THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date: May 26, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 Supplemental Transit Operations Support Contract with Young Transportation

Staff Resource(s): Ken Putnam, Transportation Department Director
Jessica Morriss, Assistant Transportation Department Director

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract with Young Transportation in an amount not to exceed $962,000 to provide supplemental transit operations support for the City of Asheville in an effort to restore portions of fixed-route transit services that have been reduced due to COVID-19 impacts to service capacity; and a budget amendment in the Transit Services Fund in the amount of $962,000 from CARES Act funding to provide budget authorization for the contract cost.

Background:

- The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the City of Asheville's fixed-route transit service, Asheville Rides Transit (ART), in a number of specific ways that have resulted in the need to reduce transit service.
- Specifically, social distancing requirements have necessitated limiting the number of people on a bus to 10 (including the driver). This has essentially reduced the overall service capacity by more than 50%, resulting in instances of overcrowding and not being able to pick up all riders.
- Additionally, staffing levels at ART have also been impacted, both due to COVID-19, natural employee turnover, and nationwide driver shortage, which has been exacerbated by COVID-19.
- Staffing shortages contributed to the need to cut 3 routes (170, S6, and one bus on WE1 route) in March, which has had a significant negative impact on many ART riders.
- Approximately $3.75 million in CARES Act funding has been provided to the City of Asheville specifically to be used for transit expenses related to COVID-19, including expenses related to purchasing operational support.
- The City released an RFP on May 13 requesting proposals to provide supplemental transit operations support, specifically requesting the provision of large vehicles and drivers to be used 12 hours per day in order to cover the peak ridership times of day on the 3 routes that were previously cut (170, S6, WE1). The contractor may also be asked to provide pick-ups and drop-offs to aid in overcrowding being experienced due to the 10-person limit per bus.
- It is unknown how long these services will continue to be necessary, though it is likely that it will no longer be needed when ART staffing levels return to normal and physical distancing measures are no longer required.
- The $962,000 cost to be authorized is a maximum amount and includes 4 buses for 12 hours per day, operating 7 days per week, between June 1 and December 31. It is possible that the number of buses per day needed may be less than 4 on any given day, and it is possible that the City may not need the additional support through December, however staff requests authorization for this maximum amount in case it is needed. Any remaining funds would be returned to the Transit Operations Fund.
- This supplemental service is not new or supplanted service and has no impact on the existing contract with RATPDev, Inc. or the Collective Bargaining Agreement between RATPDev, Inc. and its staff.

Vendor Outreach Efforts:

- A Request for Proposals was issued and posted on the City's bid page as well as the State Department of Administration Historically Underutilized Business website.

- The City received one proposal from a minority/woman-owned business based in Winter-Garden, Florida; however the proposal did not meet the selection criteria as well as Young Transportation's proposal and therefore was not selected.

Council Goal(s):
- Transportation and Accessibility.

Committee(s):
- None

Pro(s):
- The contract will provide service 12-hours per day to cover peak ridership times, primarily on the 3 routes that were previously cut. The contractor may also provide service to pick up and drop off riders that may be left at a stop due to the bus being full as a result of the 10-person limit.
- CARES Act funding can be used to fund this contract, rather than City funds.

Con(s):
- The cost to procure additional private services to supplement our fixed-route transit service.

Fiscal Impact:
- The contract is for a not-to-exceed amount of $962,000. CARES Act funding will be used to fund these services, and there is a 0% City match required.
- A budget amendment is needed in order to provide sufficient budget authorization to encumber the contract in the current year Transit Services Fund budget.

Suggested Motion:
- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract with Young Transportation in an amount not to exceed $962,000 to provide supplemental transit operations support for the City of Asheville in an effort to restore portions of fixed-route transit services that have been reduced due to COVID-19 impacts to service capacity; and a budget amendment in the Transit Services Fund in the amount of $962,000 from CARES Act funding to provide budget authorization for the contract cost.

Attachment(s)
- Resolution
- Budget Amendment

RESOLUTION NO. 20-____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH YOUNG TRANSPORTATION TO PROVIDE SUPPLEMENTAL TRANSIT OPERATIONS SUPPORT FOR THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE IN AN EFFORT TO RESTORE PORTIONS OF FIXED-ROUTE TRANSIT SERVICES THAT HAVE BEEN REDUCED DUE TO COVID-19 IMPACTS TO SERVICE CAPACITY

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has authority pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143 -129 for letting of public contracts; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville issued a competitive request for proposals for the purpose of providing supplemental transit operations services in an effort to restore portions of fixed-route transit services that have been reduced due to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the CIty of Asheville received two proposals, scoring the proposals using criteria, including overall cost, approach to providing supplemental services, and experience providing transportation and/or transit services;

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has selected Young Transportation to provide daily supplemental transit operations services for the City of Asheville;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager to execute a contract with Young Transportation in an amount not to exceed $962,000 to provide supplemental transit operations support for the City of Asheville in an effort to restore portions of fixed-route transit services that have been reduced due to COVID-19 impacts to service capacity.

Read, approved and adopted this the 26th day of May, 2020.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney

ORDINANCE NO. _____

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

That the City of Asheville Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget Ordinance be amended to provide an appropriation of $962,000 as a grant from Federal Transit Administration (FTA) CARES Act funds as follows:

TRANSIT SERVICES FUND

Revenues:

CARES Act Revenue	$962,000
Total Revenues	$962,000

Appropriations:

Contracted Services	$962,000
Total Appropriations	$962,000

That this ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon the date of final passage.

Read, approved and adopted this 26th day of May, 2020.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney