



# agenda

Subject: **Marin Transit Ad Hoc Committee on School Transportation**

Location: **Marin County Civic Center, Terrace Room - 326  
3501 Civic Center Drive, San Rafael**

Date: **June 29, 2018**

Time: **11:00 am**

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## Topics:

1. Discussion of Civil Grand Jury Report “Yellow School Bus for Traffic Congestion Relief” Recommendations (Attachment 1)
  - a. Summary of Recommendations
  - b. Role of Marin Transit
  - c. Proposed approach to response
2. Establishment of a Standing Committee on Yellow School Bus (Attachment 2)
3. Proposed process and timeline for funding decisions (Attachment 3)
4. Funding to be considered in a rationalized formula approach (Handout)
  - a. Near term – FY 2019/20
  - b. Longer Term
5. Next steps





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June 29, 2018

Student Transportation Ad Hoc Committee  
Marin County Transit District  
3501 Civic Center Drive  
San Rafael, CA 94903

**SUBJECT: Discussion of Civil Grand Jury Report, *Yellow School Bus for Traffic Congestion Relief***

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Dear Committee Members:

**BACKGROUND:**

On June 8, 2017, the Civil Grand Jury released its report, *Yellow School Bus for Traffic Congestion Relief*. The report makes several findings that are consistent with the issues your Ad Hoc Committee has been tackling over the past two years. The Civil Grand Jury's report references the 2015 *Coordinated Countywide Student Transportation Study* prepared by Marin Transit in partnership with TAM and the Marin County Office of Education (MCOE) throughout.

**SUMMARY:**

The primary findings in the report:

- School bus transportation is a means to reduce traffic congestion;
- There is a demand to expand school transportation programs
- A dedicated parking and maintenance facility for yellow bus services is needed;
- Funding for current yellow bus programs is temporary and inconsistent; and
- Lack of coordination results in inefficiencies.

The Civil Grand Jury requests that cities and towns, the County, TAM, school districts, and Marin Transit respond to the report recommendations by September 1, 2018.

**Summary of Recommendations**

The Grand Jury recommendations are summarized as follows:

- Local jurisdictions should work with Marin Transit to secure a bus parking and maintenance facility location.
- Marin Transit should establish a standing Yellow School Bus Committee that includes representatives from the County, the Marin County Office of Education, and each school district and municipality in the urbanized area.

- Marin Transit should manage the development and operations of the coordinated Yellow School Bus program with operations beginning in the 2019-20 school year.
- The County and municipalities of the urbanized corridor should make financial support of all yellow school bus programs part of each year's budgeting process.

The Civil Grand Jury's report is located at <https://www.marincounty.org/-/media/files/departments/gj/reports-responses/2017-18/yellow-school-bus-for-traffic-congestion-relief.pdf?la=en>

A copy of the report recommendations is attached to this memo.

While the report found that municipal and county funding for yellow school bus service is temporary and inconsistent, there is no recommendation that leads to establishing a stable, ongoing source of funding for yellow bus service. The renewal of the countywide transportation sales tax will require that five percent of the sales tax revenues be used for school transportation. This is a small increase to the ongoing commitment Marin Transit already makes to school transportation. As your Ad Hoc Committee has discussed, the need for additional reliable, ongoing funding is critical to the success of a countywide yellow bus program. In order for the Civil Grand Jury's recommendations to be fully realized, a new/augmented source of ongoing funding must be identified.

### **Marin Transit's Role**

The Civil Grand Jury recommends that Marin Transit take a lead role in developing and operating a coordinated yellow school bus program, beginning immediately. Near term, it recommends establishing a standing committee with broad representation and working on a financial arrangement to distribute the potential lost tax revenue from siting a parking and maintenance facility. These efforts are likely to require a substantial commitment of staff time. Additionally, expansion of the yellow bus program beyond the current programs managed by Marin Transit staff will require additional staffing. Any program expansion and related expansion of funding will need to recognize management and administrative costs.

We request that the Ad Hoc Committee provide direction on Marin Transit's role in future yellow bus expansion. A clear understanding of our role is integral to our response to the Civil Grand Jury.

### **Addressing the Recommendations**

The County of Marin, TAM, and the City of San Rafael have asked Marin Transit to lead a coordinated response to the Civil Grand Jury report. All responses must follow the format specified in the Penal Code and are due by September 1, 2018. Governing bodies of the entities requested to respond must comment or respond in an open meeting of the governing board. Given the limited number of regularly scheduled governing board meetings occurring before September 1, 2018, Marin Transit staff proposes to draft a response to share with local jurisdictions by mid-July.

Generally, staff concurs with the report recommendations. Marin Transit has been implementing some of these recommendations in whole or in part over the past three years. If the Ad Hoc Committee concurs that Marin Transit is the entity to lead the development of a yellow bus program, we suggest that our response indicate that there are two conditions that must be resolved prior to implementing a successful program. The first is ensuring reliable ongoing funding for operations and funding for capital purchases such as a parking and maintenance location and potentially bus purchases. The second and related condition is securing a

permanent or long-term parking location with the potential to perform some or all vehicle maintenance.

The Grand Jury calls for the establishment of a standing Yellow School Bus Committee comprised of representatives of 25 local entities. The initial meeting of the Committee is to be held by October 2018.

In the past, your Ad Hoc Committee has considered establishing a broader group of stakeholders when additional funding was made available for expansion of the yellow bus program. More recently, the Ad Hoc Committee has suggested convening a group of stakeholders to discuss potential methods for allocating current and near-term available funds. The schedule and parameters for such a meeting to discuss options for rationalizing fund allocations are presented in a separate item for the Ad Hoc Committee's consideration on June 29, 2018.

We request that the Ad Hoc Committee provide direction in three areas: 1. Marin Transit staff's role in convening the Yellow School Bus Committee recommended by the Civil Grand Jury; 2. the timing for an initial meeting; and 3. how this Committee may or may not engage in the discussion of allocating current and near-term funds for yellow school bus services.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Whelan  
General Manager

Attachment: Recommendations from Marin County Civil Grand Jury Report, Yellow School Bus for Traffic Congestion Relief, June 8, 2018

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to establish a coordinated YSB program to relieve associated traffic congestion the grand jury recommends the following:

- R1. The Marin County Board of Supervisors should work with Marin Transit to secure ample locations for bus parking and a location for bus maintenance by the end of 2018.
- R2. All municipalities should work with Marin Transit to secure ample locations for bus parking and a location for bus maintenance by the end of 2018.
- R3. Marin Transit should produce and make public a list of possible sites for bus parking and maintenance and the barriers to purchasing and utilizing each site by October 2018.
- R4. Marin Transit should facilitate negotiations for a financial arrangement across the full group of participants that would distribute any tax revenue lost by a municipality or the County for providing a parking or maintenance facility.
- R5. The Marin County Board of Supervisors should direct Marin Transit to establish a new standing YSB committee by September 2018.
- R6. Marin Transit should establish a new standing YSB committee that would provide guidance on YSB issues to include representatives from the County, Marin County Office of Education, and each school district and municipality in the urbanized areas of Marin. The initial meeting should be held by October of 2018.
- R7. School districts (with or without existing YSB programs) and municipalities within the urbanized area of the County should join and actively participate in the YSB committee providing guidance to Marin Transit on YSB issues, such as cost allocations, bell times and routes. The initial meeting should be held by October of 2018.
- R8. The YSB committee should work toward the establishment of a coordinated YSB for K-8 program for the urbanized areas of Marin with the goal of beginning the coordinated program by the 2019-2020 school year.
- R9. Marin Transit should manage the development and operations of the coordinated YSB program beginning immediately, with the goal of initiating operations by the 2019-2020 school year.
- R10. The County and municipalities of the urbanized corridor should make financial support of all YSB programs a part of each year's budgeting process.

**Representation to Standing Yellow School Bus Committee**

**Recommended by the Civil Grand Jury**

**Countywide Agencies**

- County of Marin
- Marin County Transit District
- Transportation Authority of Marin

**School Districts**

- Dixie School District
- Kentfield School District
- Lagunitas School District
- Larkspur – Corte Madera School District
- Mill Valley School District
- Reed Union School District
- Ross School District
- Ross Valley School District
- San Rafael Elementary School District
- Sausalito-Marín City School District
- Novato Unified School District

**Cities and Towns**

- City of Belvedere
- Town of Corte Madera
- Town of Fairfax
- City of Larkspur
- City of Mill Valley
- City of Novato
- Town of Ross
- Town of San Anselmo
- City of San Rafael
- City of Sausalito
- Town of Tiburon

## Proposed Process and Timeline for Funding Decisions Regarding Yellow Bus and Transit

Timeframe	Activity
May 9, 2018	FY 18-19 Tiburon/Reed yellow bus passes go on sale
May 24, 2018	FY 18-19 Ross Valley yellow bus passes go on sale
June 4, 2018	Marin Transit FY 18-19 budget adopted
June 2018	Marin County FY 18-19 budget adopted Tiburon JPA FY 18-19 budget adopted
June 8, 2018	Civil Grand Jury releases report, <i>Yellow School Bus for Traffic Congestion Relief</i>
June 14 – July 17, 2018	City/Town/County briefings on existing transportation sales tax and proposed renewal
June/July 2018	Marin Transit Ad Hoc Committee on School Transportation meets to discuss issues and conceptual approach to funding school bus service
July 2018	Board of Supervisors considers approval to put sales tax renewal measure on the November 2018 ballot.
August 10, 2018	Sales Tax Renewal Measure ballot language due
September 1, 2018	Responses due to Civil Grand Jury
October 2018	Civil Grand Jury recommendation that Yellow School Bus standing committee have an initial meeting
November 6, 2018	Potential vote on Sales Tax Measure Renewal and Repeal of SB1, gas tax funding for roads and transit
November/ December 2018	Marin Transit staff assesses impacts of ballot results on FY 18-19 budget and longer range financial plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If SB1 is repealed</li> <li>• If Sales Tax Renewal is passed</li> </ul>
November/ December 2018, January 2019	Marin Transit Ad Hoc Committee on School Transportation meets to discuss detailed approach to funding yellow bus programs, including eligibility, formula, and implementation guidelines
February 2019	Marin Transit Board approves school bus funding program
March 2019	Marin Transit notifies eligible entities of funding available for FY 19-20
April 1, 2019	Parking for yellow buses secured
April 2019	Marin Transit, local jurisdictions and school districts begin drafting FY 19-20 annual budgets
May 2019	Yellow bus pass sales begin
June 2019	Marin Transit, local jurisdictions and school districts adopt FY 19-20 annual budgets
June 30, 2019	Yellow bus parking lease at Los Gamos expires