



LAMORINDA SERVICE PLAN

Existing Conditions Report Executive Summary

December 2014



Lamorinda Service Plan – Existing Conditions Report Executive Summary
County Connection

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STUDY PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this study is to identify and investigate different transportation alternatives in the Lamorinda area. While the focus is on public transportation options, other alternatives will also be considered based on their ability to meet community needs in providing transportation. This study is funded by County Connection in partnership with the City of Lafayette, Orinda and the Town of Moraga. The study is guided by County Connection staff and members of the Lamorinda Program Management Committee Technical Advisory Committee (LPMC-TAC).

This Executive Summary is a high level overview of the study's Existing Conditions Report which is the first component of the plan. This document provides a baseline of existing public and private transportation options in the area, a quantitative and qualitative review of transportation demand, and a summary of feedback and input received from area residents, transportation providers, and other organizations.

APPROACH

In advance of a conversation regarding future transportation options in the Lamorinda Area, a comprehensive understanding of current services, their advantages, shortcomings, and a general understanding of transportation needs of the study area must exist. As part of the existing conditions phase of this project, the project team captured information across several important categories:

- **Existing transportation services** including publicly supported services (such as County Connection, the Lamorinda School Bus Program, and the Lamorinda Spirit Van) and other transportation activities in the area (Casual Carpool, etc.)
- **Demographic trends** that are occurring in Lamorinda including resident age, income, and vehicle ownership
- **Commute patterns** from Lamorinda including where people travel and how they get there
- **Community input** regarding current transportation options, challenges and future interests

This combination of information helps paint a picture for the project team about specific needs to be addressed and preliminary tools or service concepts that could be implemented to help tackle those challenges.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Based on the information captured in this first phase of the project, the following transportation needs are considered to be the highest priorities to be addressed in the next phase of this study:

- **Commuter Alternatives:** One of the highlighted issues is the lack of access alternatives to BART due to constrained parking. Since BART is unlikely to expand its parking capacity in Orinda or Lafayette, other transportation policies or options must be explored. In addition, commute patterns and options themselves have changed over the

past several decades. Thus, commuter options beyond BART should be explored as not all commuter trip patterns are met by existing regional transit. Potential concepts that could help meet these needs are introduced in the following section.

- **Senior Mobility Choices:** Several senior mobility programs have been highlighted as part of the Existing Conditions Report; however it is unclear if the piecemeal nature of different services can meet the pace of growth in senior transportation demand within the Lamorinda area. Furthermore, it is not clear whether current senior transportation service options can provide the level of flexibility and on-demand independence that many aging adults will prefer.
- **School Trips:** The combination of the Lamorinda School Bus Program and Student Pass program does an excellent job of reducing the number of unnecessary vehicle trips on the road today. However, traffic congestion around schools during bell times (morning and afternoon) still have been described as a community issue that can be improved.
- **Community Trips:** Much of the focus thus far has been on inter-city and regional trips. However, existing businesses, commerce, and services within each the Lamorinda area creates a need for intra-Lamorinda trips. While Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda are relatively small, there are numerous trips that require a vehicle because they are outside of a simple or safe walk. As validated by the community survey, the next phase of the study will focus on trips within each of the communities and potential service options.

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

At this phase of the project, a broad range of options should remain on the table for further investigation. However, the project team has begun to brainstorm numerous concepts and service delivery models that might be a suitable fit for the Lamorinda area. For the time being, these concepts are preliminary and will be further evaluated in the next phase of the project.

Commuter Alternatives

- Increase frequency of existing County Connection services in the Lamorinda area. Ridership has increased in the last four years and may further benefit from frequency improvements.
- Develop BART feeder shuttles or van services.
 - These could be useful in conjunction with satellite parking, if provided, as well as for home-based trips to BART. For home-based trips, assess the demand for a vanpool subscription-type service, whereby residents commuting to BART can sign up for a monthly vanpool to BART.
 - Examine the feasibility of sharing vehicles with Spirit Van to support this service.
- Develop a demand-response zone-based service to cover the Lamorinda area. This service could be modeled after the Denver Regional Transportation District Call-n-Ride service.
- Consider a marketing and informational campaign to promote the use of carpooling to/from the Lamorinda area for longer-distance trips (such as to San Francisco, Alameda County, and Santa Clara County).
- Investigate the feasibility of employing mobile phone-based on-demand options including ridesharing models (e.g. Carma/CarmaHop, Commutr, HellaRides, MetroBee).

Senior Mobility Choices

- Consider the creation of community bus or “service route” type options to address senior needs. This service model is intended to increase residents’ proximity to service availability. Because this approach increases travel time, it is most appropriate for individuals who value proximity over speed.
- Support ongoing efforts for mobility management in the Lamorinda area, which includes vehicle sharing (e.g. Spirit Van, Link, and Senior Helpline Services).
- Investigate the feasibility of employing peer-to-peer transportation models for seniors in the Lamorinda area (e.g. Lift Hero).
- Examine the applicability of a deviated fixed route service for ADA-certified passengers and/or seniors. The San Joaquin Regional Transit District has a similar service branded as “The Hopper,” which is an ADA-focused service.
- Examine how the changing market for senior housing is affecting senior transportation needs in the Lamorinda area. There is a new emphasis on solutions that enable aging in place and increasing options for “healthcare in the home.”

School Trips

- Consider staggering school start times to reduce congestion near schools in the morning and assess the ability of existing school transportation services (the Lamorinda School Bus program and County Connection School Tripper routes) to serve schools with staggered times.
- Assess the feasibility of increasing funding for the Lamorinda School Bus program to increase service availability and/or reduce costs to families.
- Investigate the feasibility of employing mobile phone-based on-demand options for school-based trips (e.g. Shuddle).

Community Trips

- Assess the need for a lunchtime circulator in downtown Lafayette and assess the feasibility of a business partnership to fund such a service.
- Investigate the feasibility of employing mobile phone-based on-demand options including Transport Network Companies (e.g. Uber, Lyft, Sidecar) and taxi-based services (e.g. Flywheel, Curb) for community-based trips.
- Examine how the changing market for senior housing is affecting senior transportation needs in the Lamorinda area. There is a new emphasis on solutions that enable aging in place and increasing options for “healthcare in the home.”

NEXT STEPS

The Project Team will use the basis of findings from the Existing Conditions Report and these preliminary concepts as a platform to further refine potential service alternatives in the Lamorinda Area. Future alternatives will be evaluated in terms of their benefits, costs, and other criteria to be determined by the project team in the next phase of the project.