



City of Thousand Oaks

TDA Triennial Performance Audit for
FY2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25



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Chapter 1 | Executive Summary

In 2025, the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) selected Moore & Associates, Inc., to prepare Triennial Performance Audits of itself as the RTPA and the 10 transit operators to which it allocates TDA funding.

The California Public Utilities Code requires all recipients of Transit Development Act (TDA) Article 4 funding to undergo an independent performance audit on a three-year cycle in order to maintain funding eligibility. Audits of Article 8 recipients are encouraged.

The Triennial Performance Audit is designed to be an independent and objective evaluation of the City of Thousand Oaks as a public transit operator, providing operator management with information on the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of its programs across the prior three fiscal years. In addition to assuring legislative and governing bodies (as well as the public) that resources are being economically and efficiently utilized, the Triennial Performance Audit fulfills the requirement of PUC Section 99246(a) that the RTPA designate an entity other than itself to conduct a performance audit of the activities of each operator to which it allocates TDA funds.

This chapter summarizes key findings and recommendations developed during the Triennial Performance Audit (TPA) of the City of Thousand Oaks' public transit program for the period:

- Fiscal Year 2022/23,
- Fiscal Year 2023/24, and
- Fiscal Year 2024/25.

The City's fixed-route system is comprised of six fixed routes and one seasonal route to Zuma Beach and Ventura Harbor, serving Thousand Oaks, Newbury Park, and surrounding areas. Fixed-route service hours are 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturday.

The City's door-to-door Dial-A-Ride service is available to passengers 65 years of age or above and those with a county-issued Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) card. Dial-A-Ride hours of operation are the same as those of regular fixed-route buses, except service is also offered from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday.

This performance audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that the audit team plans and performs the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for its findings and conclusions based on the audit objectives. Moore & Associates, Inc. believes the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions.

This audit was also conducted in accordance with the processes established by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), as outlined in the *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities*.

The Triennial Performance Audit includes five elements:

- Compliance requirements,
- Prior recommendations,
- Analysis of program data reporting,
- Performance Audit, and
- Functional review.

Test of Compliance

Based on discussions with City staff, analysis of program performance, and an audit of program compliance and function, the audit team presents no compliance findings.

Status of Prior Recommendations

The prior audit – completed in April 2023 by Moore & Associates, Inc. for the three fiscal years ending June 30, 2022 – included one recommendation:

1. Continue to work with MV Transportation to fill the open operations positions and ensure sufficient Dial-A-Ride coverage.
Status: Implemented.

Findings and Recommendations

Based on discussions with City staff, analysis of program performance, and a review of program compliance and function, the audit team submits no findings related to TDA compliance for the City of Thousand Oaks.

Recommendations are intended to assist in bringing the operator into compliance with the requirements and standards of the TDA as well as address non-compliance-related issues, challenges, or opportunities observed during the site visit and functional review. The audit team presents no recommendations for the City of Thousand Oaks.

Chapter 2 | Audit Scope and Methodology

The Triennial Performance Audit (TPA) of the City of Thousand Oaks' public transit program covers the three-year period ending June 30, 2025. The California Public Utilities Code requires all recipients of Transit Development Act (TDA) funding to complete an independent review on a three-year cycle in order to maintain funding eligibility.

In 2025, the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) selected Moore & Associates, Inc., to prepare Triennial Performance Audits of itself as the RTPA and the 10 transit operators to which it allocates TDA funding. Moore & Associates, Inc. is a consulting firm specializing in public transportation, including audits of non-TDA Article 4 recipients. Selection of Moore & Associates, Inc. followed a competitive procurement process.

The Triennial Performance Audit is designed to be an independent and objective evaluation of the City of Thousand Oaks as a public transit operator. Direct benefits of a Triennial Performance Audit include providing operator management with information on the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of its programs across the prior three years; helpful insight for use in future planning; and assuring legislative and governing bodies (as well as the public) that resources are being economically and efficiently utilized. Finally, the Triennial Performance Audit fulfills the requirement of PUC Section 99246(a) that the RTPA designate an entity other than itself to conduct a performance audit of the activities of each operator to whom it allocates funds.

This performance audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that the audit team plans and performs the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for its findings and conclusions based on the audit objectives. The auditors believe the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions.

The audit was also conducted in accordance with the processes established by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), as outlined in the *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities*, as well as *Government Auditing Standards* published by the U.S. Comptroller General.

Objectives

A Triennial Performance Audit (TPA) has four primary objectives:

1. Assess compliance with TDA regulations;
2. Review improvements subsequently implemented as well as progress toward adopted goals;
3. Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the transit operator; and
4. Provide sound, constructive recommendations for improving the efficiency and functionality of the transit operator.

Scope

The Triennial Performance Audit is a systematic review of performance evaluating the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of the transit operator. The audit of the City of Thousand Oaks included six tasks:

1. A review of compliance with TDA requirements and regulations.
2. A review of the status of recommendations included in the prior Triennial Performance Audit.
3. A verification of the methodology for calculating performance indicators including the following activities:
 - Assessment of internal controls,
 - Test of data collection methods,
 - Calculation of performance indicators, and
 - Evaluation of performance.
4. Comparison of data reporting practices:
 - Internal reports,
 - State Controller Reports, and
 - National Transit Database.
5. Examination of the following functions:
 - General management and organization;
 - Service planning;
 - Administration;
 - Marketing and public information;
 - Scheduling, dispatching, and operations;
 - Personnel management and training; and
 - Maintenance.
6. Conclusions and recommendations to address opportunities for improvement based upon analysis of the information collected and the audit of the transit operator's major functions.

Methodology

The methodology for the Triennial Performance Audit of the City of Thousand Oaks included thorough review of documents relevant to the scope of the audit, as well as information contained on the City's transit website. The documents reviewed included the following (spanning the full three-year period):

- Monthly performance reports;
- State Controller Reports;
- Annual budgets;
- TDA fiscal audits;
- Transit marketing collateral;
- TDA claims;
- Fleet inventory;
- Preventive maintenance schedules and forms;
- California Highway Patrol Terminal Inspection reports;

- National Transit Database reports;
- Accident/road call logs; and
- Organizational chart.

The methodology for this review included a virtual site visit on February 20, 2026. The audit team met with Tyler Nestved (Assistant Transit Planner) and Alina Chalas (Transit Analyst), and reviewed materials germane to the triennial audit.

This report is comprised of eight chapters divided into three sections:

1. Executive Summary: A summary of the key findings and recommendations developed during the Triennial Performance Audit process.
2. TPA Scope and Methodology: Methodology of the review and pertinent background information.
3. TPA Results: In-depth discussion of findings surrounding each of the subsequent elements of the audit:
 - Compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements,
 - Status of prior recommendations,
 - Consistency among reported data,
 - Performance measures and trends,
 - Functional review, and
 - Findings and recommendations.

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Chapter 3 | Program Compliance

This section examines the City of Thousand Oaks' compliance with the Transportation Development Act as well as relevant sections of the California Code of Regulations. An annual certified fiscal audit confirms TDA funds were apportioned in conformance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations. The City considers full use of funds under California Code of Regulations (CCR) 6754(a) as referring to operating funds but not capital funds. The TPA findings and related comments are delineated in Exhibit 3.1.

Status of compliance items was determined through discussions with City staff as well as an inspection of relevant documents including the fiscal audits for each year of the triennium, State Controller annual filings, California Highway Patrol terminal inspections, annual operating budgets, year-end performance reports, and other compliance-related documentation.

No compliance issues were identified for the City of Thousand Oaks.

Developments Occurring During the Audit Period

For many transit operators in California, recent years have reflected both the acute impacts of and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. By the end of FY 2024/25 – even earlier in some cases – most operators had exhausted federal relief funds, even though penalties for non-compliance with farebox recovery ratios continued to be waived. However, the receipt of federal relief funds complicated matters, as they impacted the amount of TDA funding operators were eligible to receive and, in some cases, resulted in over-payments that had to be resolved after the funds were spent. Many operators, even more than five years after the onset of the pandemic, still struggle with ridership that has yet to return to pre-pandemic levels.

California Assembly Bill 90, signed into law on June 29, 2020, provided temporary regulatory relief for transit operators required to conform with Transportation Development Act (TDA) farebox recovery ratio thresholds in FY 2019/20 and FY 2020/21. California Assembly Bill 149, signed into law on July 16, 2021, provided additional regulatory relief by extending the provisions of AB 90 through FY 2022/23 and adjusting definitions of eligible revenues and operating costs. Most recently, California Senate Bill 125, signed into law on July 10, 2023, extended protections provided via earlier legislation through FY 2025/26. While this means the audit period covered by this audit is fully exempt from penalties for non-compliance with the farebox recovery ratio, for example, it also means that transit operators may need to be in compliance by the second year of the next audit period.

While the ability to maintain state mandates and performance measures is important, these measures enabled transit operators to adjust to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic while continuing to receive their full allocations of funding under the TDA.

Together, these three pieces of legislation include the following additional provisions specific to transit operator TDA funding under Article 4:

- Prohibits the imposition of the TDA revenue penalty on an operator that did not maintain the required ratio of fare revenues to operating cost from FY 2019/20 through FY 2025/26.

- Expands the definition of “local funds” to enable the use of federal funding to supplement fare revenues and allows operators to calculate free and reduced fares at their actual value.
- Adjusts the definition of operating cost to exclude the cost of ADA paratransit services, demand-response and micro-transit services designed to extend access to service, ticketing/payment systems, security, some pension costs, and some planning costs.
- Allows operators to use STA funds as needed to keep transit service levels from being reduced or eliminated through FY 2025/26.

SB 125 also called for the establishment of the Transit Transformation Task Force to develop policy recommendations aimed at increasing transit ridership and improving the customer experience statewide. In the more than 50 years since the adoption of the Transportation Development Act (TDA), California’s public transportation landscape has evolved significantly. Many transit operators have struggled to meet the farebox recovery ratio requirement, raising questions about whether it remains an appropriate or effective measure of TDA compliance.

In 2018, the chairs of California’s legislative transportation committees asked the California Transit Association to convene a policy task force to examine the TDA. That effort produced a draft framework for reform in early 2020, just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Transit Transformation Task Force released its report in December 2025. While the report includes several recommendations to modernize the TDA - including identifying the farebox recovery ratio and operating cost per hour requirements as outdated and recommending that farebox recovery and cost-inflation penalties be replaced - these proposals represent an initial step rather than immediate policy changes. Achieving the necessary funding and statutory reforms will require sustained advocacy over the coming years.

Exhibit 3.1 Transit Development Act Compliance Requirements

Compliance Element	Reference	Compliance	Comments
State Controller Reports submitted on time.	PUC 99243	In compliance	Transit Operator FY 2022/23: January 29, 2024 FY 2023/24: January 29, 2025 FY 2024/25: January 27, 2026 Specialized Service FY 2022/23: January 29, 2024 FY 2023/24: January 29, 2025 FY 2024/25: January 27, 2026
Fiscal and compliance audits submitted within 180 days following the end of the fiscal year (or with up to 90-day extension).	PUC 99245	In compliance	FY 2022/23: December 18, 2023 FY 2023/24: December 5, 2024 FY 2024/25: December 1, 2025
Operator’s terminal rated as satisfactory by CHP within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim.	PUC 99251 B	In compliance	April 14, 2022 April 12, 2023 May 2, 2024 May 7, 2025
Operator’s claim for TDA funds submitted in compliance with rules and regulations adopted by the RTPA.	PUC 99261	In compliance	
If operator serves urbanized and non-urbanized areas, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to the ratio determined by the rules and regulations adopted by the RTPA.	PUC 99270.1	Not applicable	
Except as otherwise provided, the allocation for any purpose specified under Article 8 may in no year exceed 50% of the amount required to meet the total planning expenditures for that purpose.	PUC 99405	Not applicable	
An operator receiving allocations under Article 8(c) may be subject to regional, countywide, or subarea performance criteria, local match requirements, or fare recovery ratios adopted by resolution of the RTPA.	PUC 99405	Not applicable	While TOT receives Article 8(c) funds, it is not subject to alternative criteria.
The operator’s definitions of performance measures are consistent with the Public Utilities Code Section 99247.	PUC 99247	In compliance	
The operator does not routinely staff with two or more persons a vehicle for public transportation purposes designed to be operated by one person.	PUC 99264	In compliance	

Compliance Element	Reference	Compliance	Comments
The operator's operating budget has not increased by more than 15% over the preceding year, nor is there a substantial increase or decrease in the scope of operations or capital budget provisions for major new fixed facilities unless the operator has reasonably supported and substantiated the change(s).	PUC 99266	In compliance	FY 2022/23: +26.44% FY 2023/24: +0.80% FY 2024/25: -18.43% <i>Source: TDA claims. FY 2023 increase was due to contractor cost increases as well as adding a budget for a new route that wasn't implemented at that time.</i>
The expenditure of funds received under Article 4 may not exceed 50 percent of the amount required to meet operating, maintenance, and capital and debt service requirements after the deduction of federal funds and amounts allocated under PUC 99314.5 (STA).	PUC 99268	Not applicable	The City does not receive funds under Article 4.
If the operator serves an urbanized area, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating cost at least equal to one-fifth (20 percent).	PUC 99268.2, 99268.4, 99268.1	In compliance	FY 2022/23: 20% FY 2023/24: 20% FY 2024/25: 20% <i>Source: TDA fiscal audits.</i>
If the operator serves a rural area, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating cost at least equal to one-tenth (10 percent).	PUC 99268.2, 99268.4, 99268.5	Not applicable	
For a claimant that provides only services to elderly and handicapped persons, the ratio of fare revenues to operating cost shall be at least 10 percent.	PUC 99268.5, CCR 6633.5	In compliance	FY 2022/23: 10% FY 2023/24: 10% FY 2024/25: 10% <i>Source: TDA fiscal audits.</i>
If the operator has utilized the exemption from the farebox recovery requirement for extension of services, it shall submit a report on the service to the RTPA within 90 days of the end of the first year of implementation.	PUC 99268.8, CCR 6633.8	Not applicable	
The current cost of the operator's retirement system is fully funded with respect to the officers and employees of its public transportation system, or the operator is implementing a plan approved by the RTPA, which will fully fund the retirement system for 40 years.	PUC 99271	In compliance	City employees are eligible for retirement benefits through CalPERS. Operations personnel are employed by a third party.
An operator claiming funds under Article 4.5 (CTSA) is in compliance with PUC 99268.3, 99268.4, 99268.5, or 99268.9, or regional, countywide, or county subarea performance criteria, local match requirements, or fare recovery ratios adopted by the RTPA.	PUC 99275.5	Not applicable	The City does not receive funds under Article 4.5.

Compliance Element	Reference	Compliance	Comments
If the operator receives State Transit Assistance funds, the operator makes full use of funds available to it under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 before TDA claims are granted.	CCR 6754 (a) (3)	In compliance	
In order to use State Transit Assistance funds for operating assistance, the operator's total operating cost per revenue hour does not exceed the sum of the preceding year's total plus an amount equal to the product of the percentage change in the CPI for the same period multiplied by the preceding year's total operating cost per revenue hour. An operator may qualify based on the preceding year's operating cost per revenue hour or the average of the three prior years. If an operator does not meet these qualifying tests, the operator may only use STA funds for operating purposes according to a sliding scale.	PUC 99314.6	In compliance	The City only uses STA for capital purposes. This requirement was waived during the audit period under AB 149 and SB 125.
For an operator qualifying under PUC 99268.1, the funds received from the local transportation fund under Article 4 shall not exceed 50 percent of the amount that is the sum of the operator's operating cost, capital requirements, and debt service requirements less the sum of the operator's revenues from federal grants and the state transit assistance fund. The operator may receive from the local transportation fund up to 100 percent, rather than 50 percent, of the amount representing the operating cost of an extension of its public transportation system if the extension is within the definition of Section 6619.1 and if all the conditions of Section 6633.8 are met.	CCR 6633.1	Not applicable	The City does not receive funds under Article 4.
A transit claimant is precluded from receiving monies from the Local Transportation Fund and the State Transit Assistance Fund in an amount which exceeds the claimant's capital and operating costs less the actual amount of fares received, the amount of local support required to meet the fare ratio, the amount of federal operating assistance, and the amount received during the year from a city or county to which the operator has provided services beyond its boundaries.	CCR 6634	In compliance	

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Chapter 4 | Prior Recommendations

This section reviews and evaluates the implementation of prior Triennial Performance Audit recommendations. This objective assessment provides assurance the City has made quantifiable progress toward improving both the efficiency and effectiveness of its public transit program.

The prior audit – completed in April 2023 by Moore & Associates, Inc. for the three fiscal years ending June 30, 2022 – included one recommendation:

1. Continue to work with MV Transportation to fill the open operations positions and ensure sufficient Dial-A-Ride coverage.

Discussion: While the contractor had improved its general management staffing during the prior audit period, it had been unable to provide sufficient staff to meet the demand for service, primarily with respect to Dial-A-Ride services. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the contractor was deploying 18 to 19 vehicles per day to serve its combined Dial-A-Ride programs. At the time of the previous site visit, only seven vehicles were being deployed each day. This severely impacted Dial-A-Ride reservations. Only about a half of those who called were able to get their requested ride time. One quarter of callers were able to accept a different ride time, while another quarter did not get a ride.

Both the City and MV worked to recruit additional staff. During the prior audit, City staff estimated MV needed to fill approximately 20 operational positions (drivers, dispatchers, and customer service). MV had a recruiter located in Thousand Oaks, while the City and MV worked together to increase the contract cost and raise wages in order to attract qualified candidates.

There were two primary causes of the staffing shortage: Recovery from the reduced demand due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and lower wages that left the City's transit operation less competitive within the county. As a result, it was more difficult to recruit operations personnel.

The prior auditor recommended the City continue to work with MV Transportation to fill the open operations positions and ensure sufficient Dial-A-Ride coverage.

Progress: Wage increases were implemented in 2023 to support employee retention. The City of Thousand Oaks has worked with MV to ensure the transit program is fully staffed and maintains sufficient backup drivers. MV has also committed to fully staffing the program and has increased its focus on retention and strengthening relationships with employees.

Status: Implemented.

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Chapter 5 | Data Reporting Analysis

An important aspect of the Triennial Performance Audit process is assessing how effectively and consistently the transit operator reports performance statistics to local, state, and federal agencies. Often as a condition of receipt of funding, an operator must collect, manage, and report data to different entities. Ensuring such data are consistent can be challenging given the differing definitions employed by different agencies as well as the varying reporting timeframes. This chapter examines the consistency of performance data reported by the City of Thousand Oaks internally as well as to outside entities during the audit period.

Much of the variation between reports has to do with where the different services operated by the City are reported.

- **State Controller Report:**
 - Fixed-route service:
 - City of Thousand Oaks – City of Thousand Oaks report
 - City of Moorpark – City of Moorpark report
 - Kanan Shuttle – County of Ventura report
 - Demand-response service:
 - City of Thousand Oaks ADA and Senior Dial-A-Rides – City of Thousand Oaks report (except for that funded by the County of Ventura)
 - Moorpark Dial-A-Ride – City of Moorpark report
 - Westlake Village Dial-A-Ride – City of Thousand Oaks report
 - ECTA – City of Thousand Oaks report
 - Agoura Hills Dial-A-Ride – City of Thousand Oaks report
- **National Transit Database (NTD) Report:**
 - Fixed-route service:
 - City of Thousand Oaks – City of Thousand Oaks report
 - City of Moorpark – City of Moorpark report
 - Kanan Shuttle – County of Ventura report
 - Demand-response service:
 - City of Thousand Oaks ADA and Senior Dial-A-Rides – City of Thousand Oaks report (including that funded by the County of Ventura)
 - Moorpark Dial-A-Ride – City of Thousand Oaks report
 - Westlake Village Dial-A-Ride – City of Thousand Oaks report
 - ECTA – City of Thousand Oaks report
 - Agoura Hills Dial-A-Ride – City of Thousand Oaks report
- **Monthly performance reports:**
 - Fixed-route service is clearly segregated by program.
 - Demand-response service segregates ridership for each program.
 - Beginning in FY 2022, demand-response service segregates revenue miles and hours for ECTA and Agoura Hills Dial-A-Ride; all others are combined.

Given the variation in content, it can be difficult to draw comparisons with each external report. However, the primary difference between the two external reports is the inclusion of Moorpark Dial-A-Ride in the NTD report but not in the State Controller Report.

Vehicle Service Hours (VSH) and Vehicle Service Miles are the most consistently reported metrics, given most of the demand-response services are not segregated. However, the City should be mindful to only report data for services that are not reported elsewhere. For example, since Moorpark Dial-A-Ride is reported to the State Controller by the City of Moorpark, that data should not also be reported in the Thousand Oaks report.

Operating cost and fare revenue are not consistent between any of the reports. It is unclear why the operating cost reported to the NTD is significantly higher, since the fixed-route mode should only be reporting Thousand Oaks Transit.

Exhibit 5.1 Data Reporting Comparison

Performance Measure	System-Wide		
	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24
Operating Cost (Actual \$)			
<i>TDA fiscal audit</i>	\$5,924,514	\$6,015,135	\$7,237,200
<i>National Transit Database</i>	\$6,852,275	\$7,297,156	\$7,098,033
<i>State Controller Report</i>	\$5,538,075	\$6,149,817	\$5,830,682
Fare Revenue (Actual \$)			
<i>TDA fiscal audit</i>	\$226,686	\$308,537	\$249,727
<i>National Transit Database</i>	\$284,432	\$362,824	\$320,607
<i>State Controller Report</i>	\$180,177	\$302,230	\$240,615
Vehicle Service Hours (VSH)			
<i>Monthly Performance Reports</i>	36,354	37,591	34,809
<i>National Transit Database</i>	36,354	37,537	34,809
<i>State Controller Report</i>	36,280	37,270	34,809
Vehicle Service Miles (VSM)			
<i>Monthly Performance Reports</i>	554,092	588,067	564,487
<i>National Transit Database</i>	554,092	629,268	590,808
<i>State Controller Report</i>	554,092	588,592	564,487
Passengers			
<i>Monthly Performance Reports</i>	179,241	186,326	188,454
<i>National Transit Database</i>	191,874	199,603	207,684
<i>State Controller Report</i>	179,037	182,789	195,178
Full-Time Equivalent Employees			
<i>State Controller Report</i>	61	67	88
<i>Per TDA methodology</i>	57	68	89

Chapter 6 | Performance Analysis

Performance indicators are typically employed to quantify and assess the efficiency of a transit operator's activities. Such indicators provide insight into current operations as well as trend analysis of operator performance. Through a review of indicators, relative performance as well as possible inter-relationships between major functions is revealed.

The Transportation Development Act (TDA) requires recipients of TDA funding to track and report five performance indicators:

- Operating Cost/Passenger,
- Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour,
- Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour,
- Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile, and
- Vehicle Service Hours/Employee.

To assess the validity and use of performance indicators, the audit team performed the following activities:

- Assessed internal controls in place for the collection of performance-related information,
- Validated collection methods of key data,
- Calculated performance indicators, and
- Evaluated performance indicators.

The procedures used to calculate TDA-required performance measures for the current triennium were verified and compared with indicators included in similar reports to external entities (i.e., State Controller and Federal Transit Administration).

Operating Cost

The Transportation Development Act requires an operator to track and report transit-related costs reflective of the Uniform System of Accounts and Records developed by the State Controller and the California Department of Transportation. The most common method for ensuring this occurs is through a compliance audit report prepared by an independent auditor in accordance with California Code of Regulations Section 6667¹. The annual independent financial audit should confirm the use of the Uniform System of Accounts and Records. *Operating cost* – as defined by PUC Section 99247(a) – excluded the following during the audit period²:

¹ CCR Section 6667 outlines the minimum tasks which must be performed by an independent auditor in conducting the annual fiscal and compliance audit of the transit operator.

² Given the passage of AB 149, the list of excluded costs will be expanded beginning with FY 2021/22.

- Cost in the depreciation and amortization expense object class adopted by the State Controller pursuant to PUC Section 99243,
- Subsidies for commuter rail services operated under the jurisdiction of the Interstate Commerce Commission,
- Direct costs of providing charter service, and
- Vehicle lease costs.

Vehicle Service Hours and Miles

Vehicle Service Hours (VSH) and *Miles* (VSM) are defined as the time/distance during which a revenue vehicle is available to carry fare-paying passengers, and which includes only those times/miles between the time or scheduled time of the first passenger pickup and the time or scheduled time of the last passenger drop-off during a period of the vehicle's continuous availability.³ For example, demand-response service hours include those hours when a vehicle has dropped off a passenger and is traveling to pick up another passenger, but not those hours when the vehicle is unavailable for service due to driver breaks or lunch. For both demand-response and fixed-route services, service hours will exclude hours of "deadhead" travel to the first scheduled pick-up, and will also exclude hours of "deadhead" travel from the last scheduled drop-off back to the terminal. For fixed-route service, a vehicle is in service from first scheduled stop to last scheduled stop, whether or not passengers board or exit at those points (i.e., subtracting driver lunch and breaks but including scheduled layovers).

Passenger Counts

According to the Transportation Development Act, *total passengers* is equal to the total number of unlinked trips (i.e., those trips that are made by a passenger that involve a single boarding and departure), whether revenue-producing or not.

Employees

Employee hours is defined as the total number of hours (regular or overtime) which all employees have worked, and for which they have been paid a wage or salary. The hours must include transportation system-related hours worked by persons employed in connection with the system (whether or not the person is employed directly by the operator). Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) is calculated by dividing the number of person-hours by 2,000.

Fare Revenue

Fare revenue is defined by California Code of Regulations Section 6611.2 as revenue collected from the farebox plus sales of fare media. Given other revenues may be added to fare revenue for the calculation of the farebox recovery ratio, the Farebox Recovery cited within this section is not necessarily consistent with the farebox recovery ratio used for compliance determination in Chapter 4.

³ A vehicle is considered to be in revenue service despite a no-show or late cancellation if the vehicle remains available for passenger use.

TDA Required Indicators

To calculate the TDA indicators for the City of Thousand Oaks, the following sources were employed:

- Operating Cost was not independently calculated as part of this audit. Operating Cost data were obtained via State Controller Reports for each fiscal year covered by this audit. Operating Cost from the reports was compared against that reported in the City's audited financial reports and appeared to be consistent with TDA guidelines. In accordance with PUC Section 99247(a), the reported costs excluded depreciation and other allowable expenses.
- Fare Revenue was not independently calculated as part of this audit. Fare revenue data were obtained via State Controller Reports for each fiscal year covered by this audit. This appears to be consistent with TDA guidelines as well as the uniform system of accounts.
- Vehicle Service Hours (VSH) data were obtained via State Controller Reports for each fiscal year covered by this audit. The City's calculation methodology is consistent with PUC guidelines. RideCo software is used for Dial-A-Ride and Syncromatics software is used for fixed route. Solutions for Transit also audits reported data from MV for both modes.
- Vehicle Service Miles (VSM) data were obtained via State Controller Reports for each fiscal year covered by this audit. The City's calculation methodology is consistent with PUC guidelines. RideCo software is used for Dial-A-Ride and Syncromatics software is used for fixed route. Solutions for Transit also audits reported data from MV for both modes.
- Unlinked trip data were obtained via State Controller Reports for each fiscal year covered by this audit. Data is collected using automatic passenger counters. The City's calculation methodology is consistent with PUC guidelines.
- Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) data were obtained from State Controller Reports for each fiscal year covered by this review. Use of the TDA definition regarding FTE calculation was confirmed.

System Performance Trends

System-wide, operating cost experienced a net 5.3 percent increase during the audit period, and a 41.9 percent net increase across the last six years. Fare revenue decreased significantly in FY 2020/21 due to the fare-free period before fare collection resumed in FY 2022/23. This resulted in a net 33.5 percent increase during the audit period and a net 17.1 percent increase over six years.

Vehicle service hours (VSH) generally declined during the six-year period, though there were increases in FY 2022/23 and FY 2023/24. This resulted in a net 4.1 percent decrease during the audit period and a net 12.8 percent decrease during the six-year period. Vehicle service miles (VSM) followed a similar pattern during the six-year period. This resulted in an overall net increase of 1.9 percent during the audit period, but a net decrease of 11.6 percent during the six-year period. Ridership increased every year following COVID-19 in FY 2020/21. This led to a 9.0 percent net increase during the audit period and a 29.6 percent net increase across the six-year period.

Cost-related metrics typically provide an indicator of a system's efficiency, while passenger-related metrics offer insight into its productivity. Improvements are characterized by increases in passenger-related metrics and decreases in cost-related metrics. Operating cost per passenger decreased by 3.4 percent during the audit period, while operating cost per VSH and operating cost per VSM increased by

9.7 percent and 3.3 percent, respectively. Passenger-related metrics rose during the audit period, with passengers per VSH increasing by 13.6 percent and passengers per VSM increasing by 7.0 percent.

Exhibit 6.1 System Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	System-wide					
	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25
Operating Cost (Actual \$)	\$4,110,093	\$4,876,524	\$4,794,877	\$5,538,075	\$6,149,817	\$5,830,682
<i>Annual Change</i>		18.6%	-1.7%	15.5%	11.0%	-5.2%
Fare Revenue (Actual \$)	\$205,411	\$0	\$788	\$180,177	\$302,230	\$240,615
<i>Annual Change</i>		-100.0%		22765.1%	67.7%	-20.4%
Vehicle Service Hours (VSH)	39,936	36,972	31,713	36,280	37,270	34,809
<i>Annual Change</i>		-7.4%	-14.2%	14.4%	2.7%	-6.6%
Vehicle Service Miles (VSM)	638,919	605,600	497,298	554,092	588,592	564,487
<i>Annual Change</i>		-5.2%	-17.9%	11.4%	6.2%	-4.1%
Passengers	150,588	104,694	129,027	179,037	182,789	195,178
<i>Annual Change</i>		-30.5%	23.2%	38.8%	2.1%	6.8%
Employees	42	46	48	61	67	88
<i>Annual Change</i>		9.5%	4.3%	27.1%	9.8%	31.3%
Performance Indicators						
Operating Cost/VSH (Actual \$)	\$102.92	\$131.90	\$151.20	\$152.65	\$165.01	\$167.51
<i>Annual Change</i>		28.2%	14.6%	1.0%	8.1%	1.5%
Operating Cost/Passenger (Actual)	\$27.29	\$46.58	\$37.16	\$30.93	\$33.64	\$29.87
<i>Annual Change</i>		70.7%	-20.2%	-16.8%	8.8%	-11.2%
Passengers/VSH	3.77	2.83	4.07	4.93	4.90	5.61
<i>Annual Change</i>		-24.9%	43.7%	21.3%	-0.6%	14.3%
Passengers/VSM	0.24	0.17	0.26	0.32	0.31	0.35
<i>Annual Change</i>		-26.7%	50.1%	24.5%	-3.9%	11.3%
Farebox Recovery	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	4.9%	4.1%
<i>Annual Change</i>		-100.0%	0.0%	19696.7%	51.1%	-16.0%
Hours/Employee	950.9	803.7	660.7	594.8	556.3	395.6
<i>Annual Change</i>		-15.5%	-17.8%	-10.0%	-6.5%	-28.9%
TDA Non-Required Indicators						
Operating Cost/VSM	\$6.43	\$8.05	\$9.64	\$9.99	\$10.45	\$10.33
<i>Annual Change</i>		25.2%	19.7%	3.7%	4.5%	-1.1%
VSM/VSH	16.00	16.38	15.68	15.27	15.79	16.22
<i>Annual Change</i>		2.4%	-4.3%	-2.6%	3.4%	2.7%
Fare/Passenger	\$1.36	\$0.00	\$0.01	\$1.01	\$1.65	\$1.23
<i>Annual Change</i>		-100.0%	0.0%	16378.2%	64.3%	-25.4%

Sources: FY 2019/20 – FY 2021/22 data from prior Triennial Performance Audit.
FY 2022/23 – FY 2024/25 data from State Controller Reports.

Exhibit 6.2 System Ridership

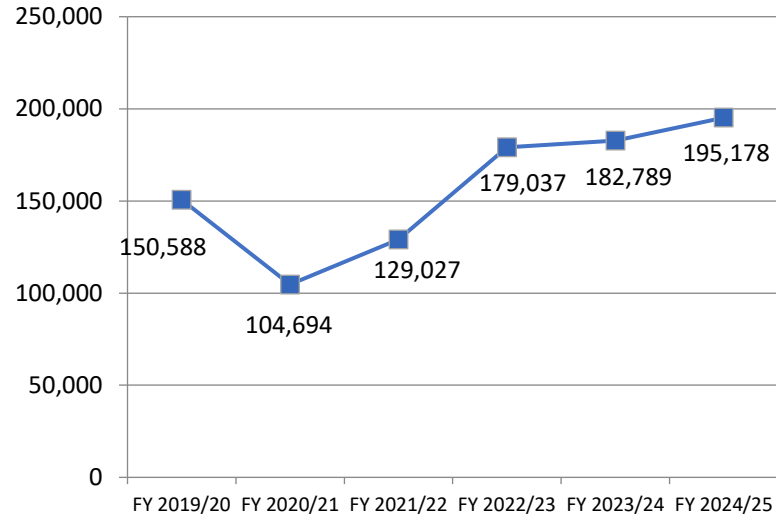


Exhibit 6.3 System Operating Cost/VS_H

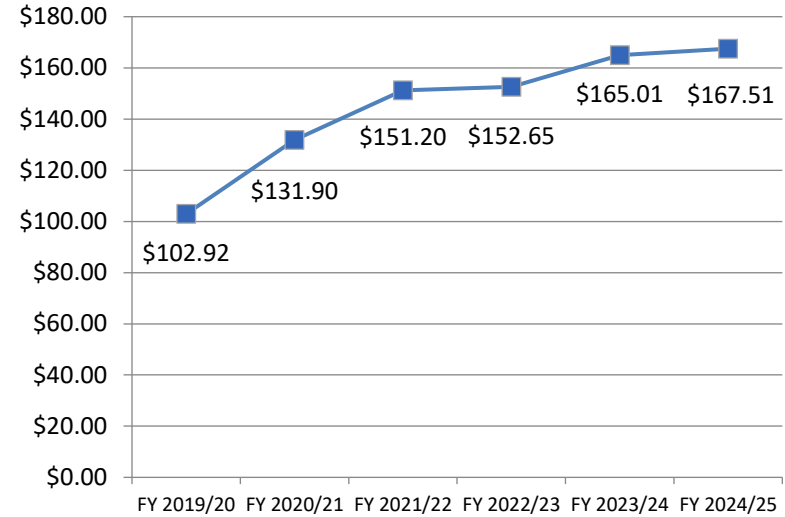


Exhibit 6.4 System Operating Cost/VS_M

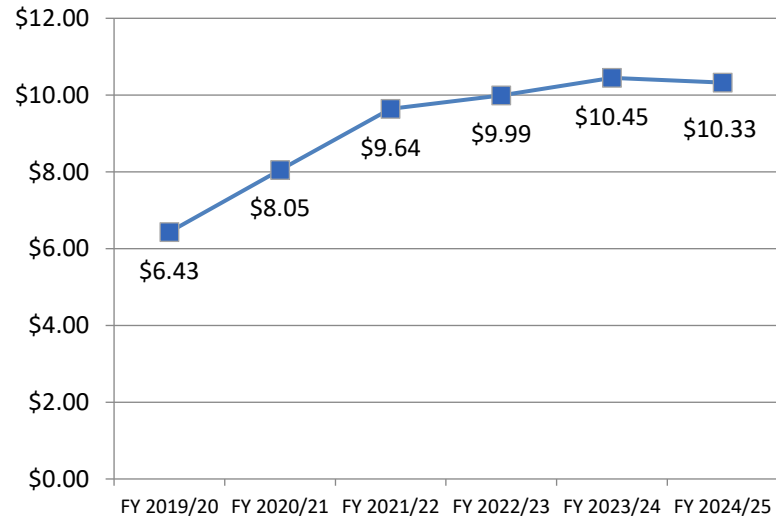


Exhibit 6.5 System VS_M/VS_H

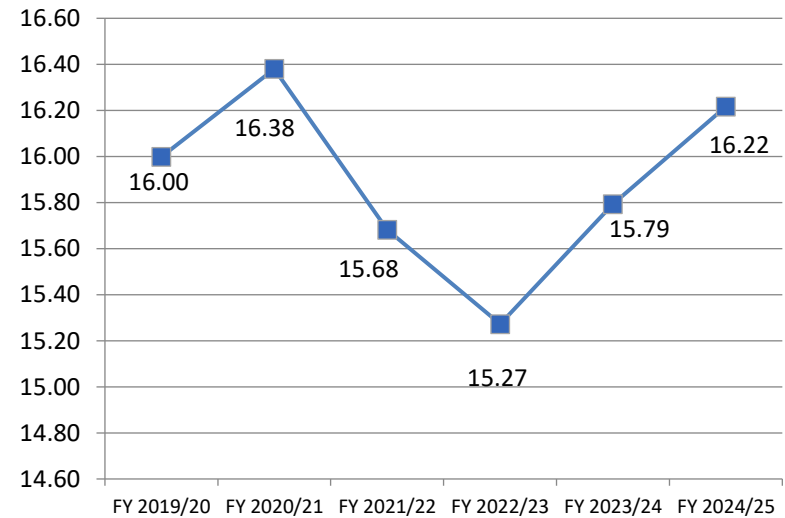


Exhibit 6.6 System Operating Cost/Passenger

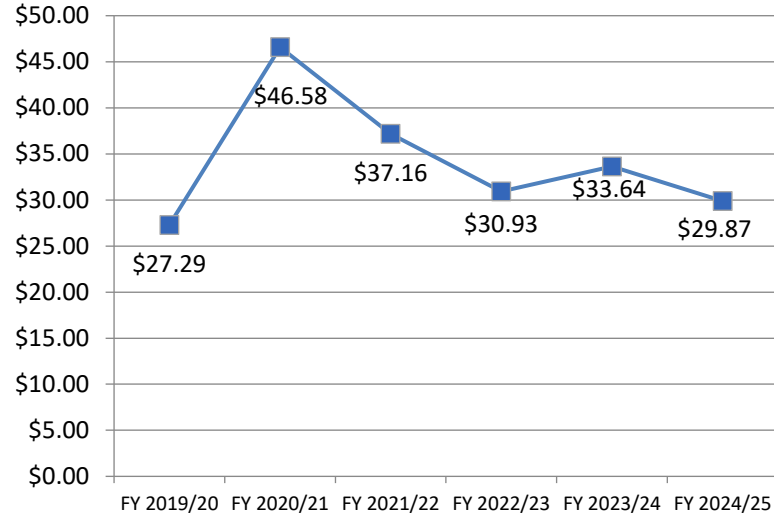


Exhibit 6.7 System Passengers/VSH

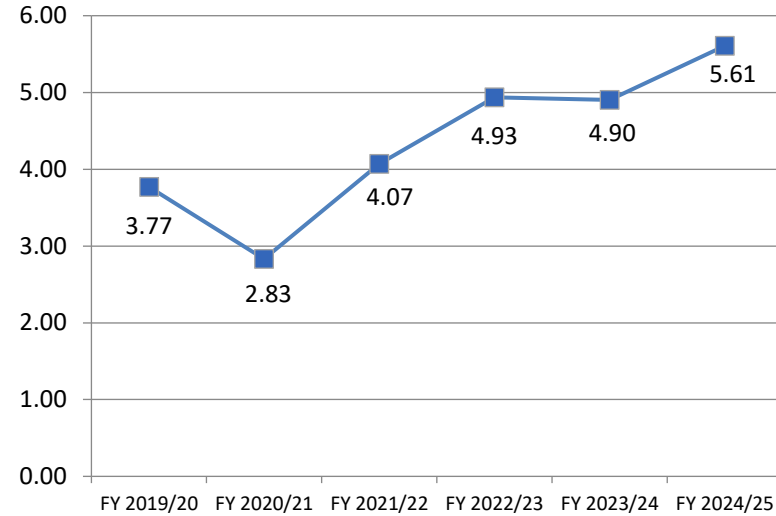


Exhibit 6.8 System Passengers/VSM

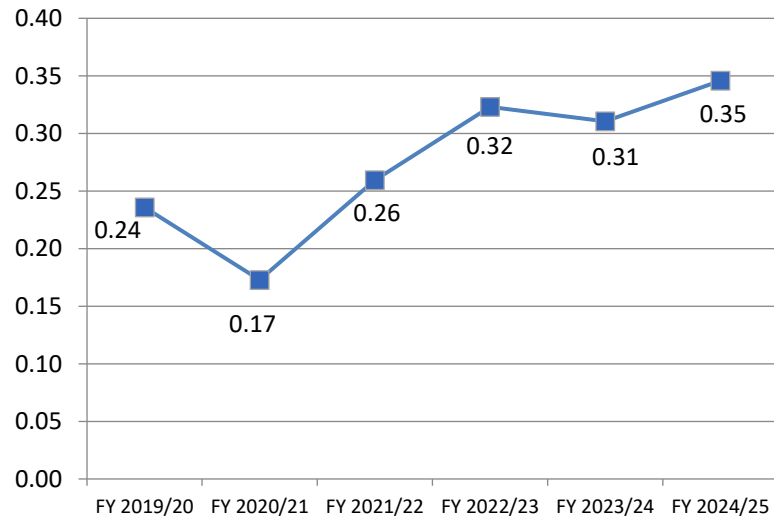


Exhibit 6.9 System VSH/FTE

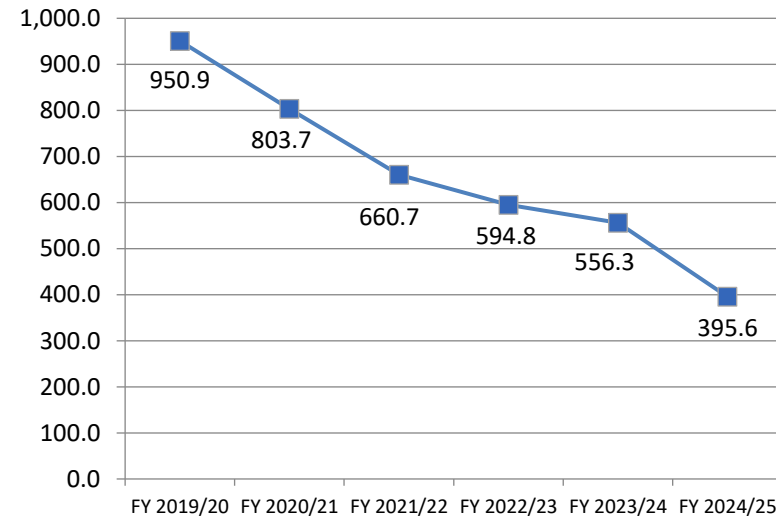


Exhibit 6.10 System Farebox Recovery

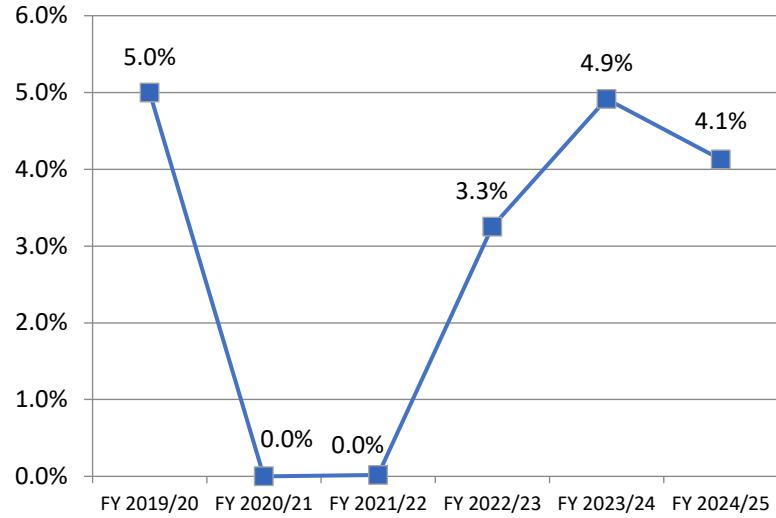
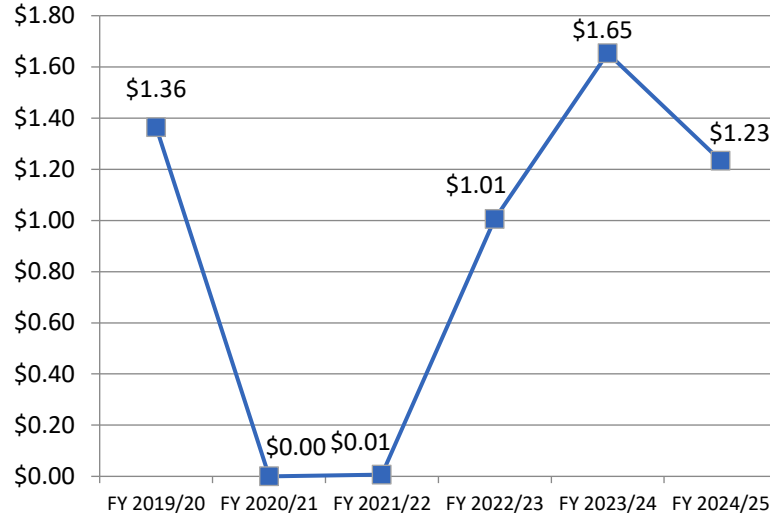


Exhibit 6.11 System Fare/Passenger



Fixed-Route Performance Trends

Fixed-route operating cost experienced a net 9.9 percent increase during the audit period, and an 80.9 percent net increase across the last six years. Fare revenue decreased dramatically in FY 2020/21 due to the fare-free period, before increasing in FY 2022/23 and FY 2023/24. This resulted in a net 14.7 percent increase during the audit period and a net 72.2 percent increase over six years.

Vehicle service hours (VSH) rose every year with the exception of FY 2021/22. This resulted in a net 2.9 percent increase during the audit period and a net 25.2 percent decrease during the six-year period. Vehicle service miles (VSM) experienced the same pattern with a net 3.7 percent increase during the audit period and a net 22.2 percent increase during the six-year period. Ridership declined in FY 2020/21 and then experienced increases every year after. This led to a 7.9 percent net increase during the audit period and a 59.8 percent net increase across the six-year period.

Fixed-route cost-related metrics increased during the audit period. Operating cost per passenger rose by 1.9 percent during the audit period. Passenger-related metrics increased during the audit period, with passengers per VSH increasing by 4.8 percent and passengers per VSM increasing by 4.1 percent.

Exhibit 6.12 Fixed-Route Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	Fixed-Route					
	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25
Operating Cost (Actual \$)	\$2,078,157	\$2,930,301	\$2,600,739	\$3,419,701	\$3,814,015	\$3,759,815
<i>Annual Change</i>		41.0%	-11.2%	31.5%	11.5%	-1.4%
Fare Revenue (Actual \$)	\$98,033	\$0	\$788	\$147,181	\$202,174	\$168,815
<i>Annual Change</i>		-100.0%		18577.8%	37.4%	-16.5%
Vehicle Service Hours (VSH)	17,874	19,103	16,555	21,750	22,152	22,386
<i>Annual Change</i>		6.9%	-13.3%	31.4%	1.8%	1.1%
Vehicle Service Miles (VSM)	284,971	296,066	258,619	335,962	343,902	348,247
<i>Annual Change</i>		3.9%	-12.6%	29.9%	2.4%	1.3%
Passengers	102,884	70,703	98,539	152,351	154,287	164,360
<i>Annual Change</i>		-31.3%	39.4%	54.6%	1.3%	6.5%
Employees	16	22	25	29	29	37
<i>Annual Change</i>		37.5%	13.6%	16.0%	0.0%	27.6%
Performance Indicators						
Operating Cost/VSH (Actual \$)	\$116.27	\$153.39	\$157.10	\$157.23	\$172.17	\$167.95
<i>Annual Change</i>		31.9%	2.4%	0.1%	9.5%	-2.5%
Operating Cost/Passenger (Actual \$)	\$20.20	\$41.45	\$26.39	\$22.45	\$24.72	\$22.88
<i>Annual Change</i>		105.2%	-36.3%	-15.0%	10.1%	-7.5%
Passengers/VSH	5.76	3.70	5.95	7.00	6.96	7.34
<i>Annual Change</i>		-35.7%	60.8%	17.7%	-0.6%	5.4%
Passengers/VSM	0.36	0.24	0.38	0.45	0.45	0.47
<i>Annual Change</i>		-33.9%	59.6%	19.0%	-1.1%	5.2%
Farebox Recovery	4.72%	0.00%	0.03%	4.30%	5.30%	4.49%
<i>Annual Change</i>		-100.0%		14104.8%	23.2%	-15.3%
Hours/Employee	1,117.1	868.3	662.2	750.0	763.9	605.0
<i>Annual Change</i>		-22.3%	-23.7%	13.3%	1.8%	-20.8%
TDA Non-Required Indicators						
Operating Cost/VSM	\$7.29	\$9.90	\$10.06	\$10.18	\$11.09	\$10.80
<i>Annual Change</i>		35.7%	1.6%	1.2%	9.0%	-2.7%
VSM/VSH	15.94	15.50	15.62	15.45	15.52	15.56
<i>Annual Change</i>		-2.8%	0.8%	-1.1%	0.5%	0.2%
Fare/Passenger	\$0.95	\$0.00	\$0.01	\$0.97	\$1.31	\$1.03
<i>Annual Change</i>		-100.0%		11980.6%	35.6%	-21.6%

Sources: FY 2019/20 – FY 2021/22 data from prior Triennial Performance Audit.
FY 2022/23 – FY 2024/25 data from State Controller Reports.

Exhibit 6.13 Fixed-Route Ridership

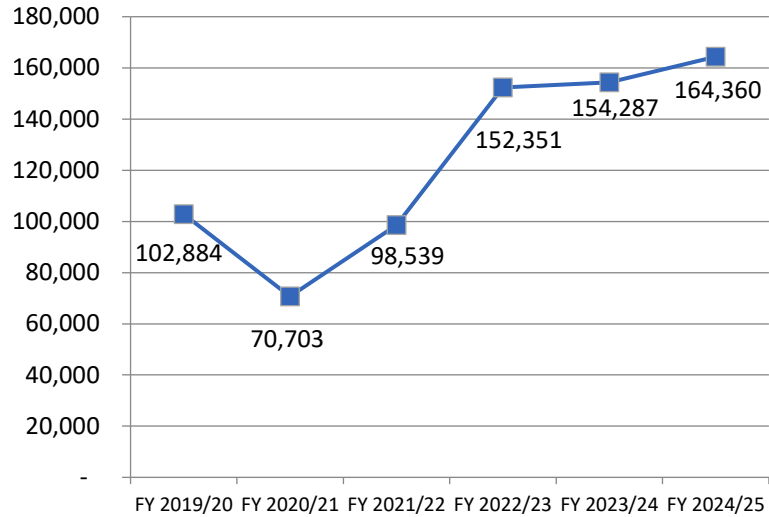


Exhibit 6.14 Fixed-Route Operating Cost/VSH

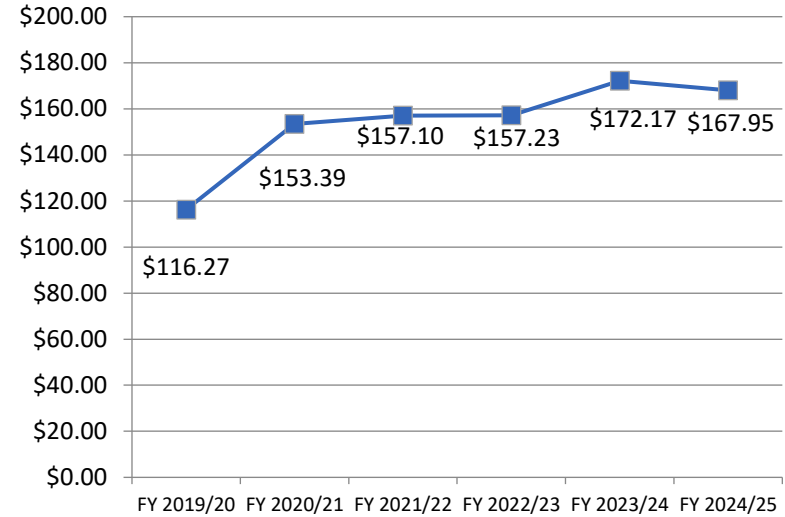


Exhibit 6.15 Fixed-Route Operating Cost/VSM

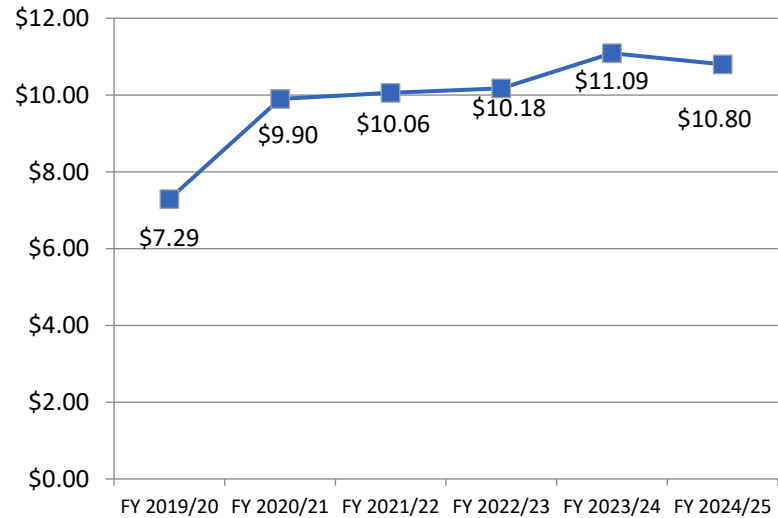


Exhibit 6.16 Fixed-Route VSM/VSH

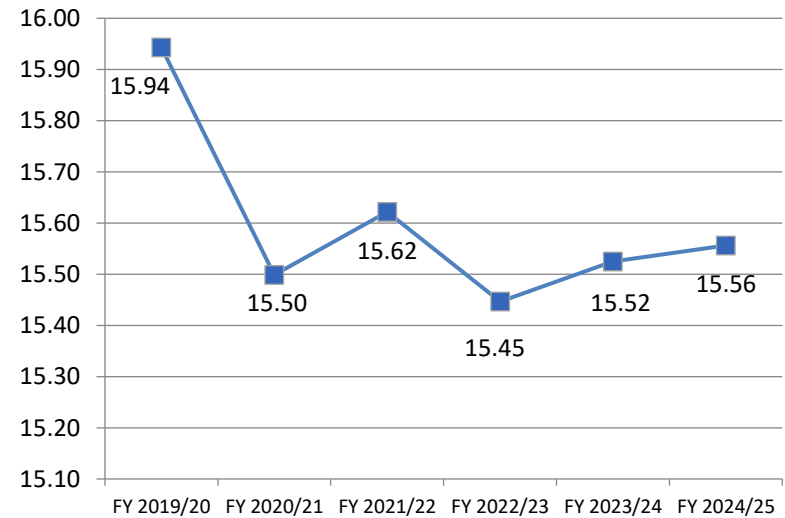


Exhibit 6.17 Fixed-Route Operating Cost/Passenger

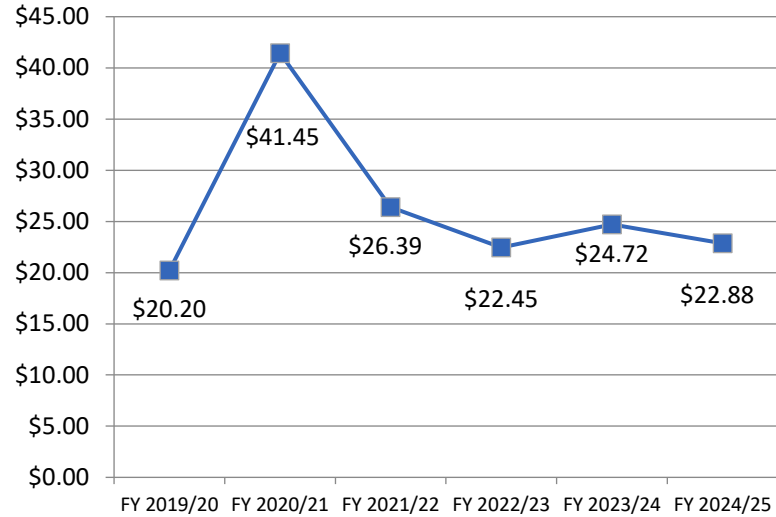


Exhibit 6.18 Fixed-Route Passengers/VSH

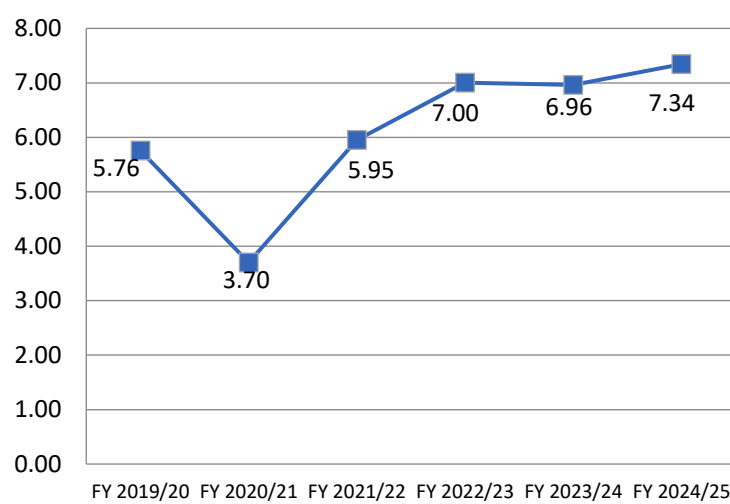


Exhibit 6.19 Fixed-Route Passengers/VSM

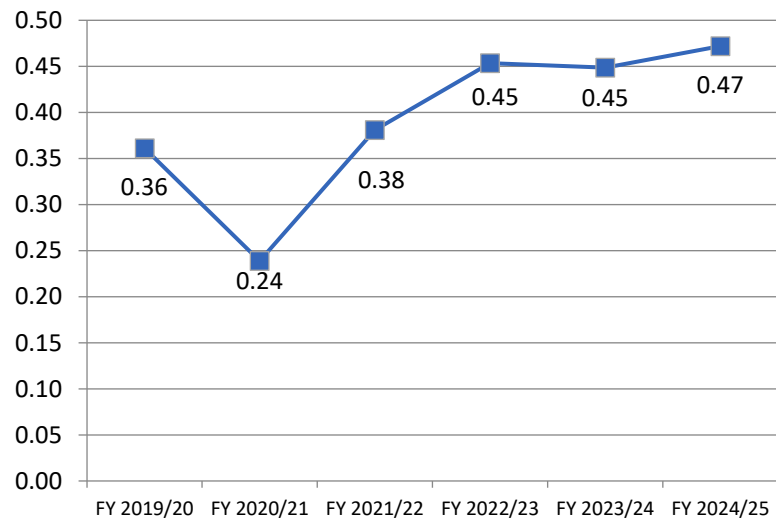


Exhibit 6.20 Fixed-Route VSH/FTE

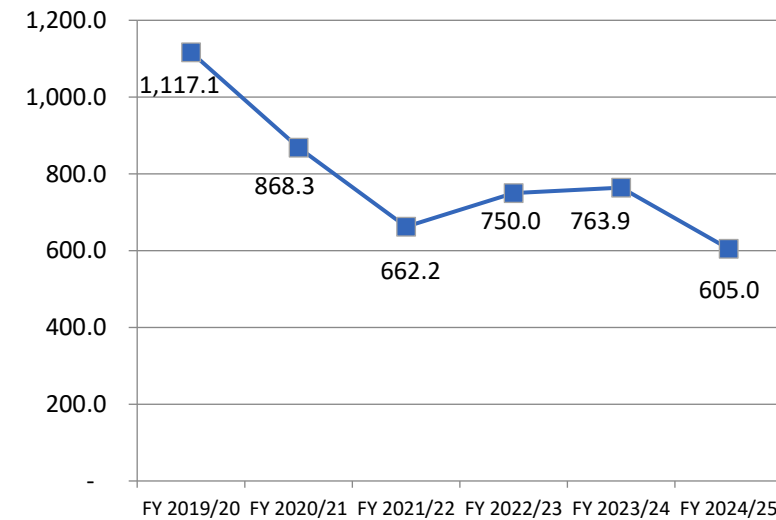


Exhibit 6.21 Fixed-Route Farebox Recovery

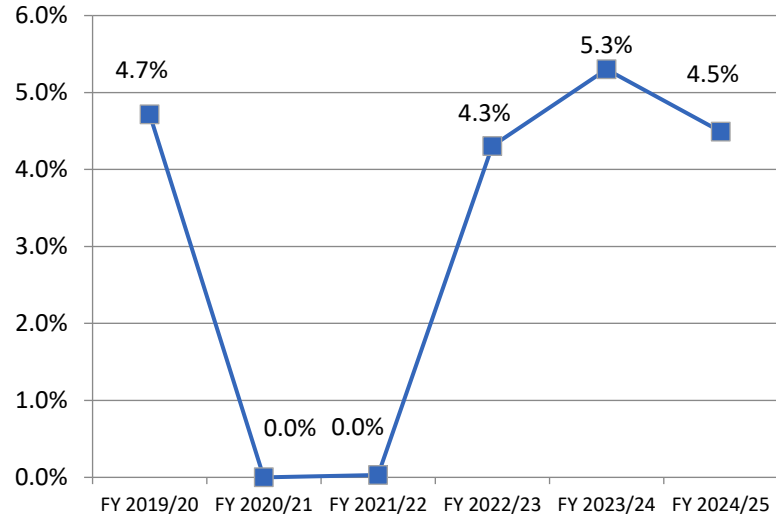
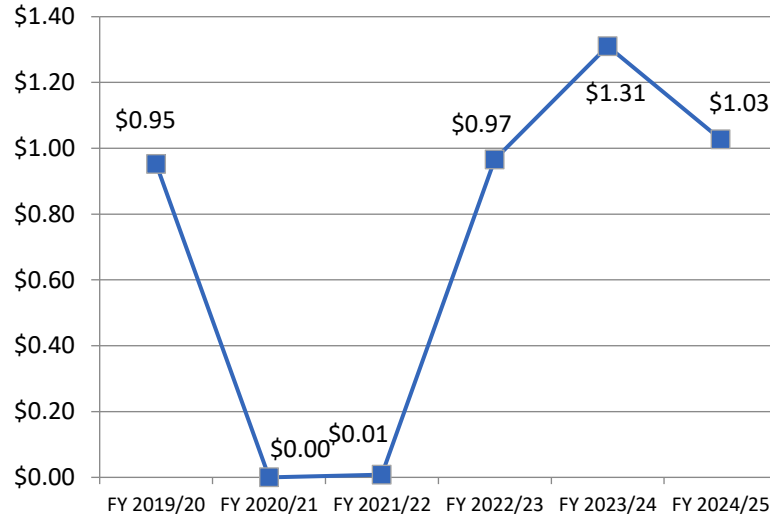


Exhibit 6.22 Fixed-Route Fare/Passenger



Demand-Response Performance Trends

Demand-response operating cost experienced a net 2.2 percent decrease during the audit period, but a net 1.9 percent increase across the last six years. Fare revenue increased 117.6 during the audit period but decreased a net 33.1 percent across the six-year period.

Vehicle service hours (VSH) decreased every year of the six-year period with the exception of a 4.0 percent increase in FY 2023/24. This resulted in a net 14.5 percent decrease during the audit period and a net 43.7 percent decrease during the six-year period. Vehicle service miles (VSM) experienced the same pattern. This resulted in a net 0.9 percent decrease during the audit period and a net 38.9 percent decrease during the six-year period. Ridership also declined through FY 2023/24, when it began rising. This led to a 15.5 percent net increase during the audit period, but a 35.4 percent net decrease across the six-year period.

Cost-related metrics, with the exception of operating cost per VSH, declined during the audit period, with operating cost per passenger decreasing 15.3 percent and operating cost per VSM decreasing 1.4 percent during the audit period. Operating cost per VSH increased by 14.3 percent. Passenger-related metrics rose during the audit period, with passengers per VSH increasing by 35.1 percent and passengers per VSM increasing by 16.5 percent.

Exhibit 6.23 Demand-Response Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	Demand-Response					
	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25
Operating Cost (Actual \$)	\$2,031,936	\$1,946,223	\$2,194,138	\$2,118,374	\$2,335,802	\$2,070,867
<i>Annual Change</i>		-4.2%	12.7%	-3.5%	10.3%	-11.3%
Fare Revenue (Actual \$)	\$107,378	\$0	\$0	\$32,996	\$100,056	\$71,800
<i>Annual Change</i>		-100.0%			203.2%	-28.2%
Vehicle Service Hours (VSH)	22,062	17,869	15,158	14,530	15,118	12,423
<i>Annual Change</i>		-19.0%	-15.2%	-4.1%	4.0%	-17.8%
Vehicle Service Miles (VSM)	353,948	309,534	238,679	218,130	244,690	216,240
<i>Annual Change</i>		-12.5%	-22.9%	-8.6%	12.2%	-11.6%
Passengers	47,704	33,991	30,488	26,686	28,502	30,818
<i>Annual Change</i>		-28.7%	-10.3%	-12.5%	6.8%	8.1%
Employees	26	24	23	32	38	51
<i>Annual Change</i>		-7.7%	-4.2%	39.1%	18.8%	34.2%
Performance Indicators						
Operating Cost/VSH (Actual \$)	\$92.10	\$108.92	\$144.75	\$145.79	\$154.50	\$166.70
<i>Annual Change</i>		18.3%	32.9%	0.7%	6.0%	7.9%
Operating Cost/Passenger (Actual \$)	\$42.59	\$57.26	\$71.97	\$79.38	\$81.95	\$67.20
<i>Annual Change</i>		34.4%	25.7%	10.3%	3.2%	-18.0%
Passengers/VSH	2.16	1.90	2.01	1.84	1.89	2.48
<i>Annual Change</i>		-12.0%	5.7%	-8.7%	2.7%	31.6%
Passengers/VSM	0.13	0.11	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.14
<i>Annual Change</i>		-18.5%	16.3%	-4.2%	-4.8%	22.4%
Farebox Recovery	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	4.3%	3.5%
<i>Annual Change</i>		-100.0%			175.0%	-19.1%
Hours/Employee	848.5	744.5	659.0	454.1	397.8	243.6
<i>Annual Change</i>		-12.3%	-11.5%	-31.1%	-12.4%	-38.8%
TDA Non-Required Indicators						
Operating Cost/VSM	\$5.74	\$6.29	\$9.19	\$9.71	\$9.55	\$9.58
<i>Annual Change</i>		9.5%	46.2%	5.6%	-1.7%	0.3%
VSM/VSH	16.04	17.32	15.75	15.01	16.19	17.41
<i>Annual Change</i>		8.0%	-9.1%	-4.7%	7.8%	7.5%
Fare/Passenger	\$2.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1.24	\$3.51	\$2.33
<i>Annual Change</i>		-100.0%			183.9%	-33.6%

Sources: FY 2019/20 – FY 2021/22 data from prior Triennial Performance Audit.
FY 2022/23 – FY 2024/25 data from State Controller Reports.

Exhibit 6.24 Demand-Response Ridership

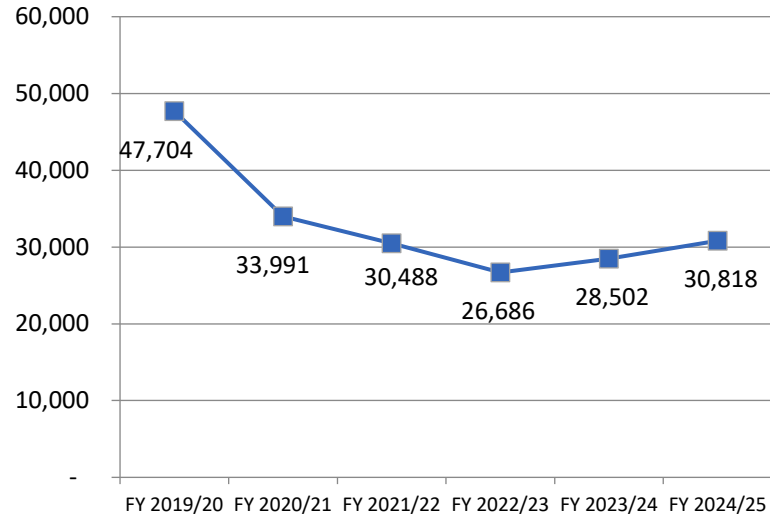


Exhibit 6.25 Demand-Response Operating Cost/VSH

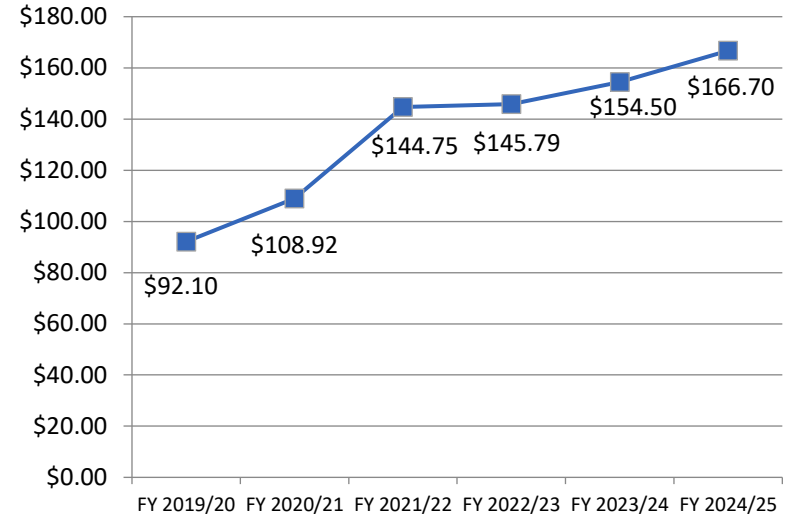


Exhibit 6.26 Demand-Response Operating Cost/VSM

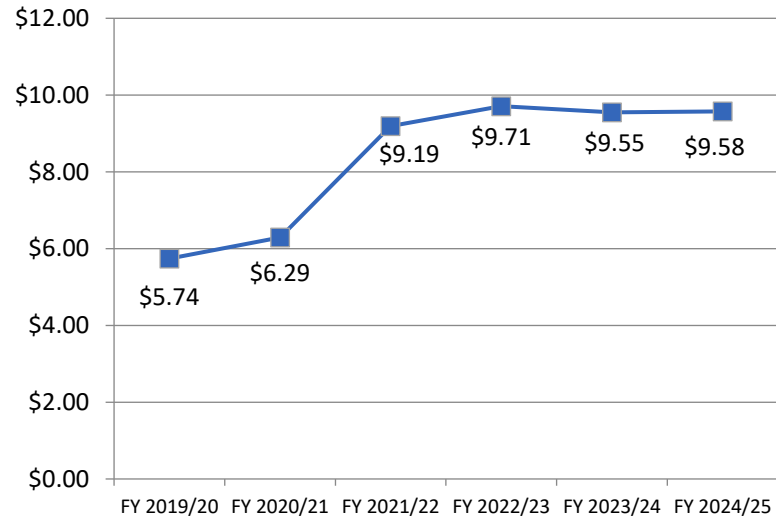


Exhibit 6.27 Demand-Response VSM/VSH

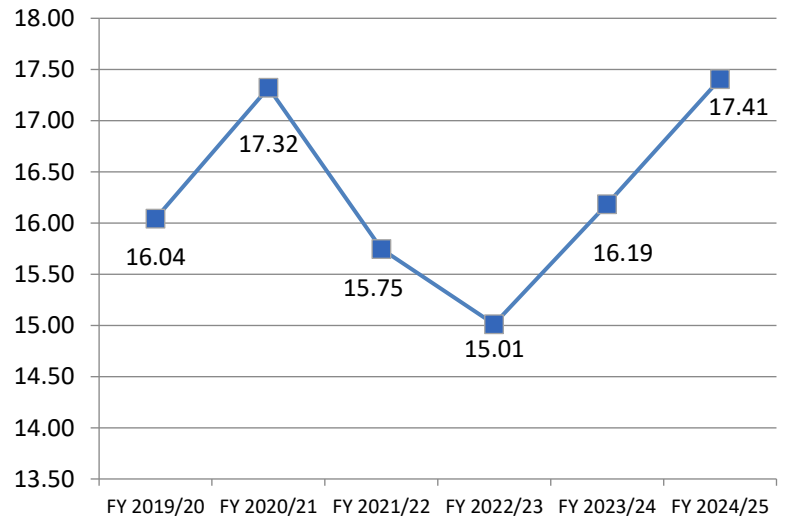


Exhibit 6.28 Demand-Response Operating Cost/Passenger

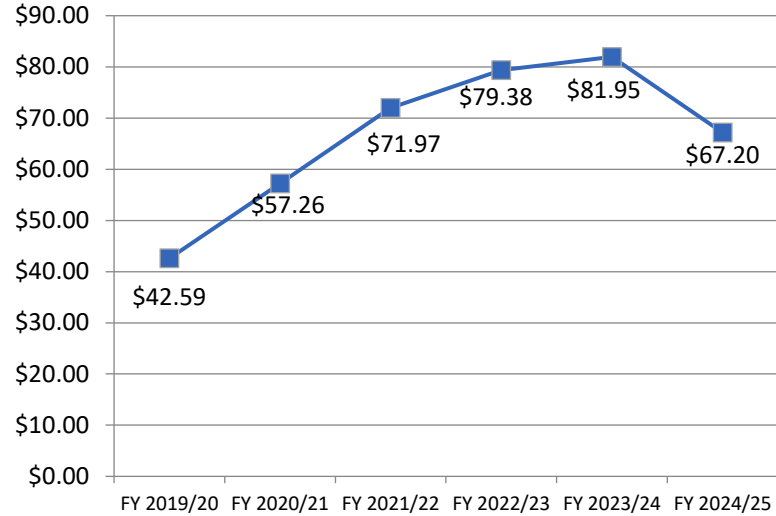


Exhibit 6.29 Demand-Response Passengers/VSH

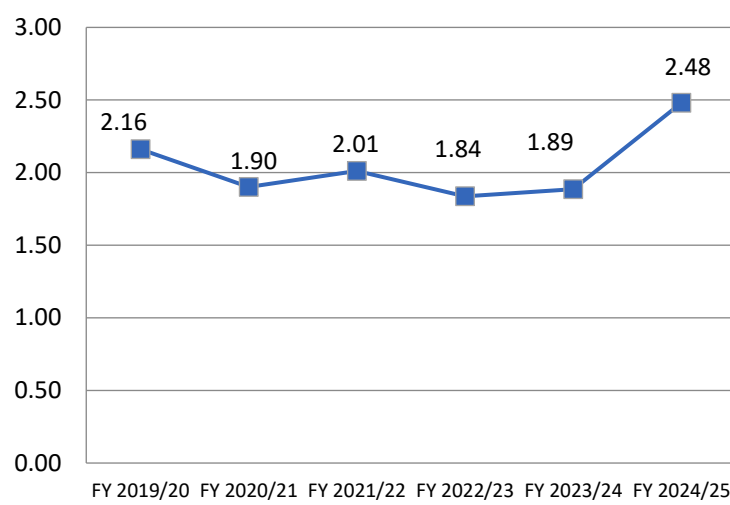


Exhibit 6.30 Demand-Response Passengers/VSM

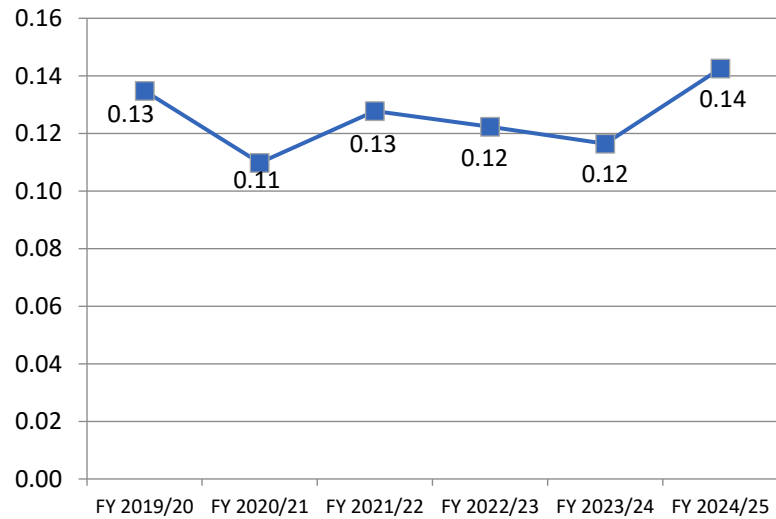


Exhibit 6.31 Demand-Response VSH/FTE

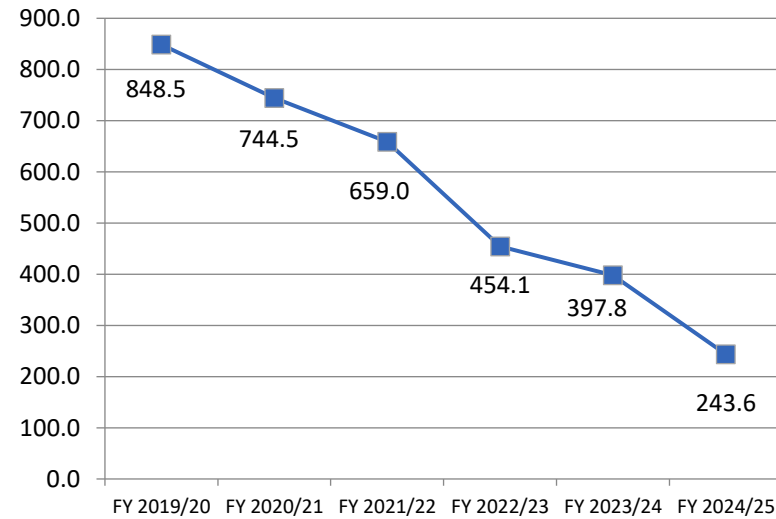


Exhibit 6.32 Demand-Response Farebox Recovery

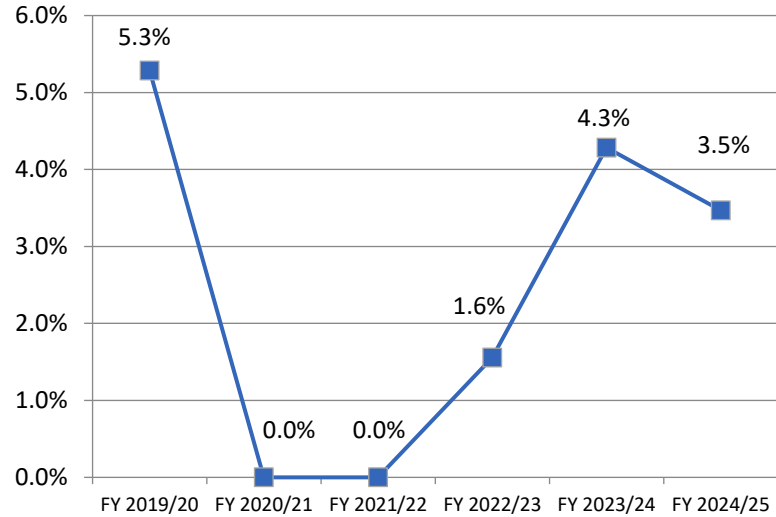
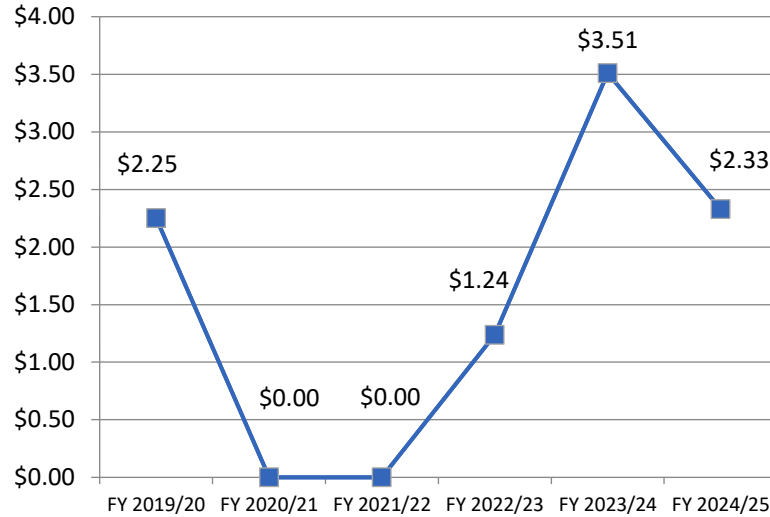


Exhibit 6.33 Demand-Response Fare/Passenger



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Chapter 7 | Functional Review

A functional review of the City of Thousand Oaks’ public transit program is intended to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the operator. Following a general summary of the City’s transit services, this chapter addresses seven functional areas. The list, taken from Section III of the *Performance Audit Guidebook* published by Caltrans, reflects those transit services provided by TOT through its transit program:

- General management and organization;
- Service planning;
- Administration;
- Marketing and public information;
- Scheduling, dispatch, and operations;
- Personnel management and training; and
- Maintenance.

Service Overview

The City of Thousand Oaks’ transit program is marketed as Thousand Oaks Transit (TOT). The TOT service area includes the cities of Thousand Oaks and Westlake Village; as well as Ventura County’s unincorporated areas of Newbury Park, Ventu Park, Lynn Ranch, Rolling Oaks, Oak Park, Hidden Valley, and Lake Sherwood. It is accessible via State Route 23 from the north and U.S. Highway 101 from the east and west.

The City’s fixed-route system is comprised of six fixed routes and one seasonal route to Zuma Beach and Ventura Harbor, serving Thousand Oaks, Newbury Park, and surrounding areas. Fixed-route service hours are 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturday.

Exhibit 7.1 Thousand Oaks Transit routes

Route #	Route Name	Area Served
40	Newbury Park – Borchart	The Oaks Mall, Newbury Park Library, NPHS, Sequoia MS, The Village at NP
41	Midtown – Flores	The Oaks Mall, Los Robles Hospital, Cal Lutheran, Los Cerritos MS, Teen & Adult Center, Transportation Center
42	Midtown – Arboles	Cal Lutheran, Los Robles Hospital, The Oaks Mall, Janss Marketplace, Teen Center, Adult Center
43	T. O. B.	The Oaks Mall, Transportation Center, Civic Arts Plaza, Westlake Plaza, VCHCA
44	Hillcrest	Transportation Center, Colina MS, The Oaks Mall, Westlake Plaza, The Promenade at Westlake
45	Newbury Park – Rancho Conejo	The Village at NP, Janss Marketplace, The Oaks Mall, Amgen area

Exhibit 7.2 Fixed-Route Fare Structure

Fare Category	Fare Price
Single Ride	
Regular	\$2.00
Senior/Disabled/Medicare	\$0.50
Transfer (between TOT and VCTC routes)	Free
College Ride Program (with college ID)	Free
Youth Ride Free Program (Grades 1-12)	Free
Children age 5 and under (with fare-paying passenger)	Free (up to 3)
10-Ride Pass	
Regular	\$16.00
Senior/Disabled/Medicare/Medi-Cal	\$4.00
7-Day Pass	
Regular	\$16.00
Senior/Disabled/Medicare/Medi-Cal	\$4.00
31-Day Pass	
Regular	\$50.00
Senior/Disabled/Medicare/Medi-Cal	\$14.00

Bus passes may be purchased onboard TOT buses or at the Thousand Oaks Transportation Center. Fares may also be paid using the regional VCbuspass (31-day pass or stored value).

The City’s door-to-door Dial-A-Ride service is available to passengers 65 years of age or above and those with a county-issued Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) card. Dial-A-Ride hours of operation are the same as those of regular fixed-route buses, except service is also offered from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday. Dial-A-Ride service is provided throughout Thousand Oaks, to Westlake Village, and to the county’s unincorporated areas of Newbury Park, Ventu Park, Lynn Ranch, Rolling Oaks, Oak Park, Hidden Valley and Lake Sherwood. Rides can be booked by phone or via the Thousand Oaks Dial-A-Ride app.

Exhibit 7.3 Demand-Response Fare Structure

Fare Category	Fare Price
Senior/ADA (one-way)	\$4.00
Companion	\$4.00
Personal care attendant (registered)	Free

Recent service and fare changes

Fare collection resumed in July 2022 with a half-fare program following a fare free period in response to COVID-19. In January 2023, TOT returned to full fares. In 2024, the transit program expanded the seasonal Summer Breach Bus service to include Saturday service to Ventura Harbor. The City introduced a sixth route to its fixed-route service in January 2026. The route, Route 45 (Newbury Park – Rancho Conejo), includes stops at the Village at Newbury Park, Janns Marketplace, The Oaks Mall, and the Amgen area. The City is also participating in the College Ride Free and Youth Ride Free programs.

General Management and Organization

Operation of the City’s transit program, as well as maintenance of leased vehicles, has been contracted to MV Transportation for nearly 20 years. The current contract has a seven-year term, which expires June

30, 2027. The City has already issued a Request for Proposals for a new contract. City staff manage the program through bimonthly reporting from the contractor, reviewing monthly invoices with performance data, and monitoring performance through multiple software platforms. These platforms include Syncromatics, Swiftly/Hopthru, Solutions for Transit, TransTrack, UTA, GFI, Trillium, RideCo, and SafeFleet cameras. The technology generally does a good job, but it can be difficult to get the customer support as quickly as desired. Syncromatics in particular was particularly challenging, but has improved over the past couple of years. This appears to be an industry issue, which is especially challenging for a small agency that has trouble managing many support tickets for different technology vendors.

Across the span of the contract, there has been a lot of turnover, especially with respect to management. During the past 18 months, MV has made a significant effort to remedy some of the issues that have been prevalent throughout the contract. Overall, City staff have been disappointed in MV corporate's ability to support its managers. With so much turnover, bringing the wrong person in and not providing support can easily result in a regression to underperformance on the part of the contractor.

Another challenge faced during the audit period was a three-month period in the summer of 2024 when the City's CNG fueling station was out of service. Fueling for the City's transit fleet had to be done in Oxnard (public pump) or Simi Valley (bus yard fueling station). This caused strain on contractor staff, which was alleviated when the fueling station was placed back into service. Since then, a new waste management facility, which includes CNG fueling, has been opened near the City's Municipal Services Center (MSC). The City has entered into an agreement that would allow it to fuel CNG vehicles at that facility in the event of another issue with its own CNG pumps.

Within the City, staffing is appropriate and supported by other City divisions and departments as required. There is a clear chain of command within the program and those staff who substantially support the program. The City currently maintains a Public Works field crew responsible for general street maintenance, including pothole repairs, and has supported transit-related efforts such as bus stop maintenance and replacement projects. While this existing structure is effective for routine needs, larger projects can limit the crew's availability for transit-specific work. A vendor contract is used for routine shelter cleaning.

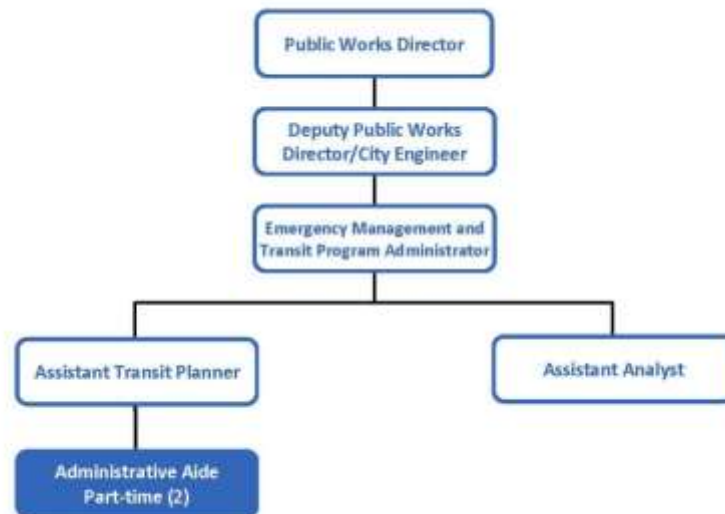
As a result, the City may wish to consider the potential benefit of establishing a more dedicated, in-house resource for the maintenance of transit amenities (possibly in lieu of another Transit Analyst). While not an immediate priority, this approach could improve responsiveness and reduce reliance on external contracts over time, and is worth further evaluation.

The City has experienced several challenges related to recent leadership transitions, including the retirements of the former Public Works Director and the Transit Manager. The Public Works Director was succeeded by the City's Deputy Public Works Director/City Engineer, who had been with the City for 19 years. The retirement of the long-time Transit Manager had greater impact. Transit was placed under the oversight of the Emergency Management and Transit Program Administrator, who has been on administrative leave since July 2025, leaving Transit with a temporary supervisor. The Assistant Transit Planner, who joined the City prior to the Transit Manager's retirement, manages most of the day-to-day activities. One of the biggest hurdles has been trying to recreate some of the information and methodologies used by the prior Transit Manager, which required extra time to do but has not had a

significant impact otherwise. The City has also added a second full-time staffer (Assistant Analyst) as well as several part-time Administrative Aides.

Exhibit 7.4 illustrates the organizational structure of the transit program within the City.

Exhibit 7.4 Organizational Chart



The Thousand Oaks City Council is the governing body for the City’s public transit program. Meetings are open to the public. The City Council meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall, which is well served by TOT Route 43. Staff routinely report on transit developments to the City Council.

As a provider of services, the City has developed strong, cooperative relations with other local municipal entities in order to provide transit services under contract. The City serves as the lead agency and fiscal agent for the ECTA MOU. The City works cooperatively with the Gold Coast Transit District on joint procurements and VCTC on issues of regional concern including the rollout of new technologies and coordination of services, and participates in special programs and projects such as the College Free Ride Program. The Assistant Transit Planner and the Assistant Analyst serve as the intergovernmental liaisons with respect to transit.

Service Planning

The most recent Transit Master Plan was completed in 2015 but never adopted due to changes in the composition of the City Council. At the time of this report, VCTC was in the process of adopting a county-wide Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP), which includes recommendations for the City’s transit program. The City has been supportive of the process overall. They felt the SRTP did a thorough job of reviewing existing conditions and looking for efficiencies, and the recommendations were in line with the City’s priorities for its fixed-route service.

With respect to recommendations for Dial-A-Ride, the City feels the SRTP focuses too much on full consolidation without appropriately considering both alternatives presented in VCTC's Transit Integration and Efficiency Study (TIES). There are concerns that jumping directly to full consolidation without further consideration of the two-provider option is not aligned with the recommendations of the TIES study.

The City ensures all services, regardless of type, are accessible to persons with disabilities. The fleet is 100 percent accessible, as are all facilities. Wherever possible, the transit program exceeds federal minimums. Demand-response services typically reflect fixed-route service hours; however, Sunday service is also offered, which exceeds federal requirements. The new fixed-route brochures include visual line type elements to improve the readability for visually impaired individuals. The City continues to update marketing materials to exceed ADA requirements.

The transit program participates in and sponsors public outreach events (such as Rotary Street Fair, Arbor Earth Day, and Senior Wellness Fest) and travel training seminars. Staff may present transit matters to the Council on Aging and the Youth Commission. Public hearings are conducted as required planning and policy activities. Hearings are held at city hall or other city venues designed for public meetings. Every effort is made to provide information to riders in three languages (e.g., English, Spanish, and Chinese) wherever possible.

Surveys were conducted in March 2025 as part of the Unmet Needs process. Surveys were also conducted in Spring 2024 as part of the VCTC SRTP development process.

To initiate the transition to zero-emission vehicles, the City procured four electric vans and currently has four Level 2 chargers installed. At the time of the site visit, those vehicles had yet to be placed into service. The City recently awarded a contract to electrify its Municipal Services Center, which will include infrastructure for charging public works, transit, and staff vehicles; public chargers; microgrids; and backup battery storage. This project is expected to take three years to complete. The City is preparing to order electric buses, which are expected to be delivered in 2.5 years. It hopes to have a 100 percent electric fleet around 2030.

Administration

The City prepares a two-year budget which includes transit expenditures broken out by capital, operations, and user fees. The Assistant Transit Planner is primarily responsible for preparing the transit budget. Staff review actuals from previous years, project price increases, and projected changes in demand. Any projected service changes, fixed-cost increases, and transit contracts get added in as well. Budgeted expectations are compared with actual expenditures monthly and reported to City Council annually. All financial data is maintained in Cognos/Naviline.

Transit staff seek out funding opportunities based on what projects need additional funding. Grants are managed by a combination of Finance staff and Public Works staff, primarily the Assistant Transit Planner. Finance staff prepare required financial reports, handle audit responsibilities, and ensure proper accounting procedures. Project managers are responsible for budget expenditure tracking and compliance with grant conditions for use of funds.

The City's Human Resources Department handles risk management, and has a procedure for processing claims. The City is a member of an Excess Liability pool (PRISM) that provides coverage up to \$25 million. The City has an adopted and compliant Public Transit Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). The safety of operating practices is reviewed by the City on an ongoing basis by the Transit Planner, while MV reviews its practices on a daily, monthly, and quarterly basis. The operations contractor is required to maintain a disaster preparedness plan, which is updated annually. The City and MV have Injury Prevention Plans in place and participate in monthly meetings with the PTASP committee.

Contracts managed through the transit department include transit operations and maintenance, transit facility security, APC hardware, APC data validation and analysis, bus stop cleaning and maintenance, transit data validation, and transit customer service management. The City also serves as the contractor for several local transit operators, including the City of Moorpark and the County of Ventura. City of Thousand Oaks facilities staff are responsible for facility management and maintenance of the Thousand Oaks Transportation Center, Municipal Services Center, and Civic Arts Plaza/City Hall.

All City staff complete timesheets and submit to supervisors and department heads for approval. All employee records are securely managed. All staff utilize direct deposit.

Accounting/Customer Service Representatives handle accounts payable. The Accounting Specialist handles accounts receivable. Goods and services must be reviewed and approved by the project manager before they are paid.

The City's purchasing procedures are governed by the Municipal Code as well as the TO Purchasing Ordinance. VCTC also has established procurement policies, which the City is following to the letter. The City also follows FTA procurement rules.

The City has an internal annual audit plan that is risk-based. It is reviewed annually and modified as needed based on any new risks identified. The audit plan is reviewed by the Finance Director, City Manager, and Finance Audit Committee. Audit reports with recommendations receive periodic follow-ups.

Marketing and Public Information

Transit marketing is conducted by the City using City resources, channels, and contractors. It includes regular website updates, content on social media platforms, print advertising, community outreach events, flyers, postcards, and promotional items. Service brochures (including service schedules) are frequently updated and distributed to locations throughout the community. Other marketing and information activities include posting information at key transit locations and public facilities, on vehicles, and in other locations and participation in public events and travel training activities. Brochures are available at both libraries, the senior and teen centers, City Hall, Thousand Oaks Transportation Center, and on vehicles. The City also attends outreach events such as community street fairs and public meetings such as the Youth Commission and Council on Aging. Data from social media and performance data is used to track the impact of marketing activities.

TOT real-time information and service notifications are included within the GoVCbus app. The City also uses an app that allows Dial-A-Ride customers to make reservations through the app.

Customer inquiries, concerns, and compliments are encouraged and can be received by phone, email, and other methods. All calls are initially recorded but not all are logged; only recordings of those identified as a complaint, compliment, or issue are saved. All customer contacts are entered into the TransTrack system, which documents investigations and resolutions. The contractor has 24 hours to respond to inquiries and begin an investigation, and one week for full resolution. Transit maintains a general email account and messages are retained for three years.

The public's perception of Thousand Oaks Transit is generally positive. This is based on transit surveys conducted during the SRTP update process. Survey respondents rated the overall quality of bus service as 3.49 points out of 4 possible points.

Scheduling, Dispatch, and Operations

The City of Thousand Oaks contracts with MV Transportation to provide vehicle operators and maintenance of leased vehicles for the City's transit services. MV's operators, dispatchers, road supervisors, and customer service representatives are represented by Teamsters Local #848. At present, MV only has full-time drivers, as it has had difficulty filling vacancies and the investment and expense of training staff does not warrant hiring part-time staff. The City feels this is an effective way to keep them more competitive by offering guaranteed full-time positions. As of the time of the site visit, MV's driver workforce was fully staffed with 38 full-time drivers.

All drivers are required to meet the same licensing and certification requirements. Road Supervisors, behind-the-wheel trainers, the Safety & Training Manager, and, in some cases, Dispatchers are licensed and qualified to drive revenue vehicles even though they are not regular drivers. This ensures the division maintains operational flexibility for road supervision, training, pull-outs, and service coverage.

Drivers bid for their work assignments on a seniority basis twice annually. Many bid schedules have multiple route or service components, but not all. Some drivers may work for multiple agencies under contract with the City of Thousand Oaks on a single shift. All drivers are trained to operate all fixed-route and demand-response vehicles.

Scheduled absences are covered by extra board drivers, followed by calls to the seniority-based extra work list, and finally to off-duty drivers. Unscheduled absences (call-outs) require a one-hour notice. In these situations a similar approach is taken, with the opening escalated to management if it jeopardizes service.

Vehicles are assigned to routes daily by dispatchers on a rotation based on route design and vehicle type. Each program operated by MV has its own fleet, and buses branded for one fleet are not assigned to another service. Dispatch receives a list of down vehicles daily prior to pull-out. Vehicles available for service are then assigned for the day.

The City of Thousand Oaks uses GFI/SPX fareboxes. Fareboxes are pulled by authorized management and supervisory staff once weekly for all buses that have been in service during the prior seven-day period. Locked fareboxes are transported to City Hall, which has a key to unlock the fareboxes and retrieve the cash. Coins are immediately deposited into a secure, tamper-proof bag, and placed in the vault for counting at the bank. All bills are counted, double-counted, banded, then deposited into a tamperproof bag, and placed in the vault. Both coins and bills are signed off by two individuals. Fares are picked up by

armored car service. Coins are counted at the bank. Accounting identifies bus fare deposits through a deposit slip that uses the same account number with a unique identifier code. This allows accounting to recognize the funds as bus coin revenue, generate a receipt, and enter the transaction into Naviline.

All TOT bus pass types are sold on board the buses and at the Transportation Center. Money on buses is deposited into the farebox vaults. For sales at the Transportation Center, MV staff provide a receipt to the customer and a monthly spreadsheet of sales to the City, which is reconciled against a printout from the ticketing machine that only City staff can generate.

For Dial-A-Ride, trip tickets are sold at the Transportation Center, City Hall, and the Senior Center. At City Hall transactions are processed no differently than any other cash transaction and are entered into the City's financial system. Tickets sold at the Transportation Center are pre-purchased by MV. Tickets sold at the Senior Center are supplied by transit staff who reconcile the sales at least weekly against both receipts and the ticket log. The cash is deposited with the City's cashier and entered into the financial system. All fare media supplied to all three locations are logged two ways and a three-part receipt is generated for record-keeping purposes.

TOT buses are equipped to accept VCTC's county-wide contactless fare payment program (VCbuspass). It also expects to install equipment to accept open-loop payments (by debit or credit card) in Spring 2026.

Personnel Management and Training

While the City's transit program is fully staffed, the contractor continues to actively recruit given its challenges in the past. Employee recruitment is conducted via multiple methodologies, including job fairs, workforce/job placements/outreach programs, ads on local hiring sites, veterans outreach, and County offices. New applicants are rapidly screened, with qualified candidates advanced into MV's training program in accordance with its operator staffing guidelines. MV does not have a dedicated local recruiter, but additional assistance can be provided by the regional and corporate human resources teams as needed.

Recruits are not required to possess a commercial license. MV provides full training through commercial licensing. All drivers must possess a commercial license with passenger and air brake endorsements as well as a Vehicle Transit Training (VTT) certificate by the end of their training.

MV strives to motivate its employees by holding employee appreciation events and luncheons, conducting customer service and safety contests, and selecting an Employee of the Month. All positive rider comments are passed along to drivers. Operator staff regularly receive risk assessments and road evaluations. A structured recognition and incentive program includes safety meeting recognition, Employee of the Month awards, DriveCam and customer service commendations, service milestones, safety bonuses, and engagement events. MV complements these efforts with programs such as a Safety Bonus for operators achieving 12 consecutive months without preventable incidents, along with additional performance-based recognition and reward initiatives.

MV has put in considerable effort to reduce turnover, particularly within the first 90 days of employment. This is typically due to schedule instability, competitive wage pressures, safety-related job stress, and low engagement. For several years, the City has worked on steadily increasing driver wages through adjustments to the contract, the most recent of which occurred in 2023. MV Transportation addresses

clear expectations, strengthened onboarding, and active use of its turnover and engagement action planning process to support workforce stability. There may be opportunities for MV to add management incentives to maintain more stability in those positions. Most managers cannot afford to live in Thousand Oaks, which contributes to the retention issues.

All operations staff receive regular, documented performance evaluations through a structured performance management framework. These include annual self-evaluations, manager evaluations, regular check-ins, and role-specific evaluations. Drivers receive a minimum of two on-board evaluations within each rolling 12-month period.

The Safety & Training Manager oversees all of MV's training programs. Certified Classroom Instructors and Behind-the-Wheel Trainers provide new-hire and refresher training. MV does not have a local in-house DMV tester; all commercial testing is done through the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Safety activities include monthly safety meetings, weekly safety stand-downs, ongoing operator training, DriveCam coaching programs, emergency preparedness, compliance training, and safety blitz campaign and recognition program. Minimum safety and training requirements are included in the transit operations operator's contract. All vehicles are equipped with safety equipment required by the Department of Transportation, state, and contract.

Discipline and attendance policies are outlined in an Employee Handbook which is provided to all employees upon the start of employment. These include a safety point system, attendance point system, coaching, and counseling. A progressive discipline program is also utilized. MV's drug and alcohol policy is monitored by the City of Thousand Oaks and the FTA.

MV Transportation provides comprehensive benefits to all full-time employees, including medical, dental, and vision insurance; retirement/401(k); paid time off; paid holidays, and a vacation cash-out program. Employees receive a package outlining available benefits on an annual basis.

Maintenance

The City of Thousand Oaks maintains its own vehicles as well as vehicles for the City of Moorpark at its Municipal Services Center. MV Transportation provides maintenance for all leased vehicles at its Santa Paula facility.

City-provided maintenance

The City of Thousand Oaks adheres to the required preventive maintenance program. Drivers complete a Daily Vehicle Inspection Report (DVIR), which identifies any unsafe conditions. MV has standing orders to identify any issues with the vehicles as part of the pre- and post-trip inspections. Maintenance will notify dispatch regarding any vehicle deemed unsafe. Vehicles undergoing maintenance will be tagged so they are not used. Repairs are performed in a timely manner; transit vehicles are the highest priority of all maintenance work. The City utilizes Faster Fleet Management software to manage its fleets.

The majority of work is performed in-house. Body work and paint are typically sent out to a local vendor as the MSC facility is not big enough to accommodate this type of work.

The City's Municipal Service Center provides maintenance for all City fleets. Transit has five dedicated service bays with one heavy lift and three portable lifts. Up to four heavy vehicles can be accommodated simultaneously. Four dedicated maintenance personnel service transit vehicles. The facility is suited to all aspects of maintenance that are performed there and has sufficient space for administrative offices and record storage.

The City of Thousand Oaks' CNG fueling facility at the MSC was completed in 2013 and activated in 2014. Moorpark buses are fueled and maintained there. Moorpark and Thousand Oaks buses have their own CNG fueling meters so that fuel is allocated accurately.

The City is currently in the process of determining what kind of expansion of the MSC will be needed, though this is separate from the electrification project discussed earlier. Staff would like more room to increase the workspace, improve access to equipment, and add new equipment needed to service battery-electric vehicles. The challenge is there is little room for expansion. It is likely there will ultimately be less space required than for traditional maintenance, but finding that balance without having that experience already is difficult. City staff hope to learn from agencies that have already been through this transition and better guide their facility planning.

California Highway Patrol (CHP) inspections are conducted every 45 days. Vehicles not passing the CHP inspection are not put into service. Some major repairs are outsourced, such as transmission rebuilds or large-scale body work. The City follows guidelines for ramp and wheelchair lift inspections – when one is down, that vehicle must be pulled out of service. The City of Thousand Oaks' policy prohibits deferred maintenance. There is currently no backlog of repairs and no idle time, as fleet mechanics work on all City-maintained vehicles.

Transit vehicles are equipped with numerous technologies, including Syncromatics MDT, GFI fareboxes, Safefleet cameras, UTA APCs, and Mifi units. During the audit period, vehicles were frequently being taken out of service for Syncromatics MDT issues. This was an issue for approximately two years, which was ultimately resolved by City staff committing more time to solving the problem and improved customer support on the part of Syncromatics.

The City's parts room is secure, with access limited to Fleet and Purchasing staff. Parts inventories are sufficient to minimize vehicle downtime. There is a defined timeframe between a request to order parts and receipt of the parts. The City of Thousand Oaks has established an email account for fleet parts so that maintenance can be notified when parts have shipped or been delivered. All parts are barcoded, tracked through the fleet management system, and inventoried annually. There is very little loss.

Maintenance is notified promptly of breakdowns. There is no real issue with vehicle downtimes, as a robust reserve fleet is maintained and vehicles can be exchanged across services if absolutely necessary. Daily updates are provided to notify dispatch when a vehicle is available for service.

Exhibit 7.5 illustrates the City's fleet inventory.

Exhibit 7.5 Thousand Oaks Transit Fleet

Make/Model	Year	Seating capacity	Fuel Type	Quantity	Assigned to:
Orion VII Bus	2008	34/2 WC	CNG	2	Thousand Oaks FR
Gillig Bus	2015	23/2 WC	CNG	2	Thousand Oaks FR
Ford E450 Cutaway	2014	16/2 WC	CNG	2	Thousand Oaks FR
Ford E450 Cutaway	2018	28/2 WC	Diesel	1	Thousand Oaks FR
Gillig Bus	2019	23/2 WC	CNG	4	Thousand Oaks FR
Blue Bird All American	2012	44/0 WC	Diesel	1	Thousand Oaks FR
Ford Starcraft	2019	8/3 WC	CNG	5	Thousand Oaks DAR
Chrysler Voyager	2022	4/1 WC	Gas	8	Thousand Oaks DAR
Chevrolet Starcraft	2023	8/2 WC	Gas	3	Thousand Oaks DAR
Chevrolet Starcraft	2023	8/2 WC	Gas	5	Thousand Oaks DAR
Rerite Starcraft	2019	8/3 WC	Gas	1	Thousand Oaks DAR - Reserve

Contractor-provided maintenance

MV Transportation provides maintenance for the City’s leased vehicle fleets at its Santa Paula location (918 Mission Rock Road E1). It uses Trapeze EAM to manage preventive maintenance scheduling, work orders, vehicle history, parts inventory, warranty tracking, and compliance reporting.

MV utilizes preventive and predictive maintenance practices. Preventive maintenance (PM) intervals conform to manufacturer service specifications and applicable FTA requirements, and the PM schedule is managed and tracked through the Trapeze EAM. MV’s maintenance manager verifies compliance with preventive maintenance schedules through Trapeze EAM reporting, including scheduled PMs, soon-due assets, and PM/inspection reports that identify units due or overdue, along with days late by location.

While most work is done in-house, some work is sent out to local vendors or dealers. These include engine replacements, engine diagnostics, transmission diagnostics/repairs, windshields, and body repair, as well as warrant work.

The maintenance facility has sufficient space for the fleet (one bay, one lift) with ample outdoor work space. It is staffed with a Shop Foreman, Tech A, Tech B, and Utility Worker. The leased facility has sufficient space for administrative offices and records storage.

MV has said the most useful improvement that could be made to its facility would be electrical upgrades in preparation of electric vehicles. At present, even if they had one portable charger, the electrical network would not be able to handle it. Other improvements include additional storage space and equipment that can do diagnostics. MV primarily provides maintenance support for the Valley Express program at this facility.

MV’s parts inventory is sufficient to minimize down time. The Trapeze EAM software monitors the minimum/maximum status of parts and notifies the maintenance manager when a part hits the minimum number in stock and needs to be reordered.

Repair priority is tracked via Trapeze EAM, supporting operational control. Out-of-service time is tracked from when the EAM work order is opened, and that this process is managed through EAM with a daily review of the vehicle down list. To prevent unsafe vehicles from entering service by placing them out of service (OOS) and controlling releases through Lockout (red tag/steering wheel cover) and Trapeze EAM work orders that mark vehicles out of service until repairs are completed and the work order is properly documented/closed. DVIs include mandatory downed defects, and the contract prohibits operating any vehicle tagged OOS. Safety-related defects must be repaired and signed off prior to return to service, with OOS status tracked via EAM/OOS reporting.

Chapter 8 | Findings and Recommendations

Conclusions

The City of Thousand Oaks is found to be in compliance with the Transportation Development Act (TDA).

Findings

Based on discussions with City staff, analysis of program performance, and an audit of program compliance and function, the audit team presents no findings related to compliance with the TDA.

Program Recommendations

Recommendations are intended to assist in bringing the operator into compliance with the requirements and standards of the TDA as well as address non-compliance-related issues, challenges, or opportunities observed during the site visit and functional review. The audit team presents no recommendations for the City of Thousand Oaks.

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