



Agenda Item #: \_\_\_\_\_

# Staff Report

## City of Manhattan Beach

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Montgomery and Members of the City Council

**THROUGH:** Geoff Dolan, City Manager

**FROM:** Lindy Coe-Juell, Assistant to the City Manager

**DATE:** December 2, 2008

**SUBJECT:** Authorize a Contract with Rural Transit Consultants for a Trolley System Assessment

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Council Sub-Committee (Mayor Montgomery and Councilmember Tell) and Staff recommend that the City Council authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Rural Transit Consultants for a trolley system needs assessment in an amount not to exceed \$27,000 and appropriate that amount from the City Council Contingency Fund.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATION:**

The City Council's Contingency Fund has a current balance of \$186,000.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The City Council's 2005-2007 Workplan included an item to consider the development of an east/west trolley service for the City of Manhattan Beach. The Council Sub-Committee worked with Staff to develop the proposed trolley system scope and to review potential service providers. In early 2006, an RFP was issued to 18 vendors and we received no responses. In June of 2006, the Redondo Beach based Beach Cities Transit was identified by the Sub-Committee and Staff as the most likely candidate for providing the service. Due to various issues, that possibility did not come to fruition.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Recently, we were introduced to Greg Meeks of Rural Transit Consultants through his consulting work with the Ocean Express, which is a trolley service that brings hotel guests from Century Boulevard to Manhattan Beach for shopping and dining. Through his work, Mr. Meeks has focused on the development of theme based trolley systems for small communities. He has established two successful trolley systems in California in Cambria and Avila Beach. Both of these systems were "turn-key" efforts where Rural Transit Consultants provided everything needed for start-up and operations. Mr. Meeks is currently developing a transit system for Panama City Beach in Florida.

This experience is attractive for the City of Manhattan Beach because the relatively small scale of a potential operation within our City was one of the primary reasons cited by the previous vendors who

declined to submit proposals. Staff called contacts in Cambria, Avila Beach and Panama City Beach that have worked with Greg Meeks to establish their trolley and transit systems. Each contact reported being very pleased with Mr. Meeks' work, the design of their systems and, in the case of Cambria and Avila Beach, with the operation of their trolley services. Based on this feedback and after holding several conversations with Mr. Meeks, we asked that he submit a formal proposal.

The Council Sub-Committee and Staff met to review the attached proposal from Mr. Meeks on November 5<sup>th</sup>. The proposal includes the following deliverables:

- A needs assessment to include one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders, two public meetings and meetings with Staff. This process will establish the greatest and most important transportation needs of the city.
- Detailed routes and schedules for a two trolley system serving the transportation needs identified in the needs assessment.
- A vehicle needs assessment with emphasis placed on establishing "green" transit.
- A detailed maintenance and safety program.
- Job costing for the Manhattan Beach trolley system for capital and operational costs over the first 5 years. This analysis will include an explanation of all grant possibilities.

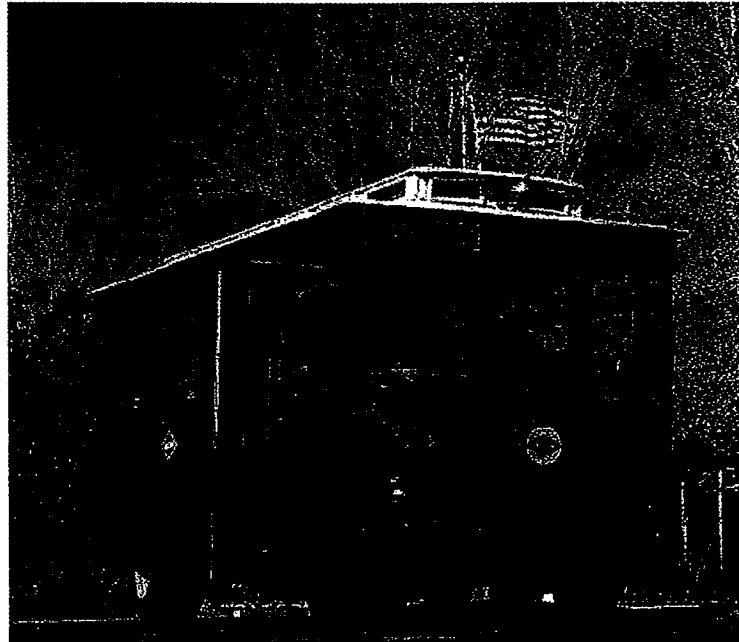
The Council Sub-Committee and Staff recommend proceeding with the trolley needs assessment proposal submitted by Mr. Meeks. If City Council decides to approve moving forward with the contract this evening, Mr. Meeks has stated that he will have the needs assessment completed in the first quarter of 2009 and that it would be possible to have a trolley service up and running by this summer.

**ATTACHMENT:** 2008 Rural Transit Consultants Proposal: The City of Manhattan Beach  
Trolley System Needs Assessment

**2008**

Rural Transit  
Consultants

Greg Meeks



# **THE CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH TROLLEY SYSTEM NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Imagine Green Transit



busman@rtconsultants.org

Greg Meeks

City of Manhattan Beach

Attn. Geoff Dolan

1400 Highland Ave

Manhattan Beach CA, 90266

Manhattan Beach caught my attention while I was working for Gate Way to LA on their expansion Project. I was impressed with your walkable downtown, your successful effort in creating Place, and your built in walkability to the neighborhoods close to the beach. All these community advantages help strengthen the potential success of a Trolley System designed for Manhattan Beach. I get excited when I think of the possibilities of capturing the imagination of the residents of Manhattan Beach centered on leaving their vehicle at home and taking the trolley. The success of theme vehicles like trolleys in coastal beach communities in California and Florida has been established over the last ten years. My company Rural Transit Consultants has had a privileged role of establishing two systems in California, while working on one presently in Florida. Our two systems in California are located in Cambria and Avila Beach. Both of these Cities were set-up as "Turn-Key" efforts where RTC provided everything needed for system start-up and operations. We also operated these systems for three years during their start-up periods. Both

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systems were modeled under State Public Transit guidelines for present and future funding. The goal of Public Transit is to encourage people to ride. We started both systems as standalone Free Systems built on the State of California Formula of 10% Fare box contribution. In California a 90%-10% partnership can be created if the City served commits to cover 10% of the operational costs. We used a creative formula to keep both of these systems running free for ten years and five years respectively. Manhattan Beach's partnership percentage may be greater depending on county population guidelines.

Rural Transit Consultants was asked to prepare a proposal that would encompass all aspects needed in establishing a Manhattan Beach Trolley System. The proposal will include one primary Trolley Route serving the greatest needs and the most people. A secondary route will be established which complements the primary route and establishes a Trolley System that serves all major stakeholders in Manhattan Beach.

Rural Transit Consultants will provide the following deliverables within a ninety day timetable.

- 1) RTC will conduct a **Needs Assessment** including all Manhattan Beach Stakeholders. This assessment will include ten days of on the ground research. The research will encompass one-to-one meetings with key stakeholders, two public meetings and unlimited meetings with Manhattan Beach City Staff. This process of establishing the greatest and most important transportation needs of the city will be open for addition and review until start of service. This review process will be guided by city staff and driven by city goals and objectives. (80 hours)
- 2) RTC will provide **Routes and Schedules** for a two bus system serving all major stakeholders in the City of Manhattan Beach. The needs assessment process will help in establishing the greatest needs for transportation in the community. These needs will be posted on a map of Manhattan Beach and dialogue for priority will be overlaid against route drivability. The

results will be two complimentary routes with thirty minute headways serving all major stakeholders with in the city. (Route Maps with Stops & Times 50 hrs)

- 3) RTC will provide a ***Vehicle Needs Assessment*** for present and future needs with emphasis placed on establishing Green Transit. The assessment is needed in placing the best theme vehicle in service based on the cities needs and budget. Capital costs can be a major challenge in starting a trolley system. RTC will plan a phase in approach. The first phase will recommend temporary vehicles for the first couple of years while environmentally vehicles can be planned for. Green vehicle options are changing monthly with grant opportunities eighteen to twenty-four months down the road. RTC will assist Manhattan Beach in selecting the most appropriate vehicle while identifying grant opportunities. (30 hours)
- 4) RTC will develop ***a maintenance and safety program*** for vehicle longevity and passenger safety. A trolley or theme vehicle when maintained correctly and driven safely can last twice as long as a transit bus. RTC will help establish helpful practices for vehicle longevity and accident free driving. (15 hours) Optional
- 5) RTC will make available a job costing for a trolley system with a one or two vehicle option. A spreadsheet will be supplied with capital and operational costs through the first five years of operation. An explanation of grant possibilities will be noted when applicable to capital of operational needs. (20 hours)

### **Cost Summary and Deliverables**

1.) Needs Assessment (80 hours @ \$125.00 per hr.)	\$10,000.00
2.) Routing, Times & Schedules (50 hours @ \$125.00)	\$ 6,250.00
3.) Vehicle Assessment ( 30 hours @ \$125.00)	\$ 3,750.00
4.) Maintenance & Safety (15 hours @ \$125.00) Optional	\$ 1,850.00
5.) Projects Costs ( 20 hours @ \$125.00)	\$ 2,500.00
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	\$ 24,350.00

### **Travel Expenses**

Ten days per Diem @ \$200.00 per day	\$ 2,000.00
Five trips from Solvang, CA to Manhattan Beach	
1300 miles @ .43 per mile.	\$ 559.00
Total Expenses	\$ 2,559.00

Total Costs + Expenses **\$ 26,909.00**

RTC is available to start as soon as October with a completion goal of January 2009. This time table would then provide ninety days for vehicle selection, start-up tasks including signage and marketing material. This would provide a possible start date of late May or early June.

Yours in Service

Greg Meeks

Rural Transit Consultants.

References

- 1) Jim Gant P.E. Redevelopment Senior Project Manager Panama City Beach Florida. (850 236-4868) This has been a project that I have worked on over the last three years. It is on going. The website for the project is [www.pcbonthemove.com](http://www.pcbonthemove.com)
- 2) Ben Bore Cambria Community Services District. (805 927-6223)



We started this Trolley Project in May of 1998 with a Feasibility Study, start-up with operations through 2005. The system still operates on a donation basis five days per week in the summer and four days a week in the off season.

3) Boyd Horn Avila Beach Community Foundation. (805 595-2213)

We provided a Feasibility Study, Needs Assessment and Operations for three years. We won the *Tranny Award* for the best transit system in the State of California in 2004. This system operates on weekends year round on a donation basis.

