivers received and reviewed a detailed memo of the various vehicle configurations, and where passengers may sit.
- Drivers are following the VCTC service model of exiting the vehicle before a passenger boards/alights to allow for proper physical distance.
- Passengers are advised during the reservation process, that currently the operator cannot provide hands on assistance to/from the curb. If the passenger needs this type of assistance, they are advised to bring a personal care attendant to accompany them, at no additional charge.



In addition, the entire local ACCESS team was broken into A/B teams to dilute the impact to operations if/when someone is exposed/infected. All staff must come in through a new employee entrance and wash their hands every time they go into the building.

Use of ACCESS Fleet and Staff to Provide Community Support - Due to the decrease in passenger boardings of 70%, a temporary workforce reduction was implemented by reducing staff to “half-time” work, which has helps alleviate the impact and allowed a retention of employees. We continue to collaborate with MV Transportation, Inc. to offer the use of ACCESS capacity for other community services. In order to enable us to do this, GCTD has applied for waivers from the FTA to reduce operating hours and for relief from ADA regulations in order to offer additional community support measure that would normally not be allowed under the FTA regulations. This includes Home Delivery and Charters (i.e. shuttle rental).

Grocery Delivery – GCTD offered to help the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging with food distribution to individuals using ACCESS vehicles and staff. This would protect staff and volunteers who assemble the grocery packages while allowing vulnerable individuals to remain in their homes as directed by Public Health. To date, we have received a call from a local resident who is trying to coordinate grocery delivery from a local store to his complex (250 residents). Staff advised the resident that ACCESS can mobilize quickly once the store has sorted through the grocery order processing.

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Transportation to Emergency Shelter – VCOES requested and received assistance re-locating individuals from the Emergency housing shelters to the Vagabond Inn in Ventura. Originally the request was for transporting 56 individuals on Saturday March 21st. The final tally was actually 30, as some folks refused to re-locate. ACCESS remains on standby and is able to mobilize quickly as requests for additional service come in.

STAFF RECOGNITION

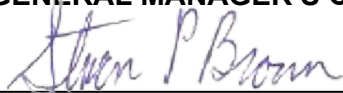
I want to recognize the dedication and commitment the staff, in particular our Bus Operators, who have shown their commitment to provide excellent customer service to our community. In this transformative time, staff continues to collaborate, adapt and navigate this unpredictable storm. Staff remains resolved to do our part to protect each other, our loved ones, and our community. We will get through this.



RECOMMENDATION

Receive update on actions taken in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
Staff recommends the Board Adopt Resolution 2020-02 of the Gold Coast Transit District Proclaiming A Local Emergency.

GENERAL MANAGER'S CONCURRENCE



Steven P. Brown
General Manager

Attachment: Resolution 2020-02 of Gold Coast Transit District - Proclaiming A Local Emergency
Attachment: General Manager's Declaration of Emergency - March 20, 2020

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RESOLUTION NO. 2020-02

RESOLUTION OF GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT PROCLAIMING A LOCAL EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the governing body of the GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT (“District”) has the authority to proclaim a local emergency; and

WHEREAS, California Government Code Section 3100 states that all public employees are declared to be disaster service workers subject to such disaster service activities as may be assigned to them by their superiors or by law, and the District needs to provide transportation services and support deemed as an essential public service; and

WHEREAS, any actions that the District may take to ensure the continuation of critical services to protect the safety of customers and to provide for immunities that will protect the District for actions taken, as covered under the California Emergency Services Act; and

WHEREAS, Government Code section 8634 allows special district boards and designated officials to enact rules and regulations to protect life and property during an emergency; and

WHEREAS, working with the County of Ventura, this proclamation authorizes the undertaking of powers and invoking and disseminating emergency orders (e.g., emergency orders, emergency spending authorities, emergency or pre-established contracting, order necessary Personal Protective Equipment, recovery, etc.) and regulations necessary to provide for the protection of life, property, and the environment; and

WHEREAS, conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the health and safety of persons and property have arisen both internationally and within the United States as a result of the introduction of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), a novel communicable disease which led to California Governor Gavin Newsom, to proclaim a State of Emergency for California on March 4, 2020; and

WHEREAS, currently COVID-19 has spread globally to more than 70 countries, infecting hundreds of thousands of persons and causing thousands of fatalities worldwide. Due to the expanding list of countries with widespread transmission of COVID-19, and increasing travel alerts and warnings for countries experiencing sustained or uncontrolled community transmission issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID-19 has created conditions that are likely to be beyond the control of local resources and require the combined forces of other political subdivisions to combat this virus; and

WHEREAS, the CDC confirmed person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 in the United States, raising the possibility of community transmission occurring in the general public. This has resulted in a Federal Declaration of National Emergency as declared by President Donald Trump on March 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, a statewide shelter-in-place order, directing all California residents to stay home was issued by California Governor Gavin Newsom on March 19, 2020; and

WHEREAS, a Local Stay Well At Home Order was proclaimed by the Ventura County Health Officer on March 20, 2020, ordering all residents of Ventura County to stay inside their residences, with an exception for essential services; and

WHEREAS, the District's ability to mobilize local resources, coordinate interagency response, accelerate procurement of vital supplies, use mutual aid, and seek future reimbursement by State and Federal governments will be critical to successfully responding to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, The District, as an essential service provider of public transit, will remain operational; and

WHEREAS, these conditions warrant and necessitate that the District proclaim the existence of a local emergency; and

WHEREAS, Government Code section 8685 et seq. allow special districts to receive an allocation of funds under the California Disaster Assistance Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the District Board of Directors hereby proclaims the existence of a local emergency and reaffirms the General Manager's declaration of March 20, 2020 and directs the District staff to take the necessary steps for the protection of life, health and safety.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that during the existence of said local emergency, the powers, functions, and duties of the District shall be those prescribed by state law and by ordinances and resolutions of the District Board of Directors.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the District General Manager or designee is hereby authorized to enact necessary rules and regulations to protect life and property during the state declared emergency.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that District staff shall review and revise their department emergency and contingency plans to address the risks COVID-19 poses to their critical functions.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that all District departments shall track costs for staffing, supplies, and equipment related to COVID-19 preparation and prevention and forward that information to the District's finance department.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the District General Manager is authorized and directed to take all measures to seek and recover disaster relief funding.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall take effect immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

**SIGNATURE PAGE
TO
RESOLUTION NO. 2020-02**

**THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT PASSED
AND ADOPTED RESOLUTION NO. _____ THIS 1st day of April 2020.**

Name: _____

Its: _____

ATTEST:



DATE Friday, March 20, 2020

TO All Employees

FROM Steve Brown, General Manager *SPB*

SUBJECT **Statewide and Ventura County “Stay Home” Order & Declaration of Emergency for Gold Coast Transit District**

On Thursday evening, March 19th, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced a statewide shelter-in-place order, directing all California residents to stay home to help combat further spread of coronavirus, with the exception of essential service. Additionally, on Friday, March 20, to further combat the spread of COVID-19, Ventura County Public Health issued a “Stay Well at Home” emergency order — ordering all residents of the County of Ventura to stay inside their residences, and immediately limit all movement outside of their homes beyond what is absolutely necessary to take care of essential needs. Essential services include things like grocery stores, pharmacies, laundry, medical, health care providers, public transportation, courts, and more. For a full list of essential services please visit: <https://www.vcemergency.com/staywellvc>

We remain committed to our mission to provide safe, reliable, efficient service to the communities we serve to the furthest extent possible. **As an essential service, Public Transit will remain operational. Employees who work for essential services such as public transit, are “exempt” from this order.**

Additionally, based on the declaration of a State of Emergency in the County of Ventura, **GCTD has also declared a state of emergency**, and will proceed to operate and take any necessary actions to carry out our mission while the emergency declaration for the County of Ventura is in effect. This includes making adjustments to fares, schedules and service levels as needed.

I want to recognize the dedication and commitment you all have shown to our community over these last few weeks. We are all doing our best to adapt and navigate this unpredictable storm. Please continue to follow all health expert guidelines to stay healthy (wash hands often, maintain a safe distance, etc.). And if you don't feel well, please stay home. We must all do our part to protect each other, our loved ones, and our community. We will get through this.

GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT