



# mobility forward

Tri-Valley  
Paratransit Study

## Final Report

January 2019



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# Executive Summary

## STUDY INTRODUCTION

This study was developed as a partnership between Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA, also known as “Wheels”) and the City of Pleasanton to explore the effectiveness of the current organization, management and delivery of paratransit service in the Tri-Valley. Nelson\Nygaard was hired to work with the City of Pleasanton and LAVTA in 2016 to conduct the study, and to prepare recommendations for service improvements.

Since the report has taken over two years to complete, it should be noted that the information contained herein was valid at the time that the data was produced. Besides inevitable changes in service usage and productivity etc., there have also been some minor policy and operational changes that have occurred since the relevant report chapter was written, and therefore may not reflect the most current conditions.

The service options presented in this report focus on key objectives of this study:

- Identify near-term service changes to improve paratransit options for populations of older adults and people with disabilities in the Tri-Valley
- Develop cost-effective strategies that focus on making paratransit more efficient and responsive to local needs
- Develop approaches that will ensure ADA paratransit is compliant with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements
- Consider service options in support of expanding needs and the growing population of older adults

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Tri-Valley is home to approximately 200,000 people in Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton and unincorporated areas. It has suburban character in both population density and distribution of land uses, with pockets of higher density in each city.

The Tri-Valley area skews slightly younger than Alameda County as a whole, especially in Dublin, but is about average for the Bay Area. The prevalence of disability varies by age in the region, with 5% as high in Livermore for people under 65, and nearly 40% of people over 65 reporting to have at least one disability.

Employment centers are most dense around the I-580 and I-680 interchange, near the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station, and the Hacienda Business Park in Pleasanton. The Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore is the largest employer in the Tri-Valley, but this is not a common destination for residents with disabilities. Eligible users are more likely to request paratransit trips for medical services, shopping and other non-work programs.

## PARATRANSIT SERVICES TODAY

Wheels Dial-A-Ride is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit system that operates throughout the Wheels service area.

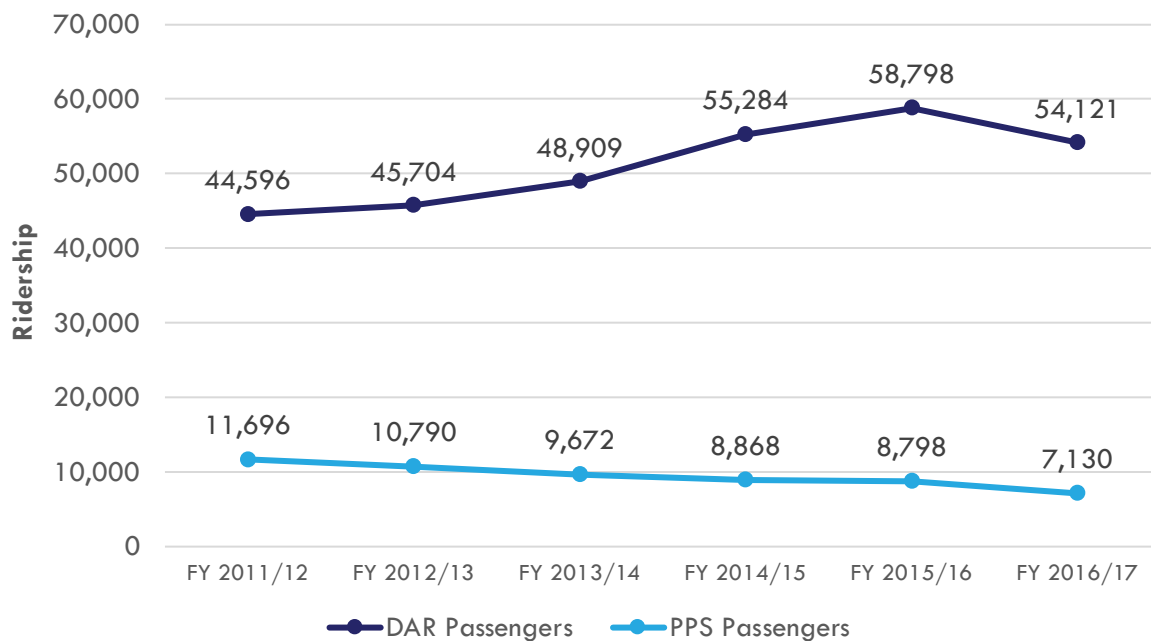
LAVTA operates a fixed-route transit system within 40 square miles in the Tri-Valley. Pleasanton Paratransit Services (PPS) also provides a stand-alone paratransit service to people with disabilities and

older adults in Pleasanton and Sunol. Together, Wheels Dial-a-Ride and Pleasanton Paratransit Service (PPS) provide an array of transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities. Figure ES-1 provides an overview of the service characteristics of each agency. Figure ES-2 shows the scale of the operations by looking at ridership over the past six fiscal cycles.

**Figure ES-1 Tri-Valley Public Paratransit Operations at a Glance**

Pleasanton Paratransit	Wheels Dial-A-Ride
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ADA and adults 70+</li> <li>▪ 8:15 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Weekdays</li> <li>▪ City employees provide service</li> <li>▪ Only city-based program in county providing ADA paratransit service</li> <li>▪ Does not offer same-day service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ADA only</li> <li>▪ 4:30 a.m. – 1:30 a.m. every day (Wheels Dial-A-Ride operates during the same days and hours as the Wheels fixed-route service)</li> <li>▪ Contracted to private mobility manager</li> <li>▪ Goes beyond the ¾-mile ADA-service mandate</li> <li>▪ Offers same-day Para-Taxi service</li> </ul>

**Figure ES-2 Wheels Dial-A-Ride (DAR) vs. Pleasanton Paratransit Service Ridership**



## OUTREACH

Despite overall satisfaction with paratransit services, specific recommendations for improvements that came out of a stakeholder survey included: making it easier to travel long distances and to locations outside of the Tri-Valley area, increasing the number of accessible taxis for people using wheelchairs, improving the information available about services and making it less confusing to have two separate ADA paratransit services.

Project stakeholders involved in the LAVTA or Pleasanton Paratransit system echoed the same topics as the survey respondents, but added that they were interested in finding creative solutions to make the



programs more sustainable for the operators and for the public – finding lower cost options and shorter travel times.

Community meetings added concerns about using transportation network companies (TNCs, such as Lyft and Uber) in the future because of having to deal with new drivers on each trip, but stressed that same day service is very important.

## RIDERSHIP FORECAST

The number of seniors and people with disabilities in the Tri-Valley is growing and is projected to continue to grow. Changes by LAVTA and Pleasanton to eligibility, fares, and service parameters will impact ridership, as will the accessibility and availability of new transportation options in coming years.

A second finding is that younger paratransit registrants take a greater proportion of trips per capita than older registrants. It remains to be seen how great an impact future changes to transportation options will impact the number of rides taken, but as younger generations age, familiarity and comfort with mobile devices will make riding easier.

## PEER REVIEW

Six transit agencies in California with paratransit characteristics similar in geography and operating characteristics, or with innovative service delivery were reviewed through looking at relevant documents and interviews. The following takeaways were:

- Providing free fixed-route transit service to ADA-eligible customers can decrease paratransit demand and service costs
- Travel training is an effective tool to increase ADA-eligible customer use of fixed-route transit and other alternatives to paratransit
- Robust data collection can lead to more cost-efficient service delivery
- Good customer service is as important as the transportation service itself
- In-person outreach is an effective marketing strategy
- Same-day paratransit service is difficult and expensive to provide
- Strategies for reducing no-shows are of great importance to agencies

For the Tri-Valley, the ideas worth considering included:

- Creating a robust mobility management system
- Diversifying outreach programs
- Implementing travel training
- Offering free rides on fixed route service for ADA eligible residents
- Offering subsidies for more taxi voucher use
- Incorporating functional assessments as part of in-person eligibility

## KEY FINDINGS

Key findings reflect the culmination of comprehensive quantitative analysis and outreach. The findings identified included:

- Both Wheels and PPS staff are dedicated to providing quality service
- The two-system operating environment brings some complexity in consistency of services and policies for consumers
- Ridership increases are putting pressure on Wheels while PPS is losing riders
- Both paratransit providers limit subscription service
- Some vulnerabilities and challenges exist with regard to ADA compliance
- For ADA-eligible consumers, opportunities exist to enhance the effectiveness of the ADA paratransit eligibility screening process
- Challenges exist related to interagency transfers for regional trips
- Wheels Para-Taxi service is a welcome service, but accessible same day service is currently limited
- PPS faces challenges with regard to driver retention
- PPS operating costs exceed industry standards
- PPS does not have policies to enforce responsible ridership
- PPS intakes and driver manifests are completed manually

## RECOMMENDATIONS

After alternatives were presented based on the key findings another round of outreach resulted in recommendations that impact both agencies, and some that are unique to each agency. The primary service strategies include:

### Joint Effort

Transfer ADA mandated service-based transportation from the City of Pleasanton to LAVTA. This will allow Pleasanton Paratransit Services to return to its core mission of serving senior residents with a recreation-based model, and direct the residents to LAVTA as the sole ADA provider, which should be easier to understand. This change would mean Pleasanton no longer needs to be compliant with ADA paratransit requirements, but also that Sunol would lose all paratransit service.

### Pleasanton Paratransit Services

Implement policy and service changes for Pleasanton Paratransit Service as a City-Based program for older adults

1. Reorganize employees to run the program more efficiently
2. Contract paratransit services with a private transportation company to reduce expenses and operate more effectively
3. Maintain demand-response program
4. Reallocate resources to special group trips and taxi voucher programs to better serve residents
5. Monitor performance metrics or refine the methodology to get a clearer picture of service being provided
6. Develop and enforce a cancellation/no-show policy to reduce late cancel and no-show rates

7. Revise scheduling practices to reduce driver turnover

## **Wheels Dial-A-Ride**

Implementing policy and service changes for Wheels Dial-A-Ride includes:

1. Administrative improvements
  - a. Contract monitoring and enforcing performance standards
  - b. Exploring new technology that will help improve performance and reduce labor hours
2. Service delivery changes
  - a. Enhance the ADA paratransit eligibility screening process
  - b. Consider reducing service area/service hours, or charging premium fares outside the required area
  - c. Expand subscription service to reduce the call volumes of people reserving individual trips
  - d. Increase the availability of same-day accessible vehicles for the ParaTaxi program
3. Data collection and monitoring
  - a. Decide on a consistent approach from year to year
  - b. Monitor and report para-taxi data for planning purposes

## **Regional Efforts**

Implement a Tri-Valley Coordinated Transit Strategy for Older Adults and People with Disabilities.

1. Short Term
  - a. Initiate cost-sharing activities with regional centers and dialysis clinics
  - b. Implement a transit orientation program, which is less formal than travel training
  - c. Explore the feasibility of a joint older driver cessation program
  - d. Share scheduling and dispatch platforms. Both systems already use Trapeze
  - e. Develop coordinated information delivered to the public
  - f. Advocate for more equitable Measure B/BB funding allocation to East County to rectify that LAVTA does not receive funding in a similar manner as East Bay Paratransit, the primary ADA paratransit program in Alameda County
2. Longer-Term Strategies
  - a. Explore mobility management options, including mobility as a service (MaaS), which serves to improve customer ease of use and to ensure rides are the most cost-effective mode for any given specific trip.



# 1 Introduction

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## SERVICE OVERVIEW

The Tri-Valley Area offers a wide range of transportation options for seniors and people with disabilities. In addition to fixed-route transit, riders have access to ADA-mandated paratransit, city-based paratransit programs, and private providers like taxis and Transportation Network Companies (TNCs).

## PLAN PROCESS AND REPORT STRUCTURE

This report documents comprehensive qualitative and quantitative analysis conducted by the Nelson\Nygaard consulting team, and the recommendations that resulted from this analysis. The study began with a review of relevant planning studies and implemented projects. A summary of the documents reviewed can be found in **Appendix A: Literature Review**. The rest of the report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 Existing Conditions.** An assessment of regional demographic trends and their impacts on mobility needs.
- Chapter 3 Transportation Services.** Existing transportation services were documented to help paint a picture of what options are available to the target population in the Tri-Valley.
- Chapter 4 Outreach.** Outreach took place in many formats and involved a variety of stakeholders over the course of the project. A summary of outreach activities is provided in Chapter 4, with detailed results of an online and paper survey in **Appendix B**.

**Chapter 5 Ridership Forecast.** This chapter provides a forecast of potential ridership on both LAVTA and PPS provided services; details regarding forecast methodology and outcomes may be found in **Appendix C**.

**Chapter 6 Peer Review.** A peer review was conducted to provide lessons learned from paratransit coordination projects in the region and in other locations in the US. More detail is provided in **Appendix D**.

**Chapter 7 Key Findings.** Key findings derived from all the previous chapters.

**Chapter 8 Recommendations.** Strategy recommendations based on the Key Findings in Chapter 7.

**Chapter 9. Implementation Plan.** A suggested approach for implementation of the Plan's recommendations.

It should be noted that the information contained in this report was true as of January 2018, and does not reflect changes that may have occurred since that time.

## 2 Existing Conditions

This chapter provides an overview of demographics of the region. Potential ridership growth based on these demographics and other factors are described in Chapter 5.

The combined paratransit service area for Wheels Dial-A-Ride and Pleasanton Paratransit Service covers more than 40 square miles and consists of the jurisdictions of Dublin (pop. 59,583), Livermore (pop. 89,115), and Pleasanton (pop. 82,270), as well as the unincorporated community of Sunol with fewer than 1,000 residents. The area is commonly known as the Tri-Valley.

The cities in the Tri-Valley continue to grow, transitioning from a mostly agricultural area into largely low-density, mostly affluent suburban development. Median household incomes for all three cities exceed \$100,000, and the percentage of residents in poverty, based on federal standards alone, are 5.7% in Livermore, and just over 4% in Dublin and Pleasanton.

Dublin, in particular, which incorporated as a city in 1982, is identified as one of the fastest growing cities in California. High population growth in the area led to rapid development into many undeveloped areas. In 2000 voters passed Measure D. It established growth boundaries around the three cities and limited development in unincorporated areas.

Population and employment density are primary considerations in determining transit ridership for both fixed routes and paratransit service. Although a majority of riders are not traveling to employment destinations for jobs, understanding where employment destinations are concentrated is useful in determining where riders are traveling for goods and services. Data is available from Wheels and the City of Pleasanton that highlights where trips are being taken throughout the Tri-Valley. Paratransit riders also make trips outside of the Tri-Valley, and transfer agreements with the other regional paratransit providers have been established to facilitate travel.

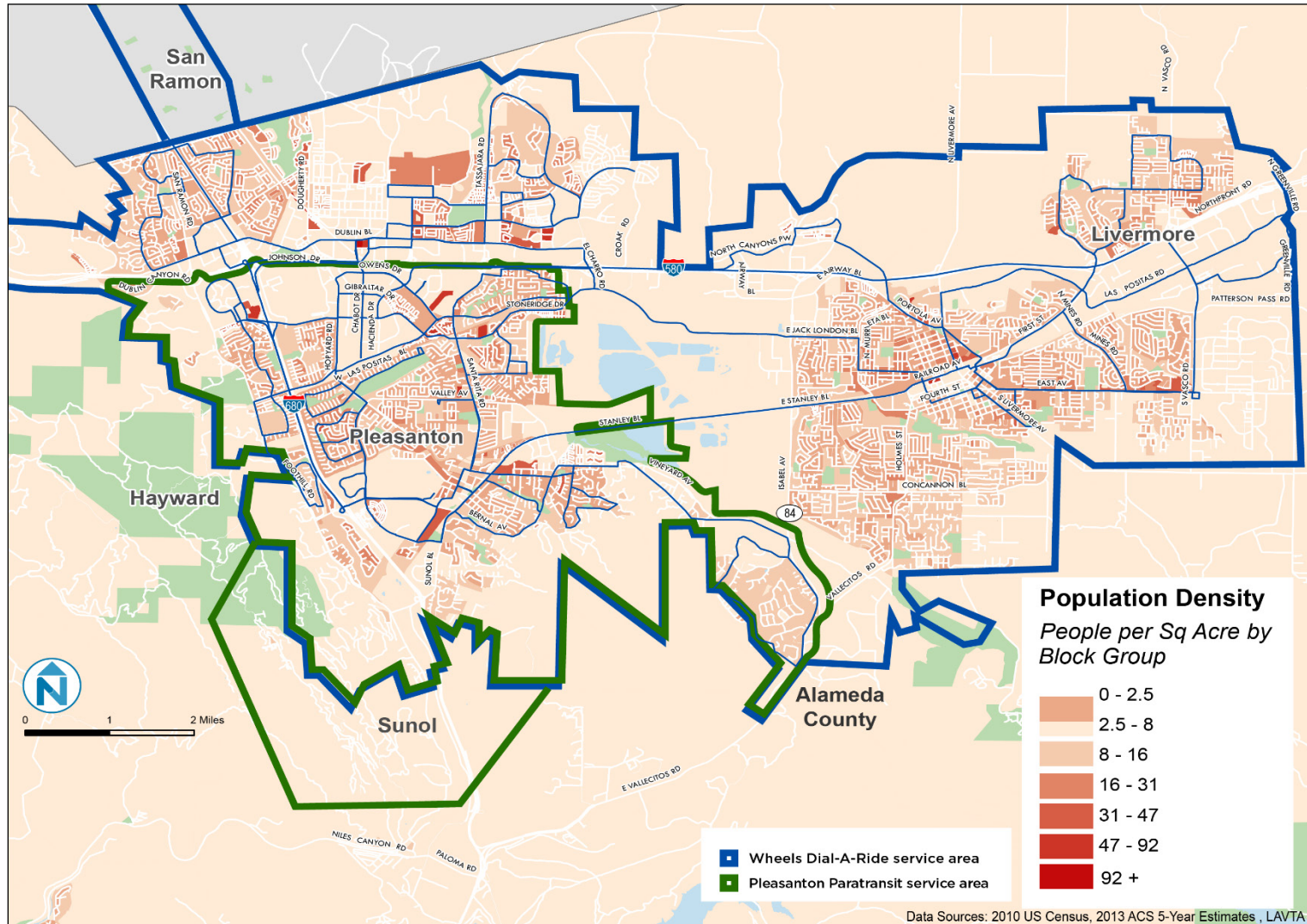
### POPULATION DENSITIES

#### Overall Population

The Tri-Valley encompasses large areas of relatively low-density development surrounding Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton. The three cities have similar residential densities, ranging from 2,896 people per square mile in Pleasanton to 3,216 people per square mile in Livermore: densities that would generally be classified as suburban in character. However, density is not evenly distributed throughout the communities: some areas are sparsely populated, especially in outlying agricultural areas between Livermore and Pleasanton. In some portions of Dublin and Pleasanton, the population density exceeds 31 people per acre, usually in areas with apartments or townhouses (Figure 2-1).



**Figure 2-1 Population Density**





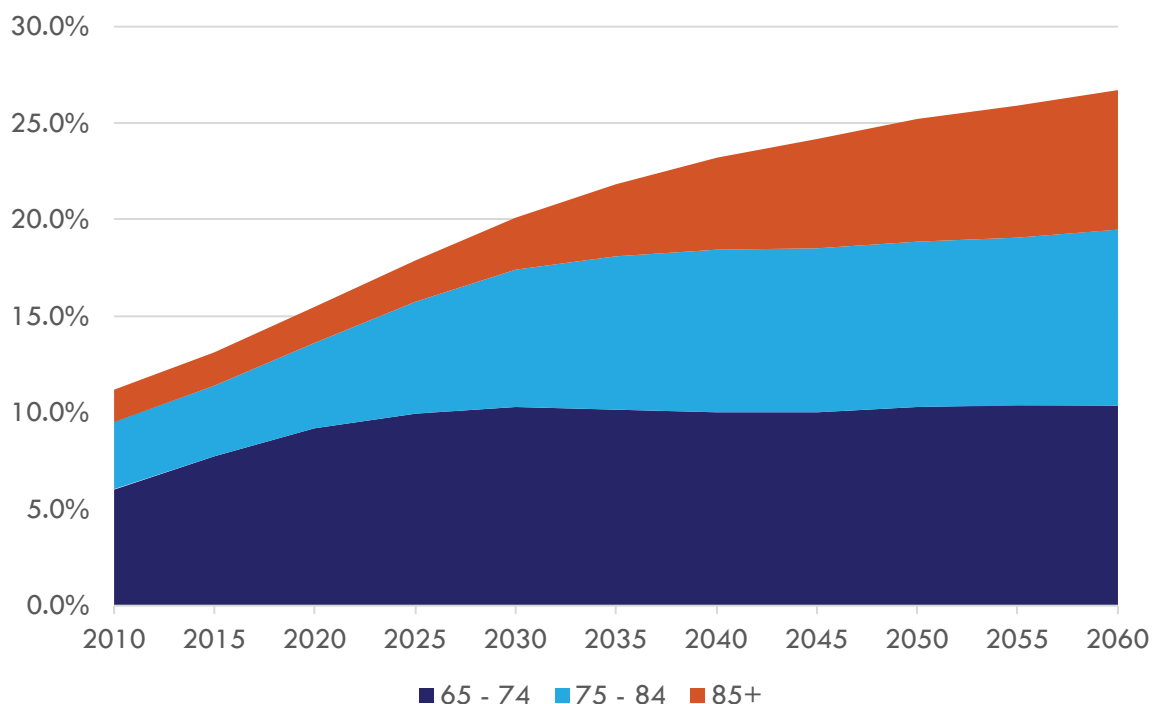
## People with Disabilities

Due to limitations on data showing the distribution of people with disabilities, this measure is not mapped as part of this report. In Dublin, 3.9% of residents under 65 years old have a disability, compared to 5% of Livermore residents and 3.7% of Pleasanton residents. US Census data shows that older adults (65 years and older) have higher rates of disability, with as many as 25% of younger older adults (65 to 74) having at least one disability. Overall, nearly 40% of people over 65 report having at least one disability. As a result, older adult data is used as a surrogate for measuring disability trends.

## Older Adults

The population of older adults will continue to grow in the Tri-Valley. Older adults currently represent about 13% of the total population in Alameda County, but by 2060, this population is expected to account for 27% of residents in the county (Figure 2-2). The proportion of older adults living in the Tri-Valley is slightly lower than the county as a whole.

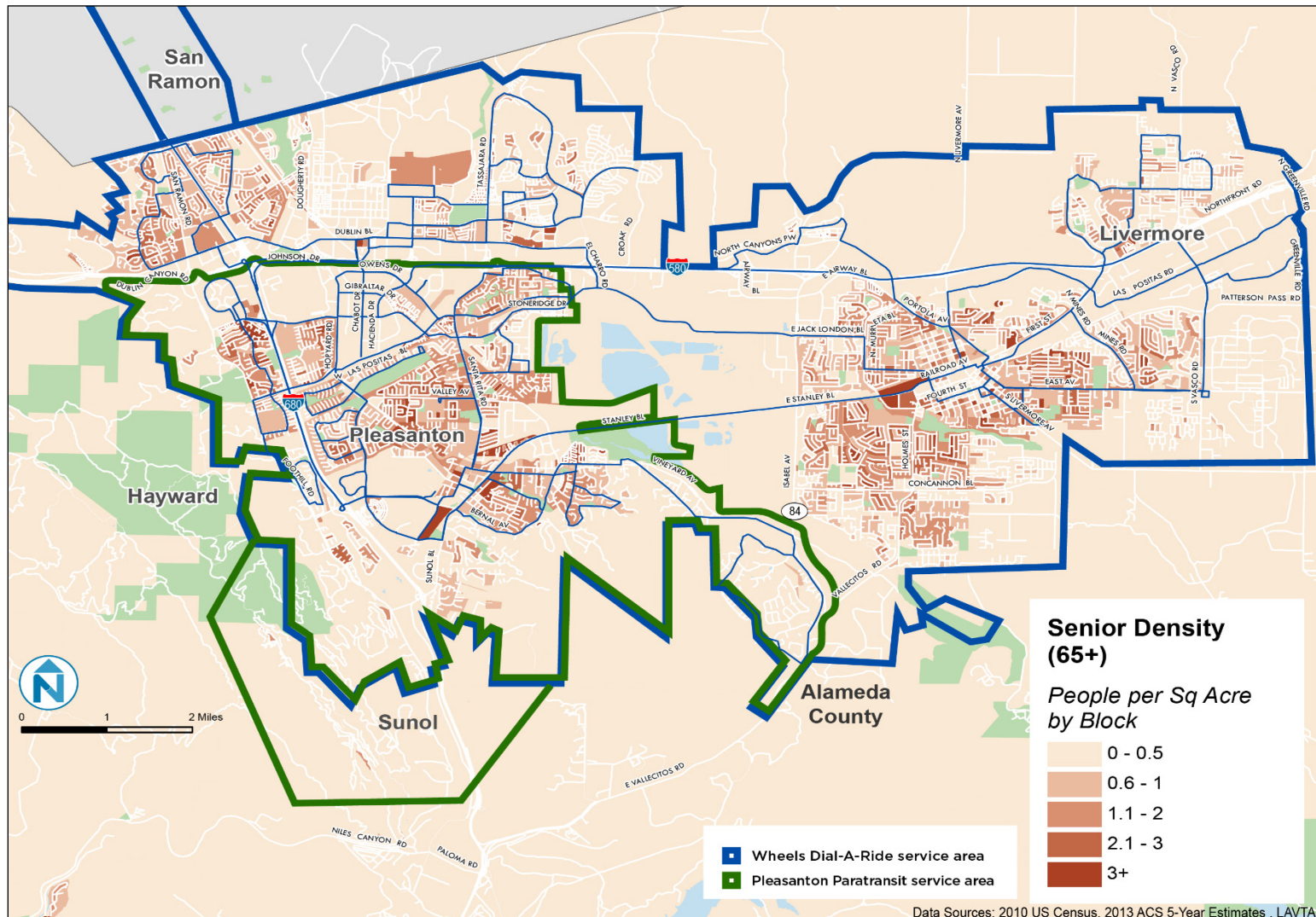
**Figure 2-2 Population 65+ Projected as a Proportion of Total Population in Alameda County**



Source: California Department of Finance

Livermore and Pleasanton have populations of older adults (people age 65 and older) that total about 10.3% and 11% respectively, of their total populations, which is about average for the Bay Area. Dublin's proportion of older adults is lower, at 7.3%. As shown in Figure 2-3, seniors are somewhat evenly dispersed throughout the Tri-Valley area, with the exception of one census tract in central Livermore, south of downtown and in the older Sunset East neighborhood, where between 15 and 20% of the residents are older adults, a slightly higher density of older adults than the rest of the Tri-Valley area.

Figure 2-3 Density of Older Adult Populations



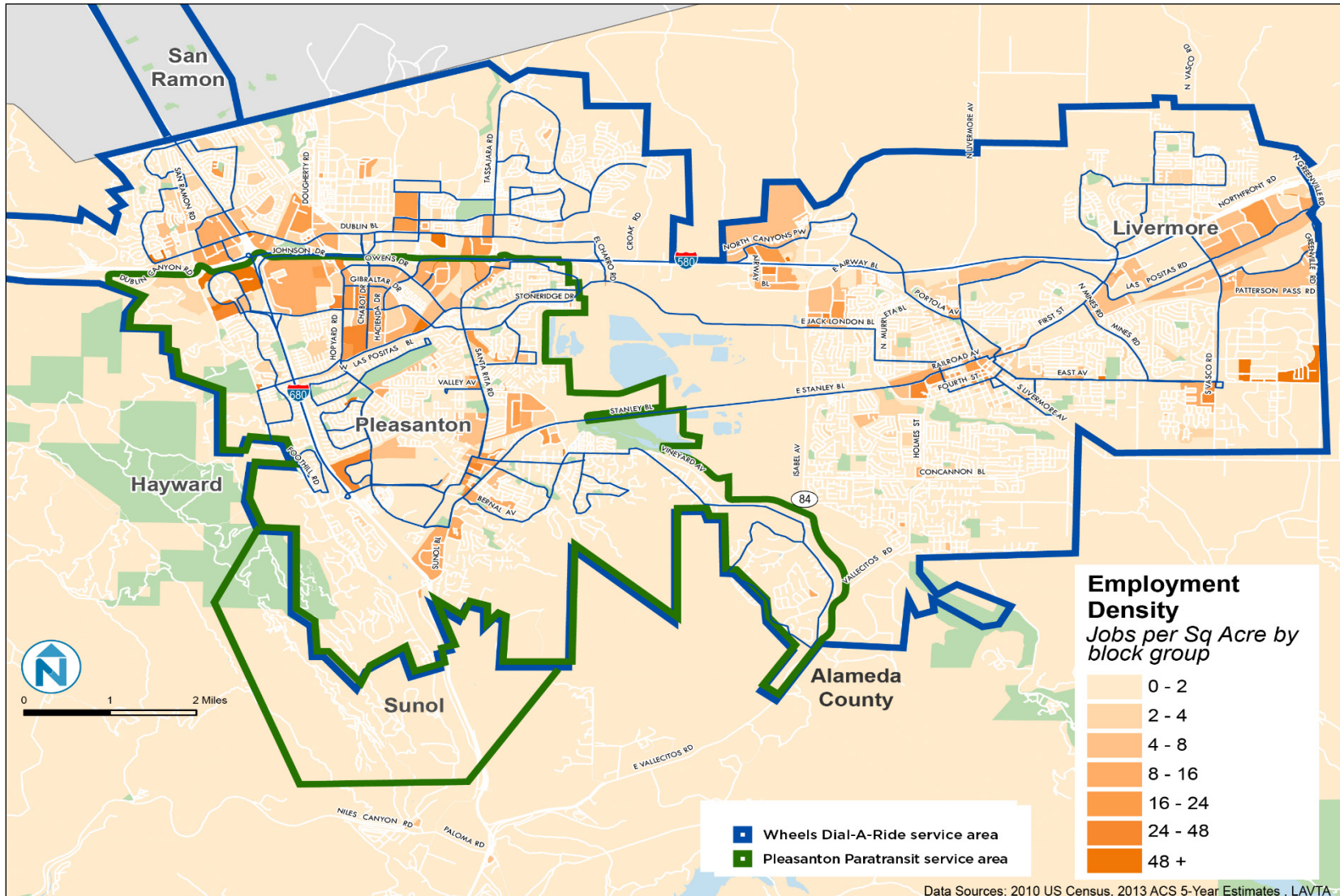
## Employment Density

It is important to understand where major concentrations of employers are located in the Tri-Valley because these are often paratransit rider destinations for medical services, shopping, and other programs. In addition, according to Wheels Dial-a-Ride and Pleasanton Paratransit Service, some people with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities, are frequent users of paratransit for travel to day programs or worksites.

Figure 2-4 illustrates the density of worksites throughout the Tri-Valley by showing employment densities. Most of these jobs are centered around the intersection of Interstates 580 and 680, close to the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station and in Hacienda, a business park. In this area, some jobsites include more than 24 employees per acre (more than 15,000 employees per square mile).

High job densities in Livermore include downtown and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the largest employer in the Tri-Valley.

**Figure 2-4 Employment Density**





## 3 Transportation Services

### FIXED-ROUTE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Public transit service within the Tri-Valley is primarily provided by the Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA), but other services operate to and through the Tri-Valley. These agencies include:

- Altamont Corridor Express (ACE Rail)
- San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)
- County Connection

With the exception of ACE Rail, each system also offers a complementary ADA paratransit service. These services are detailed in Figure 3-1 and described below.

**Wheels/LAVTA.** The Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority began service in eastern Alameda County in 1986. It is Alameda County's primary transit provider in the Tri-Valley area. The system serves the cities of Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton with 14 local, express, and rapid bus routes. Wheels Dial-A-Ride is an ADA paratransit service available to people with disabilities throughout Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton whenever fixed-route service is operating, described in detail in this chapter.

**ACE Altamont Corridor Express.** ACE Rail has been providing commuter rail service from Stockton to San Jose since 1998. The system's single line serves the Tri-Valley with three stations at Vasco Road, downtown Livermore, and downtown Pleasanton. Service is predominantly funded by a half-cent sales tax in San Joaquin County and the system is owned and operated by the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission.<sup>1</sup> There is no ADA paratransit complement for ACE Rail, as the system is considered a commuter rail line, which does not require complementary paratransit service under the ADA.

**Bay Area Rapid Transit.** The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system began operation in 1972 but did not begin serving the Tri-Valley until 1997 with the opening of its Dublin/Pleasanton Station. In 2011, a second Tri-Valley station was opened as an infill station, known as the West Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station. Both of these stations can be accessed through an on-site park-and-ride lot and through numerous County Connection and Wheels bus routes. BART complements its service with East Bay Paratransit, which it funds in partnership with AC Transit.

**County Connection.** County Connection was established in 1980 as a fixed-route bus service, primarily serving Contra Costa County. The system serves the Contra Costa County section of the Tri-Valley area as well as the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station and the ACE Rail station in Pleasanton. County Connection also provides LINK paratransit service, which operates at similar times and in similar areas as the existing fixed-route service.

In addition, other regional bus providers operate into the Wheels service area, including Modesto Area Express and the San Joaquin Regional Transit District.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.acerail.com/About/History-of-ACE>

**Figure 3-1 Fixed-Route Transit Agencies Operating To/From or Within the Tri-Valley and their Paratransit Complements**

Fixed-Route Transit Agency	Mode	Service Area	ADA-Mandated Paratransit Provider
ACE Altamont Corridor Express	Rail	Stockton to San Jose, with intermediate stops in Manteca, Tracy, Livermore, Pleasanton, Fremont, and Santa Clara.	None
BART	Rail	Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties	East Bay Paratransit (in coordination with AC Transit)
County Connection	Bus	Eastern Contra Costa County and eastern Alameda County	County Connection LINK paratransit service
Wheels (Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority)	Bus	Cities of Dublin, Pleasanton, and Livermore in Alameda County	Wheels Dial-a-Ride and Pleasanton Paratransit Service (PPS)

## PARATRANSIT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Two providers operate paratransit services within the Tri-Valley. In addition, two providers operate connecting paratransit services to and from the Tri-Valley, which afford transfers for riders. Figure 3-2 offers an overview of the different services.

Figure 3-3 shows the home origins locations for trips taken on both Wheels Dial-A-Ride and PPS.

**Figure 3-2 Paratransit Providers Operating To/From or Within the Tri-Valley**

Agency	Wheels Dial-A-Ride	Pleasanton Paratransit Services	East Bay Paratransit	County Connection LINK
ADA	Yes	Yes and Older Adults (70+)	Yes	Yes
Service Area	Cities of Dublin, Pleasanton, and Livermore in Alameda County	City of Pleasanton and Sunol, with connections to other Tri-Valley and Contra Costa County destinations	Regional: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties	Eastern Contra Costa County with connections to eastern Alameda County
Hours of Operation	4:30 AM – 1:30 AM every day (Wheels Dial-A-Ride operates during the same days and hours as the Wheels fixed-route service)	Weekdays, 8:15 AM – 4:30 PM (no holidays)	Up to 24 hours, depending on service area	Weekdays, 4:30 AM - 11:00 PM Weekends, 7:00 AM - 10:30 PM
Reservations	8:30 AM to 5:00 PM every day	Weekdays, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM (no holidays)	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM every day	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM every day
ADA Paratransit Fare	\$3.50 (increasing to \$3.75 on January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2019)	Local - \$3.00; Sunol/other unincorporated - \$3.50 Beyond local service area: \$3.50- \$4.00	\$4.00 – up to 12 miles \$6.00 – 12-20 miles \$7.00 – 20+ miles	\$4.00
FY 2016 Ridership	56,623	8,798	731,299	156,832

As required by the ADA, all paratransit services at a minimum provide eligible registrants service within  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile of a fixed-route public transportation system that is comparable to the area's fixed route service. The fares of a mandated paratransit service may not exceed twice the regular fare of the parallel fixed-route system. The service must also be available during the same hours and days that the fixed-route service is available.

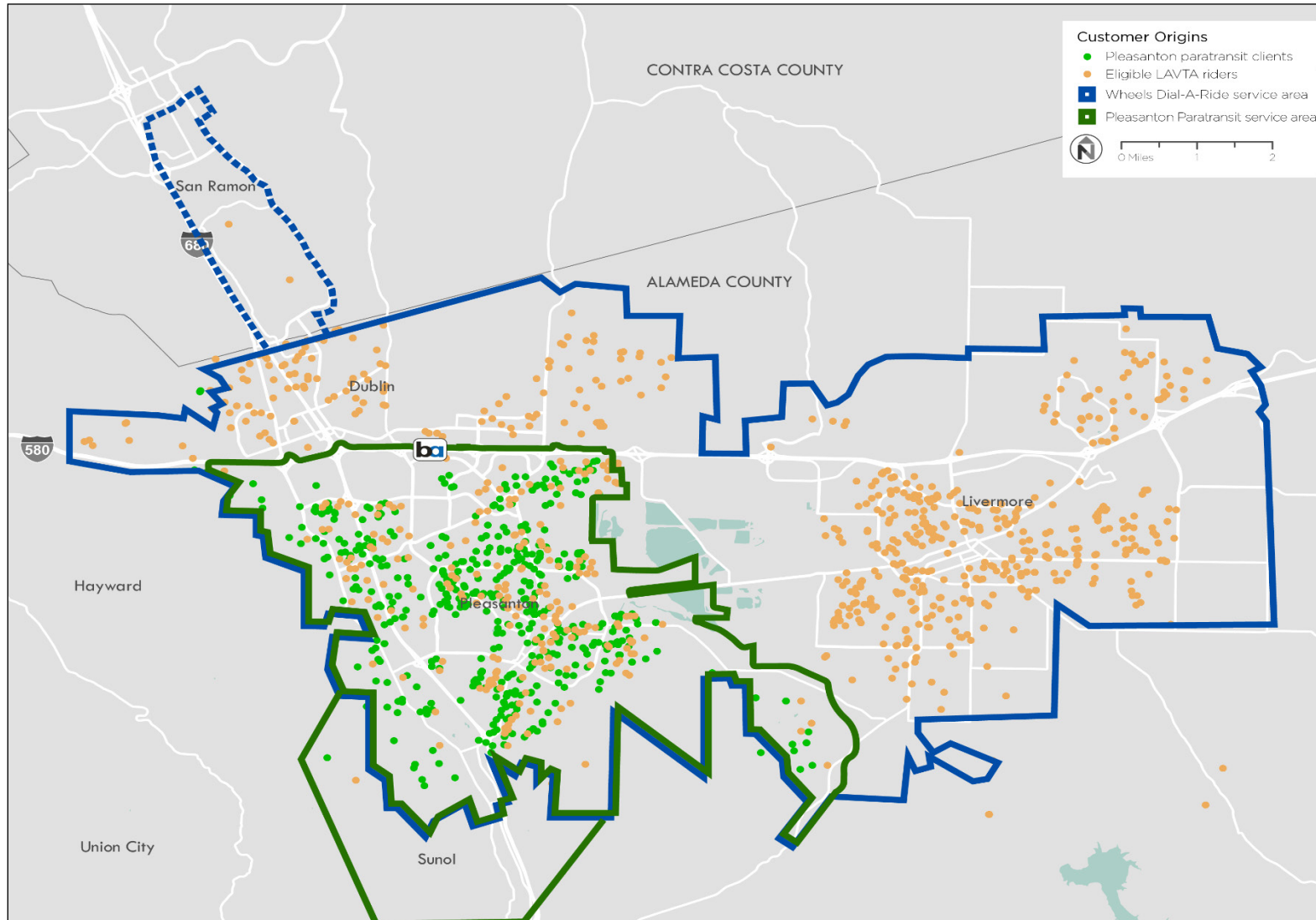
There is some overlap, and some limitations of how far a person can travel on each system. East Bay Paratransit operates in the AC Transit and BART service areas, Wheels Dial-A-Ride operates in the Wheels service area, and LINK operates in the County Connection service area.

As of September 2017, Wheels had 1,271 people eligible to use paratransit services, all of whom were eligible under ADA guidelines. Of those, 416, or 32.7% lived in Pleasanton and were eligible to take trips on Pleasanton Paratransit Service.

Pleasanton Paratransit Service had a total of 956 registrants of which only 63 (6.6%) were under the age of 70. Approximately 160 Pleasanton residents were ADA-certified. The remainder were eligible to ride solely based on age.



Figure 3-3 Home Origins for Wheels Dial-A-Ride and Pleasanton Paratransit Service Trips



## WHEELS DIAL-A-RIDE

Wheels Dial-A-Ride is an ADA-mandated paratransit service. The service provides eligible riders with a door-to-door transportation option throughout Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton and the surrounding unincorporated areas of Alameda County whenever Wheels fixed-route service is operating.

Programs offered include:

- **Wheels Dial-A-Ride:** The general paratransit program, which offers services that exceed ADA requirements, providing service throughout the general Wheels service area, regardless of whether the trip's origin or destination is within  $\frac{3}{4}$  -mile of a fixed route.
- **Same-day Para-Taxi:** A supplementation paratransit option for ambulatory riders (and limited availability for non-ambulatory riders) which provides individual, same-day, and direct paratransit rides for eligible riders.

Figure 3-4 shows the ADA service area for Wheels and also illustrates adjacent transit providers.

## Fares

Wheels Dial-A-Ride costs its riders \$3.50 per ride. Interagency transfers *from* County Connection LINK or East Bay Paratransit are free (riders are not charged for the transfer). Riders are charged for outbound trips involving a transfer to East Bay Paratransit, but not to County Connection.

The Wheels Para-Taxi program reimburses riders for 85% of a ride that does not exceed \$20, and allows up to \$200 per month in reimbursements.<sup>2</sup> Riders pay the full fare up front, and submit receipts for reimbursement from Wheels.

## Eligibility

Wheels Dial-A-Ride riders must be a resident of Dublin, Livermore or Pleasanton, with a disability and certification to use ADA service.

Approximately 1,270 individuals are registered in the Wheels Dial-A-Ride database, including nearly 160 who are also registered for Pleasanton Paratransit Service.

To determine eligibility, applications are reviewed and the Wheels paratransit planner makes a recommendation for an in-person interview (Wheels adopted this eligibility model in October 2016). Prior to that date, contractor staff (MTM) were responsible for eligibility screening, but this has currently transitioned to LAVTA staff, who are considering other options for this function.

Although LAVTA does find a small percentage of registrants conditionally eligible, Wheels does not apply any of these conditions to users who are determined to be conditionally eligible.

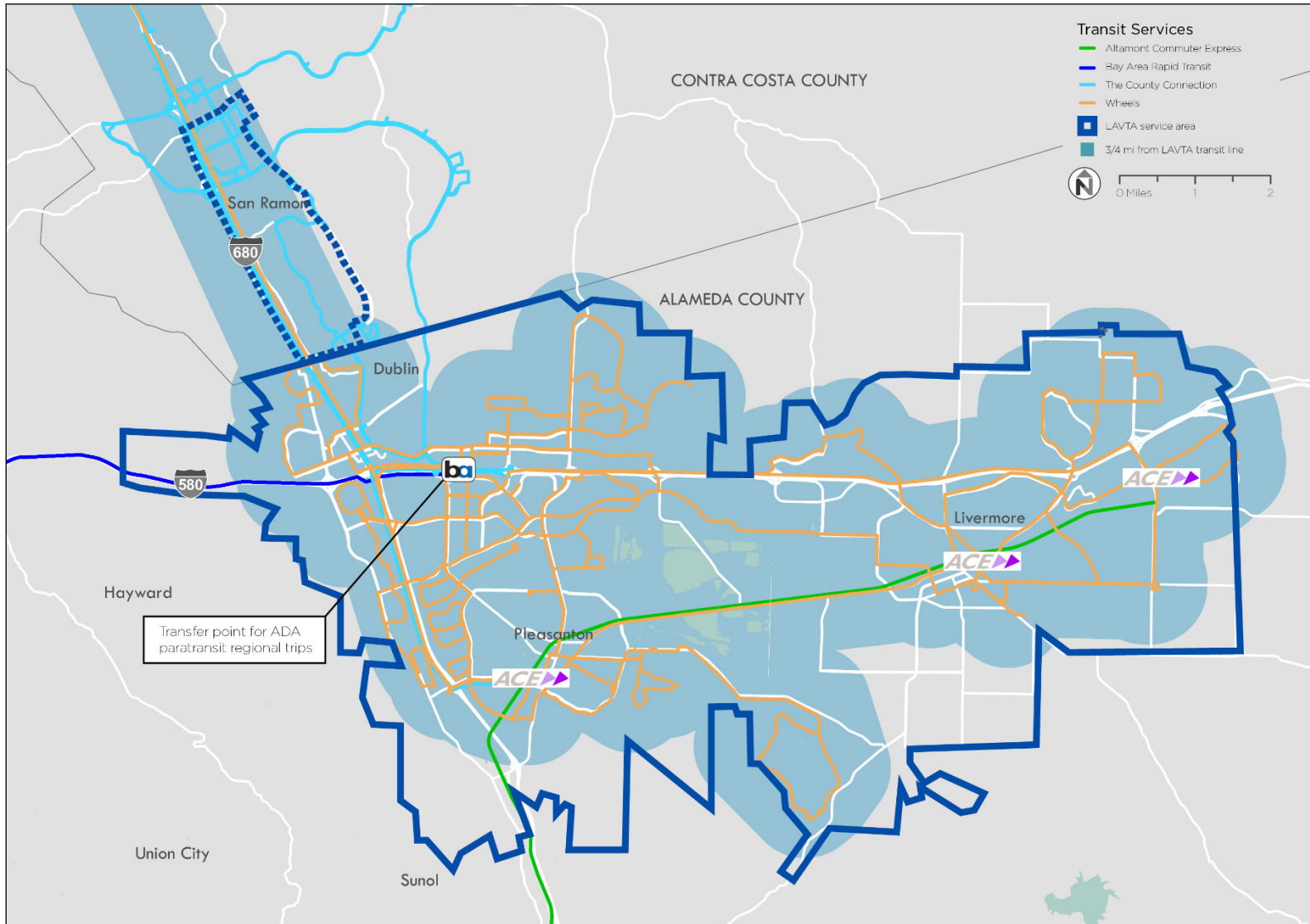
## Hours of Service

Dial-A-Ride operates between the hours of 4:30 a.m. and 1:30 a.m., which are nearly consistent with the hours of the Route 10 R Rapid service.<sup>3</sup> Reservations are accepted from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. every day.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.wheelsbus.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Para-Taxi-Brochure.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> A gap of 8 minutes currently exists between the published fixed-route and paratransit service hours

**Figure 3-4 Mandated ADA boundaries for Wheels Dial-A-Ride Service Compared with Actual Service Area**



## Staffing and Contracting

LAVTA employs a nontraditional mobility management model in the paratransit industry for provision of Wheels Dial-A-Ride service. The agency contracts with a broker, MTM, based in Saint Louis, Missouri, which also has a call center in Virginia. In contrast to the previous broker model that was operated entirely on a remote basis, MTM includes limited staffing on site at the Wheels headquarters. MTM subcontracts with independent contractors — mostly non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) providers — who are responsible for service provision.

MTM's subcontracts with the independent providers are based on a per vehicle hour payment (first pick-up to last drop-off) with no guaranteed number of trips. All drivers must undergo a background check, drug testing, LiveCheck, and vehicle checks.

Two companies pay their drivers hourly wages. These are small companies — one of which has three drivers and one has two. In addition, MTM contracts with three companies that are reimbursed on a trip basis. One uses sedans and the rest use vans, including two large accessible vans.

MTM has employed different transportation contractors since May 2014, and staff report that service quality has improved since the previous paratransit contract ended. Staff also report that drivers drive more carefully because in most cases they are using their own vehicles, and act as representatives of their companies. All contracting companies have backup vehicles. At least some vehicles have cameras onboard.

All drivers must follow MTM protocols, and MTM has tablets in the vehicles for each driver. MTM staff conduct vehicle inspections off-site. In addition, each company conducts its own morning maintenance check a half hour before the first trip.

## Scheduling/Dispatching Function

MTM uses Trapeze Novus TripSpark scheduling software. Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) at call centers throughout the company receive trip requests, and need exact addresses as they are not familiar with the service area. Livermore-based staff check emails throughout the day to make sure addresses are correct, sometimes calling passengers to verify the information. The majority of trips are assigned by Livermore-based staff to the different subcontractors. MTM's Livermore-based staff are also responsible for scheduling, dispatching and coordinating all regional trips.

## Service Provision/Policies

The following is a summary of practices and policies for Wheels Dial-A-Ride services.

### Advanced Reservations and On-Time Window

The service uses a 30-minute pickup window. Drivers wait five minutes for passengers to board; they press a button when the vehicle arrives at the location and this is used in the on-time performance measurement. Reservations can be made up to seven days in advance.

### Advanced Notification Calls

Automated night-before calls are provided (unless consumers request no call) but the service does not provide imminent arrival calls.

## **Late Cancellations/No-Shows**

When riders call in to cancel their rides this information is communicated to Livermore-based staff via email from CSRs in Missouri. Cancelling at least one hour before the trip is considered a same-day cancellation. If the cancellation occurs within one hour of the trip, it is considered a “late cancellation.” Wheels staff become involved in potential sanctions if a rider reaches a certain threshold of no-shows and late cancellations within a month.<sup>4</sup>

## **Subscription Service**

Subscription reservations are available on a limited basis for trips that recur at the same time on the same days to and from the same addresses. Approximately 30% of trips are provided through subscription service. Some individuals reportedly are granted subscription service, but do not use it. There is no minimum on the number of recurring trips required to apply for subscriptions. However, at the time of this report Wheels has a freeze on new subscriptions because the agency has established a policy that these must not exceed 50% at any time during the service day and are endeavoring to limit subscriptions to people with regularly scheduled trips occurring more than one day per week. The ADA has no such requirement unless the agency is struggling with capacity issues and must deny trips. In FY 2016, Wheels Dial-A-Ride subscriptions exceeded 50%.

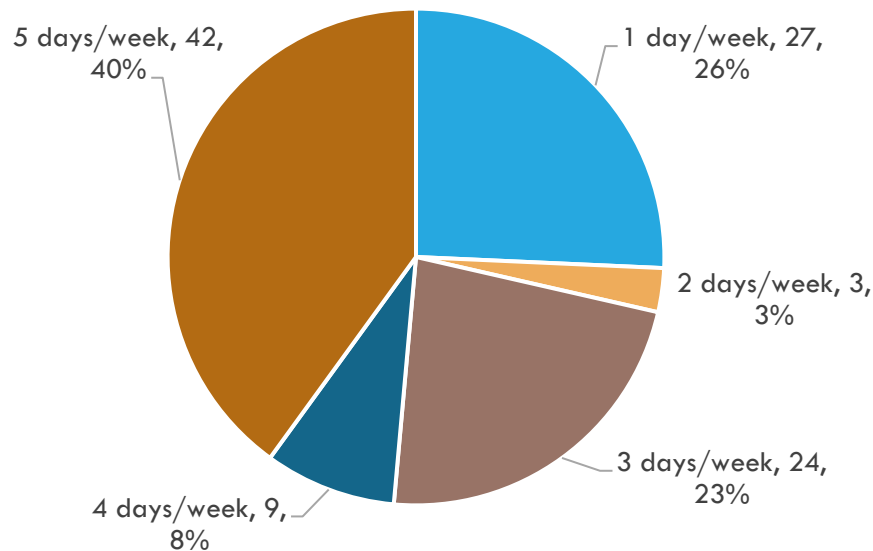
On a weekly basis, 48 individuals are making a total of 351 trips on 105 unique standing orders. The vast majority are making two trips on the days they travel: one in each direction. 82 of the 105 standing orders are for one direction of a round trip. Overall, 84% of trips are part of a round trip, equal to 296 one-way trips per week or 148 round trips.

More than one quarter of subscription trips are for trips made only one day per week; 40% are for trips made 5 days per week. There are no standing orders for 6 or 7 days per week (see Figure 3-5).

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<sup>4</sup> Wheels Dial-A-Ride defines a “missed service” as one the following: (1) a late cancellation, which is a cancellation made less than two hours before the scheduled pick-up time or (2) a no-show, which is a trip for which a patron is not present at the prearranged location and has provided no advanced communication about a schedule change.

**Figure 3-5 Wheels Dial-A-Ride: Number of Weekly Subscription Trips for Registrants with Standing Orders**



### Interagency Service Coordination

Contractor staff used to coordinate with PPS staff to fill gaps in PPS service, or if a Pleasanton resident calls Wheels to request a trip, they are referred to PPS. However, LAVTA staff have recently indicated that this is no longer the case – when a Pleasanton resident calls for a ride they are simply booked on the Wheels service.

When PPS is at capacity or is otherwise unable to provide the trip, Wheels also provides service. In addition, Wheels provides service to Pleasanton residents in the evenings and on weekends when PPS is not operating. According to staff, some people prefer to use Wheels because it operates for a longer service span than PPS, and riders are sometimes uncomfortable using different providers for different legs of their trip.

### Intercounty Service

About 10 regional connections are made daily with East Bay Paratransit, and about three to four with LINK, representing a very small number of trips compared to trips completed locally. Regional trip requests are emailed by East Bay Paratransit, including information regarding desired trip times and whether a personal care attendant (PCA) is needed. This is based on an inter-agency agreement, and applied through the use of a regional transfer form.

For customers beginning their trip with Wheels Dial-A-Ride and Pleasanton Paratransit Service, the passenger must request the transfer and then transit staff will coordinate the transfers between the providers. When Wheels Dial-A-Ride or PPS receives a passenger from East Bay Paratransit or County Connection LINK at the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station, a fare is not collected for the local portion of the trip.

One of the challenges that Wheels and PPS face is that transfer vehicles do not always show up on time. If the East Bay Paratransit vehicle is not waiting at the transfer point, it is the policy of both Tri-Valley transit providers to have their vehicles wait for the



passenger's connecting vehicle to arrive before they depart the station. For transfers inbound (from East Bay Paratransit or LINK), if the regional provider's vehicle arrives more than 5 minutes late, it is the regional provider's responsibility to take the passenger to the destination without a transfer. These "meets" generally do occur within five minutes.

### **Dialysis Trips**

Trips to dialysis clinics represent a challenge for the Wheels program, as is increasingly true for many paratransit programs throughout the country. These trips currently constitute about 9% of all trips, and are often considered some of the more difficult trips to provide because of the time sensitivity for pick-ups and drop-offs, and because many occur in the early morning hours.

### **Quality Assurance and Safety**

MTM provides an annual safety program to all drivers. In addition, staff has contact with all ten drivers daily, and routinely follows the drivers to ensure that they are providing door-to-door level of service.

### **Common Complaints**

Some of the most common complaints heard from riders is that they do not want to share the vehicle with other passengers, they object to the requirement for one hour between pickups (thus preventing "quick" stops at a pharmacy, for example), and failure to take the window into account when calling about late drivers.

## **Performance**

Wheels performance is reviewed in this section. In order to understand longer-term trends, the analysis covers a six-year period between FY 2011/12 and FY 2016/17.

Figure 3-6 presents base data and performance measures, and the discussion on the following pages presents how these metrics have changed over time.

Figure 3-6 Wheels Dial-A-Ride Performance Indicator Trends

	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17
<b>Performance Measures</b>						
<b>Operating Cost (Actual \$)</b>	\$1,397,413	\$1,427,737	\$1,519,910	\$1,717,594	\$1,816,006	\$1,856,395
<i>Annual Change</i>		2.2%	6.5%	13.0%	5.7%	2.2%
<b>Fare Revenue (Actual \$)</b>	\$151,651	\$147,024	\$151,515	\$174,870	\$196,223	\$224,023
<i>Annual Change</i>		-3.1%	3.1%	15.4%	12.2%	14.2%
<b>Vehicle Revenue Hours</b>	29,260	26,827	21,775	27,072	29,859	29,474
<i>Annual Change</i>		-8.3%	-18.8%	24.3%	10.3%	-1.3%
<b>Vehicle Revenue Miles</b>	190,062	199,010	203,627	375,873	421,306	424,072
<i>Annual Change</i>		4.7%	2.3%	84.6%	12.1%	0.7%
<b>Passengers</b>	44,596	45,704	48,909	55,284	58,798	54,121
<i>Annual Change</i>		2.5%	7.0%	13.0%	6.4%	-8.0%
<b>Trips</b>	41,255	41,855	43,731	46,441	54,975	50,433
<i>Annual Change</i>		1.5%	4.5%	6.2%	18.4%	-8.3%
<b>Performance Indicators</b>						
<b>Oper. Cost per Hr. (Actual \$)</b>	\$47.76	\$53.22	\$69.80	\$63.45	\$60.82	\$62.98
<i>Annual Change</i>		11.4%	31.2%	-9.1%	-4.1%	3.6%
<b>Oper. Cost per Psgr. (Actual \$)</b>	\$31.33	\$31.24	\$31.08	\$31.07	\$30.89	\$34.30
<i>Annual Change</i>		-0.3%	-0.5%	0.0%	-0.6%	11.1%
<b>Oper. Cost per Trip (Actual \$)</b>	\$33.87	\$34.11	\$34.76	\$36.98	\$33.03	\$36.81
<i>Annual Change</i>		0.7%	1.9%	6.4%	-10.7%	11.4%
<b>Psgs. per Hour</b>	1.5	1.7	2.2	2.0	2.0	1.8
<i>Annual Change</i>		11.8%	31.8%	-9.1%	-3.6%	-6.8%
<b>Trips per Hour</b>	1.4	1.6	2.0	1.7	1.8	1.7
<i>Annual Change</i>		10.7%	28.7%	-14.6%	7.3%	-7.1%
<b>Psgs. per Mile</b>	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
<i>Annual Change</i>		-2.1%	4.6%	-38.8%	-5.1%	-8.6%
<b>Farebox Recovery (Actual \$)</b>	10.9%	10.3%	10.0%	10.2%	10.8%	12.1%
<i>Annual Change</i>		-5.1%	-3.2%	2.1%	6.1%	11.7%

Source: Wheels

Note that different methodologies were used on different years by Wheels staff to calculate revenue hours which may account for swings in cost per hour, trips per hour, and passengers per hour.

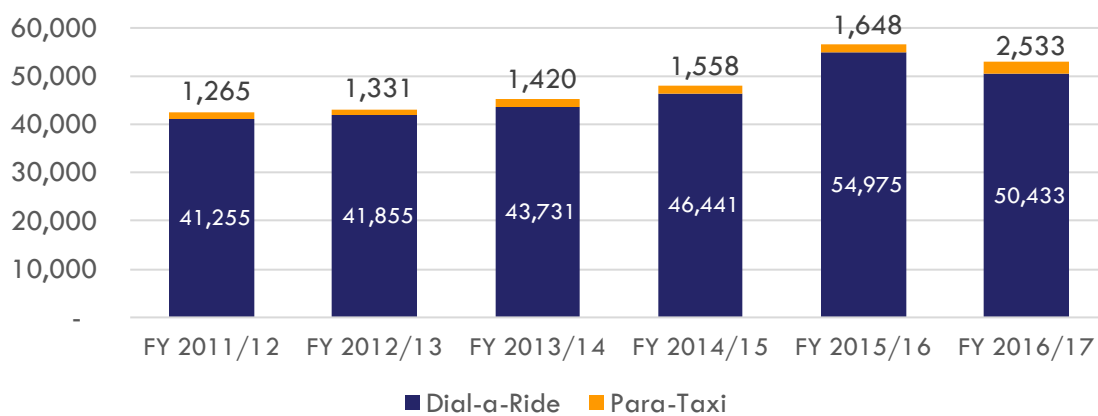


## Ridership

From FY 2011/12 to FY 2014/15, Wheels Dial-A-Ride's ridership steadily increased from 41,255 to 46,441 annual riders. Then, in a single year, system ridership jumped a staggering 18.4%. This anomaly proved to be just that; the following year (between FY 2015/16 and FY 2016/17) ridership dropped 8.3%, back to a more modest increase from FY 2014/15 as Wheels staff sought to contain ridership through in-person assessments, limited subscriptions, and encouraging use of the Para-Taxi service.

Para-Taxi ridership is also included in Figure 3-7, below. Ridership on the service increased by 54% in the last fiscal year. (See page 3-15 for more information on Para-Taxi ridership and costs).

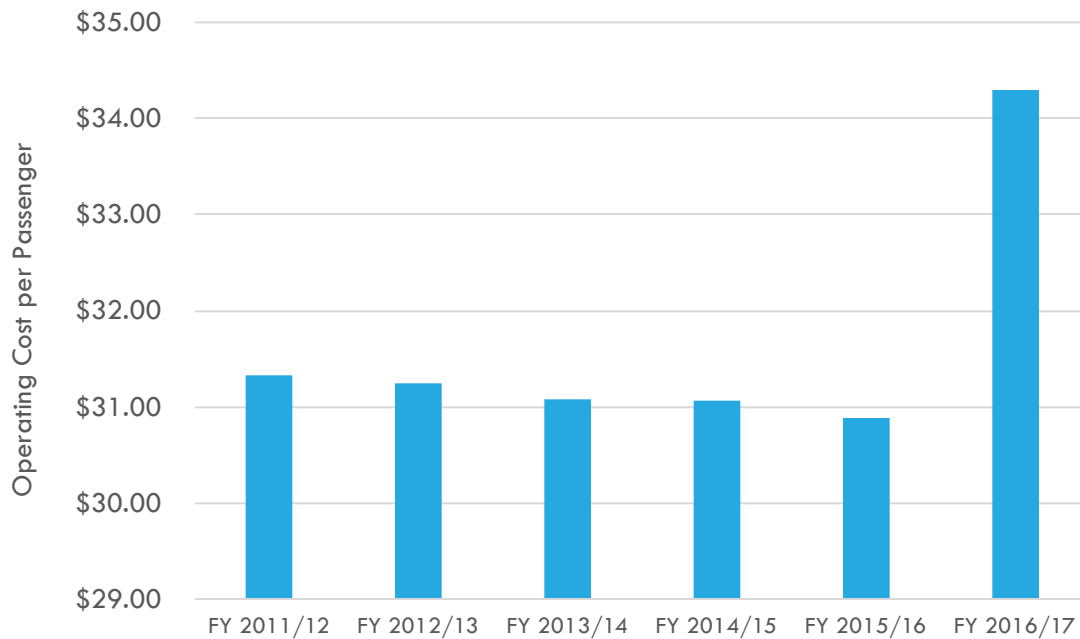
**Figure 3-7 Total Ridership – Wheels Dial-A-Ride and Wheels Para-Taxi**



## Operating Cost per Passenger

Over the past six years, the operating cost per passenger (in actual dollars) on Wheels Dial-A-Ride stayed relatively stable until FY 2016/17, when it increased more than 11% in one year. The 11% jump between FY 2015/16 and FY 2016/17 is the result of a modest increase in total operating costs combined with a larger drop in ridership between those two years. If ridership continues to decline after FY 2016/17, then operating costs per passenger may increase further unless costs can be managed differently.

**Figure 3-8 Operating Cost per Passenger – Wheels Dial-A-Ride**



## Wheels Para-Taxi Service

Wheels Para-Taxi provides a cost-effective alternative to Wheels Dial-A-Ride for select same-day trips. As shown in Figure 3-9, ridership has increased on the service over the past six years, with a jump of nearly 54% in ridership from FY2015/16 to FY 2016./17.

One of the advantages of Wheels Para-Taxi service is the availability of a same-day travel option for individuals who are eligible for ADA paratransit. Another benefit to Wheels is the relatively low cost of these trips. In FY 2016/17, 2,533 trips were taken at a cost to the agency of \$29,660, which is an average of \$11.71 per ride, about one-third of the per-passenger cost for Wheels Dial-A-Ride. Although riders pay nearly 20% of the total fares based on actual receipts, the average fare per rider has been between \$2.80 and \$3.80 over the last three years, making it relatively comparable to Dial-A-Ride fares.

**Figure 3-9 Wheels Para-Taxi Performance Indicators**

	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17
<b>Performance Measures</b>						
<b>Fares Paid by LAVTA (Actual \$)</b>	\$16,348.11	\$15,306.82	\$17,806.76	\$18,322.07	\$19,843.20	\$29,660.12
<i>Annual Change</i>		-6.4%	16.3%	2.9%	8.3%	49.5%
<b>Fares Paid by Riders (Actual \$)</b>	\$7,728.12	\$3,971.53	\$6,637.08	\$5,951.14	\$6,016.90	\$7,115.65
<i>Annual Change</i>		-48.6%	67.1%	-10.3%	1.1%	18.3%
<b>Trips</b>	1,265	1,331	1,420	1,558	1,648	2,533
<i>Annual Change</i>		5.2%	6.7%	9.7%	5.8%	53.7%
<b>Performance Indicators</b>						
<b>Average Total Fare per Trip (Actual \$)</b>	\$12.92	\$11.50	\$12.54	\$11.76	\$12.04	\$11.71
<i>Annual Change</i>		-11.0%	9.0%	-6.2%	2.4%	-2.8%
<b>% of Total Trip Fares Paid by Riders</b>	32.1%	20.6%	27.2%	24.5%	23.3%	19.3%
<i>Annual Change</i>		-35.8%	31.8%	-9.7%	-5.1%	-16.8%
<b>Average Fare Paid per Passenger (after reimbursement)</b>	\$6.11	\$2.98	\$4.67	\$3.82	\$3.65	\$2.81
<i>Annual Change</i>		-51.2%	56.6%	-18.3%	-4.4%	-23.1%

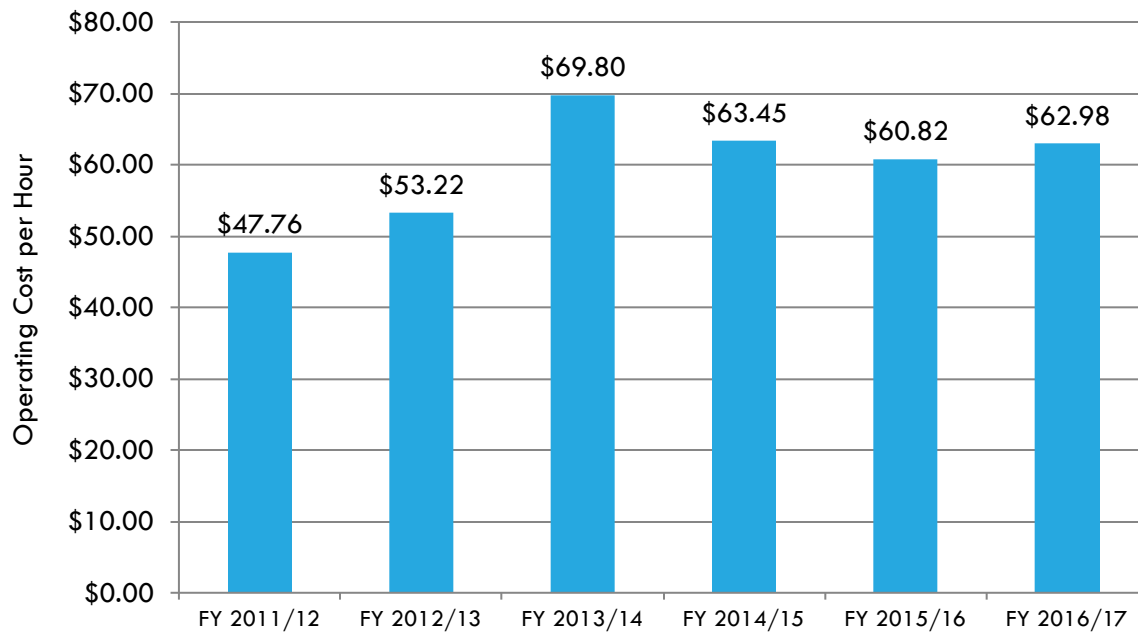


## Operating Cost per Revenue Service Hour

Wheels Dial-A-Ride's operating cost per service hour has remained fairly steady in the past three years, declining from a high of \$69.80 in FY 2013/14 to \$63.45 in FY 2014/15 and then continuing its downward trend the following year. Operating cost per hour increased 3.6% between FY 2015/16 and FY 2016/17.

Between FY 2012/13 and FY 2013/14, Dial-A-Ride's operating cost per service hour jumped 31.2%. Wheels sought to reduce costs when it took on its new contractor for Wheels Dial-A-Ride, and saw the impact of this change over the last two years.

Figure 3-10 Operating Cost per Revenue Service Hour – Wheels Dial-A-Ride

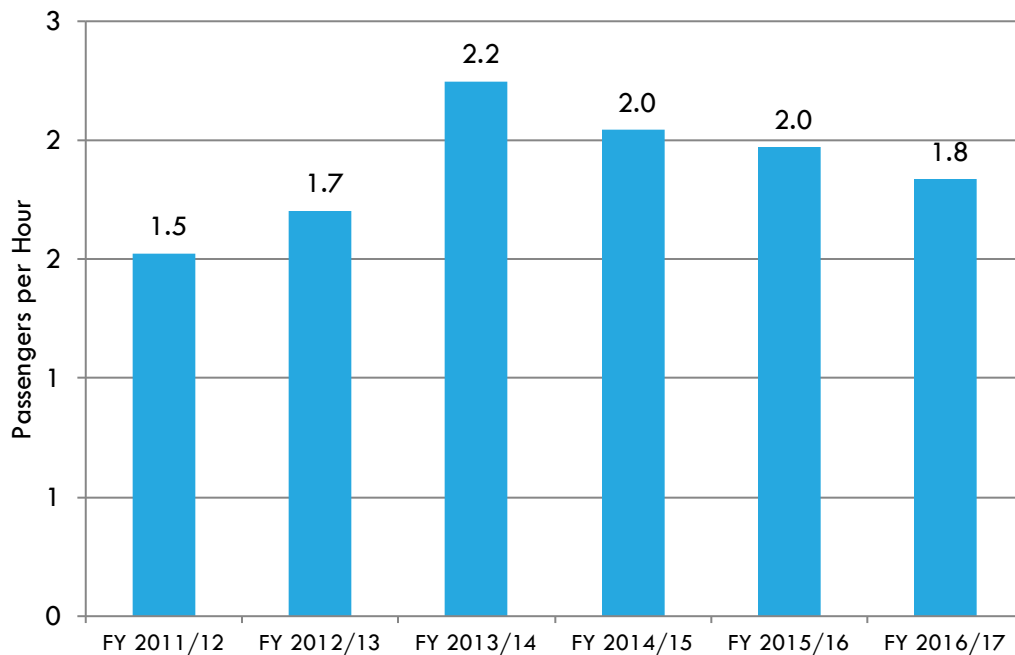


### Passengers per Revenue Service Hour

According to the recorded numbers, Wheels Dial-A-Ride experienced a 32% increase in passengers per revenue service hour between FY 2012/13 and FY 2013/14. In 2014/2015, the number of passengers per service hour dropped by 9% to 2.0, and then remained steady before experiencing an additional 7% decline between FY 2015/16 and FY 2016/17, from 2.0 to 1.8 passengers per hour.

The total number of passengers served by Wheels Dial-A-Ride actually increased between FY 2014/15 and FY 2015/16 (from 46,441 to 54,975). However, the increase in passengers did not keep pace with the expansion of service hours, leading to the decline in productivity.

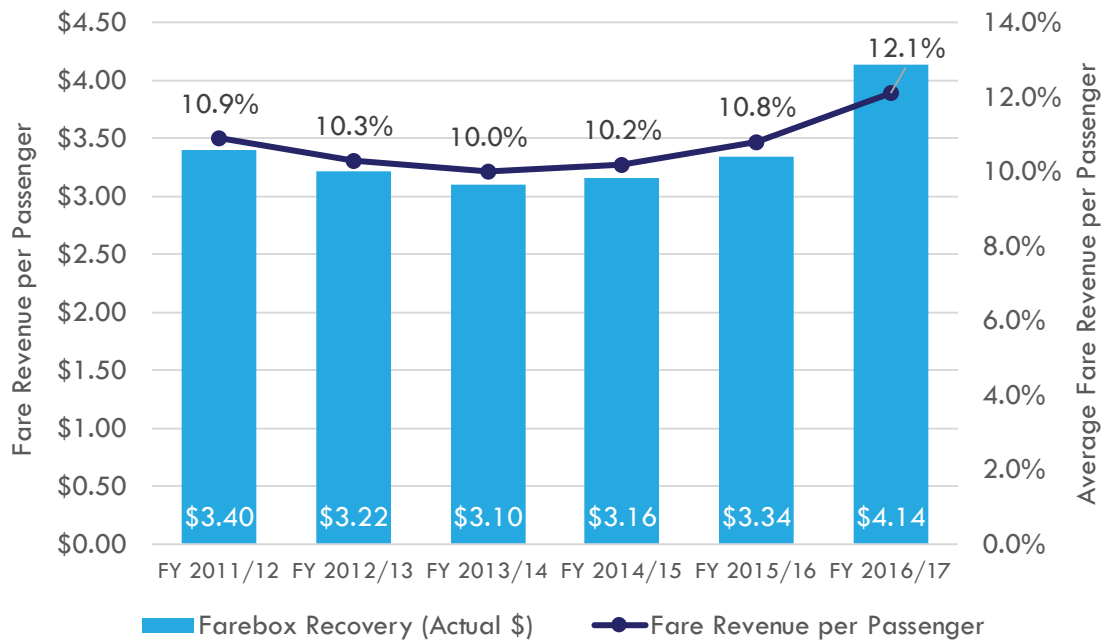
**Figure 3-11 Passengers per Revenue Service Hour – Wheels Dial-A-Ride**



## Farebox Recovery Ratio

Over the past six years, Wheels Dial-A-Ride’s farebox recovery ratio has remained generally within a percentage point of 11%. Between 2011/12 and 2013/14, it dipped from 10.9% to 10.0%, but between 2011/12 and 2016/17, it shot up to 12.1%. This suggests there may be some inaccuracies in the revenue data. During the same six-year time period, the average fare revenue per passenger hit its lowest point in FY2013/14 at \$3.10, and slowly grew, ultimately exceeding the stated fare per passenger, at \$4.14 in FY 2016/17. There is no way to account for this “average fare” figure that is higher than the passenger fare. It should be noted that funds received from BART for paratransit service are counted as contract fare revenue and increase the average fare per passenger.

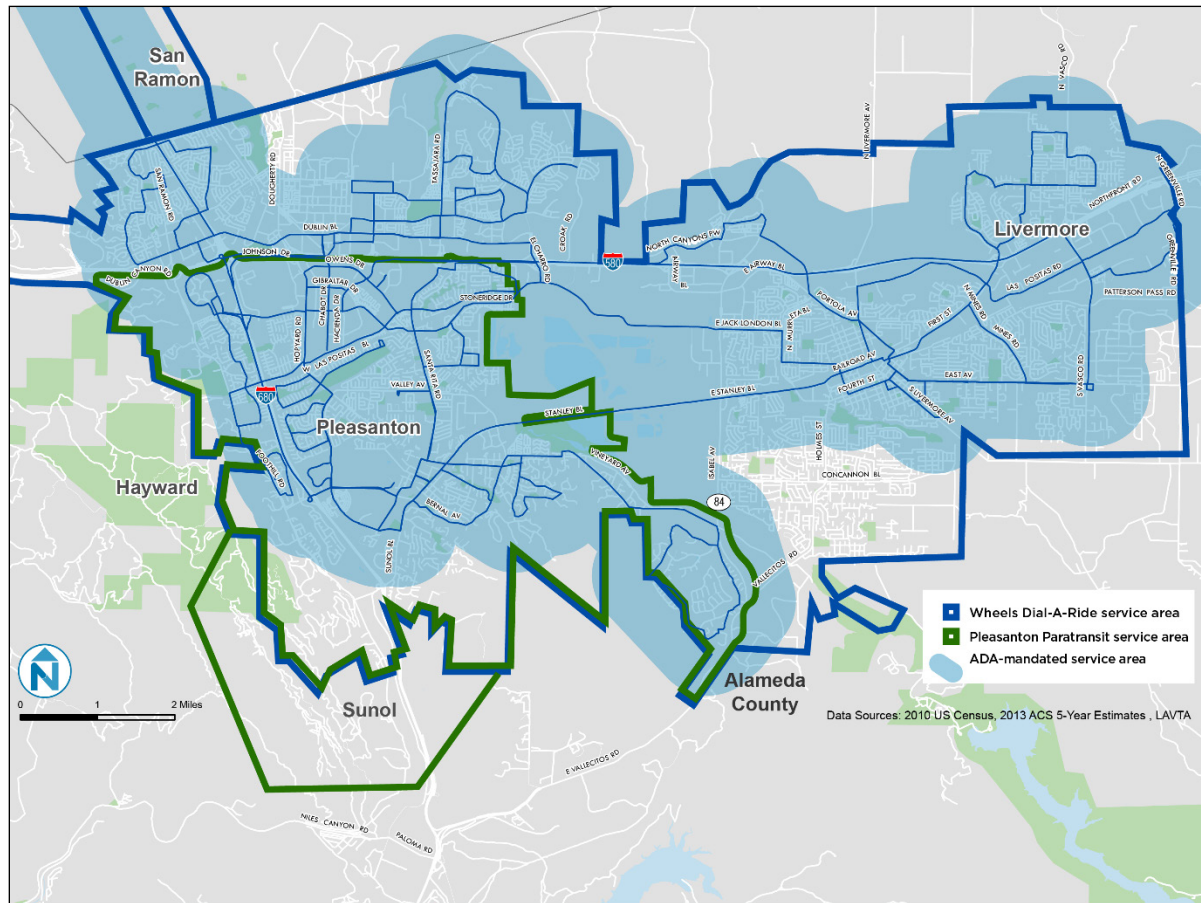
Figure 3-12 Farebox Recovery Ratio – Wheels Dial-A-Ride



## PLEASANTON PARATRANSIT SERVICE

Pleasanton Paratransit Service offers door-to-door service within the City of Pleasanton, as well as Sunol, an unincorporated area of Alameda County adjacent to Pleasanton. The service area is outlined in green in Figure 3-13.

**Figure 3-13 Pleasanton Paratransit Service Area Overlap with Wheels Dial-A-Ride Service Area**



## Fares

Rides cost \$3.00 for any trip within the local service area and \$3.50 for any trip outside of the local service area.<sup>5</sup> These locations outside the immediate service area include several medical facilities: San Ramon Regional Medical Center, Kaiser San Ramon and Medical Offices in Livermore, Veterans Administration Medical Center in Livermore, Valley Memorial Hospital/Medical Corridor, Medical Offices on Concannon Blvd. in Livermore, and the Palo Alto Medical Foundation in Dublin.

For Sunol residents, fares are an additional 50 cents.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.cityofpleasantonca.gov/gov/depts/cs/senior/transit.asp>

## Eligibility

Riders must be a resident of Pleasanton or Sunol, at least 70 years old, or a person with a disability and certified to use ADA paratransit service.

Approximately 2,900 Pleasanton residents are registered in the PPS database (excluding 200 who are residents at Pleasanton Nursing and Rehabilitation Center). However, less than 700 are active riders (defined as having ridden within the past year). This database is purged periodically when mailings are returned due to change of address or if the individual is deceased.

To determine eligibility, PPS staff review all applications, and grants automatic eligibility to those who are 70 or over for the age-based service. ADA eligibility decisions are made by Wheels and any Pleasanton resident who has been certified as ADA eligible may complete an application and ride on PPS.

Currently riders do not have eligibility conditions based on disability. The only condition that is applied is if the eligibility is of a temporary nature. This is true even for individuals who have been determined conditionally eligible by Wheels.

## Hours of Service

PPS service is provided between 8:15 AM and 4:30 PM Monday through Friday. Service in the city allows for a final pickup at 4:30 PM, whereas service out of town ends at 3 PM. PPS riders with ADA-certified disabilities may ride Wheels Dial-A-Ride when PPS is not in service. Reservations are accepted weekdays from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

All ADA and senior trips are combined for service delivery purposes, but it is estimated that approximately 11% of trips are taken by riders who are certified as ADA eligible. The program averages approximately 28 rides per day.

## Staffing Paratransit service in Pleasanton is limited in scope in comparison to the Wheels Dial-A-Ride service

PPS is unique in Alameda County in a number of respects: it is one of only two city-based services that provides ADA paratransit service (the other being Union City, which operates its own transit system), and the only one that is provided by city employees rather than by an independent contractor.

The PPS program is supervised by a Recreation Manager (.09 FTE) and Recreation Supervisor (.65 FTE) and supported by a full time Recreation Coordinator (1FTE) and Paratransit Dispatcher (1FTE). Additional program support is provided through part-time temporary positions such as a Paratransit Dispatch Assistant (.72 FTE), a Senior Recreation Program Specialist (.48 FTE), a Receptionist (.48 FTE) and six part-time drivers (3.81 FTE). The total full time equivalent for staff to operate the PPS program is 8.23 FTE.

The Recreation Manager, Recreation Supervisor and Recreation Coordinator provide administrative oversight of grant funding for the program along with staff supervision.

The Paratransit Dispatcher is responsible for scheduling, reservations, dispatching trips, screening applicants for eligibility, training the drivers on city procedures and processes (beyond the training provided by an outside trainer), and occasionally has to drive when there are runs that are not covered.



The Paratransit Dispatch Assistant assists in scheduling, reservations and dispatching trips. This position has been difficult to retain with part-time individuals because of the competition from full-time job opportunities.

Dispatch staff is responsible for coordinating trips with adjoining providers, and, similar to Wheels, uses the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station for transfers. These have reportedly been declining in recent months.

The Senior Recreation Program Specialist conducts outreach and plans and supervises the group trip program. The Receptionist provides customer service during the late morning and early afternoon answering phones and selling ride tickets.

PPS has six part-time drivers. Drivers are paid by shift time, which includes signing in and out vehicles and when their vehicle is in revenue service. At times when there are high numbers of cancellations, drivers are sometimes asked not to come in to work and are not paid for the out-of-service time.

## **Scheduling/Dispatching Function**

The dispatcher takes calls from riders and callers may leave messages after hours. When the call comes in, the dispatcher or dispatch assistant writes up the request on the Daily Rider Appointment form, and checks the Schedule Editor on Novus TripSpark while on the phone. A paper form is used in case a scheduling decision cannot be made while on the phone, and to keep track of cancellations.

Trips are scheduled based on destination arrival time rather than pick-up times.

If riders are able to be flexible in their trip request time, the dispatcher/dispatch assistant reports that they are able to accommodate most trip requests. However, this can sometimes involve offering a trip for a different day than requested. If there is no capacity available, the dispatcher refers the caller to Wheels. During the month of March, 2018, five trips were officially denied, all for non-ADA riders. Even though the program does not track ADA versus non-ADA trips, the dispatcher staff is familiar enough with the riders to be able to distinguish between passengers in each category, and ADA riders have a separate ADA code in the system.

## **Service Provision/Policies**

During peak periods, there are four vehicles in service at one time.

The following is a summary of practices and policies for PPS services:

### **Advanced Reservations and On-Time Window**

Reservations are accepted up to 14 days in advance and must be made at least 24 hours in advance – according to customer information – but not in practice. Generally, the practice conforms to ADA requirements that reservations be accepted one day in advance.

### **Advanced Notification Calls**

PPS staff provide notification calls the day prior to scheduled trip.

## **Trip Categorization**

Trips are grouped based on ten categories. The most frequently used is a generic category known as “Living Needs”, which includes trips to the hair salon, groceries, social visits etc. These categories and their use may need to be revised in order to more accurately reflect trip purpose and to ensure compliance with ADA requirements (if certain types of trips are prioritized over other types of trips).

Registrants who are ADA eligible do have a separate code designation in the database to distinguish them from those whose registration is age-based. Trip requests from ADA eligible riders are not prioritized over those who are eligible based on age.

## **Late Cancellations/No-Shows**

No-show and cancellation rates occur regularly on Wheels service and there have never been sanctions applied to those who cancel or no-show frequently. However, no-show and late cancellation rates on PPS are low compared to industry standards, at about 7%.

Trips that do not take place are considered “late cancellations” if the individual cancels within four hours of the scheduled pick-up time. All others are considered same day cancellations.

## **Subscription Service**

PPS is currently taking subscription requests, but the City’s approach is that subscriptions are not allowed to exceed 50% of total trips. As a result, many individuals with repeat trips have to schedule trips for two weeks at a time. The federal requirement that subscription trips must not exceed 50% of all trips only applies if the service is considered an ADA paratransit program and if the service denies travel to riders requesting service.

## **Interagency Service Coordination**

Wheels provides service to Pleasanton residents in the evenings and on weekends when PPS is not operating. Wheels also provides service during times there are capacity issues, as well as when the rider prefers Wheels and in instances where PPS policies do not allow a rider to use the service

## **Intercounty Service**

Limited transfers are made to both East Bay Paratransit and LINK.

## **Dialysis Trips**

Approximately 3% of total trips provided by PPS are to dialysis clinics. While this is a smaller percentage than for LAVTA, these time sensitive trips do incorporate elements of premium service, so if the program has challenges meeting other trip needs in the future, these should be considered candidates for cost sharing with the clinics.

## **Driver Manifests**

Drivers are allowed to make manual changes to the manifests during the course of the day. The drivers provide “high touch” service and check in on clients’ welfare, reporting to Senior Support Program of the Tri-Valley if they believe a client needs assistance.

## Quality Assurance and Safety

PPS ensures quality with daily check-ins with dispatch and drivers, monthly staff meetings as well as standard bus pre-checks, and regular fleet maintenance. In addition, all drivers are CPR & First Aid Certified and First Aid supplies are kept in all vehicles

## Common Complaints

Common complaints expressed by riders include the lack of same day rides, limitations on service outside of Pleasanton (particularly rides to Dublin and Livermore for shopping, etc.). Riders also express frustration at not always being able to schedule rides at the exact time requested.

## Performance

The following section provides a detailed review of the indicators for PPS. Figure 3-14 presents base data and performance measures, which is the source for the information presented in the graphs on the following pages.

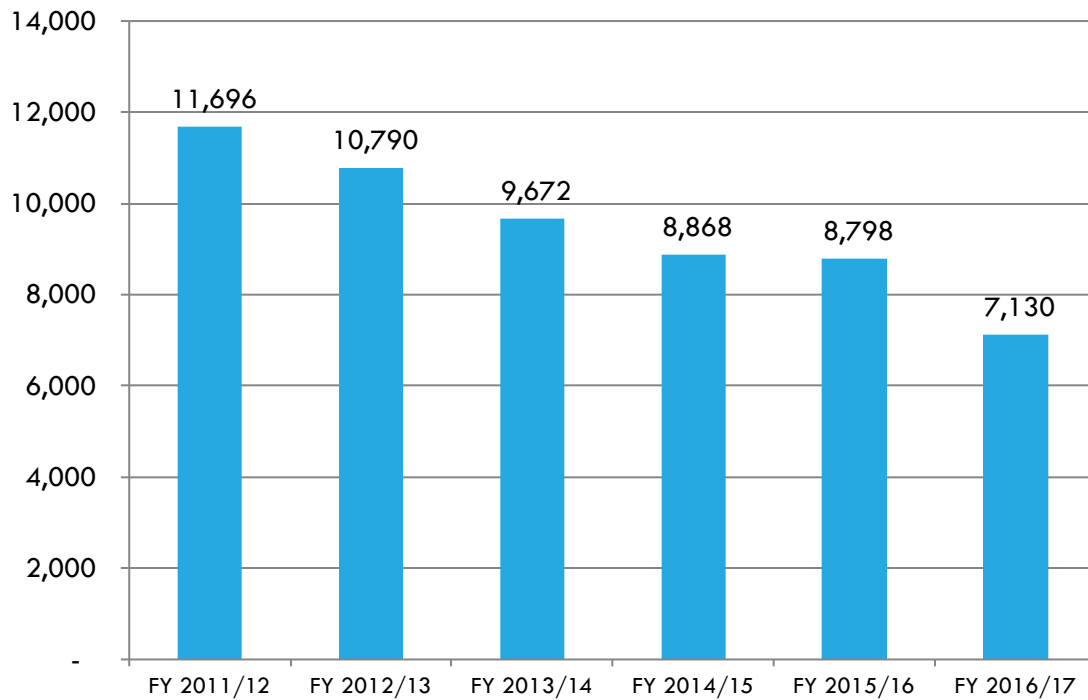
**Figure 3-14 Pleasanton Paratransit Service Performance Indicator Trends**

	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17
<b>Performance Measures</b>						
<b>Operating Cost (Actual \$)</b>	\$ 456,409	\$ 504,267	\$ 546,197	\$ 498,508	\$ 476,375	\$486,486
<i>Annual Change</i>		10.5%	8.3%	-8.7%	-4.4%	2.1%
<b>Fare Revenue (Actual \$)</b>	\$31,845	\$30,879	\$25,762	\$25,734	\$24,498	\$18,653
<i>Annual Change</i>		-3.0%	-16.6%	-0.1%	-4.8%	-23.9%
<b>Vehicle Revenue Hours</b>	4,601	4,336	4,007	3,270	3,041	3,502
<i>Annual Change</i>		-5.8%	-7.6%	-18.4%	-7.0%	15.2%
<b>Vehicle Revenue Miles</b>	48,078	46,639	42,891	35,977	36,101	30,099
<i>Annual Change</i>		-3.0%	-8.0%	-16.1%	0.3%	-16.6%
<b>Passengers</b>	11,696	10,790	9,672	8,868	8,798	7,130
<i>Annual Change</i>		-7.7%	-10.4%	-8.3%	-0.8%	-19.0%
<b>Performance Indicators</b>						
<b>Oper. Cost per Hr. (Actual \$)</b>	\$99.20	\$116.30	\$136.31	\$152.45	\$156.65	\$138.92
<i>Annual Change</i>		17.2%	17.2%	11.8%	2.8%	-11.3%
<b>Oper. Cost per Psgr. (Actual \$)</b>	\$39.02	\$46.73	\$56.47	\$56.21	\$54.15	\$68.23
<i>Annual Change</i>		19.8%	20.8%	-0.5%	-3.7%	26.0%
<b>Psgs. per Hour</b>	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.7	2.9	2.0
<i>Annual Change</i>		-2.1%	-3.0%	12.4%	6.7%	-29.6%
<b>Psgs. per Mile</b>	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
<i>Annual Change</i>		-4.9%	-2.5%	9.3%	-1.1%	-2.8%
<b>Farebox Recovery (Actual \$)</b>	7.0%	6.1%	4.7%	5.2%	5.1%	3.8%
<i>Annual Change</i>		-12.2%	-23.0%	9.4%	-0.4%	-25.4%

## Ridership - Pleasanton Paratransit Service

PPS's ridership steadily declined over the years from a total ridership of 11,696 in FY 2011/12 to a total ridership of 7,130 in FY 2016/17. According to staff, this is due in large part to capacity issues and staffing constraints, although it may also reflect some scheduling inefficiencies and eligible riders opting for Wheels Dial-A-Ride over PPS. Overall, this amounts to a ridership decline of approximately 40% over six years.

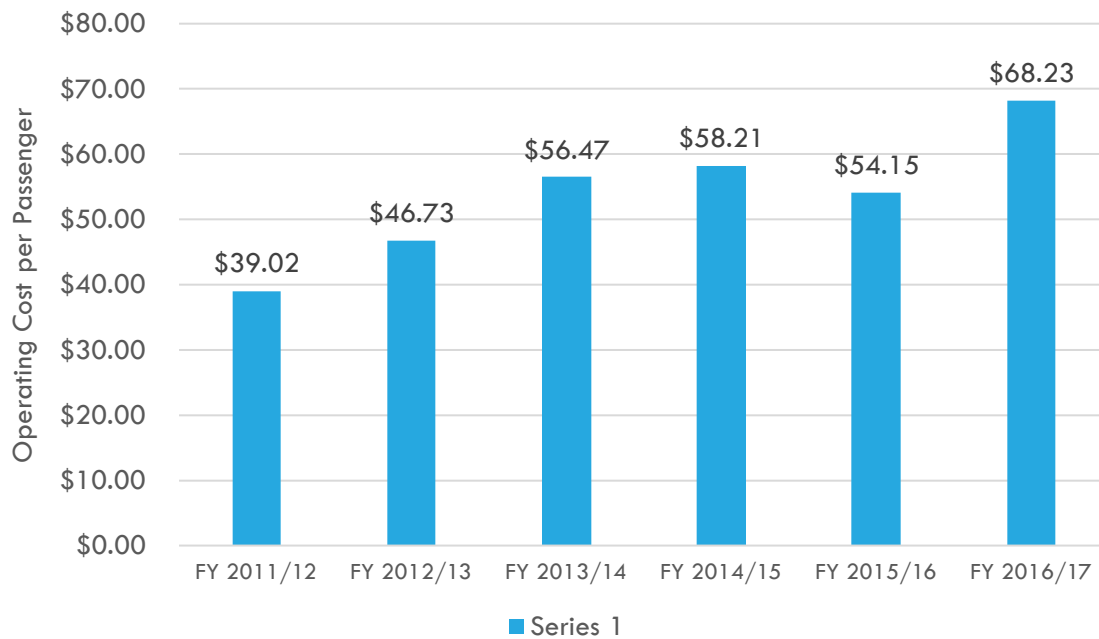
Figure 3-15 Total Ridership – Pleasanton Paratransit Service



## Operating Cost per Passenger

While PPS's total ridership steadily declined, its cost per passenger steadily increased. The steepest jump was between FY 2015/16 and FY 2016/17, during which PPS' operating cost per passenger rose from \$54.15 to \$68.23 (in actual dollars), representing an increase of 26%. During this same time frame, PPS's operating costs increased by around 2%, while ridership decreased by about 17%. The results is per-passenger costs that are twice those of Wheels Dial-A-Ride.

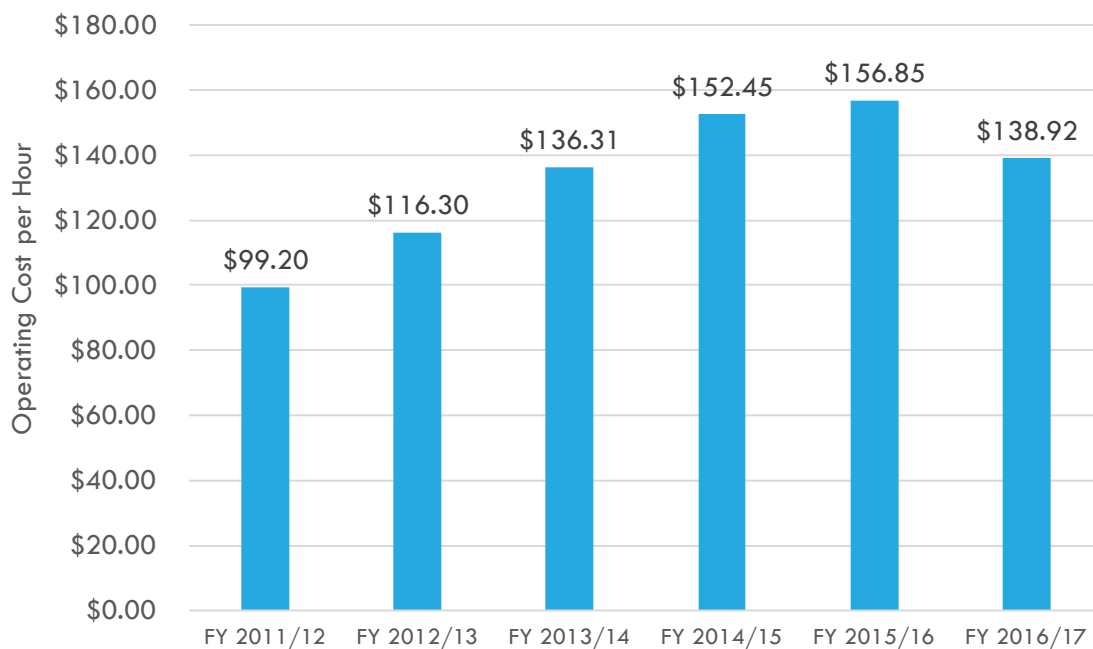
**Figure 3-16 Operating Cost per Passenger – Pleasanton Paratransit Service**



## Operating Cost per Revenue Service Hour

Pleasanton Paratransit Service's trend in cost efficiency relative to revenue service hours was similar to its cost efficiency relative to ridership during throughout the six-year period beginning FY 2011/2012. Throughout these six years, the cost per service hour steadily increased with the exception of the final year, when it dipped about 11%. This is because after years of steadily decreasing, PPS's service hours increased over 15% between FY 2015/2016 and 2016/17. Staff are uncertain about the reason for this and questions exist about whether data regarding in-service hours was accurately recorded over previous years.

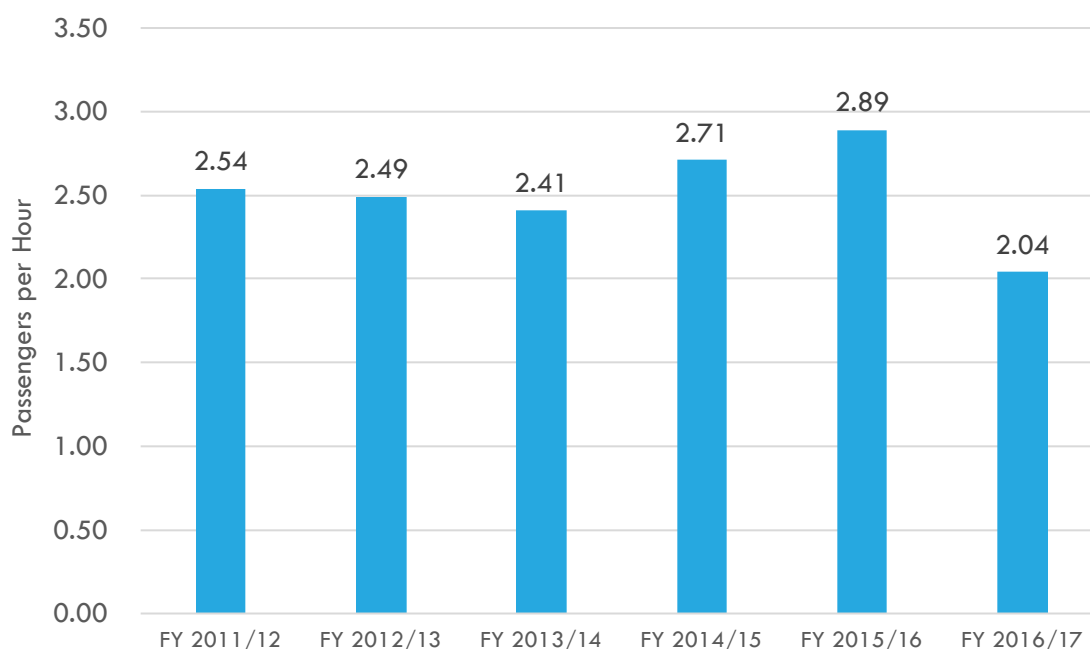
**Figure 3-17 Operating Cost per Revenue Service Hour – Pleasanton Paratransit Service**



## Passengers per Revenue Service Hour

The program served more passengers per service hour, on average, between FY 2014/15 and FY 2015/16 than during the rest of the six-year period reviewed. However, the fluctuations in this performance measure were not large; throughout the six-year period, PPS consistently served between two and three passengers per hour. The greatest change occurred between FY 2015/16 and FY 2016/17, during which the average number of passengers per service hour declined by nearly 30%. This was the result of a drop in total passengers with an increase in service hours, and may have more to do with how revenue hours were recorded during FY 2016/17 than any major changes to the provision of service. It should be noted that PPS enjoys generally higher passengers per revenue service hour than Wheels Dial-A-Ride, mostly because it operates most of its trips within a smaller service area.

**Figure 3-18 Passengers per Revenue Service Hour – Pleasanton Paratransit Service**



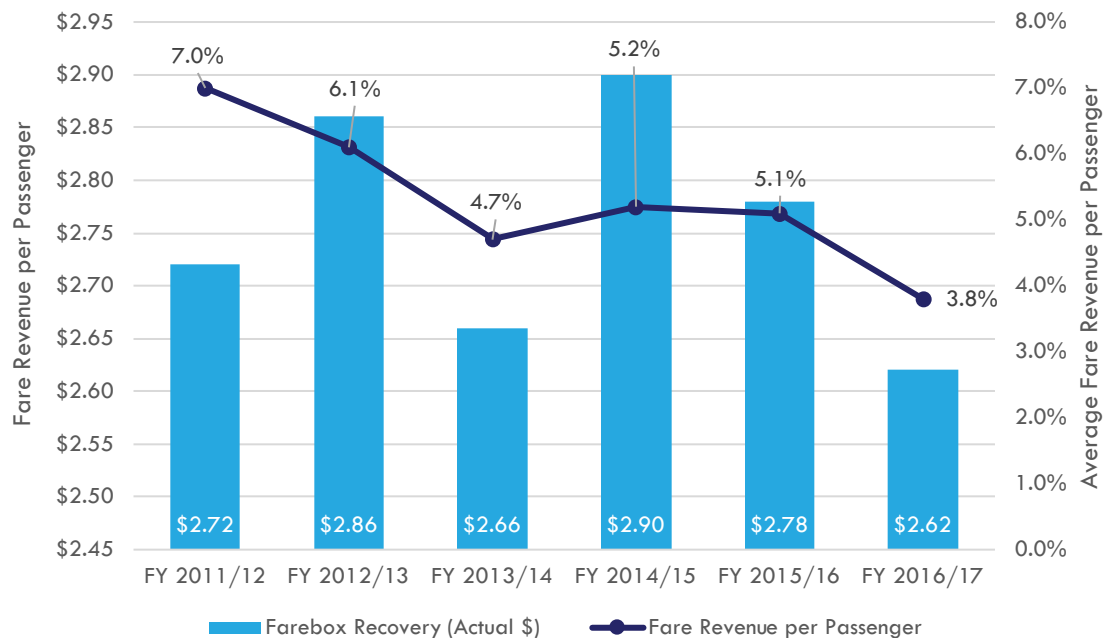


## Farebox Recovery Ratio

PPS's farebox recovery ratio declined significantly between 2011/2012 and 2016/17, beginning at 7.0% and ending at 3.8%. This marks an almost 50% decline in farebox recovery over six years and is significantly below standards for this type of service (a minimum 10% farebox recovery standard is common). This can be attributed to a steep drop in ridership combined with an increase in already high operating costs over the same time period. The steepest drop in a single year came between FY 2015/16 and FY 2016/17, during which the farebox recovery ratio declined over 25%.

In contrast, the average fare revenue per passenger did not show a consistent trend throughout this six-year period. It started at \$2.72 per passenger in FY 2011/12, hit its peak in FY 2014/15 when it reached \$2.90 per passenger, and hit its lowest point two years later in FY 2016/17 after sinking to \$2.62 per passenger. The difference between the highest and lowest fare revenue per passenger over these six years represents a range of less than ten percent.

Figure 3-19 Farebox Recovery Ratio – Pleasanton Paratransit Service



## OTHER PARATRANSIT PROVIDERS THAT OFFER CONNECTIONS TO THE TRI-VALLEY

### East Bay Paratransit

East Bay Paratransit is the ADA paratransit system that provides supplemental service for people unable to use AC Transit and BART because of a disability or a disabling health condition.

The service uses sedans or wheelchair lift-equipped vans to transport their riders within the service area, and fares are distance based, with different fare matrices for trips within the East Bay and for trips to or from San Francisco.

Reservations may be made up to seven days in advance.<sup>6</sup> As noted above, both Wheels Dial-A-Ride and PPS transfer riders to and from East Bay Paratransit.

### LINK Paratransit Service

County Connection's LINK service is an ADA-mandated paratransit service that complements County Connection fixed-route transit routes. The service operates at similar times and in similar areas as the existing fixed-route system. LINK's Monday through Friday service surpasses the requirements of the ADA, providing paratransit service within one and one-half miles of the fixed-route system. LINK also provides paratransit service on behalf of BART in Contra Costa County during the system's off-peak hours. This service is limited to a  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile buffer around BART's Contra Costa County routes. A one-way fare for any LINK trip is \$4.00.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.eastbayparatransit.org/>



## 4 Outreach

Outreach for this project included feedback from the community and stakeholders with an interest in the project outcome. The engagement was structured so that stakeholders identified as critical to project success met first to talk about the study, and then a round of community outreach meetings took place in Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton. Then a market analysis was conducted that included a public online and paper survey. After opportunities and alternatives were developed, a second round of outreach took place. This chapter is a summary of the activities and lessons learned from each event.

### PROJECT INTRODUCTION

#### Survey


To better understand the experience of Tri-Valley residents, a survey was conducted online through SurveyMonkey and in-person from May 1, 2017 to June 23, 2017. The survey was open to the public and composed of 35 questions that solicited information regarding travel patterns, recommendations for improved service, and demographic characteristics.

The survey was available in English, Spanish, and Chinese to garner as many possible responses from the diverse population in the Tri-Valley area. A total of 402 surveys were completed. Online entries accounted for the majority of the surveys (346, 86%). The remaining 14% were completed on paper and later copied into the online survey tool for ease of analysis. The full results of this survey analysis are shown in detail in Appendix B.

Overall, residents and stakeholders said:

- They are generally happy with existing paratransit services
- It is difficult to travel long distances and to locations outside of the Tri-Valley
- A lack of accessible taxis is a problem for people who use wheelchairs
- Having two separate ADA paratransit services is confusing
- Better information about available services would be useful

Figure 4-1 Mobility Forward Online Survey, First Page

Tri-Valley Paratransit Study: Survey of Dublin, Livermore, Pleasanton, and Sunol Residents

Welcome

Para completar esta encuesta en español, [haga clic aquí](#).  
以西班牙语完成这项调查, [点击这里](#)。

Dear Resident of the Tri-Valley,

Your local transit providers (LAVTA/Wheels and the City of Pleasanton) are conducting a study of Tri-Valley transportation options for older adults, as well as people with disabilities, to evaluate transportation needs and develop a strategy to provide quality, efficient services.

Your responses to the following questions will help us identify challenges and some improvements to dial-a-ride and paratransit programs in the Tri-Valley.

**And, you may enter to win one of five \$50 Visa gift cards upon completion of the survey!**

Will you please take about 5-7 minutes to share your input? The information you provide is strictly confidential.

**Please complete this survey only once.** Thank you for your time.

In which city do you live?

☐ Dublin

☐ Livermore

## Project Stakeholder Outreach

Three groups met to discuss paratransit in the Tri-Valley area after the project kicked off.

A **Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)** was convened with the goal of providing guidance to the project from people who had an interest in the outcome. Stakeholders were familiar with the services provided by Pleasanton Paratransit Service (PPS) and LAVTA and were therefore able to provide constructive policy advice regarding the direction of the study. Members of the committee included a representative of the Wheels Accessible Advisory Committee (WAAC), Pleasanton Paratransit Task Force, paratransit users, social service agency representatives and other community members. The first SAC meeting took place in June and the second in November, 2017. Topics that were discussed at the first meeting included:

- Solutions should not assume “one size fits all” for seniors and people with disabilities
- PPS may be able to do some things more effectively than LAVTA
- Question raised as to whether Dublin residents’ needs were being seriously considered
- Be sure to include interface with East Bay Paratransit in the final report
- Ensure that solutions do not assume that people with developmental disabilities can wait for a bus

The second **Stakeholder Advisory Committee** meeting took place on November 28, 2017. The group discussed the findings and areas of focus that had come from the first and second rounds of community meetings, survey efforts and quantitative findings of existing conditions. The project team shared the preliminary considerations for changes to service and then led a discussion to get feedback on the ideas.

The **Pleasanton Paratransit Task Force** also discussed this project after a presentation from the project team at the July 17, 2017 meeting. The group included members of the Pleasanton City staff that are related to the delivery of bus service in Pleasanton. The project team gave a study overview and offered input for what they'd like to see as a result of this study.

Meeting input included the following:

- **Ease of use:** It is complicated to travel long distances and to locations outside of LAVTA and Pleasanton service area
- **Availability:** The limited availability of accessible taxis is a problem for people who use wheelchairs; need to expand this option for Para-Taxi program
- **Reliability:** Lack of consistency in Pleasanton and Wheels Dial-A-Ride services; questions about the role of two separate services
- **Marketing:** Interest in greater outreach and information about existing services
- **Sustainability:** Interest in creative solutions; lower cost options; shorter travel times

The **Wheels Accessibility Advisory Committee (WAAC)** also discussed ideas, needs and goals for the study after a presentation by team members at a meeting on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017. WAAC members provided substantial input into the project survey.

## Community Meetings

Listening sessions were held in Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton with the goal of understanding who uses the existing services and what improvements could be made. The first set of meetings took place on June 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017. As with the more targeted stakeholder outreach, a short presentation introducing participants to the purpose of the study preceded a discussion where people shared their perspectives and opinions. The project team led a facilitated discussion to get the conversation started. While attendance was limited at the three meetings the team was able to solicit input about the issues that were of concern to participants. The second round of community meetings took place on November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 2017. Sessions were held once again in Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton. At each workshop, participants were asked to think through different alternatives and options, commenting on them and selecting from tradeoffs.

The takeaways from the listening sessions included concerns regarding:

- Geography
  - Dublin Ranch residential community has very limited available parking supply. Illegal parking continues to be an issue.
  - Some seniors just want to get out of the house.
- Availability
  - Same day service is important

- Availability of paratransit/parataxis is limited due to the need to serve other groups (ADA, youth, etc.)
- Ease of use
  - Limited use and access to technology by seniors 80 and above
- Marketing
  - Senior centers are a great resource for outreach/education, but not all paratransit riders use them
  - Better branding with city names would help seniors know which bus to board. The advertising is not well liked today.
- Comfort
  - Some seniors aren't comfortable knowing they will likely have a different driver each time they use a transportation network company (TNC).

## **Stakeholder Use of and Attitudes Towards Public Transportation**

The combined input from the stakeholder advisory meetings, the community meetings, and the survey results provide a comprehensive picture of residents' use of and attitudes towards public transportation. Although the majority of residents in the target populations continue to either drive or be driven for most of their trips, they recognize that this may not always be an option for them, and have considered other modes presented in this study, including public transportation.

Fixed route public transportation remained a relatively popular choice after the use of a car, but desire for more bus stop frequency was commonly expressed. Improvements to bus stop amenities would reportedly also increase bus usage. Almost one in five survey respondents indicated that they ride fixed route transit at least once a month, with about five percent riding at least on a weekly basis. However, about half indicated that they had never ridden the bus system in the Tri-Valley. As an alternative to fixed route transit, stakeholders expressed a preference for a senior dial-a-ride service or local shuttle to/from BART. Riders also identified service issues with the existing paratransit programs (some of which are service quality related, and some which exceed the ADA minimum paratransit requirements.)



Figure 4-2 Community Meeting Flyer

**You  
are invited!**

**Public Transportation for  
Older Adults and People with Disabilities**



**mobility**  
**forward**  
Tri-Valley  
Paratransit Study

Help us create a paratransit program to serve you today,  
tomorrow, and into the future!

**Join us at one of the following *Listening Sessions*:**

- Saturday, June 24, 10am-noon**  
Dublin Public Library, 200 Civic Plaza Drive, Dublin
- Tuesday, June 27, 10am-noon**  
Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Avenue, Livermore
- Tuesday, June 27, 2-4pm**  
Pleasanton Senior Center, 5353 Sunol Boulevard, Pleasanton

**At the session, you will:**

- Talk with transit planners and learn about the study.
- Share what you like (and dislike) about paratransit and what improvements to transportation access you would like to see in the Tri-Valley.
- Participate in a discussion about your priorities.




For more information, visit  
[wheelsbus.com/mobility-forward-tri-valley-paratransit-assessment-study](http://wheelsbus.com/mobility-forward-tri-valley-paratransit-assessment-study)  
or call 925-931-5346 or 925-455-7560.

Figure 4-3 Breakout Session Facilitator Questions

- 1. Today, where and why do you need to travel?**
  - a. Locally
  - b. Regionally
- 2. What are your perceptions of the available options/resources?**
  - a. Wheels Dial-a-Ride
  - b. [In Pleasanton Only] Pleasanton Paratransit
  - c. Wheels fixed routes
  - d. Other services you use when not driving?
- 3. Let's talk about what you think are the major needs and opportunities:**
  - a. Are there any unserved (or underserved) markets?
  - b. What is the quality of information about services?
  - c. What is your experience with paratransit customer service (if relevant)
  - d. How easy is it to use paratransit?
  - e. How easy is it to connect to other local and regional services?
  - f. What is your opinion of the cost of paratransit service?
- 4. If you had a magic wand, what would you change about paratransit or senior transportation in the Tri-Valley?**
- 5. Anything else you want to share?**

## Meetings with Leadership

An important component of the input solicitation process was interviewing the Pleasanton City Manager and the Executive Director of LAVTA. These meetings were held in July 2017.

Both parties were supportive of the study and talked about the opportunities to best use the funding available by improving efficiencies. The LAVTA Board of Directors invited the project team to speak at the September 11, 2017 Board meeting. The same presentation was given again on September 17, 2017 to the Pleasanton City Council to keep all parties up to date on the study.

## ALTERNATIVES ASSESSMENT

### Project Stakeholders

The project team conducted a second round of meetings with the Wheels Accessible Advisory Committee and the Pleasanton Paratransit Task Force on November 1, 2017 at Dublin City Hall to provide an update on the study and discuss preliminary concepts for service changes.

**Figure 4-4 Community Meeting Participants**

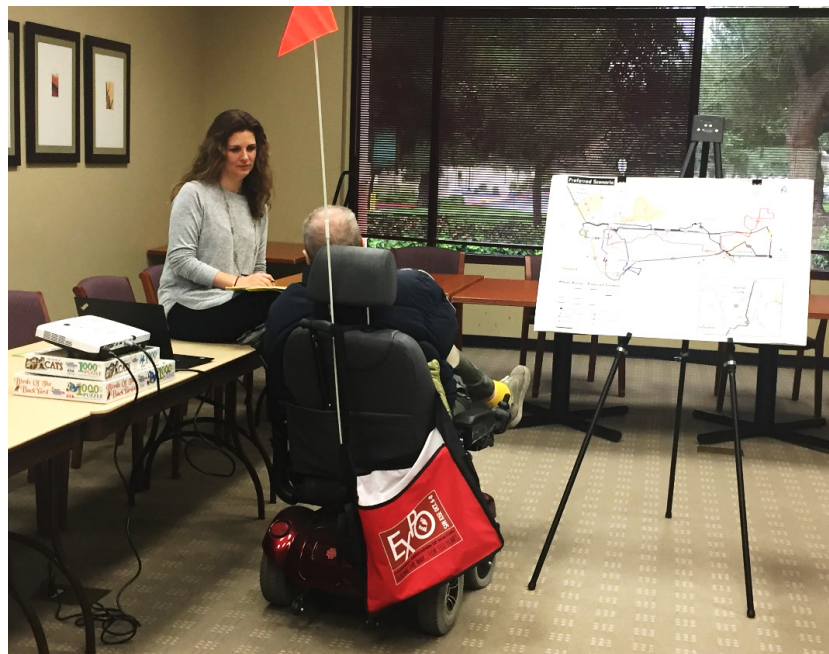
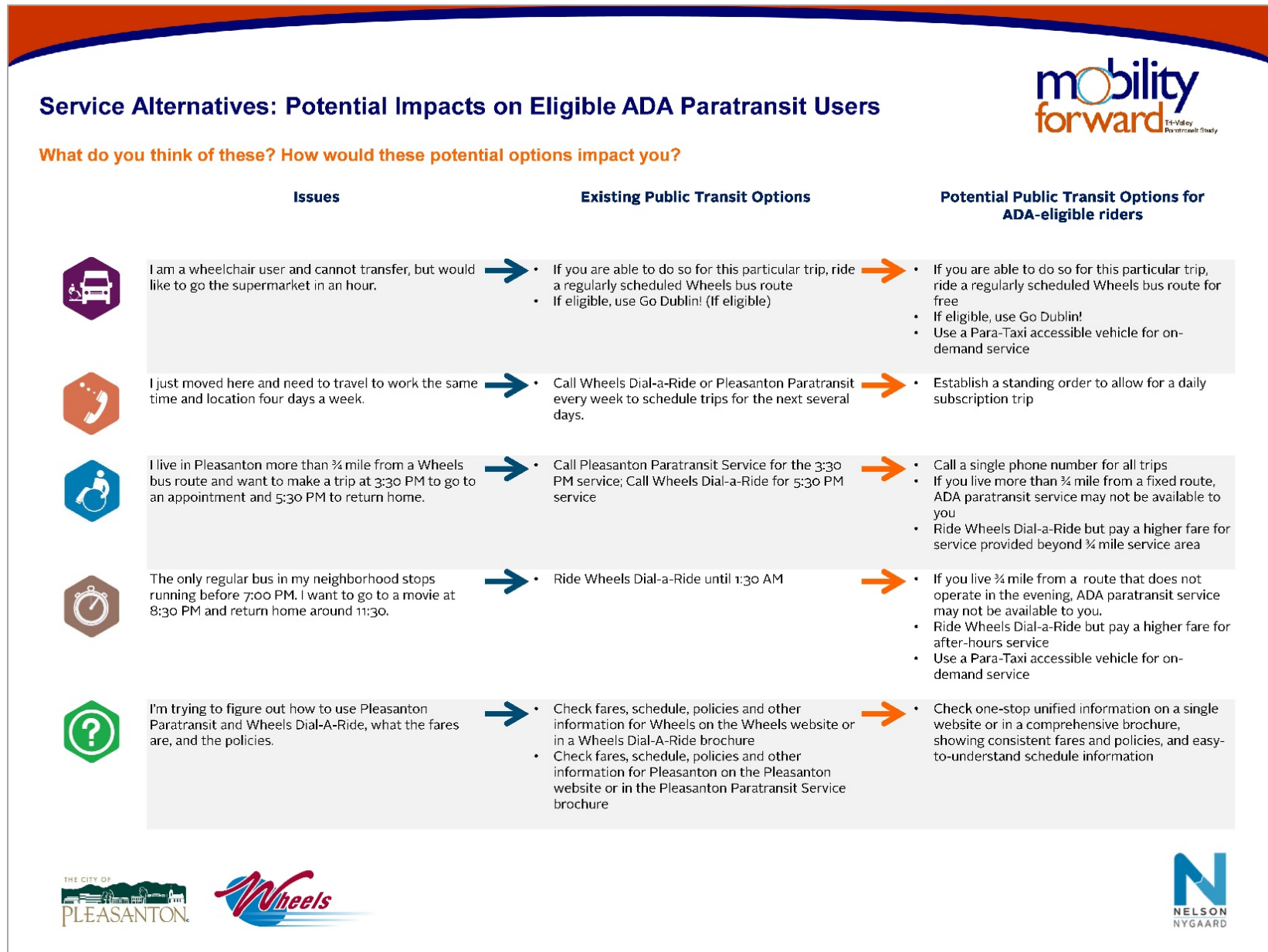


Figure 4-5 Alternatives Proposed at the Community Workshop





## 5 Ridership Forecast

Seniors and people with disabilities experience different levels of transportation access depending on their location within the county. The suburban land-use patterns that translate to higher rate of automobile ownership means there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution for meeting mobility needs. As LAVTA and the City of Pleasanton work towards a sustainable future for providing transportation services to people in the Tri-Valley, ridership forecasts reflect potential impacts on the services as the paratransit-eligible population grows. This chapter provides highlights of an analysis of recent ridership trends and ridership projections conducted by the consulting team. These projections, which extend through 2045 use data from the U.S. Census, the California Department of Finance, LAVTA, and PPS data.

A detailed description of the ridership forecast methods and findings may be found in Appendix C. Listed below are the key indicators that were used to build ridership forecasts for LAVTA and PPS:

- Population trends
- Registration trends for LAVTA and PPS
- Registration as a percentage of the service area population
- Current ridership trends
- Ridership trends by age cohort
- Percentage of trips taken by age cohort
- Demographic trends and projections (national, county and tri-valley)

Based on this analysis, we found the following anticipated ridership on LAVTA and PPS programs:

### Tri-Valley Projections

Wheels Dial-A-Ride demand should match supply because ADA regulations prohibit capacity constraints that limit ridership to less than any theoretically higher demand. Pleasanton’s actual demand is not as clear cut for people over 70 because they do not need to be ADA certified with LAVTA to schedule trips. For Pleasanton there are trip denials due to lack of resources, which makes a true projection hard to calculate with confidence. Pleasanton Paratransit riders with ADA certification are able to complete trips with Wheels Dial-A-Ride and at this time it is unknown how many of those trips would have taken place on PPS if the program had more capacity to deliver service.

To forecast future demand in the Tri-Valley we applied the projected percent changes by age cohort in Alameda County from the California Department of Finance projections (Figure 5-1) to the estimated number of trips by cohort from each agency in 2017, extrapolated from April 2017.

Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3 show the resulting projections based on the demographic forecast for the county. The number of trips requested of Wheels Dial-A-Ride is projected to increase 57% by 2035 and 82% by 2045 over the projected 2017 ridership. PPS is expected to grow 118% by 2035 and 182% by 2045 from 2017.

An estimated 1,981 trips in 2035 and 2,097 trips in 2045 are forecast by PPS riders under the age of 70. That could account for 27% of the system's trips by 2045. If those same trips were shifted to Wheels Dial-A-Ride, Wheels could anticipate another 3.2% trips annually, from 57,002 to 58,889 in 2025. By 2045 the increase in trips diverted from PPS could add 2,097 trips for a total of 84,020 annual Dial-A-Ride trips.

### Limitations of the Projections

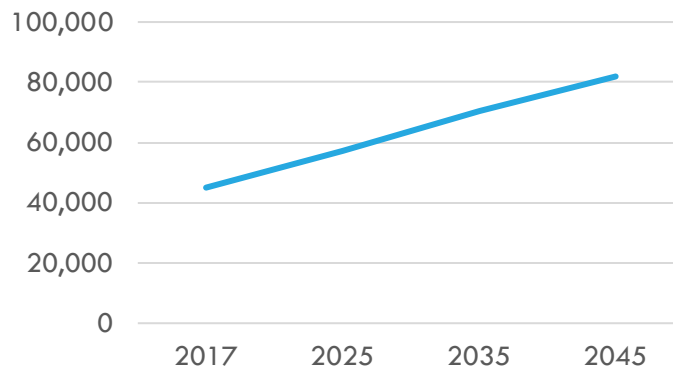
There are many caveats to these projections. First, there will be an unknown level of random variation due to using a single month as a baseline, which will influence the confidence accuracy of long-term projection. This projection should be updated as new annual figures are available and comparisons and corrections can be made based on the difference between actual and projected figures to improve confidence in the validity of the projections.

**Figure 5-1 Percent Change in Population by Age from 2015 Projections**

Age Cohort	2025	2035	2045
Under 18	1.0%	-0.5%	0.9%
18 - 49	6.2%	11.9%	16.4%
50 - 54	1.1%	11.0%	14.5%
55 - 59	2.0%	6.0%	12.6%
60 - 64	14.7%	18.5%	31.2%
65 - 69	28.2%	34.5%	41.4%
70 - 74	64.3%	95.6%	106.1%
75 - 79	87.2%	151.1%	170.7%
80 - 84	58.8%	176.4%	243.0%
85+	39.5%	162.9%	329.0%

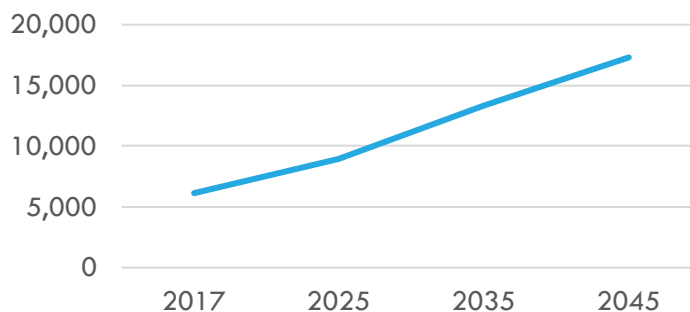
CA Department of Finance estimates

**Figure 5-2 Wheels Dial-A-Ride Ridership Projections**



CA Department of Finance estimates, LAVTA ridership report 2017

**Figure 5-3 Pleasanton Paratransit Ridership Projections**



CA Department of Finance estimates, Pleasanton ridership report 2017

Second, PPS ridership has declined for six consecutive years. This projection suggests that with no changes to the service, ridership will increase 143% over the next 28 years. The methodology of relying on countywide population projections for a small area within the County cannot account for how Pleasanton might be growing differently than the County as a whole.

Third, even with more data points on which to base projections, there are a number of external factors that can also not yet be quantified that will ultimately influence the supply or demand of paratransit ridership in the future. They include:

- Other transportation options available in the future
  - Driving behavior of seniors
  - Autonomous or Transportation Network Company (TNC)-based services
- Service parameters. Changes to the hours of service, eligibility, and areas covered
- Changes to eligibility screening or requirements
- Fare structure
- Restrictions in land use policies

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The number of seniors and people with disabilities is growing in the Tri-Valley service area
- Younger registrants take a greater proportion of paratransit trips per capita than their older counterparts
- Beyond the anticipated increases in senior and disability populations, changes to eligibility, fares, and service parameters will impact ridership
- In addition, the availability of new transportation options could have an effect on ridership projections





## 6 Peer Review

The consulting team conducted a peer review comparing six paratransit programs that were chosen because of their geographic similarities, operating characteristics, or innovative service delivery. This chapter highlights the key program elements of each peer agency that are relevant to this study. Detailed descriptions of each case study are provided in Appendix D.

Paratransit providers chosen for this analysis include:

- Fremont Paratransit (Fremont, CA)
- Santa Rosa Paratransit (Santa Rosa, CA)
- Marin Access (Marin County, CA)
- LINK (Central Contra Costa County, CA)
- Runabout Paratransit (San Luis Obispo County, CA)
- Solano County Intercity Taxi Scrip Program (Solano County, CA)

For each case study, the project team interviewed agency staff and reviewed relevant documents. It should be noted that the information described below was current at the time that the peer review was conducted in the spring, 2017.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

**Providing free fixed-route transit service to ADA-eligible customers can decrease paratransit service costs and demand.** This pricing structure incentivizes paratransit users to take fixed-route trips, which reduces demand for paratransit trips. Paratransit service is significantly more expensive to operate than fixed-route transit. This allows the user to take same-day trips when they are able, and free up paratransit vehicles for riders who need the door-to-door service.

**Travel training is an effective tool to increase ADA-eligible customer use of fixed-route transit and other alternatives to paratransit.** Fremont Paratransit, LINK, Marin Access, and Runabout Paratransit all have travel training programs. These programs provide ADA-eligible customers with a better understanding of how to use the various transit services in the area, thereby making them more comfortable with these travel options and empowering them to use transit services other than traditional paratransit. Much like providing free fixed-route service, such programs can help decrease paratransit costs and alleviate crowding on paratransit vehicles.

**Robust data collection can lead to more cost-efficient service delivery.** Two agencies highlighted the successes of their data collection efforts' positive effect on service delivery from both the operator and rider perspectives. Santa Rosa Paratransit attributed the turn-around of its entire service to its data management practices. San Luis Obispo's Runabout Paratransit noted that the information it is currently gathering on trip travel times will help the agency make system changes that improve the service's cost-efficiency.

**Good customer service is as important as the transportation service itself.** Paratransit programs stressed the importance of good customer service. Marin Access lauded its travel navigator program, which simplifies the information-gathering process by making paratransit

information available in a personalized, one-stop-shop format. Fremont Paratransit runs a successful “Mobility Management” program that provides individualized transportation assessments and planning assistance for its users. San Luis Obispo’s Runabout service recently launched an automated callback service reminding customers about the rides they scheduled, which decreased the amount of tardy and no-show paratransit riders.

**In-person outreach is an effective marketing strategy.** Agency representatives unanimously deemed in-person outreach as the most effective marketing strategy. Travel training programs were considered particularly effective by Marin Access and San Luis Obispo Runabout for advertising program benefits and encouraging the senior and disabled communities to use the transit systems instead of paratransit services.

**Same-day paratransit service is difficult and expensive to provide.** Agencies are still working out how to efficiently and effectively provide paratransit service on the same day that it is requested. Both Fremont Paratransit and Marin Access cited this as one of their greatest challenges. There is a collective sense that technology will help mitigate this challenge in the long-term.

**Strategies for reducing no-shows are of great importance to agencies.** All agencies expressed an interest in tackling the challenge of customers not showing up for scheduled pick-ups. No-shows can deplete agencies of time and resources. Agencies are experimenting with a variety of strategies to effectively deal with no-shows. One successful strategy can be found in San Luis Obispo, where Runabout Paratransit recently launched an automated callback service that reminds customers about the ride they scheduled. This strategy has both decreased the overall number of no-shows and increased the number of people who are ready for their pick-up on time.

**Figure 6-1 Key Statistics of Peer Bay Area Paratransit Systems**

	Contra Costa County	Fremont	Marin County	Santa Rosa
<b>Annual Budget</b>	\$5.1 million	\$1.5 million	\$7.6 million	\$1.2 million
<b>Number of Registered Users</b>	No data	2,204	2,324	~1,200
<b>Number of Trips</b>	156,832	24,567	168,073	~45,000
<b>Passengers per Revenue Hour</b>	1.9	1.6	2.2	2.4
<b>Cost per Hour</b>	\$69.42	\$55.54	\$77.81	No data
<b>Cost per Trip</b>	\$32.62	\$31.13	\$35.92	No data
<b>Fleet Size</b>	63 vehicles	15 vehicles	35 vehicles	13 vehicles

**Figure 6-2 Paratransit Programs Offered by Peer Systems**

	Contra Costa County	Fremont	Marin County	Santa Rosa	San Luis Obispo
<b>Mobility Management</b>		Y			
<b>Door-to-Door</b>		Y			
<b>Door-to-Door ADA</b>	Y		Y	Y	Y
<b>Eligible Distance from Fixed-Route Service (miles)</b>	Weekday: 1.5 Weekend: 0.75	N/A	0.75, with exception of one corridor	0.75	0.75
<b>Same-Day Taxi</b>		Y	Y		
<b>Volunteer Driver</b>		Y	Y		
<b>Group Trips</b>		Y			
<b>Travel Training</b>	Y	Y	Y		Y
<b>Free Fixed-Route Rides</b>	Y		Y	Y	Y

### Lessons Learned for the Tri-Valley

The review of peer programs suggests that most entities provide a similar mix of services to that found in the Tri-Valley, such as door-to-door transportation, group trips, taxi vouchers, mobility management, and senior shuttles. However, based on the key findings described above, there are a number of nuances contained within these programs that may be a good fit to address conditions in the Tri-Valley region, as follows:

- Creating a robust mobility management system, or working with the Countywide program through Eden I&R, will be valuable to riders as the programs in the Tri-Valley become more distinctly differentiated between ADA and non-ADA services
- Diverse outreach programs, including those that recognize cultural differences such as the approach found in Fremont, will help a broader array of seniors and people with disabilities to understand the options that are available to them
- Travel training can be an effective way of ensuring that riders are using the mode that is best suited to their functional abilities. The Travel Navigator program in Marin County seems particularly well suited to the Tri-Valley
- Free fixed route service for ADA eligible residents, such as that provided in Santa Rosa, is an effective way of shifting some trips to fixed route, but this is dependent on an accurate ADA paratransit eligibility screening process to avoid misuse of the free fare program
- If LAVTA wishes to encourage greater taxi voucher use, the Solano Transportation Authority (STA) has shown that the implementation of a low-income subsidy is relatively easy to implement
- Incorporating functional assessments for part of the in-person eligibility process, such as that employed in Santa Rosa, can be a valuable enhancement of the eligibility process



## 7 Key Findings

The focus of this and previous chapters was to review transit data, peer findings, public input and existing policies and procedures. Findings from these efforts indicate that Wheels Dial-A-Ride and PPS are dedicated to providing quality transit service for the community. The challenge is to effectively deploy resources to meet ADA requirements, provide services that are cost effective, and plan ahead for shifting demographics.

Although both the City of Pleasanton and Wheels have accomplished much, opportunities exist for further enhancements and a refined vision for paratransit services in the Tri-Valley. The quantitative data—as well as the insight provided by members of the public and stakeholders—sets the stage for the development of strategy recommendations that will be included in the final chapter.

Based on the information presented in this and previous chapters, several findings are identified:

### **Both Wheels and PPS staff are dedicated to providing quality service.**

Stakeholders, political leaders and members of the public lauded transit staff for providing a quality service, for being responsive, and in Wheels' case, for introducing new approaches to providing paratransit services. Consumers expressed their appreciation of the drivers they describe as friendly, knowledgeable, and offering good customer service in the field.

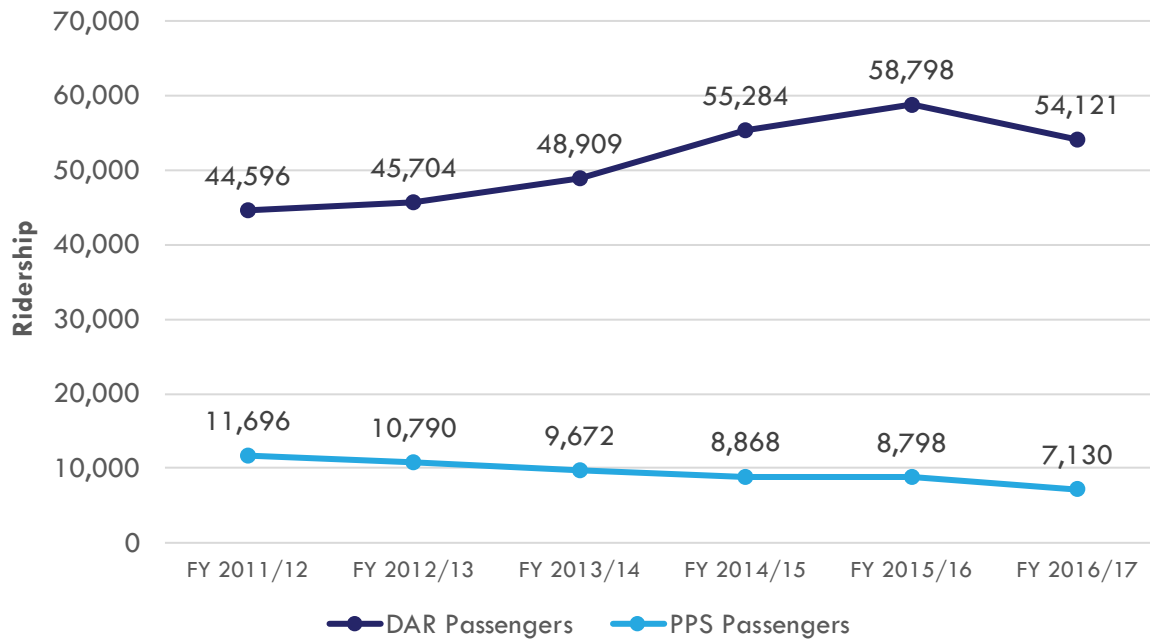
### **The two-system operating environment brings some complexity in consistency of services and policies for consumers.**

Wheels Dial-A-Ride and PPS have different fares, eligibility requirements, service hours, vehicle types, and scheduling and dispatch procedures. They also have different rules regarding the accommodation of mobility devices, pick-up windows, and hours that reservations are accepted.

### **Ridership increases are putting pressure on Wheels while PPS is losing riders.**

As shown in Figure 7-1, Wheels Dial-A-Ride has generally followed a trend of increasing ridership, while PPS ridership has declined. Although efforts have been made to reverse this trend—with some success for Wheels Dial-A-Ride—it is appropriate to consider other measures.

Figure 7-1 Wheels Dial-A-Ride (DAR) vs. Pleasanton Paratransit Service Ridership



One of the concerns about the sustainability of Wheels Dial-A-Ride service is the steadily increasing number of dialysis trips. These trips can be considered “premium” to the extent that they exceed the minimum requirements of the ADA. For operational reasons they are usually provided as subscription service (though not always in the case of Wheels), which is not required under the ADA. They also are subject to a greater time sensitivity than the trip negotiation window and on-time performance window allowed under the ADA. These trip characteristics beyond the ADA minimum requirements could serve as the basis for cost sharing negotiations with the clinics whose clients are transported by the Wheels program.

Likewise, changes in marketing, a lack of reliable availability based on scheduling practices, staffing challenges, limited service hours, and other factors may be contributing to ridership declines on PPS.

### Both paratransit providers limit subscription service.

A reasonable percentage of subscription service, usually considered in the 50 to 70% range, is more convenient for both consumers and paratransit schedulers. According to ADA requirements, subscription trips are not allowed to exceed 50% of trips provided during any service hour *if the system is experiencing capacity constraints*. In the case of Wheels, the system is reportedly meeting all the capacity constraint requirements, in particular an absence of trip denials. As such, the program is allowed to exceed the 50% limit. This would lead to greater program efficiencies and reduce the telephone volumes as riders would not have to book for recurring trips. However, the current policy of allowing subscription service with no minimum of recurring trips would need to be revisited.



PPS also places a limit on subscription service. This applies as long as the service is considered an ADA service. If the program is not intended to meet the ADA requirements, an increase in the subscription percentage would be warranted. See below for discussion on ADA service.

### **Some vulnerabilities and challenges exist with regard to Pleasanton Paratransit Service ADA compliance.**

Although a minority of PPS riders are registered as ADA-eligible riders, the service operates as the ADA paratransit complement to Wheels in Pleasanton. While the City of Pleasanton operates PPS, Wheels is responsible for ensuring the service is compliant with ADA requirements. If PPS is to continue providing ADA service, some stated PPS policies must be updated: 24-hour advance reservations, the inability to accommodate all mobility devices (and the reference to “common wheelchair” in the PPS application), requirements for a personal care attendant, and seatbelt requirements.

Under the ADA, programs that mingle ADA and non-ADA certified riders on the same vehicles must be able to distinguish between these two rider categories in order to ensure that ADA-certified riders receive service that is fully ADA-compliant. PPS does not currently track these two rider categories.

Other ADA requirements must be carried forward including comprehensive ADA training for drivers and the dispatcher, a set of published ADA-specific policies and procedures (for application approval, accommodation, service animals, visitors, and others). Policies to ensure vehicles in operation meet ADA maintenance requirements and a formalized complaint and complaint monitoring process must be implemented. The PPS trip time negotiations that sometimes result in riders being offered trips more than an hour on each side of their desired times are not allowable under the ADA. Some telephone hold times may have exceeded a level that would be acceptable under the ADA.

Based on these types of issues, a key consideration for PPS is whether it should continue to operate as a hybrid senior/ADA paratransit program or transition to a specialized program that does not operate as an ADA complement to Wheels. Other options are also possible.

### **For ADA-eligible consumers, opportunities exist to enhance the effectiveness of the ADA paratransit eligibility screening process**

While Wheels has transitioned to an in-person process that is regarded as the industry standard, the fact that this has been conducted by a member of MTM staff should be reconsidered and Wheels staff has currently assumed a greater role. Most agencies avoid contracting with their service provider to also conduct eligibility screenings because of the perception of a conflict of interest. For PPS ADA eligibility, Wheels has been assigned the responsibility for determinations.

### **Challenges exist related to interagency transfers for regional trips.**

Although long travel times are reported as commonplace when riders transfer between paratransit providers to complete a trip they may, in fact, be comparable to transit travel times on fixed routes. However, riders still voice concerns about the complexity of transfers due to service reliability that is not necessarily a function of Wheels Dial-A-Ride or PPS performance: links between these services and LINK or East Bay Paratransit require significant coordination for participating agencies. Likewise, Wheels in particular receives requests for expanded services to facilitate links to contracted bus services that operate for adults with disabilities traveling to a

regional center. Approaches to address these more regional mobility issues should also be considered.

**Wheels Para-Taxi service is a welcome service, but is limited in availability to non-ambulatory riders.**

Wheels offers same-day Para-Taxi service to riders who are able to use taxis, however some people with disabilities (who use certain mobility aids that cannot be transported in a sedan) have few options for same-day travel. Finding an alternative that allows for parity with the taxi program will be important for people with disabilities in the Tri-Valley.

**PPS faces challenges with regard to driver retention.**

An issue that needs to be addressed is driver retention. The current practice of employing primarily part-time drivers on schedules that may not always afford sufficient work hours, may contribute to the driver turnover problem of recent years at PPS, which is in turn affecting service reliability and availability. According to national research, driver turnover can result in a host of service quality and efficiency problems, and may be contributing to the exceptionally high operating cost per trip as the service is not as productive as it could be.

**PPS operating costs exceed industry standards.**

PPS' hourly operating cost is nearly \$140 per hour, or more than \$68 per passenger trip (about twice the cost for a trip on Wheels Dial-A-Ride). Costs may be higher than some other peer agencies because the City of Pleasanton's costs are fully burdened (all costs related to transportation functions are assigned to staff at multiple levels, and these may not be captured in the performance metrics at other agencies). It also suggests efficiencies are necessary if the current service model is maintained, or that new approaches to the provision of service should be considered.

**PPS does not have policies to enforce responsible ridership.**

In 2017, there were 457 late cancellations or no-shows, representing almost 7% of all completed trips. This relatively high number may be based on the substantial advance reservation allowance (up to 14 days). Failure to implement a policy of sanctions for the most egregious offenders has an impact on service efficiencies and schedule adherence.

**PPS intakes and driver manifests are completed manually**

PPS staff currently document most if not all intake information manually, and driver manifests are also prepared manually as a paper-based process. While it is not unusual for small programs to prepare these documents manually, most systems of comparable size have migrated to a partially computer based process for intake and manifest documentation. Since staff are already used to using TripSpark for computer assist scheduling, the transition to computer generated intakes and manifests should not present a significant barrier.

## 8 Recommendations

### KEY STUDY OBJECTIVES

The service options presented in this report focus on key objectives of this study:

- Identify near-term service changes to improve paratransit options for populations of older adults and people with disabilities in the Tri-Valley
- Develop cost-effective strategies that focus on making paratransit more efficient and responsive to local needs
- Develop approaches that will ensure ADA paratransit is compliant with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements
- Consider service options in support of expanding needs and the growing population of older adults

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to address these objectives, this report is organized around four primary service strategies:

1. Transfer ADA service from the City of Pleasanton to LAVTA
2. Restructure Pleasanton Paratransit Service as a City-Based Program for Older Adults
3. Implement policy and service changes for Wheels Dial-A-Ride
4. Implement a Tri-Valley Coordinated Transit Strategy for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

#### 1. TRANSFER ADA SERVICE FROM PLEASANTON TO LAVTA

Two key challenges need to be addressed to enhance the effectiveness of PPS. The first is the decision regarding the continued use of the program as a means of partially meeting LAVTA's ADA paratransit obligation, and the second is the declining use of the PPS.

It is recommended that PPS operate exclusively as a senior transportation program for the City of Pleasanton (and Sunol, if desired), and that LAVTA expand its paratransit services to incorporate the needs of current PPS ADA-eligible clients.

There are two primary reasons for the recommended course of action:

- The service currently provided by PPS to ADA-eligible clients does not fully meet the requirements of the ADA in a number of instances, as described below.
- Eliminating the ADA paratransit obligations would allow PPS to return to its core mission of serving senior residents. Depending on the funding made available by the City of Pleasanton for this service, this strategy may also enable PPS to provide more trips to older adults, resulting in a lower cost per trip.

There are numerous ways in which current service does not fully meet the ADA requirements. These include:

- Tracking and reporting of ADA and non-ADA trips

- A variety of service policies which essentially result in trip denials, including trip time negotiations outside the one hour allowable limit
- Prioritizing medical trips
- Prohibiting the use of scooters
- Requiring seatbelts

If LAVTA assumes the full ADA obligation as recommended, the distinctions between the two programs should be clearly stated, with an ADA level of service offered at LAVTA, and a senior paratransit program provided at PPS that does not need to meet ADA requirements (a non-ADA program has much greater latitude in setting policies and service parameters). While many riders indicate confusion due to the current disparities between the programs' service policies, characterizing one program as an ADA program and the other as a local city-based senior oriented non-ADA program should help riders understand that there will be differences in the services offered by the two programs.

## Considerations for the Immediate Term

Transferring the ADA program may take some time. In the immediate term the City of Pleasanton and LAVTA staff should analyze the use of Wheels by Pleasanton residents during PPS service hours. Under the current program Wheels is intended to fill in the gap in service hours when PPS is not operating. However, our analysis has indicated that some Pleasanton residents are choosing to ride the impacted Wheels service during regular PPS service hours.

The analysis should include a review of data to determine the following:

- Use of Wheels Service by Pleasanton residents during PPS service hours
- Determine if there are specific individuals who frequently choose to ride Wheels during PPS hours and define the times of day these trips occur and interview individuals to find out the reasons for their use of Wheels during PPS hours
- Identify any changes to PPS service policies that could shift trips back to PPS before the transition occurs

## Memorandum Of Understanding between Pleasanton and LAVTA

A transition plan should be developed by City of Pleasanton and LAVTA staff and memorialized in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two agencies. The MOU should include how the transfer will be completed and should include details about timeline, funds to be transferred, and how Pleasanton Customers will be supported through the transition.

## Funding of ADA Paratransit Services

The City receives Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds that are they key means of funding transit programs in California. These funds are distributed in the Bay Area through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). Since these funds are designated specifically for ADA paratransit purposes, PPS is required to transfer these funds to LAVTA in the event that the latter agency takes over responsibility for all of Pleasanton's ADA paratransit obligation.

LAVTA receives funds for ADA Paratransit services through Measure B and BB allocations for city-based programs in Dublin and Livermore. This funding comes from Alameda County

Transportation Commission (ACTC) directly because the cities of Dublin and Livermore do not provide their own Paratransit/Senior Transportation service. The City of Pleasanton receives Measure B and BB allocation directly from ACTC as they provide a Paratransit service to its residents. This funding is used to pay for the Senior Transportation component of the PPS program. LAVTA receives no additional allocation from ACTC to provide services to Pleasanton residents.

## **Elimination of ADA service for Sunol**

By discontinuing ADA paratransit service operated by the City of Pleasanton, residents of Sunol will no longer be eligible for ADA paratransit. Wheels Dial-A-Ride does not currently serve Sunol, so both agencies will need to make a policy decision regarding whether service to the small population can be funded through alternative means, and who will be responsible for providing this service.

## **Informing Pleasanton Consumers**

Educating the riding public about the implications of the policy change will be critical, as well as providing guidance on how to transfer trip needs to LAVTA. It is recommended that informational meetings be held in advance.

# **2. RESTRUCTURE PLEASANTON PARATRANSIT SERVICE AS A CITY-BASED PROGRAM FOR OLDER ADULTS**

## **A. Service Delivery Models**

Our analysis indicates that the current PPS staffing structure involves more individuals than is warranted for a program of this size. Three primary options are identified.

### **A1. Reorganize Program within City**

The City of Pleasanton may be able to reduce the number of individuals involved in the program and either maintain the current level of full-time equivalents (FTEs) among a smaller number of people or determine if the overall FTEs can be reduced and the program run more efficiently.

### **A2. Contract Service with a Private Transportation Company**

The City may choose to contract with a private transportation company for paratransit operations. This model is certainly the most common form of service delivery as it allows for flexibility to reflect changes in demand. Cost savings that are likely to result from this change could be used to maintain existing level of service and allow the City to consider expansion of service level based on the needs of Pleasanton residents. This approach would be a significant departure from the current service model and will require a detailed analysis of the costs and benefits of outsourcing the service. The cities of Fremont and Santa Rosa use the contract service model.

## **Considerations**

Some of the factors that will need to be considered as part of this analysis include:

- Contract oversight costs and training of City staff who will be responsible for this function
- Potential changes in service quality
- Potential changes in productivity and cost performance measures

## B. Operational Efficiency Options

### B1. Maintain Demand-Response Program

Demand-response transportation programs are contrasted to fixed-route transit in that they provide service on a door-to-door or curb-to-curb basis rather than at fixed bus stop locations. Trips are individually scheduled in response to trip requests via telephone or some other means. Paratransit programs are the most common form of demand-response service, but general public dial-a-ride is also a common form of demand-response service. Potential reductions in service scope and availability can be considered, such as limiting trip provision to within the city or designating specific days for specific trip purposes, such trips to medical centers two days per week.

### B2. Reallocate Resources to PPS Core Service

- **Special group trips.** In order to increase productivity and provide more trips, PPS could explore grouping trip requests at high ridership facilities. However, it will be important to design a service that is different to the previous Downtown Shuttle/My Ride service that yielded disappointing ridership results.
- **Taxi/ride-hailing voucher program.** The Para-Taxi program provided by LAVTA is an example of a taxi program, in which riders can use vouchers to receive discounted rides from taxi companies under contract to the transit agency or other municipal entity.

## C. Data Collection and Monitoring

### On-time Performance Monitoring

While PPS currently reports on-time performance of 100% (or very close to that percentage), industry standards show that this is extremely unlikely, given the lack of control over certain circumstances. The substantial declines in ridership also suggest that the service is likely not providing 100% on-time performance. Closer scrutiny needs to be paid to PPS' monitoring of this measure and a more refined methodology proposed.

## D. Service Policies

### D1. Develop and Enforce a Cancellation/No-show policy

Based on experience in the paratransit industry, programs that have implemented an effective late cancellation/no-show policy have seen a substantive reduction in their late cancel/no-show rates. This is true even once the program ceases to provide ADA paratransit service. PPS will need to develop and implement such policy in order to help improve productivity and expand the number of trips that can be provided during "holes" in the schedule.

Best practices from other agencies suggest that tying sanctions for late cancels/no-shows to the frequency of an individual's ridership is an effective means of shifting this behavior. This approach limits the amount of staff time required to monitor and address this problem, while identifying the most egregious offenders. Most riders start changing their behavior soon after

receiving their first warning letter, and only a very small number actually experience service suspensions.

## **D2. Revise Scheduling Practices**

PPS should review the use of split shifts and other scheduling practices that may contribute to driver turnover. Other systems have found that driver retention is critical to optimal paratransit operations. In addition, PPS should conduct a brief marketing analysis of prevailing wages in the area to determine if staff wages need to be increased in order to remain competitive and reduce the impact of staff turnover.

# **3. IMPLEMENT POLICY AND SERVICE CHANGES FOR WHEELS DIAL-A-RIDE**

The key challenges facing Wheels Dial-A-Ride are escalating demand and the need to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the program. Following are the priority strategies for addressing these issues.

## **A. Administrative Improvements**

### **A1. Contract Monitoring and Enforcement of Performance Standards**

LAVTA's current provider, MTM, uses a non-traditional business model for provision of paratransit services. LAVTA should explore the potential benefits of a new contract that uses a more traditional model with a local base to improve service quality and performance.

This approach may increase cost per trip, but the costs may be mitigated by improvements in productivity, enhanced contract monitoring and routine performance standards reviews.

### **A2. Explore New Technology**

LAVTA should also move towards an inter-active voice recognition (IVR) scheduling system to improve performance and reduce the labor hours necessary to track data and make changes during the day. There are many app-enabled products on the market that could also help customers.

LAVTA has considered the benefits of implementing a taxi debit card for ParaTaxi users. However, based on experience in other programs, it is still not clear that a debit card program is well-suited to a small taxi program on the scale of the Para-Taxi program.

In addition, LAVTA should pursue adding video surveillance on all vehicles. Control of the video system should reside with LAVTA as the public agency. LAVTA should also explore the viability of mobile app/computer reservations, reducing the number of calls into the call center and adding accessibility to booking rides.

## **B. Service Options**

### **B1. Enhance ADA Paratransit Eligibility Screening Process**

One of the key areas requiring improvement is the establishment of an accurate in-person ADA paratransit eligibility program that is administered by professionals with the appropriate training. Accurate eligibility screening is one of the only demand management tools allowed under the



ADA, and is consistent with the law’s regulatory language describing paratransit as a “safety net” for those who are not able to ride fixed route transit some or all of the time.

While LAVTA has already taken the important step of implementing in-person interviews for new applicants and existing Wheels registrants, this has not yet resulted in the kinds of eligibility outcomes that reflect best practices and are needed to ensure long-term financial sustainability. Almost all applicants are certified as eligible for paratransit, and while the uptick in conditional eligibility determinations is a positive sign, the benefits have not been realized due to a lack of implementation of these conditions.

LAVTA should implement the following steps in order to gain the full benefit of a comprehensive paratransit eligibility process:

- Determine whether the process will include functional assessments
- Make policy decisions on other aspects of program design (should medical waivers or medical verification be required, should applicants send in information ahead of the assessment, how will decisions be made regarding whether to extend specific assessments beyond interviews to functional assessments etc.)
- Compile a Request for Proposals in order to solicit interest from potential contractors
- Install new contractor
- Coordinate with the paratransit contractor to ensure that eligibility conditions are applied on an incremental basis

## **B2. Consider Reduction of Service Area/Hours or Charging Premium Fares**

One of the strategies that fiscally constrained paratransit programs have adopted is a reduction of service area and/or service hours to the minimum required under the ADA. This can involve an absolute drawing back to the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile corridor on either side of a transit fixed route and only during the hours that service is offered on that route. Another alternative would be to reduce paratransit service on some routes and during some service hours.

Our initial analysis of the number of individuals who would be impacted by these changes suggests that their number would be relatively limited. By implication, this would also suggest that the long term cost savings may be fairly limited. LAVTA will need to determine whether the cost benefits outweigh the potential concerns that will be expressed by community members and policy makers. However, conducting and reviewing this analysis before adopting this strategy will help make for an informed decision.

An alternative to simply eliminating service that exceeds the ADA would be to charge premium fares for non-ADA service, including trips beyond the service area or service hours, as well as same day service. The goal of this strategy is to minimize/reduce the financial impact of providing service in excess of that required by the ADA, while continuing to make this available as an occasional or lifeline option to those who need it.

## **B3. Expand Subscription Service**

The percentage of trips provided through subscription service is currently substantially below best practices in other systems. Since LAVTA currently meets its goal of zero trip denials, the agency may implement a substantial increase in the subscription service level and remain ADA-compliant. This should result in lessened call volumes as individuals will not be required to request individual trips, and greater convenience to riders with frequently repeating trip patterns.



As an initial step, the agency should identify those riders who take routine trips at least twice a week who are not receiving subscription service, and examine if there are any reasons for not providing this service. Over time an increase in this percentage to approximately 50% can be viewed as a viable goal.

#### **B4. Accessible Same-day Service**

LAVTA is considered a pioneer in the Bay Area in the development of the same-day service pilot program using ride-hailing services and taxis in the city of Dublin, as well as offering the Para-Taxi program that allows eligible users to schedule a taxi trip and receive reimbursement of 85% of the fare. However, the availability of *accessible* same-day service throughout the service area remains a mobility gap that continues to be prioritized by consumers. A variety of alternatives should be considered in order to meet this need, such as contracting with a new provider or establishing a premium paratransit fare structure to allow for same-day travel through the existing Wheels program.

In the first alternative, an on-demand bus or van service could be considered. This would be a dedicated shared-ride public transit service that allows for same-day trip requests, typically for trip pickup and drop-off locations within a specified area. On-demand service often provides a local connection (sometimes called first- or last-mile service) to or from a regional transit hub, park-and-ride lot, or express bus route for trips beyond the dedicated service area, but can also be an effective way to serve local trips.

Since this study was initiated, a number of cities and transit agencies in the country have established pilot programs that incorporate ride-hailing services as a means of expanding mobility options for ADA-paratransit certified individuals, with the hope of shifting some of the paratransit demand to lower cost ride-hailing options. While the jury is still out as to whether the latter objective has been achieved, LAVTA should monitor the results of these pilot programs and determine whether they would be viable options for expansion of the Dublin program throughout the Tri-Valley area.

A precedent for the second alternative may be found in neighboring Santa Clara County, where the Valley Transportation Authority offers same day service for a one-way premium fare of \$16.

### **C. Data Collection and Monitoring**

#### **C1. Consistent Approach from Year to Year**

The Existing Conditions chapter identified numerous anomalies in the way that performance data is collected for Wheels service. Mechanisms should be put in place in order to ensure consistency in the way the data is collected from year to year.

#### **C2. Monitor and Report Para-Taxi Data for Planning Purposes**

While Para-Taxi ridership remains a small proportion of trips currently provided to LAVTA ADA-registered individuals, this number has been growing at a substantial rate over the past two years. As such, it is important to integrate these numbers into the analysis of overall ridership of Wheels Dial-A-Ride services. Even though the extent to which these trips directly divert demand from the paratransit program is unclear, they do likely have an impact which should be taken into account.

## 4. IMPLEMENT A TRI-VALLEY COORDINATED TRANSIT STRATEGY FOR OLDER ADULTS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

### A. Short-Term Strategies

#### A1. Initiate Cost Sharing Activities with Regional Centers and Dialysis Clinics

A significant minority of trips are currently provided to clients of Regional Centers and to those requiring dialysis treatment without any cost sharing from those agencies for these critical trips. A number of characteristics of these trips would result in them being defined as premium trips, such as the need for a narrower window of on-time pick-ups than required under the ADA, and the guarantee of subscription service in most instances.

LAVTA should take steps to meet with representatives of these agencies and clinics in order to enter into cost sharing arrangements which will guarantee the continued provision of these trips, while ensuring that LAVTA receive a portion of the trip cost that exceeds the prevailing fares.

#### A2. Implement a Transit Orientation Program

Transit orientation is less formal and involved than traditional travel training and explains transportation systems by sharing information about trip planning, schedules, maps, fare systems, mobility devices, and benefits and services. It may be conducted in a group or one-on-one. Two ideas for transit orientation are “tech” training by matching seniors with middle/high school students to practice using their smartphones and Clipper orientations. Alternately, a non-profit organization could be contracted to provide the “tech training.”

Seniors in the community have requested further information on using transit and/or ride-hailing apps. These strategies are fast low-cost ways to provide travel training. Senior center staff could contact their counterparts in the school district about arranging the “tech” training matching opportunities. There are a couple of local examples of these types of trainings: The City of Emeryville provides a “tech” training matching program and Marin Transit contracts with a local non-profit organization to provide two-session “tech trainings” to seniors in Marin County.

#### A3. Explore the Feasibility of an Older Driver Cessation Program

LAVTA and PPS should examine the feasibility of developing a program that meets the mobility needs of older adults at the point at which they are “giving up their keys” or about to do so. Similar programs have been developed in other jurisdictions in which older drivers who fail their tests at the Department of Motor Vehicles are directed towards the program that provides them with information about the availability of mobility resources in their communities beyond solo driving.

#### A4. Share Scheduling and Dispatch Platforms

Since both LAVTA and PPS use Trapeze for trip scheduling purposes, there are likely benefits that would accrue if the two agencies coordinated their scheduling and dispatch platforms.

### **A5. Develop Coordinated Public Information**

In public meetings, it became clear that many people do not understand the differences among the different transportation programs in the Tri-Valley. In order to reduce confusion, LAVTA, the City of Pleasanton and other organizations should coordinate the information that is provided in materials that are made available to the public.

PPS and LAVTA might also coordinate how they communicate the purposes of their paratransit programs, which may reduce confusion among riders who may be participating in both programs.

### **A6. Advocate for More Equitable Measure B and BB Funding Allocation to East County**

The current funding allocation by planning area adopted in the Transportation Expenditure Plans by the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) for these sales tax measures designates LAVTA as a “non-mandated” service, even though this designation is intended for non-ADA paratransit services. As a result, LAVTA does not receive funding in a manner similar to that assigned to East Bay Paratransit, the primary ADA paratransit program in Alameda County. LAVTA and the City of Pleasanton should explore possibilities for addressing this funding anomaly with the Paratransit Advisory and Planning Committee (PAPCO) of ACTC through the PAPCO-developed funding formula for funding distribution within planning areas.

## **B. Longer-Term Strategy: Explore Mobility Management Options**

Mobility management programs are proliferating in the Bay Area and nationwide. They serve as a tool to both enhance coordination between various providers, and reduce the need for multiple contacts with various agencies when individuals are requesting a ride. They can also be used to ensure that the individual rides the most cost-effective mode for a specific trip, given their functional abilities.

Mobility as a Service (MaaS) can be considered a mobility management tool in that it aims to manage a network of coordinated transportation services for the community. Beyond the typical one-call/one-click mobility management model, MaaS is typically operated by one organization and more focused on individual mobility where customers can purchase bundles of transportation services that meet their needs. This concept is gaining traction in the US and could be explored as an expansion of the GoDublin pilot project with a mind for paratransit customers, which is not its primary focus now.

LAVTA and PPS should jointly pursue expanding this model to the Tri-Valley region. Both the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Alameda County Transportation Commission can be instrumental stakeholders in facilitating the implementation (and funding) of this strategy.



## 9 Implementation Plan

This study has presented a broad array of strategies that should be implemented in order to meet the region's mobility objectives. In this Final Report, we prioritize these recommendations chronologically and by level of effort.

### SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES (WITHIN ONE YEAR)

#### Joint Effort between LAVTA and PPS

A key recommendation emerging from this study is the transfer of the ADA paratransit service currently provided by PPS to LAVTA. This will allow Pleasanton Paratransit Services to return to its core mission of serving senior residents, improve efficiencies in the provision of this service – thus reducing cost per trip – and reduce the level of confusion experienced by some riders regarding the distinctions between the two services. We are purposefully not addressing the issue of transfer of funds as this is currently being negotiated by the City and LAVTA. However, we do present below the steps that will be required for this effort, as well as other strategies that are associated with this change in responsibilities.

#### Pleasanton Paratransit Services

Following are some of the actions that will be required to implement this recommendation:

##### Prior to Transition of ADA Responsibility

- Resolve the reallocation of existing funding between the City of Pleasanton and LAVTA
- Determine a realistic timeline for the transfer of the ADA responsibility to LAVTA
- Create educational materials to inform current registrants and other key stakeholders (such as social service agencies, family members) about the transition plan, including timeline and the specific ways in which riders will be affected, such as whom to call to reserve a trip and current Wheels Dial-A-Ride policies
- Ensure that staff are equipped to respond to questions from riders about the transition
- Finalize a decision regarding whether the new PPS senior-only transportation program will be a contracted service or continue to operate internally
- Make a determination of how staffing and responsibilities will be modified based upon any changes to the PPS program
- Ensure that LAVTA staff have all the required information about ADA-eligible riders
- Work with LAVTA staff to ensure a smooth transition
- Develop coordinated information delivered to the public

##### Following Transition of ADA Responsibility

- Draft and finalize a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) document to determine interest, service levels, and cost efficiencies of potential contract services for senior demand-response service and special group trips.

- Conduct a quick peer review of costs per trip of comparable programs in the Bay Area to establish a reasonable range of costs
- Create a set of performance measures that will be incorporated into a paratransit service agreement
- Review responses to RFQ and determine which vendors warrant a follow-up solicitation of technical and cost proposals
- Select a vendor and reach a service agreement with roles and responsibilities for the provider and the City
- Once the City has a viable vendor to provide this service, revise job descriptions for designated staff who will monitor the program
- Establish a performance monitoring program to ensure contract compliance
- Develop and enforce a cancellation/no-show policy to reduce late cancel and no-show rates

## Wheels Dial-A-Ride

### Activities Prior to the Transition

- Advocate with the City of Pleasanton for more equitable Measure B/BB funding allocation to East County. Advocacy efforts should address the historic anomaly that LAVTA does not receive funding in a similar manner as East Bay Paratransit, the primary ADA paratransit program in Alameda County
- Estimate the potential increase in ridership and costs that are likely to occur under different scenarios of incorporation of Pleasanton ADA-registered customers
- Identify funding sources for covering this additional financial obligation
- Implement the necessary steps to allow for an expansion of service due to the incorporation of added Pleasanton resident trips
- Establish trip demand levels (or cost increases) that would trigger adjustments in service policies – described below – to ensure the long-term sustainability of the paratransit program
- Explore new scheduling software options that will help improve performance and reduce labor hours
- Determine whether the current contracting arrangement will suffice for the provision of expanded service
- Review and enhance the current approach to data collection, including the reporting of para-taxi data
- Decide whether any service is going to be provided to Sunol residents
- Refine contract monitoring and enforcing performance standards
- Enhance the ADA paratransit eligibility screening process by incorporating functional assessments for a subset of applicants for whom an interview is insufficient to make an accurate eligibility determination

- Expand subscription service to reduce call volumes
- Explore the financial viability of offering free fixed route service to ADA paratransit eligible riders after confidence in the enhanced eligibility process has been established
- Explore the potential for incorporating TNCs in the provision of same day service, possibly expanding on the success of the Dublin program

## LONG-TERM STRATEGIES (ONE TO THREE YEARS)

### **Regional Efforts - Implement a Tri-Valley Coordinated Transit Strategy for Older Adults and People with Disabilities.**

- Initiate cost-sharing activities with regional centers and dialysis clinics, tracking progress that has been made by East Bay Paratransit
- Implement a transit orientation program, which is less formal than travel training, potentially involving high school and college student volunteers to teach technology
- Explore the feasibility of a joint older driver cessation program
- Share scheduling and dispatch platforms
- Explore mobility management options, including mobility as a service (MaaS), which serves to improve customer ease of use and to ensure rides are the most cost-effective mode for any given specific trip.

### **LAVTA-specific Activities: Consider Cost Saving Measures**

If the cost of service provision reaches a pre-determined threshold, LAVTA should consider the following activities

- Reduce service area and/or service hours to be comparable to fixed route hours on specific routes
- Charge premium fares outside the required area and hours

## **APPENDIX A**

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### Literature Review





## Appendix A Literature Review

This section provides context to the existing paratransit services in the Tri-Valley area by highlighting the local and regional plans and policies that address transportation options for the elderly and disabled in this area.

These plans and policies serve to guide paratransit services and investment throughout their respective cities and regions. Under the 1990 ADA, paratransit services are required for all fixed-route bus and rail services in the US. In Alameda County, Measure B – approved by voters in 2000 – funds countywide and city-based paratransit programs and services. In 2014, Alameda County voters approved Measure BB, extending this funding until 2045.<sup>1</sup>

Relevant expenditure plans and other studies are summarized below.

### **Assessment of Mobility Needs of People with Disabilities and Seniors in Alameda County (2017)**

The Alameda County Transportation Commission conducted an assessment to address any identified trends and themes that have emerged and provide guidance to city-based and ADA-mandated programs. Primary gaps identified included issues with (1) ADA-mandated paratransit performance, in particular on-time performance and long rides due to shared rides and congestion; (2) lack of access to reliable same-day transportation, especially for consumers who need accessible vehicles, and (3) needs for better medical transportation options, especially for cross-county and cross-jurisdictional travel to medical facilities.

Concerns were raised about barriers to accessing fixed-route transit, a need for better customer service on disability sensitivity issues, the high cost of fixed-route transit and ADA-mandated paratransit fares, and the impact of ride-hailing services like Lyft and Uber. Recommended strategies included improved accessibility of the fixed-route public transit system, expanded flexible transit options, improved quality of ADA-mandated paratransit services, expanded access to existing transit discounts (RTC and senior Clipper cards), expanded subsidized fare programs, better access to taxis, expanded availability of same-day accessible trips, increased role of mobility management, one-call/one-click programs, and accessible shared mobility services, among others.

### **Alameda Countywide Transit Plan (2016)**

The Countywide Transit Plan was developed to establish a framework for the County and its individual municipalities and transit agencies to improve local, regional, and inter-regional transit and to better align transit, land use, and economic development goals and objectives. The plan's overarching goal for seniors and people with disabilities is to improve their access to fixed-route systems. Specifically, the plan calls for improved access to transit hubs and stations, reduced distances between fixed route stops and platforms, clear signage designed in accordance

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<sup>1</sup> In adjacent service areas, Measure J, approved by Contra Costa County voters in 2005, funds paratransit services throughout that county until 2035.

with ADA-based guidelines, and enhanced travel-training programs to support people who could be paratransit riders on fixed-route service.<sup>2</sup>

## **LAVTA Comprehensive Operational Analysis (2015)**

LAVTA's 2015 Comprehensive Operational Analysis, also known as Wheels Forward, proposed a series of service changes that aimed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the transit system and to establish a roadmap for future service investments. A number of routes were modified or eliminated in 2016, based on plan recommendations, which would have had implications for the paratransit service area. However, Wheels Dial-a-Ride continued to operate service beyond the mandated ADA service area. The Go Dublin! program was established as a pilot effort based on Analysis outcomes. Wheels initiated this program to pay half a passenger fare (up to \$5) for rideshare trips that begin and end in Dublin on services provided by Uber, Lyft and DeSoto Cab Company.

## **MTC Transit Sustainability Project Paratransit Report (2015)**

In 2015, the MTC released the Transit Sustainability Project (TSP) report in an effort to establish a more robust, cost-effective and customer-focused public transit network throughout the Bay Area. As part of TSP, the agency developed a section of the report focused on paratransit. The provisions for the paratransit section focused on the accessibility, cost and efficiency of paratransit services. Among the report's recommendations were to consider charging premium fares for trips that exceed ADA requirements, to create a "mobility manager" position who coordinates resources customer services, and to improve fixed-route services to provide amenities such as low floor buses, senior-friendly seating, and other improvements to better accommodate trips that are typically taken on paratransit vehicles.<sup>3</sup>

## **MTC Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan (2013)**

MTC's 2013 Coordinated Transportation Plan is a document that fulfills federal requirements to create a "unified, comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited income, laying out strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizing services." In its needs assessment, the plan identifies enhanced paratransit services that go beyond the baseline ADA requirements as a key transportation need in the Bay Area. As a potential strategy, the plan recommends the implementation of travel training programs to complement the ADA certification process and the establishment of ADA paratransit demand management strategies throughout the region.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.alamedactc.org/files/managed/Document/19157/AlamedaCTC\\_CountywideTransitPlan.pdf](http://www.alamedactc.org/files/managed/Document/19157/AlamedaCTC_CountywideTransitPlan.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>

[http://www.alamedactc.org/files/managed/Document/15628/AlamedaCTC\\_Transit\\_Task%201\\_InventoryExistingPlans\\_20150223.pdf](http://www.alamedactc.org/files/managed/Document/15628/AlamedaCTC_Transit_Task%201_InventoryExistingPlans_20150223.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [http://mtc.ca.gov/sites/default/files/Coord\\_Plan\\_Update.pdf](http://mtc.ca.gov/sites/default/files/Coord_Plan_Update.pdf)

## Alameda CTC Transportation Expenditure Plan (2012)

The 2012 Alameda CTC Transportation Expenditure Plan details how the money from a countywide sales tax measure, ultimately approved by voters in 2014, will be spent by the supervising agency over the course of thirty years. Out of the approximately \$8 billion generated in sales tax revenue, \$774 million (around 10%) of this revenue is committed to specialized transit for seniors and people with disabilities. This funding is broken down into three overarching categories. The first category is \$464 million (60%), and is dedicated to the East Bay Paratransit Consortium, which manages the regional ADA paratransit program that serves the senior and disabled populations in the BART and AC Transit service areas. The second category is \$232 million (30%), and is dedicated to city-based and locally mandated paratransit programs, including the Wheels Dial-A-Ride program that covers the Wheels service area. The third category is \$77 million (10%), and is allocated for services that help coordinate paratransit services or fill in gaps where there is no existing service.<sup>5</sup>

## Eastern Alameda County Human Services Needs Assessment: Findings Report (2011)

In 2011, the Tri-Valley cities of Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton commissioned a comprehensive assessment of human service needs in Eastern Alameda County. The assessment found a significant and increasing disconnect between the need for human services and the supply of services available. In regard to transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities, issues identified with existing programs included the often-prohibitive cost to low-income individuals, and the complexity of transferring between transit agencies and across county lines.<sup>6</sup>

## Tri-Valley Transportation Plan and Action Plan Update (2009)

The 2009 Tri-Valley Transportation Plan/Action Plan Update assesses transportation issues within the Tri-Valley area and recommends several goals, policies, objectives and actions to address those issues. While the document does not discuss paratransit issues extensively, it does recommend the expansion of paratransit services throughout the region. Other transit-specific recommendations include a regional express bus program, the expansion of BART feeder services, region-wide bus stop improvements, improved transit service along Vasco Road, and studies on the feasibility of a BART Livermore extension and a variety of bus rapid transit routes.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.alamedactc.org/files/managed/Document/6898/ALAMEDA\\_TEP\\_Final.pdf](http://www.alamedactc.org/files/managed/Document/6898/ALAMEDA_TEP_Final.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.dublin.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/2818>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ccta.net/uploads/52978d54a5750.pdf>



## **APPENDIX B**

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### Survey Results



## Appendix B Survey Results

To better understand the experience of Tri-Valley residents, a survey was conducted online through SurveyMonkey and in-person from May 1, 2017 to June 23, 2017. The survey was open to the public and composed of 35 questions that solicited information regarding travel patterns, recommendations for improved service, and demographic characteristics.

The survey was available in English, Spanish, and Chinese to garner as many possible responses from the diverse population in the Tri-Valley area. This memo summarizes the findings from the survey outreach efforts.

To incentivize participation, respondents could provide their information to enter to win one of five \$50 Visa gift cards.

### DISTRIBUTION AND DATA COLLECTION

The survey was advertised and distributed via multiple channels. They included:

- LAVTA and City of Pleasanton email and regular mailing lists
- Social media: NextDoor, Facebook, Twitter
- Project website linked from City of Pleasanton and LAVTA's websites
- Paper copies dropped at the senior center
- Paper copies distributed at grocery stores and libraries by staff
- Paper copies distributed at three public meetings, one in each city
- The Independent, a Tri-Valley news source

Paper surveys were digitized to allow for easier analysis and interpretation of the responses.

### OVERVIEW

This section of the report summarizes the key takeaways for each question asked on the survey. Where relevant, a deeper look into the responses of current Pleasanton Paratransit or LAVTA Dial-A-Ride users will be detailed.

### Participation and Response Rate

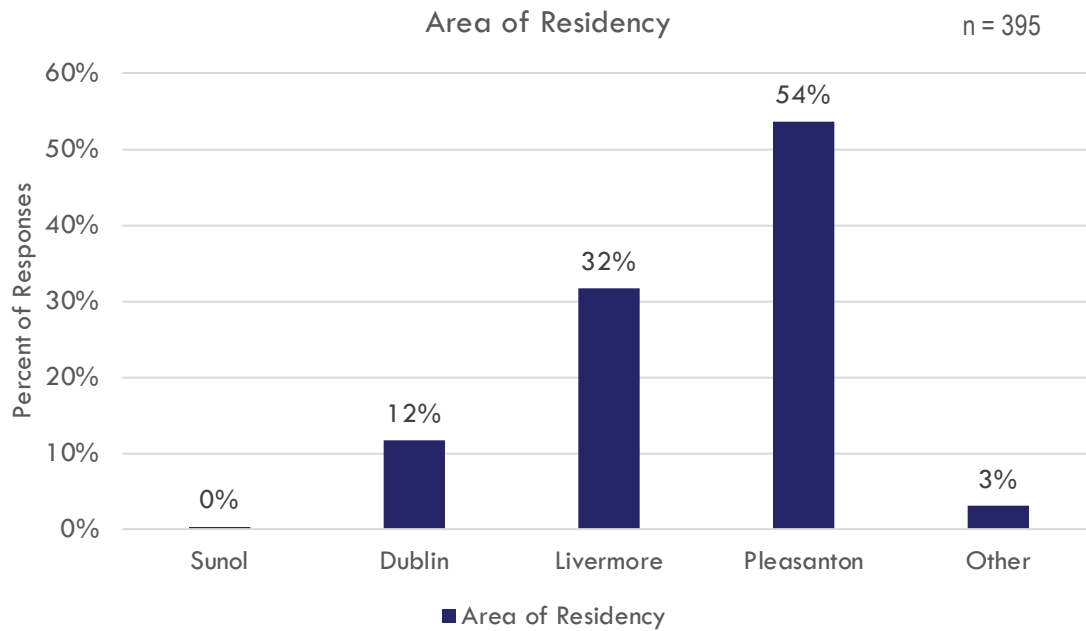
A total of 402 surveys were completed. Online entries accounted for the majority of the surveys (346, 86%). The remaining 14% were completed on paper and later copied into the online survey tool for ease of analysis.



## Geographic Distribution of Respondents

Residents of Pleasanton made up 53.6% of respondents, compared to 31.7% in Livermore and 11.7% in Dublin, as shown in Figure B-1.

**Figure B-1 Survey Respondents' City of Residence**



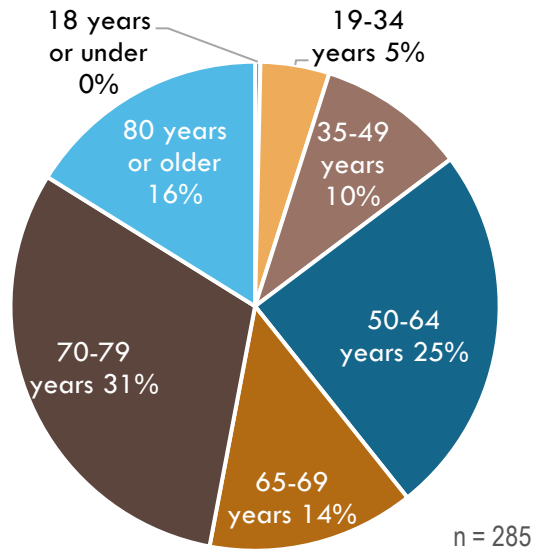
## MARKET ANALYSIS AND DEMOGRAPHICS

This section looks at the breakdown of respondents by a variety of demographic and socio-economic factors. Unless specified, the analysis includes all survey responses.

Of 280 responses, two-thirds were female. Nearly 72% identify as White, while Asians represented 15%, Latinos 7%, and Black/African Americans 2.5% of respondents.

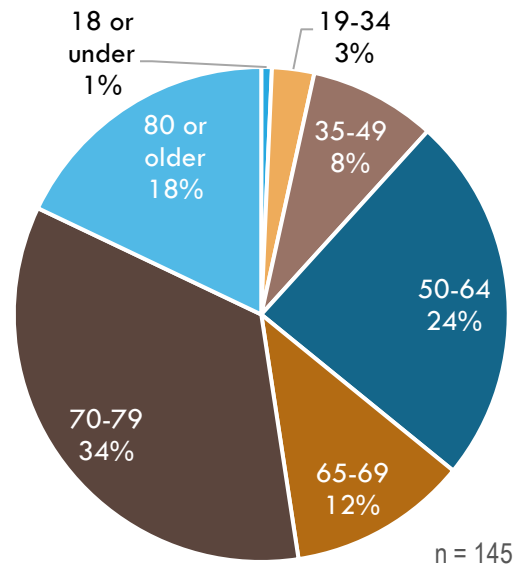
Among all respondents, 61% are at least 65 years old. Another quarter (25%) are between the ages of 50 and 64 years old.

**Figure B-2 Survey Respondent Age**



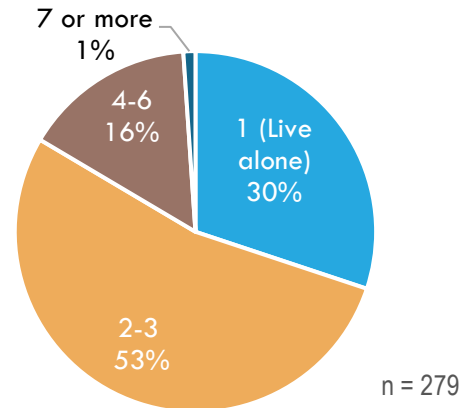
Pleasanton paratransit goes beyond ADA compliance by allowing residents at least 70 years old to be eligible to ride. Figure B-3 shows the breakdown of the 145 people who filled out the survey from Pleasanton. Fourteen percent (14%) of Pleasanton residents will be eligible for Pleasanton Paratransit Services in the next five years. Nearly a quarter more from Pleasanton are between the ages of 50 and 64, and will be eligible in the next six to 20 years. This is an important group to reach regarding their transportation needs and priorities, as they will be the primary user group for paratransit services as they grow older.

**Figure B-3 Age of Pleasanton Survey Respondents**

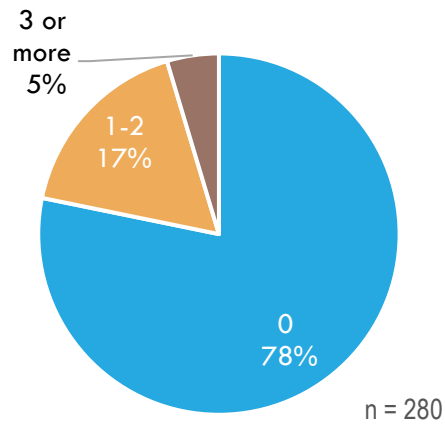


The majority of households have two to three people—including the survey respondent—living in the household. Similarly, a large proportion of households (78%) are primarily adults 18 years and older, and 53% of households have at least one person aged 70 or older.

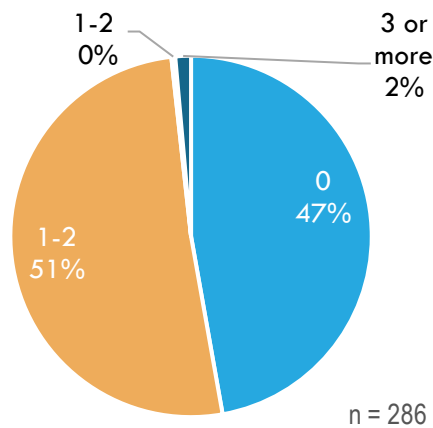
**Figure B-4 Household Size**



**Figure B-5 Number of Household Members Aged 18 or Younger**



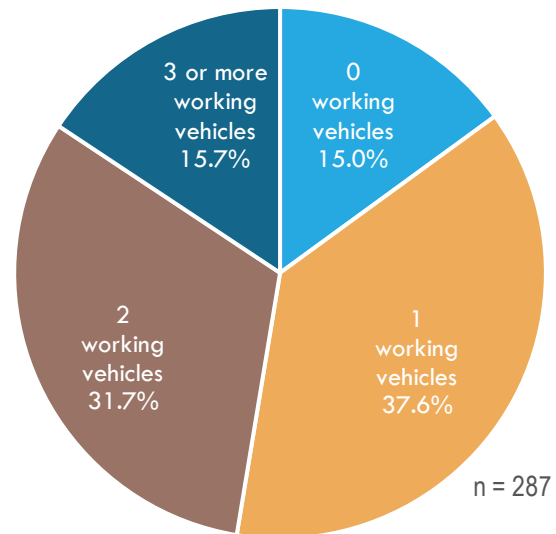
**Figure B-6 Number of Household Members Aged 70 or Older**



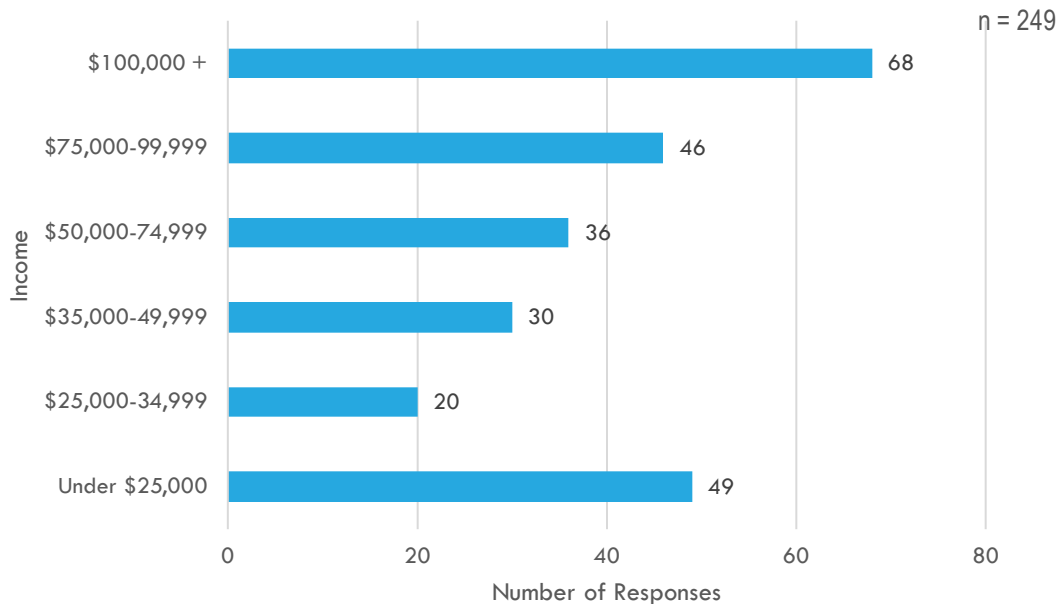
Eighty five percent of respondents have at least one working vehicle in their household, as shown in Figure B-7. This means that even if the survey respondent does not drive, there is likely someone in the home who can offer a ride at least some of the time.

Income of survey respondents did not follow the typical bell curve pattern. The highest percent of responses was from those making over \$100,000 per year, followed by those making under \$25,000 per year.

**Figure B-7 Number of Household Working Vehicles**

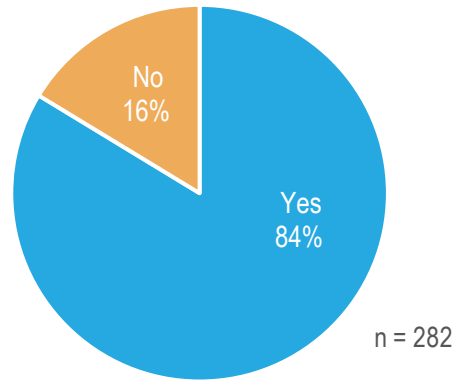


**Figure B-8 Annual Household Income**



The majority of respondents were born in the United States. Of the 46 respondents (16%) not born in the United States, the top four countries of origin were India, Philippines, China, and Canada.

**Figure B-9 Percentage of Respondents Born in the United States**



**Figure B-10 Top Country of Origin for Non-US-Born Respondents**

Birth Country	Number of Respondents
India	12
Philippines	5
China	4
Canada	3

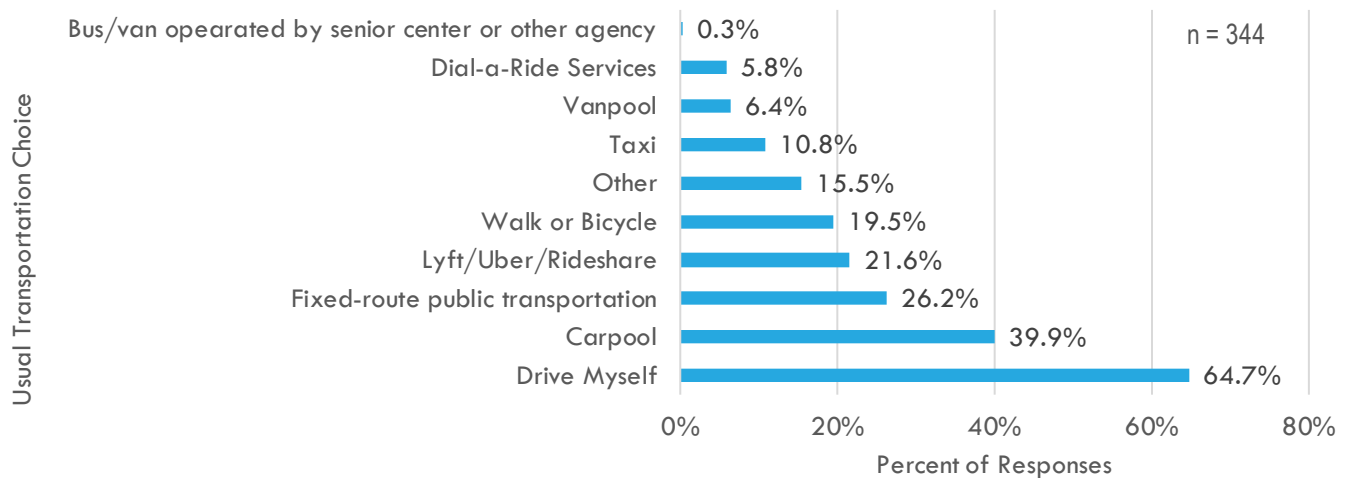
## TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

### Mode Choice for Everyday Travel

Respondents were asked to identify the type of transportation they usually use. It is important to note that the sum of responses adds up to more than 100% because people often use more than one mode to get to their final destination. That is particularly the case with public transportation or shared ride situations.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents drive themselves. Carpooling was the second most popular response at nearly 40%. Just over a quarter of respondents chose fixed-route public transportation as their usual way of traveling. The number of respondents who selected Lyft/Uber/Rideshare was over 20%, almost as high as public transit usage, implying its growing popularity.

**Figure B-11 Typical Transportation Mode Choice**

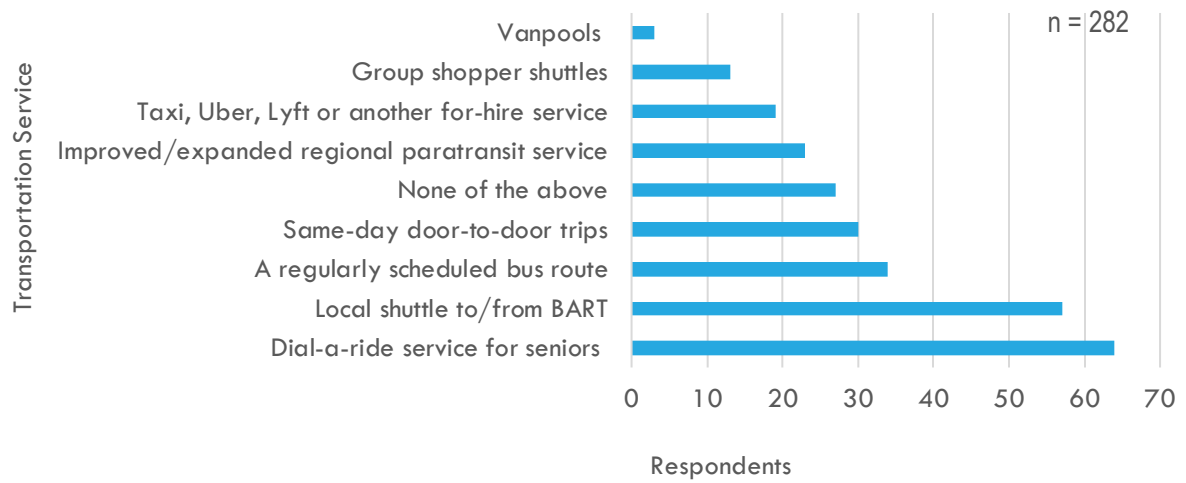


Of the 15.5% of respondents that indicated they use services other than those listed above, many noted they have a family member drive them where they have to go. The percent of respondents that carpool may be higher because several open-ended responses state and imply carpooling as a usual way to travel.

### Most Appealing Transportation Choice

When respondents were asked about the most appealing way to travel, Dial-A-Ride services stood out as the most appealing transportation service (22.7%), with local shuttles to/from BART as the second most popular (20.2%). The least appealing transportation choices for respondents and their household members are group shopper shuttles and vanpooling (4.6% and 1.1%, respectively). These two services require waiting in queue to arrive at the desired destination as opposed to the two most appealing choices that takes riders directly to their destinations.

**Figure B-12 Most Appealing Services for Respondents**

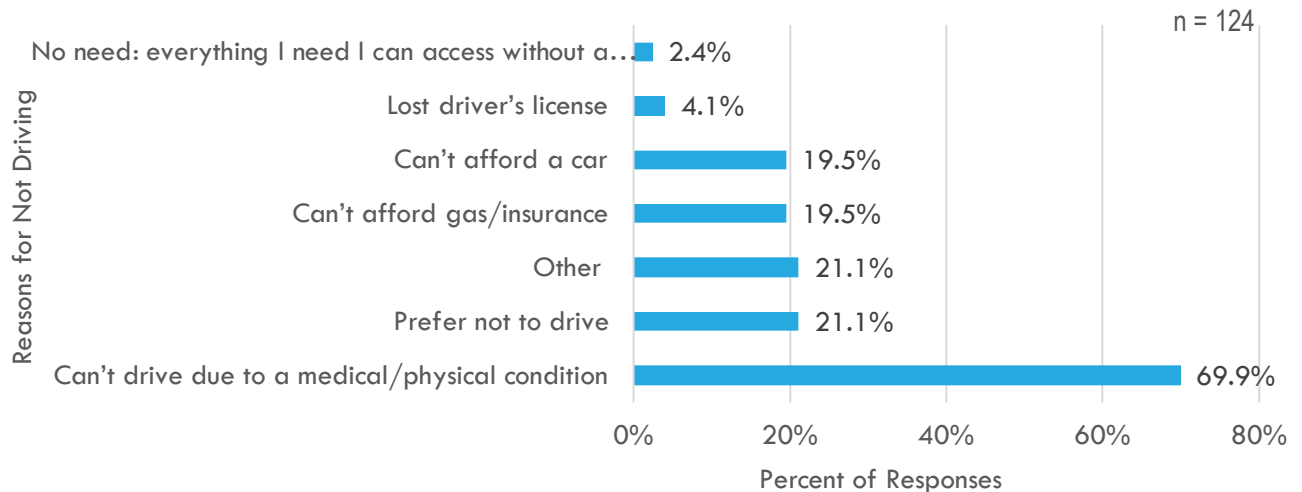


For those respondents that use Dial-A-Ride services, many answered that they use this service to get to a health facility, particularly Kaiser, and to the grocery store. For those who selected a regularly schedule bus route, most use it to move among cities in the Tri-Valley area.

## Reasons for Not Driving

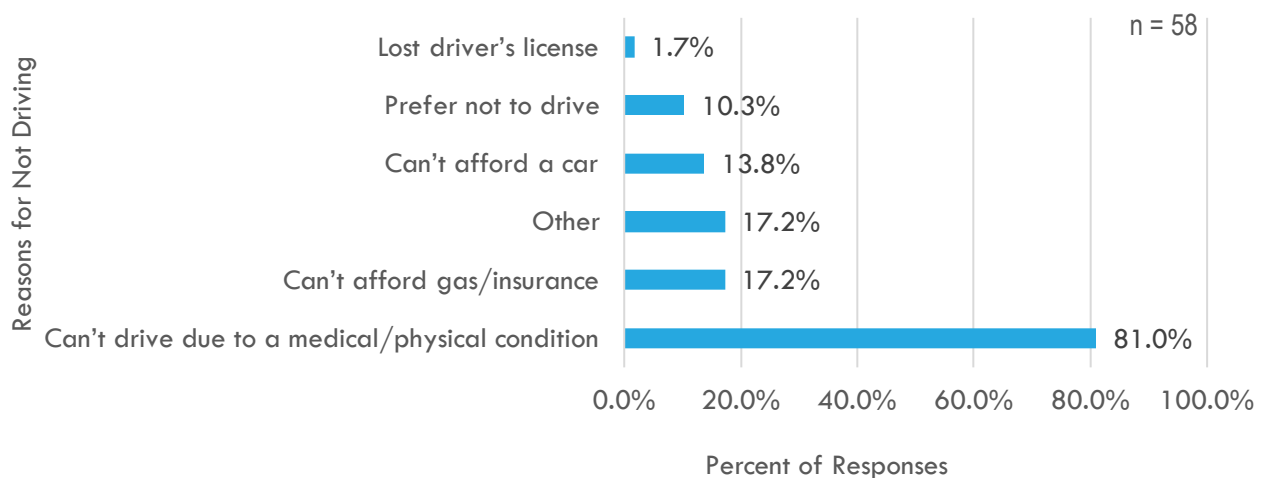
Among respondents who answered something other than “Drive Myself,” for how they usually travel, nearly 70% of respondents do not drive because of a mental and/or physical condition. Another substantial amount of respondents prefer not to drive (21.1%). Approximately 22% of respondents do not drive for financial reasons, stating they cannot afford a car, gas, and/or insurance.<sup>8</sup>

**Figure B-13 Reasons for Not Driving**



Among the 58 respondents who answered that they use LAVTA/Wheels Dial-A-Ride and the 19 respondents who use Pleasanton Paratransit, about 81% and 58% responded that they cannot drive due to a medical/physical condition, respectively. In addition, 21% of Pleasanton Paratransit users indicated that they cannot afford a car, gas, nor insurance; about 17% of LAVTA Dial-A-Ride users also cannot afford these things.

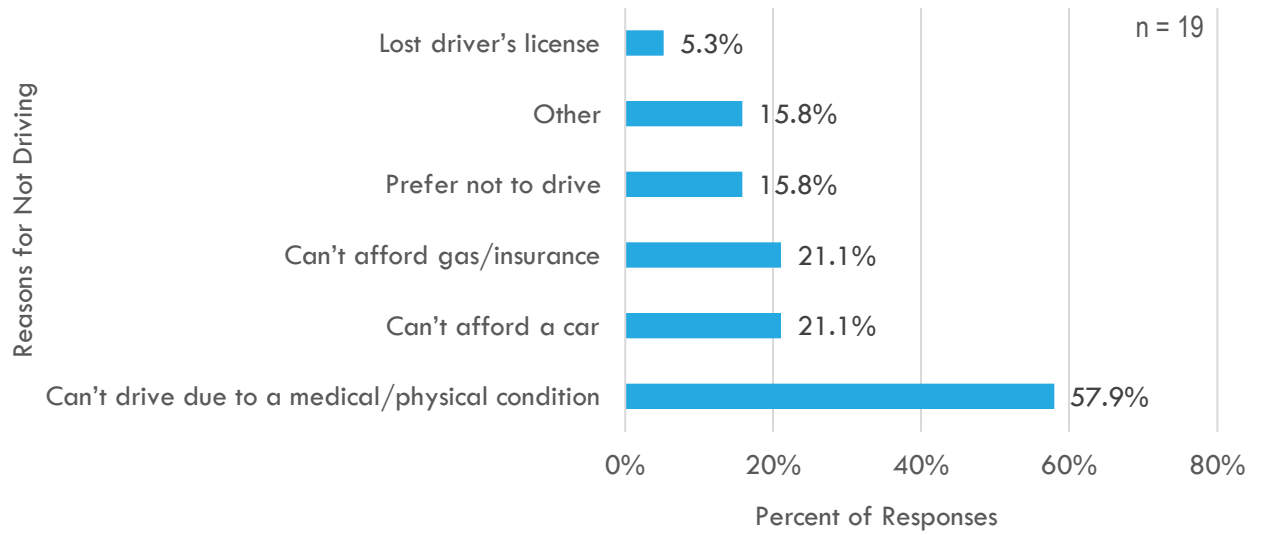
**Figure B-14 Reasons for Not Driving Among LAVTA Dial-A-Ride Users**



<sup>8</sup> The percentages in this graph are not additive as respondents were able to choose more than one reason.



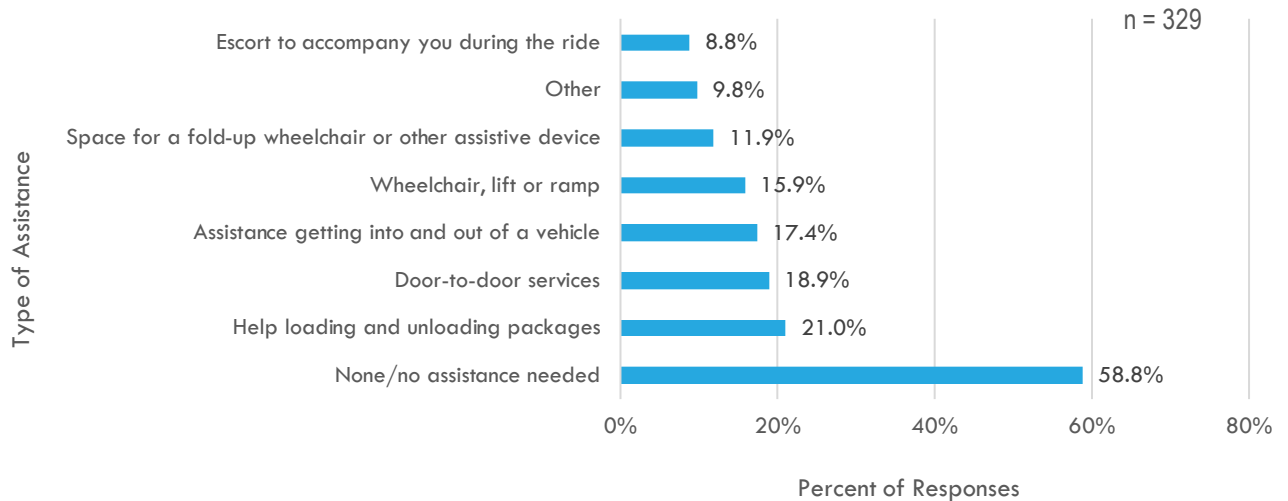
**Figure B-15 Reasons for Not Driving Among Pleasanton Paratransit Users**



## Assistance Needed to Travel Locally

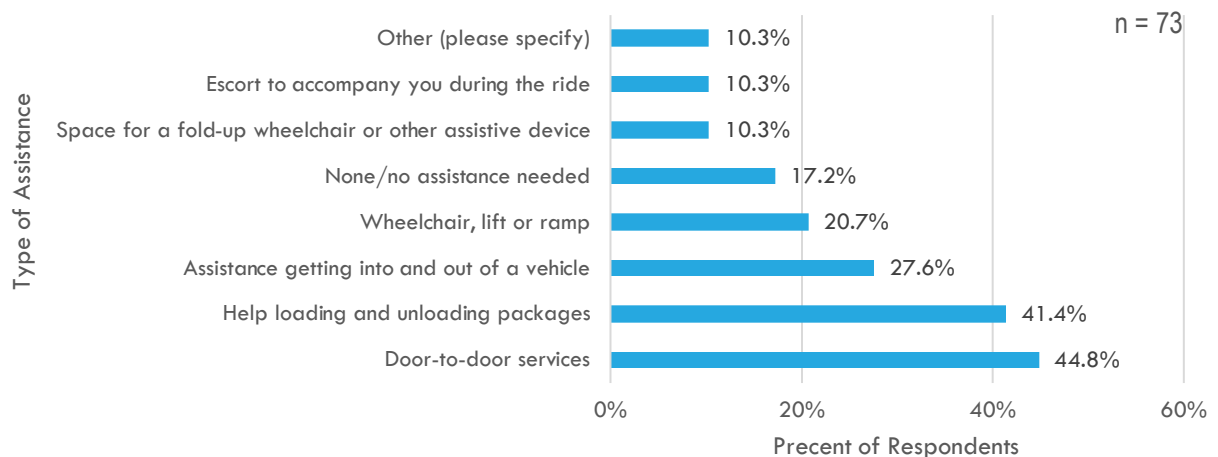
Out of 329 respondents, just under 60% of respondents require no assistance when travelling locally, as shown in Figure B-16. Twenty-one percent of respondents need assistance unloading packages, meaning there needs to be someone in the vehicle with them or available at their destination to assist them with this task. However, only 8.8% of respondents indicated they need an escort during their ride.

**Figure B-16 Types of Assistance Needed During Travel**



Among paratransit and Dial-A-Ride users, 43.8% and 20.7% use wheelchairs, 37% and 27.6% need help getting into and out of vehicles, and 42.5% and 44.8% require door to door services as shown in Figure B-17. These numbers are potentially higher because of open-ended responses indicating wheelchair-related assistance.

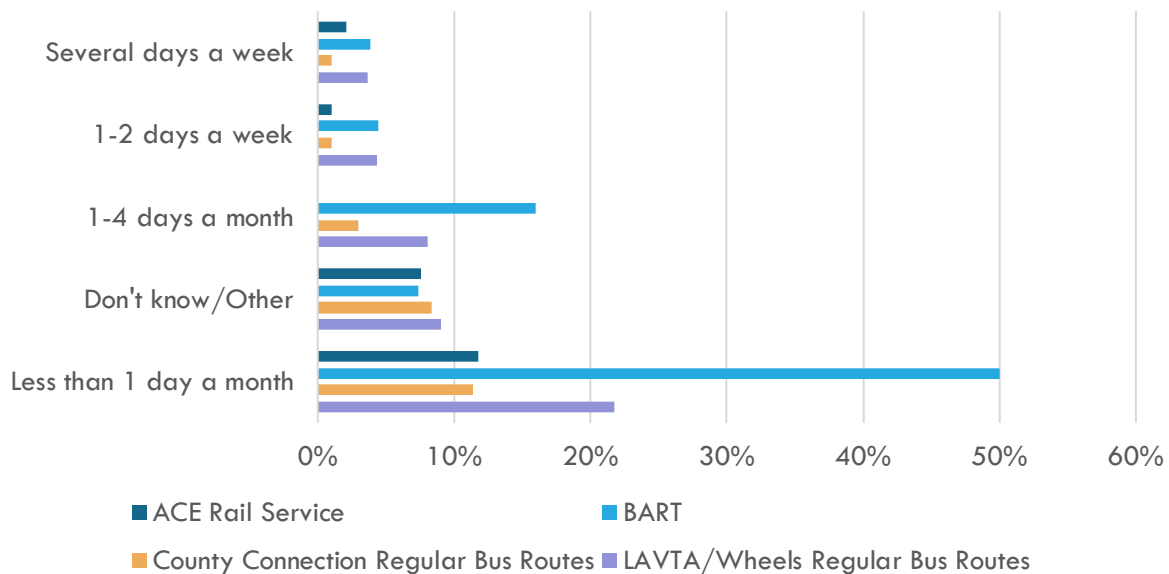
**Figure B-17 Assistance needed by Dial-A-Ride and Paratransit Users**



## PUBLIC TRANSIT USE

Ridership patterns varied among BART, LAVTA Wheels fixed-routes, and Contra Costa's County Connection. The different results are detailed in the section below.

**Figure B-18 Frequency of Fixed-Route Transportation Use**



### LAVTA Wheels Fixed-Route Bus System:

- 299 residents responded to this question; 109 respondents have used the service
- 53% of respondents have never ridden LAVTA's fixed-route system
- Over 20% of the 299 respondents use the system less than one day per month
- 3.7% used it several days a week
- About 53% of respondents have never used the fixed-route bus system

### County Connection:

- 299 residents responded to this question; 49 respondents have used this service
- Nearly 75% of respondents have never used County Connections fixed route service
- Just under half of those who have ever used it ride less than once per month
- About 75% of respondents have never used this service

### BART:

- 312 residents responded to this question; 232 respondents have used this service
- 8.3% use BART at least once per week
- 50% use it less than one day per month
- Only 18.3% have never used BART

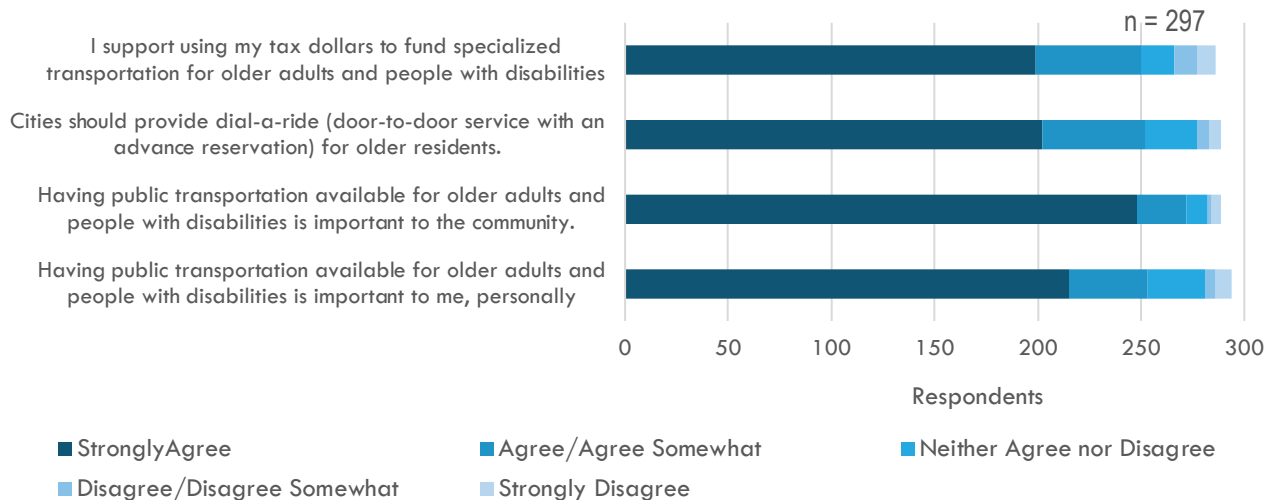
### ACE Train:

- 289 residents responded to this question; 43 respondents have used this service
- ACE is the least used system among respondents
- 77.5% of Tri-Valley residents have never used this service

## Opinions on Public Transportation as a Necessity

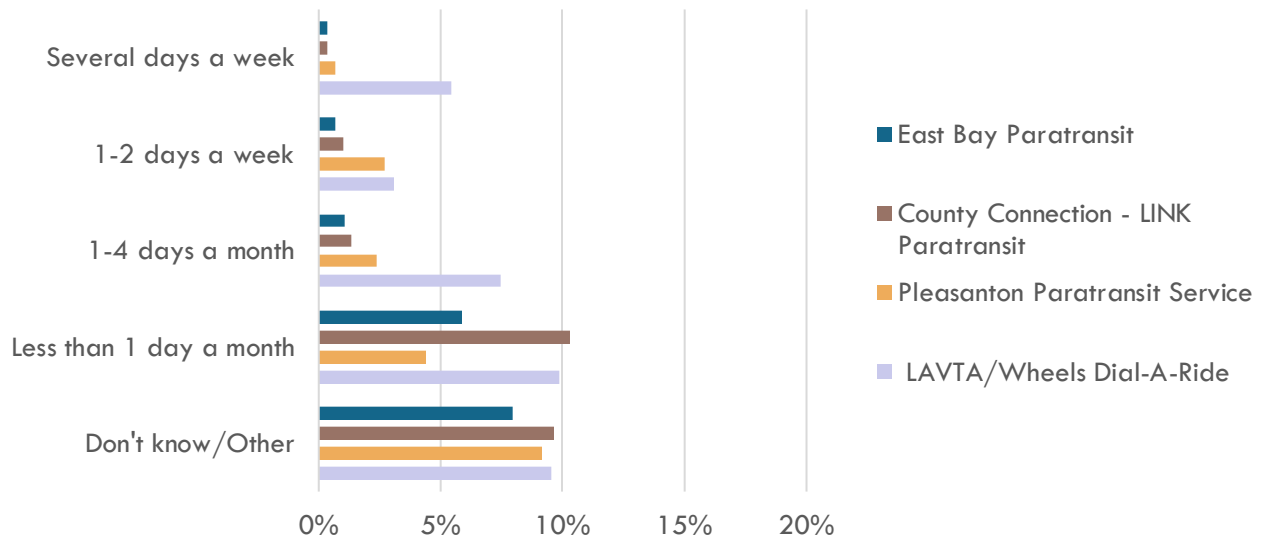
Respondents were asked to react to four statements regarding transportation services that affect them and their communities. A majority of respondents strongly agree with each of the four statements posed. The statement garnering the most negative responses (“disagree” and “strongly disagree”) focuses on using tax dollars to fund specialized transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. However, the vast majority of respondents believe that having transportation available for older adults and those with disability is important to the community.

**Figure B-19 Perceptions of Public Transit**



## PARATRANSIT USE

Figure B-20 Frequency of Paratransit Service Use



### LAVTA Dial-A-Ride:

- 295 residents responded to this question; 76 respondents have used this service
- Of all the respondents who have this service, most have used it less than one day per month (9.9%)
- Nearly 8% use the service between one and four days per month
- 5.4% of respondents that use this service several days per week
- 64.8% of respondents have never used LAVTA Dial-A-Ride

### Pleasanton Paratransit:

- 295 residents responded to this question; 30 respondents have used this service
- The majority of respondents that use this service use it less than one day a month (4.4%)
- About 80% of respondents have never used Pleasanton Paratransit

### County Connection – LINK Paratransit:

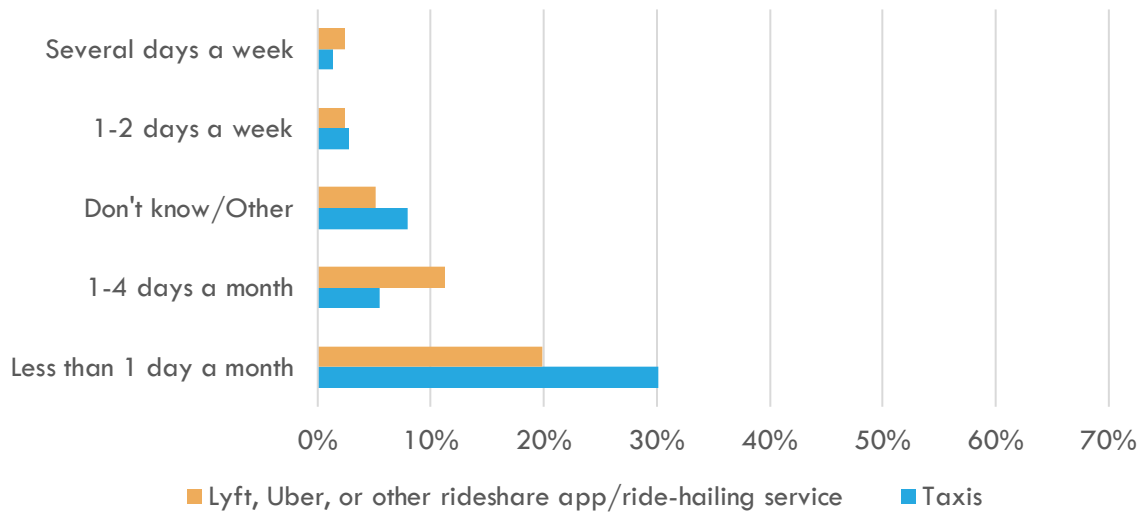
- 302 residents responded to this question; 39 respondents have used this service
- Among all the paratransit services, this is the most popular service for use less than one day per month (9.6%)
- Along with Easy Bay Paratransit, LINK is the lowest paratransit service used several times a week (0.3%)
- About 77% of respondents have never used this service

### East Bay Paratransit:

- 289 residents responded to this question; 23 respondents have used this service
- Most respondents that use this service answered that they use it less than one day per month (5.9%)
- Just over 84% of respondents have never used this service

## TAXIS AND RIDESHARE USE

Figure B-21 Frequency of Taxi and Rideshare Use



### Taxis:

- 289 residents responded to this question; 115 respondents use this service
- About thirty percent of respondents use taxis less than one day per month
- 151 respondents have never used this service (52.3%)

### Uber/Lyft:

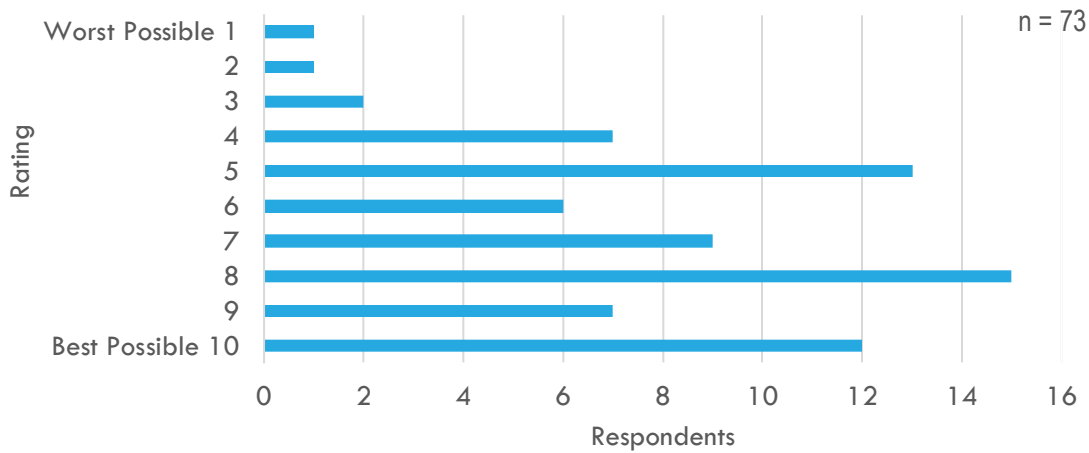
- 292 residents have used this service; 105 respondents have used this service
- Just above 11% of respondents use this service one to four days a month
- About fifty percent more of respondents use this service several days a week than they use taxis
- 172 respondents have never used this service (58.9%)

## PARATRANSIT SATISFACTION

### Wheels Dial-A-Ride Experience

As shown in Figure, residents' experiences vary with Wheels Dial-A-Ride services. About 15% of respondents think Wheels Dial-A-Ride did not provide good service and gave it a rating less than five, on a 10-point scale. In contrast, 36.9% of respondents think the service is good, giving it a rating of eight and above. Just over thirty-eight of respondents gave the service a rating between five and seven.

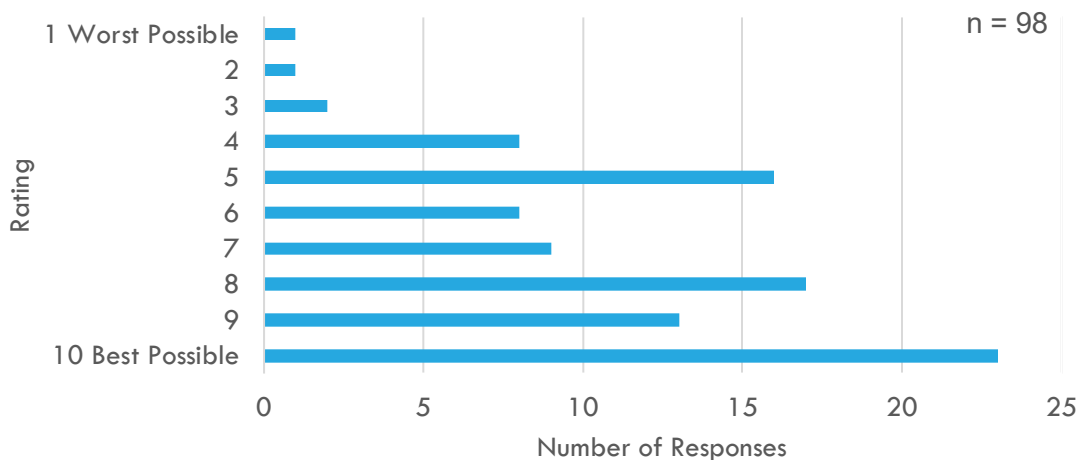
**Figure B-22 Rating of Overall Experience with Wheels Dial-A-Ride in the Past 12 Months**



### Overall Experience, Including Pleasanton Paratransit

Including the 25 respondents that use Pleasanton Paratransit, 23.4% of respondents gave paratransit services the best possible rating of a "10." Just over 54% of respondents have these services a rating of eight and higher, and 12.2% gave a rating of four or less. About 34% of respondents gave the services a rating between five and seven.

**Figure B-23 Rating of Overall Experience with Pleasanton Paratransit in the Past 12 Months**



## OPPORTUNITIES

### **Access to Additional Locations in the Tri-Valley/Greater Bay Area**

Of the 402 surveys completed, 110 respondents indicated that there are locations in the Tri-Valley or greater Bay Area that they would like to go but are unable due to lack of transportation.

Among the locations respondents would like to go but are unable to reach are Kaiser health facilities, Walnut Creek, San Ramon, Fremont, and BART stations; each of these locations had multiple respondents who wanted access.

### **Pleasanton Paratransit Service Improvements**

Most of the comments given had to do with the timeliness and reliability of Pleasanton Paratransit Service. Comments such as “be on time,” “better communication,” and “maybe they need more bus drivers” show a general concern respondents have in the ability to reach their destinations conveniently and on time.

### **Readily Available Information and Wayfinding**

Among the varied responses given, some noted that paratransit services need more funding, because although respondents may not use them yet, they will have to use these services in the future. Also, wayfinding and information about bus stops and routes need to be easier to access because many do not know where this information is.





## **APPENDIX C**

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### Ridership Forecast



## Appendix C Ridership Forecast

Nelson\Nygaard was asked to project potential ridership on LAVTA and PPS provided services during the coming decades based on a variety of factors affecting the target ridership population. As LAVTA and the City of Pleasanton work towards a sustainable future for providing transportation services to people in the Tri-Valley, ridership forecasts reflect potential impacts on the services as the paratransit-eligible population grows. This chapter provides an analysis of recent ridership trends and ridership projections through 2045 using data from the U.S. Census, the California Department of Finance, and LAVTA PPS data.

### DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Demographic trends in Alameda County highlight a growing need for paratransit and senior mobility services. Most notably, the population of Alameda County is aging: more than one in five Alameda County residents is expected to be 65 or older by 2040.<sup>9</sup> This growth in the senior population across Alameda County reflects both regional and national trends. As the population ages, the number of people with disabilities is likely also increasing, but the available data is too inexact to measure this increase with any certainty.

**Figure C-1 Geographic Areas Included in Demographic Profile**

Geographic Area	Population	Percent of Countywide Population
<b>Alameda County, California</b>	<b>1,547,000</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Cities</b>		
Dublin	46,000	2.97%
Livermore	84,000	5.43%
Pleasanton	73,000	4.72%
<b>Unincorporated</b>		
Sunol CDP	1,000	0.06%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010-2014

Alameda County has one of the highest poverty rates in the Bay Area, both among seniors and the general population. In general, more urban parts of the county have higher poverty rates, while more suburban areas have lower poverty rates. However, it is important to consider that poverty can compound the limited mobility options that exist in suburban jurisdictions such as Dublin, Livermore, and Pleasanton. The LAVTA service area comprises 13% of the County's population, as shown in Figure C-. The population of Pleasanton makes up 36% of Tri-Valley residents.

Figure C-2 shows the age breakdown of enrolled registrants as of September 2017. LAVTA had 1,271 people eligible to use paratransit services, all of whom were eligible under ADA guidelines. Of those, 416, or 32.7% lived in Pleasanton and were eligible to take trips with PPS. Pleasanton Paratransit had a total of 956 registrants of which only 63 (6.6%) were under the age of 70. There were 95 Pleasanton residents enrolled with ADA certification through LAVTA that were also over the age of 70. The remaining 794 residents were eligible to ride solely based on age.

<sup>9</sup> California State Department of Finance

**Figure C-2    Wheels Dial-A-Ride and Pleasanton Paratransit Services Registrants**

Age	Wheels Dial-A-Ride	PPS Only	PPS with Wheels ADA Certification
Under 18	6	Not eligible	Not eligible
18 - 49	177	Must register through LAVTA	40
50 - 54	40		5
55 - 59	65		4
60 - 64	78		6
65 - 69	116		8
70 - 74	140	119	17
75 - 79	147	179	23
80 - 84	164	164	15
Over 85	337	332	40
Unknown	1	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,271</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>158</b>

\* Anyone over 70 years is eligible for PPS service, regardless of ADA eligibility

As expected, the proportion of people registered for Wheels Dial-A-Ride to the total population increases with age, as shown in Figure C-3.

**Figure C-3    Wheels Dial-A-Ride Registrants as a Percentage of the Service Area Population**

Age	Wheels Service Area Population Estimates*	Wheels Dial-A-Ride Registrants**	Percent of Total Population
18 - 49	65,808	177	0.3%
50 - 54	13,276	40	0.3%
55 - 59	10,308	65	0.6%
60 - 64	7,757	78	1.0%
65 - 69	6,352	116	1.8%
70 - 74	4,321	140	3.2%
75 - 79	2,916	147	5.0%
80 - 84	1,978	164	8.3%
85+	1,822	337	18.5%

\* 2015 American Community Survey, \*\* 2017 Eligibility

**Figure C-4 Pleasanton Paratransit Services Registrants as a Percentage of the Service Area Population**

Age	Pleasanton Population Estimates*	PPS Registrants**	Percent of Total Population
18 - 49	19,315	40	0.2%
50 - 54	4,842	5	0.1%
55 - 59	3,592	4	0.1%
60 - 64	2,603	6	0.2%
65 - 69	2,291	8	0.3%
70 - 74	1,666	136	8.2%
75 - 79	1,197	202	16.6%
80 - 84	885	179	20.6%
85+	781	372	47.5%

\* 2015 American Community Survey, \*\* 2017 Eligibility

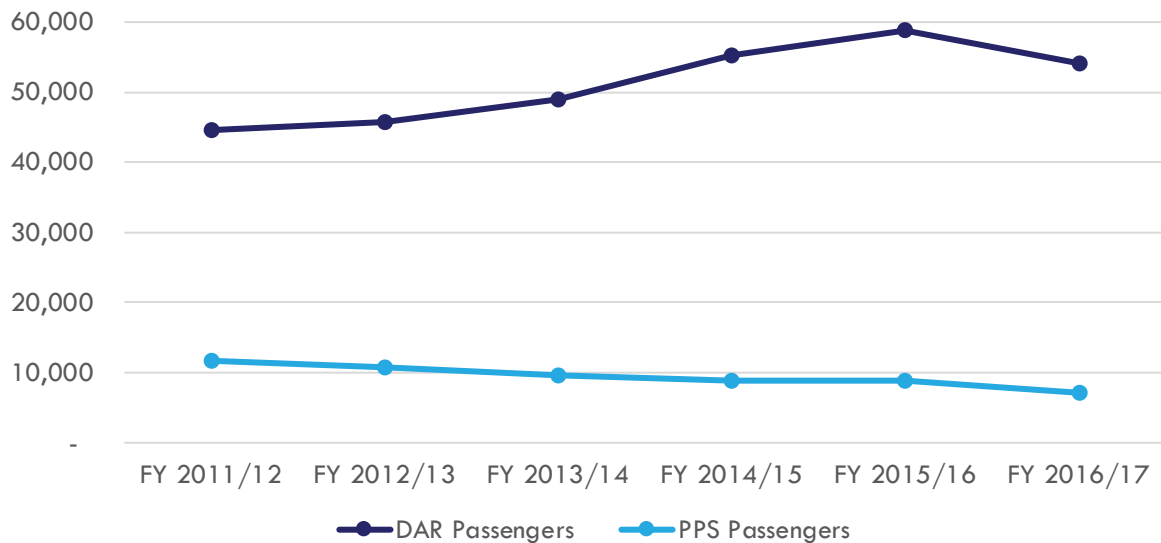
Due to a lack of robust Census data, it is not possible to reliably report on recent trends in the number or percentage of people with disabilities in Alameda County. However, it is generally understood that there is a strong overlap between seniors and people who have a disability.

## CURRENT RIDERSHIP TRENDS

Ridership on Wheels Dial-A-Ride has been growing over the past six years, as shown in Figure C-5. There was a significant jump in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015/16, and a downward correction in FY 2016/17, but the overall trend is still upward. Same-day Para-Taxi trips saw a 53.7% jump between FY 2015/16 and FY 2016/17. The following ridership forecast is based only on Wheels Dial-A-Ride trips because the breakdown by age of Para-Taxi trips is unknown.

As stated in an earlier chapter, ridership on Pleasanton Paratransit has fallen approximately 40% over the past six years. For Wheels Dial-A-Ride, we assume that supply for trips is matched with demand because of federal regulations prohibiting trip denials. This is not the case for most Pleasanton Paratransit trips. Pleasanton attributes its decline in ridership in large part to capacity and resource constraints, and not due to lack of demand for service.

**Figure C-5    Wheels Dial-A-Ride and Pleasanton Paratransit Ridership Trends**



## Ridership Trends by Cohort

Ridership data from April 2017 was used as the baseline for the future ridership projections for Wheels Dial-A-Ride and Pleasanton Paratransit. April was chosen as a representative month for ridership, but may overestimate annual ridership since there are no holidays. LAVTA Para-Taxi trips by age were unavailable, and are not included in the forecasts.

Wheels Dial-A-Ride users took a total of 3,752 trips compared to 511 on Pleasanton Paratransit, as shown in Figure C-6. It is not known how many of those trips could have been operated by Pleasanton.

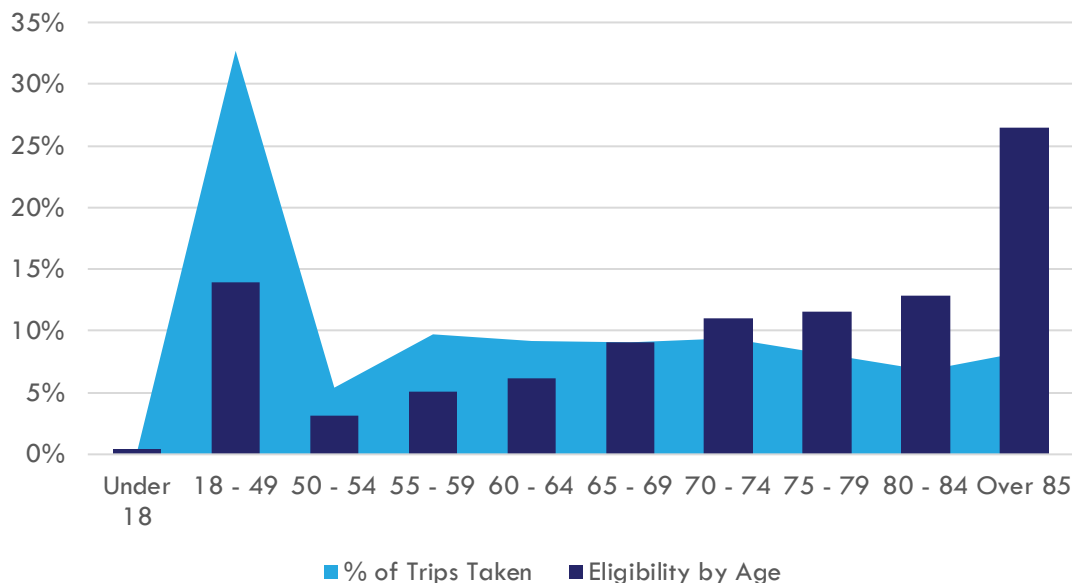
Figure C-7 and Figure C-8 depict the distribution of trips by age of the riders compared to the number of people eligible to take trips. For Wheels, riders between the ages of 18 and 49 made up 13.9% of all registered Wheels Dial-A-Ride users, but took 32.7% of trips. The number of riders older than 70 represented 62.0% of all riders, but that group took only 32.7% of the trips (17.5% were between 70 and 79 years old, and 15.2% were over 80).

Pleasanton Paratransit registrants under 70 years old made up less than 7% of all users, but took 31.1% of the trips. Open enrollment for people over 70 years old has resulted in high levels of registration compared with younger age cohorts, (nearly 60% are over 80 years old) but the trip patterns are consistent with those of Wheels, with younger groups making a greater proportion of trips. It is also clear that open eligibility increases ridership.

**Figure C-6 Ridership by Age Cohort, April 2017**

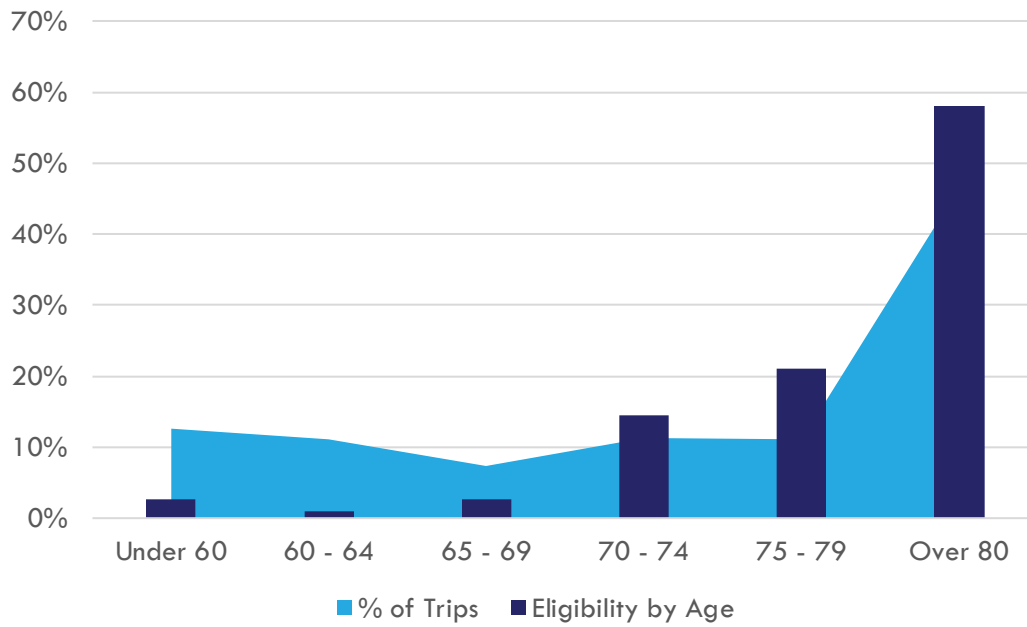
Age Cohort	PPS	Wheels DAR
Under 60	68	1,805
60 - 64	30	345
65 - 69	40	340
70 - 74	61	353
75 - 79	60	303
Over 80	252	571
Unknown	-	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>3,752</b>

**Figure C-7 Age of Wheels Dial-A-Ride Users and Percent of Trips Taken (April 2017)**





**Figure C-8 Age of Pleasanton Paratransit Users and Percent of Trips Taken (April 2017)**



## DEMOGRAPHIC FORECAST

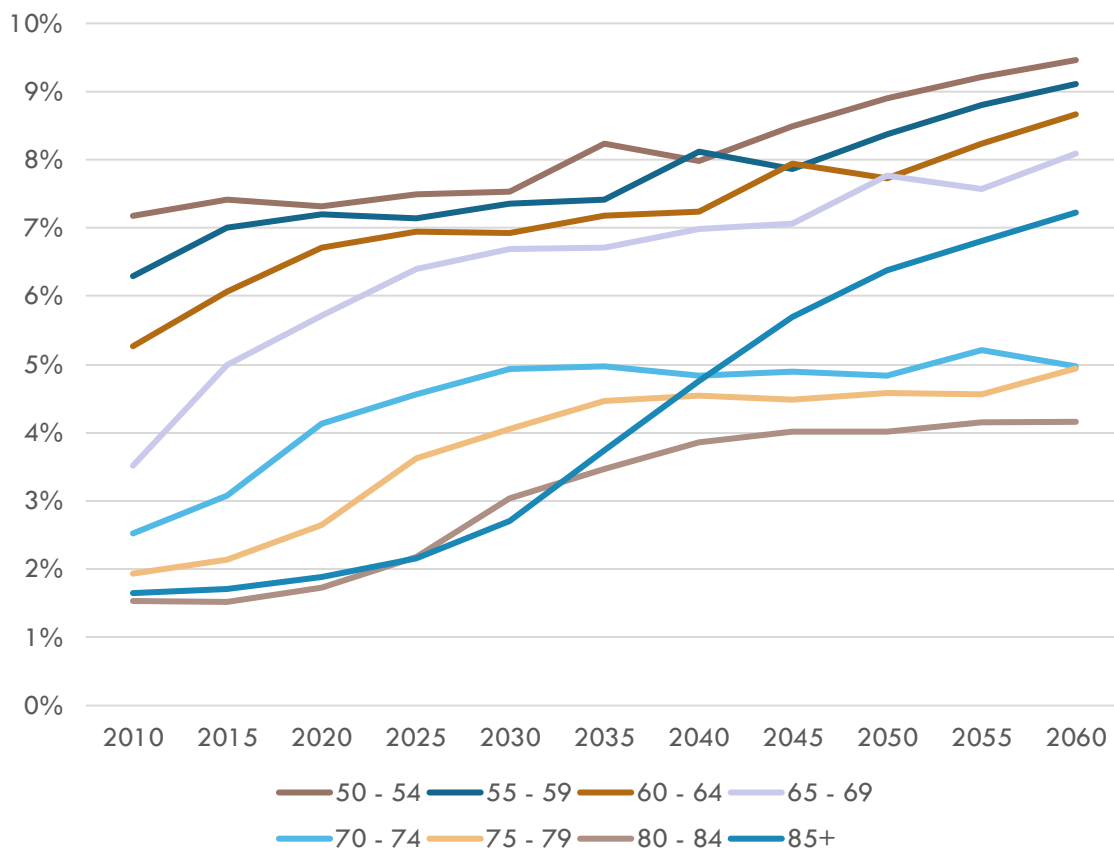
### National Trends

The increase in the senior population – and an overall increase in life expectancy nationwide – will continue to increase demand on mobility programs that target seniors and people with disabilities. It is anticipated that the increase in seniors over the next decade will be predominantly driven by younger seniors (age 65 to 74), who will likely be healthier and have fewer disabilities than older seniors. An increase in the number of people with disabilities could therefore lag behind the increase in the senior population.

### Alameda County Trends

The California Department of Finance forecasts that the number of people age 65 to 74 will grow by 51% between 2015 and 2025, 101% by 2035 and 139% by 2045. The number of people over 70 years old in Alameda County is projected to increase from 137,000 in 2015 to over 366,000 in 2040, an increase of 167%. In 2015, there were an estimated 28,000 people over 85 years old. In 2040 that is expected to be over 96,000, which is an increase of 242%. Figure C-9 shows the California Department of Finance age projections by five-year age groups.

**Figure C-9 CA Department of Finance Age Projections for Alameda County**



## Tri-Valley Projections

Wheels Dial-A-Ride demand should match supply because ADA regulations prohibit capacity constraints that limit ridership to less than any theoretically higher demand. Pleasanton's actual demand is not as clear cut for people over 70 because they do not need to be ADA certified with LAVTA to schedule trips. For Pleasanton there are trip denials due to lack of resources, which makes a true projection hard to calculate with confidence. Pleasanton Paratransit riders with ADA certification are able to complete trips with Wheels Dial-A-Ride and at this time it is unknown how many of those trips would have taken place on PPS if the program had more capacity to deliver service.

To forecast future demand in the Tri-Valley area we applied the projected percent changes by age cohort in Alameda County from the California Department of Finance projections (Figure C-10) to the estimated number of trips by cohort from each agency in 2017, extrapolated from April 2017.

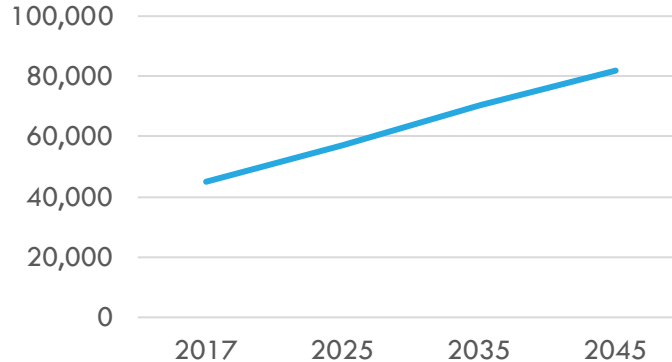
Figure C-11 and Figure C-12 show the resulting projections based on the demographic forecast for the county. The numbers used for the calculations originate in Figure C-6 and Figure C-10. The number of trips requested of Wheels Dial-A-Ride is

**Figure C-10 Percent Change in Population by Age from 2015 Projections**

Age Cohort	2025	2035	2045
Under 18	1.0%	-0.5%	0.9%
18 - 49	6.2%	11.9%	16.4%
50 - 54	1.1%	11.0%	14.5%
55 - 59	2.0%	6.0%	12.6%
60 - 64	14.7%	18.5%	31.2%
65 - 69	28.2%	34.5%	41.4%
70 - 74	64.3%	95.6%	106.1%
75 - 79	87.2%	151.1%	170.7%
80 - 84	58.8%	176.4%	243.0%
85+	39.5%	162.9%	329.0%

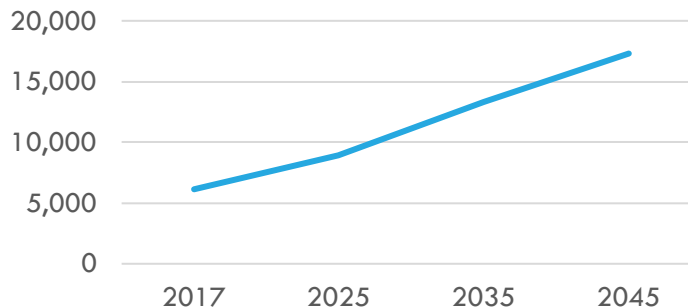
CA Department of Finance estimates

**Figure C-11 Wheels Dial-A-Ride Ridership Projections**



CA Department of Finance estimates, LAVTA ridership report 2017

**Figure C-12 Pleasanton Paratransit Ridership Projections**



CA Department of Finance estimates, Pleasanton ridership report 2017

projected to increase 57% by 2035 and 82% by 2045 over the projected 2017 ridership. PPS is expected to grow 118% by 2035 and 182% by 2045 from 2017.

An estimated 1,981 trips in 2035 and 2,097 trips in 2045 are forecast by PPS riders under the age of 70. That could account for 27% of the system's trips by 2045. If those same trips were shifted to Wheels Dial-A-Ride, Wheels could anticipate another 3.2% trips annually, from 57,002 to 58,889 in 2025. By 2045 the increase in trips diverted from PPS could add 2,097 trips for a total of 84,020 annual Dial-A-Ride trips.

### **Limitations of the Projections**

There are many caveats to these projections. First, there will be an unknown level of random variation due to using a single month as a baseline, which will influence the confidence accuracy of long-term projection. This projection should be updated as new annual figures are available and comparisons and corrections can be made based on the difference between actual and projected figures to improve confidence in the validity of the projections.

Second, PPS ridership has declined for six consecutive years. This projection suggests that with no changes to the service, ridership will increase 143% over the next 28 years. The methodology of relying on countywide population projections for a small area within the County cannot account for how Pleasanton might be growing differently than the County as a whole.

Third, even with more data points on which to base projections, there are a number of external factors that can also not yet be quantified that will ultimately influence the supply or demand of paratransit ridership in the future. They include:

- Other transportation options available in the future
  - Driving behavior of seniors
  - Autonomous or TNC-based services
- Service parameters. Changes to the hours of service, eligibility, and areas covered
- Changes to eligibility screening or requirements
- Fare structure
- Restrictions in land use policies

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The number of seniors and people with disabilities is growing in the Tri-Valley service area
- Younger registrants take a greater proportion of paratransit trips per capita than their older counterparts
- Beyond the anticipated increases in senior and disability populations, changes to eligibility, fares, and service parameters will impact ridership
- In addition, the availability of new transportation options could have an effect on ridership projections

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BETTER FORECASTING

- Forecasts should be updated with actual annual ridership data by age cohort. Three to five years of ridership data from each agency would help correct for the California State Department of Finance projections.
- If Pleasanton Paratransit can export trip data by client, it would be possible to determine how many Pleasanton residents are using Wheels Dial-A-Ride
- Adding in Wheels Para-Taxi trips by age could help estimate future demand of non-traditional paratransit demand-response transportation

## **APPENDIX D**

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### Peer Review Case Studies



# Appendix D Peer Review Case Studies

## FREMONT PARATRANSIT PROGRAM (FREMONT, CA)

### Agency Overview

The City of Fremont's Paratransit program is unique among its peers because, like Pleasanton, it is not mandated by the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Instead, it is an auxiliary service provided to supplement the federally mandated paratransit service for BART and AC Transit, known as East Bay Paratransit. Before Alameda County voters approved Measure B in 2000, the program had an annual operating budget of approximately \$200,000. After Measure B's passage, the program's budget increased to \$1.4 million annually, allowing it to provide a more robust set of services to its constituents.

The City of Fremont's primary goal for its transportation and mobility programs is to provide safe and reliable transportation for seniors and people with disabilities to:

- Improve access to health care, recreational activities, and other community services
- Decrease social isolation
- Prevent needless institutionalization
- Improve overall quality of life by enhancing the ability to live independently<sup>10</sup>

In 2006, the City completed a community needs assessment for the Tri-City community (Fremont, Newark, and Union City) funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This assessment called for increased and sustained mobility for seniors and people with disabilities. Specific objectives included providing seniors and people with disabilities with affordable and accessible door-to-door transportation (with same-day options), conducting travel trainings for these communities, and ensuring that they have access to the necessary services that meet their daily needs.

Since the 2006 needs assessment, the City has improved existing services and instituted new services under the umbrella of its paratransit program. These services include door-to-door paratransit service, same-day taxi trips, a group trips service, meal delivery service, and a mobility management and travel training service. Depending on the service, the program serves destinations within the Cities of Fremont, Newark and Union City.

### Eligibility

The door-to-door transportation service is available for residents at least 80 years of age in Fremont, 70 years of age for Newark residents, or for residents of either Fremont or Newark with a disability or a disabling health condition. This service is not available to Union City residents, as they have their own ADA-mandated paratransit service provided by their local transit provider, Union City Transit.

Same-day taxi trip vouchers are available for any resident of Fremont, Newark, or Union City who is 80 years or older.

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<sup>10</sup> Fremont FY2017-18 Paratransit Program Plan Application



ADA eligibility is not required, but people do need to fill out an application with the city to get approved.

## Services Provided

**Door-to-door paratransit.** Wheelchair accessible, shared ride transportation is provided to Fremont residents who are unable to access public transportation independently due to a disabling condition or to seniors 80 years of age and older. An application must be submitted prior to accessing the service. This service is available seven days a week, from 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. on weekdays and from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. on weekends. Trip requests are accommodated based on vehicle availability and can be reserved up to seven days in advance. The program serves all destinations within Fremont and Newark and provides riders with comprehensive transportation access for medical, shopping, errands, social, recreational, spiritual, and educational needs. The vast majority of paratransit service hours are provided during the weekday, daytime hours when program participants have few alternative transportation resources (i.e. family and friends) available.<sup>11</sup>

**Same-day taxi trips.** Subsidized taxi rides are provided to help seniors and people with disabilities with same-day transportation needs in the local area. Fremont residents who are at least 80 years of age as well as those who are unable to use public transit because of a disability are eligible for the taxi service. While an application must be submitted prior to accessing this service, eligible individuals can apply for door-to-door and taxi services using the same application. Taxi vouchers cost \$4 each and subsidize up to \$16 of taxi meter fare. Only one voucher can be used per one-way trip. Program participants are responsible for paying any fare beyond the \$16 voucher subsidy and for tipping the driver. A maximum of 20 taxi vouchers may be purchased per month. Voucher allotments are subject to change based on program funding. Subsidized taxi service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service is not wheelchair accessible at this time.<sup>12</sup>

**Group trips.** The purpose of the group trip program is to promote socialization and decrease isolation for seniors and people with disabilities. Wheelchair-accessible group trips are provided to housing complexes, skilled nursing facilities, social clubs, or other community organizations that serve persons with disabilities and/or seniors within Fremont. The program has a special emphasis on providing group transportation to individuals who are frail, homebound, linguistically isolated, or unable to use public transportation for social, recreational, and shopping activities. Transportation is available weekdays by arrangement. Trip destinations must be within a 25-mile radius of the Fremont City Hall. Before arranging a ride, interested organizations must submit a group trip services application.

**Mobility management and travel training.** The Tri-City Mobility Management and Travel Training Program provides individualized transportation assessment and planning assistance for seniors and people with disabilities residing in Fremont, Newark, and Union City. Seniors and people with disabilities, their caregivers, and service providers have a one-stop location/number where they can connect with a Mobility Specialist to receive information about services, get linked with particular programs, understand how to use the various services, and receive advocacy help

<sup>11</sup> Door-to-door transportation service is also provided to Newark residents under an agreement with the City of Newark. These services are funded with Newark's DLD funding.

<sup>12</sup> Same-day Taxi Service is also provided to Newark and Union City residents under an agreement with each city. These services are funded with Newark and Union City's DLD funding.

for a particular transportation service need. The Specialist can also provide them with a variety of program application packets and will help complete these packets over the phone. The travel training component of this program provides group and individualized travel training instruction to seniors and people with disabilities. Through a 2012 partnership with BART, the City continues to distribute senior Clipper Cards to community members and provides extensive education on how to use Clipper on transit.

**Volunteer driver programs.** Two non-profit volunteer driver programs serve the City of Fremont: *VIP Rides* and *Drivers for Survivors*. While these programs are not operated by the City of Fremont, the City helps to fund their operations, with additional funding from Alameda CTC through Measure B and Measure BB sales tax revenue.<sup>13</sup> The VIP Rides program provides free rides for seniors who do not have family members or friends to help drive them to their essential errands and appointments, and the Drivers for Survivors program provides free rides and social support for cancer patients who live in the Tri-City Area.

**Meal Delivery.** The Meals on Wheels Program provides nutritionally balanced meals for homebound seniors and persons with disabilities residing in Fremont. The various mobility and cognitive impairments of Meals on Wheels clients make it difficult to travel to congregate meal sites or to grocery shop and prepare meals. The program provides a critical life need by coordinating cost effective and efficient meal delivery services.

## System Ridership and Performance

By the end of Fiscal Year 2015-2016, there were 2,204 individuals registered for the Fremont Paratransit program. Program participants took approximately 20,297 individual trips and 4,270 group trips on Fremont Paratransit's vehicles. Almost 5,000 of these trips were lift-assisted rides.

### Fleet

All 15 vehicles are owned and maintained by MV Transportation, Inc. Previously, the City owned the vehicles, but over time it became increasingly difficult to adhere to the federal reporting requirements. Furthermore, an internal analysis concluded that maintaining ownership of these vehicles was very expensive.

The program is served by eight 16-passenger Ford E-450s, six 22-passenger Toyota Siennas, and one five-passenger Chevrolet G550.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure D-1 Summary of Fremont Paratransit's Performance Metrics**

Category	Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Statistics (door-to-door only)
Annual budget	\$1.5 million
Number of Trips	24,567
Passengers per hour	1.5
Cost per hour	\$55.54
Cost per trip	\$31.13
Fleet size	15 vehicles

<sup>13</sup> Fiscal Year 2017-2018 is the last year the City of Fremont will contribute to the funding of either volunteer driver program.

<sup>14</sup> Fremont FY2017-18 Paratransit Program Application Tables

## Fares

The cost of a one-way door-to-door paratransit trip is \$2.50, which can be paid at the time of the ride or with a prepaid voucher, which are sold in books of eight.

Taxi vouchers cost \$4 each and subsidize up to \$16 of a taxi meter fare. Only one voucher can be used per one-way trip. Program participants are responsible for paying any fare beyond the \$16 voucher subsidy and for tipping the driver.

## Program Funding

The total projected cost of the Fremont Paratransit program for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 was just under \$1.5 million. The breakdown in these costs among programs is illustrated in Figure D-2. The vast majority of this funding comes from Measure B and Measure BB.

## Staffing

The City of Fremont Paratransit Program is comprised of two full-time and three part-time staff. The full-time staff include a program manager and program coordinator. The part-time staff include an administrative support person, a group trip coordinator, and a transit adventure program coordinator.

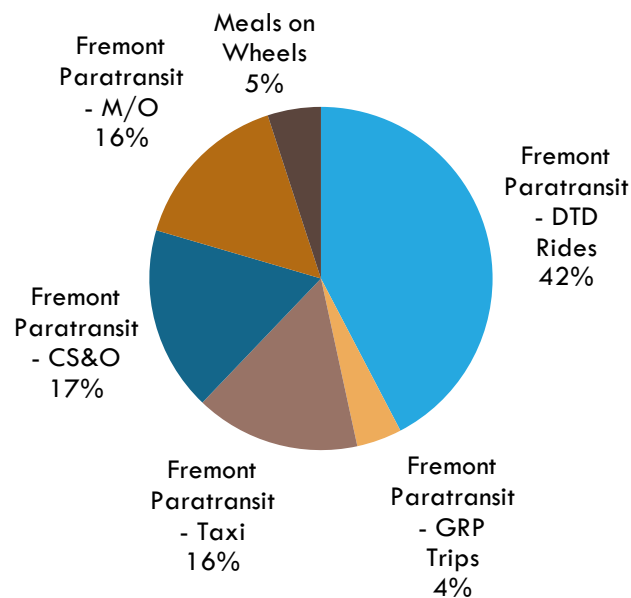
MV Transportation contracts with the City of Fremont to provide the City's door-to-door paratransit services. While MV Transportation does provide incentives for its drivers, these incentives are not part of the company's contract with the City.

The taxi voucher program is contracted out to two local cab companies. This contract has a built-in incentive for drivers, in that all \$16 of the voucher goes to the driver regardless of cost or length of the ride (a \$16 ride covers roughly a four mile trip).

## Marketing and Outreach

The Fremont Paratransit Programs marketing and outreach initiatives are extensive. The Program publishes a newsletter, puts information about their services in other local newsletters, writes articles that make their way into local newspapers, and gets program information in news

**Figure D-2 FY2017-18 Breakdown in Fremont Paratransit's Costs by Program Type<sup>15</sup>**



<sup>15</sup> Fremont FY2017-18 Paratransit Program Application Tables

briefs that are distributed to every household in the city. In addition to in-print marketing, staff conducts in-person outreach in the form of resource fair participation and one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders. They also include information about their services on the City of Fremont's website and hang flyers around community centers and senior centers in their service area.

## Successes

Successes of the Fremont Paratransit Program include:

- **Taxi voucher program.** Due to the success of its taxi voucher program, the City will be incorporating the taxi service as part of its base program in Fiscal Year 2017-2018 (the program has previously been a pilot same-day transportation service funded with an Alameda CTC discretionary grant over the past several years). The program provides a convenient, affordable same-day transportation option for seniors and people with disabilities. Integration of the service into the City's base program will allow it to provide a high quality service for consumers needing curb-to-curb services while allowing it to continue its successful door-to-door transportation service for those consumers needing door-to-door transportation and wheelchair accessible service.
- **Robust outreach** in the community
- Range of **innovative supplemental transportation programs** that benefit the community, including the mobility management and travel training, volunteer driver, and meal delivery programs

## Challenges

Challenges identified by the Fremont Paratransit program include:

- **Advanced notice for door-to-door transportation** program. The most common feedback the program receives is that riders typically have to schedule rides more than three days' in advance. Paratransit service vehicles get booked up with rides shortly after the seven-day reservation window opens. The program's strategies to mitigate this challenge include referring to and enrolling participants in the taxi voucher program (when appropriate), limiting the number of standing order paratransit service requests, and increasing the number of paratransit service vehicles.
- **Incorporating emerging technologies** into its suite of services
- Providing **same-day wheelchair-accessible vehicles**
- **Continuing to develop new innovative service models** to serve senior and disabled populations

## SANTA ROSA PARATRANSIT (SANTA ROSA, CA)

### Agency Overview

The City of Santa Rosa Transportation and Public Works Department administers Santa Rosa Paratransit, and contracts operations to MV Transportation, Inc. The system operates within a three-quarter mile buffer of Santa Rosa CityBus' 15 bus routes. In total, approximately 85% of the Santa Rosa population falls within the Santa Rosa Paratransit coverage area. Among the approximately 150,000 residents who fall within the coverage area, around 1,200 are registered for the program.

### Eligibility

**In-person eligibility interview.** The Santa Rosa Paratransit Program runs a call center to schedule in-person interviews with potential participants. This call center is run by C.A.R.E. Evaluators, that conducts the interviews and functional assessments.

### Services Provided

**Door-to-door ADA paratransit.** The Santa Rosa Paratransit Program offers next-day ADA Paratransit transportation service seven days a week. This service is available to Santa Rosa city residents who are not capable of using fixed-route public transit due to a (temporary or permanent) disability or health-related condition. This service is available for all trip purposes and is highly subsidized for eligible participants. Participants can schedule their trip from anytime between seven days before their trip until the day before their trip at the end of the day. The program occasionally provides same-day paratransit trips, depending on driver and vehicle availability.

**Free, unlimited fixed-route service.** Program participants are also eligible for free, unlimited use of the CityBus fixed-route system. Because paratransit service is so expensive to operate, the program offers free fixed-route service in an effort to minimize paratransit use except in cases of necessity.

### System Ridership and Performance

In Fiscal Year 2015-2016, approximately 45,000 people took trips on Santa Rosa Paratransit with an average of approximately 2.4 passengers per hour. Built into the City's contract with its paratransit operator is a clause stipulating that if a driver succeeds in reaching a rate of 2.58 passengers per hour over the course of a month while maintaining a 97% on-time performance (OTP) rate, that driver will receive a \$3,000 monthly bonus. If a driver reaches a 2.75 passenger per hour rate and maintains a 97% OTP rate, that bonus will increase to \$5,000. Thus far, no driver has reached either threshold.<sup>16</sup>

**Figure D-3 Summary of Santa Rosa Paratransit's Performance Metrics**

Category	2016 Statistics
Annual budget	\$1.2 million
Number of trips	45,000
Passengers per hour	2.4
Fleet size	13 vehicles

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Yuri Koslen, Transit Planner for the City of Santa Rosa. May 30, 2017.

## Fleet

Santa Rosa Paratransit's fleet of vehicles consists of 13 vehicles. During peak periods, the program typically deploys 9 - 10 vehicles. These vehicles are owned by the City of Santa Rosa and maintained by the program's contractor, MV Transportation. The City spot-checks each vehicle monthly.

## Fare

The cost to ride a Santa Rosa Paratransit vehicle is \$3 per ride. If an eligible participant in the program chooses to ride a bus in the City's fixed-route system, that ride is free.

## Program Costs and Funding

The annual budget for the Santa Rosa Paratransit program is around \$1.5 million, which includes contracts with MV Transportation and C.A.R.E. Evaluators, but does not include City employee staff time. The City's contract with MV Transportation amounts to approximately \$1 million annually.

## Staffing

Only one City of Santa Rosa employee has a significant focus on the Santa Rosa Paratransit program. The remainder of the City's paratransit work is contracted out to MV Transportation and C.A.R.E. Evaluators. MV Transportation's contract with the City requires that the company provide an on-site manager to manage the program's day-to-day operations. Recent changes to the contract include an increase in drivers' starting salary to compete with the salaries of the City's fixed-route service drivers. This has resulted in significantly less turnover in driving staff.

## Marketing and Outreach

Marketing and outreach is a challenge for the Santa Rosa Paratransit program. While there are several plans in place to improve communications to residents about the available services, few have been realized to date. Plans include advertising on fixed-route buses, distributing a mailer to City residents, and promoting the program at senior centers, Regional Centers, and dialysis clinics. At this time, word of mouth and the Paratransit Users Guide on the City's website are the most common forms of advertising.<sup>17</sup>

## Successes

Successes cited by the City's paratransit manager include:

- Santa Rosa Paratransit's **data management practices**
- The **operating contract** with MV Transportation. In 2010, the City won the "Outstanding Paratransit Program" of the year by the California Association of

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<sup>17</sup> <http://srcity.org/1728/Paratransit-Users-Guide>

Coordinated Transportation (CalACT) in part a result of its partnership with its contractor.

## Challenges

Challenges cited by the City's paratransit manager are manifold. These include:

- **Marketing and advertising strategy**
- **Slow response to customer feedback**
- **Approach to cancellations and no-shows.** The rate of canceled trips is 15 - 19%, and the rate of trips that are no-shows is 3 - 5%.

The City would like to move toward:

- Cashless ticketing
- Reducing passengers' wait and travel time by employing new technologies that enable faster response time
- Minimizing multi-stop trips



## MARIN ACCESS (MARIN COUNTY, CA)

### Agency Overview

Marin Access is a countywide program accessible to all ADA-eligible Marin County residents. The County's service area is limited to a three-quarter mile buffer around its fixed-route system, with a small exception of a grandfathered-in area. The majority of the system's service area falls along the US-101 corridor. While the service area is technically geographically limited to these areas, any eligible participant can request a ride to or from anywhere else in the county for a nominal fee (\$0.50 surcharge).

Since the program's inception in 2009, the County has contracted its paratransit services out to a local non-profit organization, Whistlestop, which runs similar services for Golden Gate Transit.

### Services Provided

**Door-to-door ADA paratransit.** Marin Access' traditional paratransit service is available to all Marin County residents who are traveling within the service area and are unable to use the County's fixed-route services due to a qualifying disability. The service's coverage area is within three-quarters of a mile of all Marin Transit bus routes. As mandated by the ADA, the service operates at similar hours to the County's existing fixed-route public transit service.

**Taxi voucher program.** In September 2012, Marin Transit launched Catch-A-Ride, an age-based taxi subsidy program for residents aged 80 and over or any resident aged 60-80 who does not drive. The program provides a \$14 subsidy for a taxi ride anywhere in the County (\$18 for eligible riders who also qualify as low-income). The program currently provides around 1,400 rides per month.

**Travel navigator program.** Marin Transit launched its travel navigator program in July 2013. The travel navigator program is a call center for Marin residents who are interested in determining their eligibility for Marin Access programs and getting other relevant transportation information. The program streamlines the information-gathering and application processes by limiting program contact to one phone number and program enrollment to one eligibility form. Call center staffers (known as "Travel Navigators") provide transportation information, eligibility determination, counseling, assistance with trip planning, and referrals to other services in Marin County and the Bay Area.

**Volunteer driver program.** Marin Access launched its countywide volunteer driver program in early 2011. The program is based on a model used in Riverside, California, in which riders recruit their friends and neighbors to be their drivers and schedule rides that are convenient for both parties. Whistlestop and West Marin Senior Services contract with Marin Access to run the program. The agency provides eligible riders with a mileage-based reimbursement to repay their volunteer driver. East Marin's program (called STAR) reimburses drivers \$0.35/mile up to 100 miles per month, while West Marin's program, (called TRIP) reimburses drivers \$0.40/mile up to 400 miles per month.

**Travel training program.** Marin Access provides travel training for seniors, consisting of groups of one to five trainees who are interested in familiarizing themselves with bus travel. In addition to an on-board travel training, the program facilitates one or two travel training presentations a month at various facilities throughout the County.



## System Ridership and Performance

In Fiscal Year 2015-2016, Marin Access provided 168,703 passenger trips to 2,324 eligible seniors over the age of 60, or roughly 2.6% of the County's elderly population. Its traditional curb-to-curb paratransit service is the most popular. There were 123,797 local trips provided for the 1,740 people eligible for that service, which amounted to 79% of all Marin Access rides. The remaining ridership included 11% through the "Catch-a-Ride" program, and 10% through the volunteer driver program.<sup>19</sup>

Marin Access program averages 2.2 passengers per hour. The average cost of the programs is \$77.81 per hour, and the average cost per trip is \$35.92 (Figure D-4).

**Figure D-4 Summary of Marin Access' Performance Metrics<sup>18</sup>**

Category	Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Statistics (Paratransit Program only)
Annual budget	\$7.6 million
Number of trips	168,073
Passengers per hour	2.2
Cost per hour	\$77.81
Cost per trip	\$35.92
Fleet size	35 vehicles

## Fares

It costs a \$2 flat rate for any paratransit ride within Marin Access' coverage area. Any ride outside of the coverage area costs participants an additional \$0.50. If a participant is late for their ride, that ride costs them an additional \$0.50. The Catch-A-Ride program provides a \$14 subsidy for taxi rides for eligible paratransit riders and \$18 for riders who also qualify as low-income. Meanwhile, the volunteer driver programs are free for riders, with the agency reimbursing drivers \$0.35-\$0.40/mile depending on where in the county the trip takes place.

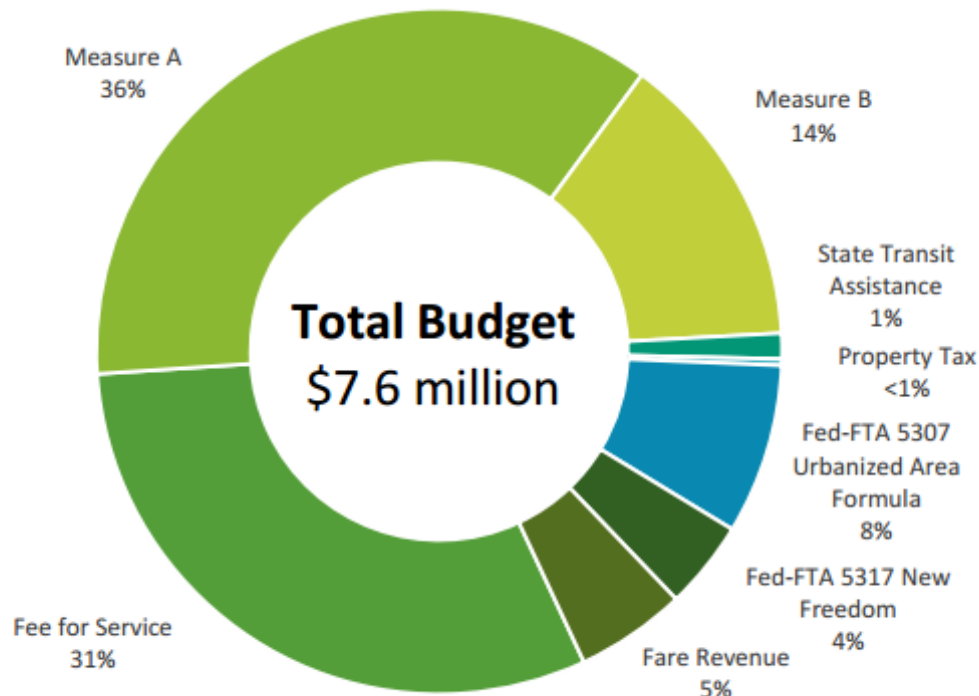
## Program Costs and Finances

The total budget for Marin Access' paratransit programs in Fiscal Year 2014-2015 was \$7.6 million. Thirty-six percent of this funding came from Measure A (a 2004 voter-approved countywide half-cent sales tax devoted to local transportation improvements), 31% came from service fees, 14% came from Measure B (a 2010 Countywide ballot measure that increased the annual vehicle license fee by \$10), and 18% came from a variety of other sources (Figure D-5). The total amount of expenditures during the 2014-2015 fiscal year was \$6.0 million.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Strategic Analysis and Recommendations. Marin Access. August 2016.

**Figure D-5 Funding Sources of Marin Access's Annual Budget, Fiscal Year 2015-2016**



SOURCE: 2016 Marin Access Strategic Analysis and Recommendations

## Staffing

Marin Transit employs 14 people in total, among which only one works directly on paratransit-related issues. Daily paratransit operations are managed by the agency's paratransit contractor, Whistlestop. This contract is based on the number of revenue hours that paratransit vehicles are in operation. Whistlestop also operates the agency's travel navigator program and paratransit services for Golden Gate Transit, a regional fixed-route public transit service. The agency contracts its Catch-A-Ride service out to MV Transportation.

## Marketing and Outreach

Marin Access' marketing and outreach strategy relies primarily on word-of-mouth and referrals from other county agencies that work with seniors and people with disabilities. The service that provides many of these referrals is 415-457-INFO, a hotline linking older adults and people with disabilities with services relevant to their needs. The agency's travel navigator program also supports outreach efforts, making presentations on request and tabling at various fairs throughout the year.

## Successes

Marin Access' greatest successes include its:

- **Travel navigator** and **travel training** programs, which both help paratransit customers familiarize themselves with available resources

- The travel navigator program simplifies the information-gathering process by making this information available in a personalized, one-stop shop format
- The travel training program has played an important role in reaching out to the senior and disabled communities and teaching them how to effectively navigate Marin Transit's fixed-route bus service.

## Challenges

Marin Access' challenges include:

- Providing **same-day service**. This has proven particularly difficult, as there has been no wheelchair-accessible taxi service serving the county since 2015. While the program recently received funding for same-day transportation services, program staff have yet to decide how to provide and price fares for this service.
- Improve its **service branding**. Because most of the Marin Access' services have been contracted out, it hard to promote and maintain consistent branding between programs.

## COUNTY CONNECTION LINK PARATRANSIT SERVICE (CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CA)

### Agency Overview

County Connection covers a service area of over 200 square miles with a population of 500,000 people and has a network of 42 fixed routes.<sup>20</sup> The fixed routes include a mix of local, select, express, and weekend services, most of which run every 30 to 60 minutes.

County Connection also provides complementary ADA paratransit service known as LINK, which has operated since 1990. Both fixed-route and paratransit services operate seven days a week.

In 2014, County Connection awarded a three-year contract to First Transit to operate its paratransit service. A new contract for this service goes out this year. As is stipulated in their contract, County Connection owns all 63 paratransit vehicles and provides a maintenance facility for their use, while First Transit is responsible for labor, scheduling, management, ride reservations, and maintenance.

The population of the service area is expected to increase by approximately 10% over the coming decade. By the end of the decade, just over half (53%) of the total population will reside in the three cities of Concord, Walnut Creek, and San Ramon.

### Services Provided

**Door-to-door ADA paratransit.** County Connection’s LINK paratransit service provides service for people with disabilities who are unable to take fixed-route transit services. It is managed by County Connection and operated by First Transit, a private transportation contractor.

LINK’s service area boundary is based on County Connection’s fixed-route system, operating service within a 1.5 mile buffer of weekday routes and a three-quarter mile buffer of weekend routes, as shown in Figure D-8 LINK’s hours of service are based on the latest running route.

**Travel training.** Paratransit riders are also eligible for travel trainings through County Connection’s volunteer “Ambassadors” program. This program assists individuals who are interested in learning to take trips on fixed-route buses.

**Free midday trips for seniors on fixed-route transit system.** Seniors at least 65 years of age may travel on all County Connection routes for free between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. every day with identification showing their age.

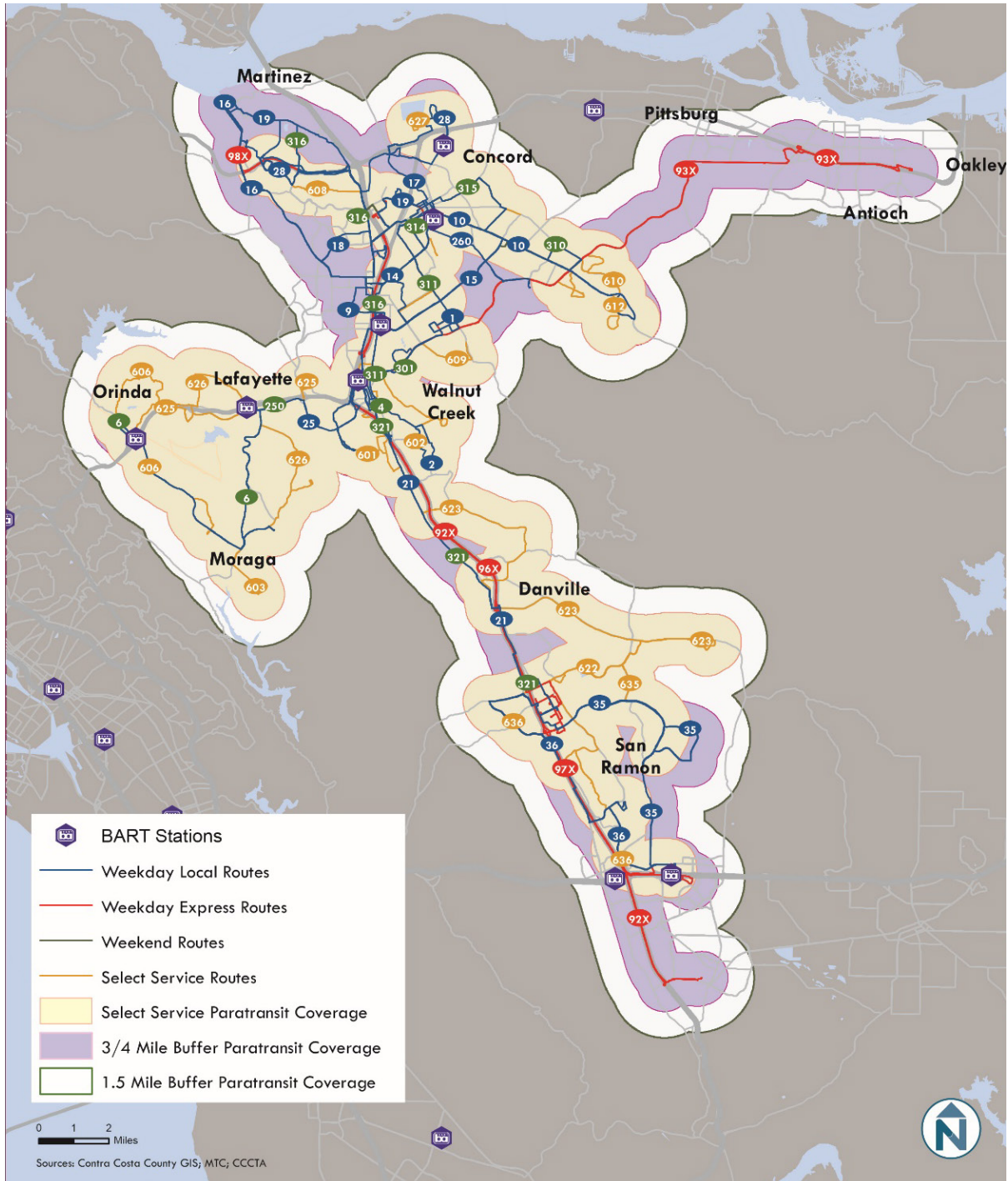
**Mobility management.** In 2015, through sales tax and New Freedom grants, Contra Costa County began a pilot project for mobility management. It continues today as a partnership with Senior Helpline Services, now known as Mobility Matters; the County does not operate the program directly. Its goal is to help connect people with the regional and local available resources. The initial goals of the program included: an inventory of available services from transportation providers, expanded transportation information and referral programs, expanding and standardizing travel training, and developing a coordinated vehicle maintenance plan.

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<sup>20</sup> Population Projections for Various Counties. 2009-2010 Community Survey. Census Bureau, [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), September 27, 2015.

The non-profit is in the process of developing a countywide travel training program and evaluating how the ADA certification determinations are made by the county's four transit agencies providing paratransit services. Up to \$350,000 of Mobility Matters expenses will be allocated to Contra Costa related mobility management functions when this program is fully implemented.

**Figure D-6 County Connection Paratransit Service Coverage**



## Eligibility

LINK rider eligibility is determined in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, using regional application materials.

County Connection staff performs eligibility tasks and in-person assessments when deemed appropriate. Eligible riders receive discounts on County Connection's fixed route system and access to LINK's door-to-door service. LINK customers must make a reservation for door-to-door service at least 24 hours in advance in order to ensure a ride. Same day requests are occasionally accepted, depending on vehicle and driver availability.

## System Ridership and Performance

In Fiscal Year 2015-2016, LINK provided 156,832 trips to eligible Contra Costa County residents. During that same year, the operating cost of the program was around \$5.1 million. In terms of cost-effectiveness, LINK sees an average of 1.9 passengers per hour on its system, an average program cost of \$69.42 per hour, and the average cost per trip is \$32.62 per hour (Figure D-7). LINK's fleet of paratransit vehicles is relatively large compared to its peers. In total, the agency owns 63 paratransit vehicles, which include 51 22-foot vans, 4 24-foot vans, 5 minivans, and 3 microvans. These vehicles are all owned by County Connection and maintained by the agency's paratransit contractor, First Transit.

**Figure D-7 Summary of LINK's Performance Metrics**

Category	Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Statistics
Annual budget	\$5.1 million
Number of trips	156,832
Passengers per hour	2.2
Cost per hour	\$69.42
Cost per trip	\$32.62
Fleet size	63 vehicles

## Fares

LINK has a \$4 fare for ADA-eligible paratransit riders. LINK also offers an "Advance Fare Payment System" which allows riders to prepay for trips. To use the "Advance Fare Payment System," riders must mail a check of at least \$50 to County Connection in order to establish an account. LINK then automatically deducts trips from the account, notifying patrons once the account reaches \$25.

## Program Costs and Funding

LINK's main funding sources over the last few years have been Measure J – a countywide half-cent transportation sales tax approved by voters in 2004 – followed by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and State Transit Assistance (STA) funds. The breakdown of primary sources is expected to remain consistent over the coming years. The revenue sources provide enough funding to allow for a fully balanced operating budget.

In Fiscal Year 2013-2014, LINK stopped receiving funding from the Transportation Development Act (TDA) 4.0, a statewide, discretionary funding source for transportation projects. The agency has reduced this gap through an increase in FTA Section 5307 grants and TDA 4.5 funding, a statewide funding source for paratransit services in particular. Future fare increases are also



anticipated to help the system maintain a balanced budget. Figure D-8 highlights the revenue sources for the paratransit system between 2012 and 2015.

**Figure D-8 Three-Year Retrospective of LINK's Paratransit Revenue<sup>21</sup>**

Category	Fiscal Year 2012-2013	Fiscal Year 2013-2014	Fiscal Year 2014-2015
Fare revenue	\$478,120	\$620,968	\$627,178
Non-Operating revenue	\$45	\$79	\$100
FTA Section 5307	\$667,479	\$1,392,859	\$1,128,694
TDA 4.5	\$638,144	\$812,956	\$766,150
TDA 4.0	\$808,838	\$0	\$0
Measure J	\$1,170,229	\$1,308,400	\$1,380,877
STA Paratransit & Revenue-based	\$1,177,261	\$916,116	\$1,067,773
BART ADA Service/Other	\$185,879	\$179,547	\$174,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,125,995</b>	<b>\$5,230,925</b>	<b>\$5,144,772</b>

## Staffing

Currently, there are five County Connection staff members whose time is at least partially dedicated to LINK paratransit service. These include the Director of Transportation, the Manager of Transportation, the Director of Planning and Marketing, and two on-hand ADA specialists.<sup>22</sup>

## Successes and Challenges

LINK's major success is their in-person eligibility assessment and certification for eligibility. The process is consistent and thorough – an in-person interview is required of each applicant, and applicants are required to bring a specific set of documents to their interview, without exception. Once approved, for registrants who are affiliated with a social service program, agency staff work with the relevant social service provider to set up an account on behalf of their client. This account is set up in such a way to allow agencies to pay for their clients directly.

<sup>21</sup> CCCTA 2016-2025 Short Range Transit Plan

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Ruby Horta, Manager of Transportation, County Connection

## RUNABOUT PARATRANSIT (SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA)

### Agency Overview

Runabout is a countywide paratransit program in San Luis Obispo County that provides paratransit service for people with disabilities. Runabout provides paratransit service within three-quarters of a mile of all Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and South County Transit (SCT) fixed-route bus routes throughout the County.

### Eligibility

To qualify for Runabout service, a rider must complete an application and have an in-person interview. All ADA-qualified residents are eligible, and there are discounts for seniors, the disabled, and children in Paso Robles and Nipomo.

### Services Provided

Service is available seven days a week, and has the same hours of operation as the County's fixed route systems. Reservations for the service must be scheduled between seven days in advance of a ride until 5 p.m. the night before. Service days and hours vary by community.

**Door-to-door ADA paratransit.** RTA provides Dial-a-Ride transportation for the communities of Paso Robles, Shandon, Templeton, and Nipomo.

**Free fixed-route transit rides.** The RTA also offers free fixed-route service for any resident who is ADA certified.

**Travel training.** Runabout recently launched a travel training program to teach county residents how to ride fixed-route and paratransit vehicles. The program's mobility specialist travels to community groups and provides personalized trainings upon request. The training focuses primarily on fixed-route service, and has successfully shifted several trainees' default transit mode from paratransit to fixed-route, as they become more familiar with the systems.

### Fares

The cost of a ride ranges from \$2.50 to \$10, depending on the length of the journey.

### Successes

RTA has made several successful changes to its Runabout paratransit service in recent years. These changes range from its eligibility policy, to pricing policy and customer service. Recent successes and ongoing challenges for Runabout's paratransit program are detailed below:

- **Eligibility policy.** Until recently, eligibility for Runabout paratransit was based upon a doctor's note. Now the program has an in-house mobility specialist who reviews all paratransit applications and sets up one-on-one interviews with individuals seeking program eligibility. The specialist also sets up occasional functional assessments to confirm applicants' eligibility. This new policy has reduced the number of applicants to the program, and ensured that the paratransit services provided are eligible to individuals who need it.



- **Travel training program.** The mobility specialist who reviews paratransit applications also goes out into the community and conducts travel trainings with community members and groups upon request. These trainings are geared toward paratransit-eligible individuals who are not yet comfortable riding the region's fixed-route system. The trainings teach these individuals how to navigate the fixed-route system so they will be more inclined to use it than Runabout.
- **Fare policy.** Runabout recently changed its fare policy to discourage paratransit trips and encourage fixed-route service trips, even among its paratransit-eligible customers. Runabout fares were formerly lower than the maximum fares allowed under the ADA, and fixed-route fares were discounted for paratransit riders. Program staff recently changed the price structure of paratransit fares to reflect the maximum amount allowed under the ADA, and made the fixed-route system free for all paratransit-eligible individuals.
- **Customer service.** Runabout recently launched an automated call-back service reminding customers about the rides they scheduled. Automated calls are scheduled for an hour prior to their trip. These calls have decreased the amount of no-shows and increased the number of people who are ready for their pick-up on time. While most users can opt out of the call-back service if they wish, chronically late or no-show users are precluded from opting out of this service.
- **Driver pool.** Because operations are all in-house, drivers are trained to operate fixed-route route and paratransit services. This has helped the labor pool be more stable, and reduce costs of fixed-route operators who would be on medical leave, but are able to drive paratransit vehicles.

## Challenges

Runabout program challenges include:

- An 18% **growth in paratransit trips** in one year
- **Improving service efficiency**
- **Implementing subsidized taxicab programs**
- How to **mitigate ongoing funding issues.** Funding and efficiency issues are being tackled through the findings of an impending report that will be looking at the slack time (the down time between trips) of each paratransit vehicle throughout the day. This information will help identify where service should increase and decrease throughout the system. By implementing these changes, program staff hope to reduce funding needs through more cost-efficient operations.

## SOLANO TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY INTERCITY TAXI SCRIP PROGRAM (SOLANO COUNTY, CA)

### Agency Overview

The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) was created in 1990. The STA is responsible for countywide transportation planning, programming transportation funds, managing and providing transportation programs and services, delivering transportation projects, and setting transportation priorities.

The STA serves a countywide population of approximately 440,000. The three largest cities in the county – Vallejo, Fairfield and Vacaville – have populations ranging from approximately 95,000 to 120,000.

STA's Intercity Taxi Scrip Program was selected for this peer review due to its innovative characteristics in serving a low-density area and the fact that Solano County has a mix of urban, suburban, and rural development patterns that share some similarities with the Tri-Valley region.

### Historical Context

Over the past decade, Solano County has used multiple methods for providing paratransit service between communities, supplementing the ADA and other paratransit services provided by the transit operators within their own service areas. Each of the major cities in the county operates its own ADA paratransit service, and is named as follows: Dixon Read-Ride ADA Paratransit, Fairfield and Suisun Transit (FAST) DART Paratransit, Rio Vista Delta Breeze ADA Paratransit, SolTrans ADA Paratransit, and Vacaville City Coach Special Services.

The transit operators provide service within their jurisdictions, and participate in the Solano County Intercity Taxi Scrip program. Traditionally, if a passenger wishes to access another city's paratransit system, the use of transfer points is required. Dispatch staff makes the arrangements on behalf of the passenger with connecting agencies. In addition to local jurisdiction paratransit service, intercity paratransit has been in operation throughout the county as well.

From 1995 through 2009, the City of Fairfield administered a program known as Solano Paratransit. It provided ADA paratransit corresponding to FAST Route 20, between Fairfield and Vacaville, and also countywide intercity service for residents of Dixon, Fairfield, Rio Vista, Suisun City, Vacaville, and unincorporated areas, but the type of trip was not limited. The service was discontinued in 2009 due to the financial unsustainability of the program. It had been operated by the same contractor that provided ADA paratransit in Fairfield and Suisun.

After the program's discontinuation, ADA paratransit service between transit service areas was provided by arranging transfers between the operators' local paratransit services.

In 2010, a new service called the Solano Intercity Taxi Scrip program began operations under the leadership of the City of Vacaville Transportation Division. The new service was designed as supplemental, non-ADA service, while ADA paratransit between cities continued to be provided by means of transfers. A Memorandum of Understanding among all of the cities, the County of Solano, and eight participating taxi companies outlined responsibilities under the new program.

The Intercity Taxi Scrip program has been popular and operates with few complaints. However, demand for trips has exceeded the available budget until the current year, and several cities routinely sold their entire monthly allocation of scrip before the end of the month. In addition,

there were no wheelchair accessible taxis in the county, and service was only available for customers who can ride in a standard passenger vehicle. The program presented concerns regarding the degree of accountability and oversight that was possible under the existing service design; the cost of lengthy trips; the lack of shared riding; and the high percentage of trips that were taken by a small number of individuals to a limited number of destinations.

## Program Administration

In July 2013, the County of Solano agreed to take over administration of the program as part of a plan to transition to a new service concept. The County led a process that produced a Request for Proposals for a contractor to implement the new service. The County later determined that it would be more appropriate for STA to administer the existing program and any replacement service. Following a review of alternative service concepts and feasibility, STA agreed to assume responsibility from the County and contracted with Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates to manage the transition process, including implementation of a new program and administration of the existing program.

## Fares

Through 2016, the Solano Intercity Taxi Scrip program continued under STA administration with few changes. The program continued to be open to individuals certified as ADA paratransit eligible by one of the participating transit operators. Booklets containing scrip worth \$100 in taxi rides were sold for \$15 per booklet. Each transit operator sold scrip to its residents who used it to pay for taxi rides. In 2017 the program increased fares to \$20 per booklet for low-income riders and \$40 per booklet for non low-income riders.

## Reimbursement Process

The taxi companies turned in the scrip that drivers received from customers to the cities in which they were licensed, along with an invoice for reimbursement. The cities reviewed and approved the taxi company invoices and forwarded them for payment by the County. At the end of each fiscal year there is an accounting reconciliation to ensure that each transit operator paid for usage by its riders.

## Financial Sustainability

In order to address the long-term sustainability of the program, a number of steps have been taken during the past two years. A new fare mechanism has been put in place to ensure financial sustainability while also addressing the needs of low-income riders. STA is about to embark on a substantial restructuring of the program that is planned for full implementation by January 2018.

## System Ridership and Performance

Figure D-11 Summary of Intercity Taxi Scrip Program's Performance Metrics

	Fiscal Year 2008-2009	Fiscal Year 2012-2013	Fiscal Year 2013-2014	Fiscal Year 2014-2015	Fiscal Year 2015-16
One-Way Passenger Trips	7,557	12,780	11,844	12,824	12,246

- Budget for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 was \$999,592 (increased from \$855,000 in Fiscal Year 2014-2015)
- Program is financed by New Freedom grants, Transportation Development Act funds, and fare revenues
- Program serves approximately 300 participating individuals
- Average productivity of approximately 1.2 passengers per trip
- Most trips are in the \$20 to \$40 range, with an average trip length for these trips of approximately 12 miles

## Challenges and Successes

Some of the key challenges faced by the program in its earlier configuration include the following:

- Long-term **financial sustainability** due to the cost per trip
- **Concentration of trips within a small group of individuals**, including a group of visually-impaired riders who use the service to commute to work at a call center at Travis Air Force Base. Many of these trips occur during night time hours as the workers operate on swing shifts.
- **Cities running out of vouchers** for sale to riders
- Program is **difficult to centrally administer** because of the participation of multiple cities and the County
- **Unavailable trips** to individuals who cannot transfer out of their wheelchairs

Some of these challenges were addressed in the steps that have already been taken. For example, those that are planned for implementation by January 2018, including the following:

- A relatively small **increase in fares** for low-income riders, with a significant increase for non low-income riders, which has both increased fare revenues and reduced the frequency with which cities run out of vouchers
- **Elimination of taxi scrip vouchers** and establishment of a centralized reservations function in STA's Mobility Call Center
- **Contracting** of service to provide accessible transportation options for wheelchair users

**Program Update:** In 2018 the program completely revamped its service model, and adopted a debit card means of payment with significant increase in the role of the STA call center. The "Taxi Card" was introduced in October 2018 and is currently being implemented on an incremental basis in each of the county's cities.