

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jason E. Brown; County Administrator

THROUGH: Stan Boling, AICP
Community Development Director

FROM: Phil Matson, AICP
MPO Staff Director

DATE: January 10, 2017

SUBJECT: Update on GoLine Beachside Circulator (Route 16)

It is requested that the data herein presented be given formal consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at its regular meeting of January 17, 2017.

DESCRIPTION & CONDITIONS

The Senior Resource Association (SRA), a private, non-profit organization, serves as Indian River County's Transit Coordinator and Service Provider. In response to a much-publicized parking problem in the Central Vero Beach business district that affected workers and visitors alike, the SRA in 2015 sought and obtained funding for a new bus route, the Route 16. That route expanded transit offerings to the public and connected major attractions in the area to several parking locations. The new route also connected to GoLine Route 1, enabling riders to access Miracle Mile and the Main Transit Hub with a single transfer.

The new "Beach Circulator" route was paid for by a grant from FDOT covering 80% of the total cost. To obtain the remaining local match, the SRA issued an RFP and received a 20% local match from an area business, Heaton Companies, owners of the Vero Beach Hotel and Spa. Despite local efforts to promote the new route, including a restructuring that was completed in November of 2016, ridership on the route has been disappointing and, with fewer than 30 passengers/day, has not met the minimal standard established in the MPO's Transit Development Plan (TDP). Given the lack of ridership, and in the interest of being responsible stewards of public funding, the SRA has decided **to discontinue service on Route 16** effective January 29th, 2017.

Indian River County, the SRA and Heaton properties have agreed to dissolve their agreement covering the local match, and the SRA will be refunding the pro-rated balance of local sponsorship money to Heaton. The MPO has been in contact with FDOT regarding the remaining grant balance and the MPO and SRA are working to identify alternative uses for the grant funding. It is possible that the Beach Circulator grant funding may be directed toward new stops that can be added to

existing routes, as the MPO and SRA are planning to restructure several routes in the Spring of 2017 in conjunction with the opening of the new transit hub. If the grant funds cannot be reprogrammed to eligible service, they will be returned to FDOT. Regardless of whether any other service can be identified in the corridor, FDOT has assured staff that it will continue to partner with Indian River County on future grant opportunities to promote transit service throughout the county.

FUNDING

Funds for Route 16 were provided by FDOT and Heaton Companies. There is no impact to County funds resulting from this action.

RECOMMENDATION

This is an informational item.