

LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
**STAFF REPORT**

SUBJECT: Dublin School Tripper Service  
FROM: Christy Wegener, Director of Planning and Communications  
DATE: September 25, 2017

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**Action Requested**

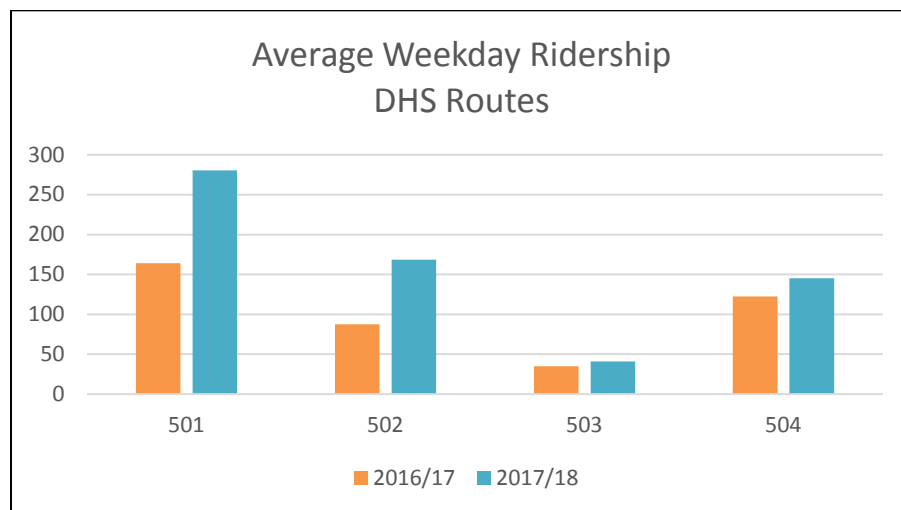
Informational item only. No action required.

**Background**

The Dublin school tripper routes have experienced major increases in ridership due to a growth in student enrollment at Dublin High School (DHS). Additionally, the Dublin Unified School District (DUSD) has diverted students from Fallon Middle School to Wells Middle School due to overcrowding. This staff report includes a summary of actions taken to accommodate the DHS loads as well as to address the growth in student enrollment throughout DUSD.

**Discussion**

Since the start of the 2017/18 school year, the passenger loads on Dublin High School routes have been significantly higher than in years past – over a 50% increase from 2016/17 passenger loads – and high enough that additional resources have been deployed to carry students. The heaviest loads are in the afternoon, but morning buses also fill up after a few stops on the route. Below is a chart summarizing the change in ridership from the current school year to last school year for Dublin High School bus routes:



The normal scheduled fleet for the DHS tripper service includes the following:

| Route | Number of AM buses | Number of PM buses |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 501   | 1                  | 3                  |
| 502   | 1                  | 1                  |
| 503   | 1                  | 1                  |
| 504   | 1                  | 2                  |

During the first few days of school, when students reported being unable to board buses due to overcrowding in the morning, LAVTA staff approved two additional AM buses – one bus is a second bus on Route 501, and the second bus is a “sweeper” bus picking up students at three high-ridership stops: Positano, Dublin Ranch, and Central. LAVTA has also deployed one additional trailer bus in the afternoon to cover Route 502. The following chart represents current resources deployed for the Dublin tripper service:

| Route       | Number of AM buses | Number of PM buses |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 501         | 2                  | 3                  |
| 502         | 1                  | 2                  |
| 503         | 1                  | 1                  |
| 504         | 1                  | 2                  |
| Sweeper Bus | 1                  | 0                  |

Adding overflow buses comes at a cost; peak buses are essentially maxed out. LAVTA’s contractor MV Transportation is having a difficult time hiring and retaining drivers after training, and most school days has to reassign supervisors and managers to drive tripper routes. In three instances, resources have been pulled off mainline routes to operate tripper service, causing ‘missed trips’ for regularly scheduled routes. Because the residential growth in East Dublin is unlikely to ebb in the near future, staff have to develop a pilot solution to accommodate the ridership within existing resources by adding service in the “shoulders” of the bell times; in other words, earlier morning and later afternoon trips that are not perfectly timed with the bell that can be operated using existing tripper buses. Students anxious to get a seat could opt for the early morning bus and those with after-school commitments or meetings would have a late-afternoon option. LAVTA staff is meeting with DUSD staff on 9/27 to discuss the proposal and put together an action plan. Following is a mock schedule with the pilot early/late trips:

**501 AM SERVICE**

|                        |               |                         |                              |                 |       |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Positano/<br>Valentano | Fallon/Antone | Fallon/Silvera<br>Ranch | Gleason/Emerald<br>Glen Park | Hacienda/Dublin | DHS   |
| 6:31A                  | 6:34A         | 6:37A                   | 6:43A                        | 6:47A           | 6:58A |
| 7:08A                  | 7:11A         | 7:14A                   | 7:19A                        | 7:24A           | 7:35A |

**501 PM SERVICE**

|       |                     |                   |                         |               |                        |
|-------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| DHS   | Hacienda/<br>Center | Gleason/Tassajara | Fallon/Silvera<br>Ranch | Fallon/Antone | Positano/<br>Valentano |
| 3:40P | 3:51P               | 3:55P             | 4:01P                   | 4:04P         | 4:07P                  |
| 4:02P | 4:13P               | 4:17P             | 4:23P                   | 4:26P         | 4:29P                  |

Early/late bird service would cost approximately \$30,000 per year to operate (for a full year), and fare revenue received would reduce the operating cost. The pilot service could begin operating in October 2017; after several months of data is collected, a decision could be made in early spring as to whether to continue the service for the 2018/19 school year. The service supplied by LAVTA for the pilot would be a one-time allocation of contingency resources, and would not be considered as a part of Dublin's baseline service hours.

### **Fallon-Wells Diversion**

LAVTA was notified the first week of school regarding the Fallon-Wells diversion of students. LAVTA looked at what it would take to provide a bus route connecting East Dublin that was timed with the Fallon bell schedule, and the resource demand would fall in the peak of the peak period when no additional buses were available and all available resources are being used for DHS routes.

LAVTA staff informed DUSD staff that there were a few options to consider given the late nature of the request: Route 30R operates every 15-minutes along Dublin Blvd connecting east and west Dublin, and Wells MS is located less than a mile (20 minute walk) from a bus stop. Kids who could get to/from Dublin Blvd have an option. Staff also suggested that DUSD look at how to implement first/last mile connections (like a bike share or bike stations) that kids can use to get to/from the 30R line on Dublin Blvd. Staff also identified the DHS tripper routes that provide coverage between east Dublin the Wells MS neighborhood (Route 502). Route 502 is an option because it has a stop very close to Wells; however, in the afternoons, Route 502 fills up at DHS and students at Wells were unable to board. LAVTA staff have since worked with operations to ensure that there was space for up to 5 students at Wells to board in the afternoon.

### **DUSD Service Plan**

Given that the growth in DUSD students and associated tripper ridership is likely to continue, staff is proposing to conduct mini-service plan for DUSD which would include community input and the development of recommendations to be implemented in the 2018/19 school year. The study, which has been proposed to DUSD staff as a joint-funding opportunity, could be multi-modal in nature looking at not only transit, but also walking and biking, and could include more creative ways to provide service for students living in the east going to school in the west. Staff would like to release an RFP/Q for the study by the end of the October, so that recommendations can be finalized in spring 2018.

### **Next Steps**

Staff will be meeting with DUSD on Wednesday 9/27. Staff can return to the Committee in October with an update.

### **Recommendation**

None – information only.