



County of Tulare 2015-2020 Transit Development Plan

Final Report
June 2015



COUNTY OF TULARE TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Final Report: **June** 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) prepared this five-year Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the County of Tulare, as an update to the existing TDP that was developed for the County in 2008. This TDP covers fiscal years (FY) 2015/16 through 2019/20.

The County of Tulare operates the Tulare County Area Transit (TCaT) system. TCaT consists of a four intercity/community fixed routes, five local community circulator routes, and a general public dial-a-ride service that operates within four distinct service areas. This TDP presents a summary of the existing conditions related to the TCaT system, defines (or updates) goals, objectives and service standards for the system, and presents a five-year service, capital, and financial plan for the system.

PLAN OBJECTIVES

This TDP serves as the primary planning document for the County's transit services. This TDP was developed to:

1. Evaluate current TCaT operations;
2. Elicit input from TCaT riders and the community;
3. Identify and resolve service issues;
4. Recommend strategies for the delivery of public transportation within the County's service area over the next five years; and,
5. Identify the capital needs and funding sources needed to operate the recommended TCaT services.

PLAN APPROACH

The development of the TDP focused on seeking input and data related to the County's transit system that would provide a solid base from which to plan the most efficient use of TCaT services. Efforts centered on garnering input from those people directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the service (both County transit staff and riders), as well as potential riders. Information was collected in a variety of ways, including:

- A review of current and past operational and financial data;
- An assessment of current and planned County transit projects;
- Discussions with County transit staff;
- Public meetings; and,
- Passenger and surveys.

Public involvement is key to the success of transit planning within any community. On-board passenger surveys were administered to ascertain passenger perceptions about the TCaT system. The surveys revealed that the average TCaT user is transit-reliant, with no access to a

vehicle. Furthermore, almost half of respondents indicated that Spanish is spoken in their homes, underscoring the need for all transit information to be made available in both English and Spanish. Overall, public awareness and support of TCaT services is very high.

In addition, two separate regional transit studies directly related to TCaT services were being conducted during development of this TDP (the *Tulare County Regional Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP)* and the *Southeast Tulare County Mobility Plan*). Public comments received about TCaT through the outreach process conducted for these studies were included in this plan.

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Several issues were identified during the preparation of this TDP that will have an effect on future service decisions. Following are summaries of the key issues that need to be addressed over the five-year planning horizon of this TDP:

Blended Farebox Recovery Ratio

The California Transportation Development Act (TDA) mandates a farebox recovery ratio of 10% for fixed route and demand-response operators that provide service within non-urbanized areas as a requirement for receiving TDA funding. Historically, TCaT has been held to the 10% rural farebox recovery ratio requirement, meaning that 10% of the system's annual operating costs must be covered by fare revenues. However, the last TDA performance audit completed for TCaT (in June of 2014) recommended that the County adhere to a "blended" farebox ratio that takes into account both the urban and rural farebox ratios, since TCaT's service area includes both urbanized and non-urbanized areas. As the regional transportation planning agency, TCAG is responsible for developing this blended farebox recovery ratio.

Working with TCaT staff, TCAG has developed a methodology for calculating a blended farebox ratio based on route miles and service areas. Fixed route costs were apportioned to urbanized areas and non-urbanized areas in proportion to the route miles included in both, and dial-a-ride costs were apportioned entirely to non-urbanized areas. This methodology resulted in a blended farebox ratio of 12% for TCaT. This blended farebox ratio is scheduled to take effect in FY 2016/17, once approved by the TCAG Board and Caltrans.

Low Fixed Route Fares

TCaT's fixed route fares are comparable to other transit providers within Tulare County, but not in relation to the service provided. Regional systems that provide countywide service typically charge more for service than their intracity/local counterparts due to the additional costs they incur through longer routes/additional service miles, but TCaT fixed route general fares have not been increased in over seventeen years, and the general fixed route fares of the local providers have caught up to it. Additionally, the TCaT fixed route system has experienced a significant increase in overall ridership since the infusion of Measure R (local sales tax) revenues in 2007, but fare revenues have not been adjusted to account for increased service levels.

SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS

Service recommendations were developed to address the issues and service constraints identified through the development of this TDP. Preliminary service scenarios were refined through discussions with County staff regarding current and near-future transit issues. Final recommendations focus on providing efficient services that meet the required (blended) farebox ratio, address service constraints, and maintain the County's vision for the TCaT services. The following recommendations should be implemented over the next five years:

Fixed Route Service

- Increase the fixed route general fare by 25¢ (from \$1.50 to \$1.75) in January of 2016, to help align fares with the service provided, and to ensure an equitable fare structure throughout Tulare County.
- Add additional weekend service to Route 30 (Northeast County) in January of 2016, by providing Saturday service to Lemon Cove and Three Rivers.
- Increase weekday service frequencies on Route 10 (North County) in FY 2016/17, through the addition of one bus.
- Increase weekday service frequencies on Route 40 (South County) in FY 2016/17, through the addition of one bus.
- Increase the fixed route general fare by 25¢ (from \$1.75 to \$2.00) in FY 2018/19, to help bring fares in-line with system growth, operating expenses, and inflation.
- Purchase and install electronic card readers to promote the use of regional electronic fare media.
- Purchase buses annually to maintain peak service requirements and increase service reliability.

Dial-A-Ride Service

- Review and adjust fare structure as needed, to reflect farebox recovery and operational cost issues; demand-response service is more costly to operate than fixed route service, so a dial-a-ride fare increase may be warranted during the life of this plan to partially offset the cost of providing demand-response trips.
- Review and adjust service areas and trip scheduling techniques as needed, to reflect funding and service demands.
- Purchase buses annually to maintain peak service requirements and increase service reliability.

Other (General)

- Implement a blended farebox recovery ratio, as developed by TCAG, once approved by Caltrans.
- Amend monthly service summary reports to include all transit expenditures (not just expenses incurred by the service contractor) in order to be able to fully assess service performance by mode

- Require service contractor to report information related to the number of bus trips canceled, ADA trip denials, and dial-a-ride no-shows.
- Update the TCaT color scheme (while maintaining the TCaT logo) to give the system a fresh look.
- Focus marketing efforts to increase ridership and improve service efficiency.

Note: Recommendations set forth in the *Southeast Tulare County Mobility Plan* and the *Tulare County Regional Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP)* (currently being developed) may require additions to the service, capital, and financial components of this TDP. Recommendations that affect TCaT's service will be included as an addendum to this TDP at a later date, if warranted. In addition, technological advances may also warrant revisiting the TDP sooner than 5 years.

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

The 2014 Transit Development Plan (TDP) represents the primary planning document that will guide the decisions associated with administering the transit services operated by the County of Tulare, known as Tulare County Area Transit (TCaT), over the coming years. The previous TDP was completed in 2008 and covered FY 2008/09 through FY 2014/15. This TDP will evaluate current transit services provided by the County of Tulare, and provide recommendations for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of these services over the next five years (FY 2015/16 through FY 2019/20). Recommendations made within this document will supersede the previous TDP.

PURPOSE OF THE TDP

A TDP is a blueprint for the delivery of transportation services provided to the general public. The County of Tulare TDP will serve as a guide for improving public transit services within the County's service area over a five-year planning horizon. The TDP will provide the public, policy makers, and county staff an opportunity to understand current transit conditions, define the future demand for service within the county, and establish an operational and capital plan to meet those demands.

A TDP also serves as the primary justification for receipt of federal, state and local funding for transit operations and capital projects. As such, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors and county staff will use this TDP to help guide the planning, policy making, programming, and budgeting of transit activities over the next five years. The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) will use this document to provide the basis for inclusion of TCaT's transit operations and capital projects in programming documents such as the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), as documentation to support projects included in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and as the basis for use of Measure R transit funds. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will use the TDP as documentation for supporting the use of federal and state funding.

CONTENTS OF THE TDP

Chapter 1 continues with a community profile of the TCaT service area.

Chapter 2 describes the history and organizational structure of the TCaT system. It also provides a description of the current fixed route and dial-a-ride services, as well as a fleet inventory and financial profile.

Chapter 3 presents a summary of public input garnered thorough on-board passenger surveys and stakeholder meetings.

Chapter 4 provides an operational analysis of the existing system. This section also includes future ridership demand estimates, a fare analysis, and reviews of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Transportation Development Act.

Chapter 5 outlines TCaT's system goals, objectives and service standards.

Chapter 6 outlines the direction the system should take over the next five years. It includes a discussion of the proposed service strategies and associated fare structure. It also includes an administrative plan, marketing plan, and service implementation schedule.

Chapter 7 outlines TCaT's five-year capital purchase program.

Chapter 8 presents a five-year financial plan for the TCaT system, which includes estimates of operating and capital expenditures, and projections of revenue by source for the proposed services. This section also includes a discussion of potential funding sources.

COUNTY PROFILE/SERVICE AREA

Geographic Area

Tulare County is centrally located within California (approximately 200 miles north of Los Angeles, and 250 miles south of Sacramento), in the heart of the Central San Joaquin Valley (see Figure 1 – Location Map). The San Joaquin Valley is a rich agricultural area, and Tulare County is recognized as one of the largest agricultural producers in the world. The County was formed from parts of Mariposa County, and named after the great Tulare Lake, a large freshwater lake that was drained for agricultural development in the 1800s.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Tulare County has a total land area of 4,824 square miles. The eastern half of the County is composed primarily of public lands included within Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Inyo and Sequoia National Forests, and several wilderness areas.

Government

The County of Tulare is a General Law County created by the State Legislature in 1852. The County is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors. Supervisors are elected to four-year terms, and represent Supervisorial Districts within the County. The Board meets every Tuesday to address business and public needs within its jurisdiction. The County provides municipal services to residents who live in unincorporated areas outside city boundaries, such as transit services. There are twenty-one unincorporated communities within Tulare County, spread out between agricultural lands (see Figure 2, page 1-6).

In addition to the unincorporated areas, Tulare County includes the eight incorporated cities of Dinuba, Exeter, Farmersville, Lindsay, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia, and Woodlake. The City of Visalia is the County Seat.

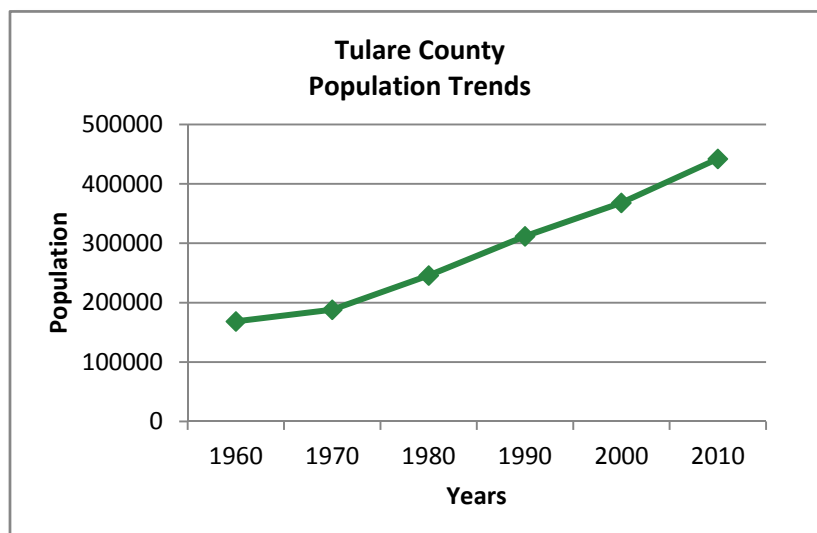
Figure 1 - Location Map



Demographics

A detailed demographic profile helps to better understand the transportation needs of a region. The demographic data contained herein was taken from the 2010 U.S. Census, and the U.S. Census Bureau's 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates unless otherwise denoted.

At approximately 459,500 residents, the County of Tulare is one of the fastest growing counties in the state; in 2013 it was ranked the 6th fastest growing county in California, with a 10-year growth rate of 16.8%. Between 2000 and 2010 the population of Tulare County increased by 20.2% with an average annual growth rate of 1.8%. The highest population growth occurred in the cities of Porterville, Visalia and Tulare (see Table 1).



Source: California Department of Finance

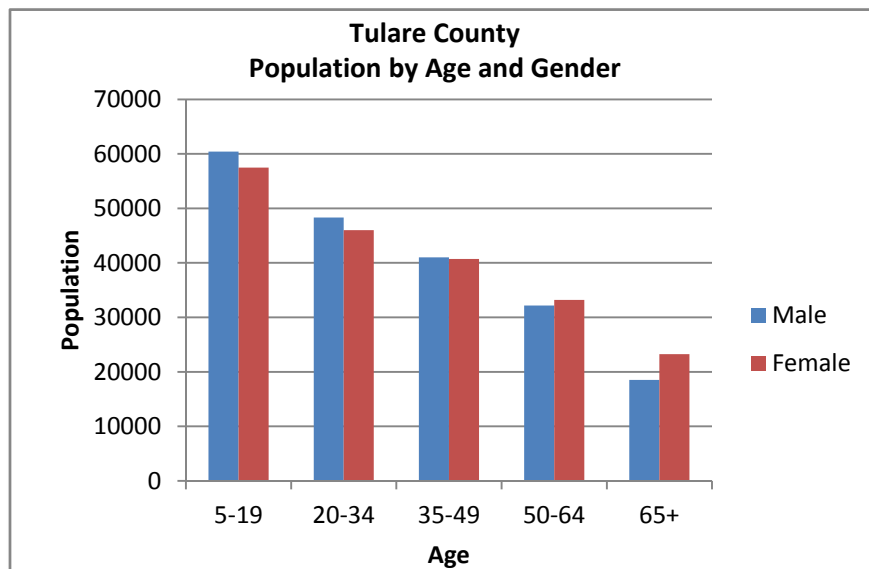
Table 1 – Total Population by City			
Area	2000	2010	% Change
Dinuba	16,844	21,453	27.3%
Exeter	9,168	10,334	12.7%
Farmersville	8,737	10,588	21.1%
Lindsay	10,297	11,768	14.2%
Porterville	39,615	54,165	36.7%
Tulare	43,994	59,278	34.7%
Visalia	91,877	124,442	35.4%
Woodlake	6,651	7,279	9.4%
Total Incorporated	227,183	299,307	31.7%
Unincorporated	140,838	142,872	1.4%
County Total	368,021	442,179	20.2%

Source: 2000 & 2010 U.S. Census

As of January 1, 2014, the California Department of Finance (DOF) estimated the County's population to be 459,446, which represents a 3.9% increase over the 2010 U.S. Census total of 442,179. According to DOF projections, the County is expected to reach a population of 722,838 by 2040.

Tulare County's population density is shown in Figure 2. The most populous areas are cities located in the western portion of the County; the County's General Plan directs growth towards urban populations. The most populous cities include Visalia, Tulare and Porterville. The most populous unincorporated communities include Cutler/Orosi, Earlimart and Ivanhoe.

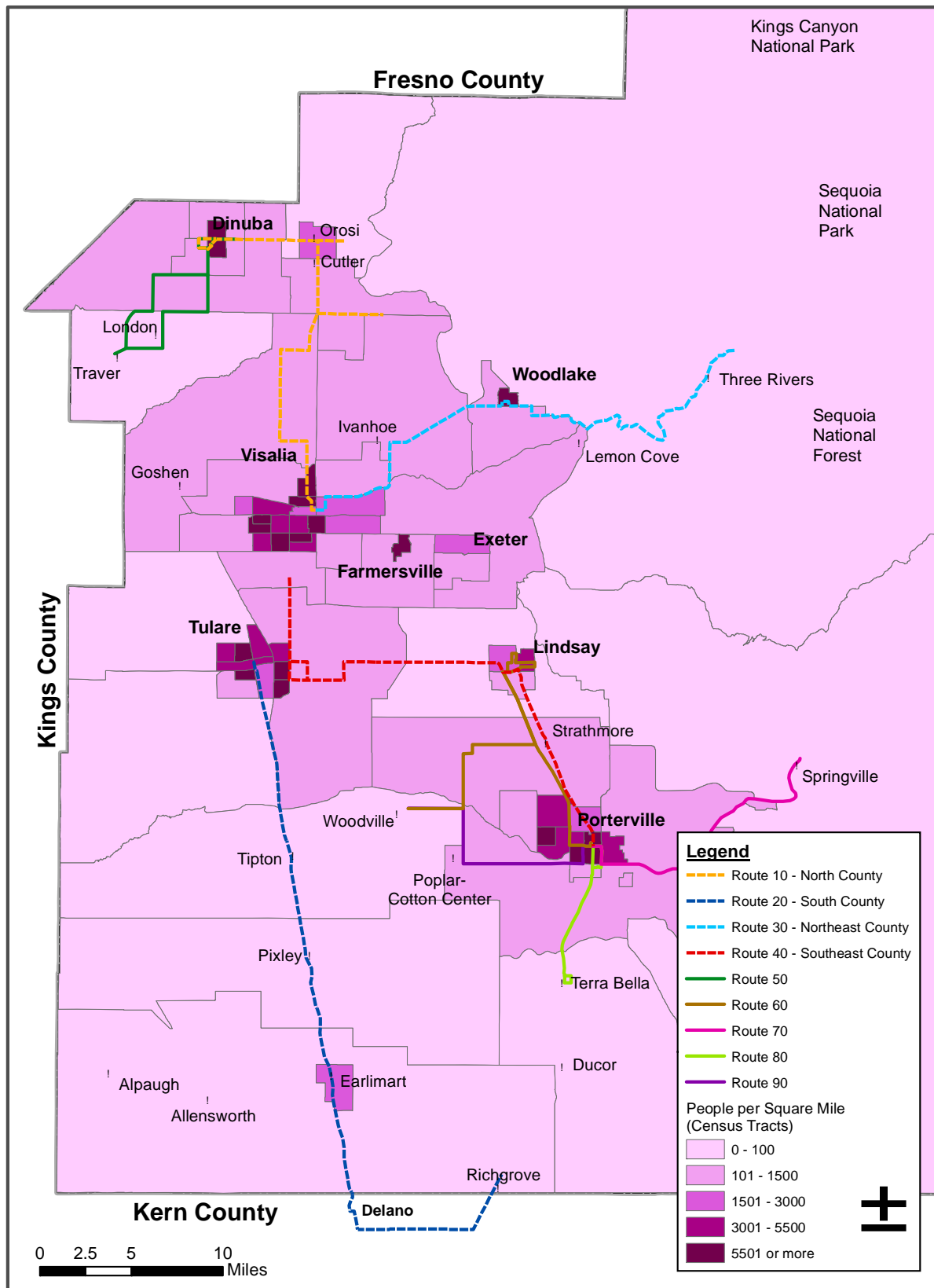
The 2010 Census revealed that roughly 50% of the County's population is male (221,442) and roughly 50% is female (220,737). Of the total population, 27% are youth between the ages of 5 and 19, 21% are between the ages of 20 and 34, 19% are between the ages of 35 and 49, 15% are between the ages of 50 and 64, and 9% of the population is 65 years of age or older. The median age is 29.6 years. The following chart shows this distribution by gender.



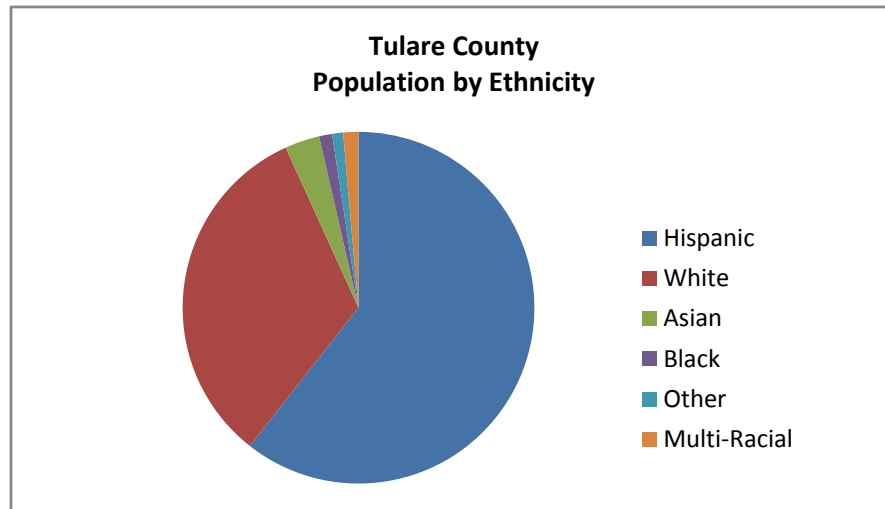
Source: 2010 U.S. Census

According to data contained within the *County of Tulare Recommended Budget (2014-2015)*, the fastest growing segment of the population is retirees over the age of 65, and the County's large population of youth under the age of 24 is above State averages.

Figure 2 – Tulare County Population Density



The majority of the population within the County is Hispanic (61%). Based on reported census counts, White (Non-Hispanic) persons make up 33% of the County's population. The following graph depicts the County's ethnic breakdown.



Source: 2010 U.S. Census

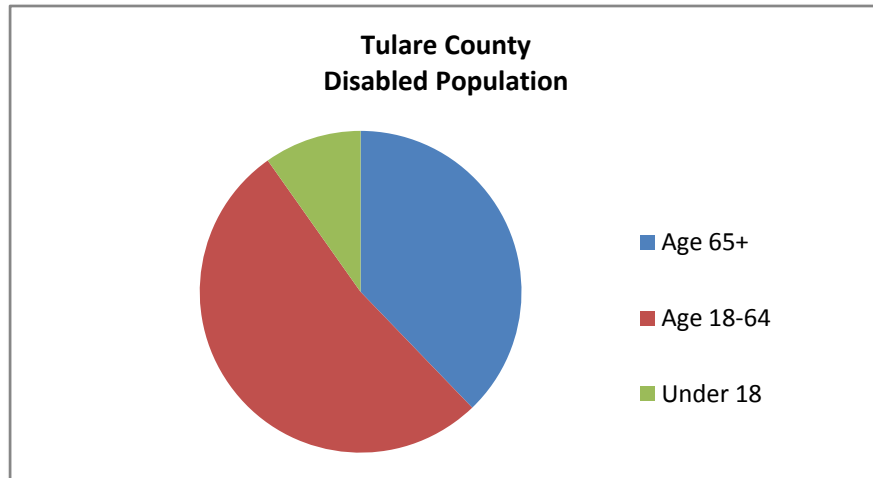
Youth (typically students over the age of 10) and seniors are less likely to have access to a vehicle making them more reliant on transit for their travel needs. Tulare County has a relatively youthful population, making primary school and college students a target market for transit ridership. Census data from the ACS indicates that approximately 138,307 residents (age three years or older) were enrolled in school during the survey period (2009-2013).

During the ACS survey period 69% of County residents twenty-five years of age or older had at least a high school diploma; 8% had an Associate's degree, 9% had a Bachelor's degree, and 5% had a Graduate or professional degree. Conversely, 32% of residents twenty-five years of age or older did not have a high school diploma, with 21% having less than a 9th grade education.

The median household income in Tulare County during the ACS survey period was \$42,708, while the per capita income was \$17,894. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of total households earned less than \$25,000 annually. Thirteen percent (13%) of households earned between \$25,000 and \$34,999, 15% fell into the \$35,000 to \$49,999 range, and 43% of households earned more than \$50,000 annually. In 2013 the official poverty level was an annual income of \$11,888; approximately 26% of the County's population lived below the poverty level in 2013. The State average is 16%. According to current census data, approximately 42% of single mothers and 12% of seniors (over the age of 65) residing in Tulare County live below the poverty level.

Along with age and income, mobility and access to a vehicle are key population characteristics to explore when determining transit-reliant populations within an area. These characteristics produce physical, financial, legal, and self-imposed limitations that generally preclude

individuals from driving, leaving public transit as an essential mode of transportation. According to the 2009-2013 ACS survey, 47,392 residents, or 11% of the County's non-institutionalized population has a disability. Thirty-eight percent 38% of the County's disabled population is sixty-five years of age or older.



Source: U.S. Census, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Of the 131,642 reported occupied households within Tulare County during the ACS survey period, roughly 7% had no vehicle available for use, while 32% of households had only one vehicle. According to the Caltrans *2014 Tulare County Economic Forecast*, the expected population growth for Tulare County between 2014 and 2019 (6.7%) will outpace the expected growth in number of vehicles (5.8%), indicating that many residents of within the County will continue to be transit-reliant. The following table sums up the transit-reliant populations living within Tulare County.

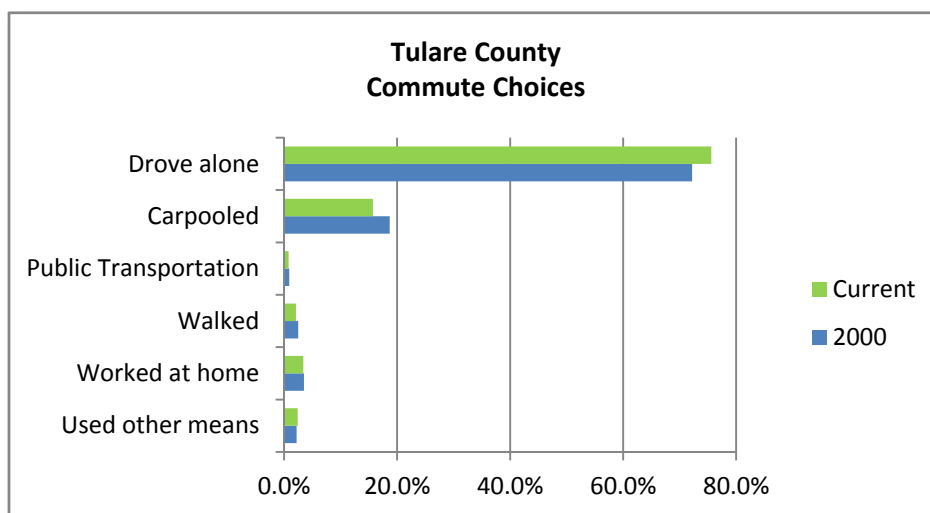
Table 2 – Transit-Reliant Populations		
Transit-Reliant Populations	Population	%
Total Population in Tulare County	442,179	100%
Age 10-24 (student age)	110,426	25%
Age 65 or older (seniors)	41,779	9%
Low-income residents (living below poverty level)	N/A	26%
Households without an automobile	8,859	7%
Individuals with a disability	47,392	11%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Economy and Employment

According to California Employment Development Department (EDD), Labor Market Information Division, approximately 197,700 Tulare County residents were part of the labor force in December of 2014. Of these eligible workers 172,600 were employed, and 25,100 were unemployed, resulting in a 12.7% unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted). The County's current unemployment rate is the lowest it has been since 2008, but it is higher than California's average rate, which is one of the highest in the nation. During the recent recession, the County's unemployment peaked at 17% (during 2010).

According to the 2009-2013 ACS survey, 97% of Tulare County workers commute to work; 3% of the population works from home. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the working population drive alone to work, 16% carpool, and 2% walk to work. Less than 1% of the County's workforce uses public transportation to commute to work. The median travel time to work is 21 minutes. The following chart shows that commute choices within Tulare County did not significantly change between 2000 and 2010, except for a slight shift from carpooling to solo driving. This shift makes sense in light of the improving economy.



Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Tulare County is one of the most productive counties in the U.S. in terms of agricultural revenues. With over 1.7 million acres in agricultural production, the County produces a variety of crops, including citrus, grapes and nuts. The dairy and beef industries are also important components of the County's economy. The County's centralized location within California and access to major shipping routes provides easy access to both national and world markets for a variety of products. Tulare County is also California's only Targeted Tax Area, offering tax incentives to businesses locating and operating within the targeted zone.

According to the 2009-2013 ACS, 21% of employed County residents over the age of 16 are employed in education or the health care industry, 11% are employed in the retail industry, and 8% in manufacturing. Agriculture employs roughly 18% of the County's population.

Twenty-four percent (24%) of Tulare County's employed population works in management, business, science, or the arts. Service occupations account for another 19% of regional jobs. The remainder of the County's employed residents work in natural resources, construction, and maintenance (21%), in sales and office occupations (21%), or in production, transportation, and material moving occupations (17%). Table 3 lists Tulare County's largest employers.

Table 3 - Major Employers in Tulare County		
Employer	Type of Business	Number of Employees (2014 data)
County of Tulare	Government	4,800
Kaweah Delta Health Care District	Health Services	2,000
Ruiz Food Products	Food Processing	1,800
Walmart Distribution Center	Distribution	1,692
Porterville Development Center	Health Services	1,300
College of the Sequoias	Education	1,160
Sierra View District Hospital	Health Services	725
Jostens	Manufacturing	720
CIGNA HealthCare	Health Services	700
Land O'Lakes	Food Processing	600

Source: County of Tulare 2014 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)

Transportation System Overview

Highways

State Route 99 (SR-99), a major north-south corridor in California, provides direct access to Los Angeles and Sacramento and the numerous cities located throughout the San Joaquin Valley. State Route 198 (SR-198) provides an east-west connection between Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and Interstate 5 in Fresno County. Various other state highway corridors within Tulare County provide connections to California's primary road network, including State Route 137 (SR-137), which runs east and west through Tulare to Lindsay, State Route 190 (SR-190), which runs east and west between Tipton and Porterville, and State Route 65 (SR-65), which runs north and south through Exeter and Porterville.

Rail

Three major rail companies provide freight service within Tulare County: Union Pacific (UP), Burlington Northern & Santa Fe (BN&SF), and San Joaquin Valley Railroad (SJVRR). The SJVRR provides short-haul service. The rail lines connect the County to all major west coast markets and destinations. In addition, there are rail service spurs and freight terminals throughout the County to serve specific industries.

There is no direct passenger rail service within Tulare County, but Amtrak provides bus service linking the Visalia Transit Center and Goshen Junction to the Amtrak station in Hanford (Kings County).

Air

Five publicly-owned airports are in operation within Tulare County. Tulare County owns and maintains Sequoia Field, while the cities of Tulare (Mefford Field), Porterville, Woodlake, and Visalia each operate a municipal airport. Visalia Municipal Airport is the only airport in the County that provides regularly scheduled commercial passenger service.

There are two privately owned airports within the County. Eckert Field is located half a mile north of the community of Strathmore, and Thunderhawk (Exeter Airport) is located three miles south of Exeter and three miles northwest of Lindsay. Both airports are open to public use.

Various private “special use” airfields and airstrips are located throughout the County. These airstrips are used for agriculture and other private aviation activities.

Bus

Along with the County’s transit system (TCaT), which provides countywide service linking the population centers, Tulare County residents are served by local service operators. The cities of Dinuba, Tulare, Porterville and Visalia each provide fixed route and dial-a-ride service within their city limits, while the cities of Exeter and Woodlake provide dial-a-ride service only.

Regional service is provided by Dinuba Area Regional Transit (to Reedley in Fresno County), TCaT (to Delano in Kern County), Kings Area Regional Transit (between Visalia and Kings County), Greyhound (to Fresno, Bakersfield, and Hanford) and Orange Belt Stages (to communities throughout the Valley, the State, and Nevada).

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CHAPTER 2 – SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

HISTORY

The transit services under the jurisdiction of the County of Tulare operate collectively as Tulare County Area Transit (TCaT). TCaT provides both regional and intercity public transit services throughout Tulare County and to the City of Delano in neighboring Kern County, as well as subsidies to residents using Orange Belt Stages' common carrier routes.

The County of Tulare has been providing public transit service since 1981. TCaT has evolved from a lifeline service to a connector service, providing connections to urban transit services in Dinuba, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia and Delano. Early services, provided under the name of Tulare County Transit (TCT), included rural intercity fixed route services (COACH), commuter service (STAGE) that brought Tulare County residents from outlying communities into Visalia, and local demand response (dial-a-ride) within and around various communities. The STAGE and COACH services were merged into a single regional fixed route network during FY 2000/01, and the system was rebranded to the current TCaT name in 2006.

The County currently operates four intercity/community fixed routes and five local community circulator routes. TCaT also offers a general public dial-a-ride service within four distinct service areas. The County contracts with the Cities of Lindsay, Woodlake, Porterville, Tulare and Visalia to provide extended service to County residents in surrounding unincorporated areas.

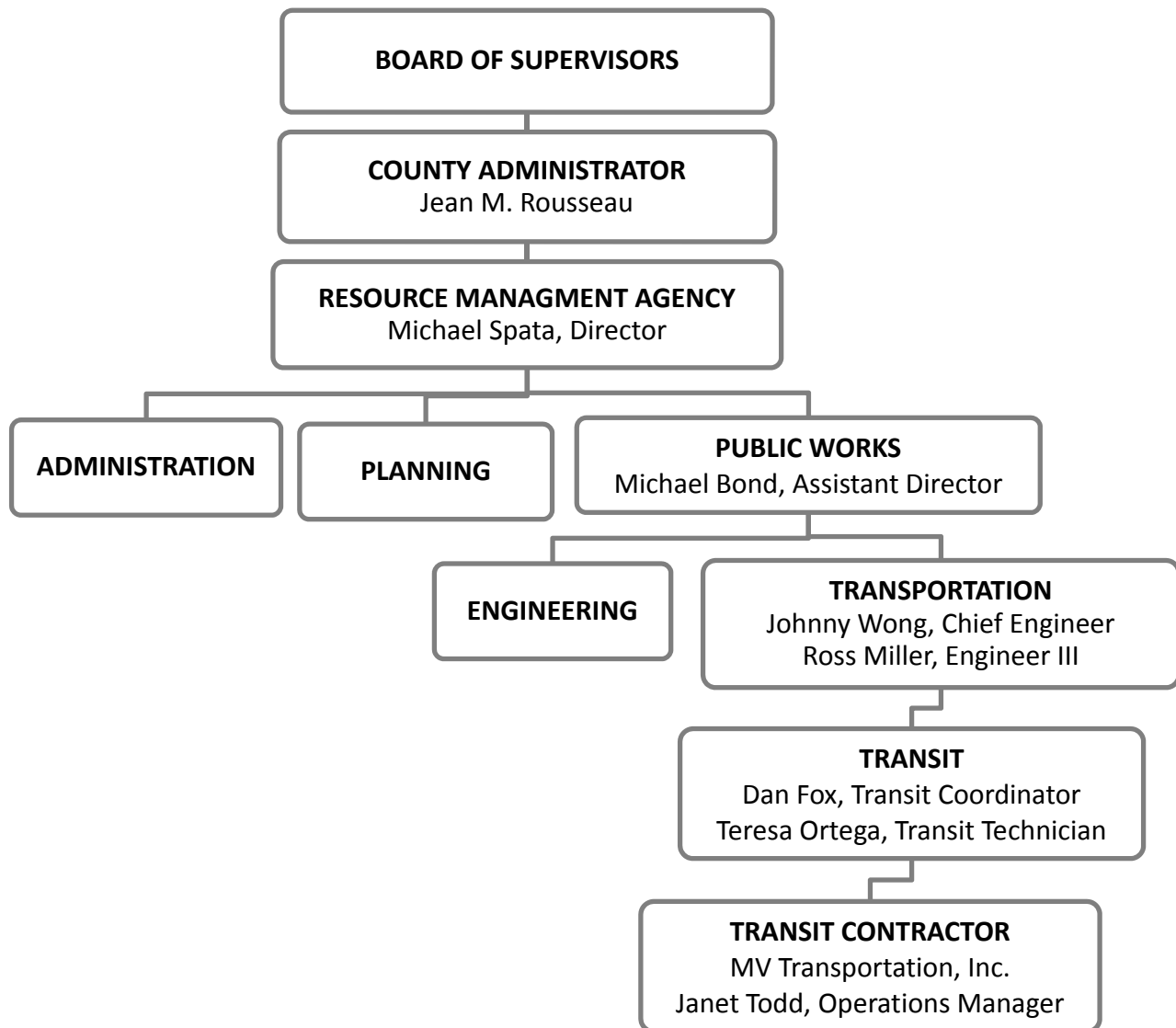
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors is the policy making body for the TCaT system. The five member Board adopts the Transit Development Plan, and through the County's annual budgetary process establishes operational and funding levels for the system. The Board also sets operational policies and parameters for the TCaT services.

Management of TCaT is an integrated function of the County of Tulare. The County's transit division which administers the service is part of the Tulare County Resource Management Agency (RMA). The RMA's Public Works Branch oversees all transit functions through its Transportation Division. Program management is provided by the Transit Coordinator with assistance from a Transit Technician. Together, they are responsible for the overall planning, monitoring, and marketing of the system. They also act as liaisons to TCAG, Caltrans and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The RMA fiscal division assists with accounting duties.

The County has contracted with MV Transportation, Inc., a private contractor, to perform the daily operations of TCaT since 2006. MV is responsible for the provision and management of day-to-day operations, including the hiring, testing, training and supervision of all drivers and dispatch staff; service data collection; and the operation of TCaT vehicles in accordance with County policies and all state and federal regulations. MV is also responsible for the

maintenance and fueling of all transit vehicles. MV's current contract is in effect through June 30, 2018.



TCAT FIXED ROUTE SERVICE OVERVIEW

Description of Current Fixed Route Service

The County of Tulare provides fixed route service to the general public through nine fixed routes; four intercity routes and five local circulator routes. Fixed routes are composed of the system of services for which a public transit vehicle is operated along a prescribed route according to a fixed schedule. TCaT fixed routes operate within both incorporated and unincorporated areas of Tulare County.

TCaT's intercity routes provide daily regional service between major cities within the county and beyond. These routes include:

Route 10 (North County) provides service between Visalia and Dinuba. Stops include the Visalia Transit Center, the Justice Complex, the Dinuba Health Center, the Dinuba Transit Center, and the communities of Cutler, Oroshi, Sultana, Yettem, and Seville. Bidirectional service is provided every 60 minutes Monday through Friday from 6:15 am to 7:05 pm between the two transit centers. Four round trips are provided on Saturday and Sunday between 9:30 am and 5:42 pm, beginning at the Dinuba Transit Center. Service to East Oroshi and Yettem/Seville is provided twice daily on weekdays only.

Route 20 (South County) provides service between Tulare and Delano (located within Kern County). Stops include the Tulare Transit Center, the Matheny Tract, the Delano Transit Center, the Delano Regional Medical Center, and the communities of Tipton, Pixley, Teviston, Earlimart, and Richgrove. Bidirectional service is provided every 60 to 90 minutes Monday through Friday between 5:45 am and 8:05 pm. Four round trips are provided on Saturday and Sunday between 8:30 am and 6:42 pm, beginning at the Tulare Transit Center. Service within Delano and to Richgrove is provided twice daily on weekdays only.

Route 30 (Northeast County) provides service between Visalia and Woodlake. Stops include the Visalia Transit Center, Golden West High School, the Whitney Transit Center (Woodlake), and the communities of Ivanhoe, Lemon Cove, and Three Rivers. Bidirectional service is provided every 35 to 70 minutes Monday through Friday between 5:15 am and 8:15 pm. Six route trips are provided on Saturday and Sunday between 9:40 am and 5:30 pm, beginning at the Whitney Transit Center. Service to Lemon Cove and Three Rivers is provided four times a day on weekdays only.

Route 40 (Southeast County) provides service between Visalia, Tulare, Lindsay and Porterville. Stops include the Visalia Government Plaza, the College of the Sequoias (COS) – Tulare campus, the Lindsay Library and City Hall, the Porterville Transit Center, and the community of Strathmore. Bidirectional service is provided every 65 to 75 minutes Monday through Friday between 5:45 am and 7:45 pm. Four round trips are provided on Saturday and Sunday between 9:45 am and 6:40 pm, beginning at the Porterville Transit Center.

TCaT's local routes provide circulation within and between many Tulare County communities. These routes include:

Route 50 (Dinuba-London-Traver-Delft Colony) provides service between Dinuba and the communities of London, Traver, and Delft Colony. Four daily trips (two am and two pm) are provided Monday through Friday between 8:20 am and 6:16 pm, and on Saturday between 9:30 am and 3:20 pm.

Route 60 (Lindsay-Plainview-Woodville) provides weekday service between Lindsay, Porterville and the communities of Plainview and Woodville. Four daily trips (two am and two pm) are provided Monday through Friday between 6:20 am and 6:30 pm. Three trips daily operate as express routes between Lindsay and Porterville, via SR 65. This route serves as a circulator service for the City of Lindsay, stopping at the local Save Mart/McDonalds shopping center, Lindsay Wellness Center, and the Lindsay High School.

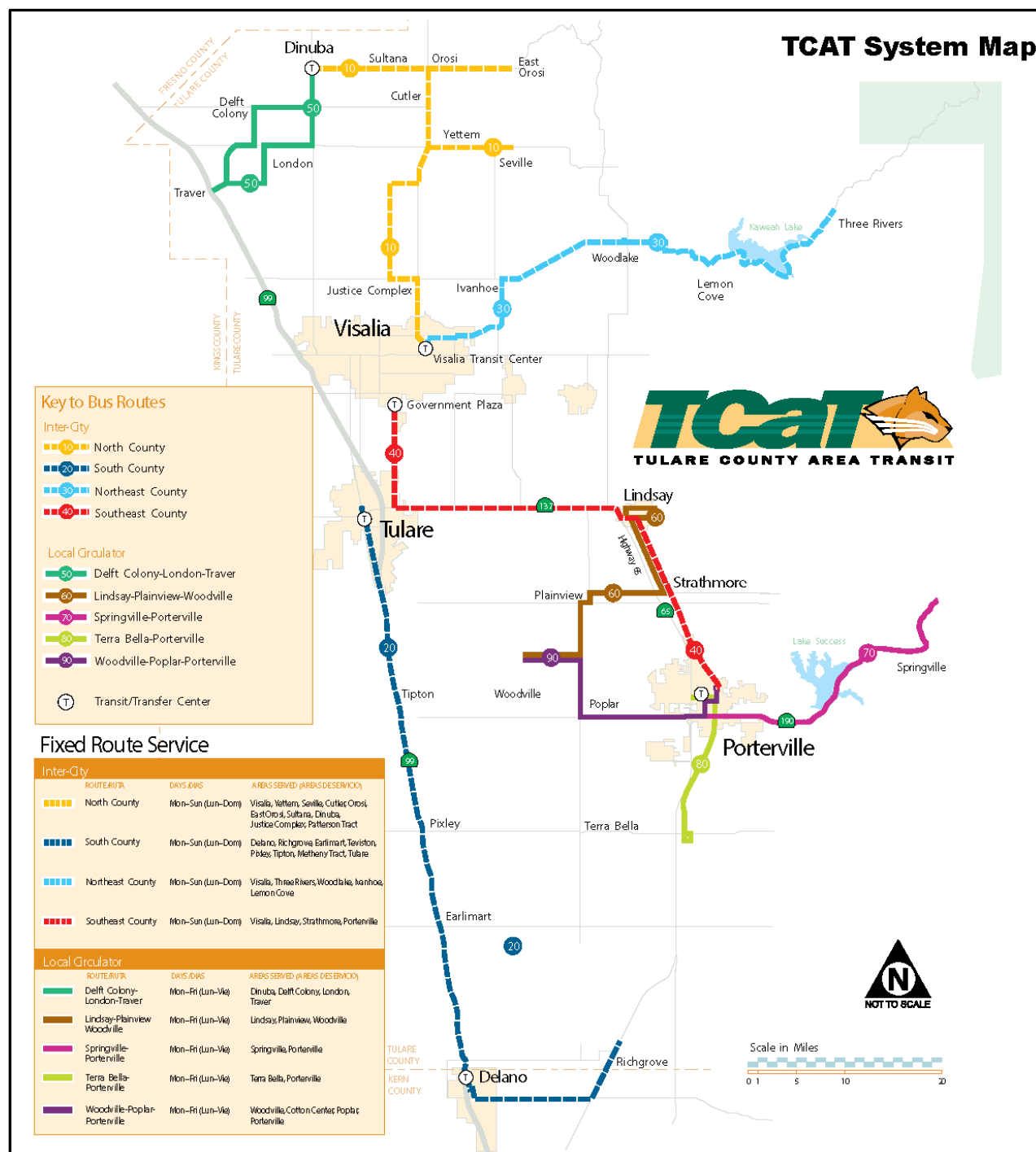
Route 70 (Porterville-Springville) provides weekday service between Porterville and the community of Springville. Five southbound and four northbound trips are provided daily Monday through Friday between 8:45 am and 4:00 pm.

Route 80 (Porterville-Terra Bella) provides weekday service between Porterville and the community of Terra Bella. Two daily round trips (one am and one pm) are provided Monday through Friday between 9:55 am and 4:45 pm.

Route 90 (Woodville-Poplar-Porterville) provides weekday service between Porterville and the communities of Woodville, Poplar and Cotton Center. Four eastbound and five westbound trips are provided daily Monday through Friday between 6:30 am and 6:30 pm.

Routes 60, 70, 80 and 90 are interlined, meaning that their schedules are designed such that one bus is used to service all four routes. Riders may request a route deviation from posted stops on all TCaT fixed routes by calling at least one day in advance of service. Figure 3 depicts TCaT's current fixed route service.

Figure 3 – TCaT Fixed Route Service



Fixed Route Service Days and Hours

TCaT provides intercity service seven days a week. Service hours vary by route. Local circulator service is generally provided weekdays (Monday through Friday), but Route 50 (Dinuba-London-Traver-Delft Colony) also runs on Saturday.

TCaT does not operate on New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day or Christmas Day. Saturday service level is provided on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Veterans' Day, the day after Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve (routes 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 only).

Fixed Route Fare Structure

The current TCaT fixed route fare structure is as follows:

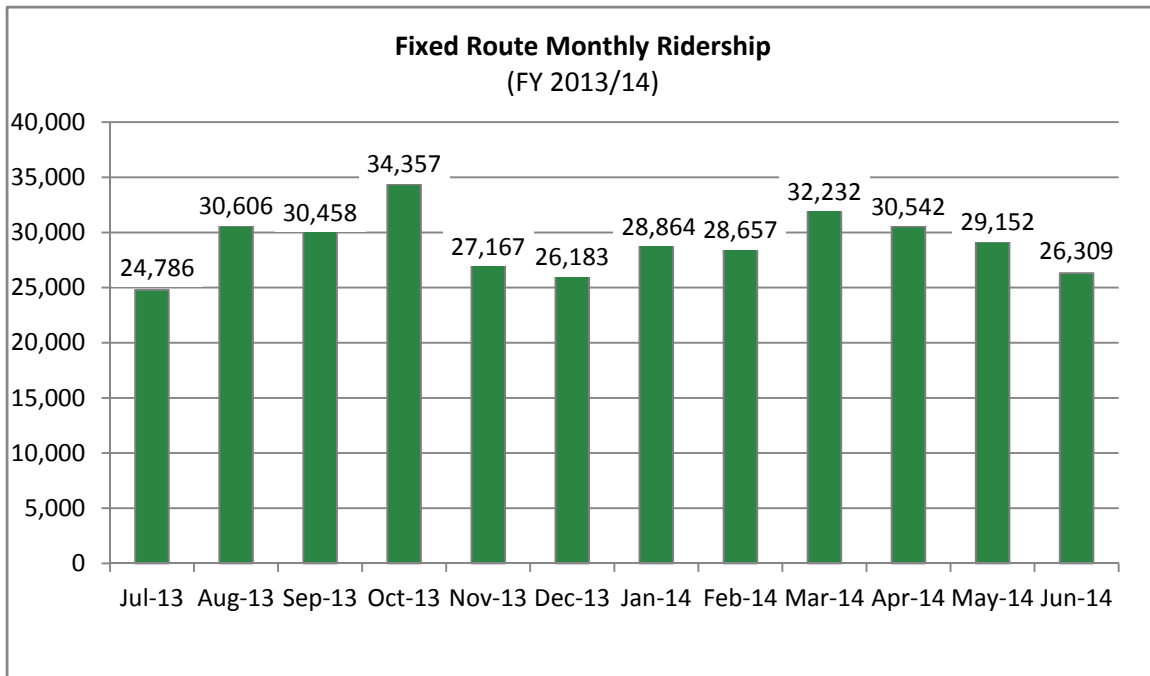
<u>Category</u>	<u>Fares</u>
General Public (age 7+)	\$1.50/one-way trip
Children (age 6 and under; first two)	Free
Each additional child	\$1.50/one-way trip
Seniors (age 60+)/Disabled/Medicare	75¢/one-way trip (9 am – 3 pm)
Punch Pass	\$13
T-Pass (countywide monthly pass)	\$50/good for unlimited fixed route rides

A punch pass is worth 20, 75¢ punches (a \$15 value), and is good for all fare categories. Punch passes and the T-Pass can be purchased at the Tulare County Government Plaza, and at the Dinuba, Porterville, Tulare and Visalia Transit Centers.

Children must be at least 7 years of age to ride the bus without adult supervision. Personal care attendants are allowed to ride for free when accompanying a disabled passenger (ADA registrant) to or from the same origin or destination. Transfers to and from Visalia Transit Route 1 are free to continue a trip. Transfers to and from Tulare InterModal Express (TIME) are accepted on TCaT Routes 20 and 40.

Fixed Route Ridership Profile

In FY 2013/14, ridership on TCaT fixed routes totaled 349,313 passengers. This is roughly a 2% increase from the FY 2012/13 total of 343,425 passengers. Monthly ridership in FY 2013/14 peaked during the month of October 2013, with a reported 34,357 passengers. The month of July 2013 saw the lowest reported ridership for the fiscal year, with 24,786 passengers. The average monthly fixed route ridership for FY 2013/14 was 29,109 passengers. The following chart shows monthly ridership totals on the TCaT fixed route system over the last reported fiscal year.



Source: TCaT System Performance Report (Fiscal Year 2013/2014)

TCAT DEMAND-RESPONSE SERVICE OVERVIEW

Description of Current Demand-Response Service

The County of Tulare provides demand-response, or dial-a-ride service, within unincorporated areas of the county (see Figure 4). TCaT Dial-A-Ride is an accessible curb-to-curb service designed to provide complementary paratransit service in response to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as specified in 49CFR37. In addition, TCaT Dial-A-Ride provides same day service to the general public on a space-available basis. Table 4 describes TCaT's current dial-a-ride service areas.

Figure 4 – TCaT Dial-A-Ride Service Areas

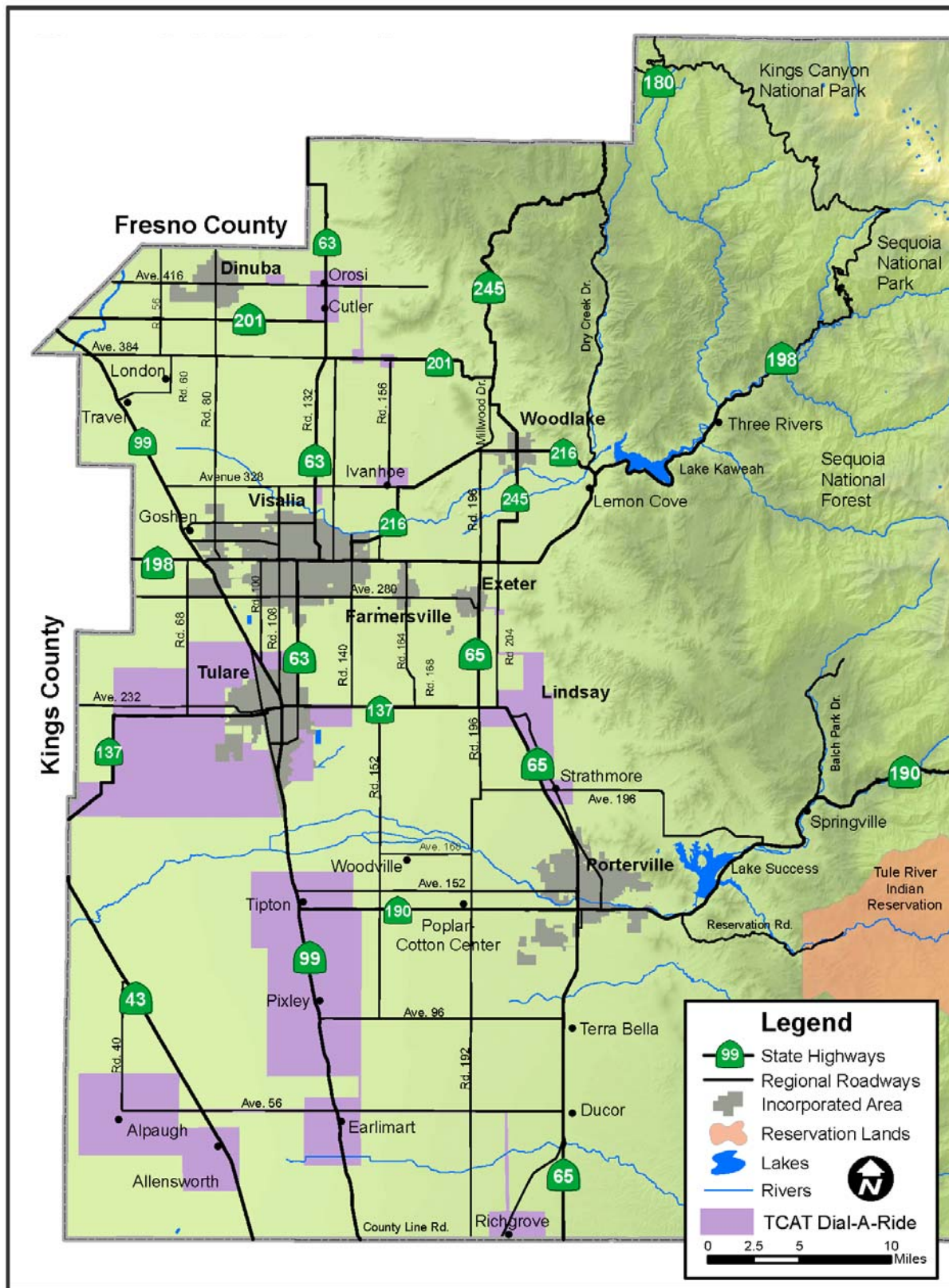


Table 4 – TCaT Dial-A-Ride Service Areas	
Service Area	Hours of Operation (Monday - Friday)
Rural Dinuba, Sultana, Monson, Cutler, Orosi, East Orosi, Yettem, Seville, North Patterson Tract	10:45 am – 12:30 pm & 2:15 pm – 4:30 pm
Lindsay, Toneyville, Tooleville	7:00 am – 3:00 pm
Pixley, Tipton, Teviston, Earlimart, Alpaugh, Allensworth, Richgrove	6:30 am – 4:30 pm
Rural City of Tulare, Waukena	7:00 am – 11:00 am & 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Source: Tulare County Transit Guide

Demand-Response Service Days and Hours

TCaT provides demand-response service Monday through Friday. Service hours vary by service area (see Table 4). Reservations must be made at least one day in advance for all dial-a-ride trips, except those within Lindsay, Toneyville, and rural Tulare. Next-day reservations are taken seven days a week.

Dial-A-Ride does not operate on New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Demand-Response Fare Structure

The current TCaT demand-response fare structure is as follows:

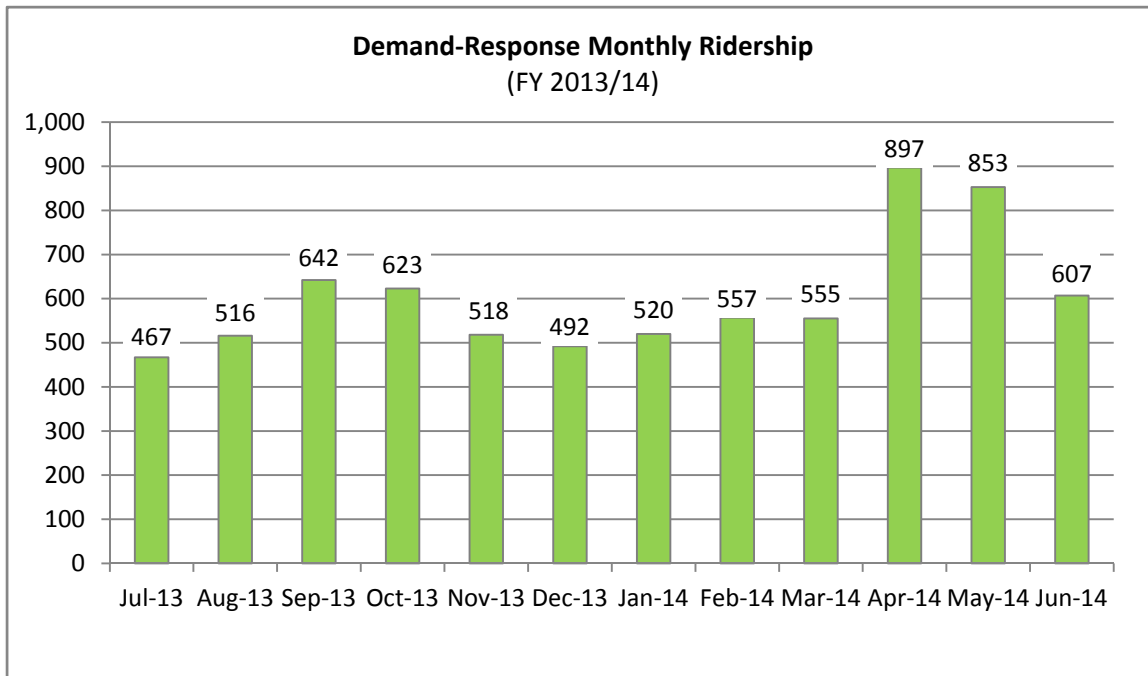
<u>Category</u>	<u>Fares</u>
General Public (age 7+)	\$2.25/one-way trip
Children (age 6 and under; first two)	Free
Each additional child	\$2.25/one-way trip
Seniors (age 60+)/Disabled/Medicare	\$1.50/one-way trip
Punch Pass	\$13

A punch pass is worth 20, 75¢ punches (a \$15 value), and is good for all fare categories. Punch passes can be purchased at the Tulare County Government Plaza, at the Dinuba, Porterville, Tulare and Visalia Transit Centers, and at Lindsay City Hall.

Children must be at least 7 years of age to ride the bus without adult supervision. Personal care attendants are allowed to ride for free when accompanying a disabled passenger (ADA registrant) to or from the same origin or destination.

Demand-Response Ridership Profile

In FY 2013/14, ridership on TCaT's demand-response service totaled 7,247 passengers. This is roughly a 12% decrease from the FY 2012/13 total of 8,272 passengers. Monthly ridership in FY 2013/14 peaked during the month of April 2014, with a reported 897 passengers. The month of July 2013 saw the lowest reported ridership for the fiscal year, with 467 passengers. The average monthly fixed route ridership for FY 2013/14 was 603 passengers. The following chart shows monthly ridership totals on the TCaT demand-response system over the last reported fiscal year.



Source: TCaT System Performance Report (Fiscal Year 2013/2014)

THE LOOP BUS SERVICE

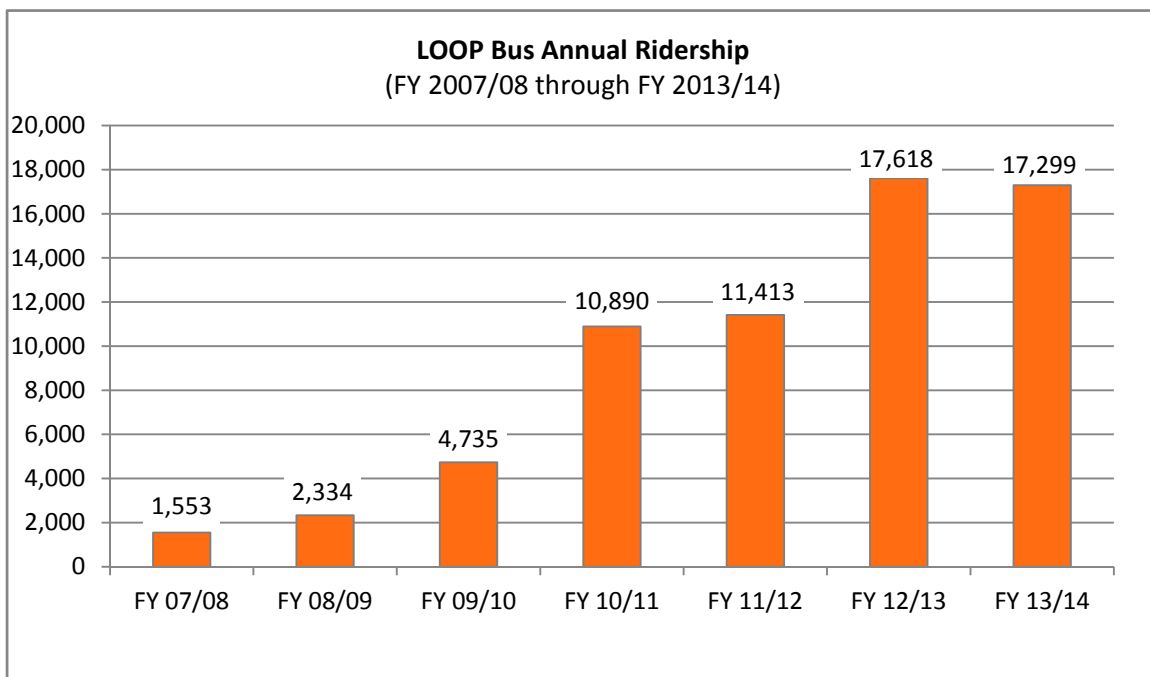
The County's Transit Division operates the LOOP Bus. The Tulare County Local Organizations Outreach Program (LOOP) is a free bus service that provides at-risk youth with transportation to free activities that connect them to mentoring and gang prevention programs throughout Tulare County. The service targets grade-school students who do not have access to or money to use public transit.

The program began in November 2006, in response to requests from local officials, law enforcement and community center advocates to provide safe access to after-school activities. The program is administered by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors and the Tulare County RMA. Funding for the program comes from the Board of Supervisors and Measure R, a ½ cent transportation sales tax.

The LOOP service is available to community and faith-based organizations, school districts (for after-school, non-school-related programs only) and local government entities. The program currently has four LOOP buses available for service seven days a week, but requests must be submitted two weeks prior to service. The LOOP Bus service does not operate on New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day or Christmas Day.

During the first year of service (FY 2007/08), the LOOP Bus carried 1,553 passengers. In FY 2013/14 the LOOP Bus served 17,299 passengers. The following chart shows annual ridership totals on the LOOP Bus service since its inception.

Note: The LOOP Bus service is not a public transit service. Information about the LOOP service is provided for informational purposes only. LOOP Bus data is not included within the TCaT financial and operating totals presented in this TDP.



Source: County of Tulare LOOP Bus Statistics

TCaT VEHICLE PROFILE

The TCaT fleet consists of twenty-five (25) vehicles, including five (5) LOOP buses. A minimum of thirteen (13) TCaT vehicles are needed on weekdays to achieve full service requirements on the fixed route and dial-a-ride services, five (5) on Saturdays and four (4) on Sundays. All TCaT vehicles are equipped with a wheelchair lift and securement system in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All buses are also equipped with bike racks to serve multimodal passengers. The following table shows the TCaT fleet inventory as of January 2015.

Table 5 - TCaT Fleet Inventory (January 2015)					
Quantity	Year	Make/Model	Capacity*	Fuel Type	Service
2	2004	El Dorado MST II	32 (+2)	Diesel	LOOP
1	2008	GMC Aerotech	26 (+2)	CNG	Fixed Route
2	2008	GMC Aerotech	30 (+2)	Gas	LOOP
1	2009	GMC Aerotech	26 (+2)	CNG	Fixed Route
7	2009	GMC Aerotech	30 (+2)	CNG	Fixed Route
4	2011	GMC ARBOC	17 (+2)	CNG	Fixed Route/Dial-A-Ride
2	2011	Ford Glaval	16 (+2)	CNG	Fixed Route/Dial-A-Ride
4	2013	Ford Aero Elite	30 (+2)	CNG	Fixed Route
2	2014	Ford Aero Elite	30 (+2)	CNG	1 Fixed Route/1 LOOP

*Includes wheelchair capacity (+#)

Source: TCaT

TCaT FINANCIAL PROFILE

TCaT cost a total of \$2,597,500 to operate in FY 2013/14. Passenger fare revenues totaled \$459,363 during the same time period, which equates to 18% of total operating costs. FTA Section 5311 (non-urbanized area funding), Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds, Tulare County Measure R funds, farebox revenues, and other state grants are the main sources of revenue for TCaT.

TCaT OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

As a regional provider, TCaT provides service from many service points throughout Tulare County, including Dinuba, Lindsay, Porterville, Tulare, Visalia and Woodlake. As a result, TCaT buses are stored at various County road yards located throughout the county, and vehicles are fueled at their staging locations during scheduled service gaps.

TCaT vehicles are currently maintained at the City of Visalia Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility, located at the City's Corporation Yard. TCaT and Visalia Transit both contract with MV Transportation for service and maintenance of their transit systems, and the County maintains an agreement with the City of Visalia for use of their maintenance facility. The facility contains five service bays, four lifts, one bus wash and one undercarriage wash. There are two mechanics on site that are dedicated to the County vehicles, of the ten MV

mechanics on staff. The County is currently in the process of developing its own dedicated transit operations and maintenance facility at the County Road Yard located southeast of Visalia. The facility will include CNG fueling stations. This project will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

EXISTING INTERFACE BETWEEN TRANSIT SYSTEMS

TCaT services provide connections to other Tulare County transit providers, and to other regional providers. TCaT passengers can access city transit services via the Dinuba, Tulare, Porterville, Visalia and Woodlake transit centers. Separate fares are required to transfer between most services, except to/from Visalia Transit Route 1, and to/from TIME (on TCaT Routes 20 and 40).

TCaT's regional service to Delano provides transfer opportunities to destinations within Kern County via Kern Transit. Orange Belt Stages and Greyhound services to destinations outside of the County can be accessed at the Tulare and Visalia transit centers.

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CHAPTER 3 – PUBLIC OUTREACH

Stakeholder involvement is critical to the successful development and implementation of a transit plan. This section discusses the techniques used to obtain feedback on current TCaT services and the identification of transit needs throughout the County service area.

ON-BOARD PASSENGER SURVEY

On-board surveys are one of the most reliable and cost effective means of gathering information about current transit users, including who rides the system (demographics), and how they feel about the service they receive. Rider surveys are often the only direct source of information about trip purpose and mode choice. Surveys can also be used to identify service needs, and to help define policies.

Methodology

On-board surveys were administered on TCaT buses during the month of December 2014. The majority of the surveys were collected prior to the winter break for local schools and colleges to ensure that responses were representative of “typical” ridership. The survey form was printed in both English and Spanish (see Appendix A).

Each of the TCaT services was represented during the survey process. Fixed route surveys were distributed and collected by trained surveyors with bilingual abilities. All of the fixed routes were surveyed during the collection process. Dial-A-Ride surveys were self-administered by MV staff; bus drivers announced the availability of survey forms during scheduled bus trips. Riders were asked to fill out the survey during the course of their trip, with driver assistance, if needed.

Survey Results

One hundred forty-seven (147) riders completed the survey (122 fixed route and 25 dial-a-ride). This small sample does not constitute a statistically valid sample of TCaT riders, but it does provide a snapshot-in-time of current transit users. Most of the surveys (83%) were filled out in English, but many of these were completed by surveyors assisting Spanish-speaking riders. Results of the survey are summarized on the following pages. Overall results were closely aligned with the results of the on-board survey completed for the 2008 TDP. Variations are noted.

Rider Characteristics

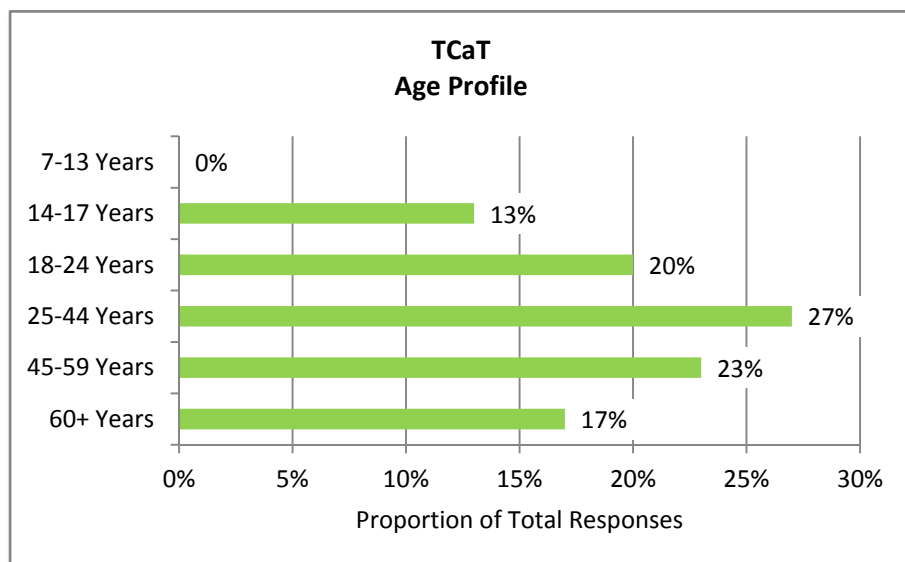
According to survey results, the average TCaT rider is between the ages of 18 and 59, with an average household income below \$10,000, and no access to an automobile. TCaT appears to have a well-established ridership base, and most TCaT riders use the County service to connect with other area transit providers.

Gender

A slight majority of respondents indicated they were female; fifty-four percent (54%) of respondents were female, while 46% were male.

Age

The majority of respondents were working-age adults between the ages of 18 and 59, with the largest group being between the ages of 25 and 44. This figure is in line with the 2010 Census counts which show the median age of County residents as 29.6 years. Approximately 17% of respondents were age 60 or older. School-age riders between the ages of 14 and 17 accounted for 13% of respondents.

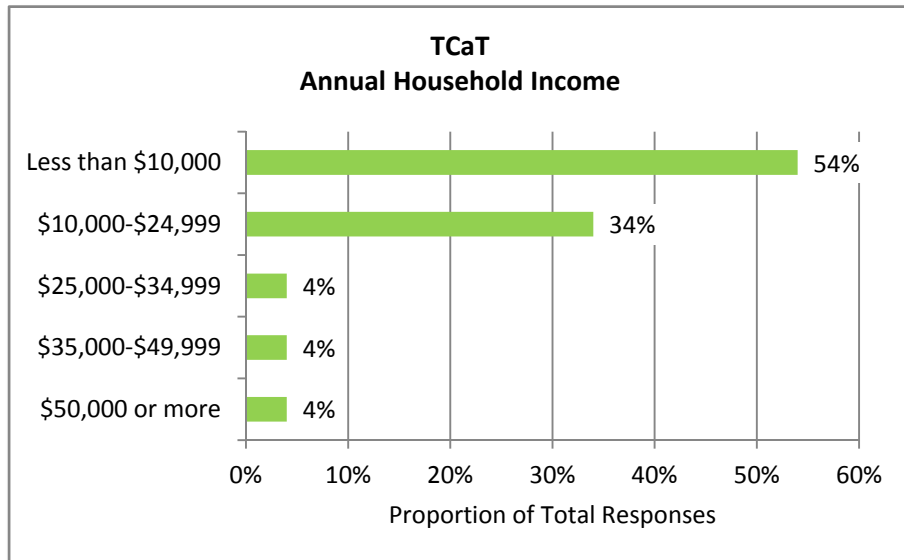


Income

Income typically plays an important role in determining transit ridership within the Central Valley. Generally, as income levels and available transportation options increase, the demand for transit services decreases. This correlation is apparent in TCaT's ridership.

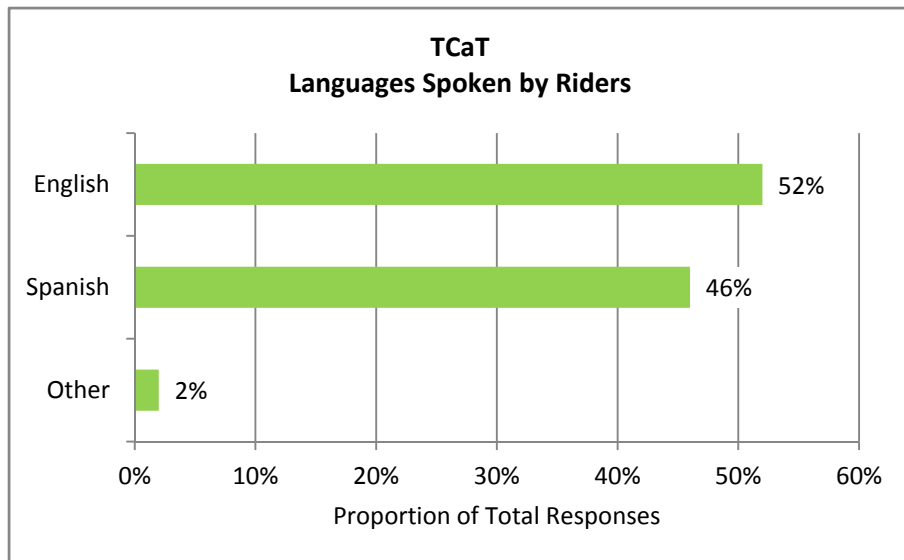
The majority of respondents (54%) reported household incomes below \$10,000. Another 34% reported household incomes between \$10,000 and \$24,999. Although household size is not known, it is likely that many of these households are at, or near the poverty level.

Over one-third of respondents (37%) indicated that they were employed, 20% were unemployed, 14% were retired, and another 29% were students. Of the employed respondents, only 12% were employed full-time. This is a 9% decrease from the 2008 survey results, possibly due to the slow regrowth of the County's economy since the economic downturn. Many of the part-time respondents also indicated that they were students.



Languages Spoken at Home

Almost half of respondents (46%) indicated that Spanish is spoken in their homes, underscoring the need for all transit information to be made available in both English and Spanish. Other languages indicated were French, Indian and Italian. Multiple responses were allowed; percentages are based on total responses received.



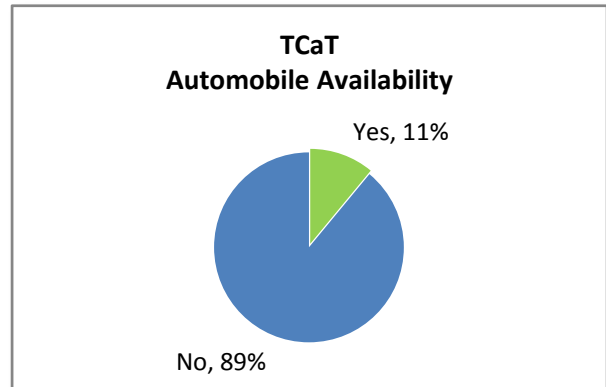
Disability Status

Twenty-three percent (24%) of riders surveyed answered “yes” to having a handicap or disability, while the other 76% indicated that they did not. Only a quarter of respondents that answered yes were using the dial-a-ride service.

Passengers that responded “yes” to having a disability were asked to answer a series of related questions. Answers to these questions were only tallied if the respondent claimed to have a handicap or disability; all other answers were dismissed. From these questions it was ascertained that only 3% of disabled passengers needed a wheelchair lift to complete their trip. Eighty-five percent (85%) of these respondents feel that TCaT services adequately meet their mobility needs.

Automobile Availability

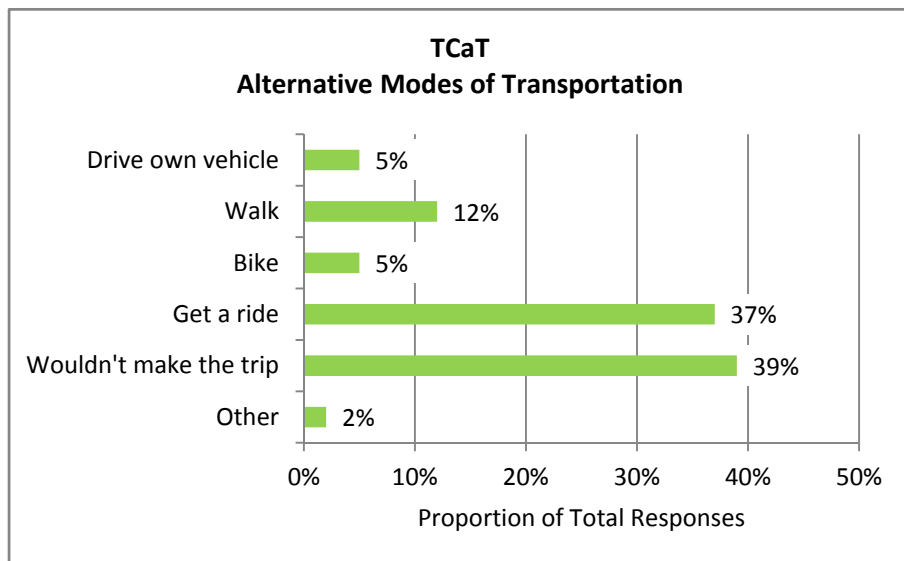
Respondents were asked whether they had access to an automobile for their particular trip. Almost all (89%) of the riders who responded indicated that they did not have a car available for their trip, underscoring the importance of transit service to TCaT’s core riders; the majority of TCaT riders are transit-reliant.



Alternative Modes

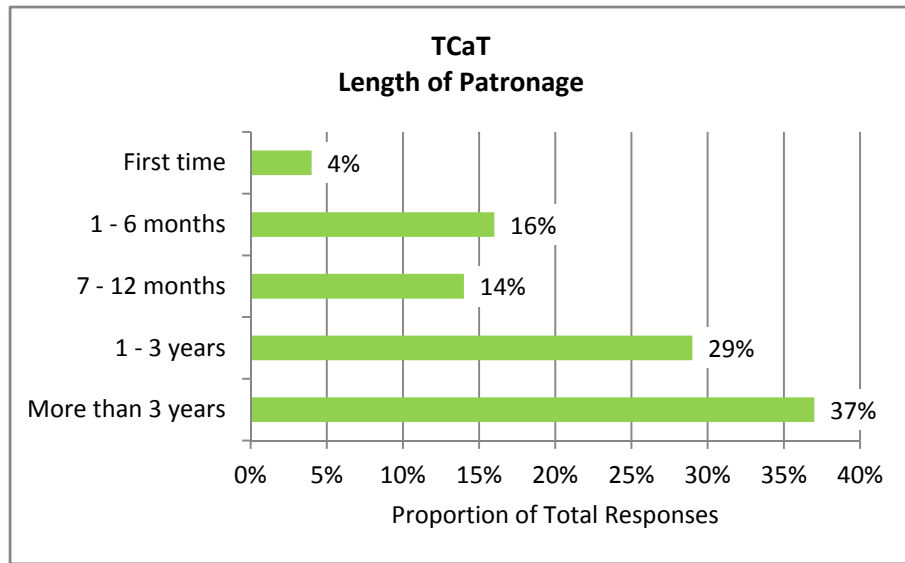
Another question asked riders how they would have traveled to and from their destination if transit service had not been available. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of respondents reported that they would have gotten a ride from someone else, indicating the importance of the trip.

Overall, 61% of respondents would have used alternate means to make their trip, while 39% reported that they would not have made the trip if the transit bus was not available. Many respondents included multiple answers; percentages are based on total responses received.



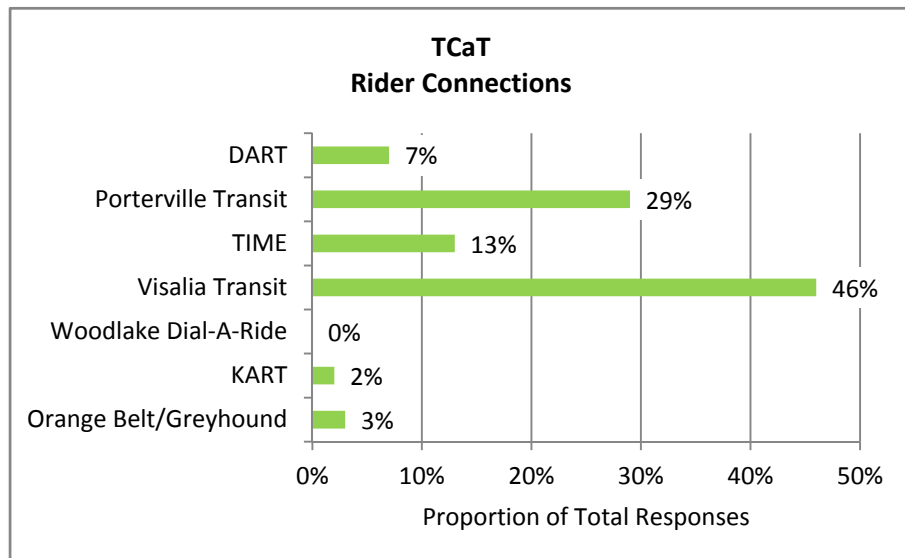
Length of Patronage

Over half of respondents (66%) indicated that they have been using the service for at least a year. The majority of respondents during the 2008 survey indicated that they were new users (less than 6 months), which means that TCaT has been successful at retaining new riders over time and has an established ridership base.



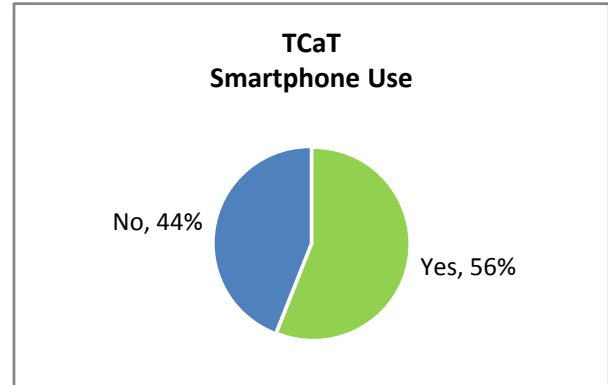
Connection to Other Services

Eighty-two percent (82%) of all the riders surveyed indicated that they use the County transit service to connect to and/or from other area transit services, thus signifying the importance of coordination between service providers. Most respondents (46%) indicated that they use TCaT to connect with Visalia Transit, but many respondents indicated that they connect with multiple providers (multiple responses were allowed).



Smartphone Use

Due to increased interest by public transit users for Wi-Fi connections aboard buses, survey respondents were asked whether they owned or used a smartphone. More than half (56%) responded that yes, they do own/use a smartphone with internet access.



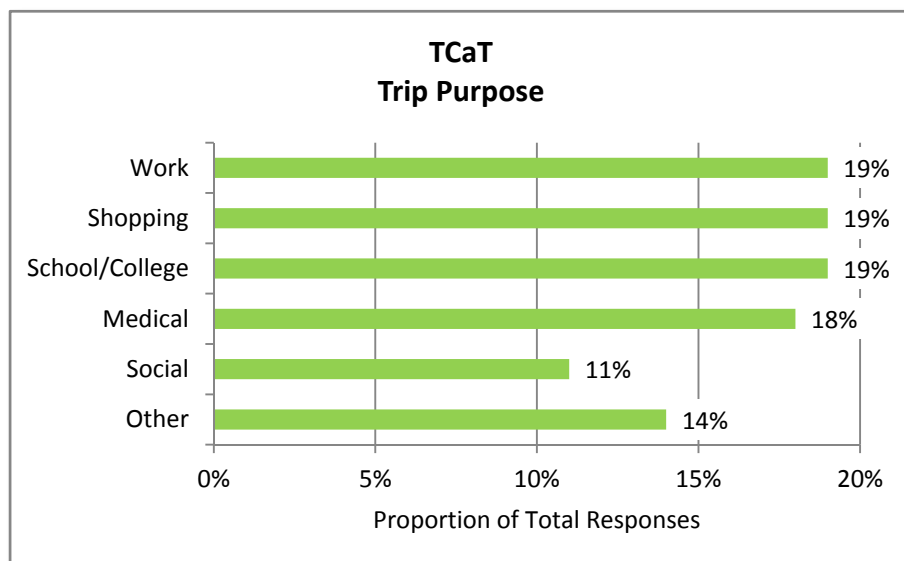
Trip Characteristics

The average TCaT trip is taken a few times a week to get to and from work, school, shopping destinations, and medical appointments. Information regarding TCaT services is most often obtained by consulting the Tulare County Transit Guide.

Trip Purpose

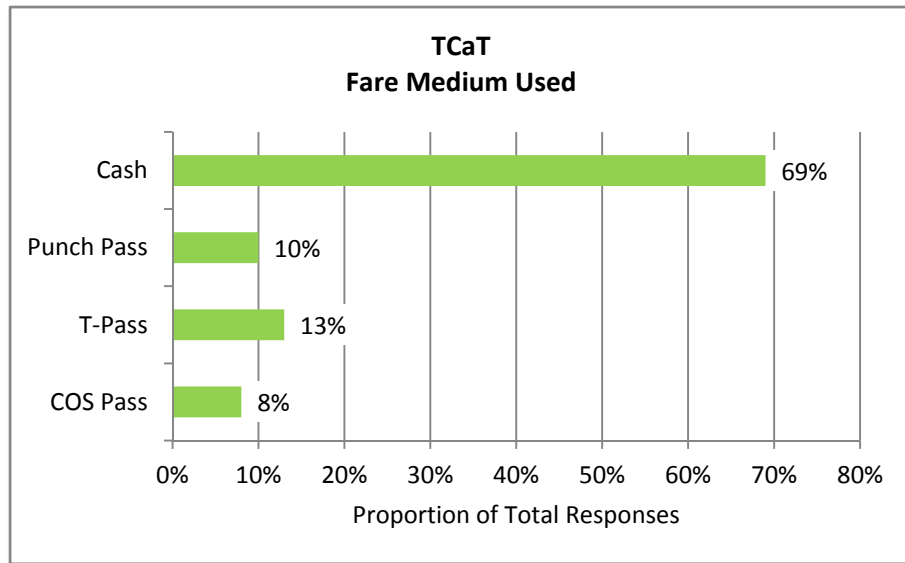
Passengers were asked to indicate the purpose of their trip. Respondents reported a variety of trip purposes, indicating that TCaT serves a variety of transportation needs. The most often reported trips, at 19% each, were work, school/college, and shopping related. Given the age profile of respondents, it is safe to assume that most of the school trips are college students traveling to one of the College of the Sequoias campuses (Visalia or Tulare), or to Porterville College. Other frequently mentioned trips were medical appointments (18%).

“Other” responses included court-related appointments and business errands. Many respondents included multiple answers; percentages are based on total responses received.



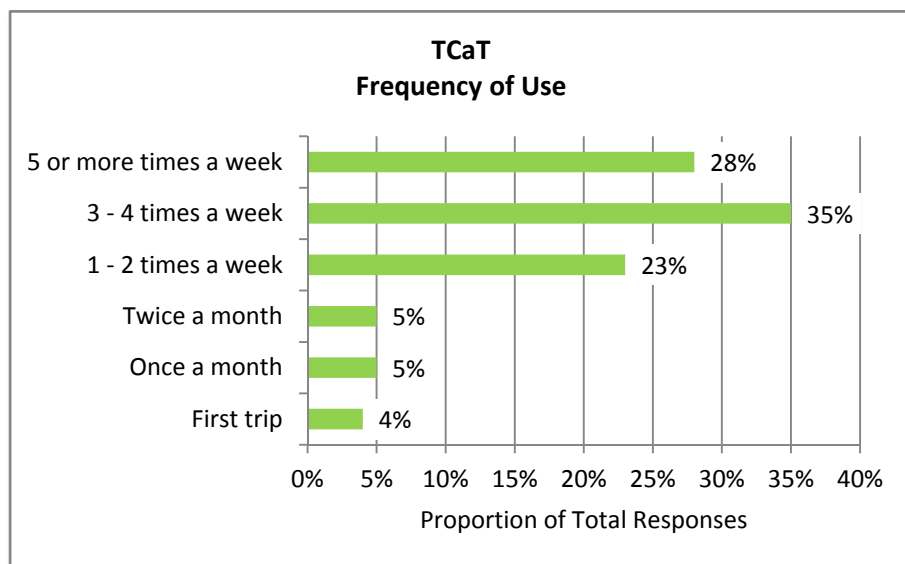
Fare Medium

Passengers were asked to indicate how they usually pay for their bus trip. The majority of respondents (69%) indicated that they use cash; most transit-reliant passengers do not have enough disposable income to purchase passes. Multiple responses were allowed; percentages are based on total responses received.



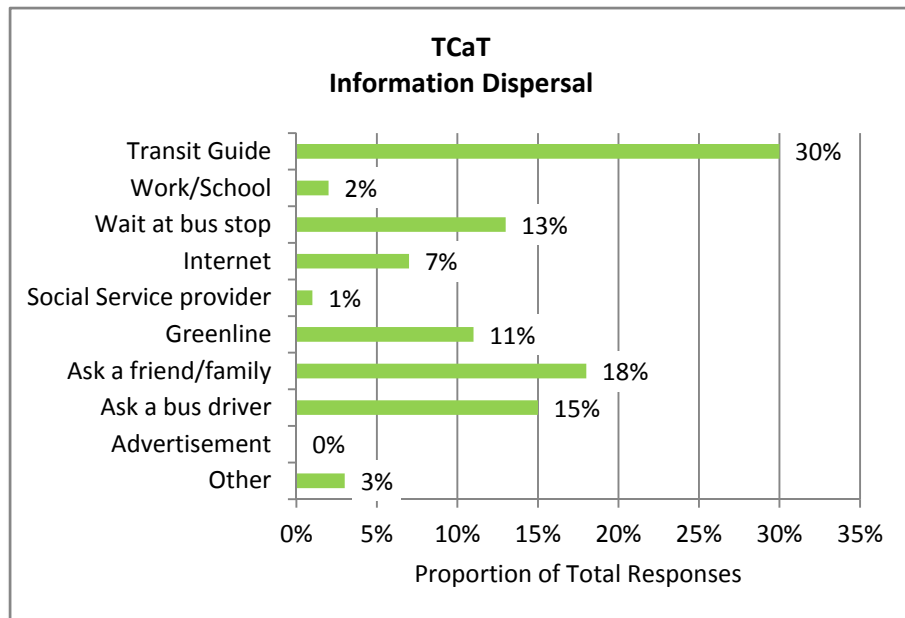
Frequency of Use

More than half (63%) of the TCaT riders surveyed, use the service multiple times a week. A few riders indicated that they were new users.



Information Dispersal

Respondents were asked to indicate how they usually get information about the transit system. Thirty percent (30%) usually consult the Tulare County Transit Guide. Transit guide was not included as an option in the 2008 surveys. Another 18% of respondents indicated that they would ask a friend or family member, and 15% would ask a bus driver. Multiple answers were allowed; percentages are based on total responses received.



Rider Attitudes and Opinions

The riders surveyed would like to see TCaT expand its current services, but are generally happy with the system's performance.

Needed Improvements

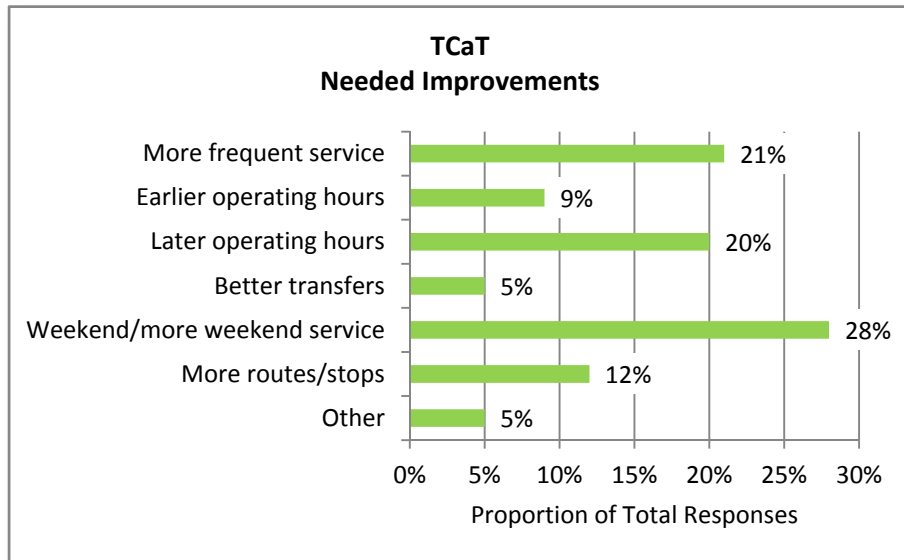
Survey respondents were asked to choose from a list of system improvements that they would most like to see addressed. Twenty-eight percent (28%) would like to see more weekend service implemented. Another 21% indicated that they would like to see more frequent service on existing routes, and 20% indicated that they want later evening service. "Other" responses are summarized by route:

Route 10 – more service to Seville; more service to Dinuba; better transfers with DART.

Route 30 – weekend service and more frequent summer service to Three Rivers.

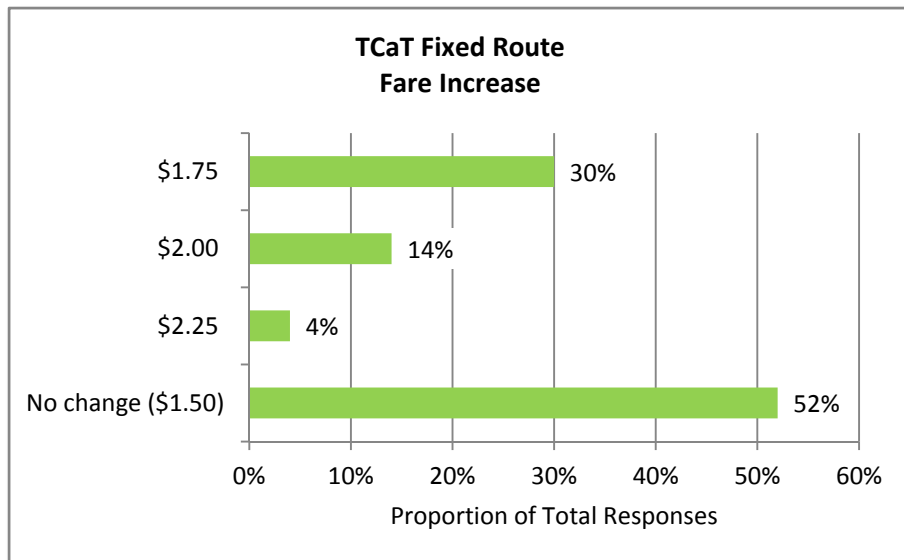
Route 40 – earlier weekend service; express/more direct routes from Porterville to Lindsay, Tulare (Route 20) and Visalia.

Many respondents also requested Wi-Fi aboard the buses. Multiple answers were allowed; percentages are based on total responses received.

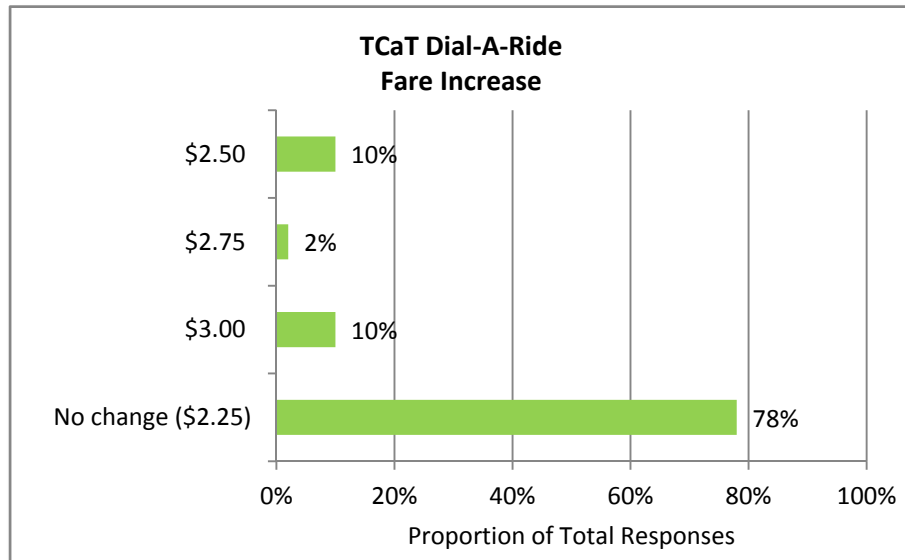


Fare Increase

The survey also asked respondents to indicate the amount they would be willing to pay for service if the County needed to raise TCaT's general fares. Respondents did not seem opposed to an increase on the fixed route service, but were not as responsive to an increase on the dial-a-ride service. Survey results are presented by service below.



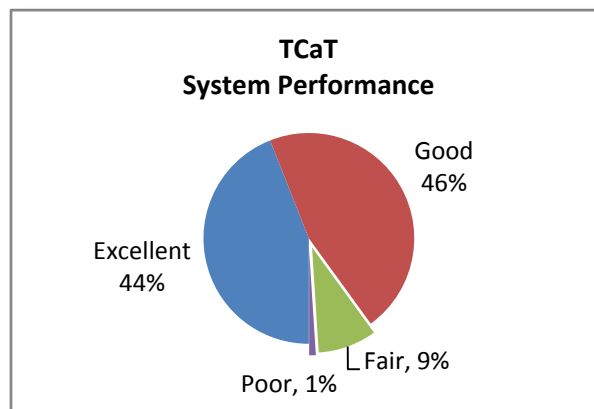
Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents were agreeable to an increase of the fixed route general fare. Thirty percent (30%) of these respondents would be willing to pay \$1.75 for the service.



Only 22% of respondents were agreeable to an increase of the dial-a-ride general fare. This comes as no surprise since the last dial-a-ride fare increase was implemented in 2012.

System Performance

In general, the majority of respondents (90%) are happy with TCaT's overall system performance. Forty-four percent (44%) indicated that TCaT is currently doing an "excellent" job.



STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Stakeholder input was also obtained through multiple meetings held to solicit transit input from users of public transit within Tulare County for parallel regional studies and for the annual unmet needs process.

Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearings

The Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG), as the regional transportation planning agency for Tulare County, is required under the California Transportation Development Act (TDA) to conduct an annual formal hearing process that solicits information about transit needs within Tulare County. Public participation is a key component of the TDA. Prior to making any allocation to member agencies (such as the County of Tulare) not directly related to public transportation services, specialized transportation services, or facilities provided for the exclusive use of pedestrians and bicycles, TCAG must annually identify the unmet transit needs of all residents in the County and those needs that are reasonable to meet. This process involves public outreach and at least one public hearing before the TCAG Board to solicit comments on unmet needs that might be reasonable to meet by establishing or expanding public transportation services, and the adoption by resolution of Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) findings related to the public comments. The County of Tulare is responsible for implementing service changes to accommodate any unmet needs within its jurisdiction that are found to be “reasonable to meet”, prior to receiving TDA funding for that year.

Public comments are invited through a wide array of mailing lists and agency contacts, by surface mail or email, and through testimony received in-person, by phone, or at the hearing. Bilingual posters and comment cards are posted at key stakeholder agencies and community organizations, as well as at all transit centers and onboard all buses that operate within Tulare County. The hearing is conducted in both English and Spanish, and Spanish interpreters are present to assist with public testimony.

Two public hearings were held on March 16, 2015; one at the TCAG Board Meeting in Visalia at 1:00 pm, and another in Porterville at 5:30 pm. Following are some of the service requests received for the TCaT service through the 2015 Unmet Needs process:

- Extend Route 50 (Delft Colony-London-Traver) north to Kingsburg (Fresno County).
- Provide weekend service to Lindsay.
- Provide weekend service to Seville and Yettem on Route 10 (North County).
- Provide weekend service to Lemon Cove and Three Rivers on Route 30 (Northeast County).
- Provide free transfers between TCaT and Porterville Transit.

Regional Transit Studies

Two separate regional transit studies directly related to TCaT services are being conducted during development of this TDP. Both studies were commissioned by TCAG, and both are being conducted by Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc.

The first study, the *Tulare County Regional Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP)*, was undertaken to address travel challenges within Tulare County through the year 2040. Project goals of the LRTP include improving mobility, connectivity, and coordination at the local, countywide, and regional levels. Public outreach for the project is focused on engaging transit and non-transit users in the discussion of current service perceptions and future improvements. The public at large is encouraged to participate through workshops conducted at major destinations along transit routes and special events, and through the project's website. Underrepresented populations are being engaged through social service agencies that represent the disabled and low-income clients; organizations that represent non-English speakers; Spanish-language media; veterans; and school district programs. All outreach is being conducted in English and Spanish. The study is scheduled to be completed in late 2015. Stakeholder comments received through the LRTP public outreach process as of April 2015 that might affect the TCaT system include the following:

- Schedule coordination is key to reducing customer trip times.
- Direct service between transit centers in primary cities (Visalia, Porterville and Tulare).
- Improved connections to Kern and Fresno County are needed.
- Difficult to travel from Porterville to Delano.
- Need for more routes and improved frequency countywide.
- Real-time information should be available for all systems in the county.
- Need to make certain that agencies are on the same page in terms of technology.
- Automated ticket systems would improve speed and customer satisfaction.
- Incremental fare increase needed countywide to keep up with demand.
- Transfer fees are costly for many riders; consider no transfer fee.

The second study, the *Southeast Tulare County Mobility Plan*, is focused on a review of current transit services operating within the southeast portion of the County, and recommendations to coordinate and improve transit service in the study area. Current providers include TCaT, Porterville Transit, and Porterville Sheltered Workshop (a non-profit agency serving adults with developmental disabilities). Public outreach is focused on informing the public, inviting participation, and communicating ideas through interviews, surveys, and public meetings. An open-house public meeting was held in Porterville on March 16, 2015, directly following the Unmet Needs hearing. The study is scheduled to be completed in mid to late 2015. Public comments received through the public outreach process as of April 2015 that might affect the TCaT system include the following:

- Residents want to get from the SR-99 corridor to Porterville.
- Service is needed from Farmersville to Visalia.

- Lindsay needs a lot more service.
- TCaT is not serving Strathmore well. Maybe this would be better served by Porterville Transit. *TCAG Note: Strathmore lies within the Porterville Urbanized Area, and is therefore within Porterville Transit's jurisdiction.*
- Real-time arrival information, whether available by phone or on mobile devices may be beneficial for regular riders, especially on TCaT.

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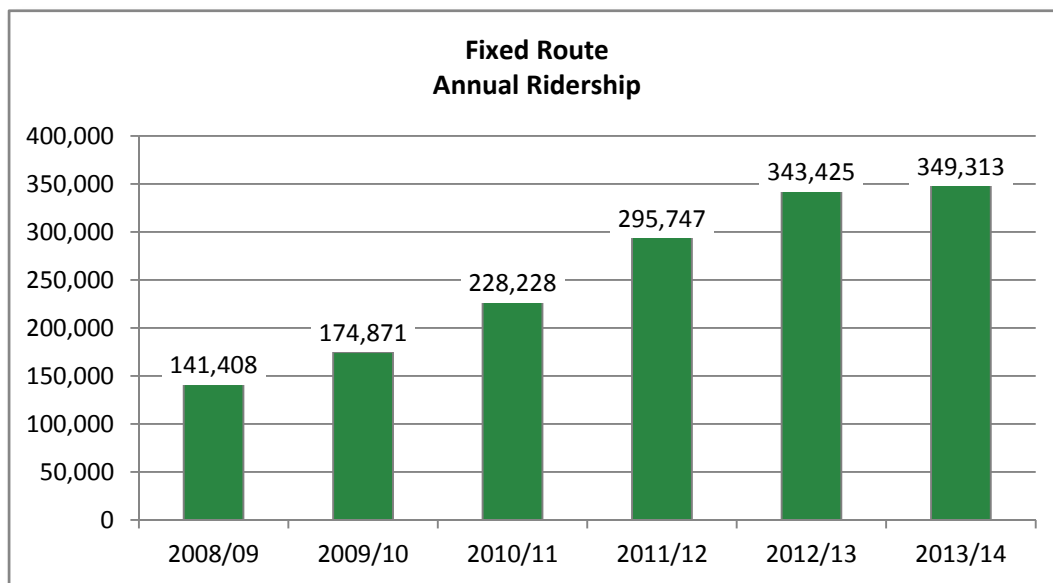
CHAPTER 4 – SYSTEM ANALYSIS

This section will review various components of the TCaT system. Analyzing service performance and operational trends provides a better understanding of the effectiveness and efficiency of the system. The results of the analysis will help identify performance issues that should be addressed over the next five years.

This chapter will begin by looking at the overall performance of the existing TCaT services. The analysis will include performance measures required by the Transportation Development Act (TDA) such as total passengers, operating cost, operating cost per passenger, and farebox recovery ratio for each service. This data will be compared with the adopted performance standards established in the *2008 County of Tulare Transit Development Plan*. In addition, this chapter will include an estimate of future transit demand based on current performance, and present an analysis of the system's fare structure, and compliance with various transit requirements.

TCAT FIXED ROUTE SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Using operating data and performance indicators, a series of assessments were completed to provide a better understanding of the operations and productivity of the fixed route service. The following graphs show a comparison of annual ridership, operating costs, fare revenues, farebox recovery ratios, and costs per passenger over the last six fiscal years. It should be noted that the operating costs used for these calculations only include administrative and contract service costs (not fuel costs), and are used for solely for the purpose of comparing trends over time.

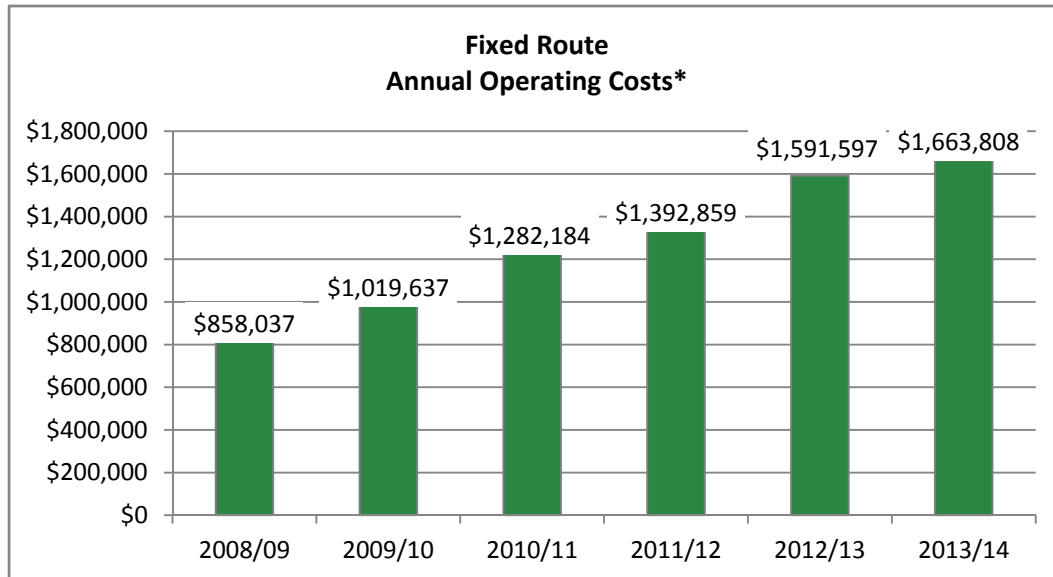


Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

Ridership on TCaT's fixed route system increased steadily over the last six fiscal years. Overall ridership increased by approximately 147% between FY 2008/09 and FY 2013/14, far surpassing the County's average annual population growth rate of 1.8% per year. This steady growth can be contributed to the steady expansion of service hours, through the addition of buses and/or schedule enhancements, including the addition of Sunday service on TCaT's intercity routes in January of 2011.

Incremental service expansion increased vehicle service hours (revenue hours) on the fixed route system by an additional 11,234 hours between FY 2008/09 and FY 2013/14. The largest annual addition of service hours occurred between FY 2009/10 and FY 2010/11, with the addition of 3,655 service hours. This coincides with the highest ridership jump (30.5%) during the study period. Ridership growth on the fixed route system seems to be flattening out, with only a 1.7% increase between the last two reported fiscal years (between FY 2012/13 and FY 2013/14).

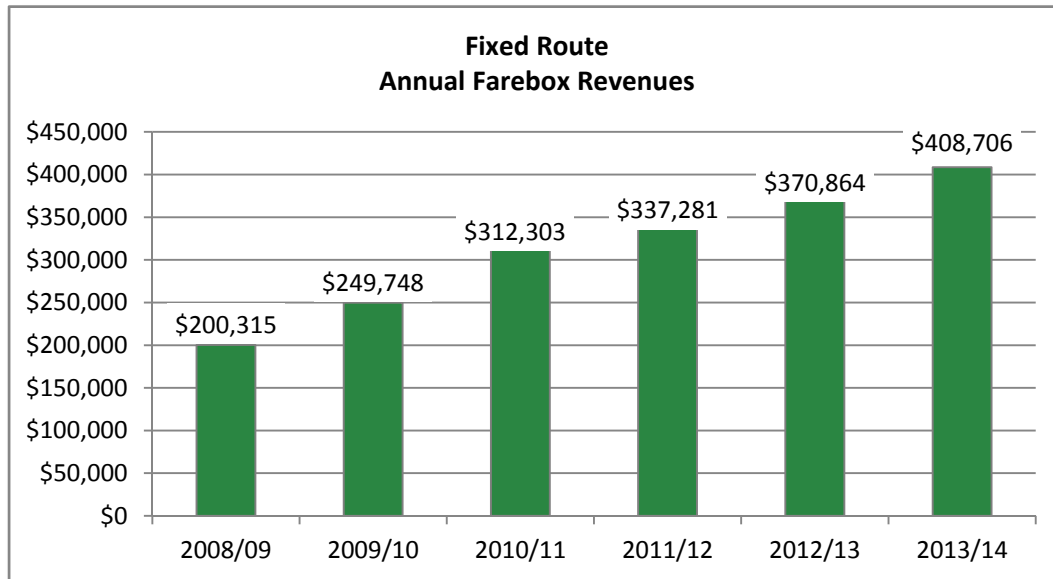
TCaT's intercity Routes 10 (North County) and 40 (Southeast County) consistently have the highest ridership of all the fixed route services. In FY 2013/14 Route 10 carried 100,220 passengers, or 28.6% of the system total (349,313 passengers), and Route 40 carried 101,182 passengers, or 28.9% of the system total. Route 60, the local circulator route to Lindsay, Plainview and Woodville, is the lowest performing route in the system. In FY 2013/14 Route 60 carried only 2,107 passengers, or 0.6% of the system total.



**Operating costs represent administrative and contract service costs only (fuel costs are not included).*

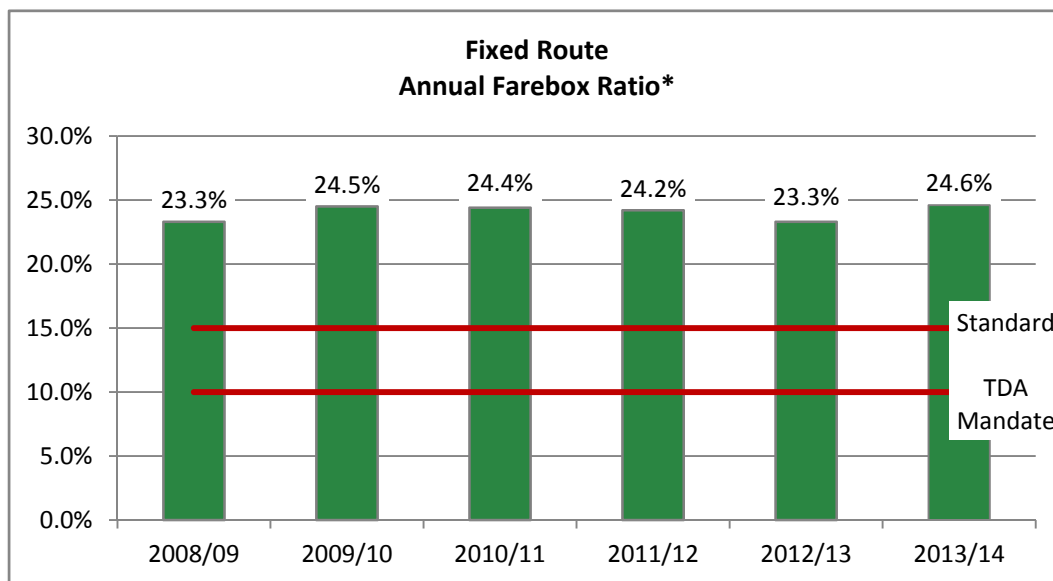
Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

The annual cost of providing the fixed route service increased at an average rate of 15.6% during the study period. The most marked increase (25.7%) occurred between FY 2009/10 and FY 2010/11 due to the expansion of service hours. Operating costs only increased by 4.5% between the last two reported fiscal years (FY 2012/13 and FY 2013/14).



Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

Fixed route farebox revenues have increased annually over the last six fiscal years; fixed route farebox revenues more than doubled between FY 2008/09 and FY 2013/14. However, total farebox revenue increases are not proportional to total ridership increases between FY 2010/11 and FY 2012/13. This is most likely due to the introduction of a student pass in January of 2011 that gives College of the Sequoias (COS) students access to free fixed route transit services throughout Tulare County through payment of their student fees. In addition, the fixed route fare range was broadened in January of 2012 with the addition of a midday reduced fare of 75¢ for seniors, disabled passengers, and Medicare recipients.

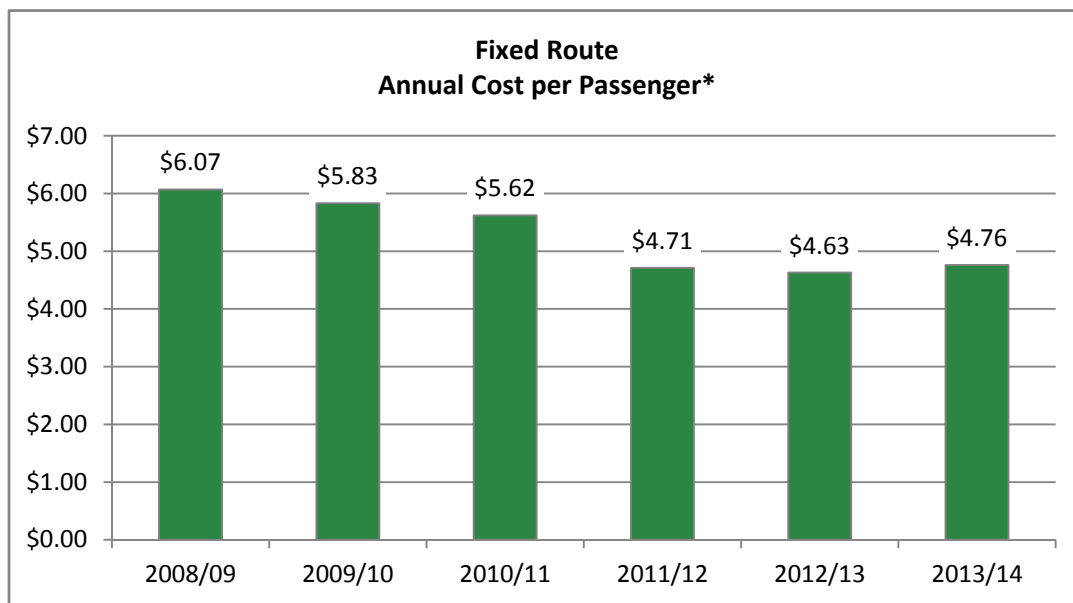


*Operating costs represent administrative and contract service costs only (fuel costs are not included).

Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

Farebox ratios represent the portion of fares paid in comparison to the operational costs of providing the service, and are calculated by dividing all farebox revenues by total operating costs. The TDA mandates that transit services operating in non-urbanized areas maintain a combined (system-wide) farebox recovery of 10% for all services, in order to receive state funding. TCaT's fixed route farebox has remained steady over the last six fiscal years, at ratios well above the system-wide mandate and the 15% standard recommended in the *2008 County of Tulare Transit Development Plan* for the fixed route system. All cost increases have been supported by associated ridership increases.

The annual cost per passenger on the fixed route system decreased by \$1.30 between FY 2008/09 and FY 2013/14. This decrease can be attributed to a higher total increase in ridership than in operating costs. However, the cost per passenger increased slightly (by 13¢) between the last two reported fiscal years (FY 2012/13 and FY 2013/14) due to a disproportionate increase in operating costs to ridership.



*Operating costs represent administrative and contract service costs only (fuel costs are not included).

Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

Operational performance data for FY 2013/14 indicates that the fixed route service is achieving most of the current performance standards. The following table compares the overall performance of the fixed route service for FY 2013/14 with the performance standards that were established in the *2008 County of Tulare Transit Development Plan*.

Table 6 – Fixed Route Performance Standards (current)		
Standard	Benchmark	FY 2013/14
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$12.00	\$4.76*
Operating Cost per Revenue Hour	\$55.00	\$51.97*
Passengers per Revenue Hour	15.0	10.9
Farebox Recovery Ratio	10.0%	24.6%*

*Achieved performance standard

Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

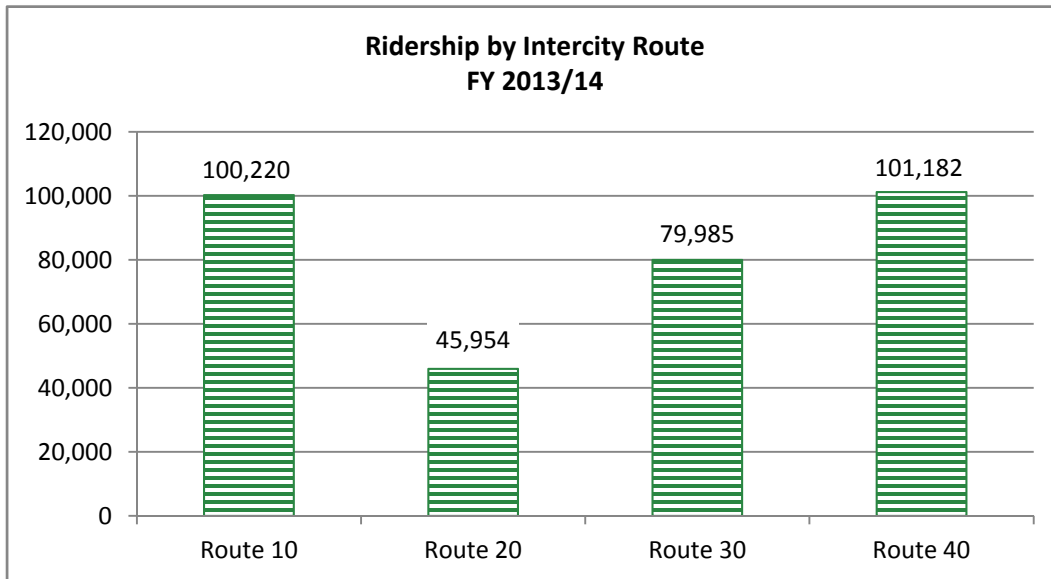
TCaT ROUTE ANALYSIS

TCaT operates nine fixed routes; four intercity routes and five local circulator routes (see Figure 3, page 2-5). A comprehensive assessment of each route's performance is essential to the overall understanding of TCaT's fixed route system. Of particular concern is the interrelationship between an individual route and the entire system. However, it is important to keep in mind that TCaT routes operate on varying schedules with differing trip frequencies. The following table depicts fixed route service headways (the time between vehicles on a route).

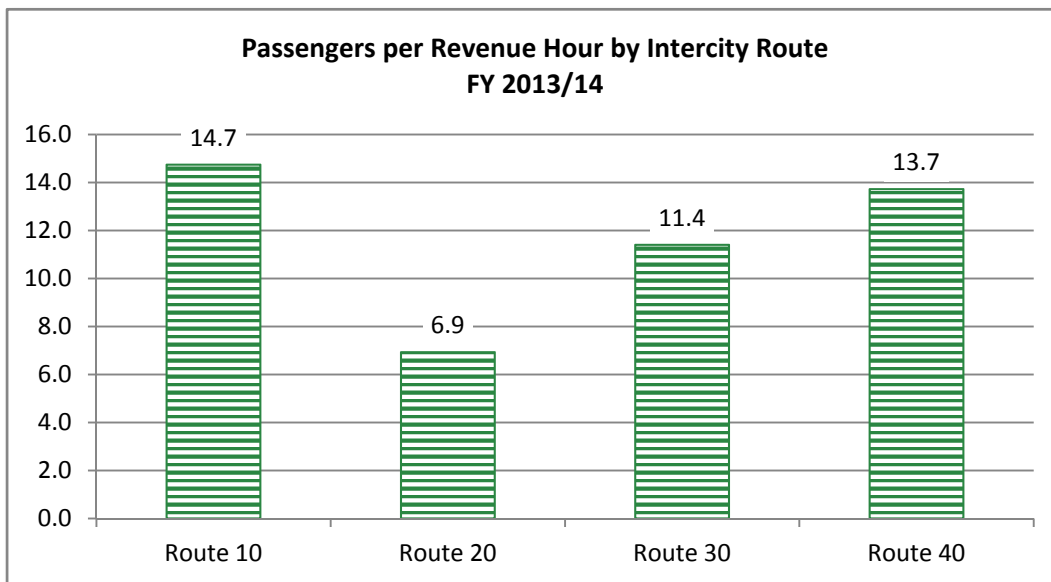
Table 7 – Fixed Route Headways					
Route	Monday - Friday			Saturday	Sunday
	AM	Midday	PM		
<u>Intercity</u>					
10	60	60	60	120-150	120-150
20	60-90	60-90	60-90	180+	180+
30	35	35-70	30-40	180+	180+
40	65	60-65	65	120-180	120-180
<u>Local</u>					
50	2 Trips	1 Trip	1 Trip	4 Trips	--
60	3 Trips	4 Trips	2 Trips	--	--
70	2 Trips	--	2 Trips	--	--
80	2 Trips	--	2 Trips	--	--
90	3 Trips	4 Trips	2 Trips	--	--

Note: Data shown is in minutes unless otherwise stated

The following graphs depict TCaT performance indicators by route for FY 2013/14. The routes are divided into intercity and local routes for easier comparison.

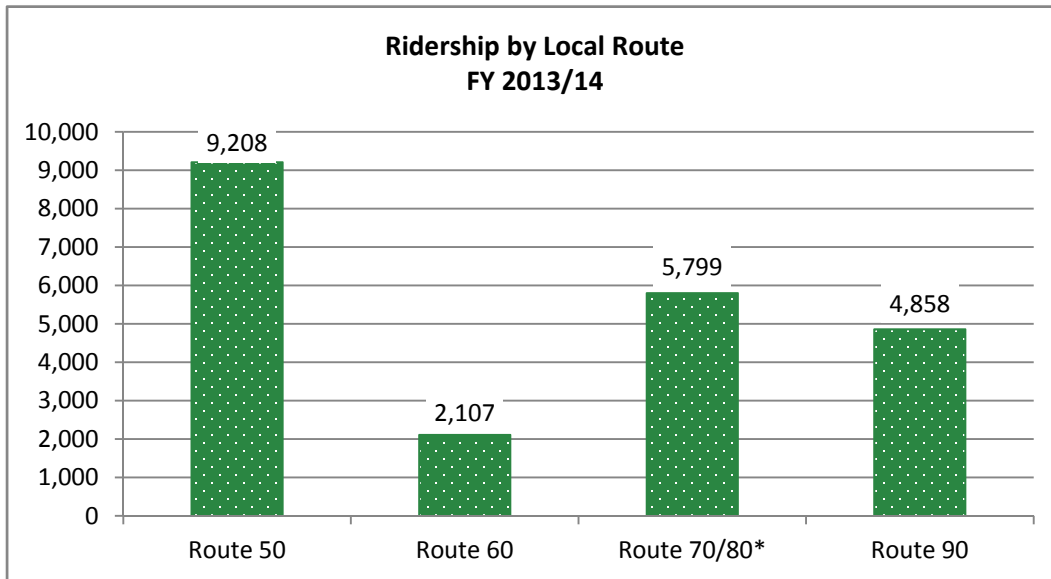


Source: TCaT System Performance Report (Fiscal Year 2013/2014)



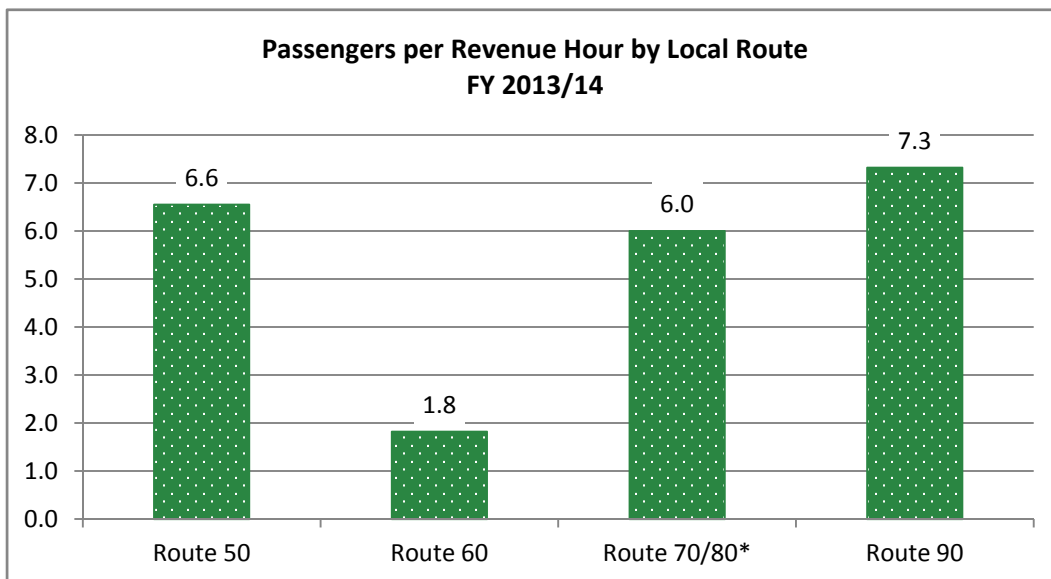
Source: TCaT System Performance Report (Fiscal Year 2013/2014)

During FY 2013/14, Route 40 (Southeast County) carried the most passengers on the intercity route system, with approximately 30.9% of the intercity ridership. Route 10 (North County) was just slightly behind with approximately 30.6% of the intercity ridership. However, boardings per vehicle revenue hour (VRH) were slightly higher on Route 10 than Route 40. None of the intercity routes are currently attaining the current standard of 15.0 passengers per VRH. Route 20 (South County) is the least productive of the intercity routes.



**Data for Routes 70 and 80 is reported together by TCaT*

Source: TCaT System Performance Report (Fiscal Year 2013/2014)



**Data for Routes 70 and 80 is reported together by TCaT*

Source: TCaT System Performance Report (Fiscal Year 2013/2014)

During FY 2013/14, Route 50 (Dinuba-London-Traver-Delft Colony) carried the most passengers on the local circulator route system, with approximately 42% of the local circulator ridership. Routes 70 and 80 combined (Porterville-Springville and Porterville-Terra Bella) came in second with approximately 26% of the local circulator ridership. However, boardings per vehicle revenue hour (VRH) were highest on Route 90, meaning that it is the most productive local route in relation to the service provided. None of the local circulator routes are currently attaining the current standard of 15.0 passengers per VRH. Route 60 (Lindsay-Plainview-Woodville) is the least productive of the local routes, and of the entire fixed route system.

A stop-level ridership analysis was completed in October 2014 as part of the data collection process for the *Tulare County Long Range Regional Transit Plan (LRTP)*. See Figure 5. The analysis was conducted by Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc. in cooperation with TCaT. The following data was taken from the *Tulare County Long Range Transit Plan – State of the System Report (March 2015)*. It should be noted that the stop level data presented should only be used to assess individual routes independently (not in comparison to one another) due to the varying schedule frequencies between the routes.

Intercity Routes

Route 10 (North County): The Visalia and Dinuba transit centers see the most boarding activity, with daily averages of 96 and 85, respectively.

Route 20 (South County): The Earlimart United Health Center stop has the highest passenger activity, with a daily average of 54 passengers. Tulare and Delano transit centers have daily averages of 37 and 25 boardings, respectively.

Route 30 (Northeast County): Three stops on the Northeast County route comprise the bulk of its ridership. The Visalia Transit Center sees a daily average of 144 passenger boardings. The Woodlake Valencia house has an average daily boarding of 101 riders, and the Ivanhoe Post Office has an average of 87 riders.

Route 40 (Southeast County): Most boardings occur at the Porterville Transit Center and the Tulare County Government Plaza, with daily averages of 138 and 85 respectively. Stops at the Lindsay McDonalds, COS Tulare, and Mooney Boulevard at Highway 137 have average daily boardings of approximately 40 passengers.

Local Circulator Routes

Route 50 (Dinuba-London-Traver-Delft Colony): Most boardings occur at Walmart in Dinuba and in Traver.

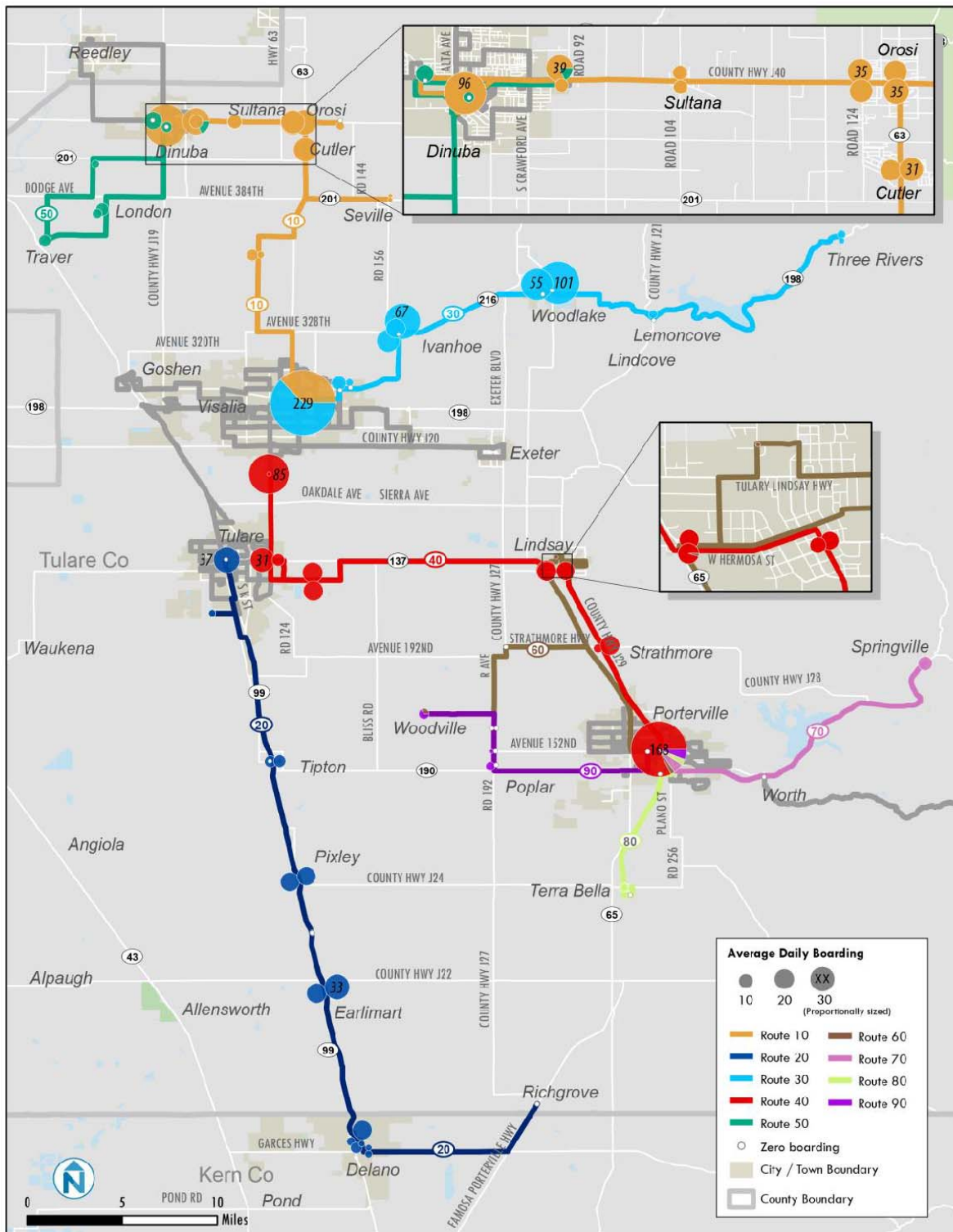
Route 60 (Lindsay-Plainview-Woodville): Most boardings occur at the Porterville Transit Center, with a daily average of 4 passengers.

Route 70 (Porterville-Springville): The highest boardings occur at the Porterville Transit Center and the Sequoia Dawn Apartments in Springville (the route terminus).

Route 80 (Porterville-Terra Bella): The highest boardings occur at the Porterville Transit Center and the Terra Bella Fire Station.

Route 90 (Woodville-Poplar-Porterville): The highest boardings occur at the Porterville Transit Center and in Woodville.

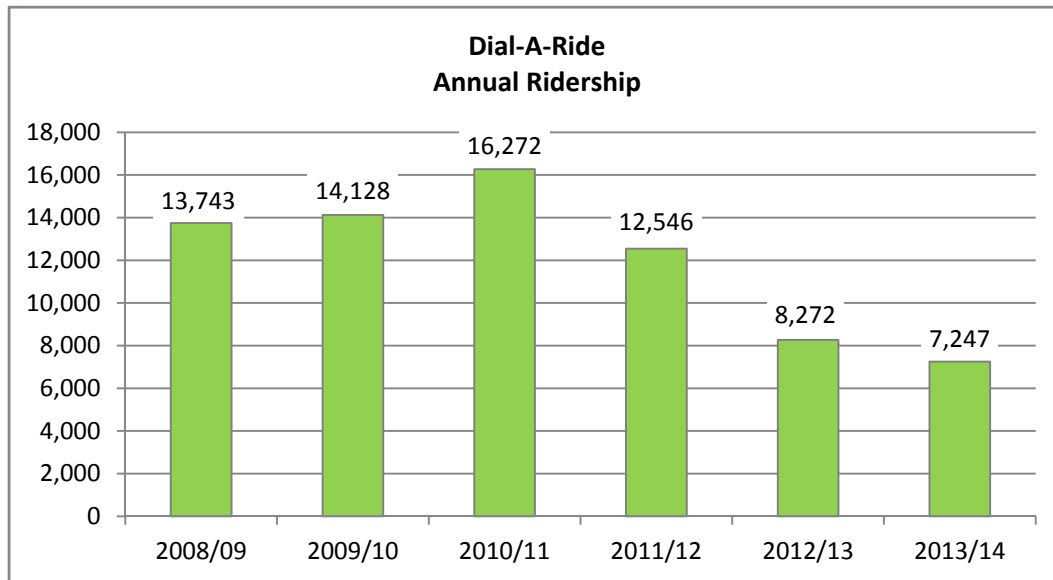
Figure 5 – Average Daily Fixed Route Ridership by Stop



Source: Tulare County Long Range Transit Plan – State of the System Report (March 2015),
Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc.

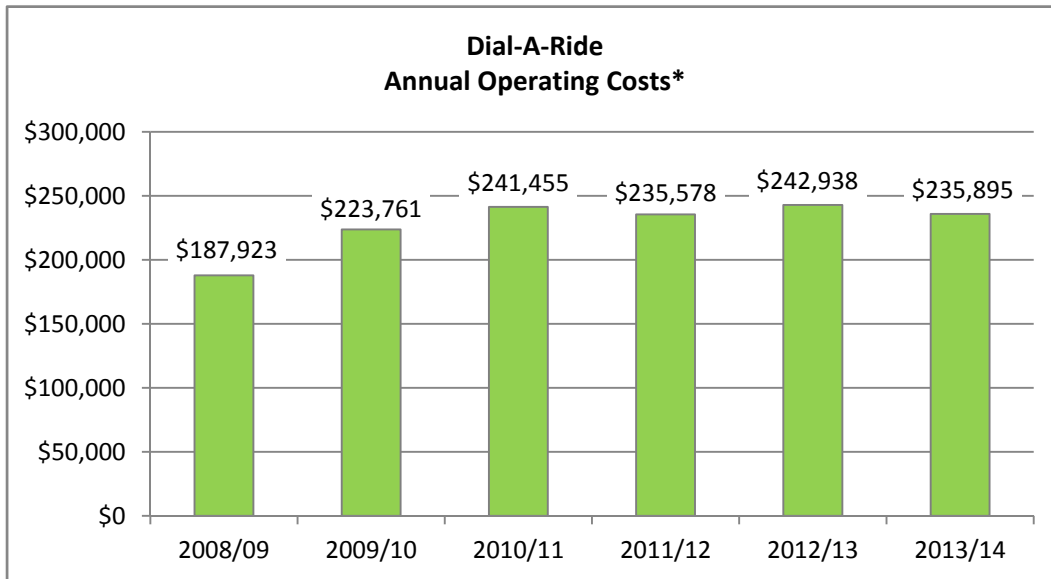
TCAT DEMAND-RESPONSE SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Using operating data and performance indicators, a series of assessments were completed to provide a better understanding of the operations and productivity of the demand-response (dial-a-ride) service. The following graphs show a comparison of annual ridership, operating costs, fare revenues, farebox recovery ratios, and costs per passenger over the last six fiscal years. It should be noted that the operating costs used for these calculations only include administrative and contract service costs (not fuel costs), and are used for solely for the purpose of comparing trends over time.



Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

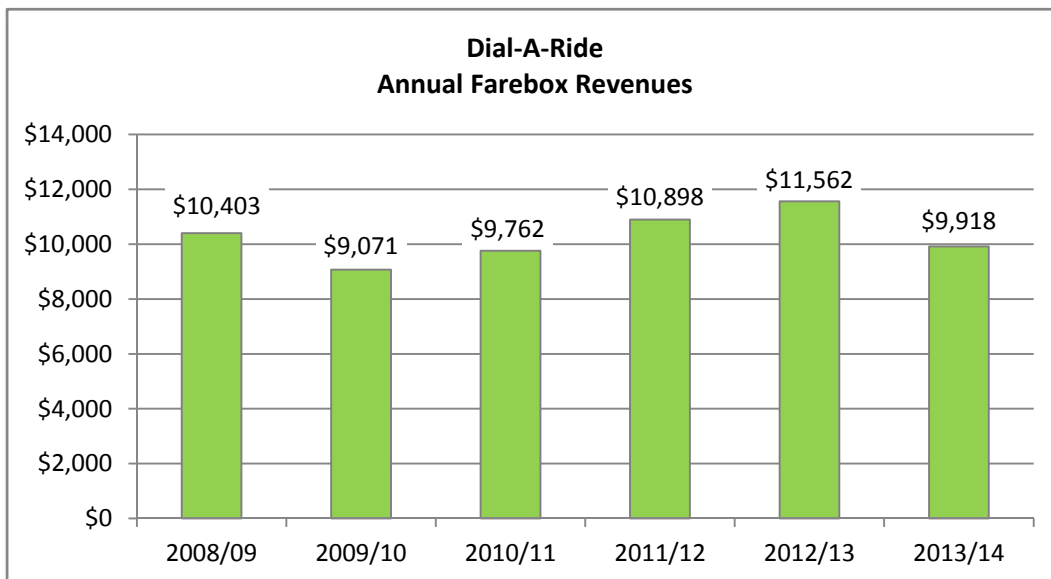
Ridership on TCaT's dial-a-ride system decreased by 47.3% between FY 2008/09 and FY 2013/14. Ridership peaked in FY 2010/11 at 16,272 passengers, and then dropped to a low of 7,247 passengers in FY 2013/14. This sharp decline is due to a dial-a-ride fare increase coupled with unprecedented fixed route expansion. In January of 2012, TCaT successfully implemented a long overdue fare increase on the dial-a-ride system. The 75¢ flat dial-a-ride fare was increased and separated into two fare categories: a \$2.25 general fare, and a \$1.50 fare for seniors, disabled passengers, and Medicare card holders. This fare increase, along with fixed route service expansion made possible by local Measure R (local sales tax) funds, helped shift ridership from the more costly dial-a-ride system to the more cost-effective fixed route system; general (non-ADA) passengers, especially students, previously used the dial-a-ride service instead of the fixed route system because it was more economical before the fare increase.



*Operating costs represent administrative and contract service costs only (fuel costs are not included).

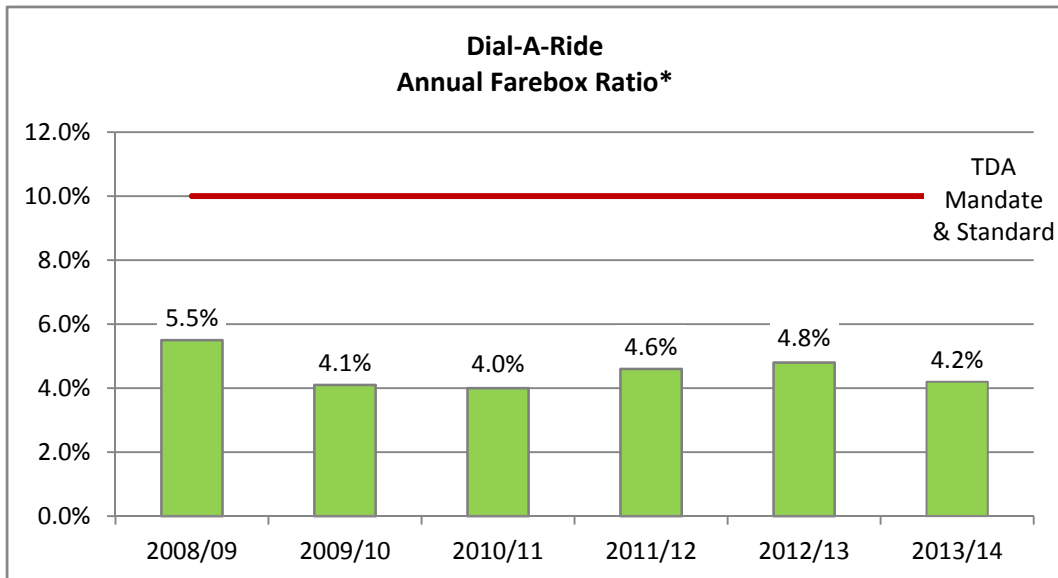
Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

The annual cost of providing the dial-a-ride service did not decrease in proportion to the ridership decrease. While ridership decreased by almost half (47.3%) between FY 2008/09 and FY 2013/14, operating costs increased by 25.5 over the same period. However, operating costs have remained fairly stable since the ridership shift in 2012. The slight drops in operating costs that occurred in FY 2011/12 and FY 2013/14 directly correspond to drops in vehicle service hours.



Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

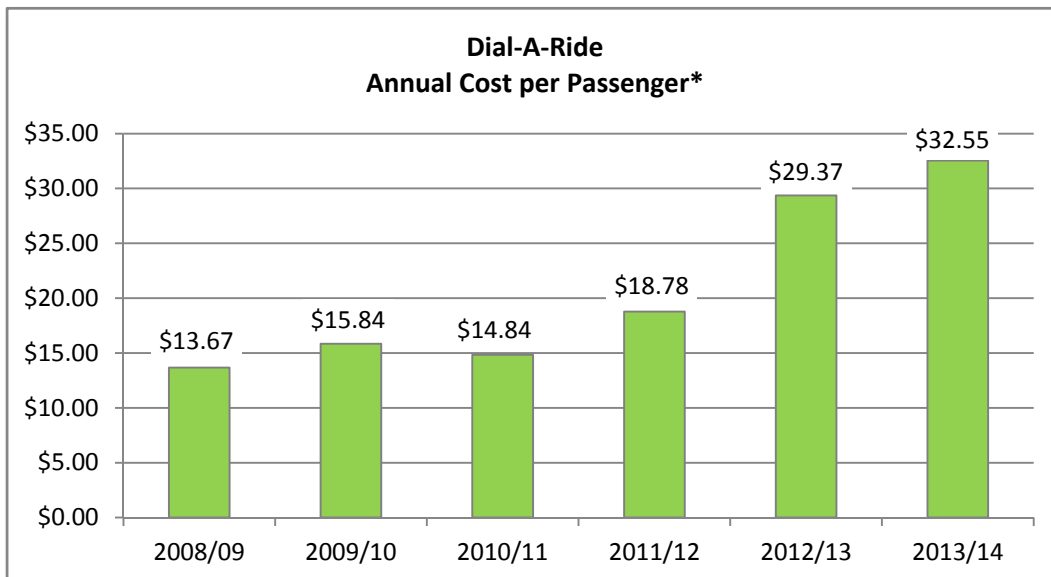
Farebox revenues remained relatively stable between FY 2008/09 and FY 2013/14, despite the drastic reduction in ridership; fare revenues only decreased by 4.7% overall. This can be attributed to the fare increase offset.



*Operating costs represent administrative and contract service costs only (fuel costs are not included).

Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

TCaT's dial-a-ride farebox has remained steady over the last six fiscal years, but at ratios well below the system-wide mandate and the 10% standard recommended in the *2008 County of Tulare Transit Development Plan* for the fixed route system. Cost increases and ridership declines have been offset by fare revenue increases.



*Operating costs represent administrative and contract service costs only (fuel costs are not included).

Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

The annual cost per passenger on the dial-a-ride system increased by \$18.88 between FY 2008/09 and FY 2013/14. This increase reflects declining ridership without a corresponding decrease in operating costs.

The TCaT operational performance data for FY 2013/14 indicates that the dial-a-ride service is not achieving any of the current service standards. The following table compares the overall performance of the dial-a-ride service for FY 2013/14 with the performance standards that were established in the *2008 County of Tulare Transit Development Plan*.

Table 8 – Dial-A-Ride Performance Standards (current)		
Standard	Benchmark	FY 2013/14
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$18.00	\$32.55
Operating Cost per Revenue Hour	\$51.00	\$67.54
Passengers per Revenue Hour	3.0	2.07
Farebox Recovery Ratio	10.0%	4.2%

Source: TCaT Fiscal Year System Performance Reports

TCAT SERVICE QUALITY

The *2008 County of Tulare Transit Development Plan* established a series of service standards for use in determining the service quality and reliability of the TCaT system. The following table summarizes the service quality and reliability of the TCaT system in FY 2013/14 against the standards recommended in the 2008 TDP. No data is currently tracked for on-time performance.

Table 9 - TCaT Service Quality/Reliability Standards (current)		
Standard	Benchmark	FY 2013/14
<u>On-time Performance</u>		
Fixed Route: 90% of departures on time (-1 to 8 minutes)	90%	No data
Dial-A-Ride: 90% of all trips of all monthly trips	90%	No data
<u>Preventable Accidents / Revenue Miles Operated</u>		
1 preventable accident per 50,000 revenue miles	0.002%	0.0006%*
<u>Roadcalls / Revenue Miles Operated</u>		
1 roadcall per 20,000 revenue miles	0.005%	0.015%
<u>Bus Trips Cancelled & ADA Trip Denials</u>		
No more than 1% of total monthly trips denied due to capacity constraints	1%	0%*

*Achieved standard

Source: Various monthly reports obtained from the County's service contractor

SERVICE COORDINATION

Transit providers within Tulare County work together to ensure that their systems work in coordination with each other to the benefit of passengers. Service overlap and duplication are avoided or eliminated through TCAG-sponsored transit forums, and service agreements between providers. All TCaT fixed routes provide service to the local provider's transit center located along the route, to facilitate passenger transfers to local systems. Shared stops are also used to allow passengers to transfer between systems. Schedules are coordinated as closely as possible to minimize delays between trips, but wait times vary throughout the day due to the fact that most local systems operate on fixed headways and TCaT schedules vary throughout the day based on coverage; TCaT routes do not provide service to every stop along each route on every run throughout the day.

Separate fares are required to transfer between systems, with the following exceptions: transfers to/from Visalia Transit Route 1 are free, and transfers to and from Tulare InterModal Express (TIME) are accepted on TCaT Routes 20 and 40. However, Tulare County residents can purchase a monthly pass (T-Pass) good for unlimited rides on all fixed route transit systems within Tulare County.

TCaT's regional service to Delano (Route 20) provides transfer opportunities to destinations within Kern County via Kern Transit. TCaT passengers can also reach destinations within Fresno County by transferring to Dinuba's Reedley Connection route, and then accessing the Fresno County Rural Transit Agency (FCRTA) service in Reedley.

In addition, TCaT participates in a cash fare subsidy program with Orange Belt Stages. Passengers that use Orange Belt for trips that originate and end within Tulare County are charged the TCaT general fare of \$1.50, and Orange Belt bills the County for the additional cost.

THE LOOP BUS SERVICE PERFORMANCE

As stated in Chapter 2, the Tulare County Local Organizations Outreach Program (LOOP) provides groups of at-risk youth with free transportation to activities that connect them to mentoring and gang prevention programs throughout Tulare County. The service is operated by the County's transit division, and funded through Measure R, a ½ cent local transportation sales tax. The LOOP Bus service is not a public transit service, and does not receive federal or state transit funds. Information about the LOOP service is provided for information purposes only.

The LOOP Bus program has grown from a one-bus fixed route service, providing summer transportation to 1,553 youth in FY 2007/08, to a four bus special request/reservation system providing year-round transportation to 17,299 youth in FY 2013/14. The County recently purchased a new 30-passenger cutaway for the LOOP service, bringing the LOOP fleet to five. This was the first new LOOP Bus (the other four LOOP buses are previously-owned), and will allow for more service requests to be booked at a given time.

The LOOP service began with a \$125,000 per year budget, which was increased to \$150,000 per year in FY 2010/11. However, only a small percentage of the budget is utilized on any given year allowing for continued growth into the near future. The following table depicts the successful growth of the LOOP Bus since its inception.

Table 10 - LOOP Bus Statistics							
	FY 2007/08	FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14
Passengers	1,553	2,334	4,735	10,890	11,413	17,618	17,299
Revenue Miles	7,985	5,759	12,860	23,931	25,621	29,105	26,567
Revenue Hours	517	378	676	1,506	1,516	1,935	1,873
Expenses	\$30,000	\$43,000	\$25,000	\$40,000	\$38,000	\$49,000	\$48,000

Source: County of Tulare LOOP Bus Statistics & Measure "R" Quarterly Calculations Reports

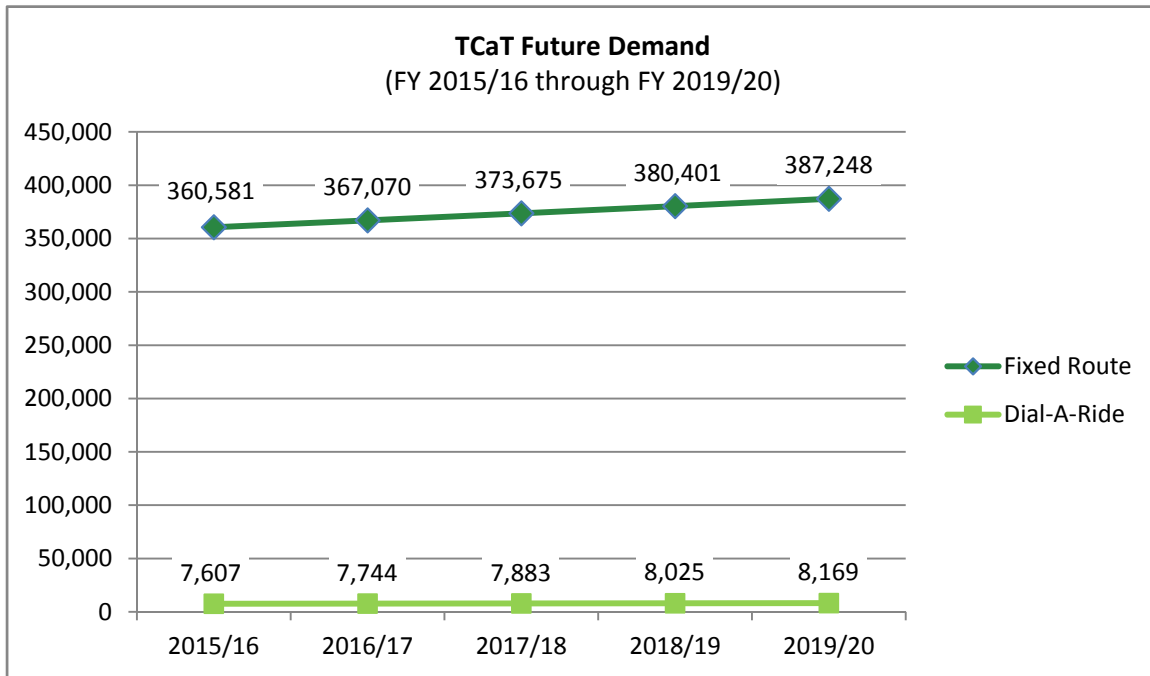
FUTURE TRANSIT DEMAND

Estimation of future demand for transit can be based on a number of factors including population, automobile ownership, income, service availability and historic ridership. An estimation of the five-year demand for transit service in Tulare County was completed based on the continuation of the existing type and scope of transit services. All calculations were computed using Department of Finance population projections and U.S. Census population data for the unincorporated portions of Tulare County.

The future transit demand projections for continuation of services were calculated for each of the current TCaT services using the current annual per capita trip rate. Per capita trip rates reflect the transit trip-making characteristics of a community. The number of transit trips made per capita is reflective of the type and frequency of service, the fare structure and the socio-economic profile of the population. Each per capita estimate was multiplied by the estimated TCaT service area population to determine projected annual ridership.

- The estimation of future trips for continuation of the existing fixed route service was based on the current per capita trip rate of 2.37 trips per year, derived from FY 2013/14 data.
- The estimation of future trips for continuation of the existing demand-response service was based on the current per capita trip rate of 0.05 trips per year, derived from FY 2013/14 data.

The following chart outlines the future transit demand for TCaT in fiscal years 2015/16 through 2019/20. Ridership totals are based on current service parameters and population growth rates for the TCaT service area.



Using existing trip rates, both TCaT services are expected to see an increase in ridership over the next five fiscal years. Overall TCaT ridership is expected to increase approximately 11% over FY 2013/14 ridership if current population growth rates remain steady within the service area.

BASELINE SERVICE

The following data is presented to provide a baseline for the evaluation of future service. The data represents a snapshot of TCaT services based on current service parameters and future transit demand, or the status quo. All calculations are based on FY 2013/14 data. All data was taken from Tulare County's State Controller's Report for FY 2014. Operating costs reflect all expenses, including fuel costs.

Table 11 - TCaT Status Quo (FY 2015/16)

Service	Ridership*	Fare Revenues	Operating Costs**	Net Costs	Farebox Ratio
Fixed Route	360,600	\$465,100	\$2,425,000	\$1,959,900	19.2%
Dial-A-Ride	7,600	\$10,400	\$330,700	\$320,300	3.1%
Combined	368,200	\$475,500	\$2,755,700	\$2,280,200	17.3%

*Ridership totals include revenue and non-revenue passengers

**Operating costs assume a 3% annual inflation rate

Overall ridership on TCaT is projected to increase approximately 2% annually under the current service parameters. Dial-A-Ride farebox ratios will remain low, but the combined system farebox ratio will remain well above the 10% adopted performance standard, and the 10% minimum required by the TDA for rural operators.

FARE ANALYSIS

The current TCaT fare system is composed of general cash revenues and passes. Seniors, disabled passengers, and Medicare card holders receive reduced fares on the fixed route system (between 9 am and 3 pm), and on the dial-a-ride system. General riders are offered fare incentives in the form of a punch pass or the T-Pass. A punch pass provides a price break over single fare purchases; a \$13 punch pass is worth 20, 75¢ punches (a \$15 value), and is good for all fare categories. The T-Pass is a countywide monthly pass that allows for unlimited fixed route rides on any Tulare County fixed route system.

A comparison of other Valley service providers shows that TCaT's fares are comparable to other transit providers within Tulare County, but not in relation to the service provided. Typically, regional systems that provide countywide, or intercity service, charge more than they do for intracity service (or more than their intracity/local counterparts). In general, regional systems incur more operating costs due to longer routes, requiring more vehicle service miles and hours. The following table illustrates this fare comparison. In all of the counties depicted, with the exception of Tulare County (Kings, Fresno, Madera and Merced), regional fixed route fares are higher than local fixed route fares. TCaT's dial-a-ride fares are also low in comparison to other Tulare County providers.

Table 12 - Fare Comparison of Central Valley Service Providers (as of March 2015)

Provider	Local General Fare (fixed route)	Regional General Fare (fixed route)	General Fare (dial-a-ride)	ADA Fare (dial-a-ride)
Dinuba Area Regional Transit (DART)	75¢*	\$1.50	\$1.50	50¢
Porterville Transit (PT)	\$1.50	N/A	\$5.00	\$2.50
Tulare County Area Transit (TCaT)	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$2.25	\$1.50
Tulare Intermodal Express (TIME)	\$1.50	N/A	\$3.25	\$2.00
Visalia Transit (VT)	\$1.50	N/A	\$4.00	\$2.25
Kings Area Rural Transit (KART)	\$1.00	\$1.50	N/A	\$2.00
Clovis Stageline/Roundup	\$1.25	N/A	N/A	\$1.25
Fresno Area Express (FAX)	\$1.25	N/A	N/A	\$1.50
Fresno County Rural Transit (FCRTA)**	75¢	75¢ to \$6.50	75¢	50¢
Chowchilla Area Transit Express (CATX)	N/A	\$2.50	\$1.50	\$1.20
Madera Area Express (MAX)	75¢	N/A	\$2.00	\$1.00
Madera County Connection (MCC)	N/A	\$2.00	N/A	N/A
Merced County Transit (The BUS)	\$1.50	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$2.50

*The DART local fixed route fare will be \$1.00 as of July 1, 2015

**FCRTA fares are subsidized through direct Measure C funds (regional public transit expenditures); Measure C funds are directly allocated for regional public transit expenditures vs local program funds (like Measure R).

Healthy farebox revenues are necessary to maintain stable farebox recovery ratios. Farebox recovery ratios are the proportion of the amount of revenue generated through fares by a system's paying customers as a fraction of the system's total operating expenses. As previously noted, the TDA mandates that transit services operating in non-urbanized areas maintain a combined (system-wide) farebox recovery ratio of 10% for all services, in order to receive state funding. However, TCaT's service area includes service in both rural and urbanized areas; TCaT provides fixed route and dial-a-ride services in both the Visalia Urbanized Area and the Porterville Urbanized Area. In order to maintain full compliance with the TDA going forward, the County will be required to maintain a "blended" farebox ratio that takes into account both the urban farebox ratio (20%) and the rural farebox ratio (10%). A "blended" farebox ratio will be discussed in more detail in the TDA section of the chapter (see Table 15) and in Chapter 6.

Therefore, although TCaT's current combined farebox recovery ratios fall between urban and rural requirements, the County should focus efforts on ways to increase farebox revenues during the lifespan of this plan, to account for increasing operating costs, and guard against ridership drops due to falling gas prices (etc.). Failure to maintain the minimum required farebox ratio over a two-year period would result in a reduction of TDA funding (LTF), which currently comprises about 22% of TCaT's annual revenues. A general fare increase is periodically necessary to bring fare revenues in-line with operating expenses and inflation.

With the exception of a dial-a-ride fare increase in January of 2012, the last fare adjustment to the TCaT system took place prior to 1998; records show that in FY 2008/09 the fixed route fare on both the intercity COACH and commuter STAGE services was \$1.50. The FY 2011/12 adjustments raised the dial-a-ride fare from 75¢ to the current \$2.25, correcting the underpricing that was shifting riders (especially school children) to the more costly (from an operations perspective) dial-a-ride service. The overall fare range was also broadened at the time, with the addition of a senior/disabled/Medicare fare category on the dial-a-ride system (\$1.50), and a midday senior/disabled/Medicare reduced fare on the fixed route system (75¢). The TCaT fixed route system has experienced a significant increase in overall ridership since the infusion of Measure R (local sales tax) revenues in 2007, but fare revenues have not been adjusted to account for increased service levels. TCaT fares should be adjusted regionally to ensure an equitable distribution of fare revenues to service provided, and adjusted regularly to account for inflation.

Although fare increases are often required as a means of generating additional fare revenue, they often result in the loss of a portion of the system's pre-increase passenger base. John F. Curtin's 1968 study, *Effects of Fares on Transit Riding*, establish the Simpson-Curtin Rule which predicts the percentage decrease in ridership as a function of the percentage increase in fares. The rule states that for every 3% increase in fares, there will be a 1% decrease in ridership (or a 3.3% decrease in ridership for every 10% increase in fares). This fare elasticity principle was upheld in a more recent report from the Transportation Research Board, *TCRP Report 95 Transit Pricing and Fares*, which concluded a 0.4% decrease in ridership for every 1% increase in fares.

However, because transit serves a relatively captive market within Tulare County, the Simpson-Curtin Rule generally over predicts passenger loss when applied to local systems; according to Todd Litman's research for the Victoria Transport Policy Institute, *Transit Price Elasticities and Cross-Elasticities* (3 April 2014), local factors such as type of user, type of trip and geographic conditions play into transit elasticity rates. Because TCaT passengers have very few transportation options available to them, we would expect fare induced ridership loss to be less than expected for systems operating within metropolitan areas (an elasticity of 2% or less, as opposed to 3.3%). Using existing service levels to project ridership for the 2015/16 fiscal year, the adjusted fare elasticity rate produced the projections shown in the following table for a nominal general fare increase on both the fixed route and dial-a-ride services. Fare revenues were calculated based on an average fare per service, and operating costs were projected out from the County's FY 2013/14 operating data.

Table 13 - TCaT Fare Increase Projections - Status Quo Service (FY 2015/16)					
Service	Fare Increase	Ridership*	Fare Revenues	Operating Costs**	Farebox Ratio
Fixed Route	+25¢ (to \$1.75)	349,800	\$538,600	\$2,425,000	22.2%
Dial-A-Ride	+25¢ (to \$2.50)	7,500	\$12,100	\$330,700	3.7%
Combined	N/A	357,300	\$550,700	\$2,755,700	20.0%

*Ridership totals include revenue and non-revenue passengers; fare revenues based on average fares

**Operating costs assume a 3% annual inflation rate

The above projections show that a 25¢ general fare increase on both TCaT's fixed route and dial-a-ride services would help to elevate the combined farebox ratio by approximately 3% over the current fare structure (Table 11). Fare options will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

Countywide Pass

The Tulare County Regional Pass (T-Pass) was implemented in April of 2007 through the annual Unmet Needs process. This \$50 regional pass allows for unlimited travel on all Tulare County fixed route systems during the month of purchase (good for one calendar month). The T-Pass can be purchased at several locations throughout Tulare County, including the Tulare County Government Plaza, and the Dinuba, Porterville, Tulare, and Visalia Transit Centers. Social service agencies account for almost half of all T-Pass sales. Revenue generated through sales of the regional pass is distributed to participating providers based on usage of the pass aboard their systems. The County of Tulare is responsible for administration of the pass.

T-Pass sales have continued to increase annually, despite a price increase from \$45 to \$50 in October of 2013. FY 2013/14 saw a new all-time high for both ridership (220,886) and average fare per ride (\$1.27). In FY 2013/14, the County generated \$102,435 in T-Pass sales, with a total of 42,681 riders using the pass on the TCaT system. The County averages third in annual T-Pass ridership, behind Visalia and Tulare, but the County and Tulare have the highest percentage of T-Pass boardings in relation to their overall ridership. The regional T-Pass program fosters

continued coordination and support of passenger transfer activity between the various Tulare County transit systems.

PARATRANSIT COMPLIANCE

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires that all public entities that operate fixed route transit services also provide paratransit service to individuals with disabilities who are unable to use the fixed route system. Paratransit service is defined as a demand-responsive service that does not operate along a fixed route. Paratransit service must be comparable to the level of fixed route service available to the general public.

Federal Regulation Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 37, Subpart F; *Paratransit as a Complement to Fixed Route Service*—37.131 *Service criteria for complementary paratransit* outlines six service criteria that apply to paratransit service under the ADA. These six criteria state that paratransit service must:

- Operate in the same service area as the fixed route system;
- Have a response time that is comparable;
- Have comparable fares;
- Meet requests for any trip purpose;
- Have comparable days and hours of service; and
- Not limit service availability because of capacity constraints.

The County of Tulare provides paratransit service through the dial-a-ride (demand-response) component of its system. TCaT Dial-A-Ride provides accessible curb-to-curb service to ADA passengers, and same day service to the general public on a space-available basis. ADA passengers are required to apply for and carry an ADA identification card in order to receive priority service and a reduced fare. All TCaT vehicles are wheelchair accessible.

The County of Tulare currently meets all of the six service criteria as determined by the ADA. Table 14 outlines TCaT's compliance with ADA regulations.

Table 14 - ADA Compliance

ADA Requirement	TCaT Performance	ADA Compliance
Service Area		
Paratransit service shall be provided in all areas located within ¼ mile of a fixed route.	The TCaT Dial-A-Ride service area encompasses the North County, South County and Lindsay area. In areas not served by paratransit service, TCaT offers fixed-route deviation (ADA priority service) within a ¼ mile radius of the fixed route service.	TCaT meets ADA service area requirements.
Response Time		
Paratransit service shall be provided to any ADA eligible person at any requested time on a particular day in response to a request made for service the previous day.	TCaT passengers wishing to schedule a dial-a-ride trip or route deviation must call at least a day in advance to ensure service. Next day reservations can be made by calling TCaT's dedicated dispatch number Monday through Friday between 5:30 am and 7:00 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays between 9:15 am and 5:00 pm. ADA reservations may be made up to two weeks in advance, and standing reservations are allowed.	TCaT meets ADA response time requirements.
Paratransit trips shall be accommodated within 60 minutes of the requested pick up time.	All paratransit trips are negotiated up to an hour before or after the desired pick up time.	
Fares		
Paratransit fares shall not exceed twice the full fare charged on the fixed route service.	Current general fixed route fares are \$1.50 for a one-way trip. Current paratransit fares are also \$1.50 for a one-way trip. Under this requirement TCaT could charge up to \$3.00 for a paratransit trip.	TCaT meets ADA fare requirements.
Trip Purpose Restrictions		
No restrictions or priorities shall be imposed on the paratransit service based on trip purpose.	All requests for paratransit service are met regardless of trip purpose. Trip purpose is not requested when making a reservation.	TCaT meets ADA trip purpose requirements.
Hours and Days of Service		
Paratransit service shall be available during the same hours and days as the fixed route service.	TCaT dial-a-ride service operates Monday through Friday at various times throughout the day, depending on the service area. TCaT's route deviation service is available during the operating hours of the individual fixed routes.	TCaT meets ADA requirements for hours and days of service.
Capacity Constraints		
Paratransit trips may not be limited by: restrictions on the number of trips provided; waiting lists for access to service; or operational patterns that limit service availability, such as trip denials or missed trips.	Paratransit trips are not currently denied due to service capacity issues. If/when space issues arise, another vehicle is temporarily placed into service to accommodate paratransit trips.	TCaT meets ADA capacity constraint requirements.

TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT ACT (TDA)

Unmet transit needs within Tulare County are evaluated annually through the TCAG Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), as required by Section 99401.5 of the California Transportation Development Act (TDA). The purpose of the hearing is to solicit comments from the public on unmet transit needs that might be reasonable to meet within Tulare County.

The following was taken from *Transportation Development Act (TDA) - Statutes and California Codes of Regulations (April 2013)*:

“The Mills-Alquist-Deddeh Act (SB 325) was enacted by the California Legislature to improve existing public transportation services and encourage regional transportation coordination. Known as the Transportation Development Act (TDA) of 1971, this law provides funding to be allocated to transit and non-transit related purposes that comply with regional transportation plans.” The TDA funds a wide variety of transportation programs. Counties (such as Tulare County) with a population under 500,000 may use LTF for local streets and roads, construction and maintenance if all transit needs are first met. Once a county reaches a population of 500,000, those portions of the county that lie within an urbanized area are prohibited from using TDA for streets and roads (section 99232.1). The STA fund can only be used for transportation planning and mass transportation projects. The TDA provides funding from the following two sources:

1. Local Transportation Fund (LTF) – derived from a ¼ cent of the general sales tax collected statewide.
2. State Transit Assistance Fund (STAF) – derived from the statewide sales tax on diesel fuel.

TDA funds are distributed by regional planning agencies, such as TCAG. A Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) composed of the transit dependent, including disabled, elderly and low-income representatives meets regularly to discuss unmet transit needs and develop criteria to guide project approval decisions. To ensure program compliance, fiscal and performance audits are conducted. Fiscal audits are conducted annually, and include a transit operator’s expense to revenue ratio known as farebox recovery. In order to qualify for funding under the TDA, a transit claimant must maintain a ratio of fare revenues to operating cost at least equal to 10% if the claimant operates in a non-urbanized area. If a claimant fails to meet its farebox recovery ratio, the claimant must use “local funds” money to meet the ratio, or risk a reduction (or loss) of TDA funding. “Local funds” are revenues derived from taxes imposed by the operator or by a county transportation commission.

Performance audits are conducted every three years and include performance measures that verify the efficiency and effectiveness of planning agencies and transit operators. The *FY 2010-2012 Triennial Performance Audit of Tulare County Area Transit (June 2014)* was the last completed for the County of Tulare. The audit covers the three-year fiscal period ending June

30, 2012 (fiscal year 2011/12). The audit found the County to be in full compliance with eight of the nine TDA compliance requirements applicable to TCaT; the County was in partial compliance with a TDA requirement regarding the timely submittals of annual fiscal and compliance audits. The following table outlines the FY 2010-2012 TPA recommendations.

Table 15 - FY 2010-2012 Triennial Performance Audit (TPA) Recommendations

	Recommendation	Notes
1	Work with TCAG to develop a blended farebox recovery ratio for the TCaT transit system.	<p>With the inclusion of Tulare in the Visalia Urbanized Area, 20% of TCaT's service hours are now spent in the urbanized area. A blended farebox ratio is required in order to maintain compliance with TDA statute PUC 99270.1.</p> <p>TCAG will develop a blended farebox ratio in cooperation with TCaT staff as part of this TDP update.</p>
2	Ensure local Measure R support is reflected in the farebox recovery analysis in the annual fiscal and compliance audits.	<p>The TPA stated that Note 6 within the audits listed fare revenue and Measure R expansion funds together as fares revenues under the farebox ratio calculation, but that the data within the audit only reflected fare revenues. This was a misprint in the Note section of the audit; the total listed within the Note 6 only included fare revenues (not Measure R funds).</p> <p>Measure R funds may only be used to supplement fares for new routes and/or route expansions (as defined in the Measure R Expenditure Plan) to achieve the required farebox recovery requirements. The total amount of Measure R used for fare supplementation may not exceed the actual cost of the new service reduced by the actual fares recovered. The County has not used Measure R funds to supplement fare revenues to date.</p>

Source: FY 2010-2012 TPA of Tulare County Area Transit

Public participation is a key component of the TDA. Prior to making any allocation not directly related to public transportation services, specialized transportation services, or facilities provided for the exclusive use of pedestrians and bicycles, TCAG must annually identify the unmet transit needs of the County and those needs that are reasonable to meet. This process involves public outreach and a public hearing before the TCAG Board to solicit comments on unmet needs that might be reasonable to meet by establishing or expanding public transportation services, and the adoption by resolution of SSTAC findings related to the public comments.

The County of Tulare currently claims TDA allocations for both transit and streets/roads. Public hearings were held in Visalia and Porterville during March of this year, as part of the 2014/2015 unmet needs process. All unmet needs requests gathered during the process will be reviewed and responded to by TCAG and the respective transit agencies before being submitted to SSTAC in May (2015). The SSTAC findings will then go to the TCAG Board for action in June or July

(2015). Any identified unmet transit needs within the County's jurisdiction that are found reasonable to meet will be required to be fulfilled before any allocation is made for streets and roads using TDA funds in FY 2015/16.

Three Unmet Transit Needs Reasonable to Meet were identified within the Tulare County service area during the previous (2013/2014) unmet needs process. The needs and TCaT's follow-up are identified below.

- 1) Tulare County will service the bus stop at Ben Maddox and Houston, and provide a sign. (The stop was being serviced by Visalia Transit and Tulare County will now serve it on Route 30).

In August 2013 the County installed a bus stop sign and pole at Ben Maddox and Houston along with a bus bench.

- 2) Tulare County will add a fourth run to the current three run weekend schedule on Route 20.

On August 11, 2014, the County of Tulare began a new weekend schedule on Route 20, with an additional (fourth) run.

- 3) Tulare and Tulare County will provide a reciprocal transfer from the Tulare system to Tulare County Route 40.

On August 11, 2014, the County of Tulare and the City of Tulare started a reciprocal transfer policy on Route 40.

CHAPTER 5—GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STANDARDS

The foundation of a TDP is the transit provider’s mission statement, and the goals, objectives and standards serve as a roadmap to move the system towards the recommendations set forth within the TDP. A clearly defined set of performance measures helps an agency monitor how efficiently it is fulfilling its mission.

A mission statement identifies a transit agency’s core purpose and focus. It sets parameters for service, defines measures of success, and guides future changes. A goal is defined as the direction toward which the service is expending its efforts; it is general and timeless. An objective is an action or point to be reached; it is attainable and measurable. A standard is a benchmark by which service operations performance is evaluated.

There is a strong role for public transit service within the County of Tulare. The critical role for transit is serving the mobility requirements and travel needs of the transit-reliant who have no or very limited access to a private vehicle. Low-income families, seniors, and students comprise the primary transit markets for TCaT.

Transit-reliant individuals have few travel choices and rely heavily on publicly provided community transportation to access jobs and those goods, services and activities within the community that influence social well-being and quality of life. The development of a transit system’s mission and goals should recognize and focus on the importance of the system’s primary markets and the importance of an affordable service to the mobility of this transit-reliant market.

Goals, objectives, and standards are not static and should be updated periodically; the County should continuously test the service to determine its success and to highlight any problems that may arise. The current transit goals, objectives, and standards were adopted as part of the *2008 County of Tulare Transit Development Plan*. The proposed goals, objectives and standards contained within this chapter have been updated from the 2008 goals, objectives and standards to reflect changes in ridership and proposed service changes.

MISSION STATEMENT

TCaT’s current mission statement, dated August 24, 2004:

“Tulare County Transit provides customer focused, safe, friendly, clean, reliable, cost effective, lifeline Countywide Public Transit service, which increases access and mobility for all, reduces congestion, improves the environment, while supporting economic development”.

A slightly revised mission statement is proposed to address the evolving role of TCaT from a lifeline service to a regional connector service, providing connections to urban transit services within Tulare County and beyond. TCaT's proposed mission statement:

Tulare County Area Transit provides customer-focused, safe, friendly, clean, reliable, cost-effective, public transit service, which increases access and mobility for all, reduces congestion, and improves the environment, while supporting economic development.

RECOMMENDED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The recommended goals and objectives reflect the proposed TCaT Mission Statement, the County's General Plan goal TC-4 "to support the development of a public transportation system that provides an alternative to the private automobile and meets the needs of those considered 'transit dependent'", and the transit policies set forth in TCAG's *2014-2040 Regional Transportation Plan & Sustainable Communities Strategy*.

Goal 1: Operate an efficient system that increases ridership and minimizes costs.

Objectives:

1. Increase transit usage
2. Minimize operating costs
3. Use public funding efficiently

Goal 2: Provide a safe and reliable transportation service.

Objectives:

1. Provide safe transit service
2. Provide reliable transit service

Goal 3: Sustain a customer-focused service environment.

Objectives:

1. Maintain a high level of public satisfaction
2. Provide convenient services

Goal 4: Increase access and mobility for all residents of Tulare County.

Objectives:

1. Maximize accessibility
2. Ensure compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
3. Encourage consideration of transit needs in land-use policies within partner communities

RECOMMENDED PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND STANDARDS

Monitoring system performance remains an important task for transit operators. Standards can be set by federal, state and local regulatory requirements, as well as goal objectives and service priorities adopted by transit agencies. While specific standards vary, performance measures generally fall into the following three categories:

- Efficiency (performance) standards;
- Service quality/reliability standards; and,
- Service design standards.

Performance Standards

Efficiency standards use operational performance data to measure the performance of a transit system. Monitoring operational efficiency and productivity requires data such as operating costs, farebox revenue, vehicle revenue hours (VRH), vehicle revenue miles (VRM) and boardings (passenger trips).

Many transit agencies do not have the staff resources to collect and analyze a broad range of performance data. Therefore, efficiency performance standards have been limited to several key indicators that provide transit agencies with a good picture of how well their service is doing. Recommended efficiency performance standards for TCaT include the following:

Operating Cost per Passenger: Calculated by dividing all operating and administrative costs by total passengers (with passengers defined as unlinked trips). The subsidy cost per passenger is a further refinement of this measure and is calculated by subtracting farebox revenue from gross operating and administrative costs and dividing by total passengers.

Operating Cost per Revenue Hour: Calculated by dividing all operating and administrative costs by the total number of vehicle revenue hours (with revenue hours defined as time when the vehicle is actually in passenger service). Operating cost per revenue hour measures system efficiency.

Passengers per Revenue Hour: Calculated by dividing the total number of passengers (unlinked trips) by the total number of vehicle revenue hours. The number of passengers per hour is a good measure of service productivity and is critical to the establishment of design standards and benchmarks for the expansion of transit service.

Farebox Recovery Ratio: Calculated by dividing all farebox revenue by total operating and administrative costs. The California Transportation Development Act (TDA) mandates a “blended” farebox recovery ratio that lies somewhere between the rural farebox ratio of 10% and the urban farebox ratio of 20% (as determined and adopted by the regional transportation planning agency) for transit services operating in urbanized and non-urbanized areas. Farebox recovery evaluates both system efficiency (through operating cost) and productivity (through boardings). Farebox recovery ratio benchmarks are critical

to the establishment of passengers per revenue hour benchmarks and benchmarks for design standards.

The chosen indicators comply with the basic performance indicators required by the TDA and are consistent with operating and cost data already collected for TCaT. Cost and productivity standards based on revenue miles were not included in the set of recommended performance standards because most transit costs, as well as budget projections, are based on operating or revenue hours. Revenue mile-based performance standards would be more relevant than hour-based standards for paratransit contracts, such as taxis contracts, where contractor compensation is based on travel distance. Operating cost per revenue hour will depend on contractor bid prices, County administrative overhead, fuel costs, and fleet maintenance costs.

Service Quality/Reliability Standards

Service quality and reliability standards should support system goals and reflect passenger perceptions. Performance measures for service quality and reliability tend to focus on service delivery and safety as seen from a passenger's point of view. Service availability, comfort and convenience are all core factors that draw in new riders and help to maintain a systems core rider base. Recommended service quality/reliability standards for TCaT include the following:

Preventable Accidents: An accident is deemed preventable when a driver has done everything within his/her power in order to prevent an accident.

On-time Performance: A measure of runs completed as scheduled.

Roadcall: Any unscheduled maintenance requiring either the emergency repair or service of a piece of equipment in the field or the towing of the vehicle to a maintenance facility.

Spare Ratio: The percentage of total vehicles that are not needed in peak service out of all the vehicles that are used in peak service.

Passenger Complaints: Valid customer complaints about the quality of service provided.

Trip Denial: Trips denied to an ADA-certified registrant due to any operational issue, including capacity constraints, equipment or manpower shortages, and on-time performance.

Service Design Standards

Service design standards are critical planning tools used to justify and prioritize the expansion of service to new areas and potential markets, and to guide the direction of service delivery. Transit service design incorporates a mix of interrelated social, political and economic factors. Generally these can include:

- The community's vision, goals, and objectives for transit;
- The marketability of the service(s) to be provided;
- Environmental and energy issues;

- Available technology;
- Budget limitations; and,
- Land use constraints and right-of-way design characteristics and limitations.

Recommended service design standards for TCaT include the following:

Wait Time: In this instance, wait time refers to the time a passenger is required to wait between getting off of one bus and boarding a connecting bus to continue the same trip.

Passenger Load: The ratio of passengers to the number of seats on a vehicle, relative to the vehicle's maximum load point. A load factor greater than 1.0 indicates that there are standees on that vehicle.

Geographic Coverage: A general measure of the distribution of routes within an agency's service area.

Bus Stop Design: Minimum design specifications for ensuring visibility, accessibility and safety of a bus stop.

The following table summarizes the recommended goals and objectives for the TCaT system, and links them to quantifiable measures and recommended standards (benchmarks). Current/adopted standards are included for comparison.

Table 16 – TCaT Goals, Objectives & Standards

Goal 1: Operate an efficient system that increases ridership and minimizes costs.

Objective	Performance Measure	Current Standard	Proposed Standard
Increase transit usage	Passengers per VRH	Fixed Route: 15.0 Dial-A-Ride: 3.0	Fixed Route: 15.0* Dial-A-Ride: 3.0*
Minimize operating costs	Operating cost per VRH	Fixed Route: \$55.00 Dial-A-Ride: \$51.00	Fixed Route: \$55.00* Dial-A-Ride: \$65.00*
	Operating cost per Passenger	Fixed Route: \$12.00 Dial-A-Ride: \$18.00	Fixed Route: \$5.00* Dial-A-Ride: \$30.00*
	Farebox recovery	10.0%	TCaT Standard: 15% TDA Standard: 12%
Use public funding efficiently	Scope of services	--	No duplication of service; facilitate connectivity with other services in the region

Goal 2: Provide a safe and reliable transportation service.

Objective	Performance Measure	Current Standard	Proposes Standard
Provide safe transit service	Preventable accidents per VRM	1 preventable accident per 50,000 revenue miles	1 preventable accident per 50,000 revenue miles
Provide reliable transit service	On-time performance	<u>Fixed Route</u> : 90% of departures on-time (0 to 8 minutes) <u>Dial-A-Ride</u> : 90% of all monthly trips	<u>Fixed Route</u> : 90% of departures on-time (0 to 8 minutes) <u>Dial-A-Ride</u> : 90% of trips served within 60-minute window
	Roadcalls per VRM	1 roadcall per 20,000 revenue miles	1 roadcall per 20,000 revenue miles
	Spare ratio (vehicles)	20%	25%

Goal 3: Sustain a customer-focused service environment.

Objective	Performance Measure	Current Standard	Proposed Standard
Maintain a high level of customer satisfaction	Passenger complaints	--	1 complaint per 1,000 boardings

Table 16 – TCaT Goals, Objectives & Standards continued			
Provide convenient services	Wait time between transfers	--	No more than 30 minutes
	Passenger load	Fixed Route: 1.25 peak 1.0 off-peak	Fixed Route: maximum of 1.25 passengers per seat
Goal 4: Increase access and mobility for all residents of Tulare County.			
Objective	Performance Measure	Current Standard	Proposed Standard
Maximize accessibility	Geographic coverage	75% of residents in the service area are within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of transit service	75% of residents in the service area are within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of transit service
	Bus stop design	All stop are marked appropriately	All bus stops should be clearly marked with proper signage. Benches and/or shelters should be considered for stops where the average daily boarding exceeds 20 passengers. Priority should be given to bus stops serving senior residences or activity centers, or facilities which serve clients with mobility impairments.
Ensure compliance with ADA	Trip denials	Dial-A-Ride: No more than 1% of total monthly trips denied due to capacity constraints	Dial-A-Ride: No trip denials allowed for ADA-certified registrants
Encourage consideration of transit needs in land-use policies, and with partner communities	Development proposals	Specify service levels. Identify capital improvements to be included in new developments. Work with retailers and business community to increase accessibility to the public transit service network.	Staff review of development proposals to identify potential transit service levels and capital improvements.

*Benchmarks represent a base; benchmarks should be reviewed annually to account for inflation.

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CHAPTER 6 – SERVICE PLAN

The service plan was developed to respond to current system constraints and transportation needs within the TCaT service area. This service plan identifies key service issues and recommends strategies to address those issues over the next five years. This section also includes administrative and marketing recommendations.

KEY ISSUES

Since the passage of Measure R (a ½ cent sales tax collected locally for the primary purpose of funding transit and transportation projects) in 2006, TCaT has successfully increased its service throughout Tulare County. Ridership and fare revenues have surged with the infusion of Measure R funds, and the County has been able to expand its transit system from a lifeline service to a regional connector service. Moving forward (over the next five years), TCaT service changes will be aimed at increasing existing service levels, and/or revising route configurations to increase accessibility within Tulare County. Several issues were identified during an analysis of existing conditions that will have an effect on future service decisions. Following are summaries of the key issues impacting future TCaT planning decisions.

Blended Farebox Recovery Ratio

The Transportation Development Act (TDA) mandates a combined (system-wide) farebox recovery ratio of 10% for fixed route and demand-response operators that provide service within non-urbanized (rural) areas, and 20% for operators that provide service within urbanized areas, as a requirement for receiving TDA funding. Historically, TCaT has been held to the 10% rural farebox recovery ratio requirement, meaning that 10% of the system's annual operating costs must be covered by fare revenues. However (as discussed in Chapter 4 of this TDP), the last TDA performance audit completed for TCaT in June of 2014 (*FY 2010-2012 Triennial Performance Audit of Tulare County Area Transit*) recommended that the County adhere to a "blended" farebox ratio that takes into account both the urban and rural farebox ratios, since TCaT's service area includes both urbanized and non-urbanized areas. The audit recommended that the County work with TCAG to develop a blended farebox recovery ratio for the TCaT system, in order to maintain full compliance with the TDA statute (PUC 99270.1). Public Utilities Code, Section 99270.1 states:

If an operator serves urbanized and non-urbanized areas in the area of jurisdiction of a transportation planning agency, the transportation planning agency shall adopt rules and regulations to determine what portion of the public transportation services of the operator serves urbanized areas and what portion serves non-urbanized areas to determine its required ratio of fare revenues to operating costs, as defined by subdivision (a) of Section 99247, or its required ratio of the sum of fare revenues and local support to operating cost, or both. The transportation planning agency shall submit the rules and regulations to the department for approval.

As the transportation planning agency, TCAG is responsible for developing a blended farebox recovery ratio that accounts for the amount of service provided in rural and urban areas. An example of such a formula and accompanying text was included as an appendix to TCAG's triennial performance audit for reference, and is included as Appendix B of this TDP.

After discussions with TCaT staff, a methodology based on route miles was deemed most appropriate. See "Sample 2" in Appendix B. Using a geographic information system (GIS), TCaT fixed routes were mapped out in relation to the two 2010 census-defined urbanized areas (UZAs) located within Tulare County (Visalia UZA and Porterville UZA) to determine the number of route miles contained within the UZAs. Fixed route costs were then apportioned to the urbanized area costs and non-urbanized area costs in proportion to the route miles in the urbanized areas and the route miles in the non-urbanized areas. This methodology resulted in a blended farebox ratio of 12% (see calculation in Appendix C). This calculation assumes that all dial-a-ride costs are apportioned to non-urbanized areas. The TCaT dial-a-ride service area only overlaps the urbanized areas in the Matheny Tract (Visalia UZA) and Strathmore (Porterville UZA), and there is not enough passenger activity to affect a farebox recovery ratio change when applied to the calculation.

This 12% blended farebox ratio will not constrain the operations of the County's transit system, and will in fact provide a more accurate performance measure for the entire TCaT system. As of FY 2013/14, TCaT's combined farebox recovery ratio was 17.7%. TDA funding currently accounts for almost a quarter of TCaT's annual operating budget; TDA funds accounted for approximately 22% of TCaT's annual operating budget in FY 2013/14.

Moving forward, TCAG will write up a formal procedure for calculating a blended farebox recovery ratio and present it to the TCAG Board for approval. Once approved by the TCAG Board, the blended farebox formula and policies will be submitted to Caltrans for approval. Calculations and procedures must be submitted to Caltrans for approval no later than April 1 preceding the fiscal year for which they will take effect, so TCaT's blended farebox ratio will take effect in FY 2016/17 at the earliest. TCAG will review TCaT's blended farebox ratio annually, and may adopt amendments to the formula and policies based on service changes. The adopted blended farebox recovery ratio formula and policies will be included in TCAG's TDA Claims Manual.

Low Fixed Route Fares

As shown in the fare analysis included in Chapter 4, TCaT fares are comparable to other transit providers within Tulare County, but not in relation to the service provided. Regional systems that provide countywide service typically charge more for service than their intracity/local counterparts due to the additional costs they incur through longer routes/additional service miles. Longer trip lengths warrant higher fares than local services, and higher regional fares effectively discourage local residents from using the regional system for local trips. However, TCaT fixed route general fares have not been increased in over seventeen years (sometime prior to 1998), and the general fixed route fares of the local providers have caught up to it;

currently all fixed route general fares in Tulare County are at \$1.50, with the exception of Dinuba's, which is incrementally being raised and will be \$1.00 as of July 1, 2015. For comparison, Kings County regional service costs riders 50% more than local service.

Additionally, the TCaT fixed route system has experienced a significant increase in overall ridership since the infusion of Measure R (local sales tax) revenues in 2007, but fare revenues have not been adjusted to account for increased service levels. The rider survey conducted for this TDP concluded that 48% of respondents were agreeable to a fixed route general fare increase even when provided with an option for "no change." TCaT fixed route fares should be adjusted regionally to ensure an equitable distribution of fare revenues to service provided.

PROPOSED FARE STRUCTURE

Adjustments to the current TCaT fixed route fare structure are proposed in order to align fares with the service provided, and to ensure an equitable fare structure throughout Tulare County. The proposed fare scenario was developed in response to discussions with County staff regarding the current fare structure and transit issues. The following table delineates the proposed fare structure.

Table 17 – Proposed Fare Structure (FY 2015/16)*		
TCaT Fixed Route	Existing	Proposed
General Public (age 7+)	\$1.50	\$1.75
Children (age 6 and under; first two with adult)	Free	Free
Each additional child	\$1.50	\$1.75
Seniors (age 60+)/Disabled/Medicare: 9 am – 3 pm	75¢	75¢
TCaT Dial-A-Ride	Existing	Proposed
General Public (age 7+)	\$2.25	\$2.25
Children (age 6 and under; first two with adult)	Free	Free
Each additional child	\$2.25	\$2.25
Seniors (age 60+)/Disabled/Medicare	\$1.50	\$1.50

*Fares to be implemented mid-year (in January of 2016)

Under this fare structure the general fixed route fare would increase by 25¢ to \$1.75 in FY 2015/16. The proposed fare structure would be implemented in January of 2016 to allow the County adequate time to prepare. No changes are recommended to the T-Pass with respect to this fare increase, and County transit staff will modify TCaT's punch pass to account for the increase.

Fare increases are periodically necessary to bring fare revenues in-line with operating expenses and inflation. The fare structure should be reviewed annually and adjusted as necessary to reflect farebox ratio requirements, changes in service, increases in operating costs, and changes to local fare structures within Tulare County. Impacts of the proposed fare structure will be accounted for in the service projections included in the next section of this report. For planning

purposes, an additional 25¢ fixed route fare increase (from \$1.75 to \$2.00) is assumed for implementation in FY 2018/19.

PROPOSED SERVICE STRATEGIES

Service strategies were developed to address the service issues and constraints identified through the TDP development process. Recommendations are listed by service.

TCaT Fixed Route Service

In order to accommodate service demand and respond to additional transit needs, service adjustments are recommended for Routes 10, 30, and 40. No recommendations have been included for the fixed routes operating in the southeast portion of Tulare County (Routes 60, 70, 80 and 90) at this time, pending conclusion of the *Southeast Tulare County Mobility Plan*. The Mobility Plan will present recommendations to coordinate and improve transit service within the southeast portion of the County, between all providers within the study area. None of the local circulator routes operating within the southeast study area are currently attaining the passengers per vehicle revenue hour standard, and Route 60 (Lindsay-Plainview-Woodville) is the least productive of TCaT's local routes, and of the entire fixed route system. Recommendations that affect TCaT's service will be included as an addendum to this TDP at a later date, if warranted. The *Southeast Tulare County Mobility Plan* is scheduled to be completed in August of this year (2015).

Route 10 (North County): An additional bus should be added to this route in order to meet rider demand through increased service frequencies (currently an additional bus is placed into service during peak hours in order to meet demand). Existing weekday service is provided every 60 minutes between the hours of 6:15 am and 7:05 pm through the use of two buses; twelve northbound trips and twelve southbound trips. Adding an additional bus could increase service frequencies to approximately 30-minute headways, with an additional five northbound and five southbound trips per weekday. This additional bus would increase vehicle revenue hours (VRH) by approximately 10 hours per week (or approximately 2,600 VRH per year), at a cost of approximately \$132,300 a year (based on FY 2013/14 data). This additional bus should be added in FY 2016/17 in order to allow sufficient time for planning and budgeting.

Service expansion on Route 10 would also include the addition of weekend service to the communities of Seville and Yettem. Currently Route 10 only services these locations on weekdays. This additional service would add approximately 10 minutes to each run schedule.

Route 20 (South County): No recommendations.

Route 30 (Northeast County): Recent public outreach efforts (through rider surveys and the Unmet Needs process) identified a need for weekend service to Lemon Cove and Three Rivers. Currently service to these communities via Route 30 is only provided Monday through Friday. Saturday service to Lemon Cove and Three Rivers should be added via the first trip and the last trip of the day, originating from the Visalia Transit Center. This additional service would increase vehicle revenue hours (VRH) by approximately 3 hours per week (or approximately 156 VRH per year), at a cost of approximately \$7,900 a year (based on FY 2013/14 data). This additional bus should be added in January of FY 2015/16 in order to allow sufficient time for planning.

Route 40 (Southeast County): This is currently the system's busiest route. As with Route 10, an additional bus should be added to this route in order to meet rider demand through increased service frequencies, and to provide additional service to the College of the Sequoias Tulare campus. Existing weekday service is provided every 60 to 65 minutes between the hours of 5:45 am and 7:45 pm through the use of two buses; twelve northbound trips and twelve southbound trips. Adding an additional bus could increase service frequencies to approximately 30-minute headways, with an additional five northbound and five southbound trips per weekday. This additional bus would increase vehicle revenue hours (VRH) by approximately 10 hours per week (or approximately 2,600 VRH per year), at a cost of approximately \$127,200 a year (based on FY 2013/14 data). This additional bus should be added in FY 2016/17 in order to allow sufficient time for planning and budgeting.

Route 50 (Dinuba-London-Traver-Delft Colony): No recommendations.

The following table delineates the projected performance of the proposed fixed route service over the next five years based on the previous discussion. These projections include a general fare increase in January of 2016 (mid FY 2015/16) and in FY 2018/19 (as outlined in the previous section).

Table 18 – Proposed Fixed Route Service Projections (FY 2015/16 - FY 2019/20)					
Fiscal Year	Ridership*	Fare Revenues	Operating Costs**	Net Costs	Farebox Ratio
2015/16	355,200	\$501,900	\$2,428,900	\$1,927,000	20.7%
2016/17	356,100	\$548,300	\$2,765,100	\$2,216,800	19.8%
2017/18	362,500	\$558,200	\$2,840,100	\$2,281,900	19.7%
2018/19	372,800	\$667,300	\$2,917,300	\$2,250,000	22.9%
2019/20	379,500	\$679,300	\$2,996,800	\$2,317,500	22.7%

*Ridership totals include revenue and non-revenue passengers

**Operating costs were based on FY 2013/14 data, and assume a 3% annual inflation rate

Under the proposed service scenario, fixed route operating costs will increase as a result of service expansion, and ridership will decline slightly from current trends as a result of a fare increase in FY 2015/16 and FY 2018/19. However, it is likely that adding additional service to the fixed route system will increase overall ridership (not shown in these projections), and that any ridership loss due to the implementation of a fare increase will reverse over time. Farebox ratios are expected to increase under this scenario, and remain well above the 15% performance standard for fixed route service, and the system-wide mandate of 12% required by the TDA.

TCaT Demand-Response Service

Although ridership on the dial-a-ride service dropped significantly when dial-a-ride fares were restructured in January of 2012, the County has been successful in maintaining consistent annual farebox revenues with the fare increase. However, operating costs have not been reduced in proportion to ridership declines, and farebox recovery ratios on the demand-response system have remained well below minimum standards. Moving forward, service efforts should focus on opportunities to improve operational efficiency; the key to providing a cost effective demand-response service lies in a system's ability to provide service to as many passengers as possible in the fewest service hours and miles as possible. As more passengers are accommodated in a single trip, the system's cost per passenger, cost per vehicle service hour, and cost per vehicle service mile will decrease. Service strategies should continue to focus on techniques to improve trip scheduling, and increase ridership.

The following table delineates the projected performance of the demand-response service over the next five years based on the continuation of the status quo. No fare increases are included in this scenario.

Table 19 – Proposed Dial-A-Ride Service Projections (FY 2015/16 - FY 2019/20)					
Fiscal Year	Ridership*	Fare Revenues	Operating Costs**	Net Costs	Farebox Ratio
2015/16	7,600	\$10,400	\$330,700	\$320,300	3.1%
2016/17	7,700	\$10,600	\$340,600	\$330,000	3.1%
2017/18	7,900	\$10,800	\$350,800	\$340,000	3.1%
2018/19	8,000	\$11,000	\$361,300	\$350,300	3.0%
2019/20	8,200	\$11,200	\$372,200	\$361,000	3.0%

*Ridership totals include revenue and non-revenue passengers

**Operating costs were based on FY 2013/14 data, and assume a 3% annual inflation rate

Under the proposed service scenario (status quo), dial-a-ride ridership will continue to grow, but at a slower pace than operating costs. Farebox ratios will slowly drop as the balance between ridership and operating costs shift, and will remain well below the 10% performance standard for demand-response service, and the system-wide mandate of 12% required by the TDA. Although fixed route farebox ratios are projected to be high enough to compensate for

low farebox ratios on the dial-a-ride system, every effort should be made to minimize operating costs and increase ridership on the dial-a-ride service. The dial-a-ride fare structure should be reviewed and adjusted accordingly in connection with the fixed route fare increase planned for FY 2018/19 to ensure that dial-a-ride fares are proportionate to fixed route fares and to the service being provided, and comparable to other dial-a-ride fares within TCaT's service area.

System Projections

The following table delineates the projected system-wide performance of TCaT over the next five years. This scenario includes all service recommendations outlined above for both the fixed route and dial-a-ride systems. All projections are based on FY 2013/14 data.

Table 20 – Proposed System-wide Service Projections (FY 2015/16 - FY 2019/20)					
Fiscal Year	Ridership*	Fare Revenues	Operating Costs**	Net Costs	Farebox Ratio
2015/16	362,800	\$512,300	\$2,759,600	\$2,247,300	18.6%
2016/17	363,800	\$558,900	\$3,105,700	\$2,546,800	18.0%
2017/18	370,300	\$569,000	\$3,190,900	\$2,621,900	17.8%
2018/19	380,800	\$678,300	\$3,278,600	\$2,600,300	20.7%
2019/20	387,700	\$690,500	\$3,368,900	\$2,678,400	20.5%

*Ridership totals include revenue and non-revenue passengers

**Operating costs were based on FY 2013/14 data, and assume a 3% annual inflation rate

From the above projections we can see that, based on current trends and proposed service changes, TCaT's combined farebox ratio should remain well above the blended requirement of 12% during the five years covered by this TDP. The projected system farebox ratio will be able to absorb any unanticipated service issues (such as ridership loss, higher fuel costs or labor expenses) without jeopardizing TDA funding, and to compensate for any increase in the mandated blended farebox ratio that may arise due to additional service being implemented within the urbanized areas. Any additional cost saving measures or unanticipated growth in the system will further strengthen this dynamic.

ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

General Procedures

The County of Tulare will continue to own and operate the TCaT system. The Tulare County Board of Supervisors will continue to act as the governing body for the system. The County will continue to own all transit equipment and intends to continue to use a contractor for the day-to-day operation of services and maintenance of transit vehicles. The service contractor will be responsible for the employment of drivers, dispatchers and mechanics, plus the tracking of all necessary ridership and operations data. The next service contract will begin in July of 2018.

The County intends on continuing its contractual agreements with the cities of Lindsay, Tulare, Porterville, Visalia and Woodlake for the provision of TCaT services, unless other arrangements are made for service within those areas. However, these service agreements should be updated annually with the most recent Census numbers and boundaries to ensure that the County is being properly compensated for both the fixed route and dial-a-ride services being provided to those cities by the County.

TCaT staff should continually seek opportunities to develop partnerships with local non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, and public agencies that provide assistance to minority, low-income, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) clients, such as the partnership they have with the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA). Such non-profits, advocacy groups, and agencies have insight into the transportation needs of their clients and prove invaluable in overcoming barriers to public participation. LEP persons are individuals for whom English is not their primary language and who have a limited ability to speak, understand, read, or write English. The largest LEP population within the County is composed of Spanish speakers. Therefore, per Title VI Civil Rights requirements, all vital TCaT documents should be translated into Spanish as outlined in the County's 2014 Federal Transit Administration Title VI Program.

TCaT staff should continue to actively work with major employers within the community (such as the County) to develop commute alternatives for employees. Emphasis should be placed on the dissemination of transit information to employees, as well as development of service hours and operating parameters that meet the needs of employees (if warranted and feasible).

Finally, the County should annually review and adjust the system's performance standards. The review should include an assessment of the service's achievement of performance standards to date. Changes should be made to reflect inflation, changes in operations, passenger demand and modifications to contractor agreements.

Data Collection Procedures

It is recommended that the County streamline its current data collection procedures. The County currently collects basic system information for use in monitoring the TCaT services, preparing annual budgets, filing grant applications, and preparing management reports for submittal to the Board of Supervisors, TCAG, and the State Controller's Office.

The service contractor provides the County with monthly summary reports of service data segregated by service mode, but these reports do not include fuel, or other expenses paid for by the County. These spreadsheets should be amended by the County to include all transit expenditures, not just expenses incurred by the service contractor, in order to be able to fully assess service performance by mode.

In addition, the service contractor does not currently report information related to the number of bus trips canceled, ADA trip denials, or dial-a-ride no-shows to the County. These types of

data are important indicators of service quality and reliability and should be included within monthly reports.

Accurate record keeping helps to ensure consistency between transit reports, such as the annual report to the State Controller's Office (Transit Operator Financial Transactions Report) and TDA claims. Transit staff should continue to work closely with the County's finance department to avoid data inconsistencies and ensure that transit data is being accurately reported.

Transit Docent

Given the current workload of County transit staff the County should consider seeking a volunteer to act as Transit Docent. This person should be knowledgeable of all aspects of local and regional transit systems within Tulare County, understand local transit needs, and be bilingual (English and Spanish at a minimum). The docent should be tasked with educating current and prospective riders on how to use the TCaT system (Rider Training Program) through presentations and on-the-bus assistance. For instance, the docent could work with the communities located within TCaT's service area to help educate students and parents on the benefits of using transit, work with seniors at local retirement communities to help them understand how to get to their desired destinations using TCaT in connection with other transit services, and work with local business to help build commute options for their employees.

MARKETING PLAN

A marketing plan should reflect the role that transit plays in the community by targeting current and potential users. Transit in Tulare County has historically had a very definitive market including students, seniors, and low-income residents with limited access to a vehicle. A marketing plan should focus on community outreach with this transit market in mind. By reaching target markets with published materials and literature, the community will gain a higher level of understanding of the current service, and passengers will receive valuable information to assist in their use of the system, potentially leading to an increase in ridership and service productivity.

Current marketing efforts include individual route pamphlets that contain a map, schedule and information about the route, as well as general service information (including dial-a-ride information). Information regarding TCaT services can also be found on the County's website. The transit webpage is nested within the Tulare County Resource Management Agency website structure, but a Google search for "TCAT" will take you directly to the transit page. The webpage also contains links to other area service providers, and to the Tulare County Transit Guide located on the TCAG website. The Transit Guide contains provides information about all transit services operating within Tulare County (including TCaT) in both English and Spanish, as is updated twice yearly. The County also participates in special events to promote transit, such as the annual Senior Day in the Park event.

It should be noted that the County is currently seeking a consultant to implement several additional marketing efforts, including an upgraded stand-alone website, and the implementation of Google Transit (an online trip planner that uses Google Maps to provide real-time transit updates). This section includes marketing efforts proposed for the TCaT system, many of which are already being implemented by the County.

Transit Branding

Identity is a critical component of transit marketing. Lack of system unity leads to passenger confusion and tends to dissuade potential riders from using the service. Transit branding helps to unify transit services through the use of a common name and color scheme. The use of a system brand provides system recognition through visual identity, and creates a distinction between a system and its services. The current TCaT name, logo and color scheme were introduced in 2005. The logo has developed an image for the service, and has helped to build greater awareness of the County's transit system. The County should continue to use the TCaT name and logo that riders have come to identify them with, but should consider updating its color scheme to give it a fresh look. The TCaT logo and new color scheme should be incorporated into all TCaT advertising and signage, and all buses should be painted (or wrapped) accordingly.

Maps/Schedules

Transit route maps and schedules comprise the primary type of transit information required by existing and potential patrons. All transit maps and schedules should be as clear and simple to read as possible, and should be updated to reflect major service changes. Individual route maps and schedules should also include information related to services that coordinate with that route. All information should be provided in English and Spanish.

Transit Information

Information on the transit system should be easily available and prominently displayed for all target markets. The availability of service information on buses, and at route stops (posted signage) is necessary to keep transit users informed, and to provide potential users with necessary information. Printed materials containing up-to-date information on routes, schedules and other transit services should be available at places frequented by target patrons; government centers, schools, shopping centers (including laundromats and discount stores), senior centers, social service agencies and medical clinics. Fliers and public announcements containing information regarding upcoming system changes should be made available to the public well in advance of the effective date, and workshops should be scheduled to educate the transit public about these changes. Additionally, the transit page of the County's website (or the stand-alone TCaT website, once developed) should be used to announce upcoming system changes and events, such as new service or special events. All transit information should be provided in English and Spanish.

Marketing Promotions

Marketing promotions involve efforts beyond printed information. Developing community-wide events to promote TCaT will help to keep transit in the minds of Tulare County residents as a viable transportation option. Promotions could be self-sponsored or held in conjunction with other local/global events such as National Transit Week, Earth Day, or local civic events (such as the annual Senior Day in the Park event). Promotions should include the distribution of transit guides and free bus passes (good for one round-trip) to attract potential riders. Transit personnel should be made available to answer service questions.

Free Advertising

Free advertising, in the form of press releases and media coverage, should be utilized whenever possible to promote transit services. Press releases should announce major service changes and improvements to the system, including the addition of new buses and/or new technology such as Wi-Fi, electronic fareboxes, or Google Transit. Media coverage should be targeted to highlight the positive aspects of using the TCaT service including the flexibility, frequency of service, and low cost. All transit advertising should be provided in English and Spanish.

Enhanced Revenue

The County should continue to seek additional revenues through the sale of on-bus advertising space. This marketing technique helps to promote transit within the business community, while generating marketing revenues. Advertising can be placed in the interior of buses, on the exterior, or on bus shelters and/or benches provided at key stop locations.

SAFETY AND SECURITY PLAN

On August 25, 2005, President Bush signed The Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), replacing the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21). The passage of SAFETEA-LU brought about increased attention to addressing the issues of safety and security as stand-alone factors with regards to public transportation systems. This focus on transit safety and oversight was carried forward with the current highway authorization, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21).

In an effort to ensure both the safety and security of its system, passengers, and employees, the County of Tulare requires its service contractor to have a Transit System Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan (TSSEPP) in place that covers passengers, employees, vehicles, and facilities. The TSSEPP must be developed in full compliance with California Law (SB 198), and must include a formal safety illness and prevention program including periodic safety meetings, participation in safety organizations, safety incentives offered by contractor to drivers and other employees, and participation in risk management activities under the auspices of contractor's insurance carrier or other organization. MV Transportation, Inc. maintains an accident and emergency preparedness training program, as well as a Facility Emergency Action Plan.

In addition, all TCaT buses are equipped with automatic vehicle locators (AVL), video surveillance, drive cams and fire extinguishers. Drive cams, or dash cams, are cameras that are programmed to record events in response to an accident or sudden stop, or when initiated by the driver (to record a passenger incident). The County has funding in place to purchase and install a new AVL/GPS tracking system on all TCaT buses.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS/FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

During the preparation of this plan, additional service options were identified for further evaluation. While not fully developed into recommendations at this time, these options are included for future consideration.

Mooney Transfer Site

TCaT's Route 40 provides service between Visalia and Porterville. Currently, passengers needing to transfer between TCaT and Visalia Transit do so at the Tulare County Government Plaza located on south Mooney Boulevard (SR 63), across from Mooney Grove Park. Mooney Boulevard is Visalia's main shopping corridor, but the Government Plaza transfer point is roughly a mile south of any shopping or restaurants.

The short range transit plan completed for the City of Visalia in 2013, determined that Visalia Transit would benefit from the development of a permanent transit hub along their south Mooney service corridor. Initial discussions between County transit staff and City of Visalia transit staff indicated that such a hub would be beneficial to both systems, providing passengers with more direct access to urban amenities.

Preliminary location discussions have included the vicinity of Mooney Boulevard and Caldwell Avenue (near the Sequoia Mall), or Mooney Boulevard and Cameron Avenue (near Target). Should the County decide to pursue a joint transfer hub, further discussion with the City of Visalia should focus on site location, passenger amenities, and coordinating service along the south Mooney corridor. This option could be implemented with the addition of service to Route 40 in FY 2016/17 (additional bus). Route 40 would be extended north from Government Plaza to the new transfer site, but the Government Plaza stop would remain as a key stop. Extending the route north, would add approximately 15 minutes to the route's schedule.

Service between Lindsay and Exeter

TCAG has received several comments regarding the lack of TCaT fixed route service between the cities of Lindsay and Exeter (only Orange Belt provides service between these two cities). Currently there isn't enough ridership demand within that corridor to support the addition of service; TCaT dial-a-ride service was extended to the community of Toneyville with little to no ridership. County transit staff is aware of this issue, and would be willing to entertain a future route that travels between Lindsay and Visalia (through Exeter) via State Route 65 (Spruce) and State Route 198 if there is enough ridership to support it. This option should be revisited at a later date, in conjunction with Caltrans planned realignment of Spruce.

SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section presents an action plan for implementing the TCaT services proposed in this chapter. The implementation plan outlines service parameters for each of the five years covered by this document. This schedule assumes the availability of all projected funding, but should be reviewed annually to reflect current funding scenarios. Capital and financial plans are included in Chapters 7 and 8.

The TCaT fare structure should be reviewed annually and recalibrated (if necessary) to reflect farebox recovery and operational cost issues. Given that demand-response service is more costly to operate than fixed route service, a dial-a-ride fare increase may be warranted during the life of this plan to partially offset the cost of providing demand-response trips.

Additionally, an annual route performance review should be conducted, and when appropriate, corrective action taken to modify route alignments, and/or service schedules to adjust to changes in service demand and service area needs.

Year One (FY 2015/16)

- Increase the fixed route general fare by 25¢ (from \$1.50 to \$1.75) in January of 2016.
- Add additional weekend service to Route 10 (provide service to Seville and Yettem) in January of 2016.
- Add additional weekend service to Route 30 (provide service to Lemon Cove and Three Rivers) in January of 2016.

Year Two (FY 2016/17)

- Increase weekday service frequencies on Route 10 through the addition of one bus.
- Increase weekday service frequencies on Route 40 through the addition of one bus.

Year Three (FY 2017/18)

- Review and adjust fare structure and services as needed to reflect funding and service demands.

Year Four (FY 2018/19)

- Increase the fixed route general fare by 25¢ (from \$1.75 to \$2.00).
- Consider a dial-a-ride fare increase.
- Review and adjust services as needed to reflect funding and service demands.

Year Five (FY 2019/20)

- Review and adjust fare structure and services as needed to reflect funding and service demands.

Note: Recommendations set forth in the *Southeast Tulare County Mobility Plan* and the *Tulare County Regional Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP)* (currently being developed) may require

additions to this service plan. Recommendations that affect TCaT's service will be included as an addendum to this TDP at a later date, if warranted.

CHAPTER 7 – CAPITAL PLAN

The capital plan has been developed to be consistent with the County's vehicle acquisition needs. The five-year program for replacement of TCaT vehicles is designed to provide adequate equipment to meet the projected service demands, and to comply with California Air Resources Board (CARB) requirements, and all other applicable state and federal requirements. Funding for the listed projects will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 8 (Financial Plan).

CURRENT CAPITAL PROJECTS

Transit Operations and Maintenance Facility (TOMF)

The County is currently in the process of building a transit operations and maintenance facility on an undeveloped parcel of land at the County's Visalia Road Yard, located at the southeast corner of Avenue 256 (Sierra Avenue) and Avenue 140 (south Lover's Lane). This project is one component of a larger project that includes County Fire Facilities, additional parking and storage at the Road Yard.

The transit component will ensure sufficient future operational and maintenance capacity for TCaT services, and will include the installation of a compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling station on site. The County currently leases space from the City of Visalia (at the Visalia Transit Maintenance Facility) for maintenance of TCaT buses, and utilizes the City's CNG facilities. With the current conversion of the TCaT fleet to CNG buses, the County needs additional fueling capacity for its transit fleet. The completed project will include a Bus Operations, Maintenance and Administration building, with maintenance bays and a dispatch center, approximately twenty-two bus covered parking spaces with solar panels, a bus wash facility, employee and public parking, and a CNG fueling facility with two fast-fill and twenty-two slow-fill pumps. The slow-fill stations will be restricted solely for the use of County buses. The fast-fill stations will be open to the general public and will include a card billing system.

Environmental clearance for the project was obtained in 2013, and a request for proposals for architectural and engineering design services was circulated in late 2013. The project is currently in the design phase, with construction scheduled to begin in 2016. The project is expected to be completed in FY 2017/18.

The TOMF project is being funded through a variety of federal, state, and local funding sources, including Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ), Proposition 1B – the Public Transportation, Modernization, Improvement, and Service Enhancement Account Program (PTMISEA), Transportation Development Act (TDA) – Local Transportation Funds (LTF) and State Transit Assistance Funds (STA), and Measure R (local sales tax).

Security Enhancements

Using funds allocated through the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) the County is in the process of seeking a contractor to upgrade the Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL)/GPS system on its fleet. AVL is a fleet tracking system that uses GPS to determine and transmit the location of a vehicle. The ability to locate a transit vehicle along a route helps to improve passenger safety, allows for on-time performance tracking, and provides the capacity for providing real-time service information (TCaT's current AVL system doesn't allow for real-time tracking).

Updating TCaT's wireless tracking system will also allow the County to look into offering public Wi-Fi onboard TCaT buses. The addition of Wi-Fi is a common request of public transit users. More than half (56%) of the riders surveyed for this TDP indicated that they own/use a smartphone with internet access. The City of Visalia successfully implemented Wi-Fi on-board its fixed route system in 2014, and the City of Porterville is currently upgrading the modems on-board the Porterville Transit fleet to allow for Wi-Fi connectivity.

FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAM

Vehicle Replacement

The proposed vehicle replacement schedule for the period from FY 2015/16 to FY 2019/20 is based upon planned services and current fleet specifications. There are currently twenty (20) vehicles in the TCaT fleet: twenty medium-duty buses, ranging in age between one and seven years. A minimum of thirteen buses are required for peak weekday service, and the additional fleet (up to seven vehicles) is used as back-up, providing a spare ratio of up to 53%. Although not a mandate of rural (5311) operators, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recommends a spare ratio no greater than 20%, in order to minimize costs associated with maintaining and insuring parked vehicles. However, several factors may necessitate higher spare ratios, including aging fleets with higher maintenance downtimes, and the cost of retiring vehicles that have not reached the end of their useful life. The County also requires a higher than normal spare ratio due to widely scattered service points that require buses to be stored at various road yards throughout the county; spare buses must be readily available at each County park-out location. The County's high spare ratio can be attributed to the large procurement of buses made possible with the availability of funds through the Public Transportation Modernization, Improvement, and Service Enhancement Account Program (PTMISEA) that was created through the passage of Proposition 1B, the Highway Safety, Traffic Reduction, Air Quality, and Port Security Bond Act of 2006, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. With a large percentage of the fleet near retirement age, additional vehicles are necessary to ensure coverage during maintenance downtimes.

The FTA recommends a seven-year/200,000 mile service life for the types of vehicles that comprise the TCaT fleet. The County has adopted a fleet replacement schedule based upon this federal threshold. Under these parameters, nine vehicles are scheduled to be retired in the next year, and six more in the next three years. However, TCAG recommends the County spread

out the purchase of replacement vehicles over several years to avoid a similar scenario in the future.

Under the proposed five-year service plan, fifteen vehicles will be needed to meet peak weekday pullout requirements in FY 2016/17. Seventeen vehicles should be cycled out of service within the parameters of this plan, and replaced with medium-duty buses to increase service reliability and maintain service requirements.

Bus Stop Amenities and Improvements

The capital plan includes funds to pay for stop amenities, including bus stop signs, shelters and benches. A signage upgrade project was completed in FY 2013/14 at all major bus stops, but funds will be needed to cover the replacement of damaged or worn signs, and the installation of signs at new stops and along new routes (if implemented). Funds have also been budgeted for the installation of passenger shelters and/or benches. Shelters and benches should be placed at key passenger activity points along fixed routes. All shelters and benches will be placed in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) specifications.



Electronic Card Readers/Fareboxes

The implementation of electronic fareboxes is a proven technique for increasing fare revenues. These fare collection systems collect fares, read passes, display information, print transfers, and collect and store information about riders by route and time. Electronic fareboxes increase fare collection accuracy, thus increasing farebox revenues by alleviating farebox abuse. They also help increase service productivity by refocusing driver efforts.

In addition, TCAG supports the coordination of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies between transit agencies through the adoption of the *2014-2019 Regional Transportation Plan & Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP & SCS)*. Policies were incorporated within the RTP to ensure system compatibility between systems and to enable the use of uniform regional passes (such as the T-Pass).

In researching the possibility of installing electronic fareboxes on the TCaT fleet, County transit staff found that the GFI-Genfare electronic fareboxes currently being used by both Visalia Transit and Porterville Transit do not physically fit on TCaT's current cutaway buses without the removal of passenger seating. Since it is unreasonable and cost-prohibitive for the County to purchase a new fleet of buses to accommodate electronic fareboxes, this capital plan includes

funds to purchase electronic card readers until a solution can be found. TCaT's current fareboxes will still be used for cash-paying passengers, but the card reader will allow for the use of an electronic T-Pass and reloadable fare cards. TCAG also recommends that all new bus purchases take into consideration the spatial needs of electronic farebox installation.

On-board Security Cameras

The County will outfit or upgrade each TCaT bus with security cameras. The installation of on-board security cameras will provide increased safety for passenger and bus operators by providing video surveillance for criminal, safety and security investigations.

This project is anticipated to cost approximately \$75,000 and was originally scheduled to be completed with CalOES funds under Proposition 1B. However, bond sales revenues for the funding program fell short of initial projections, so the project may be delayed if an alternative source of funding is not obtained.

Capital Program

Following is TCaT's capital program for FY 2015/16 through FY 2019/20.

Table 21 – Capital Program		
Year	Project	Cost
FY 2015/16	4 30-Passenger CNG Buses	\$659,400
FY 2015/16	Bus Stop Amenities	\$20,000
FY 2016/17	4 30-Passenger CNG Buses	\$692,400
FY 2016/17	Bus Stop Amenities	\$20,000
FY 2017/18	3 30-Passenger CNG Buses	\$545,200
FY 2017/18	On-board Security Cameras	\$75,000
FY 2017/18	Bus Stop Amenities	\$25,000
FY 2018/19	3 30-Passenger CNG Buses	\$572,500
FY 2018/19	Electronic Card Readers	\$175,000
FY 2018/19	Bus Stop Amenities	\$25,000
FY 2019/20	3 30-Passenger CNG Buses	\$601,100
FY 2019/20	Bus Stop Amenities	\$25,000
		Total \$3,435,600

Note: Recommendations set forth in the *Southeast Tulare County Mobility Plan* and the *Tulare County Regional Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP)* (currently being developed) may require additions to this capital plan. Recommendations that affect TCaT's service will be included as an addendum to this TDP at a later date, if warranted. In addition, technological advances may also warrant revisiting the TDP sooner than 5 years.

CHAPTER 8 – FINANCIAL PLAN

This financial plan includes estimates of operating and equipment expenditures and projections of revenues by source for the proposed service. Estimates are for the purposes of this study only, and represent approximations of the costs of operations and equipment. Actual values for annual operation and equipment will vary and will be determined through the County's annual budgeting process. The purpose of this data is to provide comparative information for the review of this TDP.

FUNDING SOURCES

Successful transit systems develop broad funding strategies to implement planned services and projects. Currently, the County's primary revenue sources include Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 funds, Transportation Development Act funds, and local sales tax revenues (Measure R). Following is a brief description of these and other funding sources available to TCaT over the next five years.

Fare Revenues

Fare revenue collection is a necessary source of transit funding, but typically only accounts for 10-20% of the costs of transit operations. Fare collection incurs costs for farebox maintenance, cash management, and auditing.

Local Funding Sources

Measure R (sales tax)

In November of 2006, Tulare County voters approved Measure R, allowing TCAG to impose a ½ cent retail transaction and use tax between 2007 and 2037 (30 years). This tax will provide an estimated \$652 million in new revenues for transportation improvements within Tulare County over its 30-year lifespan. The *Measure R Expenditure Plan* sets aside 50% of generated revenues for regional projects, 35% for city and county local transportation systems, 14% for transit, bicycle, and environmental projects, and 1% for administration and planning purposes.

According to the *Final 2006 ½ Cent Transportation Sales Tax Measure Expenditure Plan*, the goal of Measure R's Multi-Modal Transportation Program (Transit/Bicycle/Environmental Program) is to expand or enhance public transit programs that address the transit dependent population, improve mobility through the construction of bike lanes and have a demonstrated ability to get people out of their cars and improve air quality and the environment. Funds can be used for all needed phases of project development and implementation. This funding program requires matching funds from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and the Active Transportation Program (ATP), which are both administered locally through TCAG.

To accomplish this important goal, funding is provided to transit agencies within the County to expand transit services. Other uses include:

- New routes to enhance existing transit service
- Low emission buses
- Night and weekend service
- Bus shelters and other capital improvements
- Safer access to public transit services

According to the *2007 Measure R Policies and Procedures*, priority will be given to Annual Transit Service Expansion projects listed on page 10 of the *Measure R Expenditure Plan*. The County's funds are listed for use as service expansion. In addition, all projects must be adopted by the local agency and presented to the Measure R Authority in an implementation plan, and included as part of the Measure R biennial Strategic Work Plan, a five-year plan that will coincide with the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

The County of Tulare is programmed to receive approximately \$16,200,000 in Measure R Transit revenues over the life of the tax, plus an additional \$1,560,000 (\$65,000 a year) in supplemental funding as of FY 2013/14. Measure R funds are currently being used for route expansion and to operate the LOOP Bus service. As additional Measure R revenues are needed, the County will amend its Measure R Supplemental Agreement to include additional projects.

State Funding Sources

Transportation Development Act (TDA)

The Transportation Development Act (TDA) provides two major sources of funding for public transportation: the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) and the State Transit Assistance fund (STA). These funds are for the development and support of public transportation needs that exist in California and are allocated to areas of each county based on population, taxable sales and transit performance.

The availability of TDA funds is of critical importance to the County. Historically, a significant share of these funds has been used for street projects; the County currently claims about 40% of its annual TDA funds for streets and roads. State law requires that each year TDA funds first be made available for transit purposes. If no transit needs exist that can reasonably be met, the funds can then be used for street projects. TCaT's expenditure plan for the next five years assumes that TDA funds will continue to be available for both transit and street/road projects.

Cap-and-Trade: Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP)

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, took a long-term, comprehensive approach to addressing climate change and its effects on the environment and natural resources. AB 32 required California to reduce greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by 2020, and to maintain and continue reductions beyond 2020. The Air Resources Board (ARB) was directed to be the lead agency to implement the law. ARB has adopted a Scoping Plan and,

together with other State and local agencies, has developed and implemented numerous regulations and programs to reduce emissions to meet these goals. The Cap-and-Trade program is a key element of the Scoping Plan. In the Cap-and-Trade program, ARB places a limit, or cap, on GHG emissions by issuing a limited number of tradable permits (called allowances) equal to the cap. A portion of these allowances can be purchased from the State at a quarterly auction, thereby generating auction proceeds. The State portion of these proceeds is deposited in the Fund where it is available for appropriation by the Legislature to further the purposes of AB 32.

As one of the programs established in the Transit, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Communities Program by SB 862 in 2014, the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) will draw funds from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to support transit agencies in their efforts to increase transit ridership and further the greenhouse gas reduction goals of AB 32 and the associated regional greenhouse gas reduction goals of SB 375. The LCTOP was created to provide operating and capital assistance for transit agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities. Approved projects in LCTOP will support new or expanded bus or rail services, expand intermodal transit facilities, and may include equipment acquisition, fueling, maintenance and other costs to operate those services or facilities, with each project required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For agencies whose service area includes disadvantaged communities, at least 50 percent of the total moneys received shall be expended on projects that will benefit disadvantaged communities. Senate Bill 852 (Statutes of 2014) appropriated \$25 million for LCTOP for 2014-15 and Senate Bill 862 continuously appropriates five percent of the annual auction proceeds in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (Fund) for LCTOP beginning in 2015-16. The Tulare County region (all providers combined) received \$167,000 in FY 2014/15.

Federal Funding Sources

On July 6, 2012 President Obama signed into law a new two-year transportation authorization, entitled Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). MAP-21 replaced the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). MAP-21 put new emphasis on strengthening the safety of our public transportation systems. MAP-21 funds are directed towards transit projects through several funding programs, including the following:

Section 5311 – Rural Area Formula Grants

The Section 5311 program provides capital, operating, and planning assistance for operators of public transportation in non-urbanized areas with populations less than 50,000. Activities previously eligible under the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program, which provided services to low-income individual to access jobs, are now available under this program. In California, the 5311 program is administered by Caltrans on behalf of the FTA. Section 5311 funds must be matched by state and local funds. Capital projects require a 20% local match. Operating projects require a 50% local match. Local match funds can be cash or cash-equivalent, depending upon the expenditure. Non-Department of Transportation (DOT) federal funds may be used as a match.

Section 5339 – Bus and Bus Facilities Program

The Section 5339 program provides funding to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities. In California, the 5339 program is administered by Caltrans on behalf of the FTA. Funds are eligible to be transferred by the state to supplement urban and rural formula grant programs (5307 and 5311, respectively). Funding under this program requires a 20% local match.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ)

CMAQ program funds are directed to projects and programs which improve or maintain National Ambient Air Quality Standards in non-attainment areas for ozone and particulate matter (PM), such as the San Joaquin Valley, under the 1990 Clean Air Act. All CMAQ projects are coordinated and administered through TCAG. A diverse variety of projects and programs are eligible for CMAQ funds, including transit vehicles and CNG/LNG stations. All CMAQ projects must be included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

PROJECTED EXPENDITURES

The expenditure plan shown below anticipates an outlay of \$19,139,300 for operating and capital over the next five years, based on the service plan presented in this TDP. Annual expenditures range between approximately \$3,400,000 and \$4,100,000. Buses account for the majority of capital expenditures. Operating expenses assume a 3% annual inflation rate.

Implementation of the previously outlined service plan (Chapter 6) and the capital plan outlined in Chapter 7 will result in the following five-year expenditure plan.

Table 22 – TCaT Expenditures						
Expense	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	Total
Operating	\$2,759,600	\$3,105,700	\$3,190,900	\$3,278,600	\$3,368,900	\$15,703,700
Capital						
Buses	\$659,400	\$692,400	\$545,200	\$572,500	\$601,100	\$3,070,600
Stop Amenities	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$115,000
Cameras	\$0	\$0	\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$75,000
Card Readers	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$175,000	\$0	\$175,000
Subtotal	\$679,400	\$712,400	\$645,200	\$772,500	\$626,100	\$3,435,600
Total	\$3,439,000	\$3,818,100	\$3,836,100	\$4,051,100	\$3,995,000	\$19,139,300

PROJECTED REVENUES

The five-year expenditure plan outlined in the previous section will require a mix of funding revenues, as shown in the table below. Federal funds are projected to cover approximately 11% of total system costs over the next five years, while state funds will cover approximately 57%. These funds will be used for both operating and capital expenditures. Other funding sources, such as CMAQ, will be used for capital purchases as available. Local match funds for capital projects are currently show as coming from TDA and Cap and Trade funds.

Passenger fares are projected to contribute approximately 19% of the total operating costs of the proposed TCaT services over the next five years. Approximately 18% of TCaT's overall operating expenses are expected to be covered by annual Measure R allocations. TDA funds are projected to account for approximately 55% of all operating costs, unless additional FTA funds are acquired.

The following table is intended to show that the County will have adequate funds to account for the service plan and capital purchases proposed in this TDP. Actual revenue amounts and funding sources are subject to availability, and will be determined by the County's annual budgeting process. New funding sources will be sought if and when they become available.



Table 23 – TCaT Revenues

Revenue	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	Total
FTA (5311)						
Operating	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$1,000,000
Capital	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$1,000,000
TDA (LTF/STA)						
Operating	\$1,457,300	\$1,657,500	\$1,831,900	\$1,810,300	\$1,888,400	\$8,645,400
Capital	\$580,100	\$99,400	\$470,900	\$166,300	\$526,800	\$1,843,500
Subtotal	\$2,037,400	\$1,756,900	\$2,302,800	\$1,976,600	\$2,415,200	\$10,488,900
Fares	\$512,300	\$558,900	\$569,000	\$678,300	\$690,500	\$3,009,000
Measure R	\$590,000	\$590,000	\$590,000	\$590,000	\$590,000	\$2,950,000
Unknown*	\$0	\$0	\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$75,000
Cap & Trade	\$99,300	\$99,300	\$99,300	\$99,300	\$99,300	\$496,500
CMAQ	\$0	\$613,000	\$0	\$506,900	\$0	\$1,119,900
Total	\$3,439,000	\$3,818,100	\$3,836,100	\$4,051,100	\$3,995,000	\$19,139,300

*The County is seeking an alternate funding source to cover the cost of security cameras. This project was originally scheduled to be funded through CalOES funds under Proposition 1B (see Chapter 7).

Note: Recommendations set forth in the *Southeast Tulare County Mobility Plan* and the *Tulare County Regional Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP)* (currently being developed) may require additions to this financial plan. Recommendations that affect TCaT's service will be included as an addendum to this TDP at a later date, if warranted.

APPENDIX A – ON-BOARD RIDER SURVEY

TCaT
2014 Transit Survey
(Español al revés)

- What service are you using today?
☐ TCaT Fixed Route: from (town) _____ to (town) _____
☐ TCaT Dial-A-Ride: from (town) _____ to (town) _____
- What is the primary purpose of your trip today?
☐ Work ☐ Shopping ☐ School/College
☐ Medical ☐ Social ☐ Other (specify) _____
- Did you have a car available for this trip? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- How would you have made this trip if a bus was not available?
☐ Drive own vehicle ☐ Walk ☐ Get a ride (friend or family)
☐ Wouldn't make the trip ☐ Bike ☐ Other (specify) _____
- How do you usually get information about TCaT services? (check all that apply)
☐ Transit Guide ☐ Work/school ☐ Bus stop ☐ Internet ☐ Social Service provider
☐ Greenline ☐ Friend/family ☐ Bus driver ☐ Ad (tv/radio/print) ☐ Other (specify) _____
- How often do you use TCaT services?
☐ 5 or more times/week ☐ 3-4 times/week ☐ 1-2 times/week
☐ Twice a month ☐ Once a month ☐ This is my first trip
- Do you use TCaT to connect to/from other transit services, and if so, which service(s)?
☐ Dinuba Area Regional Transit (DART) ☐ Porterville Transit ☐ Kings Area Rural Transit (KART)
☐ Tulare InterModal Express (TIME) ☐ Visalia Transit ☐ Orange Belt/Greyhound
☐ Woodlake Dial-A-Ride
- How long have you been using TCaT services?
☐ First time ☐ 1-6 months ☐ 7-12 months ☐ 1-3 years ☐ More than 3 years
- Overall, how would you rate TCaT services?
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor
- Which of the following improvements would you most like to see? (check all that apply)
☐ More frequent service ☐ Earlier morning service ☐ Weekend/more weekend service
☐ Better transfers ☐ Later evening service ☐ Other (specify) _____
☐ More routes/stops (specify to where) _____
- How do you usually pay for your trip?
☐ Cash ☐ Punch pass ☐ TPass (regional pass) ☐ COS pass
- If the County needs to raise transit fares in order to continue providing service, what would you be willing to pay?
 Fixed Route (general fare) ☐ \$1.75 ☐ \$2.00 ☐ \$2.25 ☐ No change (\$1.50)
 Dial-A-Ride (general fare) ☐ \$2.50 ☐ \$2.75 ☐ \$3.00 ☐ No change (\$2.25)

In order to better understand your transit needs, we need to know more about you:

- What is your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female
- What is your age? ☐ 7-13 ☐ 14-17 ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-44 ☐ 45-59 ☐ 60+
- What is your ethnicity?
☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ Black/African American ☐ American Indian
☐ White ☐ Asian ☐ Other
- What languages are spoken in your home? (check all that apply)
☐ English ☐ Spanish ☐ Other (specify) _____
- What is the approximate annual income of your household?
☐ Less than \$10,000 ☐ \$10,000-\$24,999 ☐ \$25,000-\$34,999 ☐ \$35,000-\$49,000 ☐ \$50,000 or more
- Are you: ☐ Employed (full-time) ☐ Employed (part-time) ☐ Unemployed ☐ Retired ☐ A student
- Do you own/use a smartphone? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do you have a handicap or disability? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "Yes" to question #20, please answer the following:

- Do you need a wheelchair lift to complete your trip? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Do TCaT services adequately meet your mobility needs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

THANK YOU for taking the time to complete this survey.



TCaT
2014 Encuesta de Tránsito
(English on reverse)



1. ¿Qué servicio usó hoy?
☐ TCaT Ruta Fija: desde (ciudad) _____ a (ciudad) _____
☐ TCaT Llame-un-Paseo: desde (ciudad) _____ a (ciudad) _____
 2. ¿Cuál era el propósito de su viaje hoy?
☐ Trabajo ☐ Ir de compras ☐ Escuela/Colegio
☐ Medico ☐ Social ☐ Otro (especifique) _____
 3. ¿Tuvo usted un coche disponible para este viaje? ☐ Sí ☐ No
 4. ¿Cómo habría hecho este viaje si no estaba disponible un autobús?
☐ Condujera mi auto ☐ Caminaría ☐ Pediera "raite" (amigo/familia)
☐ No haría el viaje ☐ Bicicleta ☐ Otro (especifique) _____
 5. ¿Cómo consigue generalmente usted información sobre servicios de TCaT? (marque todo lo que aplique)
☐ Guía de tránsito ☐ Trabajo/escuela ☐ Parada de autobús ☐ Internet ☐ Proveedor de Servicios Sociales
☐ Greenline ☐ Amigo/familia ☐ Conductor de autobús ☐ Anuncio ☐ Otro (especifique) _____
 6. ¿Con qué frecuencia utiliza usted servicios de TCaT?
☐ 5 o más veces/semana ☐ 3-4 veces/semana ☐ 1-2 veces/semana
☐ Dos veces al mes ☐ Una vez al mes ☐ Este es mi primer viaje
 7. ¿Utiliza TCaT para conectarse a/desde otros servicios de tránsito, y en caso afirmativo, cuáles son los servicios?
☐ Dinuba Area Regional Transit (DART) ☐ Porterville Transit ☐ Kings Area Rural Transit (KART)
☐ Tulare InterModal Express (TIME) ☐ Visalia Transit ☐ Orange Belt/Greyhound
☐ Woodlake Dial-A-Ride
 8. ¿Cuánto tiempo ha estado utilizando servicios de TCaT?
☐ Primer viaje ☐ 1-6 meses ☐ 7-12 meses ☐ 1-3 años ☐ Más de 3 años
 9. ¿Cómo evaluaría los servicios de TCaT?
☐ Excelente ☐ Bueno ☐ Aceptable ☐ Inaceptable
 10. ¿Cuál de los siguientes servicios le gustaría ver mejorado? (marque todo lo que aplique)
☐ Más frecuente servicio ☐ Horas de operación más temprano ☐ Fin de semana /fin de semana más de servicio
☐ Mejores transferencias ☐ Horas de operación más tarde ☐ Otro (especifique) _____
☐ Más rutas/paradas (especifique a donde) _____
 11. ¿Generalmente, como paga por su viaje?
☐ Pagar al contado ☐ Pase perforadora ☐ TPass (pase regional) ☐ Pase de estudiante (COS)
 12. ¿Si el condado tiene que subir las tarifas de tránsito para seguir proporcionando este servicio, qué estaría usted dispuesto a pagar?
 Ruta Fija (tarifa general) ☐ \$1.75 ☐ \$2.00 ☐ \$2.25 ☐ Ningún cambio (\$1.50)
 Llame-un-Paseo (tarifa general) ☐ \$2.50 ☐ \$2.75 ☐ \$3.00 ☐ Ningún cambio (\$2.25)
- A fin de comprender mejor sus necesidades de transporte, necesitamos saber más sobre usted:**
13. ¿Es usted? ☐ Hombre ☐ Mujer
 14. ¿Que edad tiene? ☐ 7-13 ☐ 14-17 ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-44 ☐ 45-59 ☐ 60+
 15. ¿Cuál es origen étnico?
☐ Hispano/Latino ☐ Negro/Africano Norteamericano ☐ Indio Norteamericano
☐ Blanco ☐ Asiático/Isleño Pacífico ☐ Otro
 16. ¿Qué idiomas se hablan en su hogar? (marque todo lo que aplique)
☐ Inglés ☐ Español ☐ Otro (especifique) _____
 17. ¿Aproximadamente, cuál es su ingreso anual?
☐ Menos de \$10,000 ☐ \$10,000-\$24,999 ☐ \$25,000-\$34,999 ☐ \$35,000-\$49,000 ☐ \$50,000 o más
 18. Es usted:
☐ Empleado (a tiempo completo) ☐ Empleado (a tiempo parcial) ☐ Desempleado ☐ Jubilado ☐ Un estudiante
 19. ¿Es usted el propietario/usar un smartphone? ☐ Sí ☐ No
 20. ¿Tiene usted una discapacidad? ☐ Sí ☐ No
- Si usted contestó "Sí" a la pregunta #20, responda a las siguientes:**
21. ¿Necesita usted un ascensor de silla de ruedas para completar su viaje? ☐ Sí ☐ No
 22. ¿Están los servicios de tránsito de Dinuba satisfaciendo adecuadamente sus necesidades a raíz de su incapacidad? ☐ Sí ☐ No

GRACIAS por tomarse el tiempo para participar en esta encuesta.

APPENDIX B – BLENDED FAREBOX RATIO EXAMPLES

Appendix A

Samples of Blended Farebox Recovery Ratio Formula and Policies

Sample 1

Farebox Requirements for Urbanized and Non-Urbanized Service

Applicability

These rules and regulations shall apply for calculating fare revenue requirements per Public Utilities Code Sections 99268.2, 99268.3, and 99268.4.

Defining Urbanized and Non-Urbanized Area

For the purpose of these rules and regulations, the boundaries of the urbanized areas are those reported in the latest Federal Decennial Census. Non-urbanized areas are all other areas outside the boundaries of the urbanized areas.

Defining Service in Urbanized and Non-Urbanized Areas

For the purpose of these rules and regulations, urbanized service shall be all service provided by an operator or transit service claimant, which is provided in an urbanized area; non-urbanized service shall be all service provided by an operator or transit service claimant in a non-urbanized area.

Determining Required Fare Ratio

A claimant's required fare ratio shall be determined by the following formula:

$$R = \frac{.1 \text{ NU} + .2 \text{ U}}{\text{NU} + \text{U}}$$

R is the required ratio

NU is the operating costs in non-urbanized areas

U is the operating costs in urbanized areas

Definitions

Operating cost in the urbanized area (U) shall include the cost of all fixed-route lines and demand responsive service operating entirely within an urbanized area.

Operating cost in the non-urbanized area (NU) shall include the cost of all fixed-route lines and demand responsive service operating entirely within the non-urbanized area.

For fixed-route lines operating partly within an urbanized area and partly within a nonurbanized area, cost shall be apportioned in proportion to the service hours in each of the non-urbanized area and the urbanized area.

For demand responsive systems serving an urbanized area and non-urbanized area, the cost shall be apportioned to the urbanized area.

Sample 2**Intermediate Fare Ratio**

Minimum fare revenues to operating costs for operators serving both urbanized and non-urbanized areas can fall between the 10 percent and 20 percent requirement. The Commission, under PUC Sections 99268.3 and 99268.4, is responsible for calculating the intermediate ratio. The methodology used to calculate the minimum ratio required consists of the following:

$$R = \frac{.1 C_n + .2 C_u}{C_n + C_u}$$

R = Required ratio

C_n = Non-Exempt Costs of services in non-urbanized areas

C_u = Non-Exempt Costs of services in urbanized areas

The intermediate (blended) farebox calculation methodology is developed by the Commission and submitted to Caltrans for review by April 1 preceding the fiscal year for which the calculation takes effect. Caltrans must approve or reject the proposed methodology within 60 days after receiving it (PUC 6645). The Commission reviews and adopts the blended farebox ratios prepared by the operators by June 30. Once approved by the Commission, the fare ratio cannot be changed for the year.

**RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR DETERMINING REQUIRED
FARE REVENUE TO OPERATING COST RATIOS FOR
TRANSIT OPERATORS
SERVING BOTH URBANIZED AND NON-URBANIZED AREAS OF
THE COUNTY**

- I. Based on the latest annually adopted Short Range Transit Plans, the Transportation Commission with the cooperation of the transit operator will determine separately the operating cost of those transit services provided in non-urbanized areas and the operating cost of those services in urbanized areas.
 - A) For the purpose of this calculation, the operating cost in the urbanized areas shall include the cost of fixed route lines, groups of fixed route lines, and demand responsive service operating entirely within an urbanized area. The operating cost in the non-urbanized area shall include the cost of fixed route lines, groups of fixed route lines, and demand responsive service operating entirely within a non-urbanized area.
 - B) For fixed route lines operating partly within an urbanized area and partly within a non-urbanized area, the cost shall be apportioned to the urbanized area costs and non-urbanized area costs in proportion to the route miles in the non-urbanized area and the route miles in the urbanized area.
 - C) For general public demand response systems serving both an urbanized area and a non-urbanized area, the cost shall be apportioned to urbanized area costs

and non-urbanized area costs in proportion to the population of the urbanized area served and the population of the non-urbanized area served.

- D) The costs of extension of public transit service pursuant to Section 99268.8 of the PUC can be exempt in any of these calculations. The operator has the option to exempt an extension of service which shall occur during the initial year of service and upon satisfying the reporting requirements.

- II. The required ratio of fare revenues to operating cost in compliance with PUC Sections 99268.3 and 99268.4 shall be calculated as follows:

$$R = \frac{.1 C_n + .2 C_u}{C_n + C_u}$$

R = Required ratio

C_n = Non-Exempt Costs of services in non-urbanized areas

C_u = Non-Exempt Costs of services in urbanized areas

- III. Annually, prior to the beginning of the fiscal year, the Transportation Commission shall calculate the required revenue to operating cost ratio for each transit operator serving both urbanized and non-urbanized areas and submit this calculation to Caltrans. Caltrans shall approve the required ratio prior to the beginning of the fiscal year and the ratio shall not be subject to change.

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APPENDIX C – BLENDED FAREBOX RATIO CALCULATION

Proposed TCaT Blended Farebox Ratio Calculation

(based on FY 2013/14 data)

Fixed Route #	Total Route Miles	Route Miles in UZA
10	27.759479	4.17016
20	41.828831	4.31807
30	33.029253	5.914601
40	32.081282	14.258459
50	22.605408	0
60	27.261629	6.147386
70	16.866758	3.160552
80	11.34979	4.132366
90	14.154487	2.50075
	226.936917	44.602344

Notes: Route miles calculated using GIS

UZA = Urbanized Area as defined by 2010 Census

UZA Service (Fixed Route) = $44.602344 / 226.936917 = 0.196540715$ (or 20% of service area)

FY 2013/14 Fixed Route Operating Costs = \$2,285,800

FY 2013/14 Dial-A-Ride Operating Costs = \$311,700

$$R = \frac{.1 C_n + .2 C_u}{C_n + C_u}$$

R = Required ratio

C_n = Costs of services in non-urbanized areas

C_u = Costs of services in urbanized areas

$$R = \frac{.1 ((.80 * 2,285,800) + 311,700) + .2 (.20 * 2,285,800)}{2,140,340 + 457,160}$$

$$R = \frac{214,034 + 91,432}{2,597,500}$$

$$R = \frac{305,466}{2,597,500}$$

$$R = 0.1176 (12\%)$$

Note: Calculation assumes all Dial-A-Ride costs are apportioned to non-urbanized area