



## VCTC Intercity Bus

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 Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) as operator of the VCTC Intercity public transit service, 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 VCTC's public transit program for the period:

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

VCTC Intercity Transit bus service provides service on six fixed routes linking the cities of Ventura County and providing connections to neighboring Santa Barbara and Los Angeles counties. VCTC Intercity fixed-route hours of operation vary by route, starting as early as 4:10 a.m. and running as late as 10:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Saturday service is offered between 6:30 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on five of the six routes, and Sunday service is limited to four routes: Route 60/62, Highway 126; Route 80, Coastal Express; and Route 70, East County (Simi Valley-Moorpark-Thousand Oaks); and Route 99, Channel Islands (Oxnard-CSU Channel Islands-Camarillo). VCTC Intercity Transit does not operate on designated holidays.

VCTC utilizes a zonal fare structure. Zone 1 includes routes traveling within Ventura County, while Zone 2 includes routes traveling beyond Ventura County.

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 VCTC staff, analysis of program performance, and an audit of program compliance and function, the audit team presents no compliance findings for VCTC Intercity.

### 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. Ensure the TDA definition of full-time equivalent (FTE) employee is used for reporting to the State Controller.  
**Status:** Implemented.

### Findings and Recommendations

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

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 following recommendation is presented for VCTC Intercity.

Exhibit 1.1 Summary of Audit Recommendations

Recommendations		Importance	Timeline
1	Continue to work with the operations contractor so that the workforce is fully and sufficiently staffed.	Medium	Ongoing



## Chapter 2 | Audit Scope and Methodology

The Triennial Performance Audit (TPA) of Ventura County Transportation Commission’s 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 Ventura County Transportation Commission 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 TPA is a systematic review of performance evaluating the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of the transit operator. The audit of VCTC 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 Ventura County Transportation Commission included thorough review of documents relevant to the scope of the audit, as well as information contained on VCTC's 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 11, 2026. The audit team met with Claire Grasty (Director of Transit, VCTC), Matt Miller (Program Manager – Transit Services, VCTC), Erin Kenneally (Transit Planner, VCTC), Dolores Lopez (Transit Planner, VCTC), Gloria Housley (General Manager, RATP Dev), and Aaron Timlick (Maintenance Manager, RATP Dev), 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 Ventura County Transportation Commission’s 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. VCTC 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 VCTC 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 VCTC Intercity.

### 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	FY 2022/23: December 19, 2023 FY 2023/24: December 16, 2024 FY 2024/25: January 26, 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 14, 2023 FY 2023/24: December 10, 2024 FY 2024/25: December 17, 2025
Operator’s terminal rated as satisfactory by CHP within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim.	PUC 99251 B	In compliance	March 18, 2021 March 16, 2022 March 9, 2023 March 20, 2024 March 19, 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	VCTC Intercity does not receive funds under Article 8.
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	VCTC Intercity does not receive funds under Article 8.
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	
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: +8.73% FY 2023/24: +2.24% FY 2024/25: +40.69%  <i>Source: Final budgets. Includes operating &amp; capital. The increase in FY 2025 is tied to capital purchases and an increase in operating contract costs.</i>



Compliance Element	Reference	Compliance	Comments
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	VCTC Intercity 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: 22.78% FY 2023/24: 22.82% FY 2024/25: 20.14% <i>Source: 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	Not applicable	
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	VCTC staff are eligible for CalPERS. Operations staff are employed by a third-party contractor.
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	VCTC Intercity does not receive funds under Article 4.5
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	



Compliance Element	Reference	Compliance	Comments
<p>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.</p>	PUC 99314.6	In compliance	This requirement was waived during the audit period under AB 149 and SB 125.
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	CCR 6633.1	Not applicable	VCTC Intercity does not receive funds under Article 4.
<p>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.</p>	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 Ventura County Transportation Commission has made quantifiable progress toward improving both the efficiency and effectiveness of its VCTC Intercity 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. **Ensure the TDA definition of full-time equivalent (FTE) employee is used for reporting to the State Controller.**

**Discussion:** During the document review in the prior audit, it was noted that VCTC did not use the TDA definition of FTE employee in completing the State Controller Report as it did not include VCTC staff hours in the calculation. In addition, the document provided by the operations contractor represented a single four-week period, rather than including all hours worked for each employee for the full fiscal year.

A general lack of understanding of this requirement of the State Controller Report is the most frequent cause of this finding. The operator was out of compliance with the TDA by failing to use the TDA definition for this metric.

The prior auditor recommended VCTC ensure the TDA definition of full-time equivalent (FTE) employee is used for reporting to the State Controller. The auditor recommended staff ensure both VCTC and RATP Dev document all hours worked related to transit beginning with FY 2022/23. It should ensure the individual(s) completing the reports are aware of how to calculate this data using the TDA definition. Data provided to VCTC by the contractor should reflect work hours, not a person-count. Hours representing paid time off (such as sick time or PTO) should be excluded from these hours. VCTC should add its transit-related work hours to these totals before calculating Employees by dividing by 2,000.

**Progress:** VCTC is using the proper calculations to ensure the TDA definition of FTE is used for reporting to the State Controller.

**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 Ventura County Transportation Commission both internally as well as to outside entities during the audit period.

Data items were reported consistently except as indicated below.

- **Operating cost:** Operating cost as reported in the TDA fiscal audit was generally higher than that reported externally. The exception is FY 2024/25, where the State Controller Report was consistent with the TDA fiscal audit. In all three years, the amount reported to the National Transit Database (NTD) was the lowest of the figures.
- **Fare Revenue:** Fare revenue was reported consistently between the TDA fiscal audit and the State Controller Report. The significantly lower figure reported to the NTD was likely the result of revenues being counted as fare revenue in the other reports not being counted as such in the NTD reports.



Exhibit 5.1 Data Reporting Comparison

Performance Measure	System-Wide		
	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24
<b>Operating Cost (Actual \$)</b>			
<i>TDA fiscal audit</i>	\$11,340,899	\$11,703,814	\$11,016,332
<i>National Transit Database</i>	\$9,104,561	\$9,315,491	\$9,387,733
<i>State Controller Report</i>	\$9,529,873	\$9,888,565	\$11,016,332
<b>Fare Revenue (Actual \$)</b>			
<i>TDA fiscal audit</i>	\$2,060,039	\$2,149,770	\$2,165,437
<i>National Transit Database</i>	\$556,243	\$519,062	\$556,136
<i>State Controller Report</i>	\$2,060,039	\$2,149,770	\$2,165,437
<b>Vehicle Service Hours (VSH)</b>			
<i>Monthly Performance Reports</i>	59,221	60,820	62,989
<i>National Transit Database</i>	59,221	60,820	62,987
<i>State Controller Report</i>	59,220	60,819	62,989
<b>Vehicle Service Miles (VSM)</b>			
<i>Monthly Performance Reports</i>	1,404,476	1,330,148	1,386,764
<i>National Transit Database</i>	1,404,475	1,330,150	1,386,765
<i>State Controller Report</i>	1,404,476	1,330,148	1,386,764
<b>Passengers</b>			
<i>Monthly Performance Reports</i>	365,990	395,295	405,489
<i>National Transit Database</i>	365,990	395,295	405,489
<i>State Controller Report</i>	365,989	395,296	405,488
<b>Full-Time Equivalent Employees</b>			
<i>State Controller Report</i>	75	72	75



## 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 6667<sup>1</sup>. 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 period<sup>2</sup>:

- Cost in the depreciation and amortization expense object class adopted by the State Controller pursuant to PUC Section 99243,

<sup>1</sup> 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.

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



- 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.<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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 Ventura County Transportation Commission, 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 VCTC’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. Fare revenue data reported to the State Controller reflects other revenues not reported as fare revenue to the NTD.
- Vehicle Service Hours (VSH) data were obtained via State Controller Reports for each fiscal year covered by this audit. VSH is calculated through the scheduling software, then adjusted based on the contractor’s daily recorded hours. VCTC’s calculation methodology is consistent with PUC guidelines.
- Vehicle Service Miles (VSM) data were obtained via State Controller Reports for each fiscal year covered by this audit. VSM is documented via fuel logs and Motive. VCTC’s calculation methodology is consistent with PUC guidelines.
- Unlinked trip data were obtained via State Controller Reports for each fiscal year covered by this audit. Passenger data is captured using automatic passenger counters (APCs) installed on each vehicle. VCTC’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 15.6 percent increase during the audit period, and a 26.2 percent net decrease across the last six years. Fare revenue decreased in FY 2020/21 before significantly increasing in FY 2021/22 and FY 2022/23 (due to the resumption of full fare collection). This resulted in a net 5.1 percent increase during the audit period, but a net 1.2 percent decrease across six years.

Vehicle service hours (VSH) experienced modest year-over-year increases during the audit period. This resulted in a net 6.4 percent increase during the audit period and a net 3.3 percent increase during the six-year period. Vehicle service miles (VSM) following a similar pattern prior, though VSM saw modest year-over-year decreases in FY 2022/23 and FY 2023/24. This resulted in an overall net decrease of 1.3 percent during the audit period and a 6.4 percent decrease over the six-year period. Ridership declined significantly in FY 2020/21 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, then increased every year after. This led to a 10.8 percent net increase during the audit period, but a 20.1 percent net decrease 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. Due to the increase in operating cost, cost-related metrics increased during the audit period. Operating cost per VSM was impacted the most, given the 1.3 percent decrease in VSM during the audit period. Passenger-related metrics improved during the audit period, with passengers per VSH increasing 4.2 percent and passengers per VSM increasing 12.2 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
<b>Operating Cost (Actual \$)</b>	\$8,726,563	\$7,653,690	\$8,945,535	\$9,529,873	\$9,888,565	\$11,016,332
<i>Annual Change</i>		-12.3%	16.9%	6.5%	3.8%	11.4%
<b>Fare Revenue (Actual \$)</b>	\$2,190,743	\$753,815	\$1,257,626	\$2,060,039	\$2,149,770	\$2,165,437
<i>Annual Change</i>		-65.6%	66.8%	63.8%	4.4%	0.7%
<b>Vehicle Service Hours (VSH)</b>	60,996	49,078	59,221	59,220	60,819	62,989
<i>Annual Change</i>		-19.5%	20.7%	0.0%	2.7%	3.6%
<b>Vehicle Service Miles (VSM)</b>	1,481,474	1,186,545	1,406,898	1,404,476	1,330,148	1,386,764
<i>Annual Change</i>		-19.9%	18.6%	-0.2%	-5.3%	4.3%
<b>Passengers</b>	507,268	219,421	310,050	365,989	395,296	405,488
<i>Annual Change</i>		-56.7%	41.3%	18.0%	8.0%	2.6%
<b>Employees</b>	71	60	64	75	72	75
<i>Annual Change</i>		-15.5%	6.7%	17.2%	-4.0%	4.2%
<b>Performance Indicators</b>						
<b>Operating Cost/VSH (Actual \$)</b>	\$143.07	\$155.95	\$151.05	\$160.92	\$162.59	\$174.89
<i>Annual Change</i>		9.0%	-3.1%	6.5%	1.0%	7.6%
<b>Operating Cost/Passenger (Actual \$)</b>	\$17.20	\$34.88	\$28.85	\$26.04	\$25.02	\$27.17
<i>Annual Change</i>		102.8%	-17.3%	-9.8%	-3.9%	8.6%
<b>Passengers/VSH</b>	8.32	4.47	5.24	6.18	6.50	6.44
<i>Annual Change</i>		-46.2%	17.1%	18.0%	5.2%	-1.0%
<b>Passengers/VSM</b>	0.34	0.18	0.22	0.26	0.30	0.29
<i>Annual Change</i>		-46.0%	19.2%	18.2%	14.0%	-1.6%
<b>Farebox Recovery</b>	25.1%	9.8%	14.1%	21.6%	21.7%	19.7%
<i>Annual Change</i>		-60.8%	42.7%	53.8%	0.6%	-9.6%
<b>Hours/Employee</b>	859.1	818.0	925.3	789.6	844.7	839.9
<i>Annual Change</i>		-4.8%	13.1%	-14.7%	7.0%	-0.6%
<b>TDA Non-Required Indicators</b>						
<b>Operating Cost/VSM</b>	\$5.89	\$6.45	\$6.36	\$6.79	\$7.43	\$7.94
<i>Annual Change</i>		9.5%	-1.4%	6.7%	9.6%	6.9%
<b>VSM/VSH</b>	24.29	24.18	23.76	23.72	21.87	22.02
<i>Annual Change</i>		-0.5%	-1.7%	-0.2%	-7.8%	0.7%
<b>Fare/Passenger</b>	\$4.32	\$3.44	\$4.06	\$5.63	\$5.44	\$5.34
<i>Annual Change</i>		-20.5%	18.1%	38.8%	-3.4%	-1.8%

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

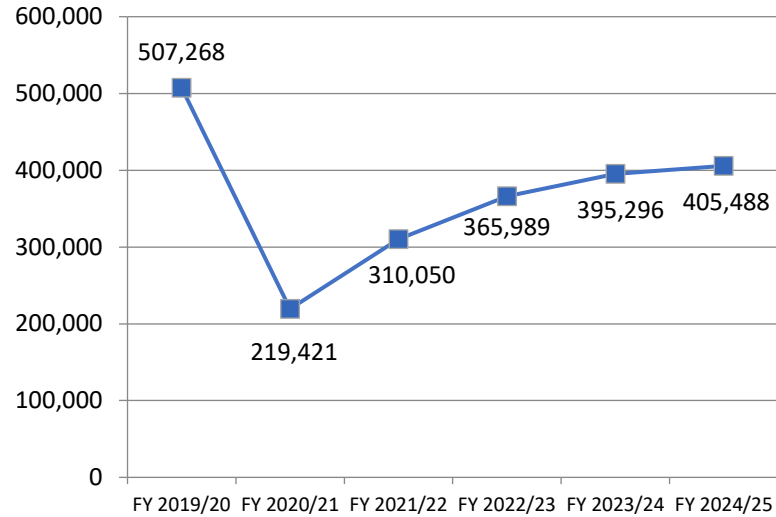


Exhibit 6.3 System Operating Cost/VSH

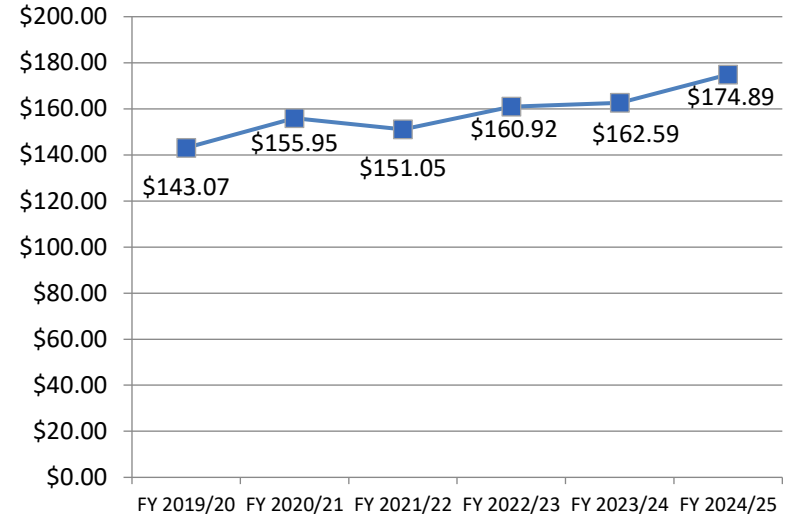


Exhibit 6.4 System Operating Cost/VSM

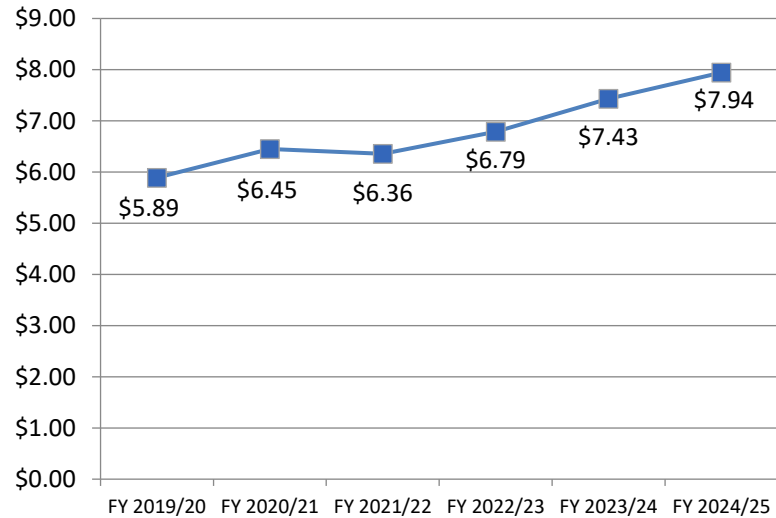


Exhibit 6.5 System VSM/VSH

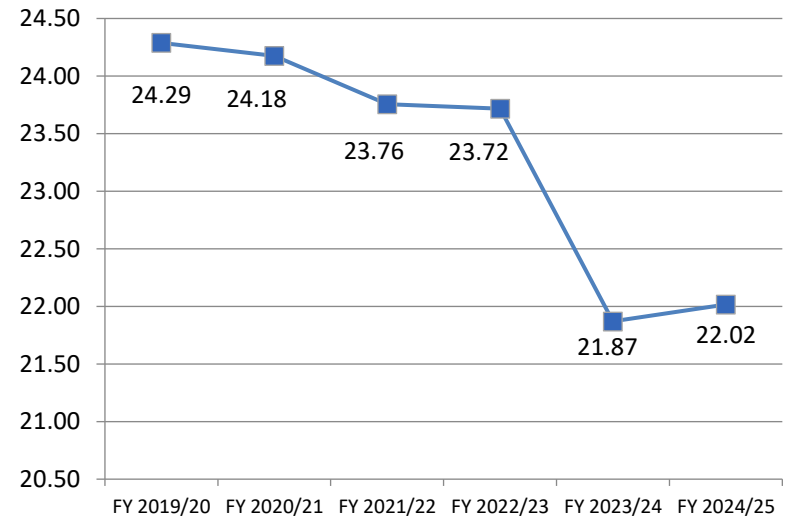




Exhibit 6.6 System Operating Cost/Passenger

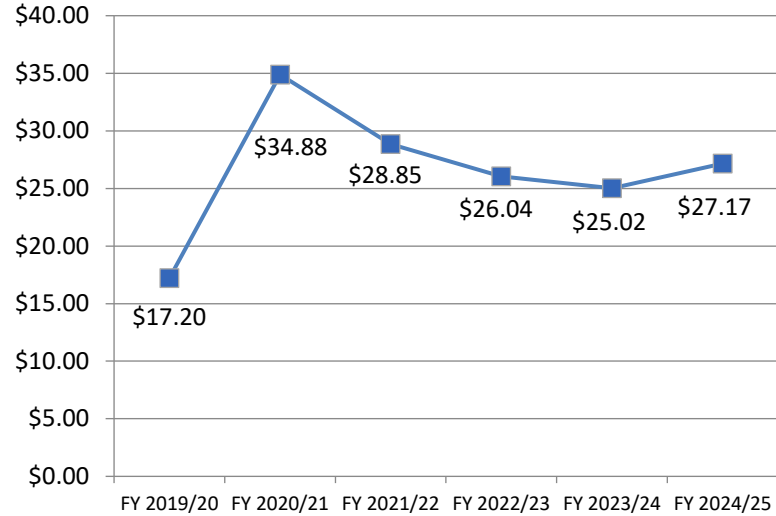


Exhibit 6.7 System Passengers/VSH

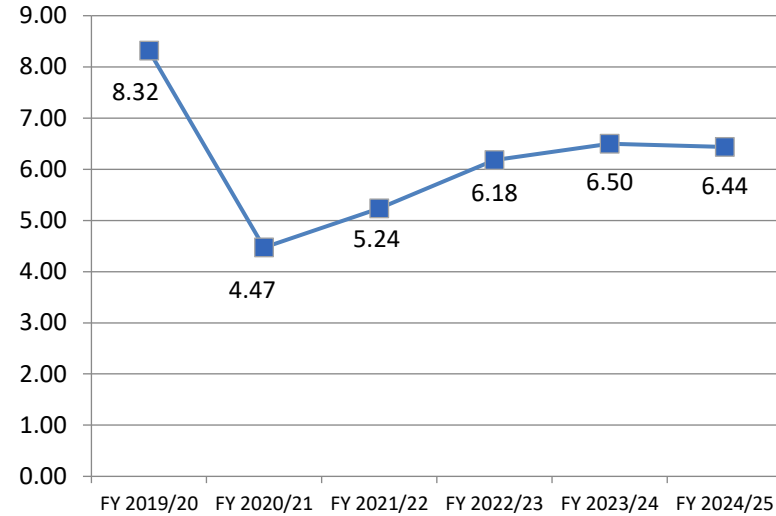


Exhibit 6.8 System Passengers/VSM

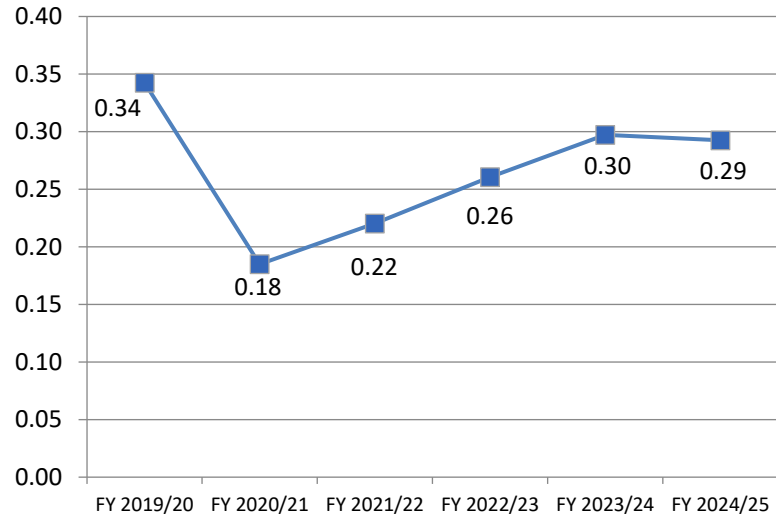


Exhibit 6.9 System VSH/FTE

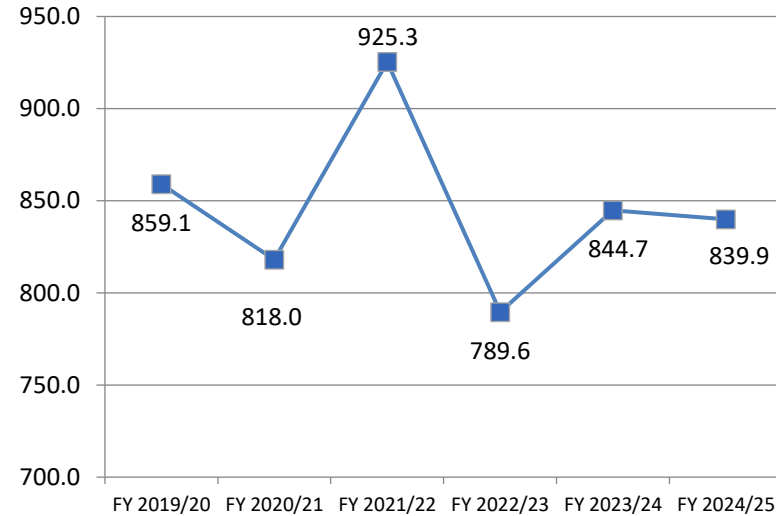




Exhibit 6.10 System Farebox Recovery

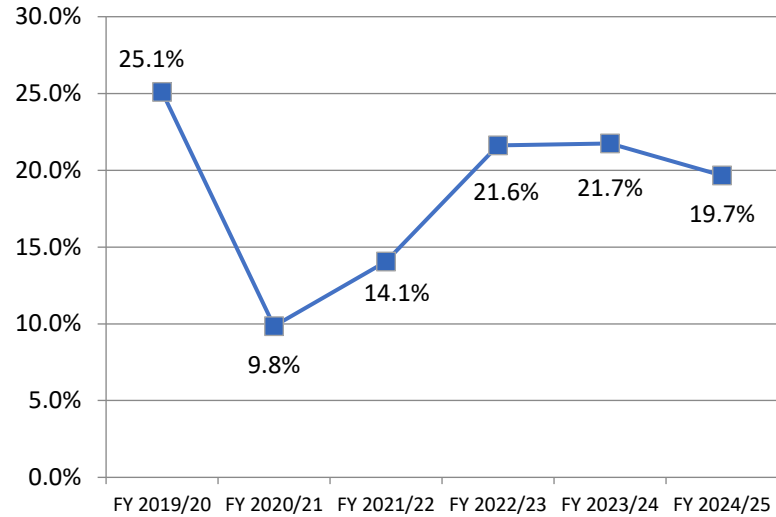
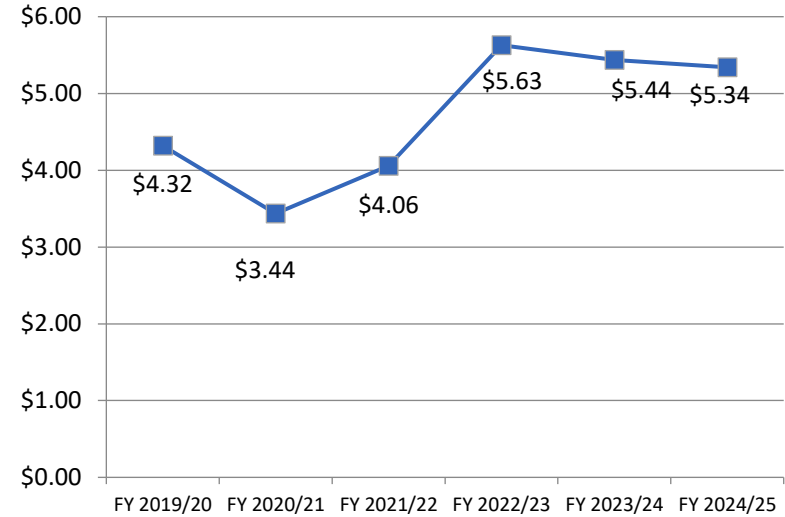


Exhibit 6.11 System Fare/Passenger





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## Chapter 7 | Functional Review

A functional review of Ventura County Transportation Commission’s public transit program is intended to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the operator. Following a general summary of VCTC’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 VCTC 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

VCTC Intercity bus service provides six fixed routes linking the cities of Ventura County and providing connections to neighboring Santa Barbara and Los Angeles counties. VCTC Intercity fixed-route hours of operation vary by route, starting as early as 4:10 a.m. and running as late as 10:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Saturday service is offered between 6:30 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on five of the six routes, and Sunday service is limited to four routes. VCTC Intercity Transit does not operate on designated holidays.

Exhibit 7.1 VCTC Intercity routes

Route	Service Area	Service Days	Service Hours
Route 50: Highway 101	Ventura – Oxnard – Camarillo – Thousand Oaks	Monday – Friday Saturday	6:30 a.m. – 8:36 p.m. 7:00 a.m. – 7:03 p.m.
Route 55/55X: Conejo Connection	Ventura – Oxnard – Camarillo – Thousand Oaks – Woodland Hills	Monday – Friday	6:15 a.m. – 6:59 p.m.
Route 60: Highway 126	Fillmore – Santa Paula – Saticoy - Ventura	Monday – Friday Saturday – Sunday	5:15 a.m. – 10:24 p.m. 8:00 a.m. – 7:39 p.m.
Route 70/74X: East County	Simi Valley – Moorpark – Thousand Oaks	Monday – Friday Saturday	5:40 a.m. – 8:12 p.m. 7:40 a.m. – 5:12 p.m.
Route 77: Cross County Limited	Ventura – Oxnard – Camarillo – Somis – Moorpark – Simi Valley	Monday - Friday	6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Route 80/80X/82: Coastal Express (Santa Barbara)	Camarillo – Oxnard – Ventura – Carpinteria – Santa Barbara	Monday – Friday	5:00 a.m. – 9:26 p.m.
Route 85/85X/87/87X: Coastal Express (Goleta)	Camarillo – Oxnard – Ventura – Santa Barbara – Goleta – UCSB	Monday – Friday	4:10 a.m. – 7:21 p.m.
Route 88/89: Coastal Express (weekend)	Camarillo – Oxnard – Ventura – Carpinteria – Santa Barbara – Goleta – UCSB	Saturday – Sunday	8:15 a.m. – 10:28 p.m.
Route 99: Cal State University Channel Islands	Oxnard – Cal State Channel Islands (CSUCI) – Camarillo	Monday – Sunday	7:00 a.m. – 5:55 p.m.



VCTC utilizes a zonal fare structure. Zone 1 includes routes traveling within Ventura County, while Zone 2 includes routes traveling beyond Ventura County.

VCTC provides grant-funded free bus service for students throughout the county, including on VCTC Intercity buses. The College Ride program allows students of all Ventura County Adult Schools, California Lutheran University, California State University – Channel Islands (CSUCI), Moorpark College, Ventura College, Oxnard College, University of California – Santa Barbara (UCSB), and Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) to ride for free with school ID. A second similar program, Youth Ride Free, for youth age 18 and under, was launched on September 1, 2022.

VCTC Intercity Bus and other Ventura County operators use the contactless VCbuspass regional fare program, which uses a smartcard or mobile phone app to store and pay fares. The VCbuspass card can be loaded with stored value funds or a 31-day pass. Using stored value funds on a VCbuspass offers a 10 percent discount over the cash fare. VCTC also recently implemented Tap2Ride, an open-loop system that allows riders to use smartphones or other devices, as well as credit or debit cards, to pay for their fare. The system caps monthly fare at \$50 within 31 days and gives free transfers for rides taken within two hours.

Exhibit 7.2 Fixed-Route Fare Structure

	Zone 1	Zone 2
Cash Fares		
Full fare (one-way)	\$1.75	\$4.00
Reduced fare (senior 65+/Medicare/ADA)	\$0.80	\$2.00
Child under 5 (with fare-paying customer)	Free	Free
Youth (up to age 18)	Free	Free
College students	Free	Free
VCbuspass – Stored Value		
Full fare	\$1.57	\$3.60
Reduced fare (senior 65+/Medicare/ADA)	\$0.72	\$1.80
VCbuspass – 31-day pass		
Full fare	\$50.00	\$130.00
Reduced fare (senior 65+/Medicare/ADA)	\$25.00	\$65.00

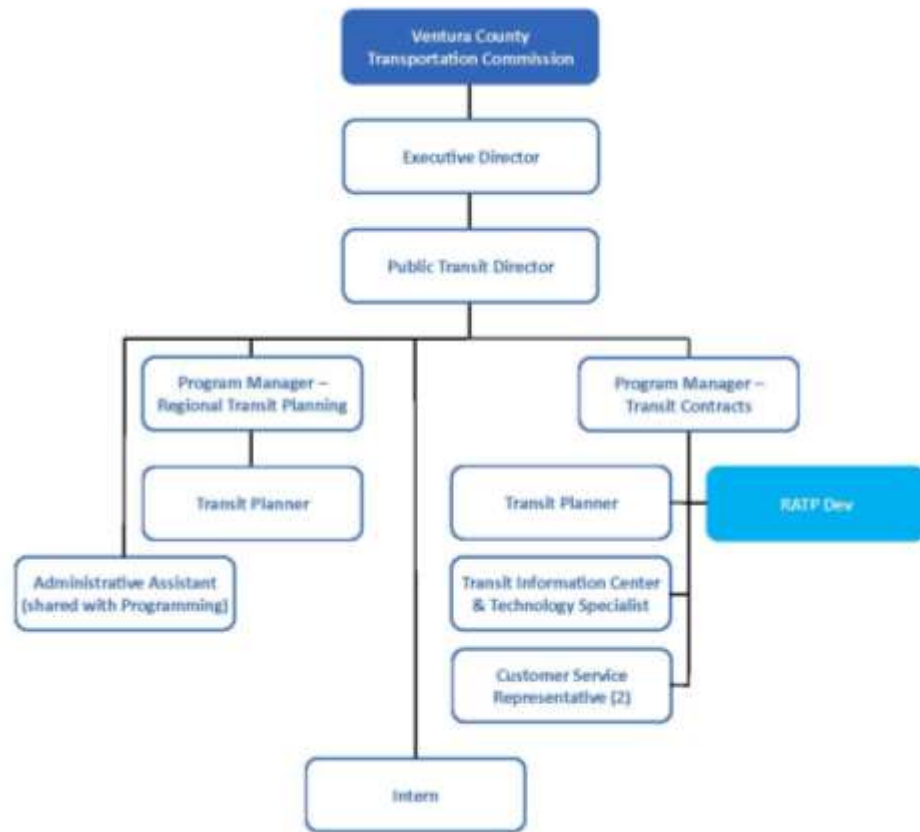
Most transfers to another VCTC Intercity bus traveling in the same direction or to another Ventura County operator are free. Transfers to VCTC Coastal Express and Conejo Connection require an upcharge of \$1.50 (\$0.75 reduced). Transfers to Valley Express Dial-A-Ride require an upcharge of \$0.50.

### General Management and Organization

VCTC’s Executive Director manages four departments: Finance, Planning and Sustainability, Programming, and Transit. The Public Transit Director oversees a department which includes two Program Managers, two Transit Planners, a Transit Information Center and Technology Specialist, and two Customer Service personnel. An Administrative Assistant is shared between Transit and Programming. At the time of this report, there was also a Transit Intern. The operations contractor reports to the Transit Director as well. VCTC’s organizational chart is presented in Exhibit 7.3.



Exhibit 7.3 Organizational Chart



The VCTC Intercity Bus program has been operated by RATP Dev (formerly Roadrunner Management Services) since 2015. That contract is currently in its last three-year extension and will expire in May 2027. VCTC monitors program performance through monthly meetings and monthly reports from the contractor. Additionally, VCTC reviews onboard technology (including automatic passenger counters and Syncromatics), bus tracking, and cameras frequently.

One of the most significant challenges faced during the audit period was a driver shortage that resulted in an increase in missed trips. In November 2022 and again in July 2025, the contractor was understaffed due to difficulties in hiring. While the system met its schedule under normal circumstances, multiple sick call-outs resulted in missed trips. In some cases, there was sufficient staff to meet pull-out requirements in the morning, but not enough to make all the trips later in the day. This situation has since been resolved.

RATP Dev also had vacancies in other positions during the audit period. A new General Manager and Assistant General Manager were hired in April 2024. The new General Manager subsequently brought in a new Maintenance Manager and has fostered a culture of transparency. Whereas in prior years supply chain shortages were frequently blamed for delays in maintenance, maintenance staff are now more willing to tackle problems. Corporate support for the new management team has been good.



While the contractor’s new management team is in place, VCTC staff still feel the program is understaffed on the contractor side, especially with respect to Field Supervisors. However, while staff feel RATP Dev have heard their concerns, there may not be sufficient room in the contract to increase the number of positions. There is also a need for an e-Mechanic given all the technology currently in use. At present, the Maintenance Manager serves as the de facto e-Mechanic.

Despite these challenges, VCTC Intercity has continued to receive awards. It received an AdWheel Award for its Spanish First marketing campaign, which generated a lot of positive feedback from the community, and was named Transit Agency of the Year in the Small Operator category by the California Transit Association in 2023.

VCTC oversees or participates in numerous committees, including the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and Transcom for transit operators. The Program Manager – Transit Contracts and Transit Planner typically serve as liaisons with other governmental organizations. The VCTC Board has expressed interest in improving on-time performance as well making transit data more accessible. To address these items, VCTC staff have been tracking on-time performance and making time adjustments as needed, and by ensuring operators log in correctly so data can be collected and shared on real-time arrival apps.

#### *Recent service changes*

During the audit period, service changes focused on improving on-time performance with schedule adjustments and enhancing connections.

In January 2023, Routes 50–55 conducted minor schedule adjustments, added a stop at Buena High School, and discontinued weekend service to the Conejo Industrial Park. Route 60 added a stop at Buena High School and introduced service to Ventura College on weekends, along with minor schedule adjustments. Additionally, Route 77 added a stop at Buena High School.

In August 2023, Routes 50-55 reinstated the Conejo Connection (55/55X), added more stops throughout the route, and adjusted the schedule to improve on-time performance. Route 60 added a stop at the Santa Paula Department of Motor Vehicles and implemented minor schedules. Routes 90-97 operate Monday through Thursday, while Route 99 will operate Friday through Sunday.

On January 22, 2024, Route 50-55 experienced significant weekday schedule adjustments and added one northbound and one southbound midday trip during the weekdays. Route 60 also experienced significant weekday schedule adjustments to improve on-time performance.

In August 2024, Route 60 made minor schedule adjustments to improve connections with Valley Express. Routes 70-73X suspended service to Conejo Industrial Park, Amgen, and Westlake and Towngate, while a new stop was added at the Newbury Park Smart & Final. Additional schedule adjustments were made to improve connections. Route 77 implemented service adjustments to align with Metrolink trains. Routes 80-89 added a stop at San Marcos High School on all Goleta trips serving the Santa Barbara County Complex. Routes 90-99 adjusted schedules to decrease wait times and improve connections.

In January 2025, Route 50-55 adjusted weekday schedules. Route 62 variation was discontinued and service was transitioned to operate solely as Route 60. Major schedule adjustments were made for Route



60 to increase service throughout the day. Routes 70-73X added a stop at Cochran Street & Galena Avenue to the last Route 70 northbound trip. Route 77 made minor schedule adjustments to better align with Moorpark College schedules. Routes 90-97 experienced schedule adjustments to late-night trips.

The regional Free Fare programs (Youth Ride Free and College Ride Free) were extremely successful during the audit period, resulting in increased ridership. Adding Santa Barbara schools (University of California – Santa Barbara and Santa Barbara City College) significantly increased ridership on the Coastal Express. Service changes on Route 60 (Highway 126) were also instrumental in increasing ridership on that route.

### Service Planning

In September 2023, the Commission approved the Transit Integration & Efficiency Study (TIES). The study identified key objectives for the Intercity program, including improved coordination among Ventura County transit providers, reducing service duplication, better route alignment, and strategies to support long-term sustainability.

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. VCTC Intercity staff indicated the routes that need the most attention are the Coastal Express and East County. The Coastal Express schedule is complex and has many variants, while the East County route has historically underperformed and presents operational challenges due to budgetary and resource constraints. VCTC staff feel the SRTP looks at things on a regional level very effectively, which should result in better coordination and interoperability among the operators. Implementing the recommendations contained in the SRTP will require a significant amount of public engagement and community input.

VCTC conducts an annual Unmet Transit Needs process, which includes a survey. While many survey responses are not applicable to the VCTC service, all relevant input is documented. An onboard survey was conducted in April 2024 in conjunction with preparation of the SRTP, and an additional survey was conducted specific to the Coastal Express route in February 2025.

VCTC regularly consults with the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee/Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee, as well as collaborates with the County of Ventura Disability Access Manager, who also serves on the VCTC Commission. In addition, VCTC prepares a Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan every five years and plans to procure a consultant in FY 2026/27 to update the 2022 Coordinated Plan.

### Administration

VCTC's annual budget includes a program-level annual budget for the VCTC Intercity service. The Program Manager develops VCTC Intercity budget by reviewing the current fiscal year's budget versus actuals; accounts for planned projects; anticipated federal revenues; and the current fiscal year's revenue, deadhead, and total hours, fuel use, and maintenance costs. The Program Manager is supported by the Public Transit Director. The draft budget is reviewed by the VCTC Finance Committee before being recommended to the full Board for a public hearing and approval.

Detailed monthly financial statements are created from the general ledger and presented to the Commission on a monthly and quarterly basis. Staff use SAGE and Excel to management financial data.



The Program Manager monitors actual versus budgeted expenses on a monthly basis and requests budget amendments on an as-needed basis. Administrative budget amendments (such as moving funds between budget categories) are requested by the Project Manager, reviewed by the Public Transit Director and Finance Director, and approved by the Executive Director. Any request for additional funds requires approval of the Commission.

Transit staff develop a list of needs and looks for grant opportunities that match those needs and Valley Express is eligible to apply for. The Programming department manages grants and handles all reporting. Transit staff provide data and information needed for reporting.

The Program Manager is responsible for contract management. During the audit period, this has included the operations contract with MV Transportation, a marketing consultant contract, CSUCI, and vendor contracts with Cubic, Elavon, Enghouse, Genfare, Kuba, Remix, RideCo, Syncromatics, TransTrack, Trillium, and UTA. Contacts are monitored regularly through monthly, weekly, or quarterly meetings and informal check-ins with vendors; Transcom meetings; and technology monitoring tools.

Risk management is handled through a risk management consultant through VCTC's insurance broker.

VCTC employees submit a digital timesheet to a supervisor for review and approval. Signed timesheets are automatically routed to accounting staff for processing.

Accounts receivable and accounts payable are handled collectively by the senior accountants and Program Manager. Disbursements are coded and approved by the Program Managers before being reviewed and paid by the Finance Department. It is the responsibility of the Program Manager to ensure goods or services have been received before the invoice payment is approved.

Procurement procedures are guided by a VCTC procurement manual, per recommendation from an FTA Triennial Review. The Programming Department leads all procurement activities. Procurement practices conform to all applicable requirements.

The Public Transit Director can approve purchases up to \$10,000, and the Executive Director can approve purchases up to \$50,000. Commission approval is required for anything above \$50,000. Vehicles are procured using the CalACT purchasing cooperative.

### Marketing and Public Information

At the beginning of each fiscal year, VCTC works with its marketing consultant, Celtis, to identify marketing campaigns and activities. A report is prepared at the end of each campaign detailing performance and impact to keep in mind for future similar activities. Marketing efforts include social media, rider alerts, car cards, posters, notices at bus stops, and brochures. Efforts are reviewed with the consultant on a weekly basis. Route brochures are published twice a year to reflect service changes. VCTC distributes the brochures to local organizations, provides them at outreach events, and stock them on all vehicles. VCTC Intercity also uses two mobile apps – the GoVCbus app provides real-time tracking and trip planning, while the Umo app enables riders to pay their fare with stored value or a monthly pass.



VCTC Intercity recently received several awards for its Spanish-language marketing campaign focusing on the service and payment options – a series of videos featuring local social media influencers. The public’s perception of VCTC Intercity is generally positive.

VCTC Intercity has two dedicated customer service representatives (CSRs). During business hours, all calls come through VCTC. After 6:00 p.m., calls roll over to the operations contractor. All customer calls and complaints are logged with the Regional Transit Information Center (RTIC). Any complaint or fare call gets routed back to VCTC and tracked using TransTrack. Complaints are resolved within seven days. Customer service data is reported to VCTC as part of the contractor’s monthly reporting packet.

### Scheduling, Dispatch, and Operations

Operation and maintenance of VCTC Intercity is provided by RATP Dev, formerly Roadrunner Management Services. RATP Dev employees are represented by Teamsters Local 186. Drivers bid for their work assignments at least twice annually, as well as prior to any major schedule change (which the collective bargaining agreement defines as any deviation of two hours or more per route). Awards are based on seniority. Drivers are rotated among routes only if they choose as part of the bid process.

At the time of the site visit, RATP Dev employed 41 full-time drivers and several part-time drivers. Part-time drivers who work 32 or more hours per week are considered full-time, even though they may work a part-time bid. Fully staffed is considered to be 57 full- and part-time drivers. At the time of the site visit, staff indicated they were about 4.5 drivers short. Although the program is experiencing a driver shortage, the contractor is able to make pull out on a daily basis.

Vacation time is scheduled in advance and cover drivers are scheduled for the route. The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) has a clear communicated policy on absences and sick leave that requires one hour notice prior to the driver’s report time. Coverage for time off is normally through standby drivers, followed by any available operators who have a day off. Part-time drivers can only work up to a certain number of hours, as dictated by the CBA. When coverage is necessary, volunteers are asked to work if they have hours available. Dispatchers are also provided with the opportunity to pick up additional hours. Road supervisors or management may be called in as a last resort.

All drivers are trained to drive all four types of vehicles currently operated in revenue service. Vehicles are typically assigned to individual drivers rather than being assigned to routes. If a vehicle is downed for scheduled maintenance, a different vehicle will be assigned to that driver. Vehicles are assigned on a rotating basis to even out the mileage. Available vehicles are communicated to dispatch verbally as well as via a communication board in the maintenance and dispatch offices.

The fareboxes are locked with no driver access. As the buses return to the yard, they are probed by a dispatcher, mechanic, or road supervisor and the money securely dropped into the vault. The next day, RATP Dev’s fare counters count the money inside a secure room equipped with cameras and sound. Bills and coins are counted using counting machines, with amounts recorded on deposit slips before being sealed inside secure bank bags. They are then locked in a vault until picked up by an armored car service. Fares are deposited daily in a designated VCTC account.



Non-cash fares are sold online or at the VCTC administration offices. All vehicles are equipped with onboard technology to receiving contactless payments. Umo readers are used for fare payment via the VCBuspass. VCBuspass offers monthly passes and stored value options which can be loaded to a plastic card or a mobile app. At the end of the audit period (June 2025), open-loop card readers were installed as part of VCTC’s Tap2Go program, which lets riders pay their fare directly with a credit or debit card. All electronic funds are deposited into a VCTC account. Amounts are reconciled at the end of each month.

### Personnel Management and Training

While RATP Dev is currently experiencing a driver shortage, the contractor is actively recruiting new employees and was recently recognized as a Top 100 Best Company to Work For. Recruitment efforts include job fairs, online job boards, social media outreach, and employee referral programs. Employment and social media job boards tend to be the most effective. RATP Dev also offers referral bonuses to existing employees who refer candidates that are ultimately hired.

The contractor has noted that many new hires are individuals transitioning to new careers later in life. Some bring considerable experience in other areas of transportation (such as delivery drivers) but have never driven a bus. The contractor seeks out high-quality candidates using innovative methods. Recruits include a mix of both licensed and non-licensed applicants. Most recruits require initial training, and all recruits receive full training even if they have a commercial license. RATP Dev’s training program can take a driver with no experience through the DMV testing and commercial licensing process.

RATP Dev recently received an award from corporate for the lowest turnover for the region. The management team actively engages with employees to maintain morale and build trust. Most turnover is due to retirement, relocation, or career change, though there are occasional terminations for discipline. The latter is governed by the CBA, which is coming up for renegotiation in mid-2026.

RATP Dev’s training program offers more than the minimum training. It includes 15 hours of classroom/VTT training, 15 hours of policies and procedures training, 20 hours of behind-the-wheel training, and 15 hours of pre-trip time. A Safety & Training Manager is responsible for training new and existing drivers, along with a Certified Instructor. RATP Dev is in the process of certifying an in-house DMV tester to replace the necessity of sending recruits 2.5 hours away for testing, shortening the time to license a new recruit.

The Safety & Training Manager also oversees the contractor’s safety program. Safety activities include train safety, bicycle and e-bike safety, pedestrian safety, human trafficking, and other relevant topics.

Performance evaluations are conducted annually. A progressive discipline policy is governed by the CBA and communicated in RATP Dev’s employee handbook. Drivers are subject to counseling, warnings, suspension, and termination depending upon the severity of infraction according to the progressive discipline policy. The CBA also provides a defined absence and tardiness policy, which is included in the employee handbook as well.

Full-time employees are eligible for paid time off, sick leave, health insurance, dental, vision, and 401(k). Part-time drivers are not eligible for vacation or insurance but do receive sick leave and may schedule



time off that is approved in advance. Benefits are communicated at the time of hire as well as through employee meetings, company emails, and employee notices.

### Maintenance

RATP Dev has a dedicated yard for VCTC operations, vehicle storage, and maintenance at 240 South Glenn Drive in Camarillo, adjacent to the Camarillo Metrolink Station. All work is done in-house with the exception of warranty work. Preventive maintenance is conducted every 5,000 miles, and all preventive maintenance is delivered on time. RTA360 software tracks preventive maintenance and repairs.

Maintenance does not conflict with regular vehicle use. Most buses operate on a split shift, which allows maintenance to be completed during midday, and there is a sufficient spare ratio. During the pre-trip inspection, each driver receives a maintenance update letting them know if the bus is safe or unsafe. Downed vehicles, and those that have been repaired and available for use, are communicated verbally as well as through a communication board in the maintenance and dispatch offices.

The only backlog of repairs is due to waiting on parts. There is a backlog of repairs or preventive maintenance due to the age and mileage of the fleet.

RATP Dev's parts room is secure and can only be accessed by maintenance staff. The contractor utilizes its maintenance tracking software for purchase orders, inventory controls, and ensuring the necessary items are available for preventive maintenance. Targeted inventory and reorder levels have been established for common and high usage items. The parts inventory is sufficient to minimize vehicle downtime. Supply chain issues are occasional and do not impact roll-out. RATP Dev has multiple vendors to call on when parts are needed, and may also reach out to other divisions for assistance if there are any issues finding a specific part.

While the current maintenance facility is sufficient for the number of vehicles, VCTC would like to establish a more sustainable facility that supports both fleet and employee growth. Key priorities of the new facility would be permanent EV charging infrastructure, space for fleet expansion, and the potential to add solar energy to assist operations. Permanent EV charging in Ventura County is being spearheaded at the Camarillo rail station, adjacent to the VCTC Intercity yard. VCTC has been working with the City of Camarillo on this project, including securing funding. VCTC owns the land, while the City of Camarillo has more resources to lead the capital project. The two entities are working on negotiating a cost sharing agreement.

In mid-2025, VCTC received five replacement diesel buses and have five more on order, expected in June 2026. Additionally, five older buses were repowered with new wiring harnesses, engines, and transmissions, extending their service life by three to four years. Funding availability, guided by the TAM Plan and ZEB transition plan, drives the timing of future replacements, with plans to replace another five vehicles in the next fiscal year. Fleet replacements are intentionally staggered to avoid having the entire fleet due for replacement at the same time.

VCTC received five electric buses in partnership with SBCAG to expand service on the Coastal Express route. The buses were placed into service in November 2025 and began operating on the Coastal Express route in February 2026. They were initially used on shorter local routes for training so that all employees



were proficient with the vehicles. The vehicles have performed well in service so far, and the manufacturer (BYD) sends someone out when there are technical issues.

With the exception of the electric vehicles owned by SBCAG and operated by VCTC, all other vehicles are owned by VCTC. The useful life benchmark for VCTC's buses is 14 years. VCTC Intercity Bus is included in VCTC's Transit Asset Management Group Plan. VCTC's fleet is detailed in Exhibit 7.4.

Exhibit 7.4 VCTC Intercity Fleet

Quantity	Make/Model	Year	Fuel
11	MCI D4505	2015	Diesel
14	MCI D4500	2015	Diesel
1	MCI D4500	2016	Diesel
2	MCI D4500	2017	Diesel
3	MCI D4500	2019	Diesel
5	BYD C10M	2023	Electric
5	MCI CRT LE	2025	Diesel



## Chapter 8 | Findings and Recommendations

### Conclusions

VCTC Intercity is found to be in compliance with the Transportation Development Act (TDA). One recommendation intended to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the operator is detailed below.

### Findings

Based on discussions with VCTC 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 following recommendation is presented for VCTC Intercity.

#### **Recommendation 1: Continue to work with the operations contractor so that the workforce is fully and sufficiently staffed.**

**Discussion:** While many of the major issues regarding an insufficient driver workforce seen during the audit period have been resolved, the contractor still indicates being several drivers short. The current number of drivers may be sufficient for a normal workday, but as VCTC has seen in the past, there can be issues meeting all of the service requirements when drivers are out on vacation and others call in sick. In addition, a review of employee work hours during FY 2024/25 showed a significant number of drivers and supervisory personnel working 59 to 60 hours a week or more on a regular basis.

**Contributing Factor(s):** The contractor appears to be making a concerted effort to fill open positions with high-quality candidates, especially those that may have other transportation experience. It is also working to reduced the time needed for commercial licensing by certifying its own DMV tester. These are both positive steps. In addition, VCTC has indicated that the CBA is up for renegotiation soon. Given the CBA limits the number of hours a part-time driver can work, that may need to be a point of discussion during the negotiations to ensure there can be sufficient staffing at critical times.

**Recommended Action:** VCTC has little control over the contractor's workforce and CBA. However, it can continue to work with its contractor to identify issues that need to be remedied. In addition, VCTC should work with the contractor regarding management-level positions (such as additional road supervisors and an e-mechanic) that it feels are necessary for successful operation of the VCTC Intercity program. While there may not be sufficient space in the current contract for new positions, it should ensure there is within future operations contracts.

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Anticipated Cost:** Unknown.



Exhibit 8.1 Audit Recommendations

	Recommendations	Importance	Timeline
1	Continue to work with the operations contractor so that the workforce is fully and sufficiently staffed.	Medium	Ongoing