



VENTURA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

HERITAGE VALLEY TRANSIT STUDY

FINAL REPORT

MARCH 2013



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Ventura County Transportation Commission Heritage Valley Transit Study

FINAL REPORT

March 2013

Prepared for

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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CHAPTER 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In late 2011, the Ventura County Transportation Commission initiated its Heritage Valley Transit Study, an update of the 1994 Transit Plan for the Santa Clara River Valley (comprised of Fillmore, Piru, and Santa Paula). The purpose of the Heritage Valley Transit Study was to objectively and comprehensively evaluate transit demand as well as recent performance of transit services operating within the Heritage Valley (i.e., VISTA Highway 126 and VISTA Dial-A-Ride). Given the uncertainty of future funding for transit throughout Ventura County, vibrant demand for service in the study area (i.e., many trips operating at capacity), and specific demographic composition of the residents within the Heritage Valley (i.e., large ride-dependent population), VCTC sought to identify strategies for enhancing community mobility within the framework of likely financial resources.

The community outreach portion of the study took multiple forms, including focus groups, stakeholder outreach, a community survey, and a survey of Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride customers. In addition, an in-depth review of Heritage Valley demographics was conducted to objectively assess potential demand for transit among key resident populations. A thorough analysis of historic and current operations and performance data for the VISTA Dial-A-Ride and VISTA Hwy 126 services was also prepared to evaluate existing levels of service, recent trends, and system efficiency.

Subsequent to the community outreach portion of this project (detailed in Chapter 2), significant changes within the VISTA program, regional decisions regarding transit in Ventura County, and changes to legislation regarding transit funding occurred. These developments, cited below, have direct impact on the provision of transit service in the Heritage Valley:

1. Passage of Senate Bill 716;
2. Recommendations set forth within the Ventura County Regional Transit Study;
3. Transition of local VISTA operation from VCTC to other agencies in the county as called for in the Ventura County Regional Transit Study (amended March 2013);
4. Bankruptcy of VISTA contract operator CUSA, LLC; and
5. Changes in federal funding allocations (i.e., MAP-21).

Service Scenarios

Given the changes in funding and service provision that occurred throughout the study period, some of the issues raised and transit services requested may lie beyond the scope of likely transit resources. Because of this, the focus has first been to identify ways to preserve the types and levels of services currently available to Heritage Valley residents. Once the existing demands have been addressed in a sustainable manner, and the connections to the adjoining services clarified as part of the implementation of the Ventura County Regional Transit Study, opportunities to address expansions in services should be further investigated.

Based on community input, examination of performance data (including transit use), public surveys, and recent demographic data, three different scenarios were developed. The scenario which appears to meet the greatest number of current and near-term transit needs is a hybrid alternative. This alternative, identified as the “modified traditional” scenario below, provides for a sustainable continued community-wide service, introduction of community fixed-route circulators, and continued provision of general public Dial-A-Ride service.

- The [Status Quo](#) scenario assumes the same service currently available in the Heritage Valley would continue to operate as it has, with separate general public Dial-A-Ride services in Santa Paula and Fillmore/Piru as well as the Santa Paula Commuter Bus.
- The [Traditional](#) scenario reflects a traditional fixed-route and ADA complementary paratransit service in Santa Paula and Fillmore, with midday general public Dial-A-Ride service in Piru. Community circulators in Santa Paula and Fillmore would be supplemented by limited shuttle service between Fillmore and Piru as well as the existing VISTA Hwy 126 service. Proposed routing is provided in Exhibits 1.1 through 1.3. Timed-transfer points would be utilized to facilitate inter-community travel.
- The [Modified Traditional](#) scenario is operationally identical to the Traditional scenario, except it would provide general public Dial-A-Ride service in all communities at a fare greater than the proposed ADA fare.

Exhibit 1.1 Santa Paula Community Circulator

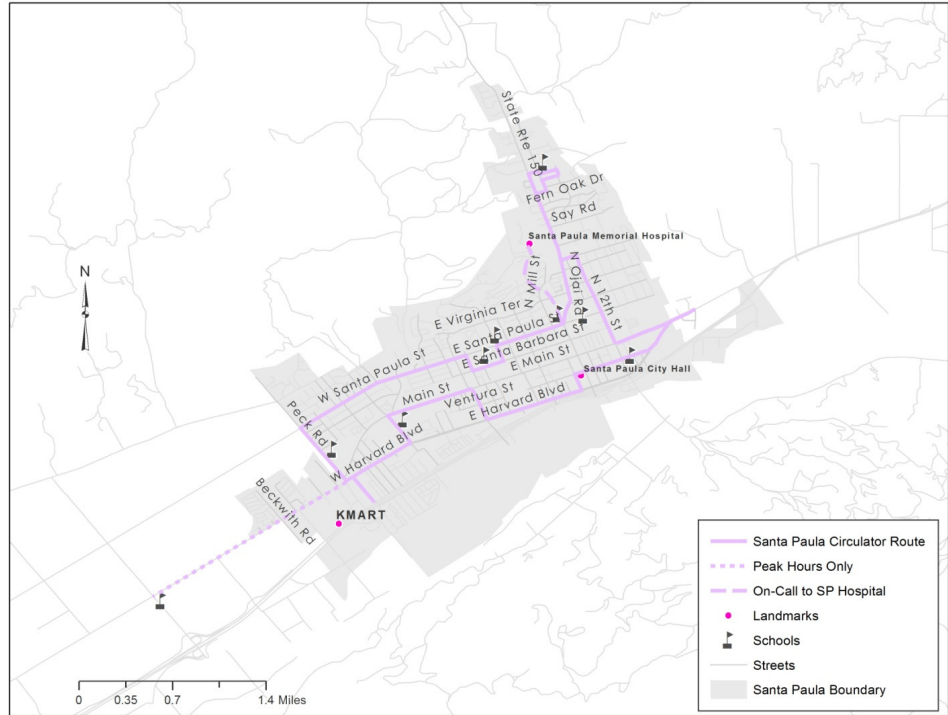


Exhibit 1.2 Fillmore Community Circulator



Exhibit 1.3 Fillmore-Piru Shuttle

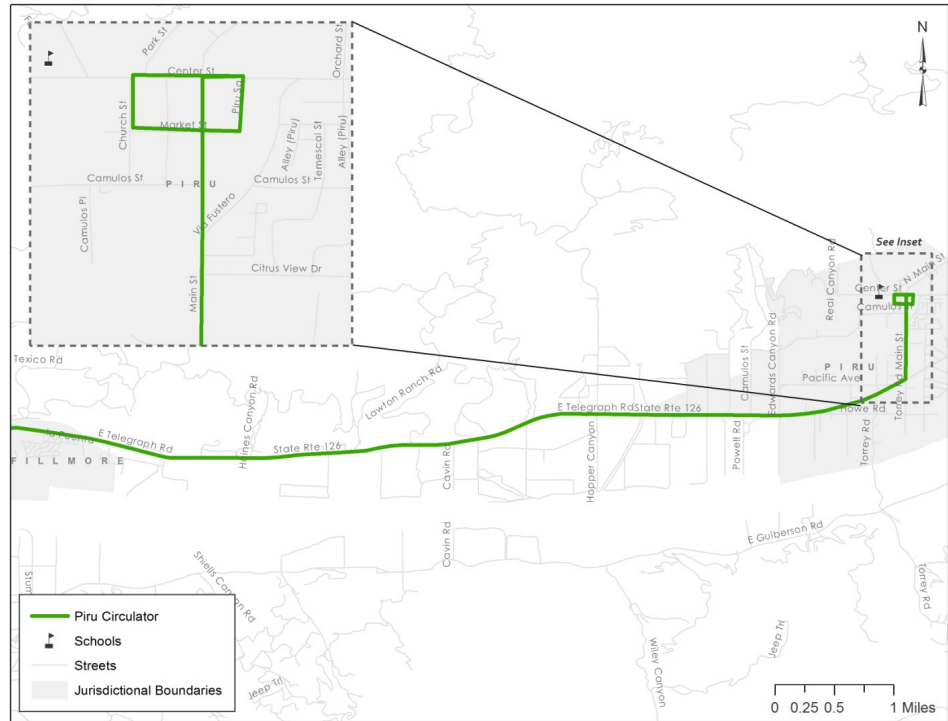


Exhibit 1.4 Summary of Operational Scenarios

	Status Quo	Traditional	Modified Traditional
Merits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiar to the community Curb-to-curb service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed-route service is less costly to operate Increased capacity without significant increase in cost (and possible savings) Eliminates need for reservations (except for ADA and Piru) Lower fares for in-town travel Fixed-route shuttle service addresses student travel between Piru and Fillmore General public Dial-A-Ride still available in Piru (midday only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed-route service is less costly to operate Increased capacity without significant increase in cost (and possible savings) Increased fare revenue due to general public Dial-A-Ride Eliminates need for reservations (except for ADA and Dial-A-Ride) Lower fares for in-town travel Fixed-route service addresses student travel between Piru and Fillmore General public Dial-A-Ride still available
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overcrowding issues Service times don't coordinate with school schedule Can't schedule DAR appointments during student travel times Need later service from Ventura More costly to operate than fixed-route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADA Dial-A-Ride use requires ADA certification Adjustment to new system Meeting all school bell schedules, especially on early release days Relies on Hwy 126 service for inter-community travel (except Fillmore to Piru) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADA Dial-A-Ride use requires ADA certification Adjustment to new system Meeting all school bell schedules, especially on early release days Relies on Hwy 126 service for inter-community travel (except Fillmore to Piru)

Given the high level of service offerings and inter-service coordination it provides, we recommend implementation of the Modified Traditional scenario. If implemented as outlined herein, along with the corresponding Financial Plan, this scenario will not only be able to operate within existing funding parameters, but is forecast to meet mandated TDA farebox standards. The Modified Traditional service model will also address issues raised during the community outreach portion of the study, including overcrowding, inability to secure reservations during peak periods, home-to-school travel, and service cost.

Administrative, Marketing, and Policy Strategies

Non-operational strategies (administrative, marketing, and policy) are limited to cost-neutral activities that improve performance and support for transit service in the Heritage Valley. They include the following:

- Improve Dial-A-Ride reservation and call center processes,
- Conduct regular driver training (including sensitivity training),
- Reduce amount of free rides on transit services,

- Improve marketing and accessibility of fare media, and
- Increase bilingual marketing efforts.

While the need for improvements to the Dial-A-Ride reservation and call center processes is somewhat mitigated with the implementation of a fixed-route service, maintaining operational efficiency in this area remains important from a customer service perspective. Recommendations regarding driver training were derived primarily through feedback from existing customers at community meetings and through survey comments. Many comments cited unfair treatment of certain passengers or demographic groups by particular drivers, which could effectively be addressed by sensitivity training and monitored by regular onboard driver observations.¹

Given 16 percent of current Dial-A-Ride customers ride free of charge, we believe it is important to reduce the number of free rides provided. Potential restrictions regarding the most common free rides – children under 5 – must be balanced with the needs of low-income families for whom transit is the only option. Potential solutions include limiting free rides to one child under 5 per paying adult or introducing a height-based (rather than age-based) free-ride policy.

Implementation of any service scenario other than the Status Quo scenario would entail rather extensive marketing prior to the launch of the new service model. This ties in with the recommendation to improve the marketing and accessibility of fare media as well as to increase bilingual marketing. A comprehensive plan for distributing information about the new service is essential, and these elements should be considered a priority.

Administrative and Governance Options

Finally, given VCTC's planned exit from neighborhood transit operations, a governing and administering entity must be identified or created for the Heritage Valley. Four options are set forth in Chapter 3. They include development of one or more community transit services, implementation of a joint powers agreement (JPA), formation of a joint powers authority (JPA), or joining Gold Coast Transit, which would provide services on behalf of the Heritage Valley communities. The VCTC Board encouraged the Heritage Valley to join Gold Coast Transit, though the ultimate decision lies with the Heritage Valley communities. The relative merits and challenges of each option are summarized below.

¹ Note: The incidence of customer concerns has declined since the July 2012 selection of a new operations contractor.

Exhibit 1.5 Summary of Administrative and Governance Options

Type of Governance	Merits	Drawbacks
Community Transit Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains community control over transit • More control over TDA funds within each community • Focus on a level of service that is right for each individual community • May choose to contract out management and administrative functions • May still choose to contract with Gold Coast Transit or another operator to provide service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted operation would likely have a higher cost due to small size of each program • Each community would have to administer its own program, including ADA • Absence of coordinated service between communities • Operator of each of the community transit services and Hwy 126 intercity would potentially be different, increasing coordination challenges • Potential higher staff support costs • Lack of expertise in transit operations and funding
Joint Powers Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains community control over transit • Allows members to pool resources (including funding and capital assets) • Formalizes the agreement between entities • More efficient than each community acting alone • Enables maximum coordination within the Heritage Valley • Focus on a level of service that is right for the Heritage Valley as a whole • May choose to contract out management and administrative functions • May still choose to contract with Gold Coast Transit or another operator to provide service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires cooperation by, and a high level of trust among, JPA members • Limits ability of JPA to place resources where transit needs are rather than where resources come from • Limits ability of JPA to issue bonds or other long-term funding mechanisms due to a lack of JPA-controlled long-term revenue stream • Challenges of creating a structure and organization from the ground up (in terms of costs and other resources)

Type of Governance	Merits	Drawbacks
Joint Powers Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains community control over transit • Allows members to pool resources (including funding and capital assets) • Creates a new, independent body with its own governing board made up of representatives from each participating entity • More efficient than each community acting alone • Enables maximum coordination within the Heritage Valley • Focus on a level of service that is right for the Heritage Valley as a whole • May choose to contract out management and administrative functions • May still choose to contract with Gold Coast Transit or another operator to provide service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires cooperation by, and a level of trust among, JPA members • Limits ability of JPA to place resources where transit needs are rather than where resources come from • Limits ability of JPA to issue bonds or other long-term funding mechanisms due to a lack of JPA-controlled long-term revenue stream • Challenges of creating a structure and organization from the ground up (in terms of costs and other resources)
Join Gold Coast Transit District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to more resources (such as vehicles) • Improved coordination with regional transit network • Reduces direct administrative burden; access to more resources (like vehicle procurement) which may require specialized expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires joining a regional organization • Administrative/planning costs likely higher to “right-size” service and support • Cost for Gold Coast to provide Heritage Valley service is unknown (no existing service model) • Limits to control over local decisions • Would require Gold Coast Transit to determine an equitable performance standard for rural service/routes

While each option offers certain advantages, should the Heritage Valley communities not elect to join Gold Coast Transit, either the implementation of a joint powers agreement or formation of a joint powers authority is the recommended course of action, as it would balance cost-effective administration and governance with local transit decision-making. However, the ultimate decision depends on whether the ultimate priority is providing the maximum level of service for the funding available or continuing to rely on an outside entity to administer transit service in the Heritage Valley.

Capital and Financial Planning

The provision of transit services in the Heritage Valley is paid for with a combination of rider fares, Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds, and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. TDA funds are collected by the state through a \$0.0025 county-wide sales tax, and distributed within the county based on the population of each jurisdiction. The TDA funds are flexible and are used for both the provision of transit service in the Heritage Valley as well as for the required federal match for capital costs. Currently the two cities and the County have an agreement to split the cost/subsidies of the

community transit/Dial-A-Ride service equally, with Fillmore providing a lesser amount.

Senate Bill 716 eliminates the availability of apportioned Local Transportation Funds (LTF) to be used for streets and roads beginning July 2014. This effectively acts as an increase in transit funding, as in prior years a portion of LTF has been used for streets and roads (except in Fillmore, where all allotted TDA funds are used for transit). Funding of VISTA 126 has been limited by the funding agreement entered into with the four entities cited above, which effectively caps the funding at the lowest common denominator. State Transit Assistance (STA), which is funded through State legislative action (the gas tax swap), has recently become an additional stable funding source for transit operations.

As the “Designated Recipient” and Regional Transportation Planning Authority, VCTC is responsible for distributing FTA funds to local jurisdictions for transit-related purposes. These FTA funds – including Section 5307 and Section 5311 – are allocated to Ventura County using both population-based and service mileage-share formulae. Currently, VISTA Dial-A-Ride and fixed-route services receive \$1.4 million combined in FTA Section 5307 funding. VISTA Dial-A-Ride is also eligible for Section 5311 funds which the County receives based on the population residing outside any urbanized area. However, while the service area is largely rural, it does not currently receive any of the Section 5311 funds. According to figures provided by VCTC, VISTA Dial-A-Ride is eligible to receive an apportionment of approximately \$300,000 based on rural population formula.

With MAP-21 going into effect October 2012, transit funding has become more stable. However, JARC funds are now allocated as formula grants. This change allows more accurate forecasting of likely revenues for transit operations.

Capital Plan

The Capital Plan presented herein considers the purchase of fifteen new vehicles using Proposition 1B funds, which would reduce operator contract costs in subsequent years through the use of an agency-owned fleet. It also includes the purchase of additional bus stop amenities to support the introduction of fixed-route service in Santa Paula and Fillmore.

Financial Plan

A Financial Plan is presented for each scenario outlined in the Service Plan chapter. Each scenario is viable within existing and forecast funding. The Plan includes anticipated changes in user fees (paid fares) as well as estimated funding from TDA and relevant grants.

In developing these Financial Plans, the following are assumed to be true:

1. The County of Ventura would maintain its current level of TDA funds to transit services provided there is a surplus. (If there is a deficit, additional TDA funds would potentially be available from the County, never to exceed the level of contribution from Santa Paula.)

2. FTA formula grant and TDA allocations would remain as forecast.
3. The operating entity or members would purchase vehicles using up to \$1.5 million in Proposition 1B funds provided by VCTC (except as shown in Scenario 1A – Status Quo).
4. The Hwy 126 service would continue to be operated as a “limited-stop” service. Any significant changes to the service (such as increased frequency, increased number of stops within the Heritage Valley, or changes to routing) would be funded by VCTC and not have a financial impact on the calculations outlined within the Financial Plan.

The following outlines the primary features of each Financial Plan as presented in Section 3.2.

Exhibit 1.6 Summary of Financial Plan

Scenario		Key Features
1A	Status Quo with Contractor-Provided (Leased) Vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes to fare structure • All TDA funds used for transit • No Proposition 1B funds used • No significant increase to farebox recovery (approximately 16%)
1B	Status Quo with Agency-Owned Vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No changes to fare structure • All TDA funds used for transit • Proposition 1B funds used to purchase vehicles • Lower contracted cost per hour • No significant increase to farebox recovery (approximately 16%)
2	Traditional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower fixed-route fare • Higher ADA Dial-A-Ride fare • All TDA funds used for transit • Proposition 1B funds used to purchase vehicles • Lower contracted cost per hour • Ridership increase anticipated due to fare reduction • Decrease in farebox recovery (to approximately 13-14%)
3	Modified Traditional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower fixed-route fare • Higher ADA and general public Dial-A-Ride fare • All TDA funds used for transit • Proposition 1B funds used to purchase vehicles • Lower contracted cost per hour • Ridership increase anticipated due to fare reduction • System-wide increase in farebox recovery (to approximately 20%)

The financial implications of each scenario reinforce our recommendation of Scenario 3, which calls for the Modified Traditional scenario, along with VCTC-funded and -operated Hwy 126 service. We believe this scenario is, in addition to being the best option for the Heritage Valley, the most sustainable financially as well as in compliance with TDA farebox recovery ratio requirements. It is also the scenario with the greatest growth potential, as surplus funds could be used for service expansion as demand warrants.

Conclusions

The Heritage Valley relies on public transit service to address the mobility needs of many of its residents. To that end, the communities of the Heritage Valley require a service model that addresses basic mobility needs both within the community and in conjunction with the regional transit network. Given the modest size of the Heritage Valley as well as its geographic location, retaining local control over transit decisions is desirable. Therefore, after evaluating community and stakeholder input, potential service delivery models, and financial considerations, we put forth the following recommendations for the successful continuation of transit service in the Heritage Valley:

1. Develop a joint powers agreement or form a joint powers authority to retain local control over transit service in the Heritage Valley.
2. Implement a Modified Traditional service scenario (complemented by VISTA Hwy 126 funded and operated by VCTC).
3. Implement administrative, marketing, and policy changes to improve customer service and enhance public awareness regarding the availability of transit service.

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2. EXISTING CONDITIONS/ PROJECT BACKGROUND

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CHAPTER 2 – EXISTING CONDITIONS/PROJECT BACKGROUND

In late 2011, the Ventura County Transportation Commission initiated the Heritage Valley Transit Study, an update of the 1994 Transit Plan for the Santa Clara River Valley (comprised of Fillmore, Piru, and Santa Paula). The purpose of the Heritage Valley Transit Study was to objectively and comprehensively evaluate demand and recent performance of transit services operating within the Heritage Valley (i.e., VISTA Highway 126 and VISTA Dial-A-Ride). Given the (then) uncertainty of future funding for transit throughout Ventura County, unprecedented demand for transit service in the study area (i.e., some services operating at capacity), and demographic composition of the residents within the Heritage Valley (i.e., large ride-dependent population), VCTC sought to identify strategies for enhancing community mobility within the framework of likely financial resources.

The Ventura County Transportation Commission, through its VISTA Dial-A-Ride program, currently provides two separate demand-response services, one operating within Santa Paula and the other in the Fillmore-Piru area. Combined, the services transport more than 200,000 passengers annually. Both Dial-A-Ride services operate seven days a week, with weekday service from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and weekend service from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Santa Paula Commuter Bus operates as a peak-hour, school-day, fixed-route service, providing two morning and two afternoon round trips between 7:10 a.m. and 3:40 p.m. VCTC also operates VISTA Hwy 126, an express (limited-stop) fixed-route service linking all three communities with the city of Ventura. This service provides more than 235,000 unlinked trips annually. The service operates Monday through Friday between 5:45 a.m. and 8:20 p.m. (13 eastbound and 12 westbound trips), and on Saturday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:57 p.m. (10 eastbound and 10 westbound trips). Each one-way trip required approximately 60 minutes to complete.

Heritage Valley Transit Study Process

A project initiation meeting was held July 13, 2011 at the VCTC offices. VCTC staff and the consultant team discussed the projected timeline and identified project activities (chiefly outreach) intended to take place throughout the project term. This process was also coordinated with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) (composed of representatives from jurisdictions within the study area) and the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) (comprised of elected officials). The purpose of the Committee's involvement was to provide direction, review project deliverables, and help secure support for community outreach. Two meetings were held with the committees: one with the TAC at the beginning of the project to discuss goals and outreach strategies (August 16, 2011) and one with the TAC and PAC to discuss findings (October 31, 2011).

To facilitate input from Heritage Valley residents and current Dial-A-Ride patrons, several outreach activities were conducted including a community survey, Dial-A-Ride customer survey, and six focus groups. Additionally, operations data as well as historic and current performance data were provided by VCTC and Fillmore Area Transportation Corp. (FATCO) for analysis and incorporation into the study report.

Summary of Findings²

- The Heritage Valley’s population (currently over 49,000) is projected to increase by nearly 30 percent across the next decade, reaching more than 63,000 by 2020.
- The percentage of youth population is projected to decline across the next ten years, potentially impacting home-to-school demand on VISTA and Dial-A-Ride services.
- Approximately 16 percent of DAR patrons are children under 5 that ride free of charge.
- Adult ridership accounts for more than 40 percent of total ridership between the two Dial-A-Ride programs, followed by students (26 percent).
- Dial-A-Ride ridership reveals a greater use of the service by general public riders versus seniors or persons with disabilities.
- Santa Paula and Fillmore experience a significant share of commuter inflow from communities as far as 50 miles away (Los Angeles, CA).

The primary aim of this report is to identify ways VCTC, Ventura County, and the Heritage Valley cities can more effectively utilize declining funding for public transit. With this goal in mind, the Service Evaluation (discussed fully in Appendix B) seeks to address the following two questions:

- Is the current VCTC service delivery operating as efficiently as possible?
- If not, what service changes are needed to achieve a more sustainable operation?

This section outlines historic performance for VISTA Hwy 126 and Dial-A-Ride services in the Heritage Valley across the past three fiscal years. It also highlights VCTC’s TDA Article 8 “unmet transit needs” process and findings across the last five years and recaps recent developments with current VISTA services.

Summary of Findings

- Although VCTC introduced system-wide fare increases in 2010 and 2011, fixed-route ridership was not severely affected within the Heritage Valley.
- Dial-A-Ride services in Santa Paula and Fillmore-Piru experienced ridership declines (4.2 and 6.1 percent, respectively) in FY 2011.
- VISTA Hwy 126 service experienced a 12-percent ridership gain during FY 2011.
- The fare increase was deemed successful, as fare revenue increased in both FY 2009/10 and FY 2010/11 without significant declines in ridership.
- Overall operating cost of Heritage Valley transit service has been slightly increasing the past few fiscal years, while service offerings (i.e., service miles and hours) have actually decreased slightly. If VCTC can increase efficiency of these services, coupled with increasing ridership trends and fare revenue, an increase in service (i.e., more vehicle service hours) could be provided.

² Based on Census 2000, Census 2010, American Community Survey 2009, California Employment Development Department, and Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data.

A key component to developing the transit study was community involvement. Community input (presented fully in Appendix C) was solicited throughout the project term. Given the service and funding challenges currently faced by VCTC it was especially important to involve the community throughout this Plan’s development. Outreach was targeted not only to those persons who currently ride public transit but also to the general public (non-riders). In addition, more intensive efforts were made to garner input from Heritage Valley residents who are dependent on public transit services for the majority of their mobility needs. To meet this project goal, project methodology included a comprehensive community involvement strategy which included the following community outreach and market research efforts (discussed herein):

- Six focus groups and community presentations,
- Community survey, and
- Dial-A-Ride customer survey.

Focus groups are listed in Exhibit 2.1.

Exhibit 2.1 Focus Groups

Organization	Activity Format	Participants	Date
Fillmore Senior Center	Small group	Seniors	9/20/2011
Fillmore One-Step A La Vez (youth)	Small group	Youth	9/21/2011
Piru Neighborhood Council	Community Meeting	General Public	9/22/2011
Santa Paula Senior Center	Small group	Seniors	9/21/2011
Task Force to End Homelessness in Santa Paula	Presentation/Survey	Homeless	9/22/2011
Rancho Sespe Apartments	Small group	Low-Income	11/17/2011

Summary of Findings

- On-time performance of both VISTA Hwy 126 and Dial-A-Ride services was perceived as poor by riders as well as non-riders.³
- Increased marketing of fare media options is needed, as many participants were unaware of available resources.
- There is a definite need for more fixed-route service as the current Dial-A-Ride programs are running at or near capacity.

As stated, comprehensive information regarding the background for the project, demographic information, and community outreach can be found in the report’s Appendix.

³ It must be noted the number of respondents to the most recent onboard survey was modest. While a total of 316 responses were received, there were no more than 99 on any individual service (such as Hwy 126 weekend service or Santa Paula DAR weekday service). Therefore this observation is primarily anecdotal and not supported by solid statistically valid data.

Recent and Anticipated Developments

Subsequent to the community outreach portion of this project, significant changes within the VISTA program, regional decisions regarding public transit in Ventura County, and changes to legislation regarding transit funding have taken place. These developments directly affect the provision of transit service in the Heritage Valley.

Senate Bill 716 and the Ventura County Regional Transit Study

The passage of Senate Bill (SB) 716, which went into effect on January 1, 2010, placed certain conditions on the use of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds in Ventura County. This section states:

The Ventura County Transportation Commission may submit to the Senate Committee on Transportation and Housing and the Assembly Committee on Transportation a report analyzing options for organizing public mass transportation services in the county, for the expenditure of revenues deposited in the local transportation fund, and a recommended legislative proposal for implementing the plan by December 31, 2011. If the legislative proposal is not enacted by the end of the 2011-12 Regular Session of the Legislature, revenues deposited in the local transportation fund in that county shall be available for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2014, and each fiscal year thereafter, solely for claims for Article 4 (commencing with Section 99260) and Article 4.5 (commencing with Section 99275) purposes.⁴

As a result of SB 716, VCTC began development of its Regional Transit Study in April 2010 to fulfill the requirements of the legislation. The study was completed in April 2012 (an extension past the December 31, 2011 date was granted) and submitted to the California State Legislature for review. The study sought to determine the feasibility for consolidation of public transit program in Ventura County. The recommendations arising from that study follow.

1. Support creation of a Gold Coast Transit District (GCTD) to assume responsibility for West County public transit services. Cities and communities in West County (along with Heritage Valley) would be offered the opportunity to join the District.
2. Transition authority for VISTA services in West County to the new District, with services in the Heritage Valley subject to negotiation and participation by those communities and California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI) and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (for Coastal Express) pending continued funding agreements with those entities.
3. Support creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in East County between the cities of Camarillo, Moorpark, Simi Valley, and Thousand Oaks and the County of Ventura for unincorporated East County, to further coordination of individual services.
4. Transition authority for VISTA East service to the East County MOU.
5. Support legislation to allow the use of TDA funds for Article 8 purposes, including streets and roads, and continued return to source of Local Transit Funds.

⁴ California State Senate Bill 716, Section 99232.3, introduced February 2009 and passed October 2009.

6. Use VCTC discretionary transit funds to deliver sustainable levels of transit service.
7. Support the objective of further consolidation over time as needed to improve connectivity and customer service.⁵

Recommendation number two directly affects the provision of transit service in the Heritage Valley. It provides Heritage Valley communities the option of joining the proposed Gold Coast Transit, but does not require that they do so. This proposed consolidation of service and recommended governance options is discussed in Chapter 3.

VCTC Will Transition Local VISTA Operation to Other Agencies in the County as Called For in the Ventura County Regional Transit Study (approved by VCTC in 2011 and amended March 2013)

With the consolidation activities outlined in the Regional Transit Study as amended, VCTC will no longer manage the operations of local VISTA bus service (Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride). Whether the Heritage Valley jurisdictions join Gold Coast, work with GCT to provide/manage the transit operations through an agreement, or choose to operate public transit service themselves is up to the Heritage Valley communities and Gold Coast Transit. Gold Coast Transit should not be viewed as the only administrative/governance option, but as one option. With a change inevitable, it is important for the Heritage Valley communities to gain a clear vision for transit in their region so that effective and appropriate decisions can be made.

Bankruptcy of VISTA Operator CUSA, LLC

Dramatic changes to the VISTA service arose when long-time VISTA operations contractor CUSA, LLC declared bankruptcy in mid-2012. The bankruptcy and subsequent sale of assets necessitated a sudden change in contractors as well as a change in VISTA's image, as the "over-the-road" coaches formerly used for VISTA service were sold and Gillig Phantoms were obtained as replacements. While the contractor change did not affect the provision of Dial-A-Ride service in the Heritage Valley (operated by FATCO), it does mark the potential for changes to transit service in the Heritage Valley as the future of transit in Ventura County is re-imagined. Some VISTA Hwy 126 trips which were served by the 54-passenger buses are impacted with the smaller 42-passenger Gillig coaches. This loss in capacity and quality of buses needs to be addressed by VCTC.

Changes in Federal Funding Allocations

Effective October 1, 2012, the new federal multi-year surface transportation funding and authorization bill Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) consolidated several federal funding programs formerly available under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which expired on September 30, 2012. FTA Section 5316 (Job Access and Reverse Commute/JARC) was incorporated into Section 5307 (Urbanized Area) and Section 5311 (Rural Area) formula grant programs. FTA Section 5317 (New Freedom) was consolidated with Section 5310 into the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities grant program. These

⁵ "Ventura County Regional Transit Study Final Report." Ventura County Transportation Commission (MIG, Inc.; Wendel; Patti Post & Associates), April 2012.

changes affected both the amount of money available as well as its use. For example, some funds that were not available to be used for operating expenses can now be used to fund operations. Other programs that were formerly discretionary are now formula-based. While this is not expected to negatively impact the amount of funding received through these programs, it may change how such funds can be utilized.

Moving Forward

Given the changes in funding and the analysis of the service modifications which were raised during the study period, some of the issues raised and transit services requested may be beyond the resources or the cost effective provision of those services. Because of this, the focus has first been to identify ways to maintain the same or similar levels of services currently available to Heritage Valley residents. Once the existing demands have been addressed in a sustainable manner, and the connections to the adjoining services clarified as part of the implementation of the Ventura Countywide Transit Plan, opportunities to address expansions in services should be further investigated.

Based on community input, examination of existing data including transit use, surveys, and demographic data, three different scenarios were developed. The scenario which appears to meet the greatest amount of concerns and transit needs identified is a hybrid alternative. This alternative, identified as the “modified traditional,” provides for a sustainable community-wide service, introduction of community fixed-route circulators, and continued provision of general public Dial-A-Ride.

The preceding public outreach narrative is maintained to offer documentation of customer issues so that when funding for expansion becomes available the demand will be, at least in part, already nominally identified.

3

3.

SERVICE PLAN

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CHAPTER 3 – SERVICE PLAN

The Service Plan chapter presents and prioritizes proposed strategies for maintaining current or equivalent levels of public transit service operating within and through the Heritage Valley (VISTA Hwy 126, Santa Paula Commuter Bus, and Fillmore-Piru and Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride services), forecasts fiscal implications for each service scenario, and identifies steps toward implementation of each proposed service scenario. In essence, it provides a “blueprint” for continuing and (in some cases) enhancing transit performance and quality of service.

As stated in the previous chapter, there are several factors driving the development of this Study, including regional changes, operational transitions, and transit funding. Three service scenarios have been developed to address these factors. Given the high incidence of transit dependence and low income levels⁶ as identified in the community and Dial-A-Ride surveys, stakeholder meetings, and focus groups, these scenarios focus primarily on maximizing mobility within the Heritage Valley, as well as connecting the Heritage Valley to Ventura via the existing VISTA Hwy 126 service.

- The **Status Quo** scenario assumes the same service currently available in the Heritage Valley would continue to operate as it has, with separate general public Dial-A-Ride services in Santa Paula and Fillmore/Piru as well as the Santa Paula Commuter Bus.
- The **Traditional** scenario reflects a traditional fixed-route and ADA complementary paratransit service in Santa Paula and Fillmore, with midday general public Dial-A-Ride service in Piru. Community circulators in Santa Paula and Fillmore would be supplemented by limited shuttle service between Fillmore and Piru as well as the existing VISTA Hwy 126 service. Timed-transfer points would be utilized to facilitate inter-community travel.
- The **Modified Traditional** scenario is operationally identical to the Traditional scenario, except it would provide general public Dial-A-Ride service in all communities at a fare greater than the proposed ADA fare.

In addition to the service scenarios, Chapter 3 also presents a number of administrative, marketing, and policy recommendations that are largely cost-neutral, as well as options for transit system governance.

⁶ Per the community survey, more than 57 percent of respondents had limited or no access to a personal vehicle, and nearly a third reported their household as low-income. Among Dial-A-Ride customers, 91 percent cited no access to a personal vehicle, while 77 percent identified their households as low-income.

3.1 – STRATEGIES

This section presents three levels of strategies:

- Service Delivery Strategies;
- Administrative, Policy, and Marketing Strategies; and
- Administration and Governance Structures.

Summary of Strategies

Service Delivery Strategies⁷

- Status quo,
- Traditional, and
- Modified traditional.

Administrative, Policy, and Marketing Strategies

- Improve Dial-A-Ride reservation and call center processes,
- Conduct regular driver training (including sensitivity training),
- Reduce amount of free rides on VISTA services,
- Improve marketing and accessibility of fare media, and
- Increase bilingual marketing efforts.

Administrative and Governance Structures

- Community transit service,
- Joint powers agreement,
- Joint powers authority, and
- Join a larger organization.

While residents expressed an interest in a variety of additional services, some were deemed not feasible at this time, especially given the need to restructure the Heritage Valley service. However, it is possible that they could be feasible in the future, especially if the anticipated level of funding remains consistent and ridership continues to increase. Some of these strategies include:

- Service to Santa Clarita – This level of expansion was requested in onboard surveys and focus group meetings. It would facilitate access to employment, shopping, healthcare, and educational resources in the Santa Clarita Valley (including Six Flags Magic Mountain, which is a significant seasonal employer particularly for Heritage Valley youth). However, this option is not feasible unless a cooperative agreement could be arranged with the City of Santa Clarita (which does not currently see service to/from the

⁷ VCTC would continue to fund and operate VISTA Hwy 126.

Heritage Valley as a priority) and there is demonstrated demand for such a service.

- Extended service to Ventura – Two additional trips from Ventura (serving the mall and Ventura College) were added to the VISTA Hwy 126 schedule in October 2012. The current level of service provided by Hwy 126 is expected to continue. Therefore, this strategy is not specifically addressed within this report.
- Student fare – There was interest in creating a student fare (on local Dial-A-Ride service) at a student focus group. The fixed-route scenarios incorporate a reduction in fare for fixed-route travel, which addresses this issue indirectly.

SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES

In light of the recent changes regarding the future of transit service in Ventura County, three distinct scenarios have been identified for the provision of transit service in the Heritage Valley. Each scenario is viable both operationally and financially, although each would require the identification and implementation of an administrative/governing body other than VCTC. (Administrative/governing options are discussed later in this chapter.)

Scenario 1: Status Quo

In Scenario 1, service in the Heritage Valley would continue to operate in the manner it currently does, with separate general public Dial-A-Ride services in Santa Paula and Fillmore/Piru as well as the Santa Paula Commuter Bus. The Hwy 126 route would continue to be part of the VISTA service funded/operated by VCTC. This Study does not address the institutional arrangements required to operate the service.

Service levels would remain the same in the Heritage Valley. Operating hours and fares would not change in this scenario. The only anticipated changes would be from an administrative standpoint (e.g., who administers and operates the service). A change from contractor-owned vehicles to agency-owned vehicles (discussed further in Section 3.2) would potentially address the overcrowding issues associated with this scenario.

Exhibit 3.1.1 Status Quo Summary

Scenario 1: Status Quo	
Merits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiar to the community • Curb-to-curb service
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcrowding issues • Service times don't work with school schedule • Can't schedule Dial-A-Ride appointments during student travel times • More costly to operate than fixed-route

Summary of Status Quo Scenario:

- General public Dial-A-Ride serving Santa Paula
 - Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.
 - Saturday and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- General public Dial-A-Ride serving Fillmore
 - Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.
 - Saturday and Sunday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- General public Dial-A-Ride serving Piru
 - Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 - Saturday and Sunday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Santa Paula Commuter Bus
 - Monday through Friday, 7:10 a.m. to 8:02 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 3:40 p.m.
 - School days only
 - Deviated fixed-route for ADA-certified customers
- VISTA Hwy 126 service funded and operated by VCTC

Scenario 2: Traditional

Scenario 2 represents a traditional fixed-route and ADA complementary paratransit service delivery model. Key issues arising from the community outreach conducted throughout this study included overcrowding (capacity issues), trouble securing Dial-A-Ride reservations during student travel periods, and a desire for a local shuttle around Fillmore. The provision of fixed-route service instead of a general public Dial-A-Ride addresses these issues while also providing a more cost-effective means of service delivery.

Fixed-route service in the Heritage Valley would be provided via community circulators traveling within Santa Paula and Fillmore. Dial-A-Ride service in those communities would then be limited to ADA-certified patrons. Limited fixed-route service between Fillmore and Piru would operate during morning and afternoon student travel times to facilitate access to and from school in Fillmore. Mid-day general public Dial-A-Ride service would still be available in Piru (with service to Fillmore). As in Scenario 1, the VISTA Hwy 126 route would continue to be part of the intercity VISTA service and would be funded and operated by VCTC.

In addition to providing scheduled service within Santa Paula and Fillmore, the community circulators would address existing capacity issues. For example, Dial-A-Ride ridership data for the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride reveals a high student demand (26.1 percent of DAR riders) using the Fillmore-Piru service for home-to-school travel. The Fillmore-Piru service would tie in closely with school bell schedules in the morning and afternoon to meet the demonstrated home-to-school travel need. In addition, the implementation of ADA complementary paratransit service would eliminate scheduling conflicts experienced by ADA-certified customers who wish to schedule a ride during morning peak hours. Currently, some Dial-A-Ride customers have trouble scheduling rides in the mornings because of the

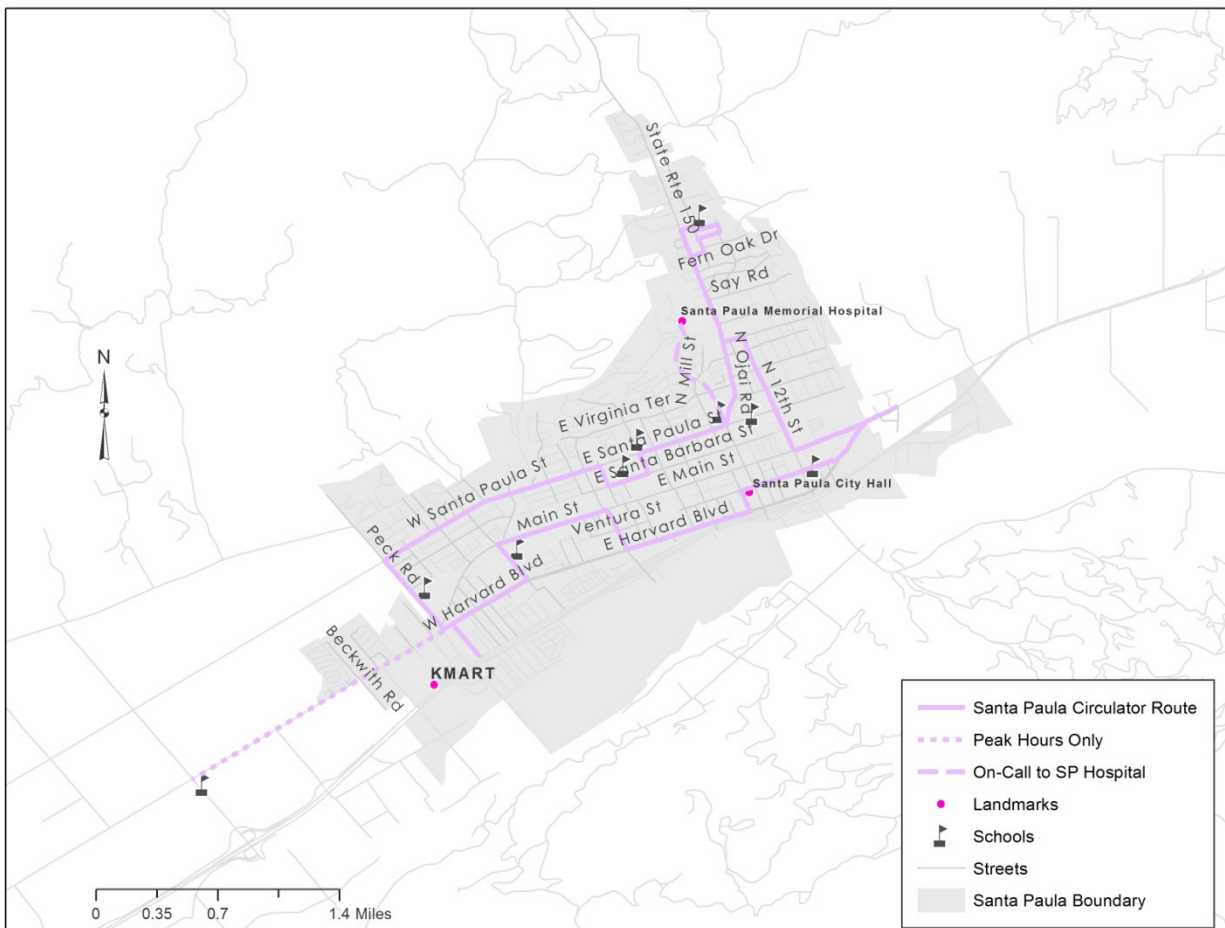
high volume of student travel. If peak-hour Dial-A-Ride service is limited to ADA-certified customers, this problem will be eliminated.

The Santa Paula community circulator would consist of two vehicles running on 30-minute headways on a loop through Santa Paula, with on-call service available to the Hospital and limited trips serving Briggs Rd. during peak hours only. Total trip time would be approximately 50 minutes and could be extended to one hour as the Limoneira area develops. Timed-transfers with the VISTA Hwy 126 service would occur at Santa Paula city hall.

Given demand to the Hospital is likely to be modest and access to the location is potentially problematic (requiring a turnaround in a private parking lot), regular service to the location is not recommended. On-call service would allow patrons to request service at that stop upon boarding the vehicle or by calling the customer service number so that a regularly scheduled trip can deviate to serve the location.

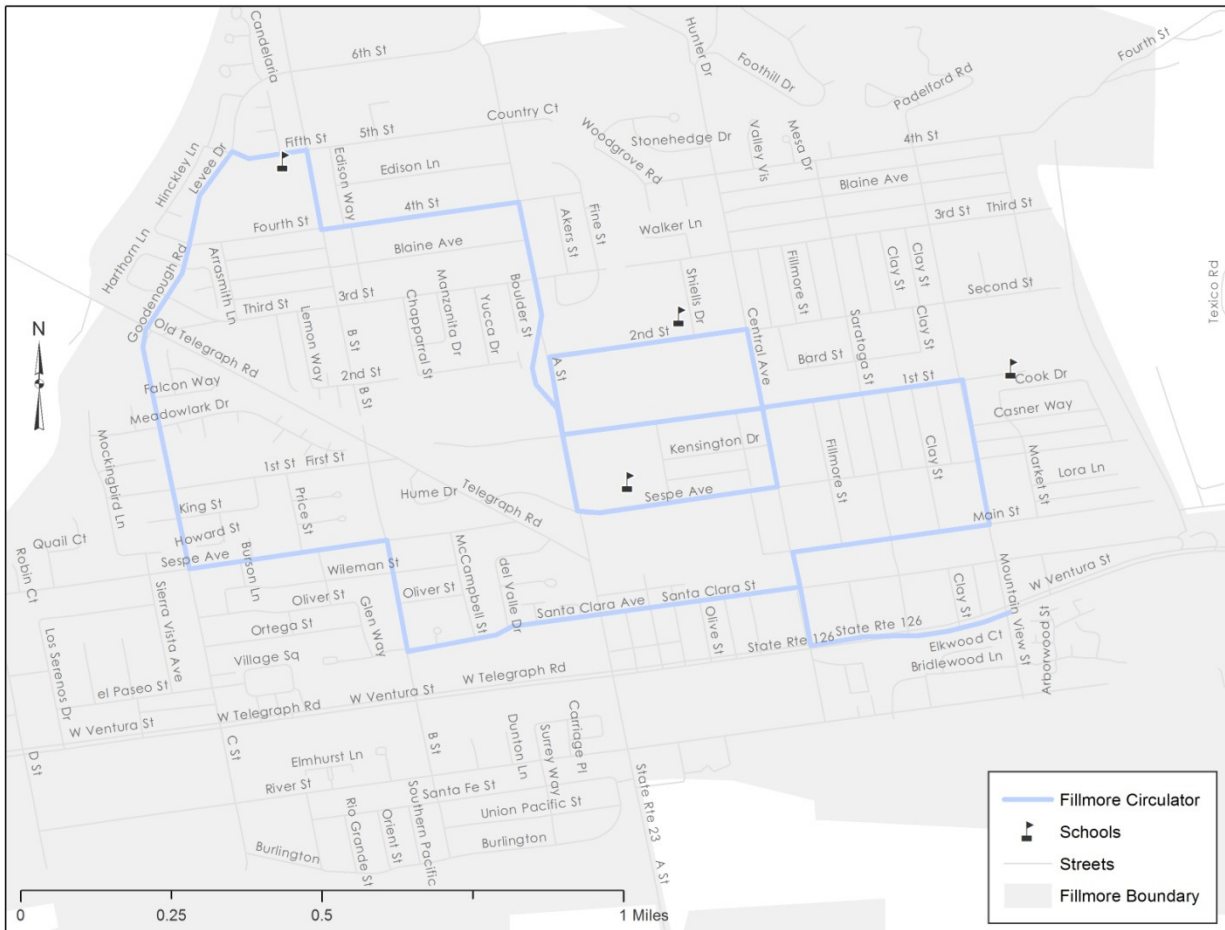
In addition, service to Briggs Rd. (Briggs Elementary) would be provided during morning and afternoon peak hours, with one to two additional mid-day trips to coordinate with early release bell times.

Exhibit 3.1.2 Santa Paula Community Circulator



The Fillmore community circulator would consist of a single vehicle running on a 30-minute headway on a loop through Fillmore. Timed-transfers with the VISTA Hwy 126 service would likely occur at the Fillmore Transportation Center.

Exhibit 3.1.3 Fillmore Community Circulator

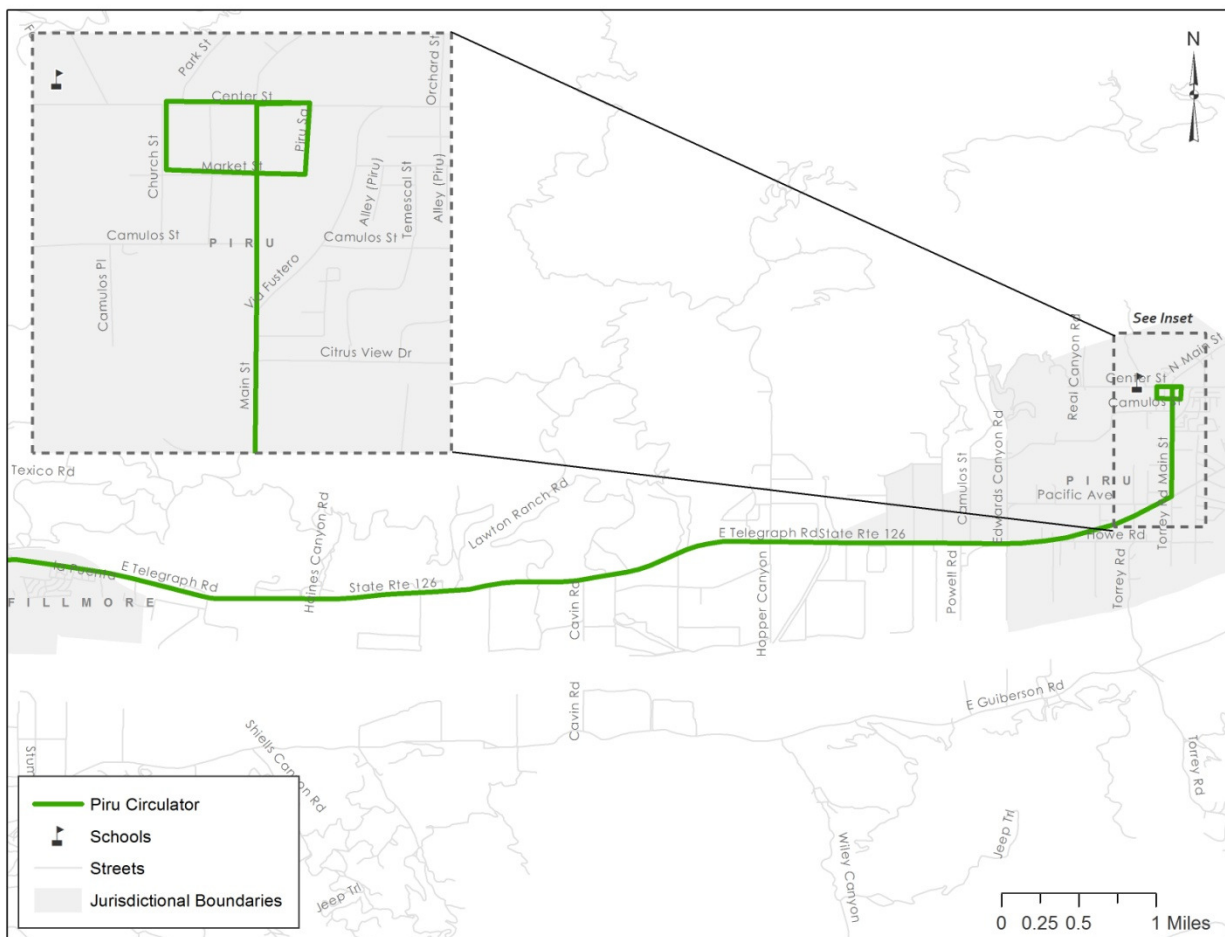


The Fillmore-Piru Shuttle would operate four round trips Monday through Friday, during morning and afternoon peak travel periods. It would provide service to the schools as well as the Fillmore Transportation Center (to facilitate access to the VISTA Hwy 126 service). Trips would be timed to best serve the bell schedules of Fillmore High School and Fillmore Middle School (see Exhibit 3.1.4). ADA complementary paratransit service would be available during peak hours, with general public Dial-A-Ride service operating mid-day.

Exhibit 3.1.4 Fillmore School Bell Schedules (2012-2013 School Year)

	Regular Start	Late Start	Dismissal
Fillmore High School	8:05 a.m.	8:35 a.m.	3:11 p.m.
Fillmore Middle School	8:00 a.m.	9:00 a.m.	2:50 p.m.

Exhibit 3.1.5 Fillmore-Piru Shuttle



ADA complementary paratransit service would provide Dial-A-Ride service to ADA-certified customers within Fillmore and Santa Paula. The ADA paratransit service would operate between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. This marks a significant change over the status quo, as anyone desiring to use the Dial-A-Ride service in Santa Paula or Fillmore (as well as during peak hours in Piru) would have to go through the ADA certification process. While certification is free, it does require advance preparation to complete the application and receive notification of eligibility. Depending on future Commission direction, one or more agencies could replace VCTC in providing ADA certifications, and there would likely be a cost to the Heritage Valley for the ADA certifications. In addition, seniors would not be eligible to use the ADA paratransit service based on age alone; they would have to be certified as having a disability preventing use of the regular fixed-route bus service. A targeted bilingual marketing and outreach campaign would need to accompany this scenario to ensure information is communicated effectively and to facilitate ADA applications. The ADA Dial-A-Ride would continue to connect with Gold Coast ACCESS at Wells Road in Saticoy.

In order to effectively serve ADA customers, we recommend any new home pick-up location be assessed by a supervisor prior to confirming the first trip request from a new ADA customer. This will identify potential concerns regarding access to the individual's primary pick-up location (usually their home) due to road conditions, safety issues, hills, or lack of space to turn the vehicle around. If a supervisor deems a pick-up location to be inaccessible, he/she would identify an alternate location that could be safely served by the ADA vehicle.

The Traditional Scenario offers a number of advantages over the Status Quo Scenario. First, fixed-route service is more cost-effective to operate, in that a larger number of customers can be served for a lower number of Vehicle Service Miles. Second, fixed-route service eliminates the need for making reservations, the efficiency of which has been an ongoing concern with the existing service. Fixed-route service also addresses student travel between Piru and Fillmore, which has resulting in overcrowding of Dial-A-Ride vehicles. The proposed purchase of larger vehicles (as outlined in the Capital Plan in Section 3.2) would help to mitigate this problem as well. Finally, in-town trips are likely to have shorter travel times, as the vehicle will only travel along its established alignment.

Exhibit 3.1.6 Scenario 2 Summary

	Scenario 2: Traditional
Merits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed-route service is less costly to operate • Eliminates need for reservations (except for ADA and Piru) • Increased capacity without significant increase in cost (and possible savings) • Lower fares for in-town travel • Fixed-route shuttle service addresses student travel between Piru and Fillmore • General public Dial-A-Ride still available in Piru (mid-day only)
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADA Dial-A-Ride use requires ADA certification • Adjustment to new system • Meeting all school bell schedules, especially on early release days • Relies on Hwy 126 service for inter-community travel (except Fillmore to Piru)

Summary of Traditional Scenario:

- Fillmore Community Circulator
 - Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 - Saturday and Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Santa Paula Community Circulator
 - Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 - Saturday and Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Fillmore-Piru Shuttle
 - Monday through Friday, a.m. peak (2 round trips)
 - Monday through Friday, p.m. peak (2 round trips)
- ADA paratransit service in Fillmore and Santa Paula
- ADA paratransit service in Piru during peak hours only
- General public Dial-A-Ride service in Piru and between Piru and Fillmore (mid-day only)
- VISTA Hwy 126 service funded and operated by VCTC

Scenario 3: Modified Traditional

In Scenario 3, the traditional fixed-route and ADA complementary paratransit model is used, with the added feature of providing Dial-A-Ride service to the general public.

Operationally, the service in Scenario 3 is identical to that in Scenario 2. However, given Dial-A-Ride is more expensive to operate than fixed-route service, general public customers using Dial-A-Ride would be charged the higher Dial-A-Ride fare set for ADA customers. In addition, scheduling priority would be given to ADA-certified customers (regardless of trip purpose). As in the first two scenarios, the VISTA Hwy 126 service would be funded and operated by VCTC.

The primary advantage to the Modified Traditional Scenario is the availability of general public Dial-A-Ride in each community, although that service would be priced at a higher fare than the fixed-route service and equal to that of the ADA complementary paratransit service.

Exhibit 3.1.7 Scenario 3 Summary

Scenario 3: Modified Traditional	
Merits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed-route service is less costly to operate • Eliminates need for reservations (except for ADA and Dial-A-Ride) • Increased capacity without significant increase in cost (and possible savings) • Lower fares for in-town travel • Fixed-route service addresses student travel between Piru and Fillmore • General public Dial-A-Ride still available
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADA Dial-A-Ride use requires ADA certification • Higher fare for ADA and General Public Dial-A-Ride • Adjustment to new system • Meeting all school bell schedules, especially on early release days • Relies on Hwy 126 service for inter-community travel (except Fillmore to Piru)

Summary of Modified Traditional Scenario:

- Community circulator in Fillmore
 - Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 - Saturday and Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Community circulator in Santa Paula
 - Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 - Saturday and Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Fixed-route service between Fillmore and Piru
 - Monday through Friday, a.m. peak (2 round trips)
 - Monday through Friday, p.m. peak (2 round trips)
- ADA paratransit service in Fillmore and Santa Paula
- ADA paratransit service in Piru during peak hours only
- General public Dial-A-Ride service available
- VISTA Hwy 126 service funded and operated by VCTC

ADMINISTRATIVE, POLICY, AND MARKETING STRATEGIES

Administrative, policy, and marketing recommendations are presented independently of the operating scenarios. They are intended to improve performance, reservation processes, fare revenue, and awareness of the service. These recommendations are designed to be low-cost activities that require little to no additional resources (primarily administrative costs) and can be implemented within a fairly short timeframe.

1. **Improve Dial-A-Ride reservations and call center processes.** Currently, VCTC contracts with FATCO to handle all Dial-A-Ride calls, including ride requests, reservations, information requests, etc. Assistance is available Monday through Friday between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and on Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Fillmore-Piru) and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Santa Paula). Based on community feedback, customers have expressed difficulty in accessing the reservation line for the Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride services as some phone calls were reported unanswered. In the future, the operator should be required to provide a more effective phone system (such as a roll-over system which can pass incoming calls to a second or third line if the first phone line is busy), and/or a digital answering system which can record missed calls. This would capture calls which are not answered due to limited staff or because they occur after hours.

Currently, customers are directed to call separate numbers depending on the community where they are requesting the trip: one number for Fillmore and Piru and one for Santa Paula. Given dispatching for both services is operated out of the same location, we recommend the two reservation lines into a single number to eliminate customer confusion and dissatisfaction.

Given the relatively high volume of service currently provided on the Dial-A-Ride programs (i.e., 108,208 trips for Santa Paula and 100,616 trips for Fillmore-Piru annually), there is a need for additional operators to handle Dial-A-Ride reservations. However, the operator should also invest in additional training for the Trapeze software currently in use. Inadequate knowledge or training of dispatching software marginalizes its value. Adequate training will allow dispatchers to take reservations more quickly by maximizing the functions and features of the software to allow more streamlined Dial-A-Ride dispatching.

While the need for improvements to the Dial-A-Ride reservation and call center processes is somewhat mitigated with the implementation of a fixed-route service, maintaining operational efficiency in this area remains important from a customer service perspective.

2. **Conduct regular driver training.** Throughout the outreach efforts conducted during this study, on-time performance and driver courtesy were oft-cited complaints, particularly regarding the VISTA Dial-A-Ride service. Both of these issues can be addressed through regular driver training regarding enforcement of key policies (especially as they pertain to pick-ups and drop-offs in outlying areas such as Rancho Sespe). Customer sensitivity training should also be provided to

ensure nondiscrimination policies regarding race, ethnicity, and/or gender are being enforced. Periodic field and/or office evaluations should be conducted to monitor onboard customer service.

3. **Reduce number of free rides.** Based on contractor-provided data, at least 16 percent of DAR patrons ride free of charge. Observations and customer feedback conclude fare enforcement is inconsistent, resulting in some patrons paying less than the required fare and contributing to the higher number of reported free rides occurring on VISTA services. Actions to reduce the free fares and/or fare evasion include replacing the “under 5 years old free” with “an under 45” tall ride free” policy – which will establish an easily enforced standard for free rides. Alternatively, the policy could reflect a one free ride per paying customer policy.

The administrating entity should conduct periodic ride checks and site visits of the transit operator to observe fare policy enforcement. Free rides equates to a loss of revenue. By reducing the number of free rides provided and enforcing a consistent fare, annual fare revenue should increase. However, there is a need to balance the collections of fares with the need to serve low-income families with small children.

4. **Improve marketing and accessibility of fare media.** Based on community feedback from focus groups and community surveys conducted in the Heritage Valley, there is a lack of awareness regarding VISTA fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride services and fare types. According to a survey of Heritage Valley residents, 19 percent of respondents stated they do not ride due to a lack of information, while approximately 38 percent stated access to more information would encourage them to use the transit services offered in the Heritage Valley. Maintaining a consistent stock of informational materials at public/community locations such as city hall, schools, libraries, senior centers, social service programs, etc. will improve awareness of service information throughout the Heritage Valley. This is particularly critical if any scenario other than the Status Quo Scenario is selected, as they represent significant changes to service delivery. This recommendation should be incorporated into the marketing budget for the service.

Many residents also stated cost as an issue. However, VCTC offers discounted fares through a variety of non-cash fare media. This includes monthly, inter-county, and premium passes as well as VISTA Hwy 126/DAR day passes. Non-cash fare media (i.e., Go Ventura Bus Pass or e-purse) should be actively marketed to Heritage Valley residents. Marketing strategies may include onboard notices/car cards, seat drops, direct mail, utility bill inserts, or inclusion in local/community publications. At this time, passes can be purchased at Santa Paula city hall and FATCO office, by mail, or by phone. E-purse funds can be loaded at these locations as well. The Go Ventura monthly pass (\$20 for Dial-A-Ride) offers significant savings over cash fares by providing unlimited rides. E-purse users load money onto the card and enjoy a ten-percent discount over the cash fare. Passes also eliminate the need for customers to carry exact change and reduce time spent collecting fares upon boarding, which can help improve on-time

performance. In addition, passes provide a more stable revenue stream for the transit system. This recommendation should be incorporated into the regular marketing budget for the service.

5. **Increase bilingual marketing efforts.** Based on 2010 American Community Survey five-year estimates, 58 percent of Santa Paula’s population speaks Spanish, with 50.5 percent of those speaking English less than “very well.” Approximately 56 percent of Fillmore’s population speaks Spanish, with 19 percent of those speaking English less than “very well.” Given the concentration of Spanish-speaking residents in these communities, bilingual transit marketing is critical to ensuring equal access to public transit for those who do not speak or read English. VCTC recently increased the availability of Spanish-language service information to include a Spanish-language VISTA Hwy 126 brochure, in addition to the existing Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride brochure and the countywide transfer program card. Any changes to transit service in the Heritage Valley arising from service-related strategies presented herein should be supported by comprehensive bilingual marketing efforts. This recommendation should be incorporated into the marketing budget for the service.

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Given VCTC’s planned departure from neighborhood transit operations, a governing and administering entity must be identified or created. Four primary options have been identified.

Option 1: Community Transit Service

In Option 1, each community would operate its own transit program – the City of Santa Paula would provide service within Santa Paula, the City of Fillmore would provide service within Fillmore, and the County of Ventura would be responsible for providing service within Piru. Each entity would have to operate its service directly or contract with a third party to provide service. (Specifics regarding the operation of inter-community service would be addressed once the “neighborhood” or local services are agreed upon.) While simple in concept, it raises significant concerns regarding effective provision of coordinated service between multiple communities. Most notably, it would likely have a negative impact on the ability of students in Piru to access schools in Fillmore. In addition, this option could result in as many as four different operators (Santa Paula, Fillmore, Piru/County, and Hwy 126), which would lead to massive fragmentation, dilution of resources, and overall customer confusion. This option is not recommended because of the adverse effect it would likely have on mobility in the Heritage Valley.

Option 2: Joint Powers Agreement (JPA)

Within the framework of a joint powers agreement (JPA), a member agency agrees to be responsible for delivering a service (in this case, transit service or the administration of said service) on behalf of the other member agencies. A JPA is a formal, legal agreement between two or more public entities that share a common power and want to jointly implement programs or deliver services. Officials from those public entities vote on and approve a cooperative arrangement.⁸ Unlike a joint powers authority (see Option 3), a joint powers agreement does not form a new entity.

A joint powers agreement can be very effective in the provision of regional services. Fairly easy to form, it allows member entities to pool their resources (such as capital assets and funding mechanisms) to provide services or programs the partners would not be able to provide on their own. However, there must be an enduring level of trust in order for a joint powers agreement to function effectively. If member entities do not trust the lead entity to provide adequate representation or guidance, there can be problems. Exhibit 3.1.9 details some of the advantages and disadvantages of a joint powers agreement.

This model has been effective in areas such as the Santa Ynez Valley, wherein the Santa Ynez Valley Transit JPA includes the City of Solvang (lead agency), City of Buellton, and County of Santa Barbara (representing the communities of Ballard, Los Olivos, and Santa Ynez). As the lead agency, Solvang

⁸ “Governments Working Together: A Citizen’s Guide to Joint Powers Agreements.” California State Legislature Senate Local Government Committee, 2007.

handles all administrative duties (including managing the operations contractor), while JPA partners contribute funding and participate in decision-making. In the Heritage Valley, for example, if Santa Paula desired to be the lead agency, Fillmore and the County of Ventura (representing Piru) would be JPA members.

Exhibit 3.1.9 Advantages and Disadvantages of JPAs

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and easy to form • May be more efficient than separate governments/entities • Cooperate on regional solutions • Help communities find grants • Can finance public works • Keeps control and decision-making within the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require mutual trust to form • Can be hard to keep together • Can be hard to dissolve • Can be hard to understand

The JPA would administer the transit service in the Heritage Valley, but all functions (operations and management) could (still) be contracted out. This would minimize the need for the lead agency to fully staff a transit program. The operations and management functions could be contracted out together or separately (with one third-party contractor filling the management/administrative functions and the other providing operations). Contract operations could be provided through Gold Coast Transit or a private operations contractor. Management could be provided by Gold Coast Transit, a third-party company with experience in transit management/administration, or another outside transit operator (such as Santa Clarita Transit). Alternatively, the JPA could hire its own staff to manage the system (using TDA or FTA funds). The lead agency would be the agency of record for any procurements, grant applications, and compliance reporting.

Option 3: Joint Powers Authority (JPA)

A joint powers authority (JPA) is similar in function to a joint powers agreement (discussed in Option 2). However, a joint powers authority forms a legally independent, separate government organization. This type of governance is often used when the terms of a joint powers agreement are complex or if one of the participating members cannot act on behalf of all members. The governing board of a joint powers authority is made up of representatives from all participating entities. It, rather than a single lead entity, makes decisions on behalf of the JPA.⁹

Many of the advantages and disadvantages of a joint powers authority are the same as those of a joint powers agreement (illustrated in Exhibit 3.1.9). The primary difference is that each participating entity has an equal “seat at the table,” reducing the need for a high level of trust in a single lead entity to act on behalf of other participants. The new independent body would be the agency of record for any procurements, grant applications, and compliance reporting.

⁹ “Governments Working Together: A Citizen’s Guide to Joint Powers Agreements.” California State Legislature Senate Local Government Committee, 2007.

Option 4: Join Gold Coast Transit

In Option 4, the Heritage Valley communities would avoid being directly in the transit business by opting to join with a larger organization already providing public transit services (as identified in recommendation number two of the Ventura County Regional Transit Study). Gold Coast Transit has indicated a willingness to assume responsibility for all or part of those transit services operating in the West County. Heritage Valley entities have the option to join the Gold Coast Transit District and would pay into it for the provision of transit service. The VCTC board discussed the potential advantages of the Heritage Valley joining the Gold Coast Transit District, though the ultimate decision is up to the Heritage Valley communities.¹⁰ Gold Coast Transit could contract for the services and needed vehicles in the Heritage Valley, or acquire and use Heritage Valley partner-owned vehicles. The decision on whether to provide direct or service or contract would be based on a number of factors, including the comparative costs of providing the service.

While each administration and governance option has relative merits and drawbacks, formation of a joint powers authority or entering into a joint powers agreement seem the most beneficial. However, the ultimate decision depends on whether the ultimate priority is providing the maximum level of service for the funding available or continuing to rely on an outside entity to administer transit service in the Heritage Valley. The relative merits of each option are presented in Exhibit 3.1.10.

¹⁰ Even if the Heritage Valley communities chose not to join the Gold Coast Transit District, they still have the option of contracting with Gold Coast Transit to operate their transit services, allowing them to take advantage of the resources available to Gold Coast Transit.

Exhibit 3.1.10 Administration and Governance Comparison

Type of Governance	Merits	Drawbacks
Community Transit Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains community control over transit • More control over TDA funds within each community • Focus on a level of service that is right for each individual community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted operation would likely have a higher cost due to small size of each program • Each community would have to administer its own program, including ADA certification • Absence of coordinated service between communities • Operator of each of the community transit services and Hwy 126 intercity service would potentially be different, increasing coordination challenges
Joint Powers Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains community control over transit • Allows members to pool resources (including funding and capital assets) • Formalizes the agreement between entities • More efficient than each community acting alone • Enables maximum coordination within the Heritage Valley • Focus on a level of service that is right for the Heritage Valley as a whole • May choose to contract out management and administrative functions • May still choose to contract with Gold Coast Transit or another operator to operate service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires cooperation by, and a high level of trust among, JPA members

Type of Governance	Merits	Drawbacks
Joint Powers Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains community control over transit • Allows members to pool resources (including funding and capital assets) • Creates a new, independent body with its own governing board made up of representatives from each participating entity • More efficient than each community acting alone • Enables maximum coordination within the Heritage Valley • Focus on a level of service that is right for the Heritage Valley as a whole • May choose to contract out management and administrative functions • May still choose to contract with Gold Coast Transit or another operator to operate service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires cooperation by, and a level of trust among, JPA members
Join Gold Coast Transit District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to more resources (such as vehicles) • Probably coordination with regional transit network • Reduces direct administrative burden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires joining a regional organization • Administrative/planning costs likely higher to “right-size” service and support • Cost for Gold Coast Transit to provide Heritage Valley service is unknown (no existing service model) • Limits control over local decisions • Would require Gold Coast Transit to determine an equitable performance standard for rural service/routes

3.2 – CAPITAL AND FINANCIAL PLANS

The provision of transit services in the Heritage Valley is funded through a combination of rider fares, Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds, State Transit Assistance (STA) funds, and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. TDA funds are collected by the state through a \$0.0025 county-wide sales tax, and distributed within the county based on the population of each jurisdiction. The TDA funds are flexible and are used for both the operation of public transit in the Heritage Valley as well as for the required federal match for capital costs. Currently the two cities and the County have an agreement to split the cost/subsidies of the community transit/Dial-A-Ride service equally, with the City of San Buenaventura providing a small share of the intercity bus costs, and Fillmore a lesser amount.

Senate Bill 716 eliminates the availability of apportioned Local Transportation Funds (LTF) to be used for streets and roads beginning in July 2014. This effectively acts as an increase in transit funding, as in prior years a portion of LTF has been used for streets and roads (except in Fillmore, where all allotted TDA funds are used for transit). Funding of VISTA Hwy 126 has been limited by the funding agreement entered into with the four entities cited above, which effectively caps the funding at the lowest common denominator. STA, which is funded through State legislative action (the gas tax swap), has recently become an additional stable funding source for transit operations.

TDA funds increased in the early part of the decade. However, after reaching a high in FY 2006/2007, the revenues dropped, reflective of the overall economy. Exhibit 3.2.1 shows the TDA revenues for the cities of Fillmore and Santa Paula and the County of Ventura.

Exhibit 3.2.1 Transportation Development Act Funding¹¹

Year	Fillmore	Santa Paula	Ventura County
FY 1999/2000	\$372,029	\$763,787	\$2,612,661
FY 2001/2002	\$460,380	\$958,703	\$3,086,063
FY 2002/2003	\$404,357	\$807,311	\$2,633,939
FY 2003/2004	\$477,807	\$940,987	\$3,094,367
FY 2004/2005	\$475,638	\$913,600	\$2,995,104
FY 2005/2006	\$511,553	\$984,825	\$3,222,512
FY 2006/2007	\$607,124	\$1,168,814	\$3,824,556
FY 2007/2008	\$546,897	\$1,046,734	\$3,447,099
FY 2008/2009	\$480,701	\$907,834	\$2,959,903
FY 2009/2010	\$390,380	\$741,994	\$2,419,336
FY 2010/2011	\$390,317	\$742,905	\$2,409,053
FY 2011/2012	\$473,274	\$924,356	\$2,966,571
FY 2012/2013	\$486,934	\$951,036	\$3,052,196*

* Preliminary

¹¹ The County share represents the population for all unincorporated areas of the county, not just the Heritage Valley.

Federal Funds

As the “Designated Recipient” and Regional Transportation Planning Authority, VCTC is responsible for distributing Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds to local jurisdictions for transit-related purposes. These FTA funds – including Section 5307 and Section 5311 – are allocated to Ventura County using both population-based and service mileage-share funding. Currently, VISTA Dial-A-Ride and fixed-route services receive \$1.4 million combined in FTA Section 5307 funds. VISTA Dial-A-Ride is also eligible for Section 5311 funds which Ventura County receives based on its population outside of any urbanized areas. However, while the service area is largely rural, it does not currently receive any of the Section 5311 funds. According to figures provided by VCTC, VISTA Dial-A-Ride is eligible to receive an apportionment of approximately \$300,000 based on rural population.

The “rural funds” are currently provided to Ojai for the Ojai Trolley service. If VCTC fully implements its policy of returning funding to the communities that generate the funds, the Section 5311 funds would be shifted to the Heritage Valley. As a result of effective funding management, VCTC is able to increase the total amount of funding coming into Ventura County by providing the Heritage Valley with Section 5307 funds while continuing to support the Ojai Trolley with Section 5311 funds. The money management of the federal funds will be determined by VCTC as part of the ongoing programming activities.

With MAP-21 going into effect in October 2012, transit funding has stabilized somewhat. JARC funds are now allocated as formula grants. This allows more accurate forecasting of available revenues for transit service operations. The Capital and Financial Plan presented herein forecasts both capital and operational costs associated with implementing each service scenario.

Fare Increase

VISTA bus fares remained largely unchanged between 1994 and 2011. In that time, VISTA operating costs have increased significantly while federal and state transit funding have decreased. In FY 2010/2011, VCTC implemented a fare increase which included a two-phase increase in the inter-county bus service fares, and a single increase in the intra-county VISTA service, the Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride services, including the VISTA premium monthly pass.

The second phase of the fare increase which took place January 2011 raised fares for VISTA’s intra-county fixed-route services 25 cents to \$1.25, while patrons qualifying within the senior/ADA/Medicare discount category experienced a 10-cent increase to 60 cents. The Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride base fare increased 25 cents to \$1.75, while the subsidized fare increased 10 cents to 85 cents. Monthly DAR passes also increased from \$16 per month to \$20 per month.

It is typical for a transit operator to experience ridership loss during the first year a fare increase is implemented. This negative ridership impact can be calculated by the fare elasticity formula which attributes a 0.4-percent decrease in ridership for every one-percent increase in fare. This is applicable

to fare decreases as well, resulting in a potential increase in ridership.¹² However, with respect to VISTA Hwy 126 fixed-route service, the typical ridership decline did not occur. Rather, VISTA Hwy 126 witnessed a substantial ridership gain (11.9 percent growth between FY 2009/10 and FY 2010/11) with anticipated growth based on FY 2011/12 projections. This converse relationship between ridership and fare increase is indicative of the level of transit-dependence within these communities. Reflective of the fare elasticity trend, both Santa Paula and Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride services witnessed a decline in total passengers between FY 2009/10 and FY 2010/11, while fare revenue increased 3.2 percent.

In January 2011, VCTC introduced a free transfer policy between the various public transit services operating throughout Ventura County. In spite of potential fare revenue loss, the nine-month demonstration project was greatly successful in promoting public transit as an attractive, affordable travel option. The program was approved for continuation into its second year. Historically, the “second fare” requirement has been a burden to many bus riders.

CAPITAL PLAN

The Capital Plan presents a framework for the ongoing development of the infrastructure necessary for the efficient provision of public transit service within the Heritage Valley and discusses two elements: fleet and bus stop infrastructure. Within each element are outlined existing conditions followed by a discussion of the steps needed to support recommended service changes as well as respond to community input arising from this study.

Revenue Fleet (Operations Contract)

VCTC contracts for day-to-day operation of its fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride services. In doing so, VCTC’s annual contract costs presented in Exhibits 3.3.10 and 3.3.14 (Financial Plans) include capital costs in addition to operating costs for fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride services operating within the Heritage Valley.

Roadrunner Shuttle operates the VISTA Intercity bus service. This includes the VISTA Hwy 126 service between Fillmore and Ventura seven days a week, with limited weekday drop-offs in Piru in the late evening. Service is typically hourly in both directions, although during peak periods a third bus is placed into service. Prior to the bankruptcy of Coach America, the service was operated using 45-foot Van Hool and MCI (Motor Coach Industries) “over-the-road” coaches. The current contractor is providing a short-term service, and has acquired 40-foot Gillig Phantom coaches, with a maximum seating capacity of 45 persons, 10 less than the over-the road coaches. This lower capacity means that some of the runs now include standees.

¹² McCollom, Brian E. and Richard H. Pratt. Transportation Research Board. *TCRP Report 95 Transit Pricing and Fares*, “Chapter 12, Traveler Response to Transportation System Changes.” (Washington D.C., 2004)

VCTC will seek a longer-term operations contract and vehicles through a competitive process in 2013 for all intercity services beginning in July 2014. The funding will be provided by VCTC using Federal Transit funds, State Transit Assistance Funds (STA) and other grants, and will not use local resources.

Exhibit 3.2.2 Current FY 2012/13 Fixed-Route Fleet (Roadrunner-owned)

Vehicle Number	Make	Model	Fuel Type	Model Year	Mileage	Use
15GCD0919P1084748	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0914P1084754	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0918P1084756	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0913P1084759	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0913P1084762	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0917P1084764	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0910P1084766	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0912P1084767	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0916P1084769	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0918P1084773	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0911P1084775	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0917P1084778	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0915P1084780	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0910P1084783	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0914P1084785	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0918P1084787	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0911P1084789	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0918P1084790	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0919P1084796	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0919P1084801	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0919P1084894	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0910P1084895	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0912P1084896	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0914P1084897	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0916P1084898	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0910P1084900	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0912P1084901	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
15GCD0913P1084907	Gillig	40102TB6V92	Diesel	1993		Fixed-Route
3FRXF7FL2BV665101	Ford	F-750	Diesel	2011		Fixed-Route
3FRXF7FL4BV665102	Ford	F-750	Diesel	2011		Fixed-Route



Current VISTA Hwy 126 vehicle



Over-the-Road coach

FATCO operates 11 vehicles during peak-hour service. This fleet includes both diesel- and gas-powered vehicles. The useful life of these 12- to 16-passenger cutaways is five years or 150,000 miles.

Exhibit 3.2.3 Current Dial-A-Ride Fleet (FATCO-owned)

Vehicle Number	Manufacturer Name	Fuel Type	Year of Purchase	Radius (miles)	Capacity - Seated	Use
20	Chev	Diesel	1999	300	14	Charter/Spare
25	GMC	Gas	1995	12	12 + w/c	Spare
28	Chev	Gas	2007	12	14	Spare
30	Chev	Diesel	2002	12	12 + 2w/c	Dial-A-Ride
31	Chev	Diesel	2002	12	12 + 2w/c	Dial-A-Ride
32	Chev	Diesel	2002	12	12 + 2w/c	Dial-A-Ride
33	Chev	Diesel	2002	12	12 + 2w/c	Dial-A-Ride
34	Chev	Diesel	2002	12	12 + 2w/c	Dial-A-Ride
35	Chev	Diesel	2002	12	12 + 2w/c	Dial-A-Ride
36	Chev	Diesel	2002	12	14 + 2w/c	Dial-A-Ride
37	Chev	Diesel	2002	12	14 + 2w/c	Dial-A-Ride
38	Chev	Gas	2004	300	14	Charter/Spare
39	Chev	Diesel	2010	12	16 + 2w/ch	Dial-A-Ride
40	Chev	Gas	2011	12	14	Charter/Spare
41	Chev	Diesel	2010	12	16 + 2w/ch	Dial-A-Ride



Current VISTA Dial-A-Ride vehicles

VCTC should purchase up to five large (i.e., 30-foot) cutaway buses for use on local services, as well as ten small cutaway buses for Dial-A-Ride service. This added capital expense would require additional funding to cover maintenance of these agency-owned vehicles.



Large Cutaway



Small Cutaway

Use of an agency-owned fleet would significantly decrease the annual cost of providing services. A one-time cost to purchase vehicles is significantly less expensive in the long run than utilizing contractor-owned vehicles. Consequently, we recommend using Proposition 1B funds to purchase vehicles owned by one of the project partners rather than an operations contractor. Approximately \$1.4 million in Proposition 1B monies could be used to purchase 15 cutaways during FY 2013/2014. The larger vehicles could be assigned primarily to Dial-A-Ride trips exhibiting chronic overcrowding and/or for the provision of fixed-route service.

Exhibit 3.2.4 Vehicle Needs

	FY 2013/2014		
	Number	Cost/Unit	Total Cost
Large cutaways	5	\$120,000	\$600,000
Small cutaways	10	\$80,000	\$800,000
Total	15		\$1,400,000

Bus Stop Infrastructure

This portion of the Capital Plan includes an inventory of current bus stop amenities as well as a strategy for their enhancement.

VISTA has three different types of bus stops:

1. Stops with sign poles only,
2. Stops with benches, and
3. Stops with shelters.

Bus stop amenities play a critical role in the success of a public transit program. Shelters build awareness of the service and can generate advertising revenue. Yet first and foremost they contribute to transit rider safety and comfort. Industry research has confirmed bus shelters also play a vital role in attracting additional ridership. The absence of adequate amenities at bus stops can deter both potential and current patrons from using transit given the relative comfort and convenience inherent in a personal vehicle.

VCTC has been proactive in its approach toward maintaining the overall appearance and functionality of its transit facilities and bus stops. In October 2011, VCTC completed a bus stop inventory across each VISTA route alignment. The purpose of the bus stop inventory was to determine which stops lacked adequate amenities (i.e., benches, bus stop signs, info-posts, shelters, and trash receptacles) or were in need of other improvement. Exhibit 3.3.3 displays all VISTA Hwy 126 bus stops and details all amenities located at each. Five of the stops provide connections to other VISTA-operated routes. A handful of VISTA Hwy 126 stops do not feature VISTA signage or route information.

Exhibit 3.2.5 Existing VISTA Hwy 126 Stops

VISTA Hwy 126							
Stop & Location	Pole*	Bench	Shelter	Trash Can	Info-Post	VISTA sign	Other Routes
Fillmore Senior Center (Santa Clara St & Palm St)	None	8	1	2	None	None	
Santa Paula City Hall (Ventura & Mill St)	RD	12	1	2	Yes	None	
Santa Paula K-Mark (midblock Faulkner)	RD	1	2	2	Yes	None	
Wells Center (Frontage Rd & Carlos St)	SQ	None	1	1	Yes	Yes	
Ventura County Govt. Ctr (Victoria Ave & Circle)	RD	1	None	1	Yes	Yes	
Ventura College (NW corner Telegraph Rd & Estates Ave)	SQ	1	None	1	Yes	Yes	101/Conejo
St. Bonaventura H.S. (Telegraph Rd & Dunning)	DQ	1	None	None	Yes	Yes	101/Conejo
Ventura County Beach Pier (Harbor Blvd & Pier)	DQ	None	None	None	Yes	Yes	101/Conejo
Ventura County Medical Center (Loma Vista & St. Pauls Dr)	DQ	2	None	1	Yes	Yes	
Pacific View Mall on Telegraph (Ventura Transit Center)	None	20	N/A	10	None	None	101/Conejo and Coastal
Ventura College (SW corner Telegraph Rd & Estates Ave)	SQ	None	1	1	Yes	Yes	101/Conejo

*RD = round; SQ = square

There are display kiosks at both the Fillmore Senior Center and the Ventura Transit Center which have schedules posted in them, as well as space for additional transit information.

A number of new stops will be required to support the introduction of fixed-route service in the Heritage Valley. Potential locations for these stops include Fillmore High School, C Street and First Street, Santa Clara Avenue and A Street, Mountain View Street and First Street, Second Street and A Street, and Fifth Street and B Street (Fillmore) as well as South Steckel Drive and Main Street, East Harvard Boulevard and Palm Avenue, Head Start Center, North Twelfth Street and Main Street, and Santa Paula Memorial Hospital (Santa Paula).

The Capital Plan presents the potential vehicle purchase and bus stop amenities. Scenarios 2 and 3 would require the installation of a minimum of 12 new stops, 12 info-posts, and one bench.¹³ Vehicle purchase and bus stop signage is included under FY 2014. Additional bus stop amenities are phased in across the subsequent three years.

Exhibit 3.2.7 Capital Plan

	FY 2013		FY 2014		FY 2015		FY 2016		FY 2017	
	Qty	Cost	Qty	Cost	Qty	Cost	Qty	Cost	Qty	Cost
Fleet										
Large cutaway		\$0	5	\$600,000		\$0		\$0		\$0
Small cutaway		\$0	10	\$800,000		\$0		\$0		\$0
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>\$0</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>\$1,400,000</i>		<i>\$0</i>		<i>\$0</i>		<i>\$0</i>
Bus Stops										
Sign posts		\$0	12	\$2,546		\$0		\$0		\$0
Info-posts		\$0		\$0	4	\$1,060	4	\$1,060	4	\$1,060
Benches		\$0		\$0	1	\$3,183		\$0		\$0
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>\$0</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>\$2,546</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>\$4,243</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>\$1,060</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>\$1,060</i>
Total				\$1,402,546		\$4,243		\$1,060		\$1,060

¹³ Note: These are tentative stops and may be subject to change.

FINANCIAL PLAN

The Financial Plan forecasts those expenditures needed to implement the recommendations included within the Strategies section (Section 3.1). These recommendations vary in scope from administrative, policy, and marketing amendments to capital purchases and service restructuring. Each is equally viable within existing and forecast funding. The Plan includes anticipated changes in user fees (paid fares) as well as estimated funding from TDA and grant programs.

In the development of this Financial Plan, the following statements are assumed to be true:

1. The County of Ventura would maintain its current level of TDA funds to transit services provided there is a surplus. (If there is a deficit, additional TDA funds would potentially be available from the County, never to exceed the level of contribution from Santa Paula.)
2. FTA formula grant and TDA allocations would remain as forecast.
3. The operating agency or members would purchase vehicles using up to \$1.4 million in Proposition 1B funds provided by VCTC (except as shown in Scenario 1A – Status Quo).
4. The VISTA Hwy 126 service would continue to be operated and funded by VCTC as a “limited-stop” service. Any significant changes to the service (such as increased frequency, increased number of stops within the Heritage Valley, or changes to routing) would be determined by VCTC based on financial resources and passenger use.

Five-year operating expenses for each scenario have been developed using the following assumptions:

1. The selected service scenario would be implemented beginning in FY 2014.
2. VCTC will operate and fund the VISTA Hwy 126 service using non-local funds.
3. Operational costs are based on contractor- and agency-provided data.
4. The bulk purchase of agency-owned vehicles (if selected) would occur during FY 2014.
5. Other capital purchases would take place in the years identified in the Capital Plan. (Section 3.2)
6. Capital replacement costs are not reflected in the tables.
7. Fixed-route operating cost is forecast to increase at three percent per annum, based on historic performance.
8. Fixed-route ridership and fare revenue are projected to increase four percent per annum.
9. Dial-A-Ride operating cost is forecast to increase at two percent per annum, based on historic performance.
10. Dial-A-Ride ridership and fare revenue are projected to increase four percent per annum.
11. Any operating expenses not covered through farebox recovery or grants (i.e., FTA Sections 5307 and 5311) would be covered through local subsidy (i.e., TDA). As adopted

in the VCTC Countywide Transit Plan, regional financial resources will be provided to ensure that after all other resources are used, the service is “kept whole.”

Exhibits 3.3.8 and 3.3.9 illustrate the contracted rates for existing services. A rate of \$50 per Vehicle Service Hour is used to calculate operating costs for agency-owned vehicles. This is consistent with current transit operations contract rates in the region.

Exhibit 3.2.8 FY 2012/2013 Operating and Capital Costs

FY 2012/2013	Total Hours	Lease cost/hour	Total cost/hour	Total cost	Current Operator
		Op cost/hour			
Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride*	32,069.0	\$44.51	\$78.10	\$2,504,588.90	FATCO
		\$33.59			
Hwy 126	9,347.5	\$61.64	\$102.72	\$960,175.20	Roadrunner
		\$41.08			

* Includes Santa Paula Commuter Bus

Exhibit 3.2.9 FY 2013/2014 Operating and Capital Costs

FY 2012/2013	Total Hours	Lease cost/hour	Total cost/hour	Total cost	Current Operator
		Op cost/hour			
Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride*	32,069.0	\$46.15	\$80.98	\$2,596,947.62	FATCO
		\$34.83			
Hwy 126	9,347.5	\$61.64	\$102.72	\$960,175.20	Roadrunner
		\$41.08			

* Includes Santa Paula Commuter Bus

Scenario 1: Status Quo

This scenario has been broken out into two financial options – status quo operation with contractor-provided (leased) vehicles (Scenario 1A), which represents current operating conditions, as well as status quo operation with agency-owned vehicles (purchased with Proposition 1B funds) (Scenario 1B). Agency-owned vehicles represent a significant savings on annual capital costs.

Operating costs for this scenario assume the following service parameters:

- Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride: 32,069 annual VSH¹⁴.

¹⁴ Vehicle Service Hours.

Scenario 1A: Status Quo with Contractor-Provided (Leased) Vehicles

Scenario 1A would maintain the same level of service as currently exists in the Heritage Valley. The cities of Santa Paula and Fillmore would increase their TDA contributions to be used solely for transit service. Beginning in FY 2014, the administering entity would assume responsibility for marketing and program administration.

Exhibit 3.2.10 Scenario 1A (Status Quo) Financial Plan

	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Revenue					
Proposition 1B	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FTA Section 5307 - discretionary	\$923,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FTA Section 5307 - attributable	\$191,808.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00
FTA Section 5311	\$0.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00
FTA Section 5339	\$22,108.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00
TDA Santa Paula	\$398,200.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00
TDA Fillmore	\$398,200.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00
TDA County	\$398,200.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00
TDA Ventura City	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fares	\$173,500.00	\$178,705.00	\$184,066.15	\$189,588.13	\$195,275.78
Total revenues	\$2,505,516.00	\$2,774,270.00	\$2,779,631.15	\$2,785,153.13	\$2,790,840.78
Expenses					
Capital cost	\$1,427,391.19	\$1,479,984.35	\$1,479,984.35	\$1,479,984.35	\$1,479,984.35
Operating cost	\$1,077,197.71	\$1,116,963.27	\$1,139,302.54	\$1,162,088.59	\$1,185,330.36
Marketing	\$0.00	\$22,339.27	\$22,786.05	\$23,241.77	\$23,706.61
Administration	\$5,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Total expenses	\$2,509,588.90	\$2,679,286.89	\$2,702,072.94	\$2,725,314.71	\$2,749,021.31
Operating/Capital Reserve	(\$4,072.90)	\$94,983.11	\$77,558.21	\$59,838.43	\$41,819.46

This does not include VISTA Hwy 126 intercity services.

Scenario 1A is not expected to result in any significant changes to farebox recovery, fare revenue, or ridership (beyond the assumed rate of growth cited earlier in this chapter).

Exhibit 3.2.11 Scenario 1A Impact on Farebox

	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
General Public Dial-A-Ride					
Ridership (3%/year)	222,428	229,101	235,974	243,053	250,345
Fare per Passenger	\$0.78	\$0.78	\$0.78	\$0.78	\$0.78
Fare Revenue	\$173,500.00	\$178,705.00	\$184,066.15	\$189,588.13	\$195,275.78
Operating Cost (2%/year)	\$1,077,197.71	\$1,098,741.66	\$1,120,716.50	\$1,143,130.83	\$1,165,993.44
Farebox Recovery	16.11%	16.26%	16.42%	16.58%	16.75%

Scenario 1B: Status Quo with Agency-Owned Vehicles

Scenario 1B would maintain the same level of service as currently exists in the Heritage Valley. The cities of Santa Paula and Fillmore would increase their TDA contributions to be used solely for transit service. Beginning in FY 2014, the administering/governing agency would assume the responsibility for marketing and administration. This scenario includes a vehicle purchase of 10 small cutaways and 5 large cutaways using Proposition 1B funds.

Exhibit 3.2.12 Scenario 1B (Status Quo) Financial Plan

	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Revenue					
Proposition 1B	\$0.00	\$1,400,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FTA Section 5307 - discretionary	\$923,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FTA Section 5307 - attributable	\$191,808.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00
FTA Section 5311	\$0.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00
FTA Section 5339	\$22,108.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00
TDA Santa Paula	\$398,200.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00
TDA Fillmore	\$398,200.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00
TDA County	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00
TDA Ventura City	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fares	\$173,500.00	\$178,705.00	\$184,066.15	\$189,588.13	\$195,275.78
Total revenues	\$2,505,516.00	\$3,697,261.00	\$2,302,622.15	\$2,308,144.13	\$2,313,831.78
Expenses					
Capital cost	\$1,427,400.00	\$1,400,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Operating cost	\$1,077,197.71	\$1,603,450.00	\$1,635,519.00	\$1,668,229.38	\$1,701,593.97
Marketing	\$0.00	\$32,069.00	\$32,710.38	\$33,364.59	\$34,031.88
Administration	\$5,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Total expenses	\$2,509,597.71	\$3,095,519.00	\$1,728,229.38	\$1,761,593.97	\$1,795,625.85
Operating/Capital Reserve	(\$4,081.71)	\$601,742.00	\$574,392.77	\$546,550.17	\$518,205.93

Scenario 1B is not expected to demonstrate any significant changes to farebox recovery, fare revenue, or ridership (beyond the assumed rate of growth cited earlier in this chapter). However, there is a significant reduction in cost due to the purchase of the vehicles, which eliminates the need to lease vehicles from the operations contractor.

Exhibit 3.2.13 Scenario 1B Impact on Farebox

	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
General Public Dial-A-Ride					
Ridership (3%/year)	222,428	229,101	235,974	243,053	250,345
Fare per Passenger	\$0.78	\$0.78	\$0.78	\$0.78	\$0.78
Fare Revenue	\$173,500.00	\$178,705.00	\$184,066.15	\$189,588.13	\$195,275.78
Operating Cost (2%/year)	\$1,077,197.71	\$1,098,741.66	\$1,120,716.50	\$1,143,130.83	\$1,165,993.44
Farebox Recovery	16.11%	16.26%	16.42%	16.58%	16.75%

Scenario 2: Traditional (Fixed-Route with ADA Paratransit)

Scenario 2 would introduce fixed-route service with ADA complementary paratransit to the Heritage Valley. The cities of Santa Paula and Fillmore would increase their TDA contributions to be used solely for transit service. Beginning in FY 2014, the administering/governing agency would assume the responsibility for marketing and administration. This scenario includes a vehicle purchase of 10 small cutaways and 5 large cutaways using Proposition 1B funds.

Operating costs for this scenario assume the following service parameters:

- Fillmore Community Circulator: 4,680 annual VSH
- Santa Paula Community Circulator: 8,996 annual VSH
- Fillmore-Piru Shuttle: 780 annual VSH
- ADA Dial-A-Ride: 9,360 annual VSH
- General public Dial-A-Ride (mid-day, Piru only): 1,040 annual VSH

Exhibit 3.2.14 Scenario 2 (Traditional) Financial Plan

	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Revenue					
Proposition 1B	\$0.00	\$1,400,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FTA Section 5307 - discretionary	\$923,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FTA Section 5307 - attributable	\$191,808.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00
FTA Section 5311	\$0.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00
FTA Section 5339	\$22,108.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00
TDA Santa Paula	\$398,200.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00
TDA Fillmore	\$398,200.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00
TDA County	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00
TDA Ventura City	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fares	\$173,500.00	\$168,860.60	\$175,339.85	\$182,070.01	\$189,060.88
Total revenues	\$2,505,516.00	\$3,687,416.60	\$2,293,895.85	\$2,300,626.01	\$2,307,616.88
Expenses					
Capital cost	\$1,427,400.00	\$1,402,546.00	\$4,243.00	\$1,060.00	\$1,060.00
Operating cost	\$1,077,197.71	\$1,242,800.00	\$1,274,884.00	\$1,307,826.52	\$1,341,651.24
Marketing	\$0.00	\$37,284.00	\$38,246.52	\$39,234.80	\$40,249.54
Administration	\$5,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Total expenses	\$2,509,597.71	\$2,742,630.00	\$1,377,373.52	\$1,408,121.32	\$1,442,960.77
Operating/Capital Reserve	(\$4,081.71)	\$944,786.60	\$916,522.33	\$892,504.70	\$864,656.11

Scenario 2 includes changes to the fare structure in conjunction with the implementation of the fixed-route, deviated fixed-route, and ADA paratransit services. The lowering of the fixed-route fare is likely to result in a ridership increase of approximately 11 percent, while the increase of the Dial-A-Ride fare will likely result in a ridership decrease of 17 percent.

Exhibit 3.2.15 Scenario 2 Fare Structure

Fare Type	Current	Proposed
Dial-A-Ride – Adult/Student	\$1.75	N/A
Fixed-Route – Adult/Student	N/A	\$1.25
Dial-A-Ride – Senior/Disabled	\$0.85	N/A
Fixed-Route – Senior/Disabled	N/A	\$0.60
Dial-A-Ride – ADA	N/A	\$2.50

By effectively implementing a reduction in fare (the general public fare drops from \$1.75 for Dial-A-Ride to \$1.25 for fixed-route), the fixed-route service should, over time, increase its ridership significantly. However, at the same time, there would be a decrease in the efficiency of the ADA complementary paratransit, which is expected to see a significant and steady use, but not a high number of passengers per hour. System-wide farebox recovery is expected to remain above 10 percent, which is the minimum for rural transit services utilizing State TDA funds.

Exhibit 3.2.16 Scenario 2 Impact on Farebox

	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Fixed-Route					
Ridership (4%/year)		231,710	240,978	250,618	260,642
Fare per Passenger		\$0.61	\$0.61	\$0.61	\$0.61
Fare Revenue		\$141,343.10	\$146,996.82	\$152,876.70	\$158,991.76
Operating Cost (3%/year)		\$722,800.00	\$744,484.00	\$766,818.52	\$789,823.08
Farebox Recovery		19.55%	19.74%	19.94%	20.13%
ADA Dial-A-Ride (general public in FY 2013)					
Ridership (3%/year)	222,428	11,007	11,337	11,677	12,028
Fare per Passenger	\$0.78	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50
Fare Revenue	\$173,500.00	\$27,517.50	\$28,343.03	\$29,193.32	\$30,069.12
Operating Cost (2%/year)	\$1,077,197.71	\$520,000.00	\$530,400.00	\$541,008.00	\$551,828.16
Farebox Recovery	16.11%	5.29%	5.34%	5.40%	5.45%
System-Wide (Excluding Hwy 126)					
Ridership		242,717	252,316	262,295	272,670
Fare Revenue		\$168,860.60	\$175,339.85	\$182,070.01	\$189,060.88
Operating Cost		\$1,242,800.00	\$1,274,884.00	\$1,307,826.52	\$1,341,651.24
Farebox Recovery		13.59%	13.75%	13.92%	14.09%

Scenario 3: Modified Traditional (Fixed-Route with ADA Paratransit and General Public Dial-A-Ride)

Scenario 3 is virtually identical operationally to Scenario 2. The only change is that Dial-A-Ride service would be available to the general public in Fillmore and Santa Paula. This service would be available for the same fare as the ADA Dial-A-Ride service. It is anticipated some current customers would continue to utilize Dial-A-Ride even at a higher cost, while the majority would transition to fixed-route due to the lower cost. Consequently, fare revenue for this scenario is higher than that in Scenario 2.

Operating costs for this scenario assume the following service parameters:

- Fillmore Community Circulator: 4,680 annual VSH
- Santa Paula Community Circulator: 8,996 annual VSH
- Fillmore-Piru Shuttle: 780 annual VSH
- ADA/general public Dial-A-Ride: 9,360 annual VSH
- General public Dial-A-Ride (mid-day, Piru only): 1,040 annual VSH

Exhibit 3.2.17 Scenario 3 (Modified Traditional) Financial Plan

	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Revenue					
Proposition 1B	\$0.00	\$1,400,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FTA Section 5307 - discretionary	\$923,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FTA Section 5307 - attributable	\$191,808.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00	\$102,116.00
FTA Section 5311	\$0.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00
FTA Section 5339	\$22,108.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00	\$11,770.00
TDA Santa Paula	\$398,200.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00	\$875,209.00
TDA Fillmore	\$398,200.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00	\$431,261.00
TDA County	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00	\$398,200.00
TDA Ventura City	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fares	\$173,500.00	\$250,231.74	\$258,755.16	\$267,574.94	\$276,701.60
Total revenues	\$2,505,516.00	\$3,768,787.74	\$2,377,311.16	\$2,386,130.94	\$2,395,257.60
Expenses					
Capital cost	\$1,427,400.00	\$1,402,546.00	\$4,243.00	\$1,060.00	\$1,060.00
Operating cost	\$1,077,197.71	\$1,242,800.00	\$1,274,884.00	\$1,307,826.52	\$1,341,651.24
Marketing	\$0.00	\$37,284.00	\$38,246.52	\$39,234.80	\$40,249.54
Administration	\$5,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Total expenses	\$2,509,597.71	\$2,742,630.00	\$1,377,373.52	\$1,408,121.32	\$1,442,960.77
Operating/Capital Reserve	(\$4,081.71)	\$1,026,157.74	\$999,937.64	\$978,009.62	\$952,296.83

Exhibit 3.2.18 Scenario 3 Fare Structure

Fare Type	Current	Proposed
Dial-A-Ride – Adult/Student	\$1.75	\$2.50
Fixed-Route – Adult/Student	N/A	\$1.25
Dial-A-Ride – Senior/Disabled	\$0.85	N/A
Fixed-Route – Senior/Disabled	N/A	\$0.60
Dial-A-Ride – ADA	N/A	\$2.50

By allowing general public use of the Dial-A-Ride service at the increased rate, Scenario 3 forecasts significant increases in farebox recovery for the Dial-A-Ride service, which would reach nearly 30 percent. System-wide, farebox recovery would far exceed the minimum of 10 percent for transit service in non-urbanized areas.

Exhibit 3.2.19 Scenario 3 Impact on Farebox

	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Fixed-Route					
Ridership (4%/year)		166,634	173,299	180,231	187,441
Fare per Passenger		\$0.61	\$0.61	\$0.61	\$0.61
Fare Revenue		\$101,646.74	\$105,712.61	\$109,941.11	\$114,338.76
Operating Cost (3%/year)		\$722,800.00	\$744,484.00	\$766,818.52	\$789,823.08
Farebox Recovery		14.06%	14.20%	14.34%	14.48%
ADA & General Public Dial-A-Ride (general public in FY 2013)					
Ridership (3%/year)	222,428	59,434	61,217	63,054	64,945
Fare per Passenger	\$0.78	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50
Fare Revenue	\$173,500.00	\$148,585.00	\$153,042.55	\$157,633.83	\$162,362.84
Operating Cost (2%/year)	\$1,077,197.71	\$520,000.00	\$530,400.00	\$541,008.00	\$551,828.16
Farebox Recovery	16.11%	28.57%	28.85%	29.14%	29.42%
System-Wide (Excluding Hwy 126)					
Ridership		226,068	234,516	243,285	252,386
Fare Revenue		\$250,231.74	\$258,755.16	\$267,574.94	\$276,701.60
Operating Cost		\$1,242,800.00	\$1,274,884.00	\$1,307,826.52	\$1,341,651.24
Farebox Recovery		20.13%	20.30%	20.46%	20.62%

3.3 – RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the relative merits and challenges outlined for each service scenario, as well as the input provided by current customers, community members, and stakeholders during public involvement and outreach efforts, we recommend implementing Scenario 3, which combined the Modified Traditional Scenario with the VCTC-operated VISTA Hwy 126 route. This scenario provides service within and between each community while addressing issues identified by the community, including overcrowding, desire for local shuttles, home-to-school travel, inability to secure reservations during peak periods, and difficulty reaching a customer service representative to make a reservation. It provides for timed connections between community circulators and the VISTA Hwy 126 service, as well as service between Piru and Fillmore that is coordinated with the high school and middle school bell schedules. Finally, the implementation of fixed-route service within the Heritage Valley will allow for lower fares for fixed-route service.

While the need for improvements to the Dial-A-Ride reservation and call center processes is somewhat mitigated with the implementation of a fixed-route service, maintaining operational efficiency in this area remains important from a customer service perspective. Recommendations regarding driver training were driven primarily by feedback from existing customers at community meetings and through survey comments. Many comments cited unfair treatment of certain passengers or demographic groups by particular drivers, which could effectively be addressed by customer sensitivity training and monitored by regular onboard observations.

Given 16 percent of current Dial-A-Ride customers ride free of charge, we believe it is important to reduce the number of free rides provided. Potential restrictions regarding the most common free rides – children under 5 – must be balanced with the needs of low-income families for whom transit is the only option. Potential options include limiting free rides to one child under 5 per paying adult or introducing a height-based (rather than age-based) free-ride policy.

Any service scenario other than the Status Quo scenario will entail rather extensive marketing prior to the launch of the new service model. This ties in with the recommendation to improve the marketing and accessibility of fare media as well as to increase bilingual marketing. A solid plan for distributing information about the new service is essential, and these elements should be a priority.

We also recommend the communities of the Heritage Valley enter into a joint powers agreement or form an independent joint powers authority to administer the transit service. While each option offers certain advantages, implementation of a JPA would balance cost-effective administration and governance with local control of transit decisions. If an agreement is preferred, the City of Santa Paula or the City of Fillmore should be named as the lead entity, with the other municipality and the County of Ventura as participating members.

Based on the demand for transit service identified in the Heritage Valley as well as the current funding

reality, VCTC should consider implementation of the following short-, near-, and long-term strategies.

Short-term Strategies (within 6-12 months)

Administrative and Governance Structures

- Begin development of a JPA to administer transit service in the Heritage Valley.
- Identify a lead entity.

Service Scenarios

- Develop an operations plan for Scenario 3: Modified Traditional (inclusive of routing and schedules).¹⁵

Administrative, Policy, and Marketing Strategies

- Improve Dial-A-Ride reservations and call center processes.
- Conduct regular driver training.
- Reduce amount of free rides.
- Develop marketing strategies/marketing plan to support implementation of the new service.

Near-term Strategies (within 12-18 months)

Administrative and Governance Structures

- Conduct necessary coordination and program activities to prepare for transition of service.

Service Scenarios

- Develop an ADA plan.
- Conduct procurement activities necessary to secure an operations contractor.
- Transition to an agency-owned fleet utilizing Proposition 1B funds to purchase vehicles (this will be discussed in more detail in the Capital Plan section).
- Launch the Modified Traditional with VCTC-operated VISTA Hwy 126 service.

Administrative, Policy, and Marketing Strategies

- Improve marketing and accessibility of fare media.
- Prepare bilingual marketing materials to support implementation of Scenario 3.
- Conduct bilingual outreach to promote Scenario 3 and retain current customers.

Long-term Strategies (2-5 years)

Administrative, Policy, and Marketing Strategies

- Monitor system performance to determine if and when expansion is warranted and can be supported by available funding.
- Conduct regular community outreach to ensure the service provided fits the needs of the community as well as possible.

¹⁵ Includes VCTC-operated and -funded VISTA Hwy 126 service.

3.4 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Implementation Plan presents a recommended schedule of those tasks anticipated to support introduction of the recommendations presented in the Strategies section. Given the actual date for implementation of the recommended service scenario has not yet been firmly established, a timeframe for each recommended activity is provided in relation to the launch of the selected service scenario.

Exhibit 3.4.1 Proposed Implementation Schedule

Recommendation	Timeframe
<i>Administration and Governance</i>	
Begin formation of a JPA to administer transit service in the Heritage Valley.	Completed 3-6 months prior to service start
Identify a lead entity for the JPA.	Completed 3-6 months prior to service start
Conduct necessary coordination and program activities to prepare for transition of service.	Completed 3-6 months prior to service start
<i>Service Scenarios</i>	
Develop an operations plan for Scenario 4.3: Modified Traditional (inclusive of routing and schedules).	Completed 3 months prior to service start
Develop an ADA plan.	Completed 3 months prior to service start
Conduct procurement activities necessary to secure an operations contractor.	Initiated 3 months prior to service start
Transition to agency-owned fleet utilizing Proposition 1B funds.	During FY 2013
Launch the Modified Traditional with VCTC-operated VISTA Hwy 126 service.	N/A
<i>Administrative, Policy, and Marketing</i>	
Improve Dial-A-Ride reservations and call center processes.	Initiated as soon as possible; ongoing
Complete initial driver training.	Initiated as soon as possible; ongoing
Modify fare policy to limit free rides for children under 5 years of age	Implemented as soon as possible
Develop marketing plan to support implementation of the new service.	Completed 3-6 months prior to service start
Improve marketing and accessibility of fare media.	Completed 1 month prior to service start
Prepare bilingual marketing materials to support implementation of Scenario 3.	Completed 1 month prior to service start
Conduct bilingual outreach to promote Scenario 3 and retain current customers.	Initiated 3 months prior to service start; ongoing
Monitor system performance to determine if and when expansion is warranted (supported by available funding).	Initiated 3 months after service start; ongoing
Conduct regular community outreach to ensure the service provided fits the needs of the community as well as possible.	Initiated at time of service start; ongoing

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APPENDIX

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APPENDIX A – DEMAND ANALYSIS

This section further addresses the array of contributors influencing travel demand for residents, workers, and visitors within Fillmore, Piru, and Santa Paula (herein referenced as the Heritage Valley). The analysis examines factors such as transportation options, major employers and trip generators, key demographics, economic indicators, proposed land-use changes, and commute trends. Additionally, the discussion seeks to assess fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride data to identify behaviors/trends by target population groups.

Based on the data and analysis discussed herein we consider the following key findings noteworthy.

- The Heritage Valley population (49,125 in 2010) is projected to increase nearly 30 percent across the next decade, reaching more than 63,000 by 2020. (Exhibit A.1)
- Youth population is projected to decline across the next ten years, potentially impacting home-to-school demand on VISTA and Dial-A-Ride services. (Exhibit A.5)
- Based on census tract data, a large portion of the ride-dependent population resides north of State Highway 126 in western Fillmore and Santa Paula (areas not currently served by fixed-route service). (Exhibits A.7 to A.11)
- Approximately 16 percent of DAR patrons ride free-of-charge. (Exhibit A.13)
- Adult ridership accounts for more than 40 percent of total ridership between the two Dial-A-Ride programs, followed by students (26 percent), thereby revealing a greater use of the service by “general public” riders versus seniors or persons with disabilities. (Exhibit A.14)
- The average unemployment rate is more than 15 percent in the Heritage Valley. (Exhibit A.16)
- While the majority of the Heritage Valley work force travel outside the respective communities for work, a significant share work within a 10-mile radius of their home community. (Exhibit A.19)
- Santa Paula and Fillmore experience a significant share of commuter inflow from neighboring cities as far as 50 miles distant. (Exhibit A.19)

Geographical Context

Located in the agriculturally rich Santa Clara River Valley, the Heritage Valley is comprised of the communities of Fillmore, Piru, and Santa Paula. Based on Census 2010 data, the combined population reached nearly 50,000; with Piru at 2,063, Santa Paula at 32,060, and Fillmore at 15,002.

Fillmore is a small town with a land area of 3.4 square miles located at the base of the Los Padres National Forest. Considered a “railroad town,” it lies adjacent to an ex-Southern Pacific Railroad station, nestled amid historic citrus and avocado orchards. Piru is seven miles east of Fillmore in unincorporated Ventura County along the Santa Clara River. Santa Paula, known as the “citrus capital of the world,” is

well-known for its large production of lemons, oranges, and avocados. Geographically it is at the center of the county, located 65 miles northwest of Los Angeles and 14 miles east of Ventura.

The primary transportation corridor within the Heritage Valley is State Highway 126. As the main route running through Fillmore and Santa Paula, as well as Piru and historic Rancho Camulos, it serves as the chief corridor connecting all communities within the Valley. Highway 126 begins at the Highway 101 junction as the Santa Paula Freeway, after which it transitions at Hallock Drive to Telegraph Road and later Henry Mayo Drive. This transportation corridor is scenic in landscape and rich agriculture (i.e., citrus and avocado orchards) and located adjacent to the Southern Pacific Railroad line. The rail right-of-way is owned by VCTC and operates in Rancho Camulos primarily as a recreational/sightseeing service provided by the Fillmore and Western Railroad, though limited freight service also uses the line.

Mobility Inventory

Transportation services operating within the Heritage Valley includes VISTA inter-community service (VISTA 126) as well as VISTA local services (Santa Paula Commuter Bus and Santa Paula and Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride programs). Private transportation services include taxi services (i.e., 2 EZ Cab Co.) and a private bus transportation company (Heritage Valley Bus, Inc.) which provides local and interstate charter services.

Population Profile

The following exhibit presents population growth over the last decade and forecasts same across the next 10 years. Using percent change as our basis for forecasting growth as well as Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) cohort-component model, the Heritage Valley's total population is projected to increase 28.4 percent by 2020. Census data reveals a 13 percent population growth within the Heritage Valley between 2000 and 2010, with the largest growth witnessed in Piru (72.5 percent). Using this percent change for Piru, we forecast the population to reach 3,559 by 2020. Based on SCAG's 2020 forecast for Santa Paula and Fillmore, population is projected to increase 23.2 percent and 33.4 percent, respectively.

Exhibit A.1 Population Trend

Geographic Area	Population			Percent Change	
	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 SCAG Forecast	2000-2010	2010-2020
Piru (CDP)	1,196	2,063	3,559	72.5%	72.5%
Santa Paula (CCD)	28,598	32,060	39,496	12.1%	23.2%
City of Fillmore	13,643	15,002	20,012	10.0%	33.4%
Total Population	43,437	49,125	63,067	13.1%	28.4%

Source: Census 2000, Census 2010, SCAG cohort-component model (for Santa Paula & Fillmore)

Note: SCAG's cohort-component model computes the population at a future point in time by adding to the existing population the number of births and persons moving into the region during a time interval, and by subtracting the number of deaths and the number of persons moving out of the area. Fertility, mortality, and migration rates are projected in 5-year intervals for each age group, for four mutually exclusive ethnic groups: Non-Hispanic White, Non-Hispanic Black, Non-Hispanic Asian, and Hispanic, by these population classes: residents, domestic migrants, and international migrants.¹⁶

Education Profile

Fewer than 65 percent of Heritage Valley residents are high school graduates, while less than two percent of Piru residents earned a Bachelor's Degree or higher, a substantially lower proportion when compared with Santa Paula and Fillmore. It is unclear as to the reason behind this low percentage; however, given the large proportion of low-income and language-isolated individuals residing in these communities, some correlation can be made regarding annual income and ability to afford or access higher education. This may result in lower demand for public transit as a home-to-school travel option among college-aged residents, especially in Piru.

Exhibit A.2 Education Characteristics

	Median Age	Education		
		Percentage Over 25 without High School Diploma	Percentage High School Diploma or Higher	Percentage Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Piru (CDP)	33.7	39.1%	60.9%	1.9%
Santa Paula (CCD)	31.1	36.6%	63.3%	10.8%
City of Fillmore	34.8	34.7%	65.3%	12.8%
Ventura County	36.1	17.7%	82.3%	30.3%
California	34.6	19.5%	80.5%	29.7%

Source: ACS 2009

¹⁶ Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), "Regional Demographic Trend Projection." <http://www.scag.ca.gov/forecast/methods.htm>. November 30, 2011.

Housing Profile

Similar to the State’s median house value (\$479,000), the median value of single-family dwellings within the Heritage Valley averaged \$474,500 collectively. In all three communities renters of both single-family and multi-family dwelling units paid an average of \$1,000 or more a month. The majority of homeowners and renters in Fillmore (58.2 percent and 62.2 percent, respectively) allocated at least 30 percent of their income to housing-related expenses (mortgage and rent), while Piru residents reported paying 42.2 percent and 35.6 percent, respectively. Given the volatile housing climate and the increase of single-family dwellings in foreclosure, shifts in trip origin and destination pairings and trip generators are likely to result due to increase in vacancies or households relocating to different neighborhoods.

Between 2000 and 2010, the number of total households in Santa Paula increased 2.6 percent (net increase of 211); lower than Ventura County’s overall growth rate (9.7 percent). Santa Paula’s median house value was slightly less than its counterparts, corresponding with the higher concentration of low-income persons residing in Santa Paula (Exhibit A.11).

Exhibit A.3 Housing Characteristics

	Median Rooms per Structure	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
		Median Value	Percentage of owners spending more than 30% on income on mortgage	Median Rent	Percentage of renters spending more than 30% on income on rent
Piru (CDP)	4.9	\$489,700	42.2%	\$1,076	35.6%
Santa Paula (CCD)	4.9	\$446,500	50.7%	\$1,041	59.8%
City of Fillmore	5.4	\$487,300	58.2%	\$1,018	62.2%
Ventura County	5.7	\$593,200	50.2%	\$1,350	54.8%
California	5.1	\$479,200	51.6%	\$1,116	54.5%

Source: ACS 2009

Economic Profile

As illustrated in Exhibit A.4, the median household income for residents in Heritage Valley was less than \$60,000, with the greatest disparity between Santa Paula and Fillmore (27.3%). As presented later in this chapter, the median earning for specific occupations leveled out under \$30,000, suggesting a significant proportion of households are multi-income households.

Exhibit A.4 Economic Characteristics

	Income				
	Median Household Income	Social Security Income	Public Assistance Income	Median Family Income	Per Capita Income
Piru (CDP)	\$58,750	\$16,517	\$1,495	\$60,707	\$17,604
Santa Paula (CCD)	\$47,691	\$13,413	\$5,649	\$50,870	\$18,810
City of Fillmore	\$59,464	\$14,830	\$3,761	\$69,922	\$20,886
Ventura County	\$74,828	\$15,333	\$4,977	\$83,830	\$32,063
California	\$60,392	\$14,472	\$5,455	\$68,909	\$29,020

Source: ACS 2009

Ride-Dependent Populations

A community's "ride-dependent" population is defined as those demographic groups most likely to rely on alternative modes of transport (i.e., public bus, taxis, etc.) traditionally because of limited to no access to a personal vehicle. Hence, this population is more likely to rely on other people or services (i.e., public transit) for their mobility. These demographic groups typically include school-age youth (ages 5 to 17), seniors (ages 65 and older), persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals. The data analyzed within this section was compiled from a variety of sources (i.e., U.S. Census Bureau, California Economic Development Department, California Department of Finance, and Southern California Association of Governments) and is limited to certain evaluation years based on the data available at the time of this report's preparation.

Exhibit A.5 shows ride-dependent population distribution throughout the Heritage Valley. Data is compiled from individual estimates of Fillmore, Piru, and Santa Paula's ride-dependent population using Census 2000, ACS 2009, and Census 2010 data.

The single largest population group within the Heritage Valley is “youth” population. Across the past decade, youth population declined 2.5 percent, yet still reflects 20 percent of the total Heritage Valley population. While there is no certainty this decline will continue, for the purposes of this study, we assume the trend will continue. SCAG’s city profile projections¹⁷ further support this trend, projecting a decline in population share to 25 percent by 2015 for the 5 to 20 age group. This negative trend suggests a potential drop in future demand for transit service for home-to-school travel among the school-age population.

In 2010, seniors comprised less than 10 percent of the total population within the Heritage Valley, reflecting a seven-percent growth since 2000. Assuming annual percent-change remains consistent across the next decade, senior population would increase another eight percent by 2020, though percent share of the Heritage Valley population is expected to continue to decline. As populations age, demand for affordable transportation alternatives increase. With capacity issues existing on all three services, VCTC should refocus its Dial-A-Ride service toward senior and persons with disabilities to accommodate anticipated long-term growth.

Low-income individuals, defined as persons living at or below the U.S. Census poverty threshold (household income of \$22,314 for a household of four in 2011), comprised nearly 14 percent of the total Heritage Valley population in 2010. We project the low-income population to comprise nearly 10 percent of the total Heritage Valley population by 2020. Drawing from community survey results (Appendix C), low-income residents comprised 19 percent of the respondent pool. This is one of the most common demographic identifier, second only to the number of respondents who indicated Spanish as their primary household language. This suggests a high proportion of residents now and in the future will need affordable transportation alternatives/options (beyond the personal vehicle). In addition, bilingual transit marketing and customer service will continue to be critical in ensuring equal access to public transit for the significant language-isolated community living within the Valley.

Exhibit A.5 Ride-Dependent Populations

Population Group	2000		2010		2020 Forecast		Percent Change	
	Number	Share of Population	Number	Share of Population	Number	Share of Population	2000-2010	2010-2020
Youth (ages 5 to 17)	10,081	23.2%	9,833	20.0%	9,632	15.3%	-2.5%	-2.0%
Seniors (65 and over)	4,502	10.4%	4,805	9.8%	5,184	8.2%	6.7%	7.9%
Persons with disabilities*	8,350	19.2%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Low Income Individuals*	6,226	14.3%	6,046	13.6%	6,243	9.9%	-2.9%	3.3%
Persons with no vehicle access*	1,070	2.5%	891	2.0%	718	1.1%	-16.7%	-19.4%
Heritage Valley Total Population	43,437	69.6%	49,125	45.3%	63,067	34.5%	13.1%	28.4%

Source: Census 2010, *2010 data not available, therefore data collected from 2009 ACS estimates.

¹⁷ Southern California Association of Governments, “SCAG Local Profiles: Profile of the City of Santa Paula.” <http://www.scag.ca.gov/resources/profiles.htm>. May 5, 2011.
Southern California Association of Governments. “SCAG Local Profiles: Profile of the City of Fillmore.” <http://www.scag.ca.gov/resources/profiles.htm>. May 5, 2011.

The breakdown of ride-dependent groups by community is detailed in Exhibit A.6.

Exhibit A.6 Ride-Dependency by Community

Ride-Dependent Populations					
Geographic Area	Youth (ages 5 to 17)	Seniors (65 and over)	Persons with disabilities*	Low-Income Individuals*	Persons with no vehicle access
Piru (CDP)	387	155	-	60	26
Santa Paula (CCD)	6181	3099	4,228	4671	537
City of Fillmore	3265	1551	-	1315	328
Total Ride-Dependent	9,833	4,805	4,228	6,046	891

* Persons with disabilities data not available for Piru and Fillmore. Available data for Santa Paula reflects 2007 ACS, low-income data reflects 2009 ACS.

Exhibits A.7 through A.11 illustrate traditional ride-dependent groups in the Heritage Valley by census tract. Data presented therein represents census data compiled from Census 2000 as well as Census 2010. Given the Summary File 3 survey was not conducted during the 2010 Census, we will be using 2000 Census data in our analysis of persons with disabilities.

Note: The Summary File 3 long form survey was excluded from Census 2010 with the intention for the annually conducted American Community Survey to be used as a replacement for the long form. The ACS essentially covers the same questions provided within the Summary 3 long form. Instead of collecting data from about 1 in every 6 households once every 10 years, like the decennial census long form the ACS samples about 1 in every 40 addresses every year, or 250,000 addresses every month. This allows the Census Bureau to produce data every year rather than every decade.

- 1-year - For areas with large populations (65,000 or more), survey estimates are based on 12 months (1 year) of ACS data.
- 3-year - For all areas with populations of 20,000 or more, the survey estimates are based on 36 months (3 years) of ACS data.
- 5-year - The Census Bureau will produce estimates for all areas, down to the census tract and block group levels, based on 60 months (5 years) of ACS data.¹⁸

Exhibit A.7 provides locational data regarding senior-rich neighborhoods within the Heritage Valley. As shown, high concentrations lie north of Ojai Road in Santa Paula within the hillside residential zone. Land-use designation within this area reflects chiefly single-family and medium-density residences. In contrast, Piru is comprised of fewer than 345 residents identified as seniors. Residents north of State Highway 126 in all three communities are the primary riders of the current services and are the target for any future service enhancements. Based on Dial-A-Ride billing data (see Dial-A-Ride Patronage section), the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride service yields seven percent more senior riders than Santa Paula,

¹⁸U.S. Census Bureau, "Census Transportation Planning Products (CTPP) Training Session."
<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/tp67.pdf>. September 22, 2011.

comprising approximately 14 percent of total Dial-A-Ride customers. This reveals a higher demand for Dial-A-Ride service for seniors in Fillmore and Piru. This trend may be attributed to VISTA 126 providing only three stops within Fillmore and Piru, limiting use of the fixed-route service for destinations not located along the VISTA 126 alignment.

Analysis of census tract data reveals a high concentration of youth residing within the western portion of Fillmore. This area is largely comprised of low-income households, language-isolated residents, and agricultural workers – demographic groups which traditionally reflect ride-dependent populations. There are seven schools (elementary, middle, and high schools) located within the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride service area, with the majority located in western Fillmore (north of State Highway 126) – areas not currently served by VISTA 126.

Outreach efforts prior to and during this study revealed concerns from youth and their parents regarding pick-up and drop-off delays during school/commute hours. Based on our review of contractor-provided Dial-A-Ride monthly ridership and fare reports, students comprised 26.1 percent of patrons for both Dial-A-Ride programs (DAR fare analysis section). This suggests a large proportion of students rely heavily on Dial-A-Ride for home-to-school travel, not the ideal trip purpose for a Dial-A-Ride service. Additionally, considering the only Fillmore stop provided on VISTA 126 is the Fillmore Senior Center, some form of affordable home-to-school transport is necessary for students within Fillmore, Rancho Sespe, and Piru. Dial-A-Ride service hours may need adjusting in the interim to serve the student population as current transportation provided by the school district is not meeting demand, as indicated through outreach efforts such as the Rancho Sespe focus group.

“Persons with disabilities” data shown in Exhibit A.9 reflect 2000 Census data. As shown in Exhibit A.10, significant concentrations of persons with disabilities reside within western Santa Paula and Fillmore. Currently VISTA 126 provides two stops in Santa Paula and one stop in Fillmore along State Highway 126. VISTA 126 and the Dial-A-Ride programs continually operate at capacity due to the high demand for service within the Valley, a trend reflected in performance data showing year-to-year increases in fare revenue and ridership. Assuming a similar trend in population growth similar to the senior population, greater demand for better service offerings, especially to western Santa Paula and Fillmore, will only increase over time. To promote a mode-shift to fixed-route service, VCTC should consider developing a shuttle service serving destinations or neighborhoods north of State Highway 126. Additionally, multiple social service agencies (i.e., Meals on Wheels, Santa Paula Social Services, and Santa Paula Family Resources) are located nearly a 10-minute walking distance from the two primary stops in Santa Paula (i.e., K-Mart and city hall). This presents a potential barrier for persons with disabilities in conveniently accessing their final destination.

Households with limited/no access to a personal vehicle are distributed fairly evenly throughout Santa Paula and Fillmore, with fewer than 38 households identified in Piru. Exhibit A.10 illustrates a reverse trend, where concentrations of households with no access to a personal vehicle are situated in the eastern portions of each community versus the western portions where the majority of ride-dependent

groups reside. Based on survey results, a significant share of residents (43 percent) lacked access to a personal vehicle, with more than 60 percent relying on family, friend, or public transit as their primary mode of transportation. This mirrors census data which reveals 891 households throughout the Heritage Valley are without a personal vehicle. Given the total Heritage Valley population for 2010 was estimated at 49,125, this translates to no less than two percent of persons without a personal vehicle residing within the Heritage Valley.

Similar to youth and persons with disabilities data, the presence of low-income individuals is concentrated within the western portions of Fillmore and Santa Paula. As of 2010, more than 6,000 residents indicated earning an annual income at or below the federal poverty threshold.¹⁹ Not illustrated is the concentration of ride-dependent households located in the communities between Fillmore and Piru (i.e., Rancho Sespe). Agricultural workers comprise a large share of the Heritage Valley population, translating to a large share of the low-income residents or ride-dependent population presented in Exhibit A.11. With the Rancho Sespe apartments being an affordable housing complex aimed at providing housing for local farm workers, reliance on transit service in this area is high. VCTC might consider adding a couple of trips to the VISTA 126 within this area of the community.

¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 data. <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>. November 2011.

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Exhibit A.7 Concentration of Seniors

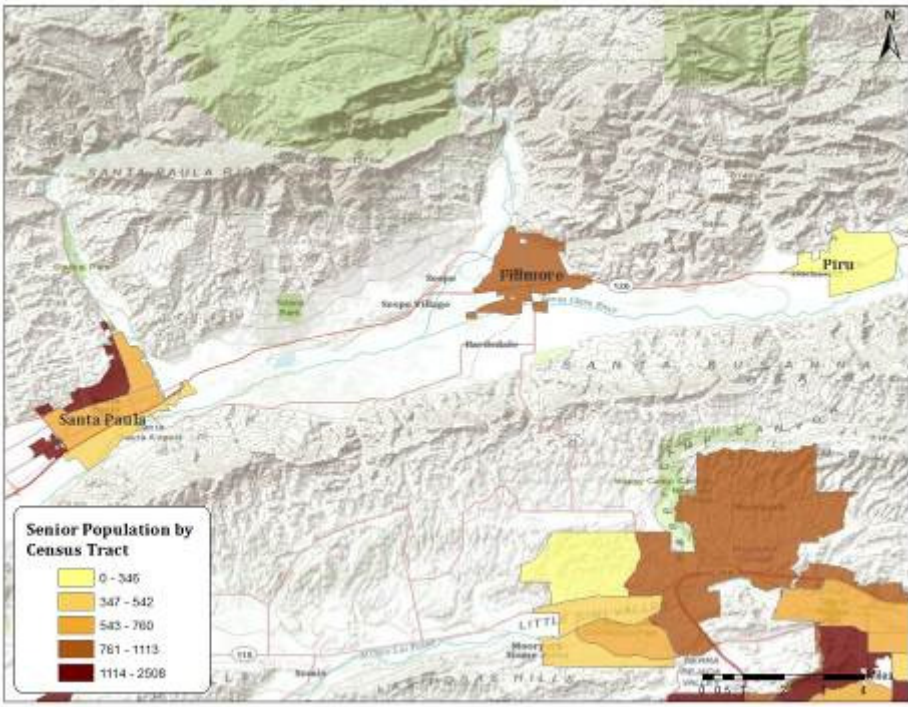


Exhibit A.8 Concentration of Youth

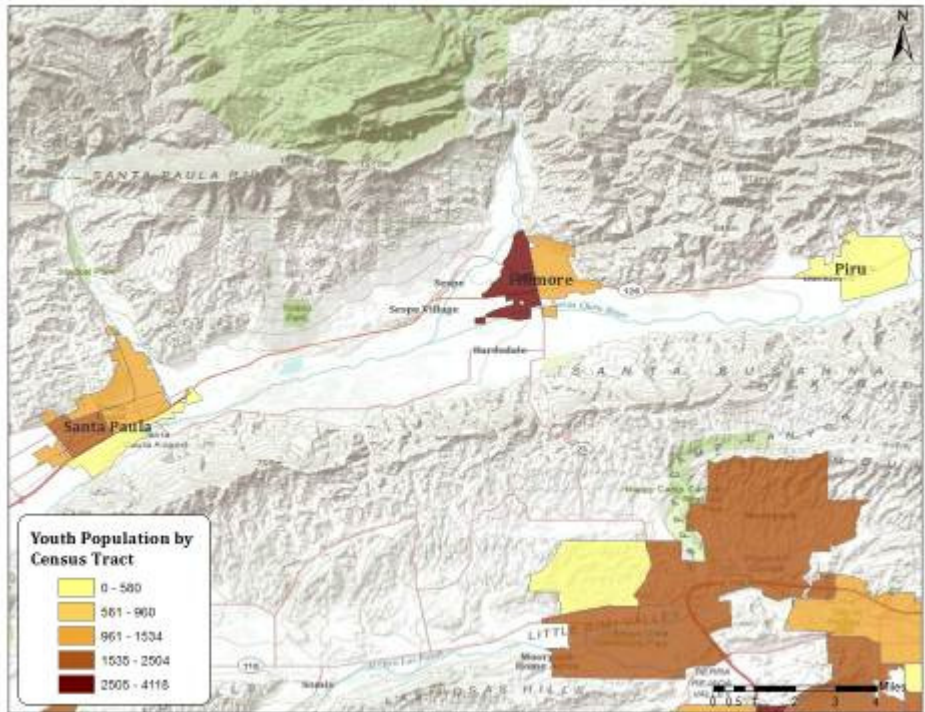


Exhibit A.9 Concentration of Persons with Disabilities

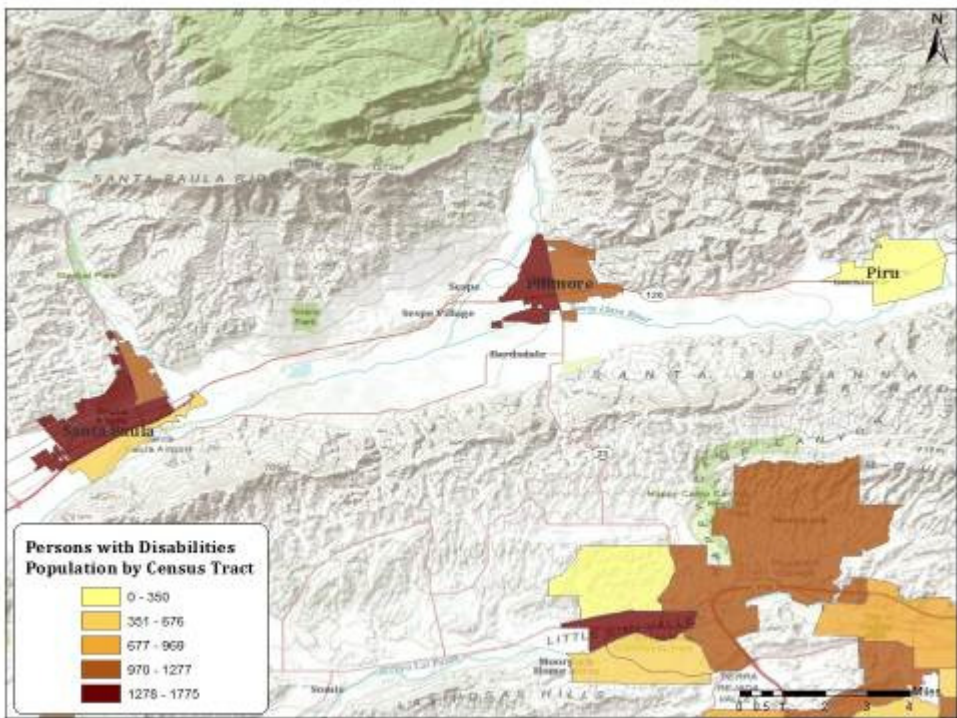


Exhibit A.10 Concentration of Zero-Vehicle Households

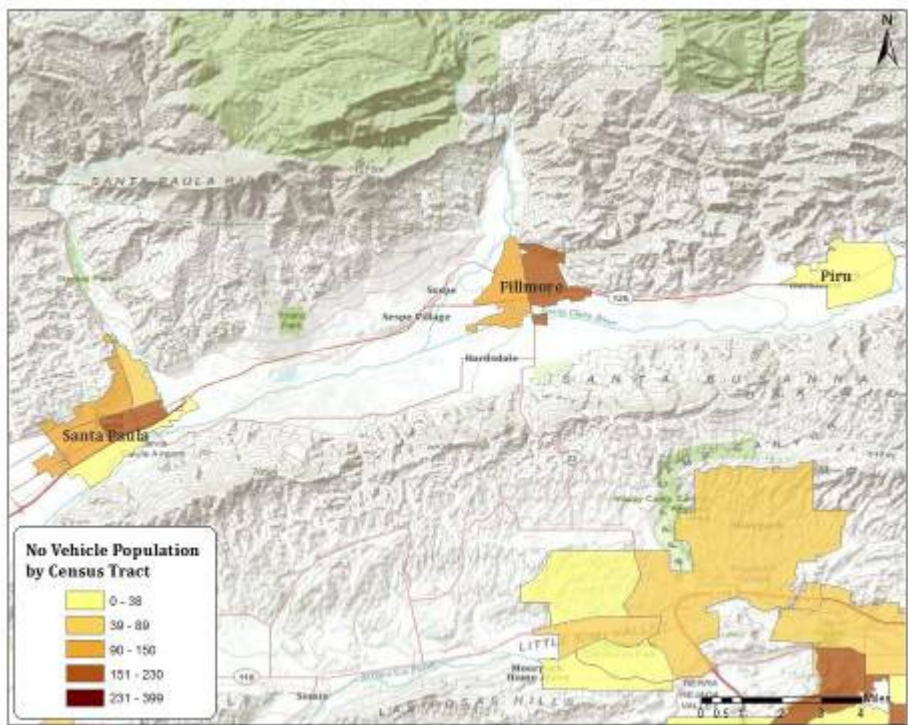
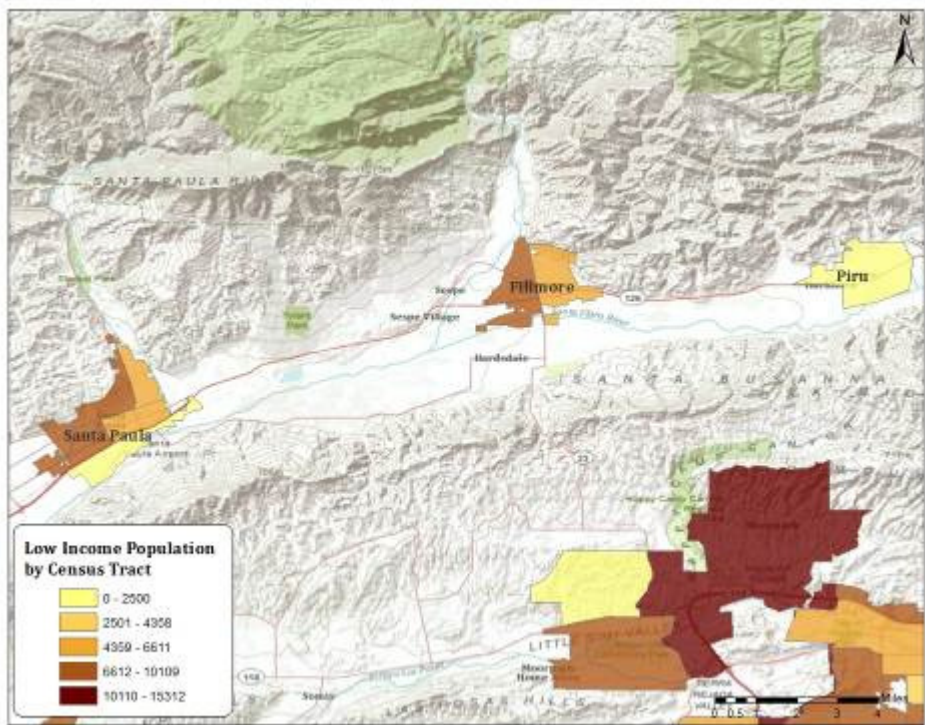


Exhibit A.11 Concentration of Low-Income Individuals

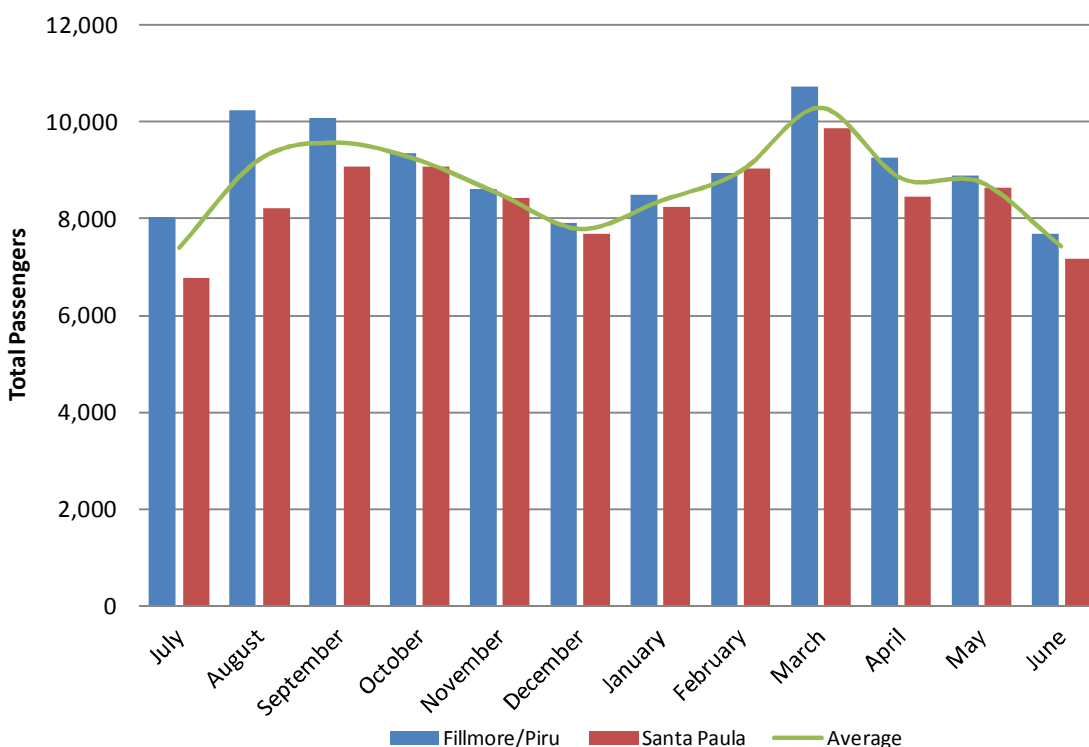


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Dial-A-Ride Patronage

Exhibit A.12 shows total ridership by month for Fiscal Year 2010/2011 for the Fillmore-Piru and Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride programs. As shown, the programs follow a similar trend throughout the year, with relatively modest variations in fall and spring. Throughout Fiscal Year 2010/2011, the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride program transported seven percent more passengers than Santa Paula, which is interesting given Fillmore has both a smaller overall population and smaller ride-dependent population as shown in Exhibits A.5 and A.6, respectively. This ridership trend can most likely be attributed to level of reliance on the Dial-A-Ride service for travel to/from Fillmore, Rancho Sespe, and Piru.

Exhibit A.12 Fillmore and Santa Paula DAR Ridership



Fare Media

There are a relatively large number of fare media options associated with the Dial-A-Ride programs. To summarize, these options include:

- Cash,
- Go Ventura Bus Pass/E-purse,
- Transfer,
- Red Token, and
- Day Pass.

Exhibit A.13 presents the distribution of media types used for each Dial-A-Ride program during Fiscal

Year 2010/2011. As shown, cash and Go Ventura cards are the most commonly used forms of payment, with Adults and Students accounting for the majority of patrons. The number of passengers riding free of charge is of note in this chart, as it accounts for more than 16 percent of total ridership. This figure includes both children under age five as well as those riding using the free fare program. Given recent funding challenges, free ridership should be further investigated, particularly as related to the fare increases that went into effect on September 17, 2011.

Exhibit A.13 Ridership by Fare Media

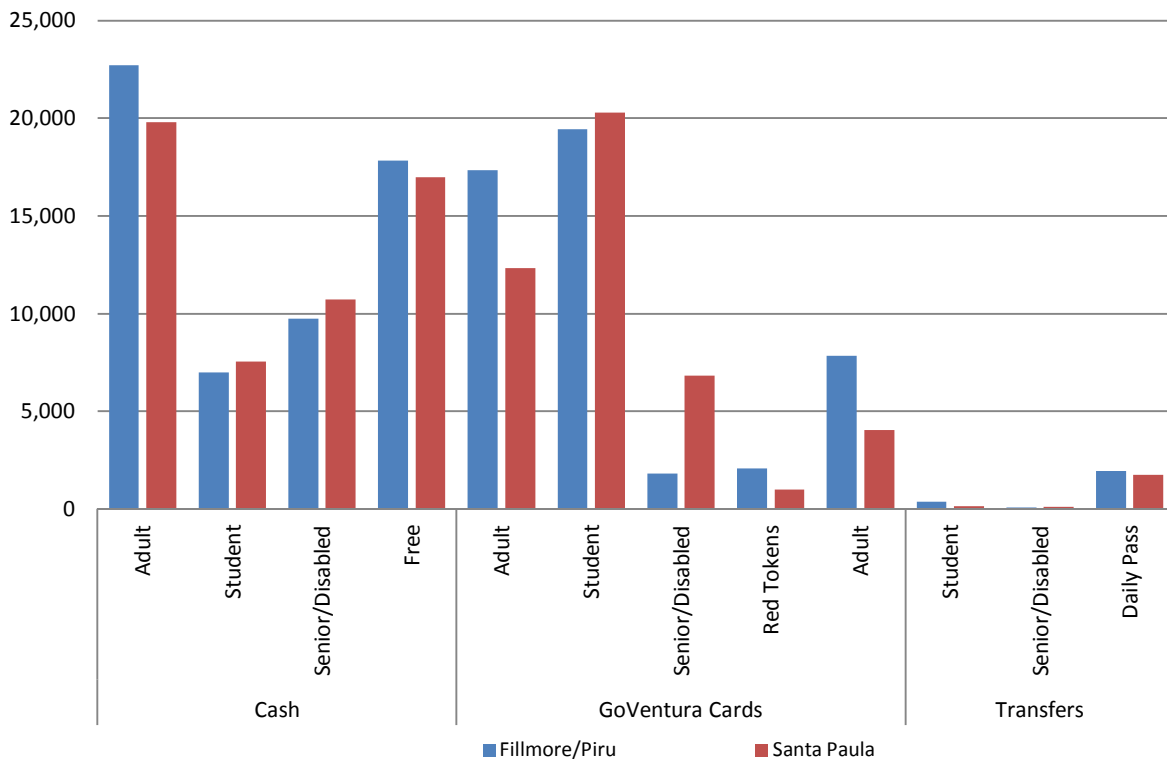


Exhibit A.14 incorporates the data used in Exhibit A.12, segregating fare media types based on patron age. As seen in the chart, Adult ridership accounts for more than 40 percent of total ridership between the two programs, followed by students (26 percent). The “age-neutral” category makes up over 19 percent of total ridership; however, this category is comprised of those riders whose age cannot be determined based on fare media type. During its outreach efforts, the consultant team identified a need for increased home/school travel options, as current Dial-A-Ride services do not align with traditional/current school bell times. Given vehicle capacity issues, it is unrealistic that Dial-A-Ride is an optimal service solution.

Exhibit A.14 DAR Ridership by Fare Category

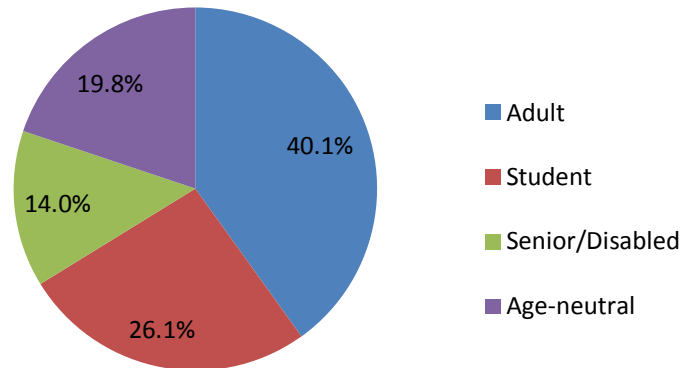
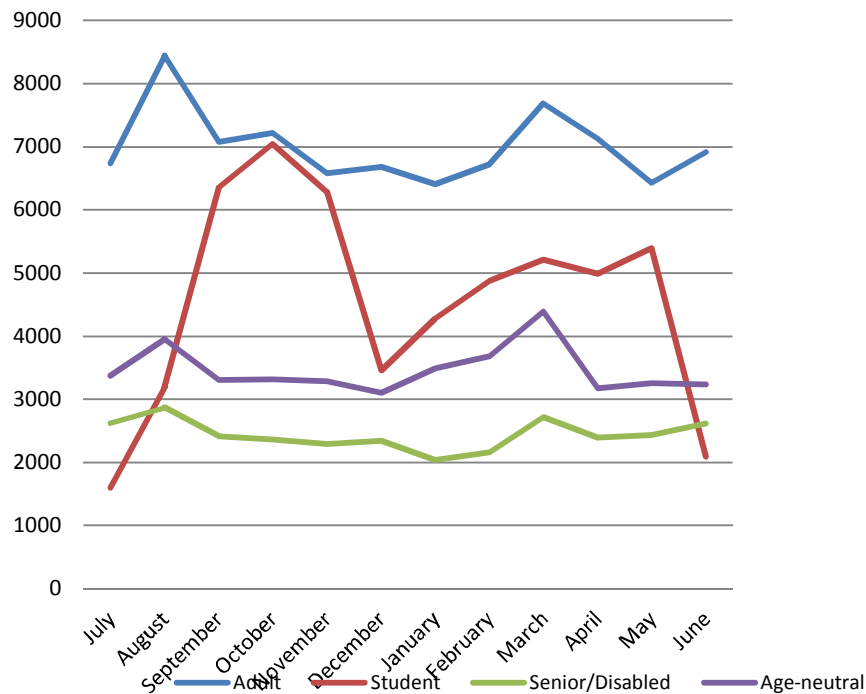


Exhibit A.15 below provides a time-series representation of ridership by fare category for Fiscal Year 2010/2011. A discernible trend exists within most categories: ridership remains relatively consistent throughout the year, with modest peaks in August and March. This trend, however, does not hold true with respect to students. During this study period, student ridership peaked in October reflective of increases in demand associated with the start of the school year, yet declined precipitously through December, with little recovery after the holiday break period. The student ridership decline experienced in June is not surprising given this month typically marks the end of the school year.

Exhibit A.15 DAR Ridership/Month



Employment Profile and Commuter Trends

While it is imperative for a transit service to meet the travel needs of the general public, special emphasis is given to meeting the demand of work-age adults. If successfully tapped, this group can contribute to a sustained revenue stream arising from regular and predictable usage. The following section identifies and quantifies recent travel patterns combined within the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamic data and federal census. Based on travel patterns codified herein, specific recommendations will be developed to ensure this group's needs are met.

Exhibit A.16 presents the estimated labor force as of October 2011. These estimates are not seasonally adjusted to reflect fluctuations arising from changes attributable to seasonal employment or retail sales. Exhibit A.16 shows Heritage Valley's Labor Force includes 18,900 individuals (approximately 39 percent of total population). At the time of this report, the state unemployment rate was reported to be 11.7 percent for the month of November 2011. As shown in the table, the average unemployment rate for the Heritage Valley is more than 15 percent, with each community at least two percent higher than the state average. High unemployment rates may result in potential changes in daily trip or commute patterns such as fewer patrons during peak hours, increases in midday ridership, and changes in trip generators (origins and destinations).

Exhibit A.16 Heritage Valley Labor Force

Community	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	
			Number	Rate
City of Fillmore	6,800	5,900	900	13.2%
Piru CDP	600	500	100	16.7%
Santa Paula (CDD)	14,900	12,500	2,400	16.1%
Total	22,300	18,900	3,400	15.2%

Source: Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, October 2011.

Exhibit A.17 shows commute patterns by community. Based on census data the majority of the Heritage Valley work force drives alone. This corresponds with census trends which show a decline in households with limited/no access to a personal vehicle. Unlike community survey results, the proportion of those using public transit as their primary mode of transportation for home-to-work travel were quite low. This may be an indication of the relatively low level of service available to residents within the Heritage Valley.

Exhibit A.17 Commute Characteristics

	Commute		
	Drive Alone	Public Transit	Walked
Piru (CDP)	79.9%	0.0%	7.5%
Santa Paula (CCD)	73.2%	0.6%	1.5%
City of Fillmore	83.1%	0.0%	2.7%
Ventura County	78.6%	1.2%	1.8%
California	73.2%	5.2%	2.8%

Source: 2009 ACS

Exhibit A.18 illustrates census-designated occupation categories as they relate to the Heritage Valley and its respective communities. A large share of the employed labor force works in natural resource, construction, and maintenance occupations. As a largely agricultural-based economy, we recommend VCTC increase its efforts in publicizing its Rideshare and vanpool programs to agricultural workers. The vanpool and Rideshare programs present a cost-effective way of providing alternatives for transportation to the community at-large.

Review of this data assists in identifying potential commute patterns and travel demand as well as with scheduling service to accommodate work schedules (i.e., full-time or part-time) based on the most noted occupation within each community. For instance an office worker (sales and office occupations) would likely have a different work schedule than perhaps a waiter (service occupation).

Exhibit A.18 Occupations by Community

Occupations	2010 Census	Median Earnings	2009 ACS**	
			Santa Paula	Fillmore Piru
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	2,428	\$47,243	1573	95
Service occupations	2,376	\$18,942	845	106
Sales and office occupations	2,699	\$26,505	1692	91
Farm, fishing, and forestry occupations*	-		422	98
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	2,828	\$22,248	784	101
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	2,065	\$27,425	1182	78
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	12,396	\$25,798	6498	569

*2010 Census data includes "Farm, fishing, and forestry" occupations under "Natural resources, construction, and maintenance" occupations.

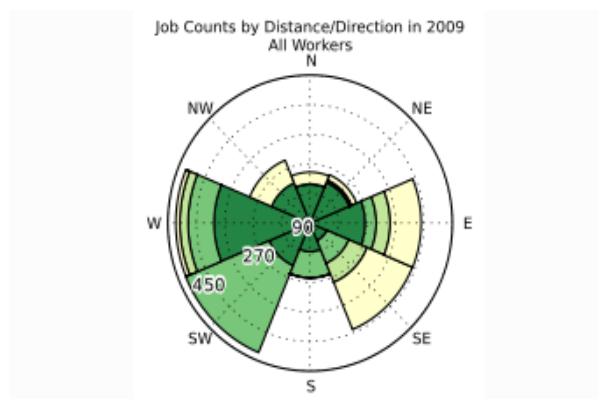
**2009

American Community Survey doesn't include median earnings by occupation.

Exhibit A.19 shows the directional patterns and distance traveled by residents within each community for employment-related travel. Nearly half of the Heritage Valley work force commutes less than 10 miles to their place of employment, suggesting relatively few leave the Valley for work. In spite of the large portion working within a 10-mile radius of their home, a notable share, especially in Santa Paula (21.9 percent) travel more than 50 miles each way for work.

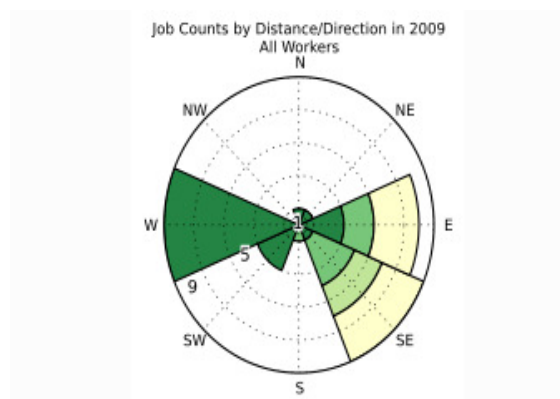
Exhibit A.19 Job Counts by Distance/Direction

Fillmore



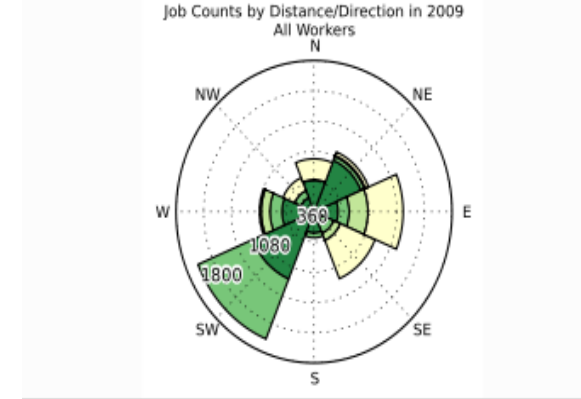
Jobs by Distance - Work Census Block to Home Census Block		
	2009	
	Count	Share
Total Primary Jobs	2,240	100.0%
Less than 10 miles	1,146	51.2%
10 to 24 miles	559	25.0%
25 to 50 miles	141	6.3%
Greater than 50 miles	394	17.6%

Piru



Jobs by Distance - Work Census Block to Home Census Block		
	2009	
	Count	Share
Total Primary Jobs	32	100.0%
Less than 10 miles	18	56.2%
10 to 24 miles	6	18.8%
25 to 50 miles	2	6.2%
Greater than 50 miles	6	18.8%

Santa Paula



Jobs by Distance - Work Census Block to Home Census Block		
	2009	
	Count	Share
Total Primary Jobs	6,520	100.0%
Less than 10 miles	3,181	48.8%
10 to 24 miles	1,442	22.1%
25 to 50 miles	468	7.2%
Greater than 50 miles	1,429	21.9%

Source: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (2009 ACS)

Exhibit A.21 illustrates the relationship between living and working in Fillmore. Based on the Venn diagram, more than 5,500 employed Heritage Valley residents work outside of Fillmore, while fewer than 800 conveniently live and work within the city of Fillmore. This trend correlates with Exhibit A.20, which reveals a concentration of commuters traveling outside of Fillmore to Oxnard and Los Angeles.

Exhibit A.21 Fillmore Inflow/Outflow Job Counts

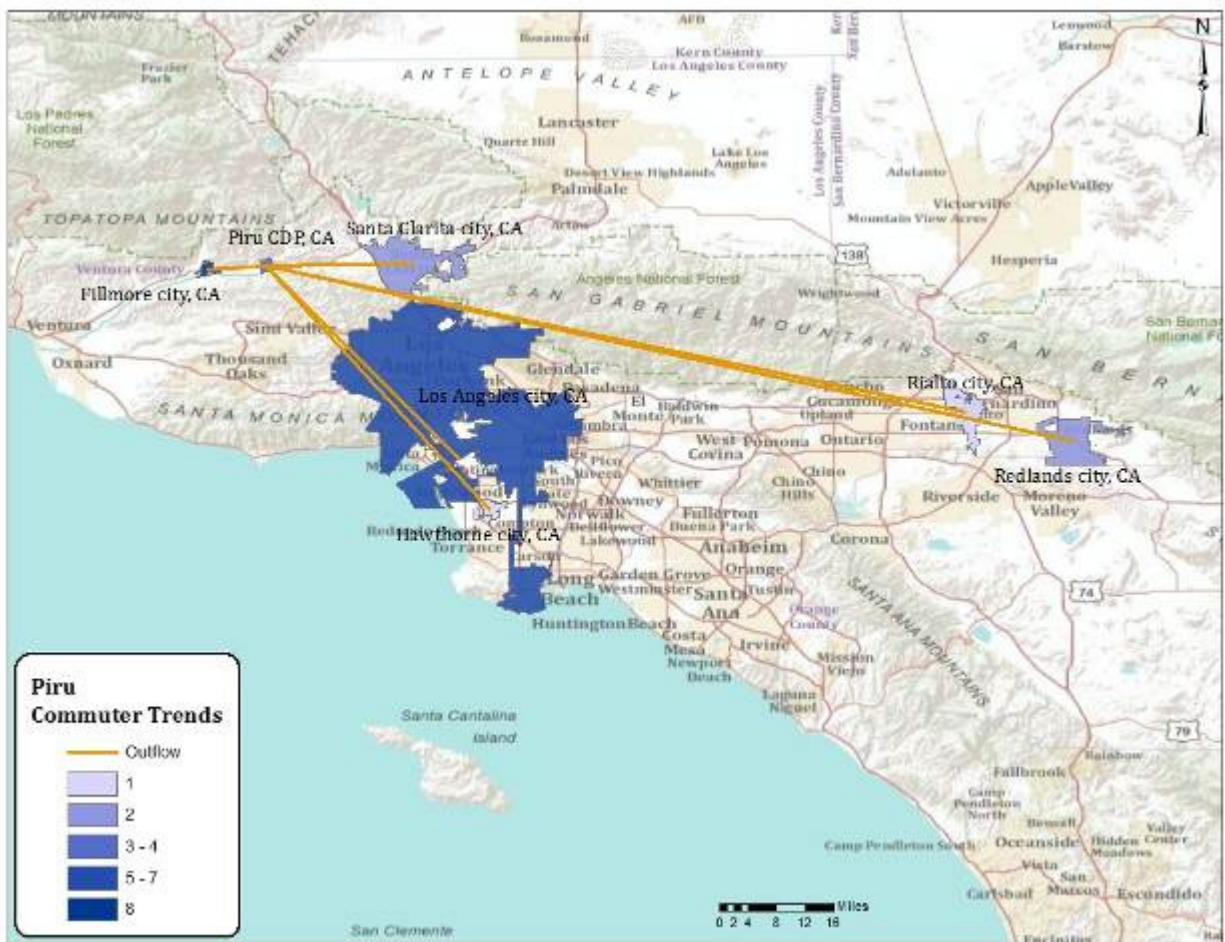
Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2009



Source: 2009 Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

As shown in Exhibit A.22, the cities with the greatest employment activity are Los Angeles and Fillmore. Given the high concentration of residents traveling to Fillmore for work, moving forward VCTC might consider introducing a shuttle service between the three communities during peak hours to mitigate crowding on the regular fixed-route and alleviate the stress on the current service due to increases in demand and ridership.

Exhibit A.22 Commuter Activity Originating in Piru

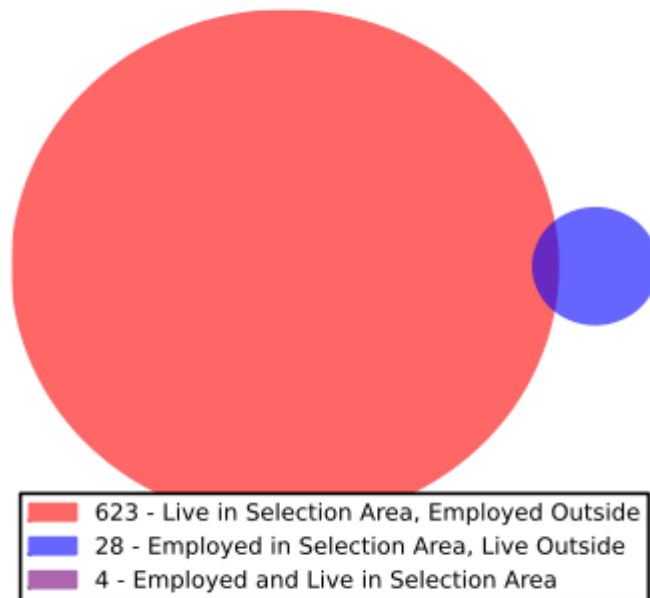


Source: 2009 Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Similar to commuter trends illustrated in the city of Fillmore, the majority of Piru residents travel outside of Piru for work (Exhibit A.22). As shown in Exhibit A.19, 18.8 percent of residents travel in excess of 50 miles to reach their place of employment. For someone living in Piru, this would require use of a personal vehicle as current Heritage Valley services provide no direct route to the destinations listed above (i.e., Redlands or Rialto). A very modest number of workers travel into Piru for work suggesting the demand and supply for jobs in Piru is quite low and further supporting the belief that the current service to Piru is sufficient for demand.

Exhibit A.23 Piru Inflow/Outflow Job Counts

Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2009



Source: 2009 Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

Exhibit A.23 illustrates the commute/travel outflow of Santa Paula’s work force. As shown, a large number of employed residents travel outside of Santa Paula for work to employment centers as far as Bakersfield and Los Angeles. The largest portion of commuter travel is within a 20-mile radius of Santa Paula. Given this overall pattern, VCTC should consider implementing a new local fixed-route service or shuttle service within the Heritage Valley to serve areas and neighborhoods not located along State Highway 126.

Exhibit A.24 Commuter Activity Originating in Santa Paula



Source: 2009 Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

The majority of Santa Paula’s work force travel outside of Santa Paula for work, with another 12 percent of the surveyed work force employed and living in Santa Paula. Surprisingly more than 4,500 workers travel into Santa Paula from their residences located in neighboring cities. This inflow of workers suggests a demand for better connectivity between regional services and VISTA. Given the large commuting population traveling in and out of Santa Paula, potential demand for services traveling to neighboring cities (i.e., Oxnard and Santa Clarita) from Santa Paula is high.

Exhibit A.25 Santa Paula Inflow/Outflow Job Counts

Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2009



Source: 2009 Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

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APPENDIX B – SERVICE EVALUATION

The Ventura County Transportation Commission provides public transit service to the communities of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru (aka Heritage Valley). VCTC provides the VISTA 126 and Santa Paula Commuter, as well as general public Dial-A-Rides in Santa Paula and Fillmore-Piru. In FY 2010/11, the public transit service provided over 428,000 unlinked trips. Given the low density of the area, it is impressive VCTC was able to see increasing ridership, particularly given the weakened economy.

Despite the gains in ridership, there is a large amount of uncertainty regarding future funding for the existing level of service in the Heritage Valley. As note, the primary aim of this report is to identify ways VCTC, Ventura County, and the Heritage Valley communities can more effectively utilize declining revenues for public transit. With this goal in mind, this discussion seeks to address the following two questions:

- Is the current VCTC service plan operating as efficiently as possible?
- If not, what service changes are needed to achieve a more sustainable operation?

The findings from the service evaluation reveal that although VCTC introduced system-wide fare increases during 2010 and 2011, ridership was not severely affected in the Heritage Valley. With that said, VISTA 126 service experienced a notable increase in ridership of 12 percent during this past fiscal year. The fare increase was deemed successful, as fare revenue increased in both FY 2009/10 and 2010/11 when the fare increases took place.

Overall operating of VCTC Heritage Valley service has been increasing slightly across the past few fiscal years, while service offerings (i.e., service miles and hours) have actually decreased slightly. If VCTC could increase efficiency of these services, coupled with increasing ridership trends and fare revenue, they could experience a positive overall balance of system performance.

Objectives of Evaluation

This section includes an evaluation of VCTC's day-to-day operations in the Heritage Valley, providing a snapshot of existing conditions. It serves as the primary tool for analyzing historic performance and includes subjective and objective elements into the service planning process. The analysis of system performance data is used to identify operational successes as well as areas for improvement.

Evaluation Approach

Operational data for VISTA 126 and the general public Dial-A-Ride was obtained from VCTC. The data covers Fiscal Years 2007/2008 through 2009/2010. Data compiled from field observations supplemented their data to provide insight into day-to-day operations.

Service Description

Within the Heritage Valley, VCTC provides intercommunity bus service through the VISTA 126 and Santa Paula Commuter Bus, as well as general public Dial-A-Ride service in Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru.

VISTA 126 travels primarily along the Highway 126 corridor between Piru and Ventura, with stops in Fillmore, Piru, and Santa Paula. The service operates 13 eastbound trips and 12 westbound trips Monday through Friday; and 10 eastbound and 10 westbound trips on Saturday. On Saturday, VISTA 126 westbound originates at the Fillmore Senior Center while VISTA 126 eastbound terminates at the Fillmore Senior Center. There is no VISTA 126 service to Piru on Saturday. Each one-way trip takes approximately 60 minutes.

The VISTA Santa Paula Commuter service provides peak-hour travel within Santa Paula. The route operates four trips, two in the morning and two in the afternoon, Monday through Friday during the school year. As a result of a recent FTA performance review, VISTA provides ADA complementary paratransit service for the commuter service through the use of route deviation.

VCTC also provides general public Dial-A-Ride service in the communities of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru. The Dial-A-Ride service operates seven days a week with weekday service ranging from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and weekend service ranging from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Exhibit B.1 shows the service, days of operation, service span, and service frequency.

Exhibit B.1 Service Characteristics

Service	Days of Operation	Service Span	Frequency
VISTA 126	Monday through Saturday	5:45 a.m. to 8:20 p.m. (M-F) 8:00 a.m. to 5:57 p.m. (Saturdays)	30-minute (AM Peak), Hourly
Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride	Monday through Sunday	6:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. (M-F) 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (Weekends)	On-demand
Fillmore Dial-A-Ride	Monday through Sunday	6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (M-F) 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Weekends)	On-demand
Piru Dial-A-Ride	Monday through Sunday	6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (M-F) 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Weekends)	On-demand
Santa Paula Commuter	Monday through Friday (during the school year)	7:10 a.m. to 3:40 p.m. (M-F)	2 a.m. trips 2 p.m. trips

Fare Structure

VCTC offers a range of fare options for its customers. Exhibit B.2 shows the fare structure for the VCTC services in the Heritage Valley. “Senior” is defined as any individual 65 years or older.

Exhibit B.2 Fare Structure

Fare Type	Price
VISTA 126	
Adult/Student	\$1.25
Senior/Disabled/Medicare cardholder	\$0.60
Child under five	Free
Go Ventura Monthly Pass (Not valid on Dial-A-Ride in Heritage Valley)	
Adult/Student	\$50.00
Senior/Disabled/Medicare cardholder	\$25.00
Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride	
Adult/Student	\$1.75
Senior/Disabled/Medicare cardholder	\$0.85
Child under five	Free
Transfer from bus to Dial-A-Ride	\$0.50
Transfer from Dial-A-Ride to bus	Free
Dial-A-Ride/VISTA 126 Day Pass	\$3.50
VISTA Dial-A-Ride Monthly Pass (Heritage Valley only)*	\$20.00 (all ages)
Premium Monthly Pass (Valid on fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride)	
Adult/Student	\$60.00
Senior/Disabled/Medicare cardholder	\$38.00
*Day Pass – good on Highway 126 and Dial-A-Ride	

Service Evaluation – Combined Operations

Exhibit B.3 shows the combined performance indicators for the services operating in Heritage Valley. The data in this table reflect VISTA 126 as well as the general public Dial-A-Ride services in Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru. The table is followed by illustrations of each performance indicator and a discussion of significant trends.

When examining trends in performance measures, it can be seen fare revenue has been experiencing a continually increasing trend since FY 2009/10. This could be chiefly attributed to the fact VCTC introduced fare increases on these services in 2010 and again in 2011.

Exhibit B.3 Combined Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11
Operating Cost	\$1,461,965	\$1,527,180	\$1,539,011
Percent Change		4.5%	0.8%
Fare Revenue	\$325,649	\$346,817	\$397,095
Percent Change		6.5%	14.5%
Vehicle Service Hours	38,017	39,003	38,974
Percent Change		2.6%	-0.1%
Vehicle Service Miles	567,464	584,897	578,608
Percent Change		3.1%	-1.1%
Passengers	402,801	415,943	428,415
Percent Change		3.3%	3.0%
Performance Indicator			
Operating Cost/VSH	\$38.46	\$39.16	\$39.49
Percent Change		1.8%	0.8%
Operating Cost/VSM	\$2.58	\$2.61	\$2.66
Percent Change		1.3%	1.9%
Operating Cost/Passenger	\$3.63	\$3.67	\$3.59
Percent Change		1.2%	-2.2%
Passengers/VSH	10.60	10.66	10.99
Percent Change		0.7%	3.1%
Passengers/VSM	0.71	0.71	0.74
Percent Change		0.2%	4.1%
Farebox Recovery Ratio	22.27%	22.71%	25.80%
Percent Change		2.0%	13.6%
Fare/Passenger	\$0.81	\$0.83	\$0.93
Percent Change		3.1%	11.2%

Source: Ventura County Transportation Commission

The following discussion refers to Exhibits B.4 through B.11 found on pages B-7 and B-8. Each exhibit illustrates the above listed performance indicators for the three most recent fiscal years (FY 2008/09 through FY 2010/11). Each indicator represents the combined performance of VISTA 126 and the Dial-A-Ride services.

Combined Ridership (Exhibit B.4)

During the evaluation period, ridership grew steadily at three percent per annum. As will be illustrated in the proceeding route-by-route analysis, in FY 2009/10 ridership growth can be largely attributed to increased patronage on the Dial-A-Ride services; where in FY 2010/11 the VISTA 126 was responsible for the majority of the ridership growth.

Combined Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour (Exhibit B.5)

This metric measures the cost of providing one hour of service for the combined operations and evaluates the service's ability to operate efficiently. Over the evaluation period, Operating Cost/VSH increased by approximately three percent between FY 2008/09 and FY 2010/11. This is reflective of the increasing costs of operations such as fuel, wages/salaries, etc.

Combined Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Mile (Exhibit B.6)

Similar to the above metric, the Operating Cost/VSH measures the cost of providing a single mile of revenue service. This metric is also used to help evaluate a service's cost-effectiveness.

Mirroring Operating Cost/VSH, Operating Cost/VSM increased by three percent over the evaluation period, caused chiefly by Operating Cost increasing at a faster rate than Service Miles. This suggests any increase in Service Mile should be coupled with improvements in efficiency.

Combined Operating Cost/Passenger (Exhibit B.7)

As with the previous two metrics, the Operating Cost/Passenger is a measure of a system or route's efficiency. Ideally, an operator would like to see the Operating Cost/Passenger fall or remain stable over a given evaluation period.

Despite an increase in the Operating Cost/Passenger in FY 2009/10, the metric fell in FY 2010/11 due to ridership increasing at a faster rate than Operating Costs. If VCTC can stabilize Operating Costs and/or boost ridership at a faster rate than the increase in Operating Cost, then we believe this metric should continue to fall.

Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour (Exhibit B.8)

This metric measures the number of passengers carried per hour. Given the increase in ridership and Operating Costs remaining relatively stable over the evaluation period, VCTC transported more Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour each successive year during the evaluation period. This positive trend in this metric suggests VCTC services are becoming more efficient each year, in terms of number of passengers carried per service hour.

Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile (Exhibit B.9)

This metric measures the number of Passengers transported for every Vehicle Service Mile provided in the Heritage Valley during the evaluation period. This metric closely mirrored the Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour metric as ridership grew faster than the number of Vehicle Service Miles each fiscal year. The positive trend illustrated in Exhibit B.9 suggests VCTC is able to attract new riders while maintaining the same levels of service.

Combined Farebox Recovery Ratio (Exhibit B.10)

The farebox recovery ratio measures how much fare and other operating revenues (e.g., pass sales) cover the cost of operating the service. This is the most common metric for identifying the subsidy needed to maintain operations as well as to determine how cost-effectively a route or system is operating.

Farebox recovery of the combined VCTC services operating in the Heritage Valley has proven to be relatively stable throughout the past three years. Farebox recovery ratio has remained above 20 percent, with FY 2010/11 having the highest farebox recovery ratio (nearly 26 percent). This means the system covered slightly more than one-quarter of its operating costs through passenger fares.

Combined Fare/Passenger (Exhibit B.11)

The Fare/Passenger represents the average fare each passenger paid for their trip. As Exhibit B.11 illustrates, the Fare/Passenger increased across the evaluation period, particularly in FY 2010/11. This was due largely to fare revenue increasing much faster than ridership growth. Based on the breakdown of fare revenue sources, fare revenue from non-pass users (i.e., monthly passes) grew while pass-user revenue remained relatively constant.

Exhibit B.4 Total Annual Ridership

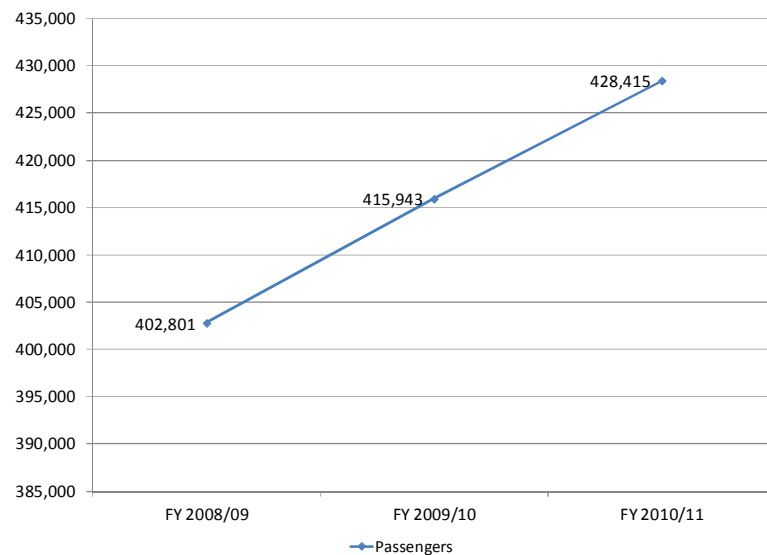


Exhibit B.5 Combined Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour

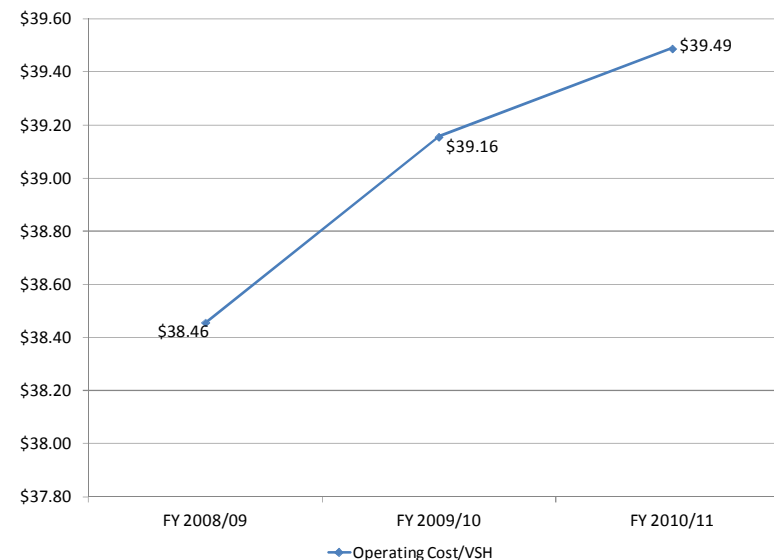


Exhibit B.6 Combined Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Mile

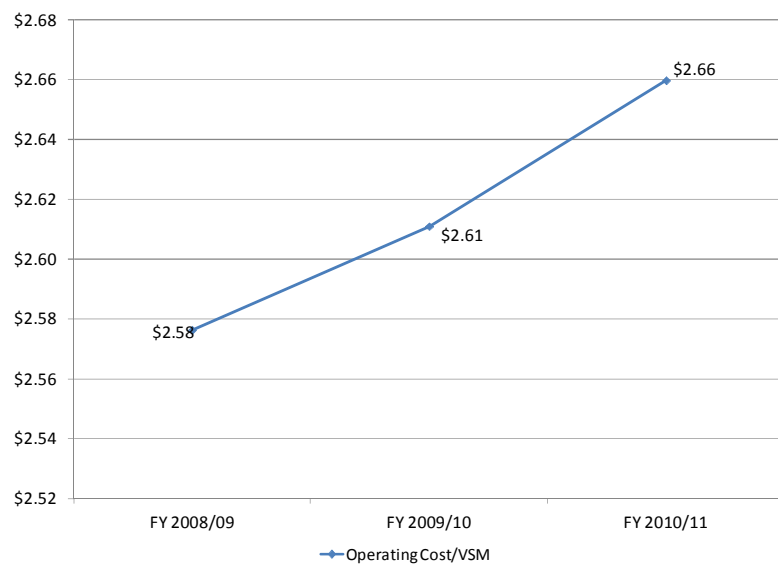


Exhibit B.7 Combined Operating Cost/Passenger

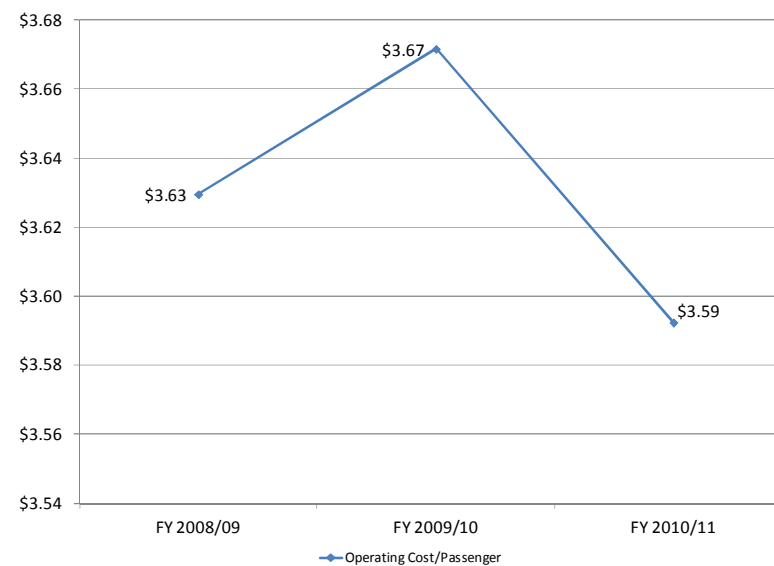


Exhibit B.8 Combined Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour

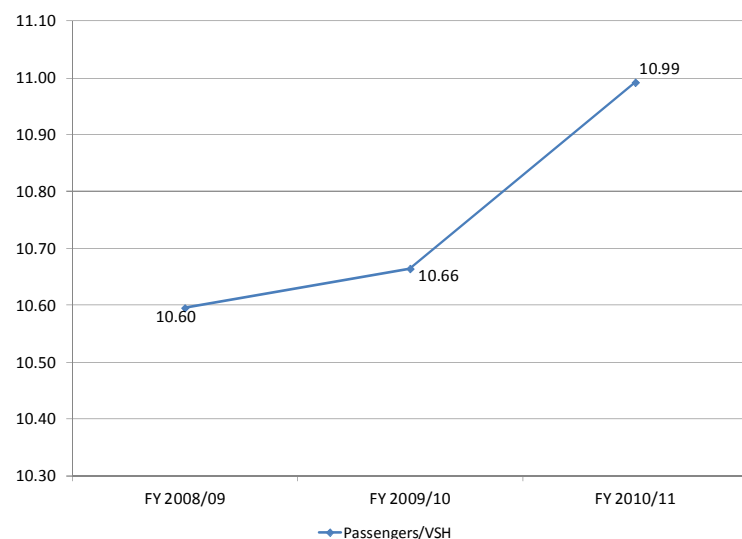


Exhibit B.9 Combined Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile

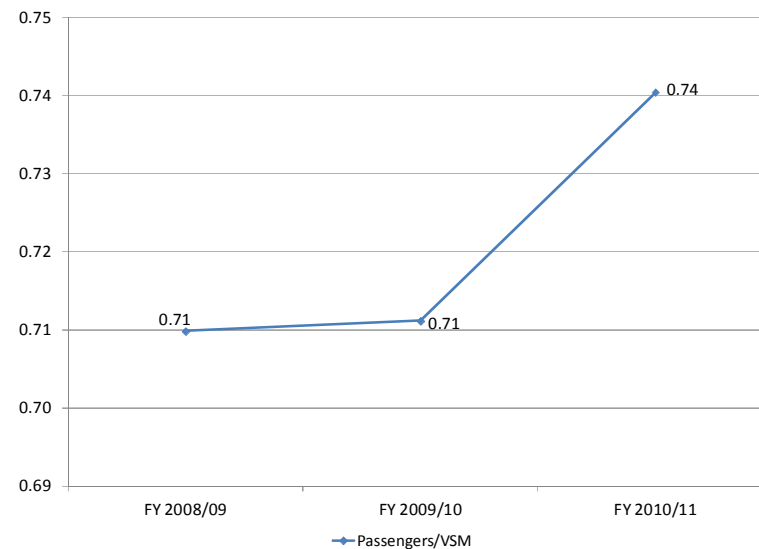


Exhibit B.10 Combined Farebox Recovery Ratio

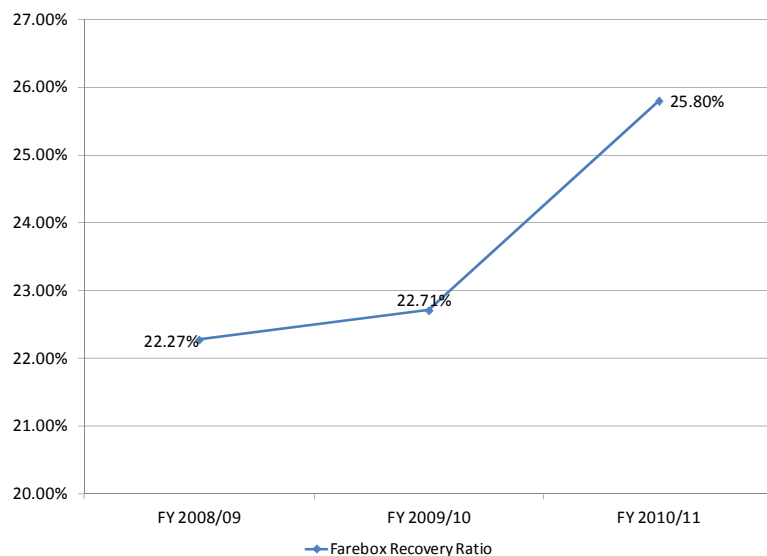
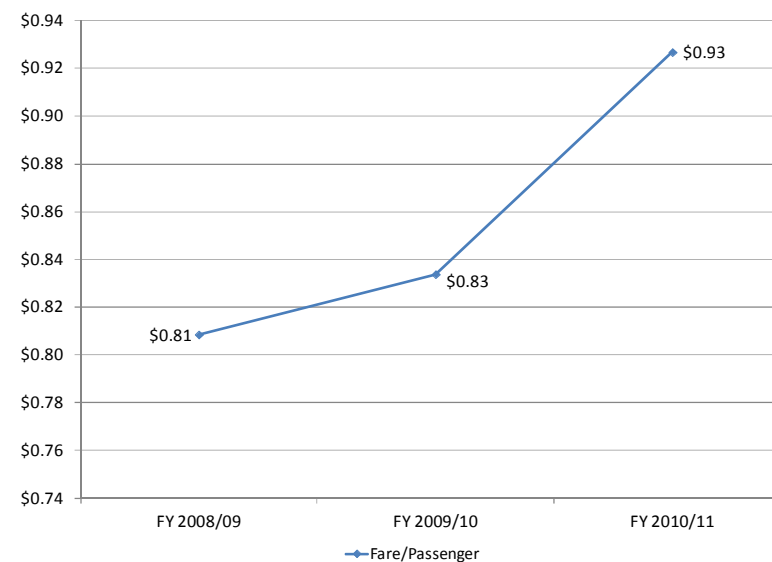


Exhibit B.11 Combined Fare/Passenger



VISTA 126 Service Evaluation

Exhibit B.12 shows the performance measures and indicators for VCTC's VISTA 126 service for fiscal years 2008/09, 2009/10, and 2010/11. Following the exhibit are illustrations of each performance indicator and whether significant trends have occurred during the evaluation period.

When evaluating the performance measures on the top half of the exhibit, several significant changes should be noted. Ridership (passengers) grew by nearly 12 percent this past year, or nearly 24,000 unlinked trips. This change was substantial given there were little to no changes in service miles. In 2010, VCTC adopted a free transfer policy between VISTA bus services which may have positively impacted ridership (the program was implemented in January 2011). Transferring from Dial-A-Ride to VISTA 126 is free; however, VISTA has continued to charge a \$.50 fee when transferring from VISTA 126 to the Dial-A-Ride services in the Heritage Valley.

The increase in fare revenue can be explained by the trend in ridership this past fiscal year. However, fare revenue increased at a faster rate than passengers, which is most likely due to the January 1, 2011 fare increase.

Exhibit B.12 VISTA 126 Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11
Operating Cost	\$399,011	\$391,355	\$405,681
Percent Change		-1.9%	3.7%
Fare Revenue	\$174,010	\$190,465	\$235,672
Percent Change		9.5%	23.7%
Vehicle Service Hours	8,346	7,866	8,359
Percent Change		-5.8%	6.3%
Vehicle Service Miles	230,293	230,453	231,572
Percent Change		0.1%	0.5%
Passengers	196,750	199,043	222,723
Percent Change		1.2%	11.9%
Performance Indicator			
Operating Cost/VSH	\$47.81	\$49.75	\$48.53
Percent Change		4.1%	-2.4%
Operating Cost/VSM	\$1.73	\$1.70	\$1.75
Percent Change		-2.0%	3.2%
Operating Cost/Passenger	\$2.03	\$1.97	\$1.82
Percent Change		-3.0%	-7.4%
Passengers/VSH	23.57	25.30	26.65
Percent Change		7.3%	5.3%
Passengers/VSM	0.85	0.86	0.96
Percent Change		1.1%	11.4%
Farebox Recovery Ratio	43.61%	48.67%	58.09%
Percent Change		11.6%	19.4%
Fare/Passenger	\$0.88	\$0.96	\$1.06
Percent Change		8.2%	10.6%

Source: Ventura County Transportation Commission

The following discussion refers to Exhibits B.13 through B.20 found on pages B-12 and B-13. Each exhibit illustrates the above-listed performance indicators for VISTA 126 for the three most recent fiscal years (FY 2008/09 through FY 2010/11).

VISTA 126 Ridership (Exhibit B.13)

Across the evaluation period, ridership increased on the VISTA 126, more rapidly during FY 2010/11. During FY 2010/11, ridership growth on VISTA 126 accounted for the ridership gains of the combined operations in the Heritage Valley (see Exhibits B.3 and B.4). Ridership fluctuations are not only affected by changes in service operations, but also by external factors such as gas prices and other economic factors (e.g., employment, income, etc.). The most notable change that occurred during this past fiscal year was the adoption of free transfers between VISTA bus services, which could be a factor in the positive ridership trends on this service.

VISTA 126 Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour (Exhibit B.14)

Over the evaluation period, this metric spiked in FY 2009/10 but fell in FY 2010/11. The spike in FY 2009/10 was largely a result of near six percent decline in Vehicle Service Hours and a two percent decrease in Operating Costs. In other words, the reduction in Vehicle Service Hours did not translate directly to operational cost savings.

By contrast, in FY 2010/11 the increase in Vehicle Service Miles was proportionally larger than the Operating Cost on VISTA 126. As a result, VCTC experienced a more efficient operation this fiscal year than during the prior fiscal year.

VISTA 126 Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Mile (Exhibit B.15)

The service's Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Mile had the inverse trend than what was observed in the Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour metric. Over the evaluated period, Vehicle Service Miles increased at less than once percent while Operating Costs fluctuated. Consequently, when the Operating Cost increased by four percent in FY 2010/11, Vehicle Service Miles only increased by 0.5 percent; indicating the increase in cost was associated with other factors such as cost of fuel, wages/salaries, or other administrative costs.

VISTA 126 Operating Cost/Passenger (Exhibit B.16)

Given ridership grew rapidly over the evaluation period, it is not surprising the Operating Cost/Passenger metric declined over the evaluation period. This was particularly true during FY 2010/11 where the Operating Cost/Passenger fell by over seven percent. This means VCTC is expending less per passenger each fiscal year. This is a positive trend which suggests VISTA 126 is operating in a fairly cost-effective manner.

VISTA 126 Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour (Exhibit B.17)

Over the evaluation period, Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour increased steadily over the evaluation period. This metric indicated VISTA 126 is transporting an increasing number of passengers every fiscal year, reflecting an increased demand for the service.

[VISTA 126 Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile \(Exhibit B.18\)](#)

As with the Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour metric, the Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile metric increased over the evaluation period. Given Vehicle Service Miles increased by less than one percent each year, FY 2010/11 saw a large increase in the metric due to the double-digit growth in ridership. The positive trend in this metric suggests VISTA 126 is transporting more patrons per mile and as is operating efficiently. As a result, we believe no significant route restructuring or service changes are warranted at this time.

[VISTA 126 Farebox Recovery Ratio \(Exhibit B.19\)](#)

The service's farebox recovery ratio increased rapidly across the evaluation period. By FY 2010/11, the farebox recovery ratio hit 58 percent, which means fare and other revenues covered more than half of the Operating Costs. This can be partially explained by the fare increases to VISTA's inter-county services in 2010 and system-wide in 2011. In addition, ridership has increased, further affecting this metric positively.

[VISTA 126 Fare/Passenger \(Exhibit B.20\)](#)

Given the increase in ridership and fare revenue, it was not surprising to see this metric increase over the evaluation period. Based on the fare revenue data, more patrons are paying the general public fare rather than using discounted fares or monthly passes.

Exhibit B.13 VISTA 126 Ridership

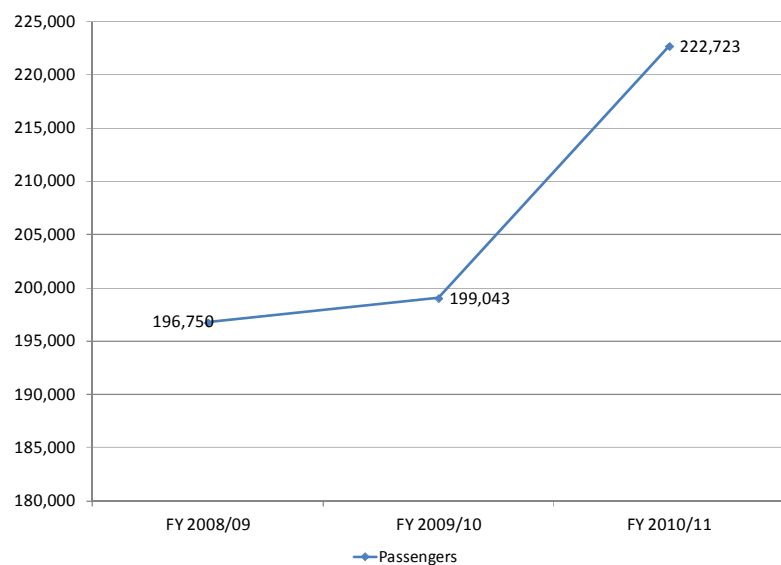


Exhibit B.14 VISTA 126 Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour

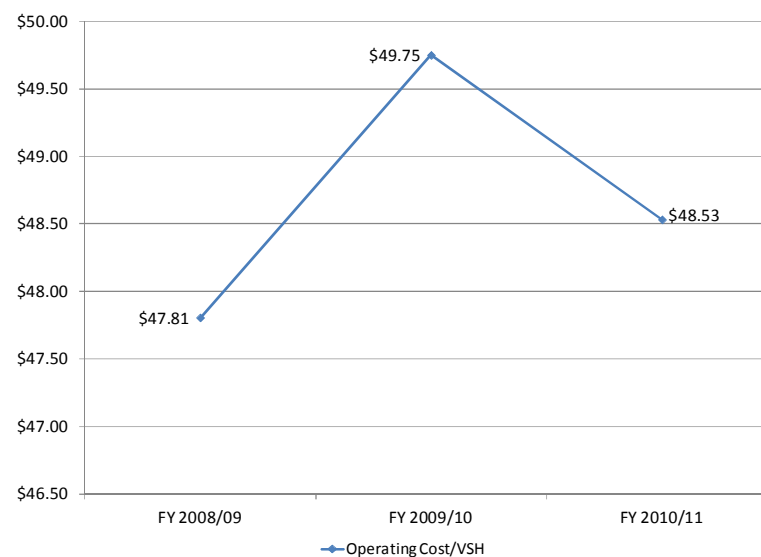


Exhibit B.15 VISTA 126 Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Mile

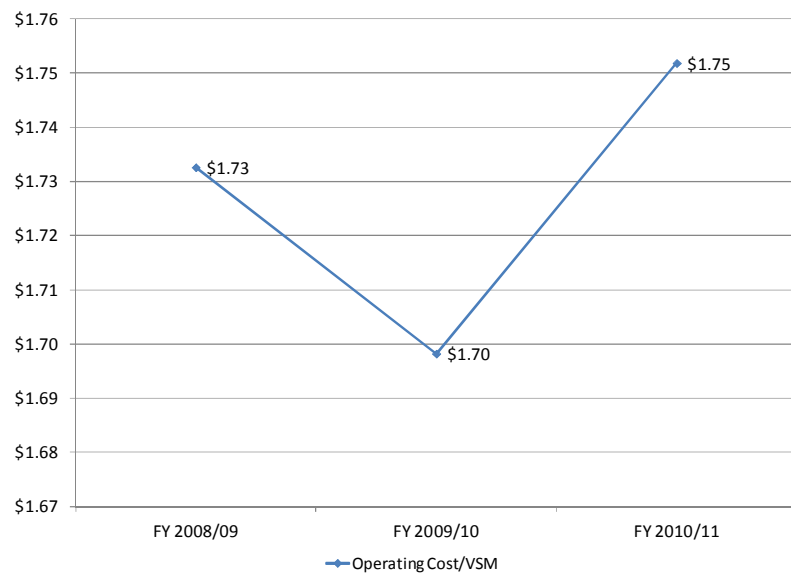


Exhibit B.16 VISTA 126 Operating Cost/Passenger

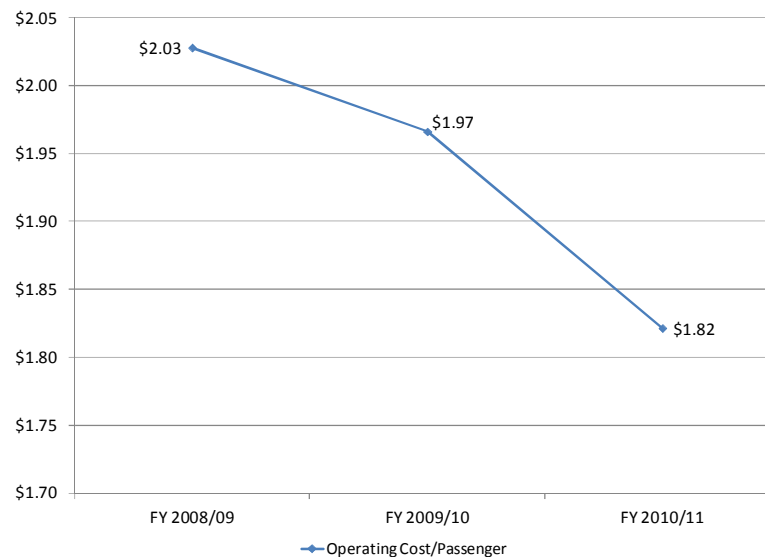


Exhibit B.17 VISTA 126 Passengers/Vehicle Service Hours

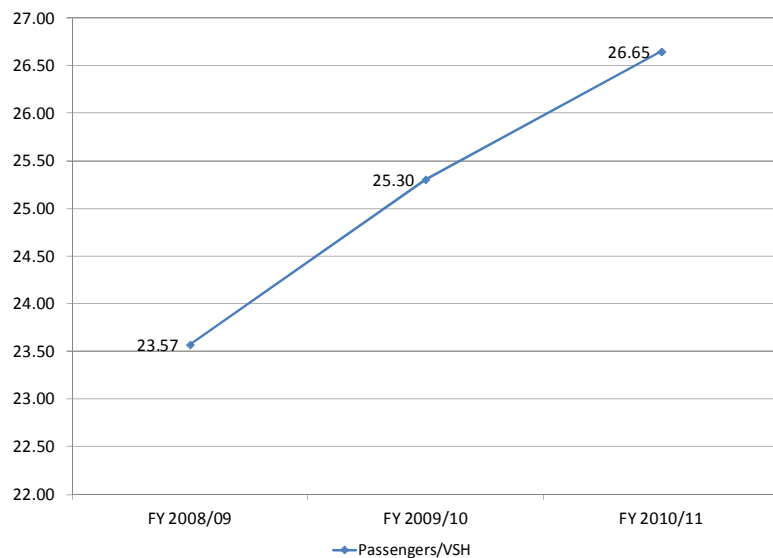


Exhibit B.18 VISTA 126 Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile

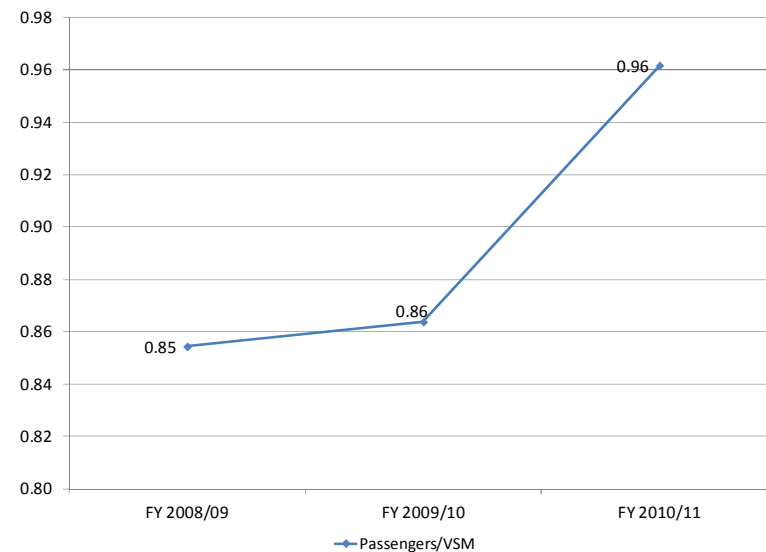


Exhibit B.19 VISTA 126 Farebox Recovery Ratio

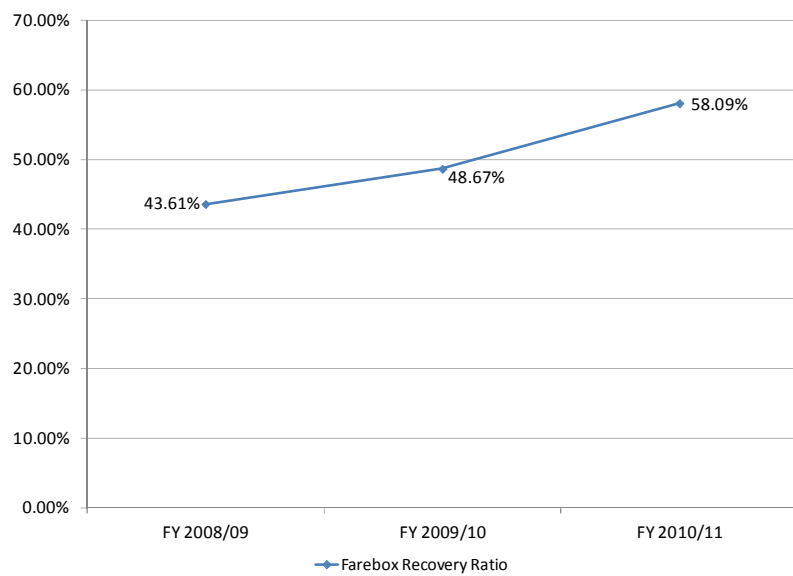
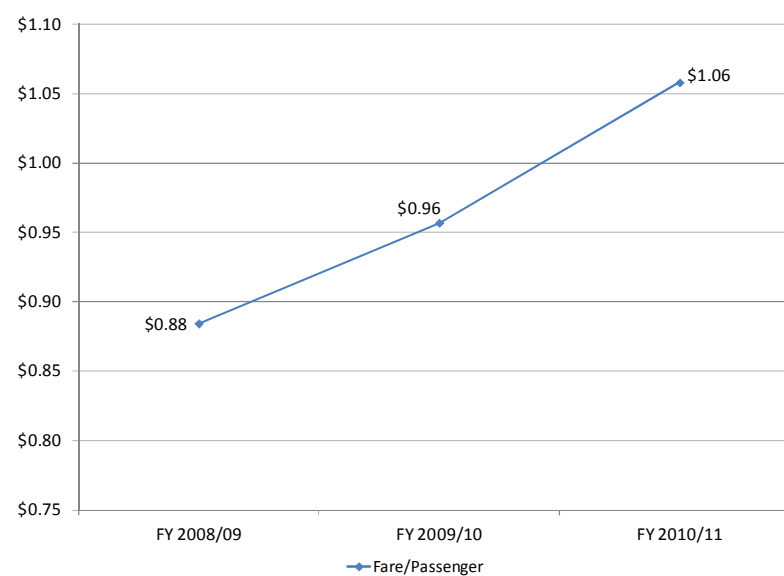


Exhibit B.20 VISTA 126 Fare/Passenger



Dial-A-Ride Service Evaluation

In this section we evaluate the Dial-A-Ride programs operating in Santa Paula and Fillmore-Piru. Exhibit B.21 shows the performance measures and indicators for the combined Dial-A-Ride services.

The most notable differences in performance measures between the two community Dial-A-Ride programs in the past fiscal year can be seen in operating cost, fare revenue, and vehicle service hours. For the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride, operating cost decreased; however, it was accompanied by a similar decrease in vehicle service hours.

Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride has been experiencing an increasing trend in fare revenue, while Fillmore-Piru has experienced very little to no change in fare revenue. Given the January 2011 fare increase, it is not surprising fare revenue would increase, as long as ridership remains stable.

Note: Santa Paula Commuter Bus performance data is included in Dial-A-Ride statistics. VCTC does not capture this data separately. The commuter service is considered a “standing reservation” and therefore calculated with the existing Dial-A-Ride services.

Exhibit B.21 Dial-A-Ride Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride			Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride		
	FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11	FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11
Operating Cost	\$530,805	\$579,771	\$599,752	\$532,149	\$556,054	\$533,578
Percent Change		9.2%	3.4%		4.5%	-4.0%
Fare Revenue	\$68,078	\$73,165	\$78,209	\$83,561	\$83,187	\$83,214
Percent Change		7.5%	6.9%		-0.4%	0.0%
Vehicle Service Hours	14,817	15,734	16,158	14,854	15,404	14,457
Percent Change		6.2%	2.7%		3.7%	-6.1%
Vehicle Service Miles	155,687	169,826	167,022	181,485	184,618	180,014
Percent Change		9.1%	-1.7%		1.7%	-2.5%
Passengers	98,346	104,267	99,912	107,705	112,633	105,780
Percent Change		6.0%	-4.2%		4.6%	-6.1%
Performance Indicator						
Operating Cost/VSH	\$35.83	\$36.85	\$37.12	\$35.83	\$36.10	\$36.91
Percent Change		2.9%	0.7%		0.8%	2.2%
Operating Cost/VSM	\$3.41	\$3.41	\$3.59	\$2.93	\$3.01	\$2.96
Percent Change		0.1%	5.2%		2.7%	-1.6%
Operating Cost/Passenger	\$5.40	\$5.56	\$6.00	\$4.94	\$4.94	\$5.04
Percent Change		3.0%	8.0%		-0.1%	2.2%
Passengers/VSH	6.64	6.63	6.18	7.25	7.31	7.32
Percent Change		-0.2%	-6.7%		0.8%	0.1%
Passengers/VSM	0.63	0.61	0.60	0.59	0.61	0.59
Percent Change		-2.8%	-2.6%		2.8%	-3.7%
Farebox Recovery Ratio	12.83%	12.62%	13.04%	15.70%	14.96%	15.60%
Percent Change		-1.6%	3.3%		-4.7%	4.2%
Fare/Passenger	\$0.69	\$0.70	\$0.78	\$0.78	\$0.74	\$0.79
Percent Change		1.4%	11.6%		-4.8%	6.5%

The following discussion refers to Exhibits B.22 through B.29 found on pages B-18 and B-19. Each exhibit illustrates the above listed performance indicators for Santa Paula and Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride services for the three most recent fiscal years (FY 2008/09 through FY 2010/11).

Dial-A-Ride Ridership (Exhibit B.22)

Overall, the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride had consistently higher ridership than the Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride services. Despite the gains in ridership for both programs in FY 2009/10, it was followed by a similar decrease in ridership during FY 2010/11.

Based on the fare category breakdown, the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride had more patrons use the “Adult” fare category, which suggests the Dial-A-Ride program in the Fillmore-Piru area is used beyond the traditional Dial-A-Ride demographic (i.e., seniors and persons with disabilities).

Dial-A-Ride Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour (Exhibit B.23)

Across the evaluation period, both Dial-A-Ride services experienced increases in the Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour. While both programs had identical Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour

during FY 2009/10, the Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride operating cost jumped almost five percent higher than the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride program.

[Dial-A-Ride Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Mile \(Exhibit B.24\)](#)

Unlike the Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour metric above, the Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Mile metric remained relatively stable over the evaluation period. The only noticeable shift in the metric was in FY 2010/11 when the Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride service experienced a five percent increase, when Operating Cost increased and Vehicle Service Miles decreased. This indicates the increased Operating Cost did not translate to more service.

[Dial-A-Ride Operating Cost/Passenger \(Exhibit B.25\)](#)

The Operating Cost/Passenger metric had a relatively flat trend for the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride yet increased steadily for the Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride. The Fillmore-Piru carries more passengers and operates at a lower cost than the Santa Paula service. The lower Operating Cost/Passenger iterates the inherent demand and reliance on the Fillmore-Piru demand response service. Although the service appears efficient, to increase efficiency and optimize value and full utilization of dispatching software Trapeze used by FATCO, it is critical dispatchers are trained sufficiently on the program.

[Dial-A-Ride Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour \(Exhibit B.26\)](#)

While the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride program was able to maintain its Passenger/Vehicle Service Hour ratio, the Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride experienced a decline in this metric. The decline in this metric for the Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride program came from ridership decreasing while Vehicle Service Hours increased. This means that while VCTC invested more operational dollars into this service, ridership did not increase. The decline in ridership might also reflect the January 2011 fare adjustment which raised Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride fares by 25 percent and the discounted senior fare age to 65.

[Dial-A-Ride Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile \(Exhibit B.27\)](#)

For both programs, Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile declined over the evaluation period. Only the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride saw an increase in this metric during FY 2009/10. The spike in this metric for the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride program was due to a larger proportional increase in ridership than Vehicle Service Miles. Given both programs experienced declining Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile, VCTC should consider methods of increasing ridership including increased marketing and public outreach.

[Dial-A-Ride Farebox Recovery Ratio \(Exhibit B.28\)](#)

Across the evaluation period, both programs experienced little variation in their respective farebox recovery ratios. While each program had a fairly stable farebox recovery ratio, the reason for said stability was specific to each program. The Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride service had a stable farebox recovery ratio because the fare revenue and Operating Costs changed at relatively the same rate. By contrast, the stable farebox recovery ratio for the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride came from miniscule changes in fare revenue while Operating Cost fluctuated.

[Dial-A-Ride Fare/Passenger \(Exhibit B.29\)](#)

In comparing the Fare/Passenger for the two Dial-A-Ride programs, the Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride experienced an increase in the metric over the evaluation period while the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride service saw the metric fluctuate between FY 2009/10 and FY 2010/11.

This is likely the result of the 25 percent fare increase implemented in January 2011 on all VISTA routes. Although it is likely a share of riders shifted from public transit to alternative modes like biking/walking, the Dial-A-Ride programs remain the primary travel option aside from the personal vehicle within the Heritage Valley. Given the level of patron dependence on the service, the raise in fares resulted in an unlikely trend when factoring traditional fare elasticity relationships assumes a ridership decline with an increase in fares.

Additionally, the increase in this metric for the Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride service suggests more patrons who fall into the “Adult/Student” fare category are using the service relative to other rider groups. This conclusion is further supported by the fare data provided by VCTC, which shows growth for riders in the “Adult” category.

Exhibit B.22 Total Dial-A-Ride Ridership

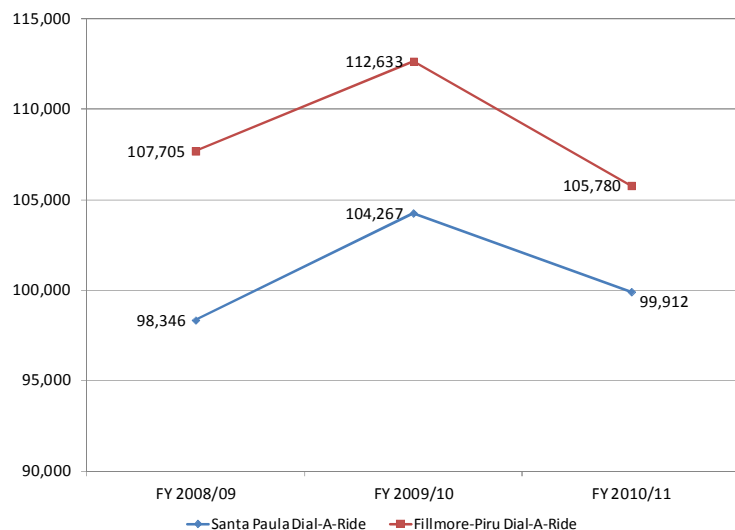


Exhibit B.23 Dial-A-Ride Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour

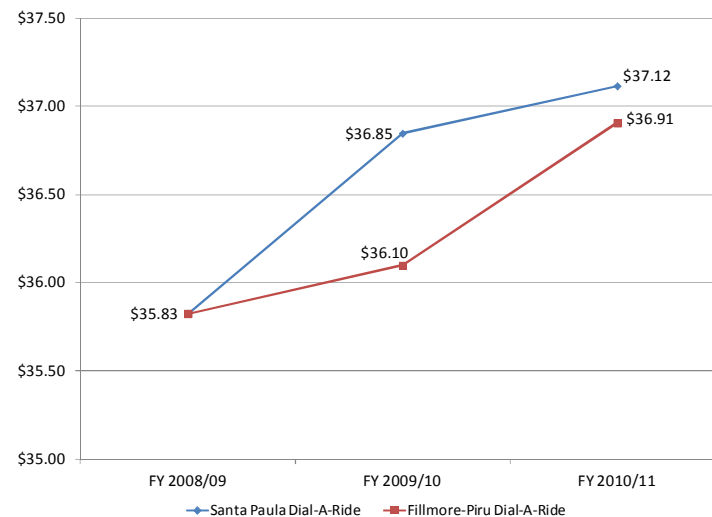


Exhibit B.24 Dial-A-Ride Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Mile

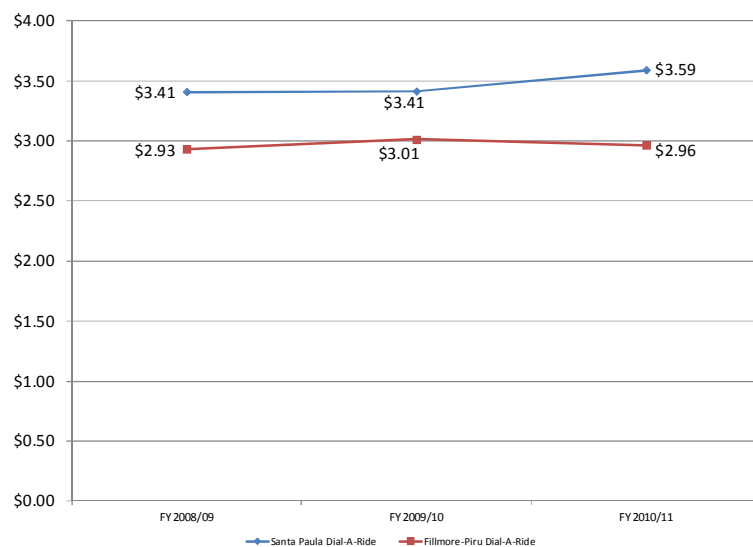


Exhibit B.25 Dial-A-Ride Operating Cost/Passenger

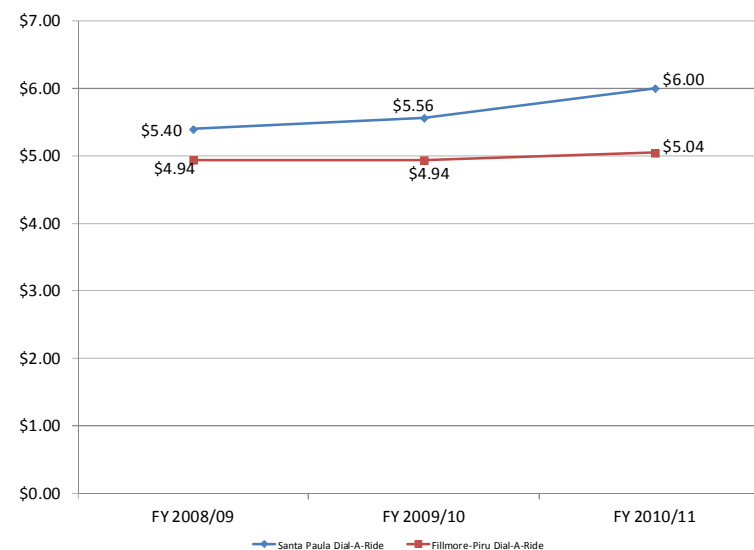


Exhibit B.26 Dial-A-Ride Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour

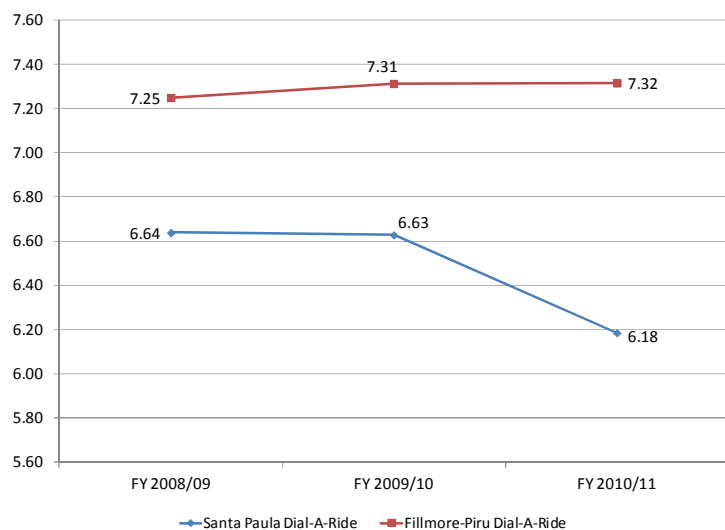


Exhibit B.27 Dial-A-Ride Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile

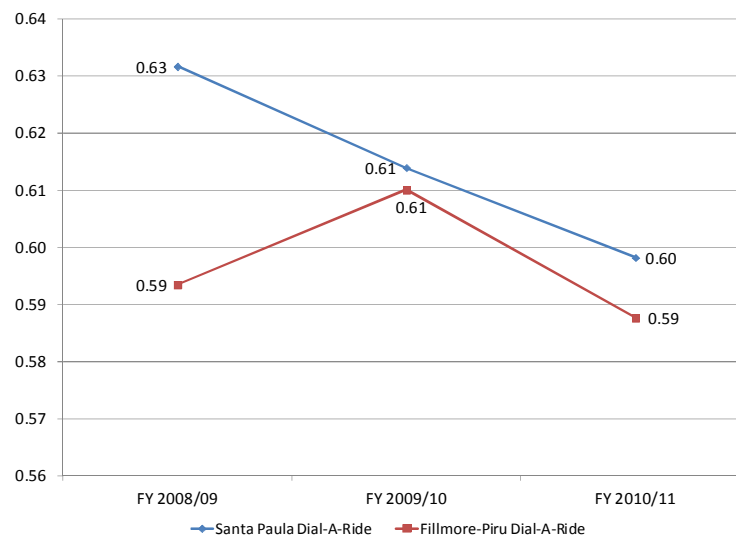


Exhibit B.28 Dial-A-Ride Farebox Recovery Ratio

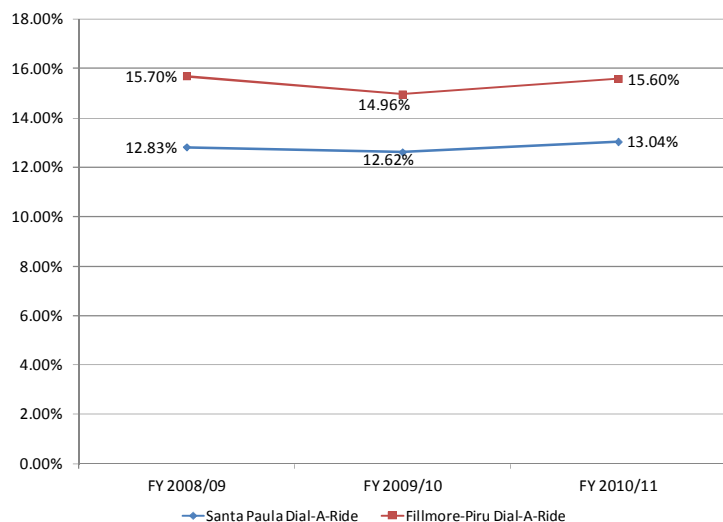
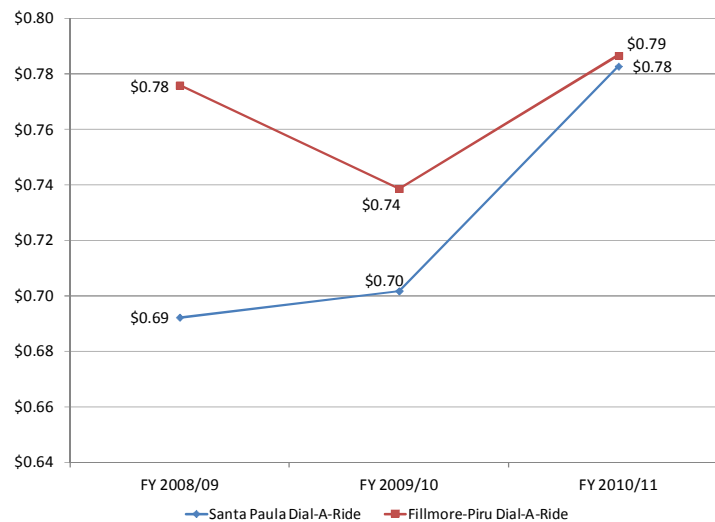


Exhibit B.29 Dial-A-Ride Fare/Passenger



TDA Article 8 Unmet Transit Needs Evaluation

The “unmet transit needs” process annually evaluates transit needs of individuals or groups by providing a forum for public comment regarding their transportation needs. As required by California’s Transportation Development Act (TDA), this public hearing process serves as an opportunity to solicit testimony on local and/or regional transit needs. Through this process, testimony is reviewed using VCTC’s adopted definitions of “unmet transit needs” and “reasonable to meet.”

An unmet need exists if an individual of any age or physical condition is unable to transport themselves due to deficiencies present in the existing transportation system. Exclusions from this definition include minor operational improvements or improvements scheduled or funded for implementation in subsequent fiscal years.

Below are VCTC’s adopted criteria:

Public Utilities Code (PUC) Section 99401.5 (c) requires the transportation planning agency (VCTC) to hold at least one public hearing pursuant to Section 99238.5 to solicit comments on the Unmet Transit Needs that may exist within the jurisdiction and that may be reasonable to meet by establishing or contracting for new public transportation, or specialized transportation, or by expanding existing services.

All Unmet Transit Needs that are reasonable to meet must be funded before any allocation is made to streets and roads pursuant to PUC Section 99401.5 (e). Under Section 99238 (c) (2), the Public Utilities Code specifies that the social service transportation advisory council, Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee/Social Service Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC/SSTAC) in our county, has the responsibility to participate in the annual process and must review and recommend action by VCTC on the findings. This is done at the discretion of VCTC and is not required by statute. A panel consisting of a number of the VCTC Commissioners is appointed annually by the VCTC Chairman to act as the hearing board. The full VCTC then considers all the input from these sources and adopts the findings.

According to the California Public Utilities Code (PUC) Section 99401.5 (d) the Commission must find by adopting a resolution that either:

- *There are no Unmet Transit Needs;*
- *There are no Unmet Transit Needs that are reasonable to meet; or,*
- *There are Unmet Transit Needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet.*

The resolution approving the findings must include information that provides the basis for the Commission decision. In accordance with PUC Section 99401.5 (c) the Commission adopted definitions of “Unmet Transit Need” and “Reasonable to Meet” at the January 5, 1996 VCTC meeting and reaffirmed these definitions at its December 3, 2011 meeting.

Following are the adopted definitions of “Unmet Transit Need” and “Reasonable to Meet”:

“Unmet Transit Need”:

“Unmet transit needs” are, at a minimum, those public transportation services that have been identified by substantial community input through the public hearing process or are identified in a Short Range Transit Plan, in local Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit plans and/or in the Regional Transportation Plan that have not yet been implemented or funded.

“Reasonable to Meet”

An unmet transit need shall be considered reasonable to meet if the proposed service ⁽¹⁾ is in general compliance with the following criteria:

Equity

- 1. The proposed service will not cause reductions in existing transit services that have an equal or higher priority.*
- 2. The proposed service will require a subsidy generally equivalent to other similar services.*

Timing

- 1. The proposed service is in response to an existing rather than future transit need.*

Feasibility

- 1. The proposed service can be provided within available funding. ⁽²⁾*
- 2. The proposed service can be provided with the existing fleet or under contract to a private provider.*

Performance

- 1. The proposed service will not unduly affect the operator's ability to maintain the required passenger fare ratio for its system as a whole.*
- 2. The proposed service will meet the scheduled passenger fare ratio standards as described in the recommended benchmarks for the passenger farebox recovery ratio for new transit services in Ventura County.*
- 3. The estimated number of passengers to be carried will be in the range of other similar services, and/or, the proposed service provides a "link" or connection that contributes to the effectiveness of the overall transit system.*

Community Acceptance

1. *The proposed service has community acceptance and/or support as determined by the unmet needs public hearing record, inclusion in adopted programs and plans, adopted governing board positions and other existing information.*

⁽¹⁾ *Proposed service is defined as the specific transit service identified as an unmet need (as defined) and which requires evaluation against this definition of “reasonable to meet.”*

⁽²⁾ *Per State law, the lack of available resources shall not be the sole reason for finding that a transit need is not reasonable to meet.*²⁰

Exhibit B.30 presents findings or comments expressed at “unmet transit needs” hearings held across the past five years. *(Note: not all findings documented or reported through the “unmet transit needs” process are presented in Exhibit B.30. Due to insufficient demand identified for these findings, no further action was required.)* Findings identified as actual “unmet transit needs” are listed by fiscal year.

In FY 2005/06 a need was identified to implement a transit service to the Ventura County Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) in El Rio on a demonstration basis. This finding continued across the next three fiscal years and was dismissed in FY 2008/09 due to service’s inability to meet the performance criteria established by VCTC. Also emphasized through the “unmet transit need” process was the continual monitoring or continuation of demonstration projects like the Conejo-Warner Shuttle (“Senior Concerns Shuttle”) which sought to address transit inaccessibility concerns for the senior community in Ventura County.

Although not found to be an “unmet need,” a finding was identified in the Heritage Valley for service to Wheeler Canyon. Although it was outside any logical service area and too limited to sustain transit, the Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride service was modified to provide limited service to the site. Virtually no demand for the service was generated (one or two calls per year).

On February 7, 2011, VCTC held the FY 2011/12 “unmet transit needs” hearing at the Camarillo city council chambers, with additional evening sessions in Oxnard and Thousand Oaks. A total of 44 supplemental comments provided in writing and by telephone were submitted in addition to in-person testimonials.

This recent “unmet transit needs” hearing generated several recommended findings, yet no unmet transit need was identified as “reasonable to meet” (VCTC Resolution #2011-05).

²⁰ Ventura County Transportation Commission, “Unmet Transit Needs” Background and Criteria.

Exhibit B.30 Annual Summary: Unmet Transit Needs

FY 2005/06
Implement transit service to the Ventura County Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) in El Rio by or in partnership with the County of Ventura, on a demonstration basis.
Continue to monitor SCAT* transit demonstration service in the El Rio/Nyeland Acres area.
FY 2006/07
Continue to work with the County to monitor the County JJC transit demonstration service to the Juvenile Justice Center.
FY 2007/08
Monitor transit service demonstration projects underway, including the Ventura County Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) in El Rio, the Conejo-Warner Center Shuttle ("Senior Concerns Shuttle"), and SCAT Route 12.
FY 2008/09
Monitor the Ventura County program to provide access to the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) in El Rio (which is no longer considered in existing transit service since it failed to meet adopted VCTC Unmet Transit Needs performance criteria).
FY 2009/10
Continue all existing bus services, except Gold Coast Transit Route 12 and JJC Dial-A-Ride, but including the Conejo-Warner Center Shuttle ("Senior Concerns Shuttle") demonstration project.
FY 2010/11
No findings or comments were found that directly impact the study area in the FY 2010/11 Unmet Transit Needs report.
FY 2011/12
No findings or comments were found that directly impact the study area in the FY 2011/12 Unmet Transit Needs report.

*SCAT became Gold Coast Transit in July 2007

Source: Ventura County Transportation Commission

Recent Developments

In response to the volatility of the current funding climate, and in an effort to sustain at a minimum the baseline services within the Heritage Valley, VCTC has implemented operational, financial, and governance changes to VISTA 126 as well as Fillmore-Piru and Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride services across the last two fiscal years. In light of the recent passage of Senate Bill 716 (which requires VCTC to use all TDA funding by July 1, 2014 exclusively for transit), the Commission continues to remain proactive in assessing and addressing future demand in spite of funding uncertainties through encouraging public participation in the service planning process. Recently, VCTC prompted the development of the Regional Transit Study which focused on developing vision and guiding principles for transit in Ventura County as well as addressed the requirements stipulated by SB 716. This bill will have limited impacts on the study area. The only known impact will be in the city of Santa Paula, where additional funds for transit will be programmed in 2014 (unless the legislature changes the way funds are allocated).

The City of Fillmore uses all its TDA funds for transit, as does the City of Ventura. This limits VCTC's ability to expand VISTA 126 (costs are shared by four agencies: City of Ventura, County of Ventura, City of Santa Paula, and City of Fillmore) and the Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride. Additionally, a Steering Committee was appointed in April 2010 to meet regarding the Regional Transit Study. This same committee has been involved in the development of the Heritage Valley Transit Study.

To ensure public awareness of potential changes to the VISTA services and Fillmore-Piru and Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride services, VCTC has held multiple public hearings and meetings to discuss service reductions and fare increases, especially with respect to services in the Heritage Valley. Exhibit B.31 reflects these recent developments impacting countywide and Heritage Valley services (VISTA 126 and Fillmore-Piru and Santa Paula Dial-A-Ride services).

Exhibit B.31 Regional Transit Developments

Recent Developments
FY 2010/11
March 2010: Contract with MIG to conduct the VCTC Regional Transit Study.
April 2010: Ad hoc committee appointed to assist consultants and staff with RTS.
June 2010: Commission approved continued participation of VISTA in specific to promotional fares for APTA-sponsored "DUMP THE PUMP" day, and the use of discount fares for school field trips under certain conditions.
June 2010: VCTC extends the last two trips on VISTA 126 to offset reductions in DAR service to Piru.
July 2010: Public meeting held in July 2010 to discuss two-step fare increase for Coastal Express and Conejo Connection.
October 2010: VCTC approved implementation of free transfers between VISTA (intercity) services.
December 3, 2010: Commission approves amended FY 2010/11 VISTA Highway and Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride Cooperative Agreement between Fillmore, Santa Paula, San Buenaventura, VCTC, and Ventura. Amended agreement allows modifications to the basic formula so that those agencies with sufficient TDA funds could maintain or increase service.
December 2011: As a result of carry-over of TDA funds for the City of Fillmore, weekday service on Fillmore DAR reinstated, funding two vehicles to operate until 7 p.m. and one vehicle to 8 p.m. VISTA Hwy 126 intercity evening hours extended to provide service to Piru and Rancho Sespe.
January 1, 2011: VISTA's intercity bus service and Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride introduced fare increase adopted by the Commission on November 5, 2010. New VISTA fares and Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride passes increases go into effect, while the eligibility age for senior discounts are raised to 65 years of age.
January 3, 2011: Approved November 2010. DAR cash fares and e-purse fares increase.
February 2011: VISTA replaces two older vehicles with two new 16-seat buses. One bus is placed in Santa Paula to address at-capacity on the commuter route. The second is placed in Fillmore to mitigate overcrowding between Fillmore and Piru/Rancho Sespe.
February 7, 2011: Annual Unmet Transit Needs meeting is held at Camarillo city hall.
February 2011: Discussion held regarding VCTC maintaining its current fleet to avoid large Capital investment for bus purchase and placement. This fails to address the exceeding demand for peak hour VISTA 126 services and the associated challenge of finding future funding sources. Staff will develop a funding plan to address this matter.
March 4, 2011: Board consideration for a policy for free and discounted fares to fund promotion and marketing of VCTC services.
May 10, 2011: Commission approves revised VISTA 126 and Heritage Valley dial-a-ride cost allocation.
June 3, 2011: Commission approves contract with Nextbus for five years at a cost of \$668,850, funding provided through FTA.

FY 2011/12
July 9, 2011: Commission approves contract to complete Heritage Valley Transit Study.
August 30, 2011: Additional vehicles (4) placed in service during the weekday evenings in Fillmore-Piru due to better than expected sale tax revenue.
September 9, 2011: Commission recommends continuation of VISTA free inter-service transfer agreement.
September 17, 2011: Fare increase introduced across all routes/services.
September 21, 2011: Continuation of county-wide transfer agreement.

APPENDIX C – COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A key component of the transit study, community input was solicited through several outreach activities. Outreach was targeted not only to persons who currently ride transit services (such as VISTA 126 or Dial-A-Ride), but also to the general public (non-riders). In addition, more intensive efforts were made to garner input from individuals who are dependent on public transit services for the majority of their mobility needs.

Given the service and funding challenges currently faced by VCTC, it was especially important to engage the community throughout the plan's development. This not only ensured transparency was maintained, but that service alternatives were community-driven. To meet this project goal, we employed a comprehensive community involvement strategy which included the three community outreach and market research efforts discussed on the following pages. Each section provides an overview of the methodology used as well as the outcome. The three outreach activities were:

- Focus groups and community presentations,
- Community survey, and
- Dial-A-Ride customer survey.

The project team also coordinated with the Technical Advisory Committee (composed of staff from study area jurisdictions) as well the Political Advisory Committee (comprised of elected officials). The purpose of the Committees' involvement was to provide direction, review project deliverables, and help secure support for community outreach. Two meetings were held with the TAC, one at the beginning of the project to discuss goals and outreach strategies (August 16, 2011), and a second one (with the PAC) to discuss initial findings (October 31, 2011).

Key findings noted in this chapter as derived from outreach efforts include:

- Perceived poor on-time performance of both VISTA 126 and Dial-A-Ride services;
- Potential for increased marketing of current fare programs as many residents are unaware of available resources; and
- The need for more fixed-route service as the current Dial-A-Ride programs are running at or near capacity, often serving students or working adults.

C.1 — FOCUS GROUPS AND COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Methodology

Traditional outreach methods such as surveys or “big tent” community meetings may not reach community members who are not historically involved in the planning process yet may have the greatest need for transit services (i.e., low-income or ride-dependent). Therefore, to further solicit public input regarding transit services and mobility needs in the Heritage Valley, stakeholder and targeted outreach was conducted at various social/human service and community organizations.

The consultant team and VCTC staff developed a list of local stakeholder organizations representing target populations such as low-income individuals/families, students, senior adults, and persons with disabilities. Once contacts were identified, the project team coordinated with the various stakeholders to schedule small group discussions (focus groups) or attendance at regularly scheduled meetings. In total, six meetings were conducted between September 17, 2011 and November 22, 2011.

Exhibit C.1.1 summarizes the stakeholders for this project and the type of forum conducted for each. The type of activity varied depending on the organization, as well as the availability of the contact and desired participants.

Exhibit C.1.1 Summary of Stakeholder Outreach

Organization	Activity Format	Participants	Date
Fillmore Senior Center	Small group	Seniors	9/20/2011
Fillmore One-Step A La Vez (youth)	Small group	Youth	9/21/2011
Piru Neighborhood Council	Community Meeting	General Public	9/22/2011
Santa Paula Senior Center	Small group	Seniors	9/21/2011
Task Force to End Homelessness in Santa Paula	Presentation/Survey	Homeless	9/22/2011
Rancho Sespe Apartments	Small group	Low-Income	11/17/2011

In addition to the above-mentioned stakeholder group meetings, our project team conducted a series of community meetings to address the community at-large. A second round of community meetings, to be held in conjunction with regular public meetings (i.e. city/town council meetings), will be scheduled following upcoming discussion with the PAC and TAC.

The goal of the focus groups and open discussions was to gather feedback regarding need, perceptions, opinions, and attitudes toward transit services within the Heritage Valley, with a focus on ride-dependent demographics. Questions were asked in an interactive group setting where participants were free to talk with the facilitator and other group members. Each participant had an opportunity to speak and was provided with an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback (via surveys). Focus group participants were also invited to complete community and Dial-A-Ride customer surveys as applicable.

Postage-paid reply envelopes were provided for stakeholders who were not present.

Summary of Results

Rancho Sespe Residential Focus Group

The residential multi-family complex is located about five miles east of Fillmore and two miles west of Piru, on the south side of State Route 126. The complex is owned by the farmworkers' nonprofit corporation and has 100 dwelling units, a community center, and a childcare center on a 20-acre site. The complex was selected for a focus group because many of its residents are low-income, language-isolated, and minority (largely Hispanic). Transit services near the complex include VISTA Route 126 and Fillmore-Piru Dial-A-Ride. Although only three residents of the complex attended the focus group, the attendees provided valuable input on behalf of many of the other residents. Small groups such as this often promote more open dialogue as attendees feel more comfortable sharing their concerns. The following are key findings from this focus group conducted on September 17, 2011.

- Most residents are aware of and use VISTA 126.
- There is a need for mid-day fixed-route bus service.
- There is a perceived language barrier between Spanish-speaking passengers and drivers.
- The bus is frequently either late or leaves stops early (causing passengers to miss transfers), therefore residents have difficulty getting to appointments on time or even catching the bus.
- Having exact change for the bus can be difficult; one attendee stated sometimes he had to pay more than the fare for his first trip, and then doesn't have enough cash for the second trip.
- There is a desire for VISTA 126 to pick up near the Rancho Sespe property (or across the street) going west toward Fillmore so riders do not have to board the bus going eastbound and ride through Piru to get to westbound locations such as Fillmore. Currently, VISTA 126 does not make stops in Piru or Rancho Sespe going westbound, only eastbound on a limited schedule.

Overall, residents of this complex have limited access to transit services. Therefore, it is critical the service that does come to the community be on time and not leave stops early, as this may be a customer's only mobility option. Multiple-ride bus passes should be advertised at this particular location and made more accessible to these communities so riders do not always have to have exact change.

One Step A La Vez Focus Group

One Step A La Vez offers a variety of programs for youth ages 13 to 19 residing in Fillmore and Piru. Our bilingual outreach staff coordinated with the youth program to conduct a small group discussion on September 21, 2011. During the focus group, participants were asked to consider their needs versus their desires with respect to VISTA bus services. Given the focus group consisted of school-age youth, the following comments are primarily in regards to student and/or home-to-school transportation

needs. Some identified needs may not be reasonable to meet due to lack of funding and/or demand. Although some issues were raised regarding the availability of VISTA bus services during school start and end times in the Heritage Valley, it should be noted there is school bus transportation service to Piru and Rancho Sespe.

- Buses are overcrowded during peak hours; students request additional bus service during these time periods.
- There is a desire for extended service hours on local Dial-A-Ride; current operating hours do not allow students to arrive at school on time in the mornings.
- There is a desire for extended service hours from Heritage Valley to Ventura (specifically the Ventura mall), possibly as late as 8:30 or 9:00 p.m.
- There is a desire for bus service to Santa Clarita from Heritage Valley; youth would be willing to pay a similar fare as on the VISTA bus to Ventura.
- Participants requested a discounted rate for students on local Dial-A-Ride, as current fare of \$1.75 is difficult to pay. Students indicated a fare of \$1.25 would be reasonable.

Fillmore Senior Center Focus Group

A focus group was conducted with senior center participants on September 20, 2011. Primary concerns and input regarding transit needs are summarized below.

- There is a lack of affordable transportation to the senior center for meal services. Participants expressed a desire for more tokens for qualifying Nutritional Program participants.
- Participants who ride the bus are very satisfied with VISTA service and feel the senior fare rate is a good deal.
- Some participants were not aware of VISTA fares, indicating the need for additional information at senior center regarding transit services.
- There is a desire for a fixed-fee monthly pass for seniors.
- There is a desire for local shuttle service around Fillmore.
- Participants feel there is a need for additional driver training, both sensitivity and “behind-the-wheel.”

Overall, additional information about available services should be provided to the senior center. Many seniors may not be able to afford any fare increase due to living on a fixed income.

Piru Neighborhood Council Meeting

On September 22, 2011, the project team attended a Piru Neighborhood Council meeting and presented project overview and goals. The meeting elicited input regarding transit services and unmet needs.

- Participants stated family members rely on the VISTA service and enjoy the routes available.

- There is a desire for additional service information distribution locations.
- There is a desire for additional safety features onboard buses to prevent/deter crimes such as vandalism.
- There is a desire for service linking Heritage Valley with Santa Clarita.

Santa Paula Senior Center Focus Group

To facilitate input from seniors at the Santa Paula Senior Center, our project staff coordinated with Senior Center staff to arrive prior to the start of the monthly senior lunch event on September 21, 2011. This allowed the project team to speak with three small groups of seniors attending the lunch. Towards the end of the event, the project team provided an overview of the study and invited participants to complete community surveys.

- Participants are grateful for Dial-A-Ride services and VISTA bus.
- Many participants experienced late arrival of Dial-A-Ride buses.
- Dial-A-Ride patrons are unable to schedule trips during the peak student travel times.
- There is a desire for more information regarding transit services at the Center.

Task Force to End Homelessness in Santa Paula Meeting

Project team attended a meeting of the Task Force to End Homelessness in Santa Paula on September 22, 2011 to garner input from representatives of the homeless community. Moore & Associates and VCTC staff presented a brief background and goals of the project to the Task Force.

- Primary clientele has severely limited mobility options due to low-income status.
- Smaller rideshare solutions to job sites may be a more efficient way of providing transportation for the low-income.
- There is a desire for a medical shuttle or service, which could potentially be supported financially by a third party.

Analysis of Key Findings

Overall, the majority of the residents interviewed are grateful for the services currently being provided within the Heritage Valley, especially the connection to Ventura. However, when discussing service improvements and quality, some notable areas for improvement included on-time performance (buses running late), cost of service (especially for residents with low or fixed income), and driver courtesy. On-time performance and driver courtesy can easily be solved through enforcing existing policies and providing additional driver training, as well as by improvements to the complaint resolution process.

Although several residents stated the cost of service was a barrier for them in accessing certain services, VCTC already has a number of discount fare media options in place. Many residents were either unaware of available services or simply did not know about certain details such as fares and types of fare media, suggesting a lack of information. We recommend VCTC increase marketing of VISTA and Dial-A-Ride services throughout Heritage Valley communities, with special focus on social and human

service organizations as well as community/senior center locations. Some locations would require service brochures, while others might benefit most from a poster (info-post) of service/route information and contact information.

When discussing service expansion, it became evident many residents would enjoy additional service throughout the day to/from Ventura, as well as to/from Santa Clarita. Additional mid-day and evening service hours were also desired.

C.2 — COMMUNITY SURVEY

Methodology

It is important to survey the general community in order to develop service recommendations that may enhance transit's position as an alternative mobility option among "choice riders." The purpose of the community survey was to facilitate feedback from the community at-large and from non-riders throughout the Heritage Valley service area.

The community survey was designed with the following objectives:

- Identify and quantify mobility needs of the community;
- Assess community awareness, use, and perception of existing transit services;
- Codify travel behavior of Heritage Valley area residents; and
- Identify and prioritize potential transit service enhancements for the study area.

Moore & Associates employed a "shoe-leather" approach to solicit community input and insight designed specifically to target the study area demographics (i.e., language-isolated communities). The intercept methodology encouraged interactions between our bilingual (English/Spanish) survey staff and Heritage Valley residents through face-to-face communication. Bilingual project staff conducted candid conversational interviews with riders and non-riders at various community locations throughout Fillmore, Piru, and Santa Paula. Staff completed survey questionnaires during and after each individual interview. Fielding was conducted on August 25 and 27, 2011. Locations included:

- Shopping centers including Santa Paula Shopping Center, Fillmore Shopping Center, Piru Market, Limoneira Ranch, Carniceria Y Mercado La Plaza, and Mi Pueblito Meat Market;
- Community/public places including churches, libraries, Boys and Girls Club, U.S. Post Office, and community centers;
- Parks including Tolan Park, Harding Park, golf course, Main Street Park, and Warring Park;
- Laundromats;
- Bakeries; and
- Outdoor community events.

Fielding of the community survey was also conducted at Ventura Community College, resulting in 45 additional valid responses. Surveys were also distributed and collected during all focus groups and community workshops. The combined survey efforts resulted in the collection of 308 valid responses.

To analyze the survey responses, we entered the data into our firm's Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) platform. Next, simple frequencies and cross-tabulations (relationships) were generated. The data were then exported into Microsoft Excel to create charts and graphs.

Analysis of Key Findings

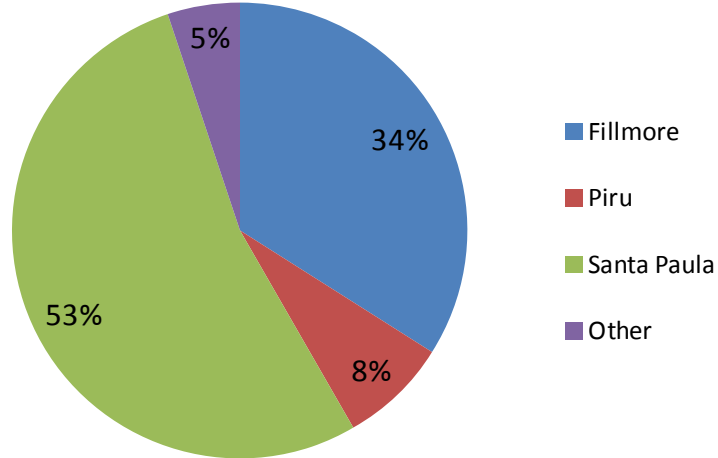
When assessing community awareness and use of transit services, the survey results showed many residents are aware of the VISTA bus and Dial-A-Ride services. More residents indicated having used the VISTA 126 service recently than having used the Dial-A-Ride service.

Given the high unemployment rate and low income levels, residents of the Heritage Valley need reliable transportation services for access to job opportunities, school, healthcare, and necessary "quality of life" services.

Additional marketing is sometimes the most cost-effective way to increase demand and revenue for transit services. However, there appears to be a demonstrated need for more frequent and reliable service throughout the Heritage Valley.

Exhibit C.2.1 illustrates respondents' home communities. Over half (53 percent) of respondents reside in Santa Paula, while 34 percent reside in Fillmore, and eight percent in Piru. Other communities in which respondents reside include Rancho Sespe, Oxnard, and Ventura. The share of respondents from each community is representative of the share of population each community comprises within Heritage Valley. The survey was completed in Spanish by 28 percent of respondents, while the remaining 72 percent elected to complete the survey in English.

Exhibit C.2.1 Respondent Community



Summary of Results

The following summarizes the results from the community surveys grouped into three categories: mobility needs assessment, travel characteristics, and awareness and use of transit services.

Mobility Needs Assessment

The survey included voluntary questions regarding respondent demographic, economic, and household characteristics. These characteristics make up the typical profile of Heritage Valley residents and can be used to assess unmet needs as well as the level of mobility-dependence.

Ride Dependency. Exhibit C.2.2 presents the ride-dependency characteristics of survey respondents. In the simplest terms, ride-dependency means the extent to which an individual relies on an alternative form of transportation because he/she has limited or no personal mobility options.

The matrix indicates many residents of the Heritage Valley are likely to need or use public transit services primarily due to economic factors, as over half of the survey respondents (59 percent) are unemployed and/or do not have access to a personal vehicle (57 percent). Conversely, non-working age groups such as seniors and youth only make up a combined 21 percent of respondents.

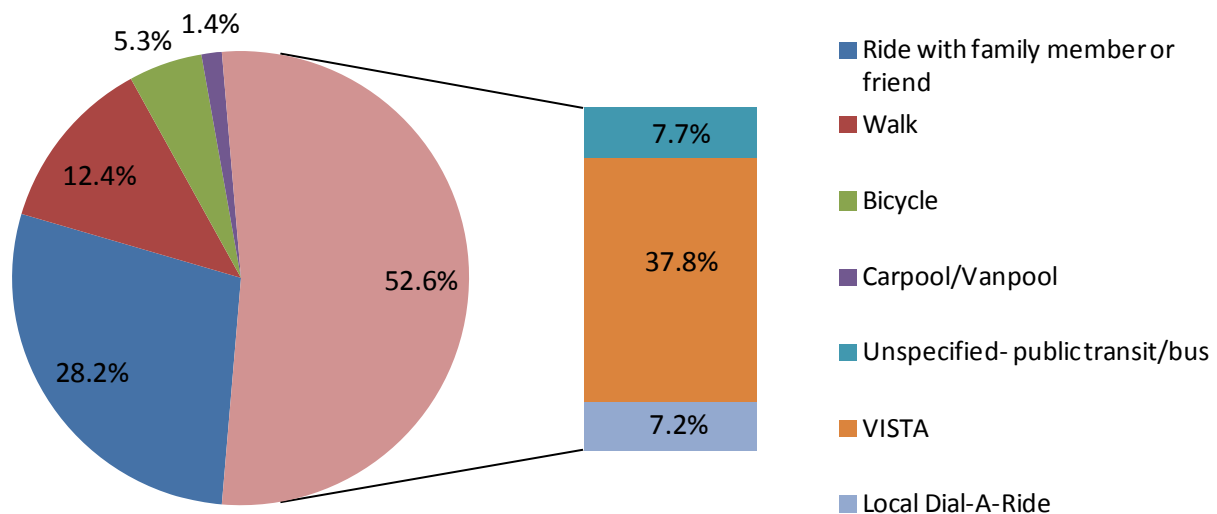
Based on 2011 federal poverty guidelines and Census Bureau poverty thresholds, a four-person household earning \$22,314 or less is considered to be living in poverty. Nearly 32 percent of respondents stated they reside in a low-income household (income below \$25,000). Given the high unemployment rate and large portion of residents who are low-income in the Heritage Valley, it is important to consider the negative impact fare adjustments may have on low-income individuals who rely upon public transit for their daily mobility.

Exhibit C.2.2 Ride-Dependency Matrix

Category	Percent of Respondents
Unemployed	59.4%
No/limited access to a personal vehicle	57.3%
Low-income	31.8%
Full-time student	22.5%
Seniors (65 years or older)	14.0%
Youth (under 17 years)	7.3%

Primary means of transportation for ride-dependent population. Exhibit C.2.3 below illustrates of the 57 percent of respondents who indicated not having access to a personal vehicle, many rely on VISTA services (38 percent) or ride with friend/family (28 percent) for their primary means of transportation. Other reported means of transportation included walking (12 percent), public transit/bus (8 percent), and local Dial-A-Ride (6 percent). Given the size of these communities, most notably Fillmore and Piru, it is expected many residents walk for some of their trip needs such as shopping or recreation/social. However, to access healthcare, work, or school sites, many residents of these rural communities need to travel to larger cities such as Ventura which require a motorized mode of transport.

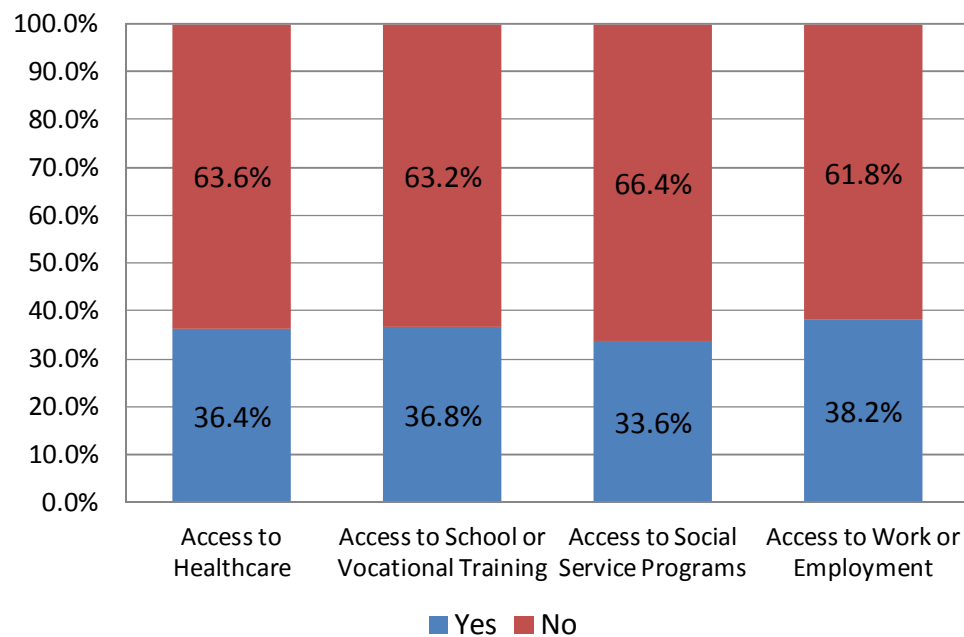
Exhibit C.2.3 Transportation for Ride-Dependent Population



Ease of accessing various destinations. Respondents were asked if the lack of affordable and reliable transportation has negatively impacted their ability to access healthcare, school or vocational training, social service programs, or work or employment opportunities. As indicated in Exhibit C.2.4, many respondents (around 60 percent) feel they have issues with accessing the cited trip locations.

Given respondents have the same level of difficulty accessing each cited destination; this may further suggest these types of services are only available in larger cities such as Ventura, which those residing in Fillmore and Piru would have most difficulty accessing without a personal vehicle.

Exhibit C.2.4 Ease of Accessing Key Destinations



Employment. The most common travel destinations are typically home and school locations. Of the 41 percent of respondents who are currently employed, 55 percent work outside the community in which they reside and 42 percent drive alone to work.

Respondents were asked to specify their work site zip code for both full-time and part-time employment. Relatively few respondents elected to specify their work zip code; therefore, the data cannot accurately reflect residents' travel patterns throughout the Heritage Valley. However, of the respondents who did specify a zip code and their home location, the majority represented intra-community home-to-work travel. Respondents who reside in Piru are most likely to travel to other communities (such as Santa Clarita, Santa Paula, and Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley) for employment.

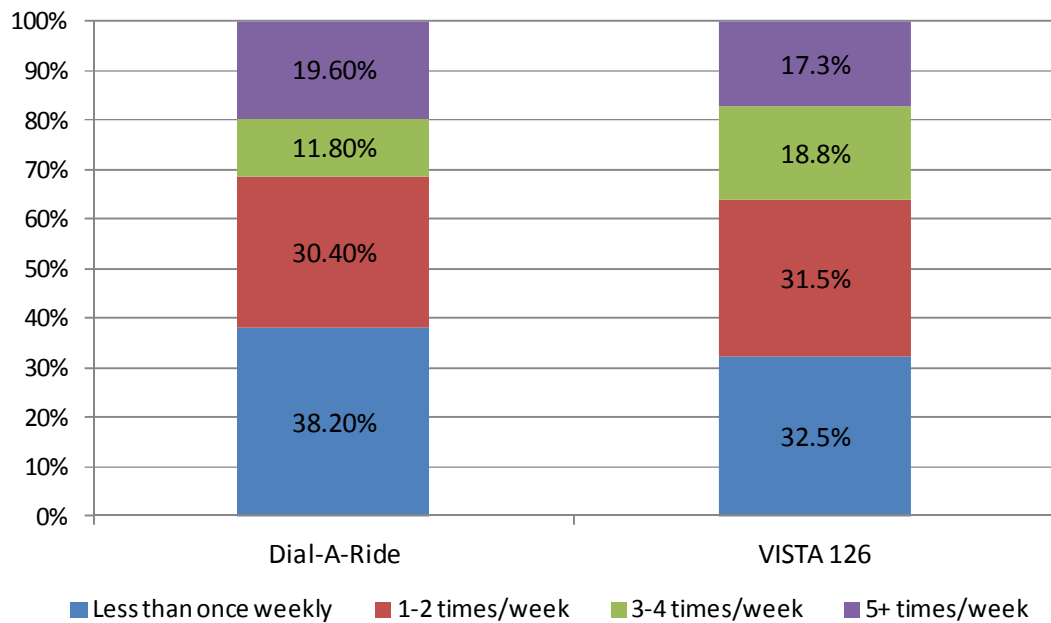
Awareness and Use of Transit Services

Respondents were asked about their awareness of available transit services, frequency of use, customer satisfaction, barriers of use, and preferred service enhancements. The majority of respondents, 75 percent, stated they were aware Dial-A-Ride service is provided within Heritage Valley communities.

While 75 percent have heard of the service, only 31 percent have actually used the Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride in the past 90 days. Alternatively, 64 percent of respondents have used VISTA 126 service in the past 90 days.

Exhibit C.2.5 illustrates the frequency of use for respondents who have ridden Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride and VISTA 126 services in the past 90 days. Riders of each service tend to use them with similar frequencies. A significant number of respondents indicated relatively infrequent ridership (less than three times per week), more so on the Dial-A-Ride service (68.6 percent) than the VISTA 126 (64 percent). This may be reflective of the high unemployment rate, suggesting there is not a need for frequent travel to work or school destinations. However, the high unemployment rate may also be attributed to the lack of available and reliable transportation services for daily home-to-work travel (as shown in Exhibit C.2.4).

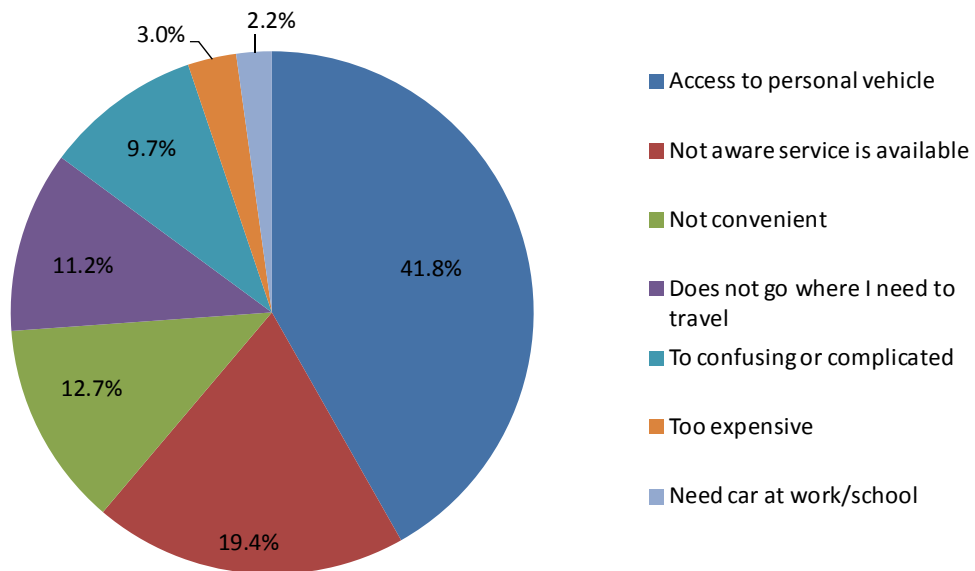
Exhibit C.2.5 Frequency of Use by Service



Primary reasons for not riding. As is typical in non-urbanized communities, the main reason for not riding is the ownership of a personal vehicle. When other shared modes of transportation, such as public transit or carpooling, are not reliable or convenient, the private automobile is the dominant travel option. Exhibit C.2.6 illustrates about 42 percent of respondents do not ride transit services in the Heritage Valley (Dial-A-Ride or VISTA 126) due to the fact they have their own car. Other reasons include “not convenient” (13 percent) and “does not go where I need to go” (11 percent).

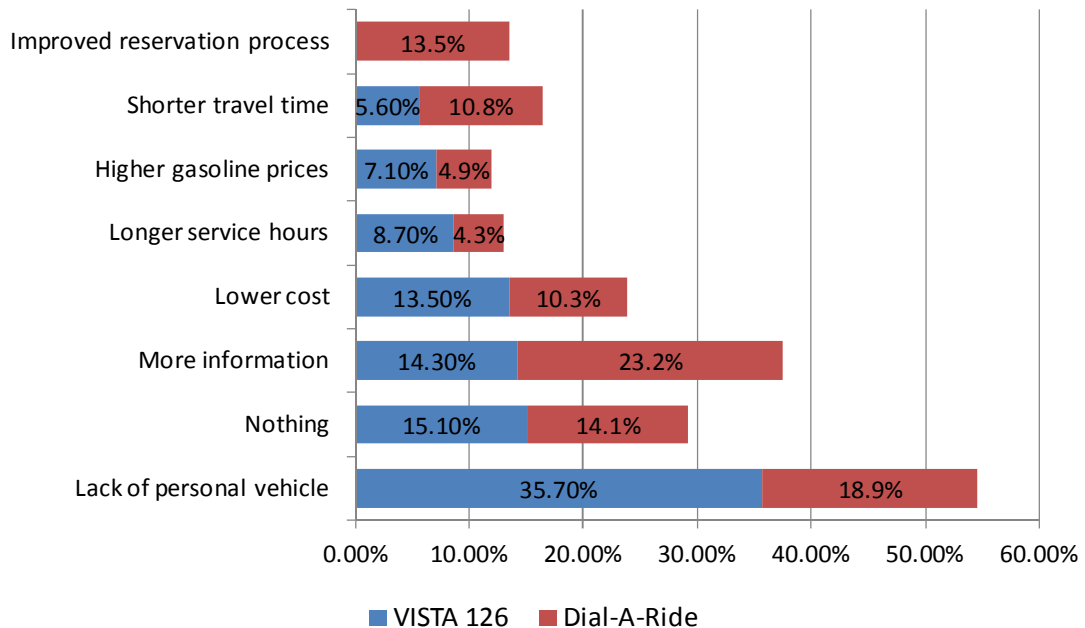
The second-most dominant reason (19 percent) was the respondent was not aware services are available. This indicates there is an opportunity to increase ridership through increased marketing to the Heritage Valley.

Exhibit C.2.6 Barriers to Transit Use



Circumstances to encourage transit use. To assess the demand of the non-rider population, the survey asked respondents who have not ridden VISTA or Dial-A-Ride services recently what factors or service enhancements, if any, would encourage them to ride these services. Exhibit C.2.7 illustrates the results by service. Similar to the previous finding from Exhibit C.2.6, not having a personal vehicle is the main factor found that would encourage respondents to use available transit services. In addition, access to more information was also selected as one of the main factors.

Exhibit C.2.7 Transit Attractors

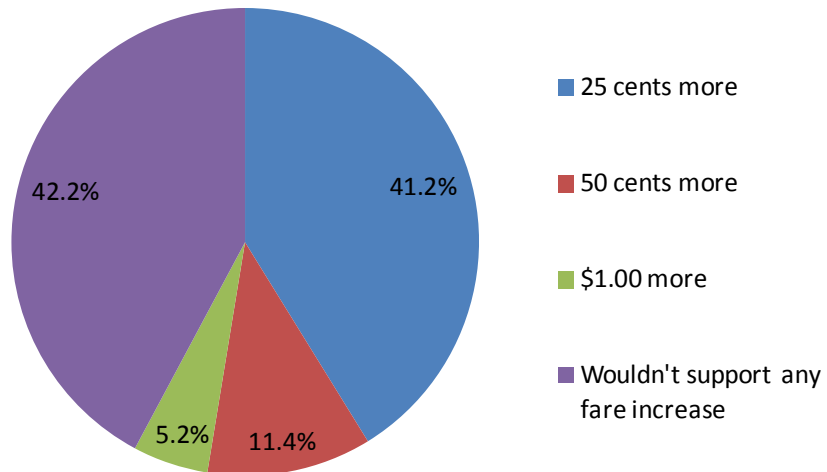


Fare increase. Given the current economic climate and lack of available funding for transit services, in order to implement improvements to a transit system, additional funding and revenue sources must be identified. While fare increases do not fully cover additional operating costs, they are sometimes necessary to reach the required subsidy for federal funding.

Therefore, to gauge the fare elasticity of the community, respondents were asked to indicate how much additional fare they would be willing to pay for VCTC to implement service improvements suggested in Exhibit C.2.7. At least 40 percent of respondents would support a fare increase of at least 25 cents for service enhancements. However, another 42 percent stated they simply would not support any fare increase. It can be assumed a large portion of respondents who would not support a fare increase were also the portion of respondents who stated “nothing” or a “lack of a personal vehicle” would encourage them to choose VISTA or Dial-A-Ride.

The low level of support for a significant fare increase suggests residents felt the cost of the service is either already too high, or is at the highest cost they would be willing or able to pay for the service provided. This can be reflective of the fact a large portion of respondents were low-income and/or unemployed.

Exhibit C.2.8 Support for Fare Increase



C.3 — DIAL-A-RIDE CUSTOMER SURVEY

Methodology

This section features analysis of the Dial-A-Ride Customer Survey conducted during the period of August 26 and September 23, 2011. The bilingual surveys were distributed via direct mail (USPS) to a stratified sample of the Dial-A-Ride registrant database, which was supplemented by onboard distribution by drivers. Two hundred survey packets (inclusive of survey instrument and postage-paid response envelope) were mailed on August 26, 2011, and 125 survey packets were provided to the operator for drivers to distribute to riders, both with a response deadline of September 23, 2011. Of the surveys distributed, 43 responses were received. This is not a statistically valid sample for the target population, therefore may not reflect the typical Dial-A-Ride customer. However, while the response is not statistically valid, it may accurately reflect the needs of the typical Dial-A-Ride patron as it represents slightly more than ten percent of the Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride customer base.

The survey had several objectives:

- Develop a demographic profile of Dial-A-Ride users,
- Codify current rider travel patterns,
- Assess customer satisfaction, and
- Identify and prioritize potential service enhancements.

Our project team began analyzing the survey data by entering it into our Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. After the data were cleaned, we identified and generated simple frequencies and conducted initial cross-tabulations (relationships). We then exported the processed data into Microsoft Excel to generate charts and graphs.

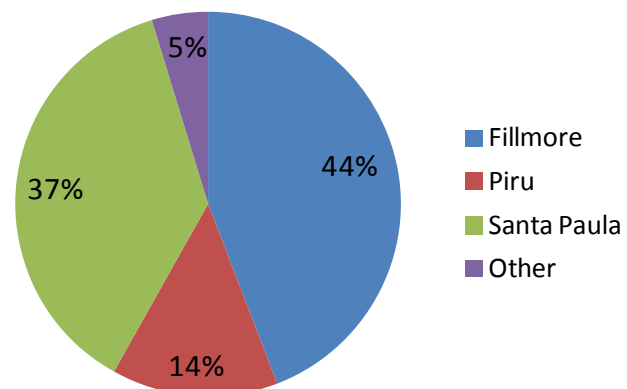
Analysis of Key Findings

Dial-A-Ride customers are dependent on the service for the majority of their mobility needs. They typically ride frequently (more than five times per week), ride for many different purposes, and ride because they do not have access to a personal vehicle or do not drive. This indicates the service is a lifeline for many who reside in the Heritage Valley.

Given the demand for Dial-A-Ride service, VCTC should consider implementing some form of fixed-route service throughout the Heritage Valley communities. This could be in the form of shuttle service and separate Dial-A-Ride program for persons riding outside the three-quarter-mile service area.

Exhibit C.3.1 illustrates the percentage of survey respondents residing in each community. The majority of respondents reside in Fillmore and Santa Paula. While Piru only made up 14 percent of respondents' home communities, it is also much smaller than Fillmore and Santa Paula in terms of population.

Exhibit C.3.1 Respondent Home Community



Summary of Results

The following summarizes the results from the Dial-A-Ride customer surveys.

Mobility Needs Assessment

To develop a demographic profile of current Dial-A-Ride customers in the Heritage Valley, the survey collected demographic information regarding respondent age, employment status, and household income. These questions were intended to reveal the level of ride-dependency of Dial-A-Ride customers (i.e., low-income, senior, youth, etc.). Survey respondents were asked several questions which gauged their level of ride-dependency.

Exhibit C.3.2 combines responses to several questions into a matrix illustrating the ride-dependency of current Dial-A-Ride patrons. A significant portion of riders do not have individual mobility freedom due to a lack of access to a personal vehicle (91 percent) and/or lack of a valid driver license (81 percent). The ride-dependency matrix suggests many customers are using the Dial-A-Ride programs because they lack or have limited mobility alternatives.

Approximately 77 percent of survey respondents indicated having an income less than \$25,000 annually, placing many of them at or below the poverty threshold for a family of four. Therefore, it is important to consider the negative impact fare adjustments may have on low-income individuals who rely upon public transit for basic mobility needs.

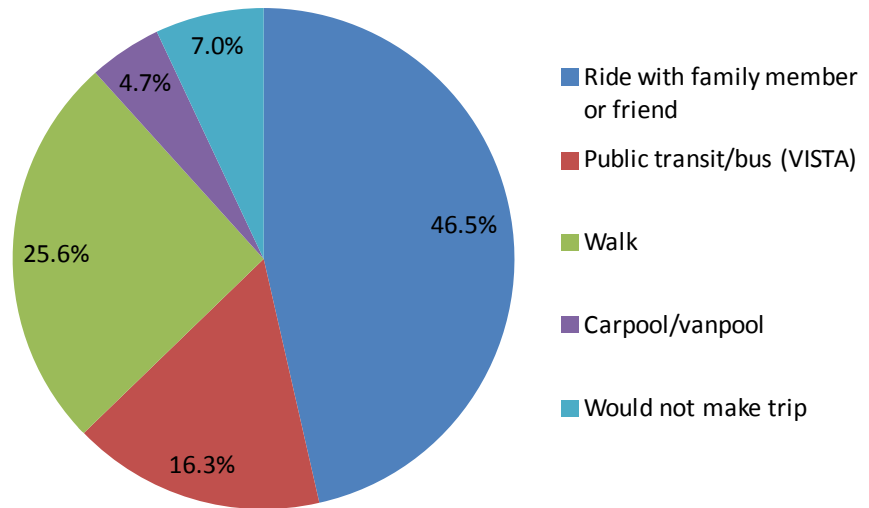
About 29 percent of respondents identified themselves as having an impairment (disability) which impacts their personal mobility. Seniors and youth each comprised of 28 percent of the respondent pool. The average survey respondent comprised a demographic profile which in large part represents the traditional ride-dependent population.

Exhibit C.3.2 Ride-Dependency Matrix

Category	Percent of Respondents
No access to a personal vehicle	91.0%
No driver license	81.0%
Low-income	77.0%
Have a disability	29.0%
Youth (under 17 years)	28.0%
Seniors (60 years or older)	28.0%

Other travel options. To further assess riders' dependency on the service, the survey asked respondents how they would normally travel if Dial-A-Ride service was not available. Many respondents stated they would get a ride from another person (46 percent) or walk (26 percent). Others suggested they would use another form of public transit, such as the VISTA bus (16.3), while a few stated they simply would not make the surveyed trip (7 percent).

Exhibit C.3.3 Other Mobility Options

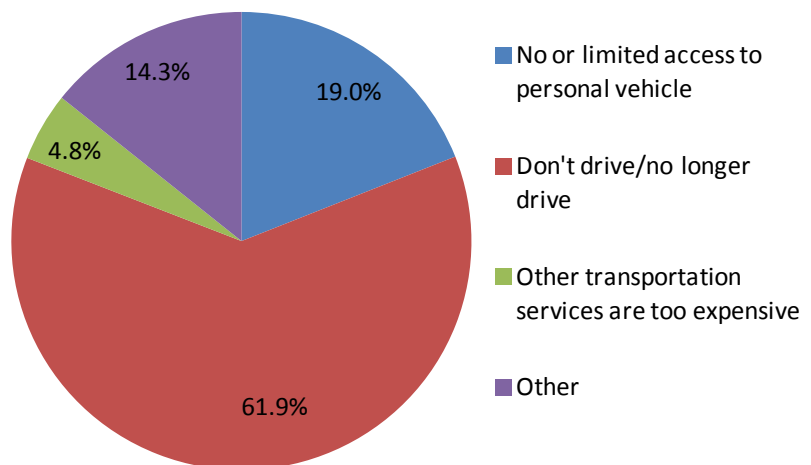


Use of Service

To assess the travel behaviors of the typical Dial-A-Ride customer, the survey asked questions regarding frequency of use, reasons for riding, and typical travel destination.

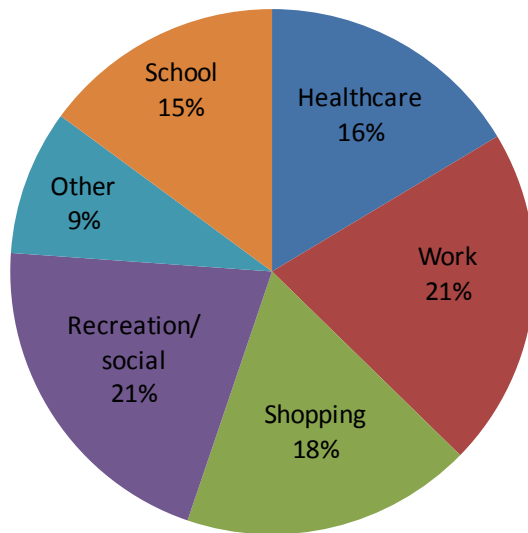
Main reasons for riding. Exhibit C.3.4 illustrate the different respondents' reasons for using the Dial-A-Ride services. Respondents were given four choices, with one being "other." The majority of respondents use the programs because they either do not drive or have limited/no access to a personal vehicle. This finding mirrors the ride-dependency of Dial-A-Ride customers shown in Exhibit C.3.1.

Exhibit C.3.4 Primary Motivations



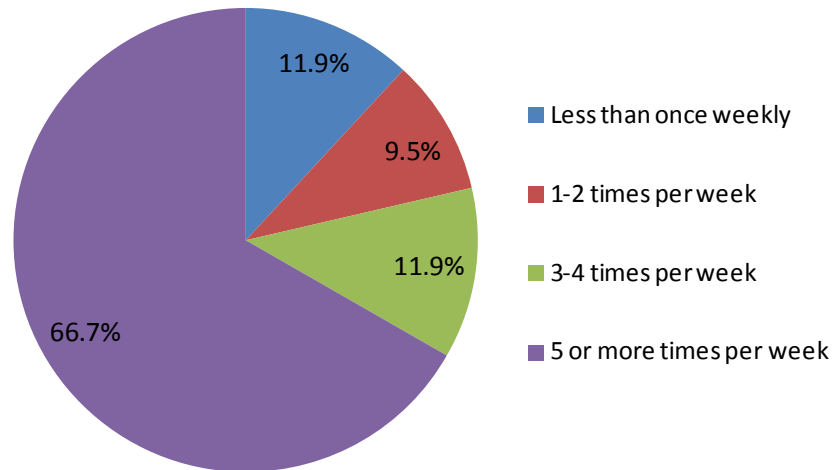
Most common trip purpose. Survey respondents were asked what their typical travel destination is when using the Dial-A-Ride services. Exhibit C.3.5 indicates said customers' trip purposes are rather evenly distributed, with work and recreation/social being the most common responses at 21 percent each, followed closely by shopping, healthcare, and school, respectively. These findings are contrary to what is typically seen in a traditional Dial-A-Ride service; while work and school are trip purposes typically associated with traditional fixed-route services, each make up a significant portion of responses in the Heritage Valley.

Exhibit C.3.5 Common Trip Purposes



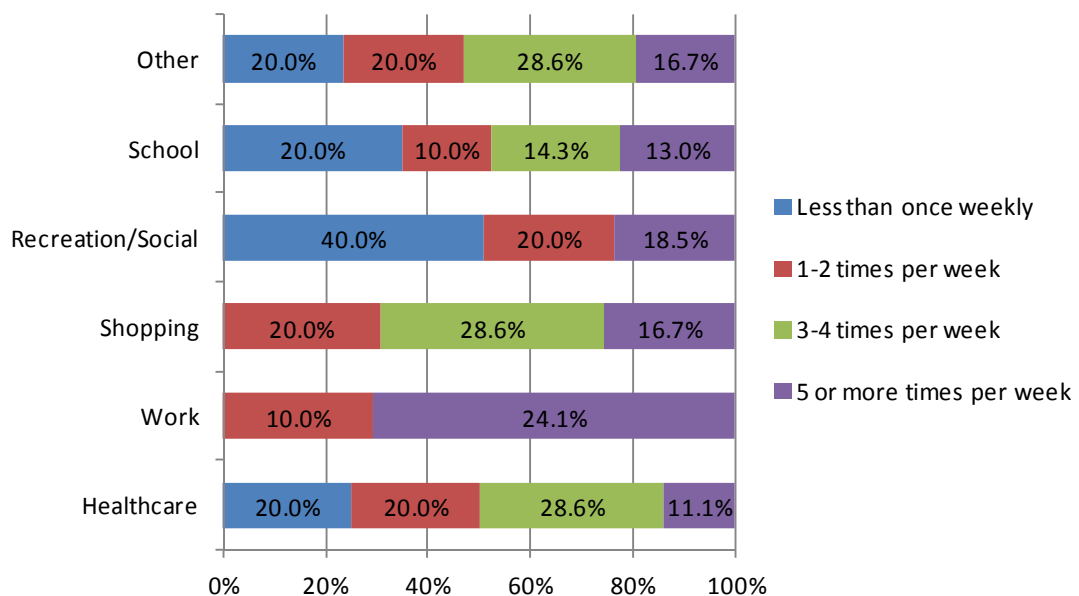
Frequency of use. Reflective of the previous discussion regarding use of service, the majority of survey respondents (66.7 percent) use the Dial-A-Ride services five or more times per week (67 percent), while another 12 percent ride three to four times per week. These findings are contrary to the overall community survey (Exhibit C.3.6), as they focus strictly on Dial-A-Ride customers rather than community members as a whole.

Exhibit C.3.6 Frequency of Use



Frequency of use by trip purpose. Exhibit C.3.7 compares the frequency of use of riders and their most common trip purpose. The most frequent trips (5 or more times per week) are for work, while recreation/social trips were the least frequent.

Exhibit C.3.7 Frequency of Use vs. Trip Purpose



Customer Satisfaction

To generate customer feedback regarding Dial-A-Ride service, the survey asked respondents three primary questions regarding trip reservations, on-time performance, and satisfaction with various service aspects. Nearly 58 percent of respondents stated they are typically not able to reach a customer service representative within a reasonable timeframe when calling to place a ride request. In addition, another 43 percent stated the vehicle frequently does not arrive at the scheduled pick-up time; of these, 89 percent cited the bus being late while 11 percent said it arrived early. Responses regarding customers' typical trip experience reveal demand for the Dial-A-Ride service is reaching, or has exceeded, capacity.

Exhibit C.3.8 illustrates respondent satisfaction ratings of eight different service attributes. The service attributes with the highest satisfied rating of "excellent" were dependability (47 percent) and convenience (46 percent). On-time performance had the lowest satisfaction rating, with nine percent of respondents stating "poor." Overall, customers are relatively contented with most service attributes, with very few ratings of "poor" or "fair."

