



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 02/07/2023

ITEM NO: 14

DATE: January 23, 2023
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Discuss Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Proposed Changes to Route 27 Weekend Bus Service

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) proposed changes to route 27 weekend bus service.

BACKGROUND:

VTA Bus Route 27 operates seven days a week from the Winchester Transit Center in Campbell to Los Gatos and then runs east on Blossom Hill to the Santa Teresa area of south San José. It is the only route that operates through downtown Los Gatos and serves between two to seven weekend passengers a day from the Town. See Attachment 1 for a route map.

DISCUSSION:

Increasing weekend traffic in downtown Los Gatos causes delays to the entire service route, particularly during the summer months and in the westbound direction. The buses can no longer keep to the schedule regardless of time allotted and often run over 30 minutes late due to congestion on Los Gatos Boulevard, Main Street, and Santa Cruz Avenue. The bus is also forced to make route detours during the Farmers' Market on Sundays. While the Route 27 bus sees average ridership levels of 473 on Saturdays and 256 on Sundays, only two to seven of these weekend passengers a day are from the downtown Los Gatos area.

Considering the low ridership from Los Gatos and to increase service reliability to hundreds of weekend riders of Route 27, VTA will be rerouting their bus to run on Saratoga-Los Gatos Road

PREPARED BY: Tracy Wang
Transportation and Mobility Manager

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Town Attorney, Finance Director, and Parks and Public Works Director

DISCUSSION (continued):

on weekends only, instead of operating on the congested downtown streets of Santa Cruz, Main, and University. VTA will also add one weekend bus stop on eastbound Saratoga-Los Gatos Road between Santa Cruz, and University Avenue. See Attachment 2 for a route map of the proposed route change.

This change is expected to impact between two to seven weekend riders from Los Gatos, who will need to board the bus at different locations. This change is expected to offer more reliable service that operates efficiently according to schedule. There will be no change to weekday service and no impact is anticipated for Los Gatos High School riders. This change is scheduled to be implemented on April 29, 2023. VTA will alert riders in advance by posting flyers at the affected bus stops in advance, communicating the service changes through brochure and posters on vehicles, VTA website service change notice, social media blog, Transit App alerts, and other communication channels.

CONCLUSION:

Reliable bus service is a critical factor to rider experience and retention. The service changes described in this report are scheduled to take affect at the end of April. VTA implements transit service changes four times per year in January, April, August and October. Major service changes (defined [here](#)) are typically implemented in January, while minor service changes are typically implemented in April, August, and October. Major service changes must be submitted to the VTA Board of Directors for review and approval. VTA staff considered this service change to be minor in compliance with VTA's Title VI Policy and it did not involve a decision from VTA's Board of Directors. To staff's knowledge, the Town has no say in this service modification.

COORDINATION:

This agenda item was coordinated with the Complete Streets Transportation Commission (CSTC) and VTA. The CSTC questioned whether the changes could be for a specific season instead of year-round and why changes must happen four times a year. The Commission also had concerns about the elimination of service accessibility through downtown on weekends. VTA staff answered these questions and concerns.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The discussion of the VTA service changes has no fiscal impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

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SUBJECT: Changes to VTA Bus Route 27

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Attachments:

1. Existing VTA Route 27 Map
2. Proposed VTA Route 27 Map Through Los Gatos