

## Executive Summary

An up-to-date Short Range Transit Plan (SRTTP) guides Marin Transit's investments in the future. It is a living document that uses current information, financial resources, and performance targets to plan for local public transit services. The SRTTP balances Marin Transit's projected costs and revenues over a five-year timeframe and is designed to provide a ten-year vision of the future.

Marin voters approved a twenty year ½ cent transportation sales tax (Measure A) in 2004 that designated 55 percent of revenues to local transit services and established goals, objectives, and performance measures. Dedicated local funding enables the District to pay for and improve local bus and shuttle services and targeted mobility programs for Marin senior, disabled, and low-income residents. The District's ability to secure federal, state, and regional funding for public transit operations, equipment, and facilities depends on the availability of local funding sources. Scheduled Marin Transit services encompass all bus routes that begin and end within Marin County, middle and high school trippers, the community shuttle program, the West Marin Stagecoach, and the Muir Woods Shuttle. Marin Transit provides demand response paratransit services for those eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and additional mobility management programs to expand their travel options and serve seniors who no longer drive. In all cases, Marin Transit anticipates the needs of Marin County's diverse travel markets and delivers cost-effective, targeted service options. Marin Transit is a future-oriented mobility manager.

### Marin Transit services and programs

With approval of Measure A, the District developed the county's first local transit service plan as part of the 2006 Short Range Transit Plan. The local service plan was designed to enable local riders to travel more efficiently to reach work, school, and health care destinations with fewer transfers. Marin Transit has continued to refine the route structure to anticipate and serve the needs of local riders, improve service efficiency, and establish a system to evaluate performance by service type.

The District's bus and shuttle services carry over 3.5 million passenger trips each year and are organized by program and service type. The five program areas are: local fixed route, community shuttle, supplemental school, rural fixed route, and the Muir Woods Shuttle. Service type refers to the purpose of individual routes and their intended markets. Marin Transit develops and delivers a family of services to accommodate the diverse transportation needs of Marin residents.

Marin Transit contracts out all of its operations in four program areas – Big Bus, Community Shuttle, Rural and Seasonal, and Special Needs. Marin Transit initiated an innovative mobility management program, Marin Access, in 2008 to develop and deliver efficient travel options and improved information for senior and disabled residents. Since 2009, the District operates the award-winning seasonal Muir Woods Shuttle that keeps vehicles off of narrow mountain roads, relieves congestion, and improves the experience of visitors from across the United States and around the world. This is accomplished through an ongoing partnership with the National Park Service.

Marin Transit works with many schools in Marin County to offer supplemental transit services for students. These school service trips reduce roadway congestion during peak travel hours. The District offers a reduced price Youth Pass for riders 18 and under that provides unlimited rides on all local transit services within Marin County. Free Youth Passes are provided to students of eligible families with demonstrated income hardships.

Under the umbrella of Marin Access, Marin Transit has a variety of programs that serve the transportation needs of senior and disabled residents. A team of travel navigators coordinate and match four mobility programs for eligible riders. These include local paratransit, dial-a-ride, volunteer driver, and subsidized taxi (Catch-A-Ride). The travel navigators provide trip planning and technical assistance so that riders can select the most appropriate option to make their trips. The delivery of Marin Access services is supported by Measure A as well as a more recent vehicle license fee (Measure B) that designates funds specifically to expand and enhance services for senior and disabled residents.

With a relatively stable population base in Marin County, ridership on local transit and mobility management program continues to grow with targeted services.

### **Who does Marin Transit serve?**

The table below is presented in Chapter 1 and compares the results of three passenger surveys conducted on Marin Transit services in 2005, 2008, and 2012 with recent data on the demographics of Marin County residents.

The comparison highlights significant differences in transit riders from the average Marin County resident in income and race. Compared to the rest of the County, Marin Transit local riders have a significantly lower income and lower proportion of riders identify their race as Caucasian/White. About 61% of Marin Transit local riders earn less than \$25,000 a year, while the majority of Marin County residents (57%) are at the other end of the range earning \$75,000 or more. In addition to providing an overview of the District's services, partner agencies, and capital assets, Chapter 1 summarizes the findings from local transit needs and countywide market assessments. The findings identify the characteristics of those who are likely to use local transit services in the future. The recommendations from each of these studies significantly inform the SRTTP service planning priorities.

Category	Transit Rider (Onboard Survey Results)			Marin County % <sup>(1)(2)(3)</sup>
	2005	2008	2012	
<i>Age</i>				
Persons under 18 years old	18%	25%	21%	21%
Persons between 18 and 65 years old	78%	70%	72%	60%
Persons 65 years old and older	4%	5%	7%	19%
<i>Gender</i>				
Female	48%	46%	49%	51%
Male	52%	54%	51%	49%
<i>Household Income</i>				
Under \$25,000	51%	61%	57%	14%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	28%	18%	20%	16%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	10%	8%	7%	13%
\$75,000 or more	10%	13%	16%	57%
<i>Race</i>				
Hispanic	n/a	49%	43%	15%
Caucasian/White	n/a	36%	39%	73%
African American	n/a	9%	7%	3%
Asian	n/a	8%	5%	5%
Other	n/a	5%	6%	3%

**Source:** (1) U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, Summary File 1 (2) U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey (3) U.S. Census Bureau, 2013, Population Estimates Program (PEP)

### Service types and productivity

In recent years, Marin Transit has developed and applied categories of services based on the market served. This system provides a means to establish performance standards and better design services in different parts of the county based on the profile of the travel market and ridership levels. Chapter 1 provides a description of how the District defines these service types and the transit vehicles assigned to them.

### Marin Transit priorities and performance measurement

The Measure A expenditure plan calls for Marin Transit to update this Short Range Transit Plan every two years so that the District will more effectively respond to the changing transit needs of all who travel within the county. The expenditure plan distributes transit funds within four categories:

- Maintain and expand local bus transit service
- Maintain and improve the rural bus transit system
- Maintain and expand transit service and program for those with special needs
- Invest in bus transit facilities for a clean and efficient transit system

As required in Measure A, the transit planning process employs extensive public input from all areas of the county and bases investments on an analysis of measurable performance criteria. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission also compels transit operators to prepare an SRTP every four years, and this SRTP update addresses their requirements. Through Marin Transit’s short range planning process, the District has established a system for evaluating the performance of its services and programs that refers to and builds on the eight criteria established in the Measure A plan. The District organizes these measures into three categories to evaluate the performance of its services and programs as follows:

### 1. System-wide Performance

- a. Relieves congestion and provides mobility as measured in total ridership;
- b. Ensures high levels of customer satisfaction with services;
- c. Provides accessible transit services with Marin County;
- d. Ensures services are provided in a reliable manner;
- e. Provides service levels to prevent overcrowding;
- f. Promotes environmental justice based on demographic analysis; and
- g. Meets cost efficiency standards based on cost per revenue hour.

### 2. Route Level Performance

- a. Meets service typology productivity standards based on passengers per hour;
- b. Meets service typology cost effectiveness standards based on subsidy per passenger trip;
- c. Provides adequate service frequency based on service typology;
- d. Provides adequate span of service based on service typology; and
- e. Provides competitive travel times to promote transit usage.

### 3. District Performance

- a. Attracts outside funding sources, including federal and state revenue, as well as other local funds;
- b. Operates the system in a manner that encourages public involvement and participation; and
- c. Maintains a capital plan to minimize air quality issues and provide quality amenities and vehicles.

Chapter 2 of the SRTP provides detail on each Marin Transit goal and performance targets. The District provides a monthly system and route performance report to the Board of Directors and an annual report each Fall. These reports are available for viewing on the website: [www.marintransit.org](http://www.marintransit.org)

### Service Plan Goals within the Short Range Transit Plan

Marin Transit employed three primary objectives to identify funded service needs:

1. Address current underperformance and carry out the recommendations in the District’s *Countywide Transit Market Assessment* (2013);
2. Improve transit system efficiency through the use of scheduling software; and
3. Support connectivity to current and future regional transit services.

Under objectives 1 and 2, the service plan aims to improve the system for current riders by **strengthening connectivity in major transit corridors** based on the countywide market assessment. These may include increasing frequency of buses and reducing the length of time to reach destinations. The corridors identified for improvements include:

- Canal – Downtown San Rafael – Civic Center – Northgate – Novato
- Canal – Downtown San Rafael – Strawberry – Marin City
- Canal – Downtown San Rafael – San Anselmo – College of Marin
- Canal – Downtown San Rafael – Larkspur Landing – Marin General – College of Marin
- Highway 101 (Novato – Downtown San Rafael – Marin City – Sausalito)
- Prepare for SMART service

Under objective 3, the plan modifies service to enable local routes to connect to SMART stations and **increase connectivity of transit** in Marin County:

- Extend Downtown Novato routes north to serve San Marin / Atherton Station, pending infrastructure to accommodate the service extension.
- Evaluate deviations of Hamilton services to serve employment areas at Hamilton Landing or Bel Marin Keys
- Streamline services between Downtown San Rafael and Larkspur Landing / Marin General / College of Marin

Specific service improvements are described in detail in Chapter 3.

## Marin Transit capital and financial plans

Delivering safe and cost effective transit service requires adequate numbers of well-maintained vehicles, bus stops, and other supportive capital facilities and equipment. The capital plan addresses clean-fueled vehicles, bus stop amenities and accessibility, major transfer locations, passenger information, and communications. The District has established a program of expenditures that identifies sufficient funding sources and the expected timeframe for each project. The capital plan also describes needed capital projects that will require additional funds - as unfunded capital needs.

The SRTP provides a ten-year plan for local and rural bus and shuttle routes and Marin Access programs based on projections of annual service hours and miles for each service category. While there is a ten-year planning outlook, the first five years of the SRTP are financially constrained. All projected costs and revenues are balanced during that time period. For operations, costs include contract services by program, fuel and communications, and customer service. Marin Transit draws from a variety of sources to pay for these services. These include local Measure A, state transit assistance and transit development funds, federal grants for rural and lifeline services, and fares.

Appendix B of the SRTP evaluates the District's fare policy structure and offers recommendations as a component of the overall funding plan. Any fare changes will be considered as part of a public process and will be subject to Title VI Civil Rights analysis and Board approval.

The SRTP financial plan also maintains the Marin Transit Board adopted District reserve levels throughout the five years. Chapters 4 and 5 describe the updated short range capital and financial plans in detail.

## **Where is local transit going in the future?**

This SRTP service plan is the basis for the ten year financial and capital planning. The plan identifies three service delivery challenges: Costs continue to outpace revenues; Rapid growth in the numbers of senior and disabled residents; and Public recognition of Marin Transit services and programs. Opportunities include diversifying Marin Transit services and programs, reductions in operating costs, and the use of new technologies and shared-ride services as a complement to local transit options. While school enrollments increase, the District is working with partners, school districts, and colleges to develop innovative and financially sustainable transportation options for students.

The fixed route service plan anticipates a 12 percent growth in revenue service hours over the next ten years. The plan implements the improvements identified in the 2013 *Countywide Transit Market Assessment*, prepares the District for the start of SMART service, and puts forward changes to improve the efficiency and convenience of the transit system for riders. The timing of these improvements will depend on future service contracts.

### ***Increase Efficiency of Operations***

Create cost-neutral service expansion through increasing efficiency. Reassess route schedules and their alignments with current peak/off peak runtimes, and restructure routes that have excess time when the bus is out of service. Newly purchased scheduling software enables the District to closely assess current and proposed bus and shuttle schedules.

### ***Plan for the Expanding Need for Marin Access Programs and Services***

Marin County's senior population is projected to increase by 41 percent over the next ten years. Marin Access programs provided almost 160,000 passenger trips in fiscal year 2014, and the number will increase in proportion with the numbers of residents reaching age 65 and beyond. Individualized transit services are by their nature expensive to provide, and the most expensive is door-to-door paratransit utilized by most Marin Access customers. The travel navigator program provides riders with the information they need to select the most appropriate mobility services available to them.

The SRTP accommodates and manages future growth related to senior and Americans with Disabilities Act-eligible riders and evaluates current service options, usage, and funding.

- Maximize the use of electronic scheduling software to increase service and efficiency;

- Restructure the Paratransit operations contract. Over the ten-year plan horizon the paratransit contract alone represents approximately one-third of all District expenditures. A new contract moves the pricing to a fixed and variable structure that reduces the financial impact for the District as service grows;
- Evaluate fare policies for Marin Access programs. These include pricing that enables customers to select the best program based on their trip need, changes to paratransit fare policies, charging a base fare for the Catch-A-Ride subsidized taxi program, and exploring options to further reduce fixed route fares for senior and ADA-eligible residents; and
- Continue to explore partnership opportunities to enhance mobility for senior and ADA-eligible residents to ensure new transportation services are well coordinated and sustainable.

The SRTP plans for an average of 4 percent per year increase in annual service levels for Marin Access programs over the 10 year life of the Plan. If higher levels of ADA required service is needed, this may impact Marin Transit’s ability to continue to provide the majority of requested trips that are not required under the ADA.

#### *Evaluate Unfunded Service Needs*

The SRTP Appendix C lists future service improvements as needs that are not funded within the Plan. These have been developed through input from customers and stakeholders and analysis of:

- Recommendations from the Community-Based Transportation Plan (CBTP) in the Canal, Marin City, and Novato;
- Current and previous planning studies; and
- Changes in transportation market conditions and demographics.

Funded or unfunded, Marin Transit evaluates each service need based on the Measure A performance criteria for transit investments. Appendix C includes the results of this evaluation for improvements that will require additional and financially sustainable funding to operate.