

# TULARE COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSIT AGENCY (TCRTA) TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**December 13, 2021, 1:00-3:00 P.M.**

**Tulare County Association of Governments  
210 N. Church St. Suite B  
Visalia, CA 93291  
(559) 623-0450**

**NOTE:** This meeting will allow Board Members and the public to participate in the meeting via Teleconference, pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 at [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202120220AB361](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB361).

**Zoom Meeting | Direct Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86088775988?pwd=eWFJUU0JCVFUwMTkSS3FnMU5pQXl5QT09>

**Toll Free Call in:** (888) 475-4499 | **Meeting ID:** 860 8877 5988 | **Passcode:** 920816

**Call in only instructions:** Enter your meeting ID followed by #, Enter # for participant ID, Enter the passcode followed by #.

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**If information is needed in another language, contact (559) 623-0450.**

**Si se necesita esta información en español, llame (559) 623-0450.**

**Kung ang kailangang impormasyon ay sa Tagalog, tawagan ang (559) 623-0450**

## **NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC** **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

During public comment period, members of the public may comment on any item of interest to the public and within the subject matter jurisdiction of TCRTA Subcommittees but not appearing on this agenda. Under state law, matters presented under this item cannot be discussed or acted upon by the Board at this time. For items appearing on the agenda, the public is invited to make comments at the time the item comes up for Board consideration. Any person addressing the Board will be limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes so that all interested parties have an opportunity to speak with a total of fifteen (15) minutes allotted for the Public Comment Period. Speakers are requested to state their name(s) and address(es) for the record.

# **TULARE COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSIT AGENCY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

## **I. CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME, AND ROLL CALL**

## **II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

## **III. TAC CONSENT ITEMS**

1. ACTION: Approve the November 1, 2021, Meeting Minutes (Pages 04-07)

## **IV. TAC ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

1. ACTION: Approve Draft Fare Model (Pages 08-09)
2. ACTION: Approve Draft Fare Changes (Pages 10-11)
3. ACTION: Approve Draft Service Changes (Pages 13-14)

## **IIV. ADJOURN**

The next scheduled meeting of the Tulare County Regional Transit Agency (TCRTA) Subcommittees will be held on Monday, January13, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. at the Tulare County Association of Governments, via Zoom 210 N. Church St. Suite B, Visalia, CA 93291.



# **TULARE COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSIT AGENCY**

## **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Greg Gomez  
Eddie Valero  
Jose Sigala

Monte Reyes  
Kuldip Thusu

## **TCRTA STAFF**

Rich Tree, Executive Director

\*The TCRTA is temporarily receiving support from the Tulare County Association of Governments.

## **OFFICE INFORMATION**



### **Tulare County Association of Governments**

210 N. Church Street, Suite B

Visalia, CA 93291

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[www.tularecog.org](http://www.tularecog.org)

# TULARE COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSIT AGENCY (TCRTA) TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

**November 1, 2021, 1:00-3:00 P.M.**

**Tulare County Association of Governments  
210 N. Church St. Suite B  
Visalia, CA 93291  
(559) 623-0450**

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## **TULARE COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSIT AGENCY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) MINUTES**

### **I. CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME, AND ROLL CALL 1:00pm**

### **II. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Public comments opened and closed at 1:01pm. No public comments were heard.

### **III. TAC CONSENT ITEMS**

#### **1. ACTION: Approve the October 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Upon motion by Member Valero and second by Member Reyes, the minutes were unanimously approved by members present.

### **IV. TAC ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

1. **STATUS AND REVIEW: APPROVE REMOTE ATTENDANCE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS PURSUANT TO STATE ASSEMBLY BILL 361**

Mr. Sigala provided an overview of the information regarding AB 361 and how it affected the committee. Mr. Tree provided local information regarding Covid-19 statistics. Discussion ensued among the committee regarding remote participation, Covid 19 and AB 361 proforma requirements.

Upon motion by Member Valero and Second by Member Thusu, the item was unanimously approved.

2. **ACTION: APPROVE FARE SIMPLIFICATION**

Mr. Tree discussed Fare Free program and participation in the Cal ITP program. He further discussed FTA requirements with regard to service and fare changes. Mr. Tree gave a brief overview of the half fare policy and justification of peak time. He stated that most agencies felt it was easiest to provide half fare throughout the service time and that TCRTA doesn't meet the 50 vehicle and over 200,000 population thresholds. Mr. Tree discussed challenges around setting fares for different agencies and provided examples of fare simplification which included the breakdown of fixed route and dial-a-ride fares. Discussion ensued among members regarding consistent fares, zones and tap on and tap off user experience.

Upon motion by Member Reyes and second by Member Thusu, the item was unanimously approved.

3. **ACTION: APPROVE ADVERTISEMENT OF AN RFP FOR THIRD PARTY CONTRACTOR**

Mr. Tree reported on the internal discussions of quality of service. He further reviewed expanding on the Greenline and partnering with Visalia and detailed that staff wanted to be mobility managers and help them plan their trip and provide more services. He stated that such services are generally contracted out and most contracts were expiring at the end of the year. He further discussed vehicle fleets, the Dinuba contract, and automobile insurance potentially with CalITP and the fluctuating market.

Mr. Miller and Ms. Soper discussed details regarding bids and contracts for their respective agencies. Discussion ensued regarding the scope of advertisement and maintenance, existing agreements, and the plan to bring maintenance and customer service in-house and advertising the RFP.

Upon motion by Member Sigala and second by Member Thusu, the item was unanimously approved.

4. **ACTION: APPROVE TCRTA BOARD WORKSHOP**

Mr. Tree stated that he and Chair Sigala wanted to bring the information gleaned from the CalACT workshop and share it with the other members. He further stated that it could be an opportunity to discuss service planning, routes, budget planning and other transit related information. He stated that it was possible to bring in guest speakers on ADA or other transit industry experts.

Upon motion by Chair Sigala and second by Member Reyes, the item was unanimously approved.



**5. ACTION: APPROVE SUPPORT FOR THE 2022 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Mr. Kimball provided an overview of the Regional Transportation Plan; sharing that it was federally required and updated every four years. He described scenario development on transportation, land use, GHG reduction targets and improving air quality. He went on to shared details of the three scenarios with the TCRTA Technical Advisory attendees and invited attendees to take the survey and provide feedback.

Mr. Smalley stated that there would be a recommendation to widen two sections of 99 in the valley. He discussed the importance of 99 for transit, highlighting right of way acquisition, interchange and economic development in city of Tulare. He emphasized that 99 was critical for our county and discussed Finish the 99 Coalition and plans to finance within 12 years and the request to consider support from the TCRTA.

Upon consensus of members present, Chair Sigala stated that he would draft a letter of support.

**6. DISCUSSION: TCRTA STAFFING PLAN**

Mr. Tree discussed developing a long-term staffing plan and reviewed the draft organizational chart provided with the staff report. He described key roles and strategies for initial discussion.

In other discussion, Mr. Tree further stated that the next meeting conflicted with the TCAG meeting. Ms. Davis requested feedback on what the board would like to see for the budget workshop portion. Discussion ensued among members to add a budget comparison for what was initially set, where we are and a projection for 2022, cash and accrued based comparison. Further discussion was had regarding staff working on a three-year projected budget, not necessarily to be ready for the December meeting.

**V. ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 2:46pm.

The next scheduled meeting of the Tulare County Regional Transit Agency (TCRTA) Technical Advisory Committee will be held on Monday, December 13, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. at the Tulare County Association of Governments, via Zoom 210 N. Church St. Suite B, Visalia, CA 93291.

## **TULARE COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSIT AGENCY**

### **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Greg Gomez	NP	Monte Reyes	P
Eddie Valero	P	Kuldip Thusu	P
Jose Sigala	P		

P= Present NP= Not Present

**Others Present:** Teres Ortega, Angelina Soper, Ross Miller

### **TCRTA STAFF\***

### **OFFICE INFORMATION**

Rich Tree, Executive Director

\*The TCRTA is temporarily receiving support from the Tulare County Association of Governments.

Rich Tree, TCRTA Executive Director	P
Jennie Miller, TCRTA Associate Regional Planner EH	P
Elizabeth Forte, TCAG Principal Regional Planner	NP
Servando Quintanilla Jr., TCAG Administrative Clerk II	P
Brideget Moore, TCAG Analyst III	P
Leslie Davis, TCAG Finance Director	P
Holly Gallo, TCAG Office Assistant III	P
Giancarlo Bruno, Regional Planner	P
Sheela Bhongir, Regional Planner	NP

P= Present NP= Not Present

### **Tulare County Association of Governments**

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Tulare County Regional Transit Agency  
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

**AGENDA ITEM IV-1**

**December 13, 2021**

**Prepared by Richard Tree, TCRTA Staff**

**SUBJECT:**

**Action:** Approve Draft Fare Model

**BACKGROUND:**

Every transit agency must eventually address fare policy, structure, and technology, and, while each of these areas has typically been evaluated separately, it is important to understand the interrelationship among them. Policy generally guides the direction for structure, but technology decisions can also affect decisions regarding structure as well as policy.

In general, there are three basic decision-making scenarios: policy-driven (changes based on goals), technology-driven (changes based on the type of technology selected), and service-driven (changes based on the need to integrate a new mode or service into the system).

Major fare policy goals can be categorized as customer-related, financial, management, or political. Because of the widespread decline in ridership the general emphasis in the industry has shifted from a primary concern with generating revenue to an equal emphasis on increasing ridership.

**DISCUSSION:**

The transit industry has debated the advantages and disadvantages of the flat versus distance-based and zone-based fare models. It is argued that distance-based is beneficial because it can enable generation of higher revenues associated with serving longer trips and/or providing premium service. However, the industry has leaned toward flat-fare schemes with market-based elements.

The following is a list of distance-based fare models typical in the transit industry:

Distance-based – fare is charged based on the distance traveled.

Zone-based – fare is charged based on the number of geographical “zones” traveled.

Flat Fare – a constant fare is charged regardless of distance traveled.

Although fare levels and strategies affect transit use, variables can have a strong influence. Determining the relative effects of the variables (economy, fuel prices, employment) is challenging and complicated by gaps or inconsistencies in the data for key variables.

The advent of electronic fare payment can improve the customer experience and reduce bus operator’s responsibilities. But there can be “trade-offs” between electronic fare payment and the fare model depending on the service area demographics.



For example, while distance-based fares combined with the use of electronic fare payment is advantageous to both the agency and customer, it is a disadvantage to those that are unbanked, underbanked, or cash paying. In other words, those that pay with a credit or debit card are those that benefit from a distance-based fare model.

To assist those that are unbanked or underbanked, a significant amount of investment must be made to the region's retail sales outlets to alleviate the disadvantages. For example, ticket vending machines capable of accepting cash to load a smart card or retail point of sale equipment at convenient stores.

Additionally, residents that reside in rural communities also travel the longest distance to access jobs, healthcare, and shopping typically centered in the urban areas. Based on the agencies service area demographics, a distance-based fare model would have a negative effect on riders located outside of the urbanized areas.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Technical Advisory Committee approve a flat fare model with the following variables:

1. A flat fare based on the service category (local and commuter);
2. A flat fare based on the service type (ADA paratransit and On-Demand); and
3. Authorize staff to propose flat fare model to member agencies.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Flat fare model is consistent with historical fare revenue generation which has a neutral effect on fiscal impact since fare revenue generation is driven by ridership.

#### **ATTACHMENT:**

None

Tulare County Regional Transit Agency  
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

**AGENDA ITEM IV-2**

**December 13, 2021**

**Prepared by Richard Tree, TCRTA Staff**

**SUBJECT:**

**Action:** Approve Draft Fare Changes

**BACKGROUND:**

The Federal Transit Administration's Office of Civil Rights works with transit providers to ensure that the impacts of service and fare changes are not discriminatory and are distributed equitably to minority and low-income populations. The FTA also seeks to ensure that minority, low-income, and limited English proficient communities have an equal opportunity to participate in the public involvement process that often precedes a decision to change service and fares.

FTA's Circular 4702.1B, "Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients," provides service and fare equity guidance to transit agencies with 50 or more fixed route vehicles in peak service in large urbanized areas (over 200,000 in population). All "providers of public transportation to which this Section applies shall develop written procedures consistent with this Section to evaluate, prior to implementation, any and all service changes that exceed the transit provider's major service change threshold, as well as all fare changes, to determine whether those changes will have a discriminatory impact based on race, color, or national origin.

Additionally, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that, "the fare for a trip charged to an ADA paratransit eligible user of the complementary paratransit service shall not exceed twice the fare that would be charged to an individual paying full fare for a trip of similar length, at a similar time of day, on fixed route."

Finally, 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 requires transit operators that fares charged to elderly and handicapped persons during non-peak hours will not exceed one-half of the rates generally applicable to other persons at peak hours. This requirement is often called "Reduced Fare" or "Half-Fare" policy.

**DISCUSSION:**

Since TCRTA does not currently meet the threshold of operating 50 or more fixed route vehicles in peak service, 27 TCRTA vehicles, and is not located in an urbanized area of 200,000 or more in population, TCRTA is only required to set system-wide standards and policies in its Title VI Plan. These system-wide requirements state the general prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin. Additionally, TCRTA shall include the public participation when considering service and fare changes.

The current fare structure, from each member agency, is listed below in the following tables:

<b>Fixed Route</b>					
<b>Member Agency</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>Senior/ADA</b>	<b>Day Pass</b>	<b>7-Day Pass</b>	<b>Regional Pass</b>
Dinuba	\$1.00	\$1.00/\$.50	N/A	N/A	\$55.00
Exeter (VT)	\$1.75	\$.85	\$3.50/\$2.50	\$14.00/\$7.50	\$55.00
Farmersville (VT)	\$1.75	\$.85	\$3.50/\$2.50	\$14.00/\$7.50	\$55.00
Lindsay (TCaT)	\$2.00	\$1.00	N/A	N/A	\$55.00
Porterville	\$1.50	\$.75	\$3.00/\$1.50	N/A	\$55.00
Tulare	\$1.50	\$.75	N/A	N/A	\$55.00
Woodlake	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
County	\$2.00	\$1.00	N/A	N/A	\$55.00

<b>Dial-A-Ride</b>				
<b>Member Agency</b>	<b>General</b>	<b>Senior/ADA</b>	<b>Youth</b>	<b>Local Monthly Pass</b>
Dinuba	\$2.00	\$1.25/\$.75	\$1.75	\$35.00 (Student/Senior)
Exeter (VT)	\$4.00	\$2.25	\$4.00/\$2.25	\$75.00
Farmersville (VT)	\$4.00	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$75.00
Lindsay (TCaT)	\$3.00	\$2.00/\$1.00	\$3.00	N/A
Porterville	\$5.00	\$2.50		N/A
Tulare	\$3.25	\$2.00	\$2.50/\$1.25	N/A
Woodlake	\$1.00	\$.25	\$1.00	N/A
County	\$3.00	\$2.00/\$1.00	\$3.00	N/A

At the Board meeting held on November 15, 2021, the Board of Directors approved the action of simplifying the fare structure to make riding the bus less complex and easier to use.

To ease the transition from the Fare Free 4 All Program to collecting fares it is staff's recommendation to propose a phased approach to reinstating fares. The phased approach to reinstating fares provides additional time for recovery of its riders.

The following draft phased approach is both customer-driven and financially-driven. The first phase, March 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022 welcomes back fare collection with an emphasis on keeping fares low and simple to understand. Riders will have the option to pay for their ride on all bus services using the Cal-ITP contactless fare payment system.

The second phase, starting July 1, 2022, is financially-driven to increase fare revenue to support the agency's operating costs. The second phase is also coordinated with the introduction of the new and world-class regional fare system. This new fare system will allow riders to purchase and manage their own rider accounts online, at the transit center, and participating retail outlets. This phase also includes several discounted passes to reward frequent riders and electronic transfers between TCRTA and Visalia Transit for the first time.

TCRTA FARE PRICE (March 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022)		
Base Fare (per Rider)	Regular	Half-Fare (Seniors 65+, ADA, Military)
Local Fixed, Circulatory, and Commuter Routes*	\$1.00	\$.50
Children (age 12 and under)	FREE	
ADA Paratransit (Seniors 65+ and ADA)	\$2.00	
On-Demand	\$3.00	
*Single Ride Is Good For One Rider And One Free Transfer		

TCRTA FARE PRICE (July 1, 2022)		
Base Fare (per Rider)	Regular	Half-Fare (Seniors 65+, ADA, Military)
Local Fixed and Circulatory Routes*	\$2.00	\$1.00
Commuter Routes*	\$3.00	\$1.50
Children (age 12 and under)	FREE	
ADA Paratransit (Seniors 65+ and ADA)	\$4.00	
On-Demand	\$4.00	
*Single Ride Is Good For One Rider And One Free Transfer		
Discounted Fares (per Rider)		
Local and Circulatory Routes		
1-Day Pass	\$4.00	\$2.00
7-Day Pass	\$20.00	\$10.00
31-Day Pass	\$50.00	\$25.00 (Half-Fare & Students)
Commuter Routes		
1-Day Pass	\$6.00	\$3.00
7-Day Pass	\$30.00	\$15.00
Monthly Pass (Regional)		
31-Day Pass	\$55.00	

#### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Technical Advisory Committee:

1. Approve draft Fare Price starting March 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022;
2. Approve draft Fare Price starting July 1, 2022; and
3. Authorize staff to propose draft fare changes to member agencies.

#### FISCAL IMPACT:

The phased fare changes are customer- and finance-driven and is designed to increase fare revenue generation over time.

#### ATTACHMENT:

None

Tulare County Regional Transit Agency  
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

**AGENDA ITEM IV-3**

**December 13, 2021**

**Prepared by Richard Tree, TCRTA Staff**

**SUBJECT:**

**Action:** Approve Draft Service Changes

**BACKGROUND:**

The region's growth and the need to meet mobility and environmental objectives place tremendous demands on public transit providers. Current systems, some of which are old and in need of upgrading, must expand service area, increase service frequency, and improve efficiency to serve these demands. There is urgency from transit providers to adapt to appropriate new technologies, introduce innovations, and create efficiency in the transit system.

**DISCUSSION:**

To introduce innovative mobility and improve efficiencies of the transit system, staff is proposing the following service changes:

1. Interchange local fixed routes with on-demand service in the City of Dinuba. This service change is designed to provide efficient, expanded, and innovative mobility to the community to address the low-productivity routes, ADA compliance, and community growth.
2. Interchange the local flex route with on-demand service in the City of Lindsay. This change is a neutral change in service and more of a branding the service mode. The local flex route is a modified version of a demand response type of service.
3. Create uniformity in the local fixed route schedule across the TCRTA system. Currently, local fixed routes have unique service hours for each individual member agency. The uniform schedule will have all local fixed routes operating on the same service hours and on the same days. It is proposed that local fixed routes operate Monday – Saturday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, and limited Sunday service from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.
4. Create uniformity in the ADA paratransit schedule across the TCRTA system. ADA regulations require that ADA paratransit operate on the same days and hours of the local fixed route system, therefore the current ADA paratransit schedule is unique to each member agency's fixed route service. This service change will insure TCRTA is ADA compliant regarding paratransit service. It is proposed that ADA paratransit service operate Monday – Saturday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, and limited Sunday service from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

5. Create uniformity in the On-Demand schedule across the TCRTA system. On-Demand service is being planned to expand to all member agencies starting next fiscal year. It is proposed that On-Demand service operate Monday – Saturday from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm, and limited Sunday service from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Technical Advisory Committee approve:

1. Approve the draft service changes; and
2. Authorize staff to propose service changes to member agencies

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Service changes are designed to create efficiencies in the system and reduce operating costs. Expanded On-Demand service is funded by grant funding. Actual fiscal impact will be depending on the upcoming Agreement with the third-party contractor.

**ATTACHMENT:**

None