



**COUNCIL OF SAN BENITO COUNTY
GOVERNMENTS
SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION
ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING AGENDA**

DATE: Friday, January 27, 2017

LOCATION: Council of San Benito County Governments
Conference Room
330 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C-7
Hollister, CA 95023

MEMBERS: Esther Alva, Mary Margaret Bilich, Clay Kempf, Caroline Medina,
Jim Parker, Ann Ross and Pauline Valdivia

9:30 A.M. CALL TO ORDER

- A) **ACKNOWLEDGE** Certificate of Posting
- B) **ELECT** SSTAC Chairperson for 2017
- C) **ELECT** SSTAC Vice Chairperson for 2017
- D) **Public Comment.** *(Opportunity to address the Council on items of interest not appearing on the agenda. No action may be taken unless provided by Govt. Code Sec. 56954.2. Speakers are limited to 3 minutes.)*
- E) Member Announcements
- F) Executive Director's Report

CONSENT AGENDA:

(These matters shall be considered as a whole and without discussion unless a particular item is removed from the consent agenda. A member of the public should seek recognition by the Chair if comment is desired. Approval of a consent item means approval of recommended as specified on the Staff Report.)

- 1) **APPROVE** SSTAC Special Meeting Minutes dated September 23, 2016 – Gomez
- 2) **RECEIVE** Operations Performance Report for the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016/2017 – Valentine

REGULAR AGENDA:

- 3) **RECEIVE** Presentation on the Mapping Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Technology for the 21st Century (Transit ITS) Plan Draft Recommendations – Valentine
- 4) **RECEIVE** Presentation on Options for County Express Commuter Rail Service to Gilroy – Valentine

Adjourn to Meeting of March 24, 2017

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**COUNCIL OF SAN BENITO COUNTY GOVERNMENTS
SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

DRAFT MINUTES

DATE: Friday, September 23, 2016
9:30 AM

LOCATION: **Council of San Benito County Governments**
Conference Room
330 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C-7
Hollister, CA 95023

CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Tony Mercado called the meeting to order at 9:38 A.M.

SSTAC Members 2016	*Jan 22	*Mar 25	May 27	*July 22	Sept 23	Nov 18 <i>Special</i>
Tony Mercado			P		P	
Maggie Bilich			P		A	
Esther Alva			E		P	
Clay Kempf (Bob Campbell)			P		E	
Alex Andrade			E		A	
Ann Ross			P		P	
Pauline Valdivia			P		P	
Jim Parker			E		P	

*** Meeting Cancelled**

P= Present A=Absent E= Excused (a) = alternate

STAFF PRESENT:

Mary Gilbert, Interim Executive Director; Regina Valentine, Transportation Planner; Monica Gomez, Secretary I

A. CERTIFICATE OF POSTING

Upon a motion duly made by Pauline Valdivia, and seconded by Ann Ross, the Committee unanimously acknowledged the Certificate of Posting. Vote: 5/0 motion passes.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

C. MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Esther Alva announced that they will be holding a Job Fair at the Veteran's Memorial Building October 20th.

Tony Mercado announced that he was stepping down from the Social Services Technical Advisory Committee (SSTAC) because he was relocating to Southern California. However, he stated that he would ask a member of his staff to take his place on SSTAC.

D. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ms. Gilbert was pleased to introduce Regina Valentine who was hired to fill the Transportation Planner position that was recently left vacant. Ms. Gilbert mentioned that Regina is coming from the Stanislaus Council of Governments agency and she previously worked for San Benito COG as an intern.

Ms. Gilbert announced that County Express will be providing free shuttle service to and from the 2016 San Benito County Fair. Staff is working with County Fair staff to advertise the service to the community.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1) **APPROVE** SSTAC Meeting Minutes dated May 27, 2016 – Gomez
- 2) **RECEIVE** Operations Performance Report for the 4th Quarter of Fiscal Year 2015/2016- Valentine

Upon a motion duly made by Pauline Valdivia, and seconded by Ann Ross, the Committee unanimously approved Items 1 and 2 from the Consent Agenda. Vote: 5/0 motion passes.

REGULAR AGENDA:

- 3) **RECEIVE** Update on Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) Intercounty Service Increase – Valentine

Ms. Valentine reported that the LTA has continued one express trip to Gavilan College which was implemented in September 2015 and established two new trips to the Gilroy Transit Center and back, providing riders additional chances to connect with Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) routes. The increased service implements requests that have been made during COG's Unmet Transit Needs process. County Express schedules have been changed to match up with adjacent transit providers such as VTA and Caltrain.

SSTAC members recommended getting the word out about the service by putting announcements on VTA connection buses, Facebook, High School bulletin, and local churches.

- 4) **RECEIVE** and **COMMENT** on the on Goals and Public Transportation Project List for the Draft 2040 Regional Transportation Plan – Valentine

Ms. Valentine provided an overview of the proposed policy goals. Staff asked that the SSTAC recommend the policy goals to the COG Board of Directors for adoption. The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council was also asked to review and comment on San Benito County region's draft list of public transportation projects.

Ms. Valentine stated that the public will have an opportunity to provide their comments as the Plan is developed. Public outreach will include public meetings, online and social media outreach, and targeted meetings with community groups.

There was consensus from the SSTAC to recommend the policy goals to the COG Board of Directors for adoption. There was also a recommendation to encourage both Cities and the County to advertise the services whenever possible at their meetings as a way to get the word out to the public.

5) RECEIVE Report on Planning for a Transportation Sales and Use Tax to be Considered in an Election in 2018 – Gilbert

Ms. Gilbert provided an update on the planning for a transportation sales and use tax to be considered in an election in 2018.

There was brief discussion about providing more public outreach and education about who COG is and providing more specificity in the Expenditure Plan project list.

There was no further discussion.

Adjourn to Meeting of November 18, 2016.

Upon a motion duly made by Jim Parker, and seconded by Esther Alva, the Committee unanimously adjourned the meeting at 10:24 a.m. Vote: 5/0 motion passes.

Staff Report

To: Social Services Transportation Advisory Council
 From: Regina Valentine, Transportation Planner Telephone: (831) 637-7665 x 205
 Date: January 27, 2017
 Subject: Quarterly Operations Performance Report

Recommendation:

RECEIVE Operations Performance Report for the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016/2017.

Summary:

The Operations Performance Report analyzes all public transportation services that the Local Transportation Authority (LTA) administers and operates for San Benito County. LTA contracts with MV Transportation, Inc. for public transit operations (County Express) and Jovenes de Antaño for specialized transportation.

Financial Considerations:

LTA provides fuel and vehicle maintenance for County Express operations and vehicle maintenance for specialized transportation operations. The table below shows operations costs and the percentage of the approved budget for the First Quarter (July – September 2016).

	Expended for 1 st Quarter	Expended Year-to-Date	% of Budget Expended to Date
Fuel	\$29,642.71	\$29,642.71	18.53%
Other Materials and Supplies	\$15,003.93	\$15,003.93	17.04%
Maintenance Labor	\$12,221.25	\$12,221.25	19.02%
Contracted Services	\$306,252.23	\$306,252.23	23.11%
Operators Salaries and Wages	\$29,032.35	\$29,032.35	16.06%

Background:

The Operations Performance Report typically compares a single quarter in the current and previous fiscal year. The report contains system-wide, individual service, and fiscal year-to-date information for the current and previous fiscal year.

Staff Analysis:

County Express

During the 1st Quarter of Fiscal Year 2016/2017 County Express experienced a 7.59% decrease in ridership (n = 26,837) from the 1st Quarter of FY 2015/2016 (n = 29,041). Total operational costs increased by 3.69% in the 1st Quarter of FY 2016/2017 compared to FY 2015/2016, \$314,975.56 and \$303,765.57 respectively.

Specialized Transportation

Compared to the 1st Quarter of FY 2015/2016 to FY 2016/2017, Specialized Transportation experienced an increase in ridership and in operational costs. Ridership increased 37.42% (4,701 passengers), while operational costs totaled \$76,682.31, an increase of 51.19% in part due to the hourly rate increase approved by the LTA Board at the October 2016 meeting.

Executive Director Review: _____

Counsel Review: N/A

Attachment: County Express and Specialized Transportation Operations Performance Report

COUNTY EXPRESS AND SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS PERFORMANCE REPORT

Fiscal Year 2016/2017

First Quarter Report
July 2016 – September 2016

San Benito County
Local Transportation Authority
330 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C7
Hollister, CA 95023
831.637.7665
www.SanBenitoCountyExpress.org

December 2016



Transit and Specialized Transportation Operations Performance Report

Fiscal Year 2016/2017 – First Quarter

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Executive Summary

County Express

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Compared to the 1st Quarter of FY 2015/2016 to FY 2016/2017, Specialized Transportation experienced an increase in ridership and in operational costs. Ridership increased 37.42% (4,701 passengers), while operational costs totaled \$76,682.31, an increase of 51.19% in part due to the hourly rate increase approved by the LTA Board at the October 2016 meeting.

Financial Impact

Table 1 shows a breakdown of the operational expenses and percent expended of the approved budget.

	Expended for 1 st Quarter	Expended Year-to-Date	% of Budget Expended to Date
Fuel	\$29,642.71	\$29,642.71	18.53%
Other Materials and Supplies	\$15,003.93	\$15,003.93	17.04%
Maintenance Labor	\$12,221.25	\$12,221.25	19.02%
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Operators Salaries and Wages	\$29,032.35	\$29,032.35	16.06%

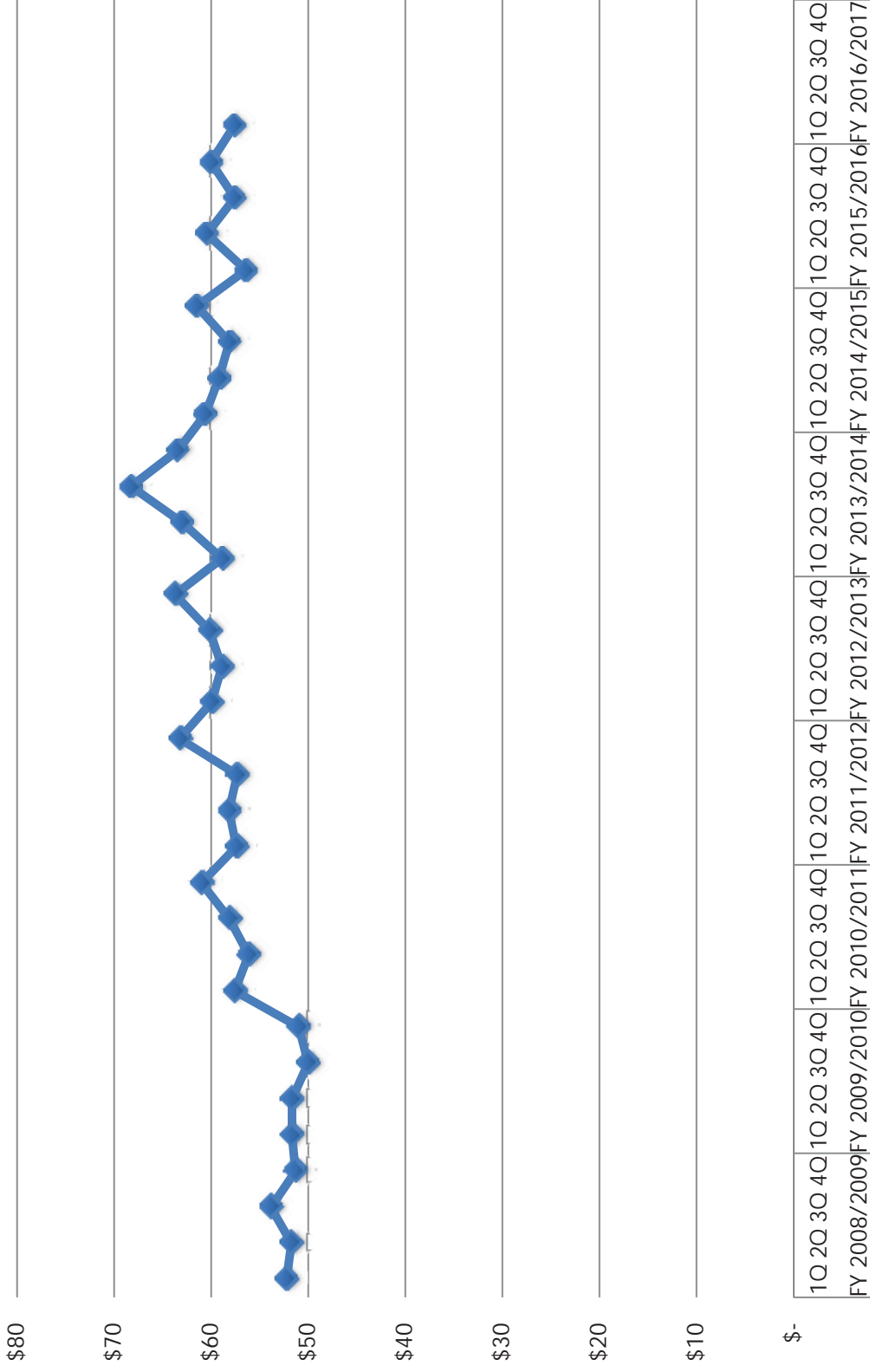
Notable Events of Fiscal Year 2016-2017

Date	Event
September 2016	California Average: \$2.803 per regular unleaded gallon according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (www.eia.gov).
September 29 – 30, 2016	County Express offered free shuttle service to the San Benito County Fair.
September 29, 2016	Two large commuter buses funded by Public Transportation Modernization, Improvement, and Service Enhancement Account Program (PTMISEA) monies were delivered.
September 28 – 29, 2016	County Express rider surveys were administered to solicit public input on technology improvements to include in the Transit ITS Plan.
September 6, 2016	Using Low Carbon Transit Operations Program funds, additional Intercounty runs to the Gilroy Transit Center were added to help riders connect with regional commuter services.
August 2016	California Average: \$2.745 per regular unleaded gallon according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (www.eia.gov).
August 29, 2016	Regular Intercounty service began to coincide with the first day of instruction for Gavilan Community College.
August 22, 2016	Regular Fixed Route service began to coincide with the first day of instruction for the Hollister School District.
July 2016	California Average: \$2.911 per regular unleaded gallon according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (www.eia.gov).
July 28, 2016	Four buses funded by Public Transportation Modernization, Improvement, and Service Enhancement Account Program (PTMISEA) monies were delivered.
July 1 – 4, 2016	Limited and special service schedule was provided to accommodate the Hollister Freedom Rally and the 4 th of July Holiday.

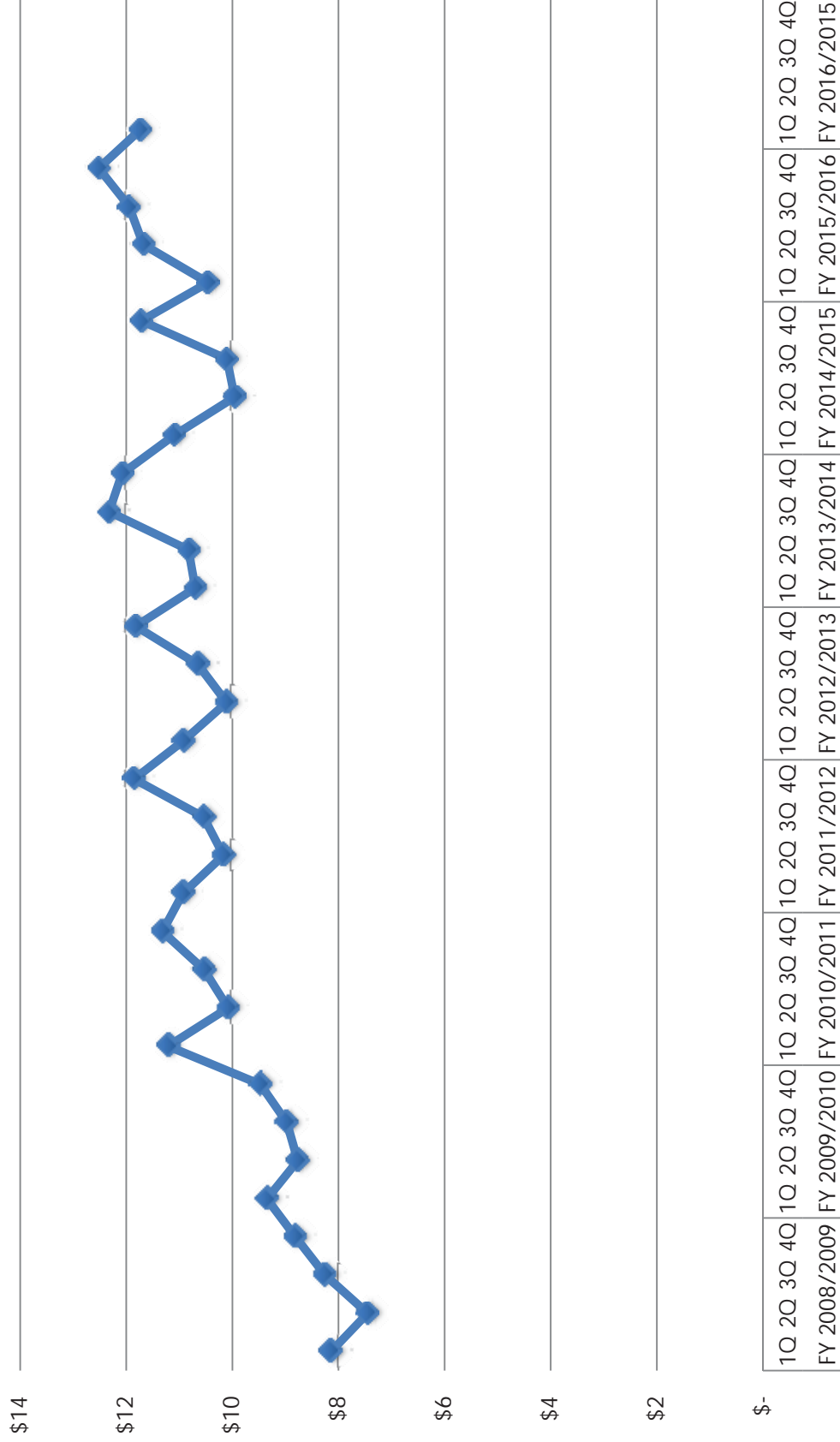
Performance Indicators

County Express		FY 15/16 1st Quarter	FY 16/17 1st Quarter	% Change
Ridership	Fixed Route	6,332	6,568	3.73%
	Dial-A-Ride	3,951	5,422	37.23%
	Paratransit	8,481	4,873	-42.54%
	Intercounty	10,277	9,974	-2.95%
	System-Wide	29,041	26,837	-7.59%
Revenue Service Hours	Fixed Route	1,300.02	1,307.06	0.54%
	Dial-A-Ride	978.80	915.35	-6.48%
	Paratransit	1,753.54	1,823.08	3.97%
	Intercounty	1,351.73	1,418.75	4.96%
	System-Wide	5,384.09	5,464.24	1.49%
Passengers Per Revenue Hour	Fixed Route	4.87	5.03	3.17%
	Dial-A-Ride	4.04	5.92	46.74%
	Paratransit	4.84	2.67	-44.73%
	Intercounty	7.60	7.03	-7.53%
	System-Wide	5.39	4.91	-8.94%
Cost Per Revenue Hour	Fixed Route	\$56.42	\$57.61	2.11%
	Dial-A-Ride	\$56.43	\$57.64	2.14%
	Paratransit	\$56.42	\$57.63	2.14%
	Intercounty	\$56.40	\$57.69	2.29%
	System-Wide	\$56.42	\$57.64	2.16%
Cost Per Passenger	Fixed Route	\$11.58	\$11.46	-1.04%
	Dial-A-Ride	\$13.98	\$9.73	-30.40%
	Paratransit	\$11.67	\$21.56	84.75%
	Intercounty	\$7.42	\$8.21	10.65%
	System-Wide	\$10.46	\$11.74	12.24%
Operations Costs	Fuel	\$36,267.53	\$29,642.71	-18.27%
	Other Materials and Supplies	\$10,270.45	\$13,075.42	27.31%
	Maintenance	\$12,729.70	\$9,165.93	-28.00%
	Purchased Transportation	\$225,679.53	\$241,317.23	6.93%
	Operators Salaries and Wages	\$18,818.36	\$21,774.27	15.71%
Farebox Recovery	Fixed Route	11.34%	11.63%	2.56%
	Dial-A-Ride	9.27%	13.61%	46.82%
	Paratransit	11.45%	6.09%	-46.81%
	Intercounty	16.30%	14.77%	-9.39%
	System-Wide	12.63%	11.35%	-10.13%

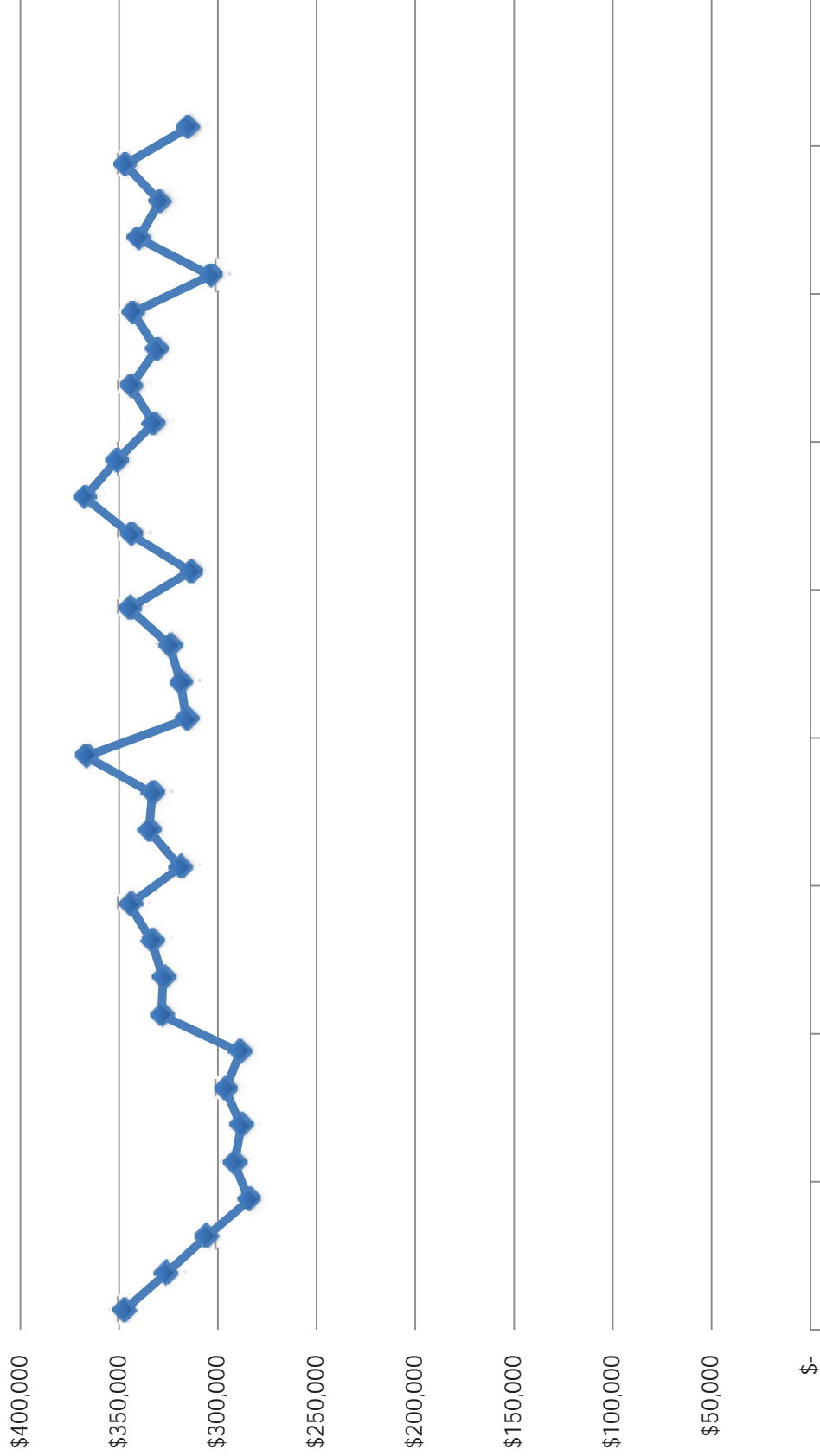
Cost per Vehicle Revenue Hour



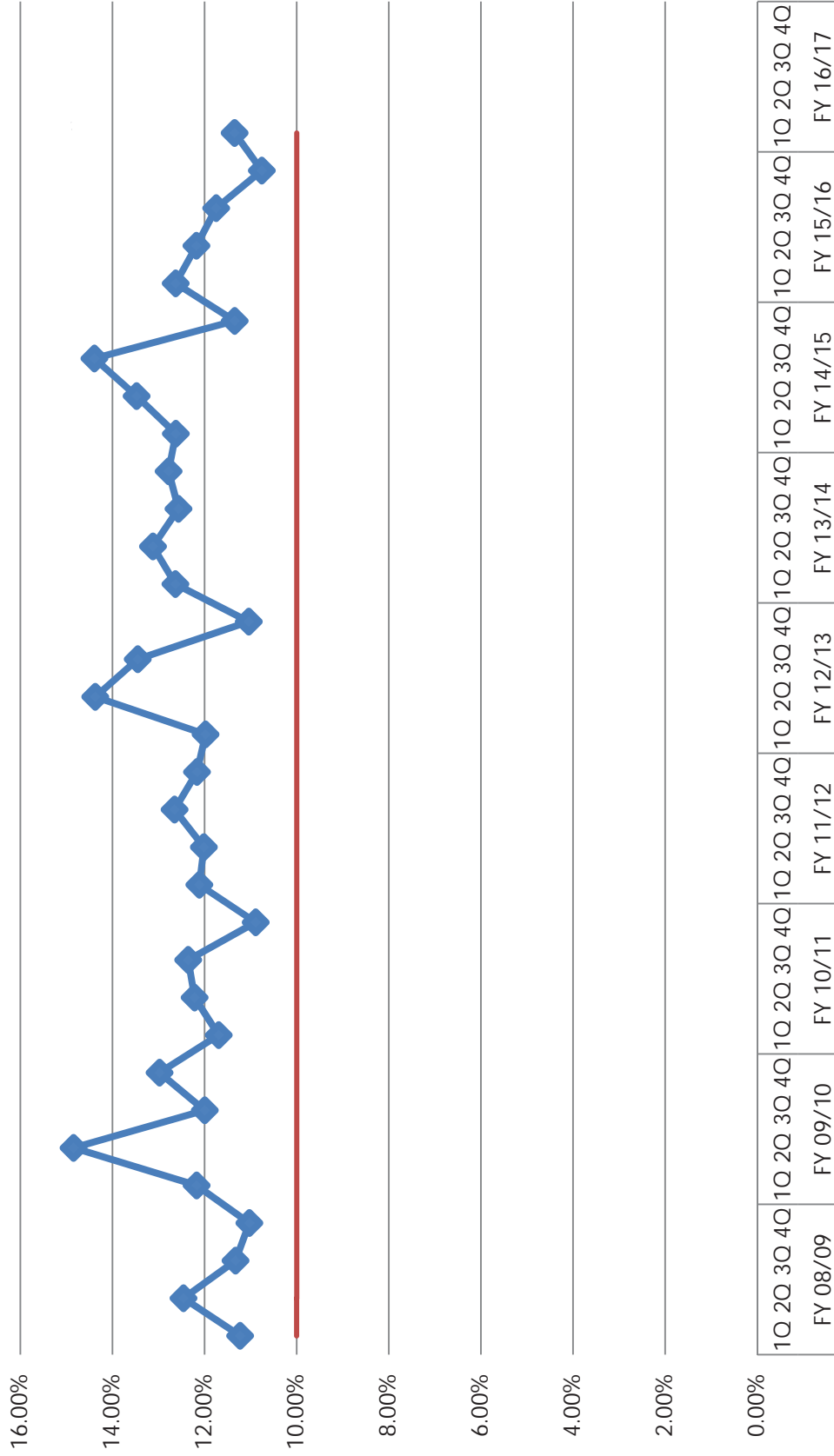
Cost per Passenger



Operational Costs



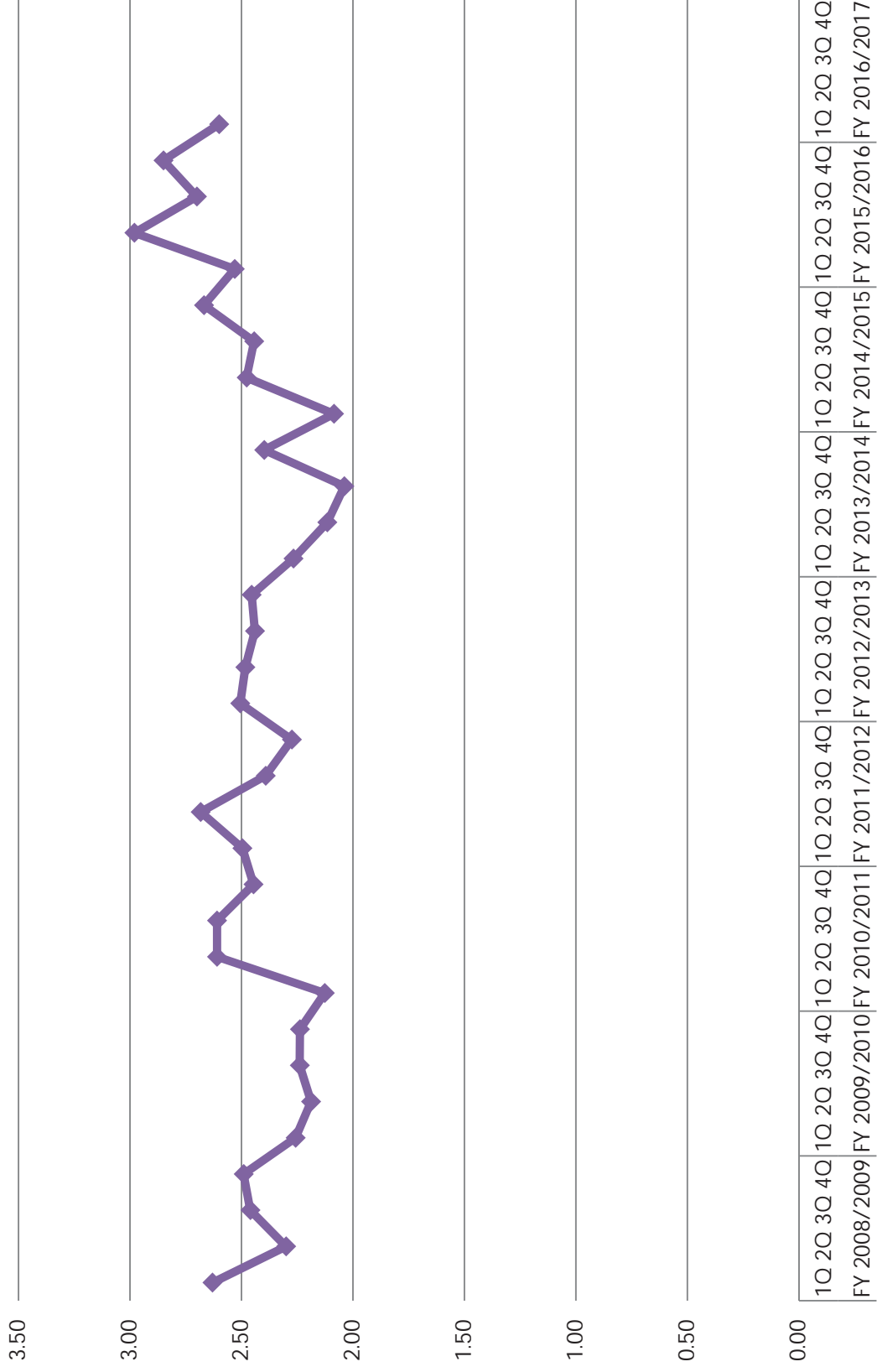
Farebox Recovery



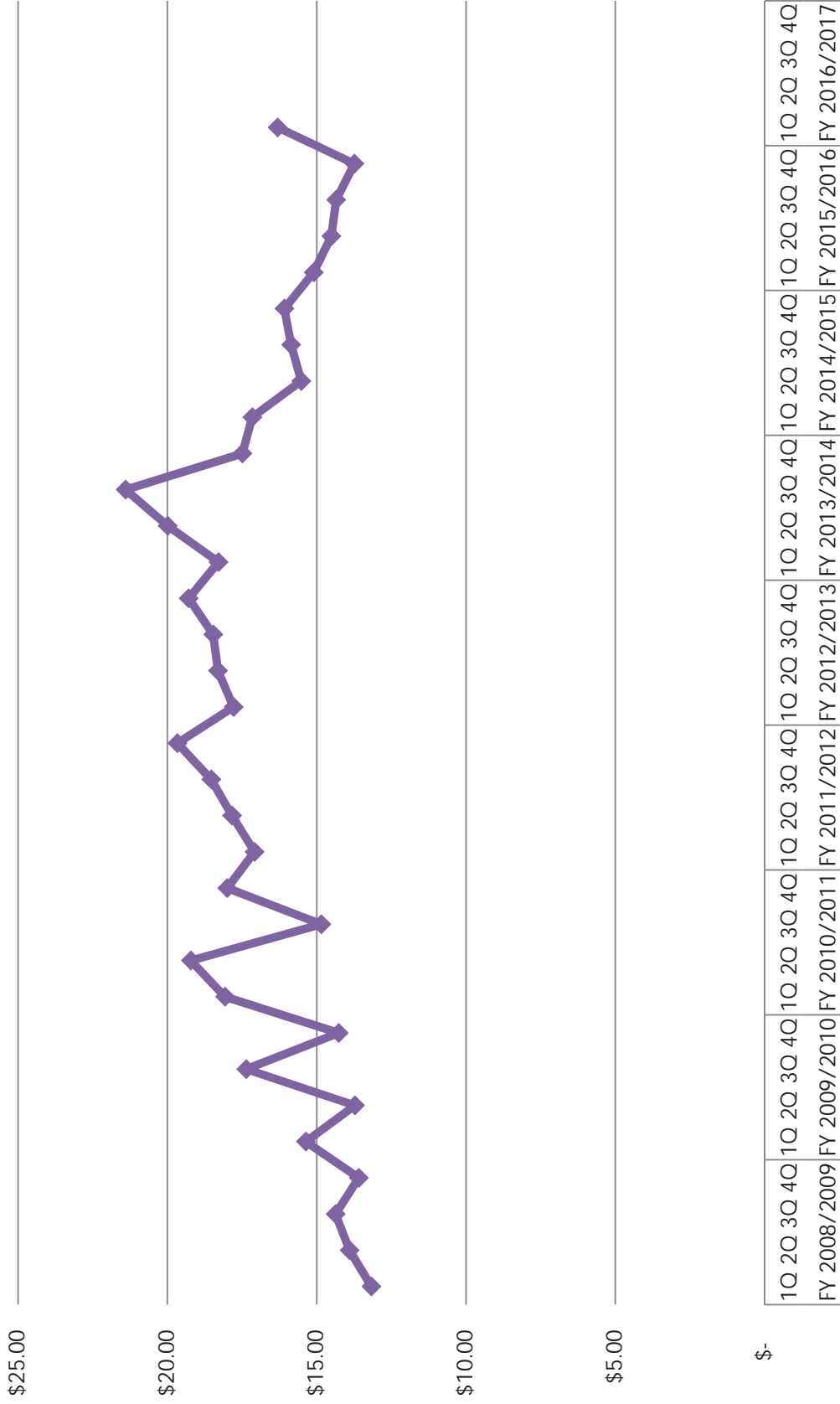
Performance Indicators#

Specialized Transportation		FY 15/16 1st Quarter	FY 16/17 1st Quarter	% Change
Ridership	OOCMT	1,205	1,526	26.64%
	Senior Lunch	2,049	2,768	35.09%
	MSAP	167	407	143.71%
	System-Wide	3,421	4,701	37.42%
Revenue Service Hours	OOCMT	782.58	1,098.75	40.40%
	Senior Lunch	356.75	369.50	3.57%
	MSAP	212.50	336.50	58.35%
	System-Wide	1,351.83	1,804.75	33.50%
Passengers Per Revenue Hour	OOCMT	1.54	1.39	-9.80%
	Senior Lunch	5.74	7.49	30.43%
	MSAP	0.79	1.21	53.90%
	System-Wide	2.53	2.60	2.93%
Cost Per Revenue Hour	OOCMT	\$37.56	\$39.47	5.09%
	Senior Lunch	\$38.02	\$54.62	43.66%
	MSAP	\$36.53	\$39.03	6.84%
	System-Wide	\$37.52	\$42.49	13.25%
Cost Per Passenger	OOCMT	\$24.39	\$28.42	16.51%
	Senior Lunch	\$6.62	\$7.29	10.15%
	MSAP	\$46.49	\$32.27	-30.58%
	System-Wide	\$14.83	\$16.31	10.03%
Operations Costs	Other Materials and Supplies	\$3,068.31	\$1,928.51	-37.15%
	Maintenance Labor	\$3,959.22	\$3,055.32	-22.83%
	Contracted Services	\$39,946.58	\$64,935.00	62.55%
	Operator Salaries and Wages	\$5,107.86	\$7,258.08	42.10%
Farebox Recovery	OOCMT	1.08%	0.70%	-34.69%
	MSAP	2.68%	3.57%	33.21%
	System-Wide	1.03%	1.01%	-2.44%

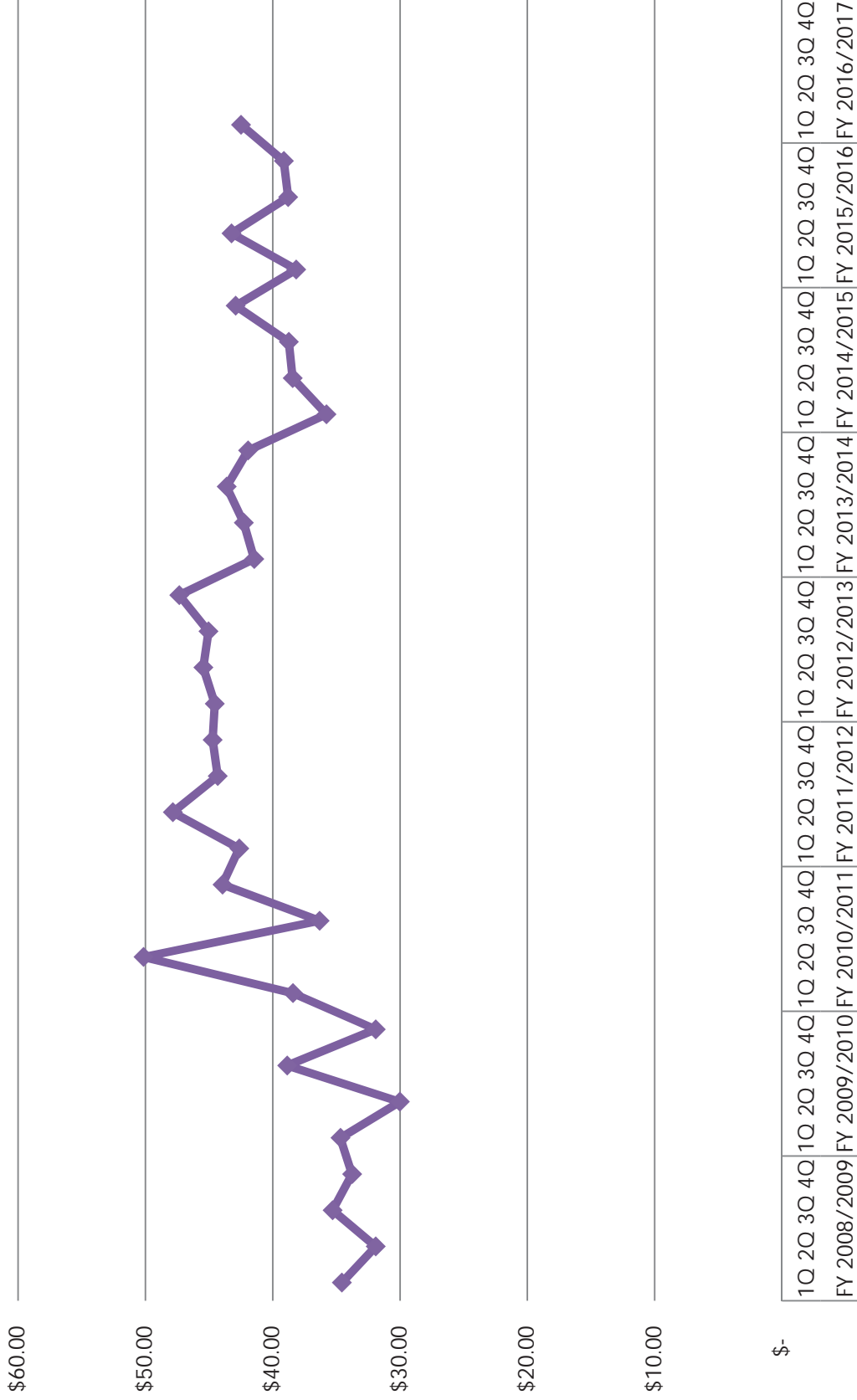
Passenger per Hour



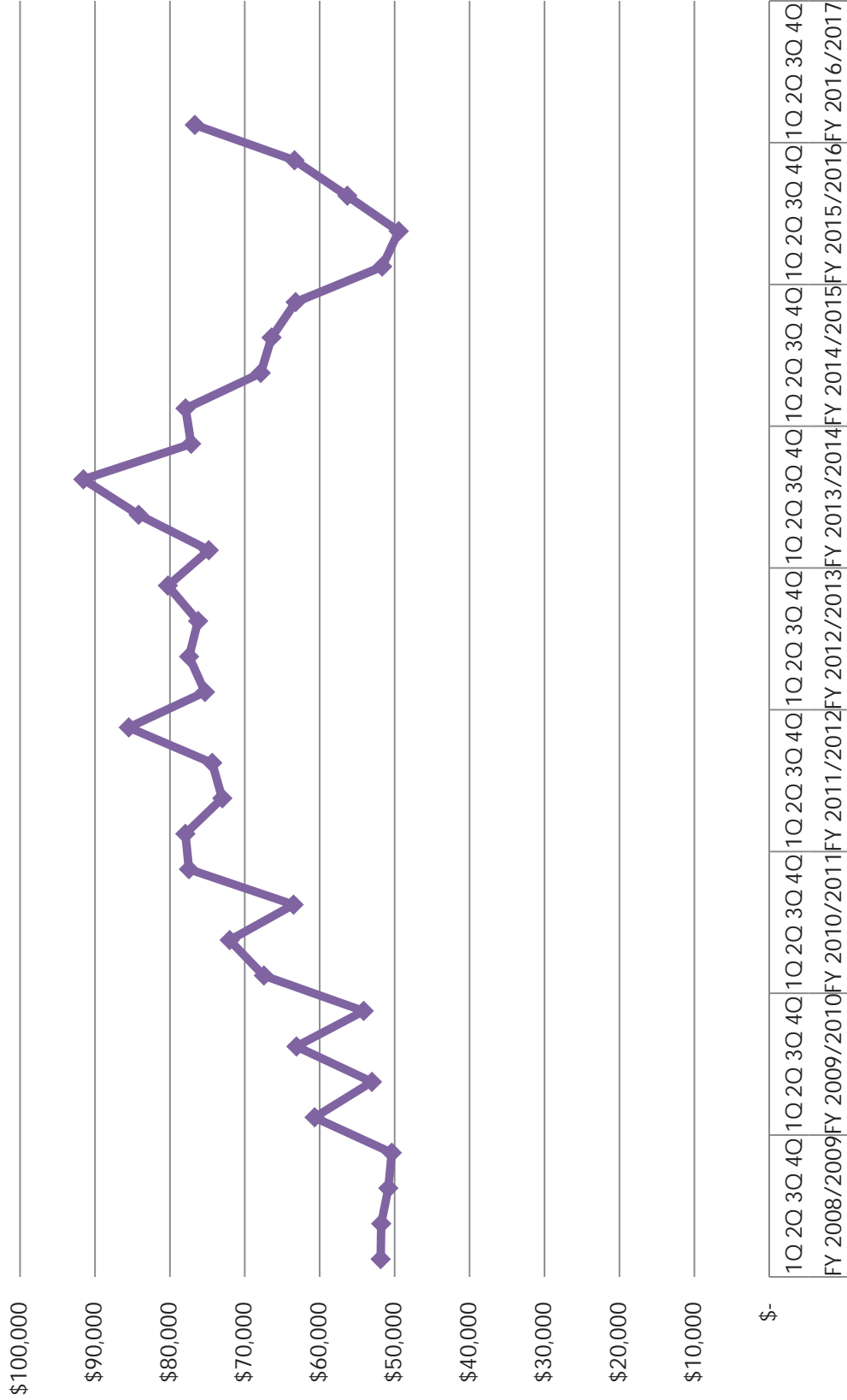
Cost per Passenger



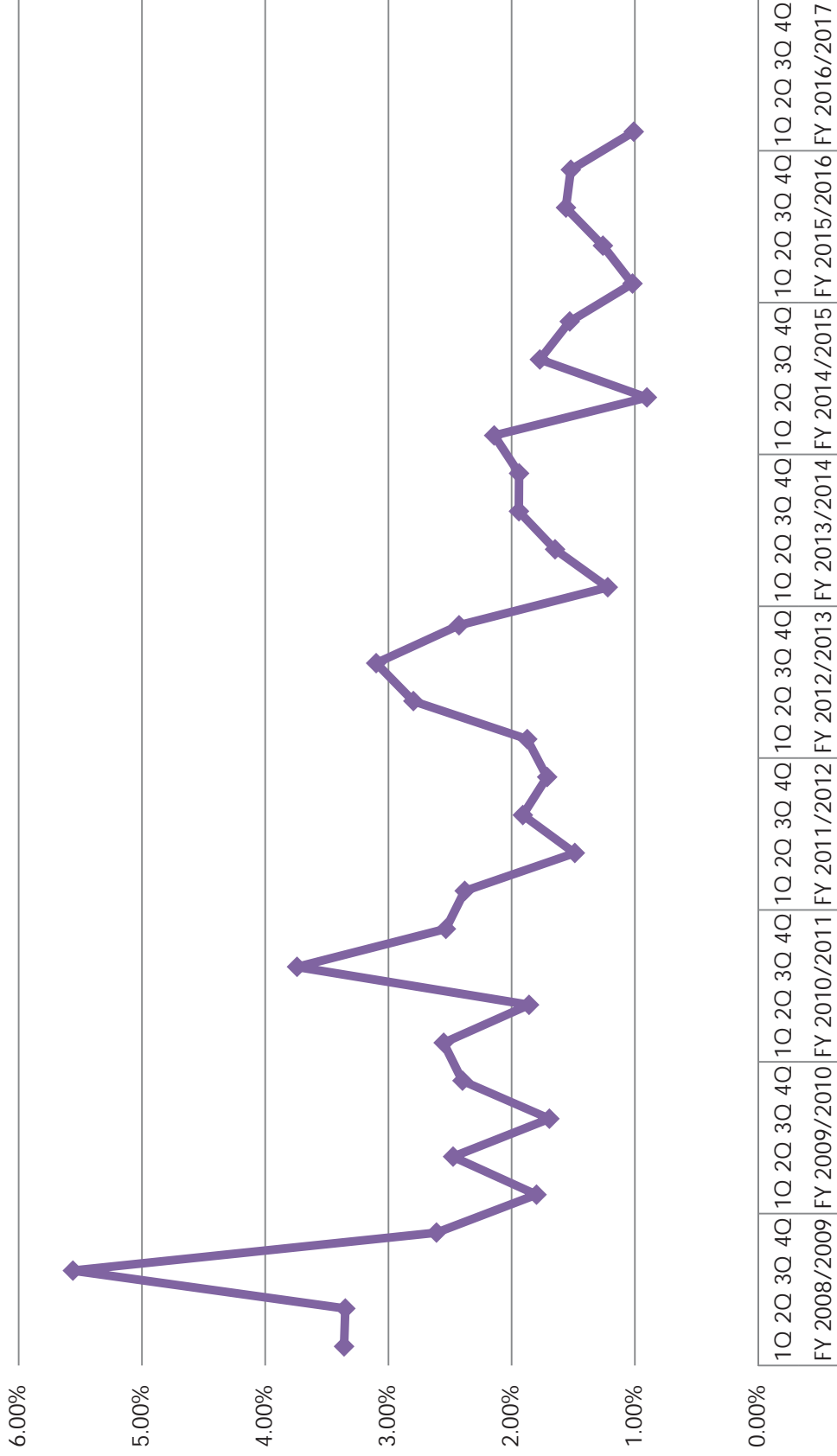
Cost per Revenue Service Hour



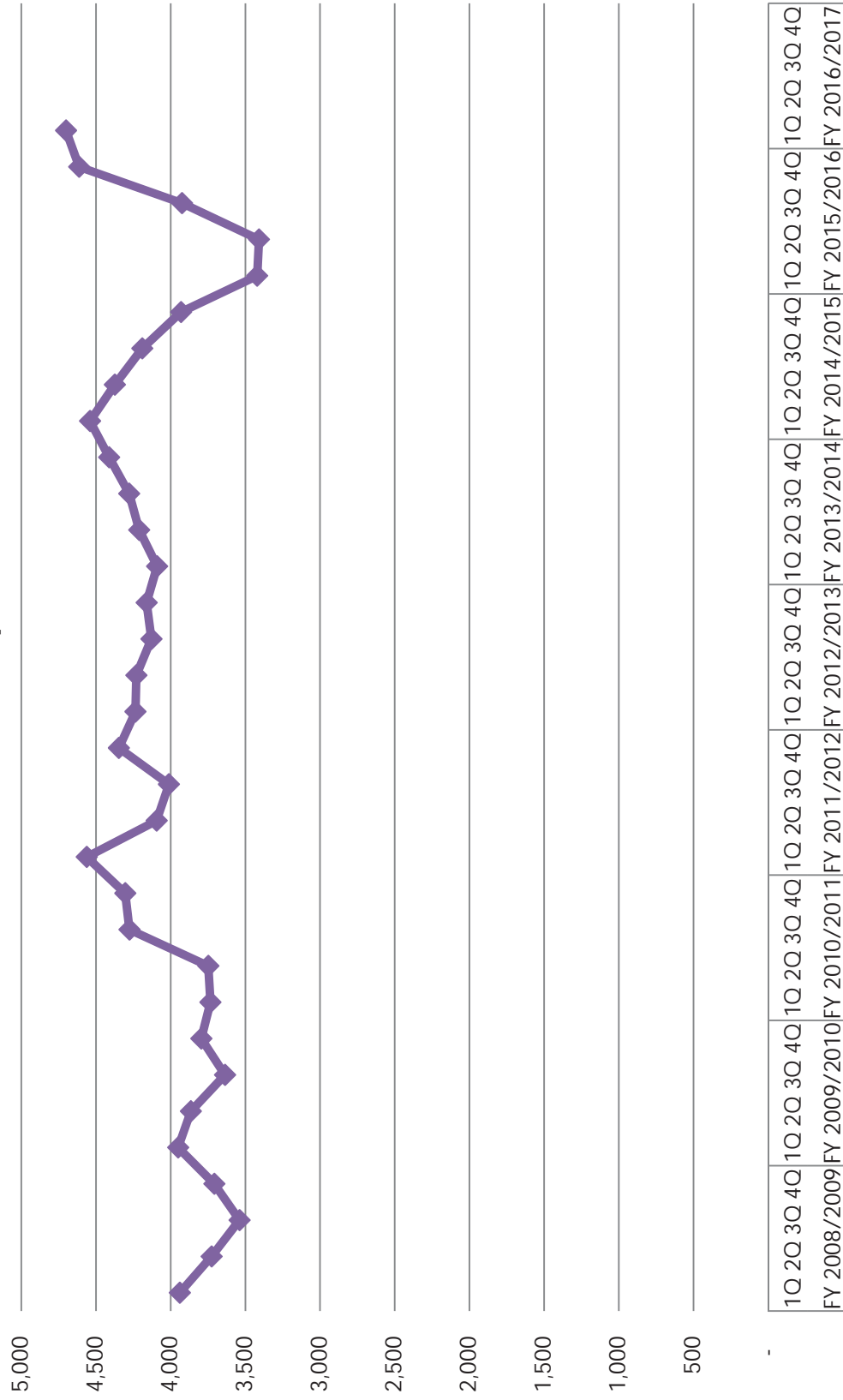
Operational Costs



Farebox Recovery



Ridership



Glossary

Term	Definition
Contracted Services	County Express and Specialized Transportation dispatch, drivers, and management are currently contracted out to MV Transportation, Inc. and Jovenes de Antaño. Contracts with both organizations are set to expire December 31, 2017.
Cost Per Revenue Service Hour	<p>Measures the cost effectiveness of the service or route by the corresponding operational costs. Operations costs include fuel, maintenance, and contract services.</p> $\frac{\text{Fuel} + \text{Other Materials \& Supplies} + \text{Maintenance} + \text{Contracted Services} + \text{Operator Salaries \& Wages}}{\text{Total Revenue Service Hours}} = \text{Cost Per Revenue Service Hour}$
Cost Per Passenger	<p>Measures the cost effectiveness of the service or route by the corresponding passengers. Operations costs include fuel, other materials and supplies, maintenance, contract services and operator salaries and wages.</p> $\frac{\text{Fuel} + \text{Other Materials \& Supplies} + \text{Maintenance} + \text{Contracted Services} + \text{Operator Salaries \& Wages}}{\text{Total Passengers}} = \text{Cost Per Passenger}$
Farebox Recovery	<p>Effectiveness measure capturing the percentage of system operating expenses recovered by fare revenue. The equation for calculating the farebox recovery ratio is:</p> $\frac{\text{Passenger Cash Fares} + \text{Token Sales} + \text{Monthly Pass Sales} + \text{Advertising Revenue}}{\text{Fuel} + \text{Other Materials \& Supplies} + \text{Maintenance} + \text{Contracted Services} + \text{Operator Salaries \& Wages}} = \text{Farebox Recovery}$
Maintenance Labor	Operational cost of in-house maintenance staff
MSAP	Medical Shopping Assistance Program is for San Benito County seniors and persons with disabilities that need escort and/or translation services at the grocery store, bank, and at doctor's appointments. The fare is \$1.25 one-way.
No-Show	A customer who did not call ahead to cancel a scheduled trip on Dial-A-Ride and Paratransit service. Vehicle arrives on site and customer is not there for pickup.
OOCMT	Out-of-County Non-Emergency Medical Transportation for San Benito County seniors and persons with disabilities who need medical treatment not available in the County. Service area ranges from Salinas to Palo Alto. The fare is a zone-based fare that ranges from \$2.00 to \$5.00 one-way.
On-Time Performance	Evaluates timeliness of services. Takes into account early, late, and missed departures on all services.
Operational Cost	<p>County Express total costs include fuel, maintenance, the payments made to MV Transportation, Inc., for operations management services, and the project administration cost by the Local Transportation Authority.</p> <p>Specialized Transportation total costs include maintenance, payments made to Jovenes de Antaño, for operations management services, and the project administration cost by the Local Transportation Authority</p>

Term	Definition
Operators Salaries and Wages	Operational cost that includes project administration. Cost of dispatchers, drivers, and management are not included in this category as they are currently contracted through MV Transportation, Inc. and Jovenes de Antaño (see Contracted Services).
Other Materials and Supplies	Operational cost that includes vehicle parts, outside labor, insurance, maintenance and office supplies, cell phone service, legal fees, and etc.
Passengers per Revenue Service Hour	Measures productivity of service or route by the number of passengers served per hour per vehicle. The passengers per revenue service hour is calculated as: $\frac{\text{Total Passengers}}{\text{Total Revenue Service Hours}} = \text{Passengers per Revenue Service Hour}$
Productivity	Measured by passengers per revenue service hour to gauge service efficiency. The passengers per revenue service hour is calculated as: $\frac{\text{Total Passengers}}{\text{Total Revenue Service Hours}} = \text{Passengers per Revenue Service Hour}$
Preventable Incidents with Injury	An avoidable incident (i.e. poor mobility device securement).
Preventable Vehicle Accidents	An avoidable accident (i.e. driver error).
Ridership	Number of one-way passenger trips
Revenue Service Hour	Fixed Route and Intercounty: Time between first printed stop to last printed stop on schedule. Dial-A-Ride and Paratransit: Time between pick-up and drop-off of clients. Does not include idle time or travel time with empty vehicle.
Senior Lunch	Transportation to and from the Senior Lunch Program at the community center in the City of Hollister. There is no fare for this service.
Service Refusal	Service availability cannot be negotiated because of service overload and customer request (i.e. Ride not available because client calls for a ride within 30 minutes).
Total Cost	See Operational Cost

Staff Report

To: Social Services Transportation Advisory Council
From: Regina Valentine, Transportation Planner Telephone: (831) 637-7665 x 205
Date: January 27, 2017
Subject: Mapping ITS Technology for the 21st Century Plan Draft Recommendations

Recommendation:

RECEIVE Presentation on the Mapping Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Technology for the 21st Century (Transit ITS) Plan Draft Recommendations

Summary:

In 2014, the Local Transportation Authority (LTA) applied for and was awarded grant funds from CalTrans to prepare a Transit ITS Plan. In April of 2016, the consulting team was selected and began work on the project. The Transit ITS Plan is anticipated to be finalized in March 2017.

Financial Considerations:

The LTA was awarded a CalTrans Transportation Planning Grant in the amount of \$63,310 to prepare a Transit ITS Plan for San Benito County. A local match of \$6,310 was provided in in-kind LTA staff time. The in-kind local match is provided by existing salaries. The grant will fund LTA staff project management and consultant contract fees (which are not to exceed \$54,740).

Background:

The Transit ITS Plan will include an inventory of the current technology used by LTA for San Benito County's transit system, a look at best practices in Transit ITS used by comparable transit agencies through California, a public outreach effort to better understand the needs of the transit users in San Benito County, and an implementation plan. The final product of this project will be a formal planning document to be approved by the LTA Board.

Staff Analysis:

The LTA's Transit ITS Plan project began in April 2016. The project is intended to provide LTA with an ITS strategic capital improvement plan for the County Express transit system. It is part of a coordinated effort to integrate the agency's previous planning work conducted in the recently adopted Short- and Long-Range Transit Plan and elements described in the 2008 Central Coast ITS Implementation Plan.

The project defines ITS improvements as systems, equipment, and infrastructure including advanced computer, wireless, and wire line communications-based information, and electronic technologies used within a public transit infrastructure. There are four elements to the project, which are as follows:

1. *Existing Inventory* – As the base line for analysis going forward, a detailed inventory is to be conducted of all existing ITS systems employed by the County Express. The inventory was completed in September 2016.
2. *Public Participation* – LTA emphasized that public input, specifically from County Express passengers, be obtained to capture all desired ITS transit improvements. In response, an onboard passenger survey was conducted over a two-day period on each of the County Express Fixed (Blue, Green, and Red lines) and Intercounty (CalTrain and Gavilan College) routes. In addition, an intercept survey was conducted with County Express passengers that were purchasing bus tokens and monthly passes at LTA's administrative office. LTA also completed other outreach efforts, such as a community workshop.
3. *ITS Technology Needs Assessment* – The Needs Assessment effort will incorporate the previous ITS elements identified in the Short- and Long-Range Transit Plan, those described in the Central Coast ITS Implementation Plan, take into account existing ITS investments, and present the findings from the public outreach efforts. Ultimately, the assessment will determine any technology gaps between the current and desired ITS systems and provide recommendations to address these gaps. The Needs Assessment data compilation and analysis is anticipated to be completed in January 2017.
4. *Implementation Plan* – The Implementation Plan will bring all the previously identified recommendations together, in priority order for implementation, along with the time anticipated to introduce these ITS system improvements to the County Express system. Upon completion of the Needs Assessment, the Implementation Plan will be assembled which is anticipated to be completed by February 2017.

During the meeting, the consulting team will make a presentation on the Transit ITS Plan's draft recommendations and will receive SSTAC member input.

Executive Director Review: _____

Counsel Review: N/A

Staff Report

To: Social Services Transportation Advisory Council
From: Regina Valentine, Transportation Planner Telephone: (831) 637-7665 x 205
Date: January 27, 2017
Subject: County Express Commuter Rail Service to Gilroy

Recommendation:

RECEIVE Presentation on Options for County Express Commuter Rail Service to Gilroy

Summary:

In response to a request from the LTA Board, staff has conducted preliminary research on the possibility of creating a commuter rail service from San Benito County to the Gilroy CalTrain station.

Financial Considerations:

The financial impact at this time is unknown. Projected costs include funding for planning and design, capital improvements, and service operations.

Background:

Census information indicates that 48.9% of employed San Benito County residents commute outside of the county for employment. As the population of the county continues to increase at a rate higher than the employment opportunities, current congestion issues for personal automobiles will continue to increase, including along Highway 25. During the August meeting, the LTA Board requested that staff conduct preliminary research on the possibility of creating a County Express commuter rail service to Gilroy to relieve congestion. Staff provided a related report to the Board in October 2015 regarding possible County Express commuter services to the Silicon Valley.

Staff Analysis:

Existing Conditions

Currently, 48.9% of the employed population of San Benito County commutes outside of the county for employment, with much of these commuters traveling to points north. County Express currently operates nine Intercounty transit routes during the A.M. commute period, with three offering direct service to the Gilroy Transit Center. Annually, the Intercounty service transports 42,097 passengers (FY15/16) with 13,042 accessing the Gilroy Transit Center.

The Gilroy Transit Center is the southernmost transit center in Santa Clara County. This transit center provides a location for operations of four different transit agencies: San Benito County Express, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Monterey Salinas Transit (MST), and CalTrain.

VTA currently operates seven different bus routes that service the Gilroy Transit Center. Three of these bus routes have service into Silicon Valley: #68 with service to Diridon Station, #168 (Express) with service to Diridon Station, #121 (Express) with service to Lockheed Martin Transit Center. All of these northbound services provide southbound services in the P.M. commute period.

Monterey Salinas Transit (MST) currently operates two bus lines that stop at the Gilroy Transit Center, with service into Silicon Valley. The San Jose Express (#55) operates from Monterey to Diridon Station getting a passenger to Diridon by 12 noon. The King City – San Jose Route (#86) can get a passenger to Diridon Station by 8:03 am via the San Jose International Airport (SJC).

CalTrain currently operates three northbound trains during the A.M. commute period from Gilroy. However, there are no southbound trains that make it all the way to Gilroy during the morning. Also, there is some uncertainty as to what will happen to CalTrain services, south of San Jose, once the Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project is complete.

Preliminary Research

In June 2000, the San Benito Council of Governments (San Benito COG) had a report prepared to look at the feasibility of extending the CalTrain line from Gilroy to Hollister (4th and Sally). The annual operating costs associated with this extension (in FY2000 Dollars) would have been \$638,000 and \$941,000, for two and three train scenarios respectively. The initial capital investment for this project (in FY2000 Dollars) would have been between \$19.6 and \$27.1 million dollars, depending on the level of safety and the desired speed of the trains. Although this report still provides valuable information, a significant amount of time has passed since its preparation and some project assumptions must be reconsidered.

CalTrain's Participation

In projecting costs, the 2000 report relied heavily upon the assumption that CalTrain would be the operating partner of the commuter rail service. Cost savings were anticipated with the use of existing Caltrain crews, cars, and locomotives operating to and from Gilroy, requiring no additional equipment. It was found in the report that it would not be practical for new commuter rail service to Gilroy to be operated by any provider other than CalTrain. Since the preparation of the report, CalTrain has indicated no interest in extending their operation of commuter rail into San Benito and Monterey counties. In fact, CalTrain has since reduced their Gilroy service from four northbound trains during the A.M. commute period to three in 2005.

Ridership Projections

In the 2000 report, it was projected that in 2003 weekday daily ridership would range between 218 and 250 passengers, and in 2020 would range between 350 and 402 passengers. Due to the nature of commuter rail, riders would be expected to travel north in the A.M. to attend work and south in the P.M. to return home. Since each person would typically ride twice a day, to determine the total number of commuters served the projected ridership should be divided in half.

For that reason, the projected number of weekday commuters served in 2003 ranges between 109 and 125, and in 2020 between 175 and 201, according to the 2000 report.

As quite some time has passed since the report was prepared, staff reviewed the average weekday passenger boardings for the Gilroy CalTrain service for a comparison. In March 2016, CalTrain experienced an average of 179 passengers boarding in Gilroy during weekdays. It should be noted that CalTrain's ridership is boosted by connecting transit services from VTA and MST, as well as, County Express' 26 average weekday round-trip riders to the Gilroy Transit Center.

Hollister Branch Line Ownership

During the preparation of the 2000 report, Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) was in ownership of the track that runs between Hollister and Gilroy, also known as the Hollister Branch Line. In 2013, UPRR sold the line to a private firm, San Benito Railroad LLC, so LTA must anticipate negotiating use of the track if a commuter rail is considered. Additionally as part of the purchase, UPRR retained an exclusive easement to provide freight rail service on the line where freight has service priority over commuter rail, which would impact service planning.

Funding Considerations

As reported above, in the 2000 report with CalTrain's project management the annual operating costs (in FY2000 Dollars) was projected to be between \$638,000 and \$941,000, with an initial capital investment between \$19.6 and \$27.1 million dollars. Although CalTrain is no longer interested in pursuing the project, staff reviewed potential funding sources.

Operations

The major source of funding used by LTA to operate transportation services is the Transportation Development Act (TDA). During the FY 2013 – 2015 period, on average San Benito COG was allocated \$1,349,753 in TDA funds. As per state legislature, TDA funds are used to financially support the following in order of priority:

- TDA fund administration
- Regional transportation planning
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Passenger Rail
- Public transit
- Streets and roads

When passenger rail services are provided in a region, per state legislature the operating costs for the service must take priority above public transit services. For this reason, County Express would be competing for limited TDA funds to continue to provide Fixed Route, Paratransit, General Public Dial-a-Ride, and Specialized Transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities. Some potential ways to reduce the amount of TDA funds needed to operate commuter rail may include a local transportation sales tax measure or private sector contributions.

Capital

Potential funding for the required capital purchases for the commuter rail service to Gilroy could include federal, state, and local sources. As authorized by the five-year federal transportation funding bill, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) offers a competitive Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Grant to fund investments such as new and expanded rapid rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars, bus rapid transit, and ferries. Further research would need to be conducted to determine which category the project could be eligible under: New Starts for projects with a total estimated capital cost of \$300 million+ or that are seeking \$100 million+ in funds, or Small Starts with a total estimated capital cost of less than \$300 million and that are seeking less than \$100 million in funds. Additionally, before applications could be submitted LTA must ensure that the project has cleared FTA grant requirements such as design and environmental review.

At the state level, the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) offers a competitive Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant to fund transformative capital improvements that modernize California's intercity, commuter, and urban rail systems to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing congestion and vehicle miles traveled. With funds generated from the state's Cap and Trade auction proceeds, in August 2016 CalSTA awarded \$390 million statewide to fund 14 projects with award amounts ranging between \$5 million to \$82 million. As described for the FTA funding source, before applications could be submitted LTA must ensure that the project has cleared CalSTA grant requirements such as design and environmental review.

To fund capital purchases locally, as with the funding for operations, they could be provided with a local transportation sales tax measure or from private sector contributions.

Next Steps

The County Express commuter rail service to Gilroy project has been included in the adopted 2035 San Benito Regional Transportation Plan as an unconstrained project as funding has not been identified. Staff will bring this item to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which includes City of Hollister and San Benito County staff, for project input and to establish a work plan. Next steps could include applying for a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant to prepare an updated project study.

Executive Director Review: _____

Counsel Review: N/A

Attachment: Hollister/Gilroy CalTrain Extension Final Report Executive Summary

HOLLISTER/GILROY CALTRAIN EXTENSION

FINAL REPORT

FOR THE

COUNCIL OF SAN BENITO COUNTY GOVERNMENTS

June 8, 2000



PREPARED BY

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Business Plan Hollister/Gilroy Caltrain Extension

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is intended to provide the Council of San Benito County Governments (SBtCOG) with necessary information and documentation to move forward to establish passenger train service between Gilroy and Hollister.

RIDERSHIP

Existing ridership data from Caltrain/Joint Powers Board (Caltrain, or JPB), Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Caltrans were reviewed to provide a baseline for estimation of the demand for extension of passenger rail service to Hollister.

Population and employment projections were identified for San Benito County in order to understand the impacts of growth, and to be able to estimate demand beyond start-up. These data were obtained from MTC and the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG).

The resulting forecasts are based upon scenarios in which existing passenger service to Gilroy is extended to one station in Hollister, opening in 2003. In Scenario 1, two trains operate northbound in the morning commute, and two trains operate southbound in the evening. In Scenario 2, the number of trains is increased to three. The station is assumed to have ample parking and adequate highway access.

Following are the resulting estimates of demand, expressed in terms of daily weekday riders with regard to the two trains and three trains scenarios:

	<u>Two trains</u>	<u>Three trains</u>
Year 2003	218	250
Year 2020	350	402

The report contains a complete elaboration of these figures and a discussion of their sensitivity to various conditions.

OPERATING PLAN AND OPERATING COSTS

Stations, Layover Facility

Three station site options were evaluated, and it was concluded that service should be implemented using a single station, located in downtown Hollister, at or near the former station located near Sally and Fourth Streets. The Wright Road location would be a second choice. A station that would take advantage of commuters on Route 101, located near Carnadero, is an optional addition to

the project, but is no substitute for the Hollister station. It may become attractive if Santa Clara County or Monterey County would substantially participate in its costs, both capital and operating.

With a downtown Hollister station, the train storage or layover facility could be at that location. Alternatively, the layover facility could be located at Wright Road. Another possibility would be to continue storing trains at Gilroy. This would reduce capital costs, but increase operating costs. A Hollister layover site would benefit Santa Clara County by alleviating the cost of expanding the existing Gilroy facility as enhanced Gilroy Caltrain service is implemented.

Service Plan

Three potential developments, now being planned, must be considered in the plan to extend passenger rail service between Gilroy and Hollister. One of these is VTA's proposed increased level of Caltrain service between Gilroy and points north. Another is Monterey County's plan to extend Caltrain service to Salinas. A third initiative is Amtrak's Coast Corridor study, which will consider service levels and infrastructure needs of all users of the Coast Line.

A logical means of initiating service to Hollister would be to extend existing Gilroy-San Francisco trips to serve Hollister. Also extending that service to Salinas suggests that there could be conflicting desires between San Benito and Monterey counties. Nevertheless, in order to show all options available to San Benito County, this report assumes all four existing Gilroy trains are available for service to Hollister.

As indicated above, two service scenarios are proposed, Scenario 1 consisting of two daily round trips between Hollister and San Francisco, and Scenario 2, three round trips. These scenarios were developed based upon existing trains with the highest percentage of San Benito county riders.

The report contains illustrative service schedules for both scenarios.

Both service scenarios assume use of existing Caltrain crews, cars and locomotives now operating to and from Gilroy. Thus, in these scenarios, no additional equipment is required (and therefore no funding is required for additional equipment). Additional equipment and crews would be required if both San Benito and Monterey Counties are unable to agree on dividing the current Caltrain trains between them.

Economic and public policy considerations indicate that it would not be practicable to assume new commuter rail service to Hollister by any provider other than Caltrain.

Operating Costs

Service to Hollister is likely to be funded in a manner similar to the Tamien-Gilroy service supported by VTA, and operating costs are projected on this basis. San Benito County should expect to pay the net cost of Hollister service, and perhaps some charge for JPB administrative expenses.

The largest single component of the Hollister operating cost would be the "Cost Allocation", which is an allocation of Caltrain annual operating costs north of Tamien based on the ratio of Hollister-Gilroy train-miles to total Caltrain train-miles north of Tamien. Other cost items would include maintenance, security and utilities directly related to facilities or service between Hollister and Gilroy. It is anticipated that Hollister operating revenues will offset operating cost of the service to the extent of about 33 to 39 percent. Net annual operating deficits of Hollister service would be about \$638,000 for the two-train scenario, and \$941,000 for the three-train scenario.

SHORT LINE EVALUATION

A hypothetical scenario was evaluated in which Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) sells the Hollister Branch to a short line railroad or to a public agency that operates, or contracts with an operator, to fulfill the common carrier freight obligation transferred with the sale of the line. Currently UPRR operates a train on the branch that services shippers three days a week: Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday.

Examination of current freight volume as well as future prospects, estimated revenues therefrom, and estimated operating costs, reveals that the Hollister Branch revenues fall short of the operating costs a short line operator would incur.

The prospects of a rail-truck transfer (intermodal facility) located on the Hollister Branch were evaluated. In RLBA's judgment, this would not be a productive investment.

Thus reasonable prospects for independent short line operation do not exist, and the recommended direction to be taken by San Benito County is an agreement with UPRR for continued freight service by UPRR as long as it may be required.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND COSTS

Improvements are required to upgrade a low-speed low-density freight branch line so that it is capable of safely accommodating passenger trains at passenger train speeds.

The initial capital cost estimate of \$27,100,000 provided for upgrade of the 12.3-mile line to Caltrain standards and allow for a maximum passenger train speed of 79 miles per hour (mph). This cost was deemed high, and RLBA was asked to look for ways to reduce cost.

By accepting a maximum speed of 59 mph on an unsignalled line, not replacing all bridges, rail and ties, and using lower cost materials, initial improvements may be reduced by almost \$7.5 million, to \$19.6 million. The line would remain in compliance with Federal Railroad Administration minimum safety standards for passenger train operations at the lower speed, but with a lower margin of safety, and would require more frequent and more expensive maintenance although Caltrain has indicated this plan would be acceptable. RLBA continues to recommend automatic block signaling (ABS) as a minimum for commuter rail service, and advises San Benito County to seek funding for it. ABS shows the presence or absence of a train, rail car, open switch or broken rail in the next "block", or section of track, and therefore tends to prevent accidents. The cost of including ABS is about \$700,000.

The reduced capital cost estimate of \$19,630,000 includes right of way improvements, a station and a layover facility. It substitutes less than optimum materials (which will not hold up as well or for as long), for example, wood crossties instead of concrete, and soft local stone ballast rather than harder rock from a more distant source. In the lower estimate, all existing rail is replaced, but only two-thirds of the crossties are replaced, rather than all of them.

TRACK ACCESS ISSUES

From a practical point of view, there really are no alternatives to operation of the Hollister commuter rail service by Caltrain.

It is highly desirable, therefore, that:

- (1) Hollister service and SBtCOG participation be on the agenda of current Caltrain and VTA negotiations with UPRR concerning enhanced service levels from/to Gilroy and
- (2) Hollister service and equipment requirements be included in Caltrain's equipment procurement/assignment efforts initiated following the passage of Measures A and B in Santa Clara County.

On April 13, at a meeting with Caltrain and VTA, VTA advised SBtCOG that it has added potential Caltrain commuter service extension to Hollister (as well as to Salinas) to its current negotiations with UPRR concerning enhanced service between Gilroy and Tamien. UPRR has not yet responded to VTA's proposals.

Caltrain and VTA have indicated general support for an extension of commuter service to Hollister (as well as to Salinas) with only two significant concerns. The first concern is that San Benito County must be able to obtain significant funding for necessary capital improvements and expected operating revenue shortfalls to facilitate a Hollister service extension. The second concern is that extension of commuter service to both Hollister and Salinas from Gilroy will require additional crews, passenger cars and motive power, unless San Benito and Monterey counties can agree on which of the current four (and possibly five future) peak morning and evening weekday trains serving Gilroy will be extended to Hollister and which to Salinas. The Caltrain Extension Task Force formed by JPB and VTA with representatives from both counties is attempting to work through this problem.

Access to the Hollister Branch may be obtained by outright purchase from UPRR, or through a "trackage rights" agreement. The report describes pros and cons of each option. Access to the UPRR mainline between Gilroy and the branch will require extending VTA's current trackage rights agreement between Gilroy and Tamien. No costs have been estimated for track access.

FINANCIAL PLAN

This section of the report identifies all potential funding sources and discusses strategies for cooperative funding.

In accord with the Joint Powers Agreement of 1991, it is assumed that the proposed Gilroy-Hollister extension would be considered an expansion project, as was the extension of service to Gilroy, and that San Benito County would be responsible for the capital costs. It may be possible for Santa Clara County to assume some of the capital costs; for example, a station and layover facility in San Benito County benefits Santa Clara County by enabling Caltrain to increase service frequency to/from Gilroy with reduced capital outlays.

Four cost sharing strategies--modeled on formulas used in the Gilroy extension, Caltrain mainline service, and Altamont Commuter Express service--are proposed for cooperatively funding the day-to-day operation. Advantages and disadvantages are discussed. Obviously the sharing of operating costs outside San Benito County would have to be negotiated.

Federal, state and local funding sources are described. Although there are at present no funds committed to extending passenger rail service to Hollister, there are several potential funding sources. There is considerable competition for those sources. It is recommended that San Benito County work through appropriate elected officials to secure funding, including its TEA-21 earmark,

the Governor's Traffic Congestion Relief Plan, and consider a sales tax for transportation, Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds and private sector contributions.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this section of the report is to identify potential adverse environmental effects associated with the project, and, where feasible, identify mitigation measures intended to lessen impacts. The assessment describes the project, lists the environmental factors potentially affected, and evaluates each factor. Several potential adverse impacts are identified and mitigation measures are described. None of the impacts appear to be critical issues, considering the environmental benefits of the project. If it is decided to use only the existing station site, and not construct any additional station, then SBtCOG may be able to make a Negative Declaration.

MILESTONES FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The report describes the key remaining steps necessary to implement passenger train service from Hollister:

- Public outreach and approvals
- Secure funding commitments, obtain environmental clearance
- Negotiate service and equipment requirements with VTA and JPB
- Negotiate access with UPRR
- Design/construct facilities, stations, improvements and procure equipment (if necessary)
- Demonstrate service and market it
- Refine service plan

In summary, the following are key unresolved issues:

- (1) Expansion of passenger service on UPRR track (Gilroy-Hollister, Gilroy-Salinas, and Amtrak's Coast Line initiative).
- (2) Extension of four Gilroy trains to Hollister and Salinas: potential conflict between San Benito and Monterey Counties.
- (3) Access for operation of passenger trains on the Hollister Branch.
- (4) San Benito institutional issues vis-à-vis Santa Clara County, as well as cost-sharing with VTA and Caltrain.
- (5) Funding.