

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Public Hearing: Route 501 Service Reduction

FROM: Christy Wegener, Executive Director

DATE: November 3, 2025

Action Requested

The Board of Directors will hold a public hearing to receive input on the Route 501 service reduction.

Background

Dublin High School has historically been served by supplemental school routes 501–504. Route 501 specifically serves the Positano, Silvera Ranch, and Dublin Ranch neighborhoods. In August 2024, Emerald High School opened, and students began transitioning from Dublin High School to the new campus. To support this transition, LAVTA introduced Route 201, a dedicated service for Emerald High School students in the Positano and Dublin Ranch neighborhoods.

The Dublin Unified School District projects Emerald High School enrollment to reach 1,765 students in the 2025/26 school year. As a result of this shift, ridership on Route 501 has declined by 62% year-over-year. In anticipation of these reductions in demand, staff correspondingly reduced the number of buses assigned to Route 501 from five to two beginning with the start of the 2025/26 school year on August 12, 2025. Additionally, staff removed the late afternoon trip that operated at 4:25pm due to low ridership in FY25 and FY24; the late trip was put into place in 2023 due to excessive loads on Route 501.

Discussion

LAVTA's Title VI and Major Service Change Policy mandates that a public hearing be held if there is a twenty-five percent (25%) or more reduction of the number of daily transit revenue vehicles of a route; i.e., the total number of miles operated by all vehicles in revenue service for a particular day of the week on an individual route. A public hearing provides a venue for Wheels riders, stakeholders, and the community to provide comments on the implementation of a new route. Therefore, in accordance with the Title VI policy, the reduction in vehicles from 5 to 2 buses on Route 501 necessitates a public comment period and a public hearing.

Since the October Board meeting, Wheels staff have been advertising the public hearing and through a variety of channels in English, Spanish, and Chinese (Simplified).

The public hearing notice was published in the East Bay Times, Valley Times Legal Classifieds section on October 14, 2025. It was also displayed at the entrance of the LAVTA Administrative Office and the Livermore Transit Center. A press release was also issued.

Details of the public hearing and the Route 501 service reduction were posted to the Wheelsbus.com website on a dedicated landing page containing a form for comment submissions.

Social media including Facebook and Instagram were utilized with “pinned” posts at the top of news feeds for the duration of the comment period.

Direct marketing was used in coordination with the Dublin school district. Automated marketing (Peachjar) notices were sent out via Dublin Unified School District and Dublin High School. A “seat drop” was completed, distributing hearing notices to students on the affected route during regular service.

Budget

There is no budget impact with holding a public hearing.

Recommendation

Staff recommend the Board hold the public hearing to receive input on the Route 501 service reduction.