

## CHAPTER 6

# Capital Alternatives

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Before transit services can be provided, a variety of capital items are required. These capital items required for public transit service may consist of vehicles, vehicle maintenance, and management facilities, passenger amenities such as shelters and benches, and park-and-ride facilities. This chapter describes the types of capital equipment that would be needed for the service alternatives presented in the previous chapter.

### VEHICLE NEEDS

#### Dial-a-ride and Route Deviation Van

Providing the dial-a-ride and/or the route deviation service would require acquisition of a 12-passenger, wheel-chair accessible van. With no alternative fueling stations available on the coast, the van would be gasoline fueled. This type of vehicle currently costs approximately \$77,000. The existing CRC van could be used as a back-up vehicle.

#### Trolley

If a rubber-tired trolley service were established, this would require the purchase or lease of a trolley. Costs of a new trolley start at around \$250,000. While used trolleys are available, the quality of these vehicles varies widely, and reliability of used trolley vehicles has been a problem for some services. If the service is tried on an experimental basis, it is recommended that a trolley be leased, which costs approximately \$3,500 per month. Including the time necessary for delivery and installation of signage, a trolley would probably need to be leased for four months each summer, for an annual capital cost on the order of \$14,000. Note that this capital cost is not part of the cost evaluation in the services alternatives table. Unless a second trolley is provided, moreover, a van would need to be operated on those days when the single trolley is under repair.

### MANAGEMENT EQUIPMENT

#### Office Equipment for Mobility Manager

It is assumed that under the service alternatives that use MTA, management of the service will be accommodated within the existing organizational structure and office infrastructure in Ukiah. If CRC provides service using paid drivers, there will be some associated dispatching needs, and these too are assumed to be provided using existing volunteer staff and the office space available to CRC. However, if the CRC transit program is expanded, a budget of approximately \$4,000 should be provided to purchase office equipment including a computer with Internet access, office supplies, and phone equipment. Additionally, if a mobility manager position is established, rideshare software should be purchased.

## **BUS SHELTERS, BENCHES, AND SIGNS**

The "street furniture" provided by a transit operation is an important component of the system's attractiveness to both passengers and non-passengers. Bus benches and shelters can play a large role in improving the overall image of a transit system, and in improving the convenience of transit as a travel mode. More importantly, shelter is vital to those waiting for buses in poor weather conditions.

### **Transit Plaza**

Gualala has been chosen as a grant recipient for a downtown streetscape project. This provides a good opportunity to develop a "Transit Plaza" as part of this project, to accommodate current and future transit ridership. MTA buses currently pull into the parking lot in front of the flagpole by Gualala Grocery. While adequate, this arrangement does not provide a good waiting environment for passengers, does not provide a strong public image for the transit program, and can result in some delays to the transit services, particularly in the evenings when the parking lot tends to become more congested.

Building and designing a Transit Plaza would provide a safe, attractive location for passengers to wait, transfer, and obtain transit information. Optimally, this facility would provide the following:

- A loop driveway to provide an off-street opportunity for transit vehicles to turn around. This is particularly important if new services are added that terminate in Gualala.
- Bays for a minimum of two vehicles at a time, of sufficient size to allow both vehicles to enter and exit the facility regardless of whether a vehicle is in the other bay.
- A shelter, enclosed on at least three sides with glass to protect against the elements and provide visibility and thus security.
- Lighting inside and outside of the shelter.
- Bicycle racks.
- Benches placed both inside and outside of the shelter.
- A sign for posters with transit information and brochures would be placed on one or two walls.

While passenger facilities for larger systems typically provide fully enclosed waiting areas and restrooms, the additional capital and maintenance costs associated with such a facility are not warranted here.

The cost of designing and building a Transit Plaza with these amenities would depend greatly on the availability and cost of land, the level of "finish" desired, and the ability to share design and construction costs with the remainder of the streetscape program. A reasonable estimate for

design and construction is on the order of \$400,000. Maintenance and repair of vandalism to bus benches and shelters is a very minor cost, as modern benches and shelters are very durable and resistant to vandalism.

### **Bus Signs**

Signed stops not only identify the location of a stop, but advertise to all who drive by that there is a bus service. Signs are a keystone of a transit marketing program. Particularly on routes where vehicles can only be seen on the routes a few times per day, signs provide an important on-street marketing tool for visitors and residents alike who are unfamiliar with the service. In addition to identifying the service, signs should provide a phone number to call for additional information on routes and schedules.

The Ridge Route service, for example, would require approximately twelve signs. The cost of a bus stop depends on the condition of the road, and can be substantial if shoulder widening to allow buses to pull out of traffic is warranted. Assuming that widening is not required, costs are limited to the purchase and installation of a post and sign. A unit cost of around \$200 per sign is typical, or \$2,400 for 12 signs.

Signs with a unique logo would be necessary if a trolley program were to be implemented. The number of stops would depend upon the route and possibly the number of participating lodging properties and other commercial properties. A reasonable estimate would be 30 individual stops, requiring on the order of \$6,000.