



**School Bus  
Consultants**

**PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE:  
SCHOOL BUS STOP SAFETY STUDY**

Lamorinda School Bus Program

November 4, 2016



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Juliet Hansen, Program Manager  
Via email: JHansen@ci.lafayette.ca.us

Dear Ms. Hansen:

School Bus Consultants, LLC (SBC) is pleased to submit this proposal to assist the Lamorinda School Bus Program (LSBP) with an evaluation of its school bus stops and routing structure. As an introduction, we would like to highlight these aspects of our firm:

- ***Highly relevant qualifications and experience specific to student transportation*** – SBC was formed from the consulting divisions of the two largest companies in North America dedicated to providing professional services to the student transportation industry. Collectively, our team has performed hundreds directly relevant consulting projects addressing every aspect of student transportation, including direct experience with TRAFFIX and Marin County Transit.
- ***Unmatched understanding of school bus operations*** – In addition to our extensive consulting background, our staff has direct experience with school bus operations and management as directors of transportation, route planners, and safety experts.
- ***A commitment to practical solutions*** – Every project we undertake begins with a fundamental understanding of the need to produce tangible results for our clients. We define success by the implementation of our recommendations and the realization of measurable improvement in our client organizations.

We look forward to the prospect of working with the LSBP on this important project. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding our proposal at 888-506-3413 extension 702.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Ammon', with a stylized flourish above the name.

Tim Ammon  
Chief Business Development Officer

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***Moving Student Transportation Forward***

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## Scope of Services

The Lamorinda School Bus Program LSBP currently provides transportation services to 1,500 students on 22 school buses. LSBP provides this service by means of a contract with a private school bus operator, First Student, whose current contract runs through FY 2017-18. The purpose of this proposal is to describe services that would examine all existing bus stops and bus routes for the purpose of verifying their safety and utility as the LSBP plans for changes to, and possible expansion of the program.

The work plan will focus on developing a safe, effective, efficient, and sustainable system of bus routes. The primary output of our proposed work plan will be a complete and comprehensive set of bus routes, including all of the detail required to operate the same. The primary mechanism to achieve this aim will be a comprehensive on-site review of all existing bus stops coupled with the data capture required to plan bus routes using the validated, and in some cases newly changed bus stops, in a computerized bus routing software. The specific elements to be addressed in the work plan will include those identified in the RFP for these services:

- Meet with LSBTA staff and First Student to review existing school bus routes, bus stops, student data, etc.
- Conduct field work to evaluate each bus route and bus stop.
- As necessary, observe bus routes in operation in real time.
- Identify stops which comply with the CVC Section 22504 and other applicable laws.
- Identify stops which may not comply with the CVC Section 22504 or other applicable laws.
- Identify safety issues including, but not limited to, sight distance, overgrown vegetation, lane width, walkability and parent parking.
- Identify any safety issues with regard to red light crossings.

The results of our proposed work plan will be provided as a draft first, and will then be presented, discussed, and adjusted through a series of onsite meetings with stakeholders as called for in the RFP. Specifically, the results will provide recommendations coinciding with those required by the RFP:

- Identify options for bus stops not in compliance.
- Identify alternate bus routes, if recommended. If driving to a bus stop is required, identify locations for parent parking near the stop.
- Identify number of buses, bus type, size and capacity for recommended changes.
- Identify changes in driver behavior, as observed, which could improve bus stop safety.
- Provide cost analysis for recommended changes.
- Provide recommendations for procedures for establishment of bus stops in the future.

The following work plan details the specific tasks that SBC will accomplish as a means of achieving these objectives.



## Task 1: Preliminary Research & Project Startup

The SBC project team will begin this project by reviewing the history and operations of the Lamorinda School Bus Program (LSBP), and thoroughly researching and understanding the California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 22504 and other applicable laws as they apply to the requirements of this project. In addition, we will design and construct a comprehensive bus stop database that will be utilized to document and capture data specific to each bus stop during the field work to follow. This database will include the capability to capture:

- Geographic location (Latitude/Longitude);
- Spatial description (i.e., street address or intersection);
- Location description (e.g., waiting area for students, surrounding obstructions, parking for parents, etc.);
- Images for future evaluation;
- Relevant safety observations (e.g., line of site issues, red light crossings, lanes of traffic, etc.);
- Relevant compliance observations; and
- A definitive notation of safe or unsafe, in compliance or not.

SBC will also establish an instance of the *Routefinder Pro* school bus routing software by *Transfinder* under a licensing arrangement SBC maintains with this industry partner. SBC will utilize this industry-leading software to conduct all analytical tasks after the data capture, to include the documentation of all bus routes and recommended changes.

Following this preliminary work, the SBC project team will conduct its first onsite visit during the week of December 12, 2016<sup>1</sup>. The purpose of this visit will be twofold: First, it will be used to conduct a comprehensive project kickoff where all stakeholders are brought together such that SBC can review the work plan, approach, timeline, and expected outcomes for the project. The goal is to establish transparency, reach consensus, and generally to establish a positive working environment for the project. The second objective will be to complete all familiarization interviews and meetings as called for in the scope of work defined by the RFP.

## Task 2: Field Work

Following the first site visit, the SBC team will consolidate its understanding concerning the LSBP and conduct detailed planning for the field work to be conducted during a series of site visits in January and early February, 2017. This field work will be planned and conducted methodically, such that all routes and each constituent bus stop is visited and evaluated, and routes observed in operation, as required and dictated by circumstance. More specifically, the SBC team will:

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<sup>1</sup> Note: All dates quoted in this proposal assume approval and notice of award in accordance with the schedule established in the RFP. Any delay will cause a proportional adjustment to these dates.



- Visit with bus vendor and LSBP staff to discuss the current bus routes (positives, negatives, challenges);
- Sequentially, over three weeks, travel every bus route, pausing at each stop to evaluate visually and to create the bus stop dB using GPS data capture devices, cameras, and manual data entry; and
- Conclude the field work by conducting debrief meetings with LSBP and bus vendor staff.

### Task 3: Analysis & Reporting

The analytical work will commence immediately after the first field work is conducted, and will be ongoing throughout that phase of the project and following. The core of the analysis will be to research and develop options for each existing stop deemed to be inadequate, ineffective, unsafe, or not in compliance. In addition, SBC will populate the *Transfinder* software with all existing routes and stops for the purpose of first documenting the current state, and then to complete any recommended alterations to include any recommended bus stop or bus route changes. The objective will be to develop proposed route modifications based on the result of the stop analysis and to garner any potential routing efficiencies.

The primary output of our work will be a complete set of bus routes and schedules, including all of the data and detail required to operate these routes successfully and to keep them current and up to date. These will also be presented graphically with maps. We will also, however, provide a comprehensive project report that describes the process, methodology, findings, and results of our work. This will include observations, analyses and findings of existing conditions, and preliminary recommendations.

The first draft for these deliverables will be developed and submitted to the LSBP Develop by February 24, 2017 as per the requirements of the RFP. The second draft, which will incorporate initial feedback, and will add an Executive Summary plus observations and recommendations for each bus route, will be delivered by March 24, 2017. The final deliverables will incorporate all additional input received and will be delivered by May 15, 2017.

### Task 4: Presentations, Adjustments, & Finalization

Following the delivery of the first draft, the project will enter the final phase whereby the results are presented, discussed, adjusted as required, and finalized in a series of meetings and presentations. The SBC team will prepare and provide all presentations and will attend all meetings as required by the RFP, including:

- Week of February 27, 2017 to meet with the project subcommittee;
- Week of March 27, 2017 to meet with the project subcommittee, as/ if required;
- April 24, 2017 for the LSBTA Board Meeting, (public hearing/workshop); and
- May 8, 2017 LSBTA Board Meeting (public hearing/workshop), as/ if required.

SBC will make any required adjustments to the deliverables and submit the final results not later than May 15, 2017 in preparation for the May 22, 2017 meeting at which it is expected that the LSBTA will adopt the final routes and bus stops for the 2017-18 school year.



## Project Schedule Summary

In summary, the following key milestones will be achieved over the course of the project:

- |                                                  |                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Project kickoff meetings and onsite discovery | Week of December 12, 2016          |
| 2. Field work for data collection                | January through mid-February, 2017 |
| 3. Delivery of first draft results               | February 24, 2017                  |
| 4. Subcommittee meeting 1 of 2                   | Week of February 27, 2017          |
| 5. Delivery of second draft results              | March 24, 2017                     |
| 6. Subcommittee meeting 2 of 2                   | Week of March 27, 2017             |
| 7. LSBTA meeting 1 of 2                          | April 24, 2017                     |
| 8. LSBTA meeting 2 of 2                          | May 8, 2017                        |
| 9. Delivery of final results                     | May 15, 2017                       |



## Company Qualifications



School Bus Consultants, LLC (SBC), formerly known as Management Partnership Services, Inc. (MPS) is the largest consulting company in North America dedicated to the student transportation industry. We have performed more than 400 consulting projects of various sizes and types for more than 250 clients in 41 states and 3 Canadian provinces. Our clients have included rural, suburban, and urban operations with both contracted and client-owned operations. We have also worked with state student transportation agencies, regional cooperative

transportation organizations, private investment firms, private sector transportation providers, and student transportation professional associations.

A total of nine full time staff consultants with more than 200 combined years in student transportation operations provides us with a unique perspective on the needs and requirements of transportation providers. Our staff has expertise in transportation services but also recognize that every dollar spent on transportation can be a dollar diverted from direct educational service delivery and other public service requirements. Therefore, we focus on identifying opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of transportation services.

Our analytical methodologies are designed to promote an understanding of transportation services and allow policy makers to craft more informed decisions. SBC uses quantitative performance measurement that is informed by a qualitative assessment of operational practices to assess efficiency and effectiveness. Conducting this type of balanced assessment allows for a more nuanced understanding of a complex enterprise like student transportation. Our focus on simplifying complex topics such as the interaction of policies, school times, costs, routing strategies and overall efficiency allows client managers to more fully assess the reasons for overspending current allocations rather than just the outcome.

SBC staff has committed itself to sharing the lessons learned with the student transportation community. To that end, we recently published, in conjunction with PaperClip Communications, a guide for transportation departments in their efforts to reduce transportation costs. *Driving Down Costs: Essential Tools for Analyzing, Measuring and Implementing Cost-Effective School Bus Services* is a collection of nearly 40 articles written by SBC staff that focus on practical ways for transportation departments to evaluate their operations and identify opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

In addition to our project work, SBC provides ongoing professional development to the student transportation community. We regularly conduct educational seminars and author articles for a number of the industry's professional organizations and journals. SBC staff has published articles in numerous professional journals, including *School Transportation Director*, *Transporting Students with Disabilities and Special Needs*, *School Business Affairs*, *American School & University*, *School Transportation News*, *APWA Reporter*, and *Public Management*.





We are also members of a number of professional school business and student transportation associations, including the National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT), International Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), National School Transportation Association (NSTA), as well as numerous other state affiliates of these organizations. We are also associated with related fleet organizations such as the American Public Works Association (APWA) and National Association of Fleet Administrators (NAFA)

## Proposed Project Staffing

SBC strongly believes in having staff members with a broad array of skills and expertise. Our staff is comprised of experienced industry professionals and highly qualified management analysts. While our staff has a broad array of individual experiences, they all must have the following characteristics that we believe are important to providing high value consulting services. Our professionals:

- *Understand the role of transportation* – We have several former transportation directors on staff with combined experience of over 100 years with district operations including the management of medium sized contracted transportation systems such as the LSBP.
- *Value the perspective of the client* – Our staff knows that it must appreciate where an organization has been in order to create a plan for the future. We will combine the experience and expertise of LSBP staff with the broad perspective we have gained through our work to develop solutions that are customized to the needs of the LSBP.
- *Be committed to innovation* – The work we do is unique for every client, because every client is unique. The issues faced and problems to be solved are different, and lead to new and unique methods of analysis, and the development of creative and practical solutions. This innovation in every project adds to an already solid foundation of industry expertise. We are committed to sharing this knowledge and realizing the value of this experience in every new project we undertake.

While all of our clients have access to the full complement of resources available to SBC, we have identified a targeted project team to conduct this work. The following individuals would be assigned to provide services to LSBP:

### Patrick Kneib - Project Manager

Patrick will provide overall project supervision, and will be accountable to the LSBTA for the results of the project. He will provide quality assurance over all reports and presentations, and will be in attendance at all key meetings.

Before joining SBC Patrick was the Director of Transportation for the Kansas City Public Schools in Missouri. During his tenure at the KCPS, Patrick completed the adaptation of the district's transportation system during its "Right-Sizing Plan" that closed nearly half of its schools. He also facilitated the transition of oversight for the district's crossing guards from the Security Department to the Transportation Department, broadened the district's Safe Routes to School Program, created a Medicaid Reimbursement Program for transportation services and oversaw the district-initiated transition from two school bus vendors to a single school bus vendor. Patrick holds a Master of Business administration degree, and has been a pivotal contributor to many SBC projects over the past two years.



### Ian Jones – Project Analyst

Ian will participate in all field work, conduct the analysis, draft reports and presentations, and will be attendance at all onsite meetings.

Ian Jones has over 5 years of experience in the transportation industry with a focus on GIS and map data analysis. He has extensive experience with road networks as well as data and route efficiency analysis. From 2013 he has worked for SBC, until recently assigned to our ongoing reform work for the student transportation program of the Hawaii Department of Education where he has been a route planner and analyst. Ian is an expert user of the *Transfinder* routing software that will be integral to this project. Ian holds a degree in Geography from the University of California.

### Griffin Scott – Project Analyst

Griffin will participate in all field work, conduct the analysis, and assist in drafting reports and presentations.

A recent graduate of the College of Charleston, Griffin joins the SBC team with a BS degree in Data Science and significant practical experience as a user of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and geospatial analysis.

### Mark Worley – Safety and Compliance Expert

Mark will provide oversight of, and subject matter expertise to the team conducting the field work. He will review and confirm all safety and compliance related conclusions, and will assist in developing recommendations for bus stop and route changes, if needed.

Mark attended Oregon State University and studied Occupational Safety and Health at Columbia Southern University. He has over 40 years of experience in school bus operations, safety and training and his experience includes certified school bus instructor, defensive driving instructor and safety review specialist. He has held Area and Regional Safety Manager positions for over twenty years for school bus operating companies.



## References

SBC has conducted a significant number of similar projects for fleets of various sizes. The three references below can provide specific feedback on our work process and quality as it relates to the development of transportation service solicitations.

### TRAFFIX

School Bus Consultants, through its predecessor organization Management Partnership Services, collaborated with the Town of Danville, City of San Ramon, San Ramon Valley Unified School District, and the Contra Costa County Transportation Authority to develop a school bus program to support traffic congestion relief. This program used funding from a local sales tax measure, Measure J, to support the program. This effort resulted in the development of the current TRAFFIX program. In addition, SBC is currently engaged with TRAFFIX in an effort to analyze and develop options pending the expiration of the current contract for service delivery with First Student.

Two of the leaders of SBC, Tim Ammon have been integral to the successful establishment of the TRAFFIX program (Tim) and the current ongoing work for TRAFFIX (Tom)

Ms. Lisa Bobadilla, Division Manager (for TRAFFIX program development project)

City of San Ramon

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(925) 973-2651

Ms. Judy Lloyd, Program Manager (for the current, ongoing project)

TRAFFIX

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(925) 866-8739

### State of Hawaii Department of Education

In July 2012, SBC began working with the Hawai'i DOE to assess the performance of its school transportation operation following a highly critical audit of transportation services. At the time the state transported approximately 40,000 students using more than 800 buses provided by 13 different contractors across 5 of the islands. DOE had previously tried and failed to implement route management software. Following an initial operational assessment conducted by SBC staff, we began the process of reforming the activities of the Student Transportation Services Branch including development of a comprehensive policy manual, the development and evaluation of a Request for Proposal for transportation services; implementing transportation management software, and revising other organizational protocols.

Reform was phased into O'ahu in 2014 and into the Big Island in 2015 with the remaining islands scheduled for implementation in 2016 and 2017. This rollout includes the development of staff training protocols, the creation of necessary coding structures for analytical and contract management requirements, and the implementation schedule for additional modules and technology (including GPS/AVL, web-based distribution of transportation data, and student ridership management). SBC staff have been responsible for the daily



management of both regular education and special needs routing and administrative support of this effort since May 2013.

*One of the assigned staff to this project, Ian Jones, joins the project following a successful stint as a route planner at the Hawaii project.*

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State Director of Transportation  
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(808) 586-0170

### Desert Sands Unified School District

This project evaluated a set of options to support revised bell schedules that promote efficiency and effectiveness in transportation and are sustainable over the short and medium term. In order to provide the most fulsome understanding of the cost and service impacts, we also evaluated the existing cost and routing structure of transportation program. The results incorporated the degree to which existing resources requirements (e.g., budget allocations and buses) would change under any alternative bell time structure.

*Our assigned Project Manager, Patrick Kneib, was also the Project Manager for this work.*

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