

Chapter 3: Service Plan

The SRTP service plan anticipates future transit service levels by revenue hours and revenue miles over the next ten years. The planned service levels show no growth in service in fixed route service and a 51% growth in senior and ADA programs during the first eight years. In the final two years of the plan, significant cuts are projected following the loss of local Measure A revenue. Compared to the base year, service levels in the final two years of the plan drop by 52% of fixed route and 32% on demand response services. These service levels allow the budget to remain balanced, and enable the District to maintain Board-adopted reserve levels throughout the 10-year plan.

In developing this service plan, staff acknowledges a number of challenges and opportunities. Challenges include: uncertainties around future revenues, the lack of permanent operations and maintenance facilities, attracting and retaining labor, supporting transportation for special needs populations, and defining transit's priority within the County's transportation hierarchy. To respond to these challenges, Marin Transit has:

- Continued to diversify the District's planning and operations practices to better match service levels to demand;
- Controlled costs through competitive bidding;
- Leveraged regional transit expansion activities;
- Provided congestion relief through student transportation services, and
- Evaluated potential partnerships with the private sector to increase and expand mobility.

Marin Transit will explore future opportunities related to improvements in regional transit, student transportation, and other alternative transportation options. The following section further describes these challenges and opportunities.

Challenge: Uncertainty of Future Revenues (Measure A)

The District has taken measures to control expenditures and expand service, primarily through procuring new operations contracts and diversifying the types of service offered. Since the passage of Measure A, the average cost per hour of fixed route service and demand response services has increased 7% and 6%, respectively. That is an annual growth of approximately 0.5% per year.

This is the first Short Range Transit Plan update to forecast a future 10-year financial outlook where the Measure A local transportation sales tax expires. Measure A designates 55% of the revenues to provision of local transit and is the source of 40% of Marin Transit's operating revenues. The District estimates that it will dramatically reduce services without this source of local transportation funding. To balance expenses and revenues, Marin Transit will be required to eliminate over half of all local fixed route service, all non-mandated senior/ADA programs, and all District-supported yellow school bus transportation.

While polling indicates support for continuation of the sales tax measure, the timing and allocation of future sales tax revenue for local transit is uncertain. This uncertainty will make it challenging for the District to invest in additional service expansion if it is unclear whether the District can maintain those higher service levels in the future. Without a dedicated source of local funding, Marin Transit will be unable to plan for the future mobility needs of Marin residents.

Challenge: Lack of Permanent Facilities Limits Program Growth; Financial and Operational Stability

Marin Transit relies on its service providers to identify and secure property for storing and maintaining the equipment required to deliver local transit services. In Marin County, it is both challenging to find and expensive to lease these types of facilities. Marin Transit conducted surveys of current and potential service providers for all types of service, including local bus, paratransit, and yellow school bus service. These service providers identified the need to secure a facility as the most significant factor in determining their interest in bidding on Marin County services, ability to provide the service, and proposed pricing.

The District has been actively working to identify and secure funding and locate a site that can support these needs. In Fall 2016, Marin Transit received a \$4.4 million grant from the Federal Transit Administration to purchase land and pave, fence, and light the site for bus storage. In addition to Capital reserve funding in the Marin Transit budget, this funding provides the District with a head start towards identifying and developing an operations and maintenance facility.

In June 2015, the Board authorized the General Manager to obtain assistance from a real estate broker and pursue available properties. An ad-hoc committee of the Board formed to help staff evaluate and select a site. To date, the District has been unsuccessful in identifying a site that meets operational needs and has support from the governing jurisdiction. Efforts have proven to be challenging due to the lack of sizable parcels zoned for industrial use.

Challenge: Attracting and Retaining Labor to Support Services

The strength of the economy has created challenges for many transit agencies nationwide, and the impacts are heightened in the Bay Area. In late 2016, Marin County's unemployment rate was below 3%—the second lowest in the State of California where the overall unemployment rate was 5.5%. Marin County's current median home prices are above \$1.2 million, placing it in the top three in the state of California. Coupled with these high housing costs, the resulting labor market creates very challenging conditions for recruiting local labor for entry-level bus operator and maintenance positions. Higher-level positions are also challenging to retain. Commute conditions into Marin County are affected by limited highway facilities, regional transit connections, and bridges that are susceptible to congestion and traffic accidents.

Aside from increased marketing and recruiting for these position, the District has been actively working with its contractors to identify wage increases and incentives to attract labor and retain qualified employees. These strategies ultimately increase the cost of operations to ensure reliable and quality service.

Challenge: Supporting Transportation for Special Needs Populations

Marin County has an ongoing responsibility and commitment to its senior, disabled, and low-income residents. These populations often have the greatest needs for transportation services that typically require the highest amount of subsidy to provide. Marin County's senior population continues to rise, and the number of low-income residents increases with economic inequality. The District's surveys of local transit and Marin Access riders showed that 57% and 61% of riders earn less than \$25,000 per year, respectively. Population trends indicate over one-third of the County's population will be over the age of 60 by 2030.

Marin Transit will always need to provide high-touch, and likely higher subsidy, programs to meet the needs of riders who depend on public transportation to maintain their independence and a high quality of life. Over 25 percent of Marin Access survey respondents stated that without Marin Access they would not travel. For

financial, logistical, or personal reasons, many riders do not have other viable options for maintaining their mobility and connections in the community. For example, private sector innovations such as Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) and commuter shuttles have increased mobility for some. However, they do not reach a significant portion of those who rely on Marin Access programs. Compared to the general population, Marin Access riders earn significantly less, are less likely to own a smartphone, and may require wheelchair-accessible vehicles that these emerging services do not currently provide.

Marin Transit is committed to supporting these riders and will factor the costs of the services they require into program planning. The District will consider how to keep this population informed and involved in the decision-making process. Marin Transit will work to ensure sufficient funding is available to meet mandated paratransit service demand and efficiently use any additional paratransit funds to continue to meet the majority of demand for non-mandated trips.

Challenge: Transit's Priority in Marin County's Transportation Hierarchy

Local transit use in Marin ranks high compared to most other counties in the Bay Area. Compared to neighboring North Bay counties, the number of Marin bus riders are over three times higher per capita than Sonoma and Solano Counties and over four times higher than Napa County¹. At the same time, Marin County does not support many of the key incentives for using transit through cost and travel-time saving that other communities have established.

Countywide, 95% of all households in Marin County own vehicles. Despite this level of investment in auto ownership, there are potential financial incentives that promote alternative transportation options for select trips. The most common are parking fees and congestion pricing tolls. Very few locations and employment sites in Marin charge nominal or market rate fees for parking. Pricing and other parking policies can be developed as incentives for transit use.

Travel time savings is another area where transit in Marin County has limited advantage over other travel options. There is limited roadway infrastructure and limited support for transit preferential treatments such as signal priority and queue jump lanes. Since most transit routes operate on the busiest and often most congested roadways, the services become less attractive for passengers due to slow speeds and long ride times.

The District will continue to lobby for enhancements and transit preferential treatments through those entities that plan, own, invest in, and/or operate these facilities: local jurisdictions, the County, the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM), and Caltrans. The rapidly developing transportation technology landscape and physical roadway capacity constraints will likely force roadway owners to rethink how they manage roadways and curb space if congestion relief is a priority.

Opportunity: Diversification of Services

Marin Transit has done a lot to prepare for the changing demographics of the County and the needs of its riders. The District's Marin Access Mobility Management Program is one of the more developed programs of this kind in the Bay Area. Marin Access identifies and provides mobility options for the senior and ADA-

¹ Bus riders include all operators within each of the Counties including: Marin Transit and Golden Gate Transit (Marin); Sonoma County Transit, Santa Rosa CityBus, and Petaluma Transit (Sonoma); VINE (Napa); SolTrans, FAST, Vacaville City Coach, Dixon Redit-Ride, and Rio Vista Breeze. Within Marin County, approximately half of all bus riders use Marin Transit services.

eligible populations in Marin County and is supported by Measure A, Measure B, and various grant opportunities. These programs will continue to grow and mature to address the need for paratransit services. They will also provide more attractive mobility options that can be operated at a lower cost to serve a wider population, including the significant number of seniors who are healthy and active. The Mobility Management Program coordinates resources, volunteers, and social service organizations to develop and support these services in Marin.

Advances in the fixed-route program have positioned the District to respond to the need for additional mobility options. The District has applied service typologies to the range of services it offers based on their purpose. The continued growth and expansion of local connector services or “community shuttles” responds to input from community-based planning efforts and has a stronger appeal to senior riders. In providing community fixed route services and travel training, Marin Transit is working towards minimizing dependence on more expensive paratransit services.

The District has also responded to the specific needs of younger students who lack home to school transportation services in Marin County. Marin Transit has helped establish and expand yellow school bus programs by partnering with school districts. These services provide needed transportation services for many students and reduce roadway congestion during peak travel hours. The District is a very rare example of a public transportation agency that continues to diversify its offerings based on the needs of the community.

Opportunity: Controlling Costs Through Competitive Procurement

Marin County relies solely on its contractors to provide the operational and maintenance support for its services. Five different contractors operate the District’s fixed route, yellow bus, and demand response services. Other entities, such as the taxi industry and local non-profits, provide additional services and support transportation programs that Marin Transit subsidizes.

Since the 2004 voter approval of Measure A, the District has been able to control its costs through competitive procurement for service providers. In the first full year of operation after Measure A, the District paid an average of \$113 per hour for fixed route service and \$67 per hour for demand response service. Since that time, all but one of Marin Transit’s operations contracts has had at least two competitive bidding cycles. The exception is local service operated GGBHTD. Over ten years later, the District pays an average of \$117 per hour for fixed route (+3%) and \$71 per hour for demand response services (+6%).

Opportunity: Regional Transit Expansion and New Non-Motorized Program Synergies

Marin Transit will continue to strengthen mobility options and seek opportunities for increased ridership. The new SMART passenger rail service offers a high capacity transit option for Sonoma and Marin County residents. Golden Gate Transit bus and ferry service connections to San Francisco and the East Bay continue to adapt to provide Marin County residents with a more attractive transportation alternative to these highly-desired work and entertainment markets.

The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM), the county’s Congestion Management Agency, is developing permanent and pilot projects that support alternative transportation. These include a guaranteed ride home program, countywide bike share pilot, potential car-sharing opportunities, and a first/last mile on-demand rideshare pilot program. Local transit serves a key role in facilitating connections within the County and to regional transit services.

Opportunity: Congestion Relief through Student Transportation Services

Students have always been a core ridership market in Marin County, with an estimated one in four trips taken by this demographic. These trips occur on regular fixed route and supplemental transit services. In recent years, the District has taken a more active role in providing and managing yellow school bus services on behalf of school districts. Marin Transit oversees yellow bus operations for three school districts that transport over 1,200 students each day.

The growth in yellow school bus programs reflects their success in attracting new riders and reducing congestion on local and regional roadways. There is increased interest from local cities and towns throughout the county in partnering with schools and Marin Transit to explore opportunities to move students out of cars and onto buses.

Opportunity: Partnering with Private Sector to Increase and Enhance Mobility

Mobility services are undergoing radical changes. Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft have leveraged technology to connect passengers with drivers, and major technology and automotive companies are racing toward the future of autonomous vehicles. Within the life of this plan, it is likely that autonomous vehicles will be commercially available and operate on local roadways in Marin County.

Staff participates in ongoing discussions with the private sector to understand and identify opportunities for successful partnership that will improve local transit offerings and serve the mobility needs of all Marin residents. Marin Transit anticipates that there will be a partnership to support on-demand mobility within the first year of the Plan.

New technologies will reshape the transportation sector and offer additional options for travel and car-free lifestyles. However, these technologies may have little to offer in terms of congestion relief. Marin County has limited opportunities to increase roadway capacity, and adding capacity may induce additional traffic. There are opportunities for public transit to further reduce congestion. These include offering high capacity transit service in affected corridors and partnering with the private sector to encourage affordable and reliable connections to public transit.

The District can also work with roadway operators to investigate options for increasing transit priority and reducing transit travel times in congested corridors so that transit is more attractive for choice riders. The combination of low transit fares and tolls, congestion pricing, or parking fees will also make driving more expensive, providing further incentive to take transit.

Planned Service Levels

The District plans service levels in anticipation of future financial projections to reduce the need for significant service reductions. While current revenue projections indicate improved economic conditions for transit, historic trends have forced the District to reduce service levels to maintain financial stability. Previous Marin Transit Short Range Transit Plans prepared for service level reductions due to historic declines in local Measure A, State, and Federal revenues and contractually fixed increases of operating costs. These planned reductions played out in a series of fixed route service cuts beginning in March 2010. The first was a 5.5% reduction or 6,690 revenue hours that was followed by a 1.9% reduction or 2,150 revenue hours in March 2012.

In addition to these service cuts, Marin Transit focused on reducing its operating costs. With the exception of Golden Gate Transit-operated local service, the District competitively bid contracted operations and succeeded in lowering the cost of these services. The District focused on renegotiating the interagency agreement with Golden Gate Transit in 2012. This agreement represented the largest share of Marin Transit services at the highest cost. A new agreement with GGBHTD took effect July 1, 2012. The new agreement reduced the contract rate, shifted the cost structure to revenue hours, reduced the annual escalation rate from 5% to 2.7%, shifted lower productivity routes to the District's shuttle service program, and modified the payment structure for capital costs. Under the new terms, Marin Transit was able to implement the service plan in the previous Short Range Transit Plan, increase local service by 11%, replenish the District's Emergency Contingency Reserves, and delay the need to spend reserve funds in the future.

The District executed a new intergovernmental agreement with GGBHTD in 2015 that extends through 2020, with the option to extend to 2022. This 2015 agreement provides additional cost savings, flexibility with annual contracted hours, and added financial clarity. The District also rebid the Marin Access Paratransit services in 2015 and reduced the operating costs associated with that program. Coupled with other financial efficiency measures, these new service agreements led the District to expand fixed route service by nearly 20% in 2016.

Marin Transit continues to pursue new revenue opportunities to support ongoing increases in operating costs. These include increasing passenger fares, applying for available grant funds, and identifying scheduling and operational efficiencies to create cost-neutral service improvements. The local initiative program outlined in the 2006 Short Range Transit Plan was designed to provide matching funds to local communities that propose to develop new service. The District suspended this program in FY 2009/10 to minimize the impact of reduced funding availability on service levels. If additional funding becomes available, Marin Transit may restart this program to support new partnership services. These services will be required to meet District performance criteria.

Financial stability is expected during the first eight years of the plan and then impacted by the assumed loss of Measure A revenues in the last two years of the plan. Table 3-1 shows the projected annual service levels by revenue hours (or buses for yellow bus service) and Table 3-2 provides projections for annual revenue miles. The narrative following the tables describes the assumptions for these service levels by program type.

Table 3-1: Planned Revenue Hours by Service Type and Route Typology

Fiscal Year	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25	FY 2025/26	FY 2026/27
Fixed-Route										
Local Trunkline	49,300	49,300	49,300	49,300	49,300	49,300	49,300	49,300	49,300	49,300
Local Basic	66,400	66,400	66,400	66,400	66,400	66,400	66,400	66,400	34,200	34,200
Local Connector	43,500	43,500	43,500	43,500	43,500	43,500	43,500	43,500	0	0
Rural	16,500	16,500	16,500	16,500	16,500	16,500	16,500	16,500	6,600	6,600
Recreational	4,950	4,950	4,950	4,950	4,950	4,950	4,950	4,950	0	0
Supplemental School	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	0	0
Partnership	3,200	3,200	3,200	3,200	3,200	3,200	3,200	3,200	0	0
Other School	<i>6 buses</i>	<i>0 buses</i>	<i>0 buses</i>							
Fixed-Route Bus Total	187,750	90,100	90,100							
Demand Response										
Paratransit / Same Day ADA	62,455	80,836	82,936	85,316	85,316	87,401	89,483	91,562	64,093	64,093
Novato Dial-A-Ride	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400	0	0
Rural Dial-A-Ride	375	375	375	375	375	375	375	375	0	0
Demand Response Total	65,230	83,611	85,711	88,091	88,091	90,176	92,258	94,337	64,093	64,093

Table 3-2: Planned Service Miles by Service Type and Route Typology

Fiscal Year	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25	FY 2025/26	FY 2026/27
Fixed-Route										
Local Trunkline	668,200	668,200	668,200	668,200	668,200	668,200	668,200	668,200	668,200	668,200
Local Basic	731,600	731,600	731,600	731,600	731,600	731,600	731,600	731,600	354,800	354,800
Local Connector	493,300	493,300	493,300	493,300	493,300	493,300	493,300	493,300	0	0
Rural	286,000	286,000	286,000	286,000	286,000	286,000	286,000	286,000	114,400	114,400
Recreational	66,700	66,700	66,700	66,700	66,700	66,700	66,700	66,700	0	0
Supplemental School	48,600	48,600	48,600	48,600	48,600	48,600	48,600	48,600	0	0
Partnership	19,200	19,200	19,200	19,200	19,200	19,200	19,200	19,200	0	0
Other School	13,800	13,800	13,800	13,800	13,800	13,800	13,800	13,800	0	0
Fixed-Route Bus Total	2,327,400	1,137,400	1,137,400							
Demand Response										
Paratransit / Same Day ADA	923,100	1,194,700	1,225,800	1,260,900	1,260,900	1,291,700	1,322,500	1,353,200	946,700	946,700
Novato Dial-A-Ride	24,900	24,900	24,900	24,900	24,900	24,900	24,900	24,900	0	0
Rural Dial-A-Ride	3,300	3,300	3,300	3,300	3,300	3,300	3,300	3,300	0	0
Demand Response Total	951,300	1,222,900	1,254,000	1,289,100	1,289,100	1,319,900	1,350,700	1,381,400	946,700	946,700

Fixed Route

Marin Transit undertook three sizable service changes since FY 2011/12. These impacted the structure of Marin local fixed route services and expanded service levels by over 30%:

1. **March 2012 North Marin County Restructuring.** Marin Transit restructured service in Novato and Northern Marin based on phase 1 recommendations from the Novato Transit Needs Assessment Study. This restructuring eliminated duplication in regional and local services, and reduced annual service levels by 2,150 hours. The restructuring also expanded local service hours and frequencies within Novato.
2. **August 2013 Service Changes.** Marin Transit reallocated services between its contractors and expanded service by 11% on local routes in Novato and Tiburon. These changes resulted from the Tiburon and Novato Transit Needs Assessments and renegotiation of the interagency agreement with GGBHTD. Changes included adding shuttle service in the communities of Novato and Tiburon, extending Route 23 to the Canal and Target, and expanding evening services throughout the county. Marin Transit staff monitored the results of the August 2013 changes, which led to additional modifications in Tiburon in June 2014.
3. **June 2016 Service Changes.** Marin Transit expanded service by nearly 20% on local fixed route services. These changes were based on the Countywide Transit Market Assessment, the previous Short Range Transit Plan funded service assessment, and operations agreements finalized in 2015. The 2016 service increases focused on four areas: service frequency, more direct service, faster service, and increased efficiency. Staff continue to monitor the impact of these changes.

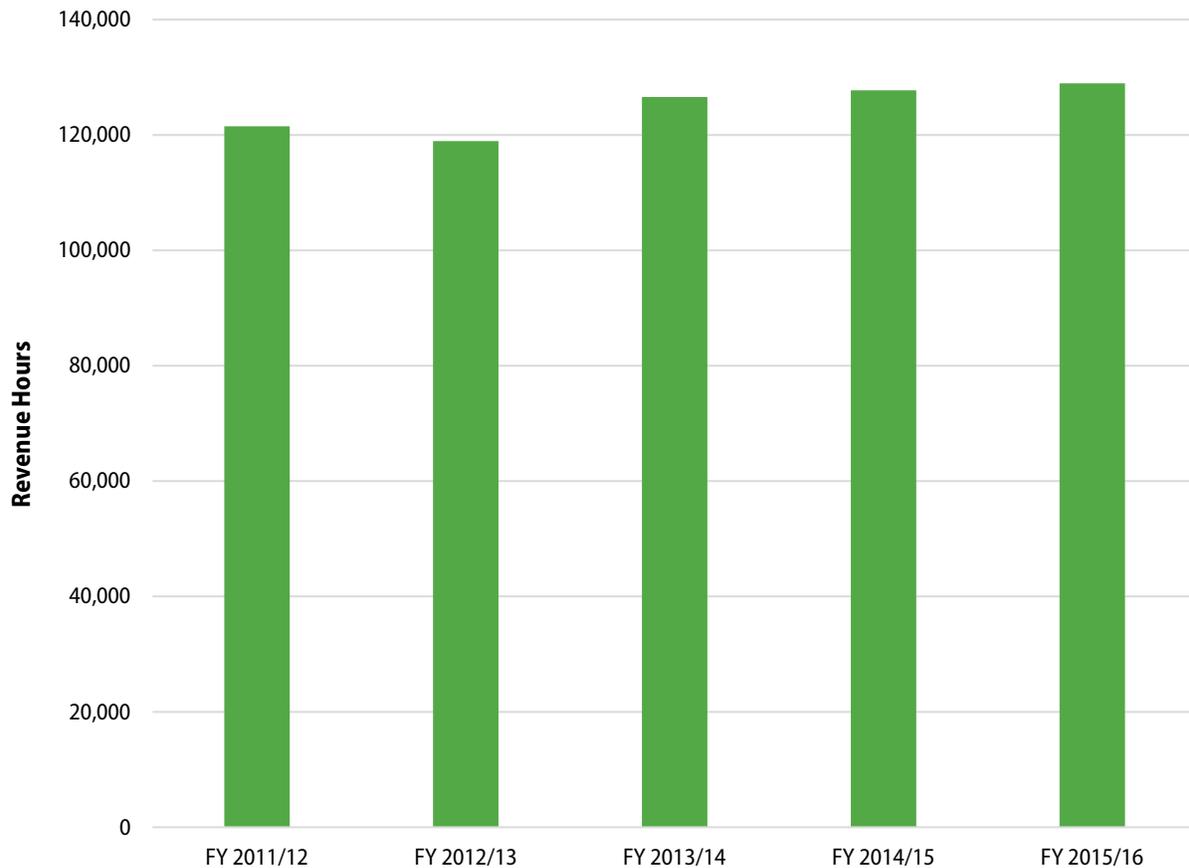
Local Fixed Route

The Local Fixed Route program contains routes within three of Marin Transit's service typologies (Local Trunkline, Local Basic, and Local Connectors). These represent 58% of total service hours forecasted over the next 10 years. Figure 3-1 summarizes annual revenue hours on these services over the past five years. The plan assumes service levels would remain constant during the first eight years of the plan and then drop by 48% in the last two years following the assumed loss of Measure A revenue.

Underperforming Routes

Marin Transit regularly monitors services to ensure they are performing efficiently and effectively and carry out the transit goals of Measure A. Staff make ongoing, incremental changes to the schedules to address underperformance or poor reliability. More significant service changes are needed to address routes that experience ongoing challenges in meeting their performance targets. The following is a summary of the District's underperforming routes based on FY 2016/17 data:

- Routes currently **not meeting** productivity targets (passengers per hour): Route 17, Route 22, Route 23/23X, Route 29, Route 49, Route 71X, Route 219, and Route 228
- Routes currently **not meeting** cost effectiveness targets: (subsidy per passenger): Route 17, Route 22, Route 23, Route 23X, Route 29, Route 35, Route 36, Route 49, Route 71X, Route 219, Route 228, Route 233, Route 251, and Route 257

Figure 3-1: Local Fixed Route Service Summary (FY 2011/12 – FY 2015/16)

Funded Service Needs

The SRTP identifies funded service needs in the local fixed route program that reflect the District’s priorities and provide Marin Transit’s Board, partner agencies, and the public with information to clearly understand the District’s future service goals. Within this plan, there are a number of factors that call for the District to hold off on forecasting additional growth and expansion in the fixed route program. These include:

Underperforming services that need evaluation, Uncertainty of future service contracts, Lack of District-owned facilities, and Uncertainty of future revenue (Measure A).

Underperforming Service Evaluation. The District undertook significant growth on local fixed route services within the last year, and many of these routes are still developing their ridership base. This includes routes planned around the SMART rail service, which just began revenue service in late August 2017. Many routes are currently unable to meet Board-adopted ridership and subsidy targets, and staff is planning a comprehensive assessment for Board consideration in early 2018. This assessment will be informed by an April 2017 onboard survey, an October 2017 100% passenger ridecheck, and ongoing monitoring metrics. The SRTP service plan assumes the assessment will be complete prior to FY 2018/19 and any proposed changes will provide opportunities to reallocate service hours to other unmet needs. Thus, the plan does not assume any change in service levels over the ten-year period associated with this upcoming evaluation.

Uncertainty of Future Service Contracts. In Fall 2017, Marin Transit will release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for over half of its fixed route service. This includes over 100,000 hours of service that are not

operated by Golden Gate Transit. There are many uncertainties around this procurement due especially to the tight labor market in Marin County and the greater Bay Area. In addition to labor, the lack of District-owned facilities and limited real estate opportunities make it challenging to predict the result of the procurement process. Expansion of service prior to fully understanding this new contract(s) is not fiscally prudent. Thus, the plan shows no change in service levels over the ten-year plan.

Lack of District-Owned Facilities. As stated earlier in this section, the District does not own its own maintenance or transit vehicle parking facilities. Even with available federal grant funds and local funding within the Capital reserves, the District has been unable to locate and secure a suitable property. Acquiring such a facility will reduce ongoing operations costs and bring a new level of stability to operations. Without this asset, future service expansion that requires additional vehicles and drivers will be challenging and costly. The District will not consider any expansion of service until it has established a location for a new operations and maintenance facility and secured funding for its development.

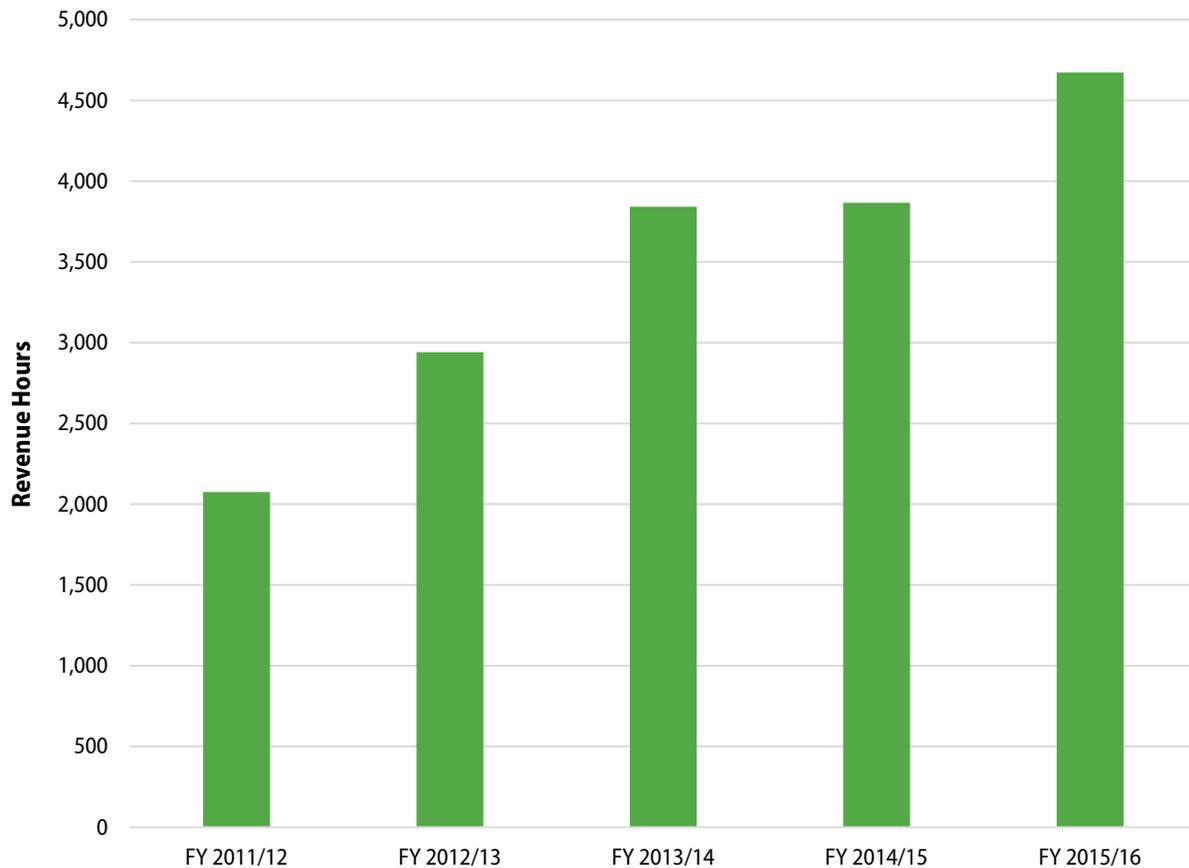
Uncertainty of Future Revenue (Marin County's Measure A). As stated earlier in this section, the uncertainty of Measure A makes it challenging for the District to plan for service expansion, even if near-term funding is available. This plan outlines a strategy to focus current excess revenues on Capital investments that will provide ongoing cost savings for operations and minimize service cuts if Measure A funding is reduced or goes away completely. Thus, there is no change in service levels associated with this uncertainty.

Recreational Services

Marin Transit's Recreational typology of services consists of one Route—the Muir Woods Shuttle. This service represents 2% of the District's total service hours forecasted over the next 10 years. Marin Transit assumed management of the Muir Woods Shuttle in the summer of 2009 in partnership with the National Park Service. In FY 2011/12, Marin Transit carried out a competitive procurement for this service and selected MV Transportation as the contract provider. Hourly service rates for the Muir Woods Shuttle dropped significantly following this competitive procurement, and the District was able to expand service and save operating money under the new contract.

Since the 2012 season, Marin Transit has continually increased service to improve reliability and meet high ridership demands on busy weekends during the peak summer months. In 2013, Marin Transit experimented with off-season winter holiday service on select days when park visitation levels are high. Due to the success of this trial, the District continues to operate this winter holiday service. In 2015, Marin Transit operated a summer weekday pilot program to test a new market of riders. This added service was also successful and has been continued for subsequent seasons.

The National Park System is planning to implement a reservation-only system for access to the National Monument in January 2018. The reservations system will include specific times that visitors can get to the park, and identify how each visitor will access the park (drive/park or transit). The District views the reservation system as an opportunity to enhance the efficiency of the shuttle service and spread out the peak ridership demands often experienced midday during the weekend. Aside from operating year-round weekend and holiday service, it is not clear what impact the future reservation system will have on the current service.

Figure 3-2: Recreational Service Summary (FY 2011/12 – FY 2015/16)

Underperforming Routes

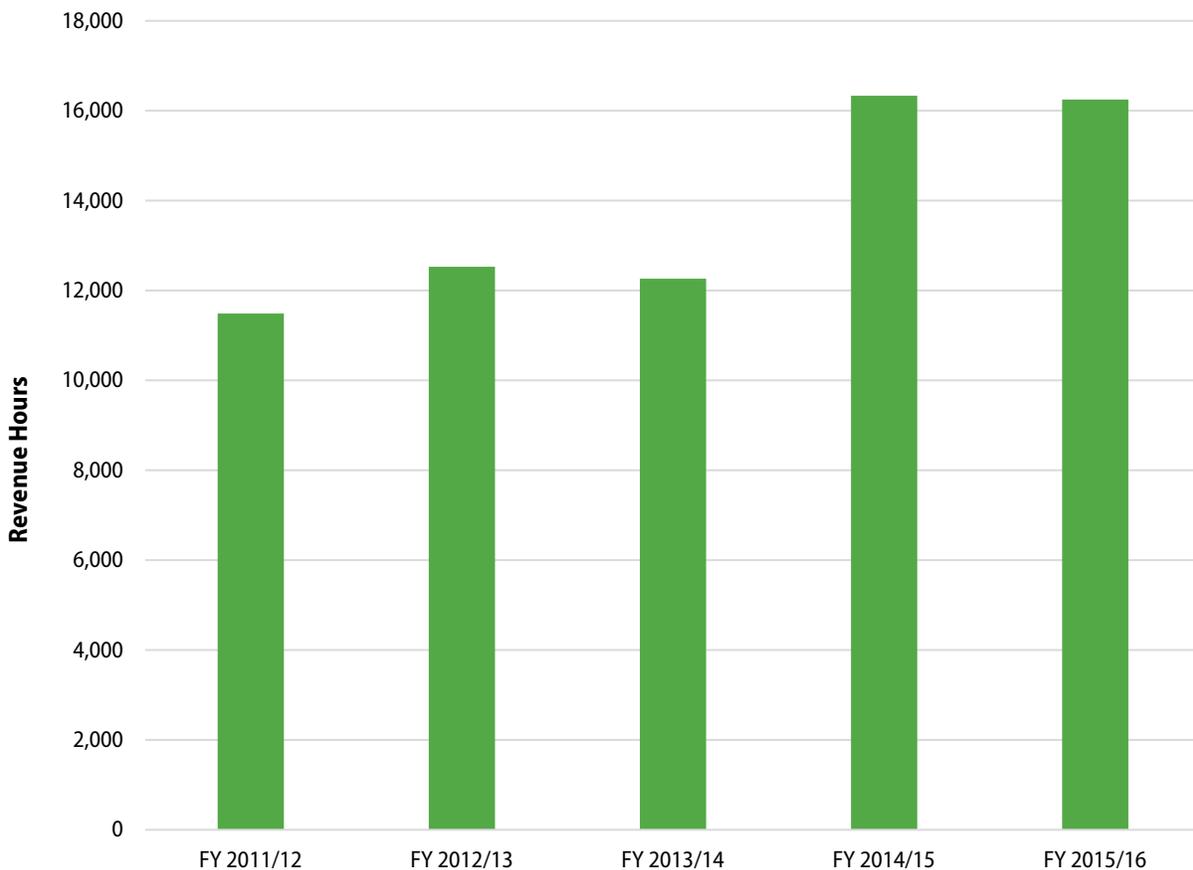
None. Route 66/66F currently meets its productivity and subsidy targets.

Funded Service Needs

Service levels on the Muir Woods Shuttle are expected to remain constant over the first eight years of the plan and then discontinued following the loss of Measure A in the final two years. The National Park Service has indicated a desire to fund the operation of a year-round weekend and holiday service once the reservation system is implemented. This expansion will equate to approximately 1,500 hours of additional service, or an increase of 30%. In this plan, the District assumes that National Park Service will pay 100% of the operating costs for this service expansion. The partners are preparing an updated agreement for signature later in 2017. Thus, future hours are not assumed in the 10-year plan.

Rural Services

The Rural program consists of the West Marin Stagecoach services. This program represents 6% of total service hours forecasted over the next 10 years. The Stage continues to gain in popularity, and Marin Transit has expanded service hours and miles on this program. Marin Transit competitively procured the Stage service in FY 2011/12. Combined with the Muir Woods Shuttle, the District awarded the contract to MV Transportation. Hourly service rates dropped compared to the previous contract, and the District added 25% more service on Route 68 in the first two years of the new contract. Ridership and subsequently productivity have kept pace with service increases and justify the expanded service.

Figure 3-3: Rural Service Summary (FY 2011/12 – FY 2015/16)

Underperforming Routes

None. Both Routes 61 and 68 meet the productivity and subsidy targets.

Funded Service Needs

The Plan assumes continuation of the current service levels and no additional growth in the first eight years of the plan. Following the assumed loss of Measure A in the last two years of the plan, service levels drop by 60%.

Supplemental Services

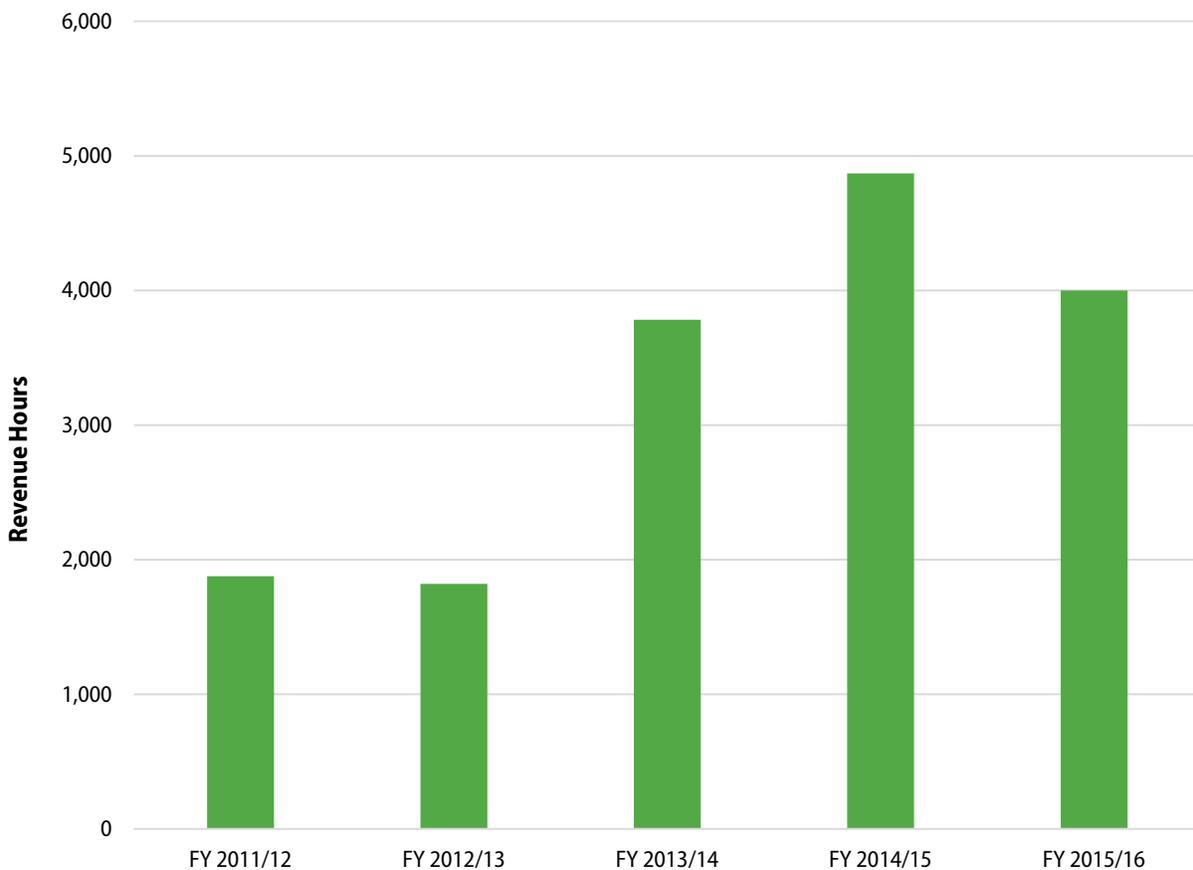
Supplemental services provide additional capacity around school bell times and have grown over the years as demand from school-aged riders has increased. These routes represent 1% of total service hours forecasted over the next 10 years. As of FY 2015/16, MV Transportation operates all supplemental routes under the Seasonal and Recreational contract. Drivers and vehicles used for these services are shared with the Muir Woods Shuttle and used when the recreational service is not in operation (weekdays during the school year). This arrangement allows the District to efficiently use labor and equipment for these specialty services.

In December 2015, the District completed a comprehensive study to determine future K-12 school transportation needs. The recommendations focused on supporting and expanding yellow school service for

K-8 students and focusing supplemental transit resources on the high schools. Efforts to implement these recommendations have been occurring in recent years, including the following:

- Transition of Supplemental service in the Ross Valley to yellow school bus service. An estimated 2,000 annual revenue hours of public transit service on Routes 23, 126, and 127 were transitioned to six yellow buses operating 17 morning and afternoon trips every school day in FY 2015/16. An estimated 450 passenger trips per day are provided on these service, and ridership increased slightly.
- A new Supplemental service to Terra Linda High School was added in FY 2015/16. Approximately 200 hours of revenue service were added, serving an estimated 90 students per day.
- The Cove School and St. Hilary School Supplemental services were transitioned to yellow bus. These resources were further invested in increasing service to Redwood High School to accommodate overcrowding.

Figure 3-4: Supplemental Service Summary (FY 2011/12 – FY 2015/16)



Underperforming Routes

- Routes currently **not meeting** productivity targets (passengers per trip): Route 115, Route 125, and Route 139
- Routes currently **not meeting** cost effectiveness targets: (subsidy per passenger): Route 115, Route 125, and Route 139

Funded Service Needs

The Plan does not include any growth in revenue hours for the Supplemental program during the first eight years of the plan and assumes it would be eliminated in the final two years following the loss of Measure A revenues. However, the District will continue to work with school districts to better coordinate bell times to allow service to be more efficient and serve additional students.

Partnership

The Partnership typology is a new typology that includes Route 122, an express service to College of Marin's Kentfield campus. This service represents 1% of the District's total service hours over the next 10 years. Service levels are dependent on funding from College of Marin through student transportation fees, and this funding is expected to remain consistent through the duration of the plan. The plan does assume this program would get cut following the loss of Measure A in the final two years of the plan.

Underperforming Routes

Due to the unique nature of Partnership services, performance is not measured based on the same productivity and cost effectiveness targets as other fixed-route services. Instead, a target has been established for outside funding to account for at least 50% of the route's operating subsidy. In FY 2015/16, the service did not meet this target, with 48.9% of the service's net cost being contributed by College of Marin. However, for the fall 2017 semester, schedules for the Route 122 were adjusted to cancel low-ridership trips and better align the service with the systemwide changes made in June 2016. Because of the resulting reduction in operating costs, the transportation fees collected by College of Marin for FY 2016/17 cover approximately 58% of the net cost, which meets the District's target.

Funded Service Needs

The Plan assumes the continuation of current service levels with no growth over the 10-year plan.

Dial-A-Ride

The District operates two types of general public Dial-A-Ride services which are focused on rural or less dense areas of County. Collectively, these programs represent just 1% of total service hours forecasted over the next 10 years

The Novato Dial-A-Ride program is expected to remain at current service levels through the first eight years of the plan and is then eliminated following the loss of Measure A in the final two years. Since the contract for the Novato Dial-A-Ride is based on the quantity of service requested, FY 2017/18 is a budgeted estimate based on previous year-end actuals. An estimated 2,400 annual hours are included in all years of the Plan.

Dial-A-Ride has proved to be a valuable transit option for those in Novato who need to access destinations further away from fixed route services. The program has evolved as the District has expanded fixed route options and identified high demand locations. However, productivity and subsidy rates continue to demonstrate that this model of service is costly to provide (on a per passenger basis) and does not achieve high productivity (passengers per revenue hour). This service should be considered for restructuring or discontinuation if a more efficient model for lower density, first/last mile service is identified in the coming years.

Rural Dial-A-Ride routes serve the rural areas of Dillon Beach/Tomales and Point Reyes Station and connect to services in Petaluma and Novato, respectively. Service to Dillon Beach and Tomales is operated weekly,

and service to Point Reyes Station is once per month. A total of 375 annual service hours are allocated to these routes.

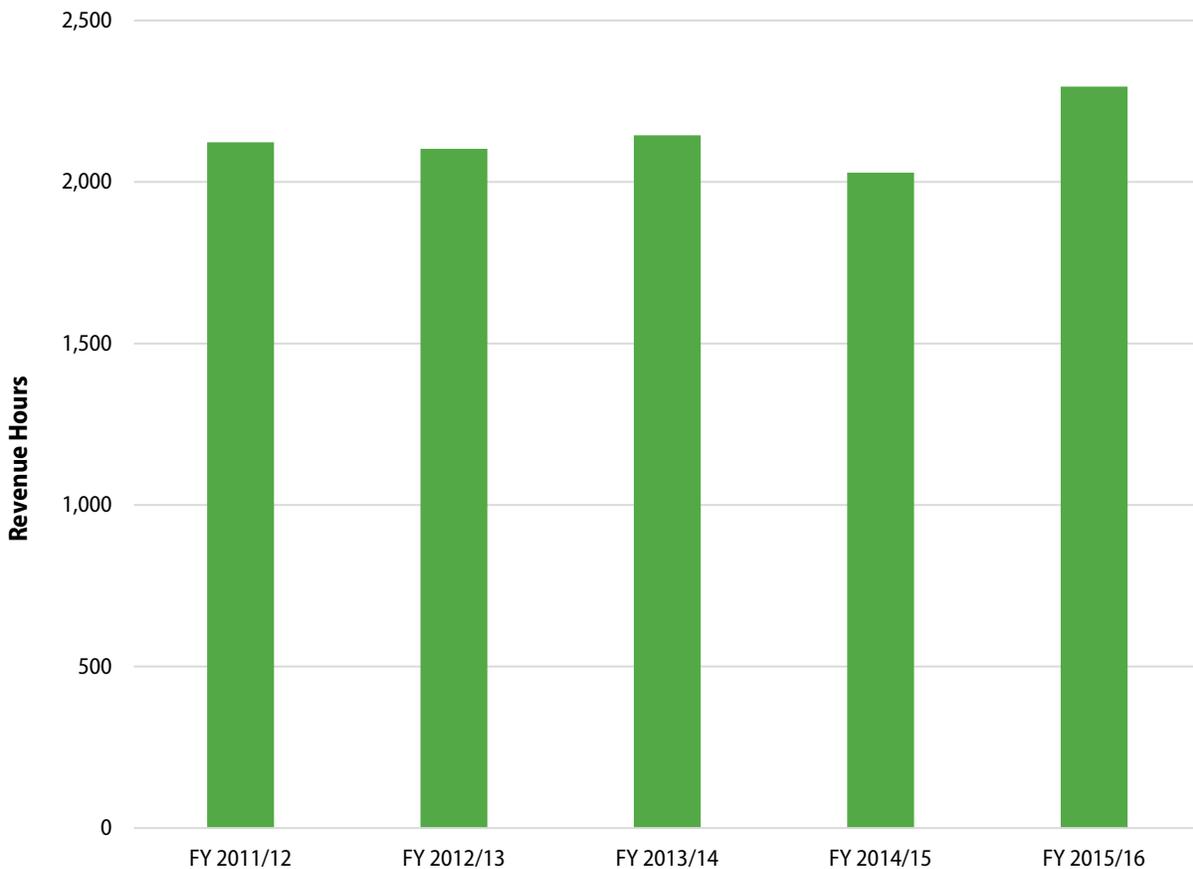
Underperforming Routes

- Routes **not meeting** productivity targets (passengers per trip): Dillon Beach/Tomales Dial-A-Ride, Point Reyes Dial-A-Ride
- Routes **not meeting** cost effectiveness targets: (subsidy per passenger): Novato Dial-A-Ride

Funded Service Needs

Marin Transit did not include any growth in revenue hours for any of the Dial-A-Ride programs during the first eight years of the plan and assumes the program will get cut with the loss of Measure A in the final two years. Staff will evaluate the Novato Dial-A-Ride service to better understand its usage and the transit markets it serves. Based on this analysis, staff may consider expanding or restructuring to better serve Novato.

Figure 3-5: Dial-A-Ride Service Summary (FY 2011/12 – FY 2015/16)



Marin Access

Historically, local paratransit has been the primary means of transportation for Marin County’s ADA and senior populations. Marin Transit established the Marin Access Mobility Management Center in 2010 to combine paratransit enrollment with information and referrals for other transportation services for seniors, persons with disabilities, and low-income residents. In subsequent years, Marin Transit has introduced travel

training, a countywide volunteer driver program, and a subsidized taxi program under the “Marin Access” umbrella. The goal of these programs is to provide for continued growth and mobility options for senior and ADA residents while respecting budget and resource limitations. Marin Access programs serve over 2,000 Marin residents and provide over 150,000 trips every year.

In 2015, the District initiated a detailed assessment of Marin Access programs to identify performance trends and lessons learned before deciding whether to expand and introduce new offerings. The study presented a comprehensive analysis of Marin Transit’s senior mobility programs under Marin Access and recommended future improvements. The study’s findings have informed Marin Transit’s decisions on how to expand programs and introduce new offerings for a rapidly growing senior population with limited resources.

The study recommendations emphasize the need to provide a more seamless experience for current program users and new travel options that leverage advances in technology. They acknowledge the increased use of the internet and smart phones. The study also underscored the importance of programs that focus on serving both active, healthy seniors and those with a higher level of transportation needs.

The District recently identified and took actions to support current and projected service levels on these programs. Remaining actions will require future Board approval. These include options to contain costs while meeting future mobility demands.

- **Maximize the use of electronic scheduling software.** In late 2016, Marin Transit released a Request for Proposals for a comprehensive demand response scheduling software package and the associated hardware for operation of Marin Access Paratransit and mobility management programs. After a competitive procurement, the District awarded a contract to Trapeze, the District’s incumbent scheduling and dispatch software provider for paratransit service. In FY 2017/18, Marin Transit will upgrade its Trapeze software to consolidate the functionalities of three different software suites (Trapeze, Microsoft Access, and Assisted Rides) into one central software package. This will increase the efficiency of the call and dispatch center, and will provide Marin Access riders and their support teams more ways to view, schedule, update, and pay for trips.
- **Provide more robust paratransit service to areas outside of the ADA-mandated geographic service area.** As mandated by the ADA, paratransit service extends within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from existing transit routes. This geographic boundary may appear arbitrary to riders, particularly when only part of a neighborhood or street is served. The current service area also presents a challenge for a growing number of residents who are eligible for paratransit. They may need to travel to a local destination outside of the mandated service area or do not live directly within the service area. These clients have a disability that prevents them from walking/rolling to or riding accessible public transportation. It is difficult for them to find appropriate or affordable options to bridge the first or last mile to reach the mandated service area. The District plans to redraw paratransit service area boundaries so that they are more legible to riders and to serve residents who would otherwise be isolated. Staff will develop fare and scheduling policies for this extended service area that will help to ensure that there is no unintended impact or consequence to mandated paratransit service.
- **Develop a more robust, accessible same-day service.** Marin Access is a family of services that provides a menu of the best possible services consistent with rider demand and need. Current travel trends show a strong demand for short trips that could be served more efficiently while increasing mobility for many. First-last mile connections from transit that do not require an advance

reservation could improve travel options for over 600 current users. These can provide flexibility and expand service options on a larger scale. A significant portion of current and future Marin Access customers will benefit from improved connections to fixed route transit. By serving same-day transportation needs the District hopes to: 1) Provide senior and ADA consumers with better choices and more flexibility with their travels, 2) Provide more convenient short-distance travel connections to local destinations and fixed route transit service, 3) Safely serve clients located in areas with the most challenging topography and roadway infrastructure; and 4) Appeal to new riders with attractive alternatives to driving.

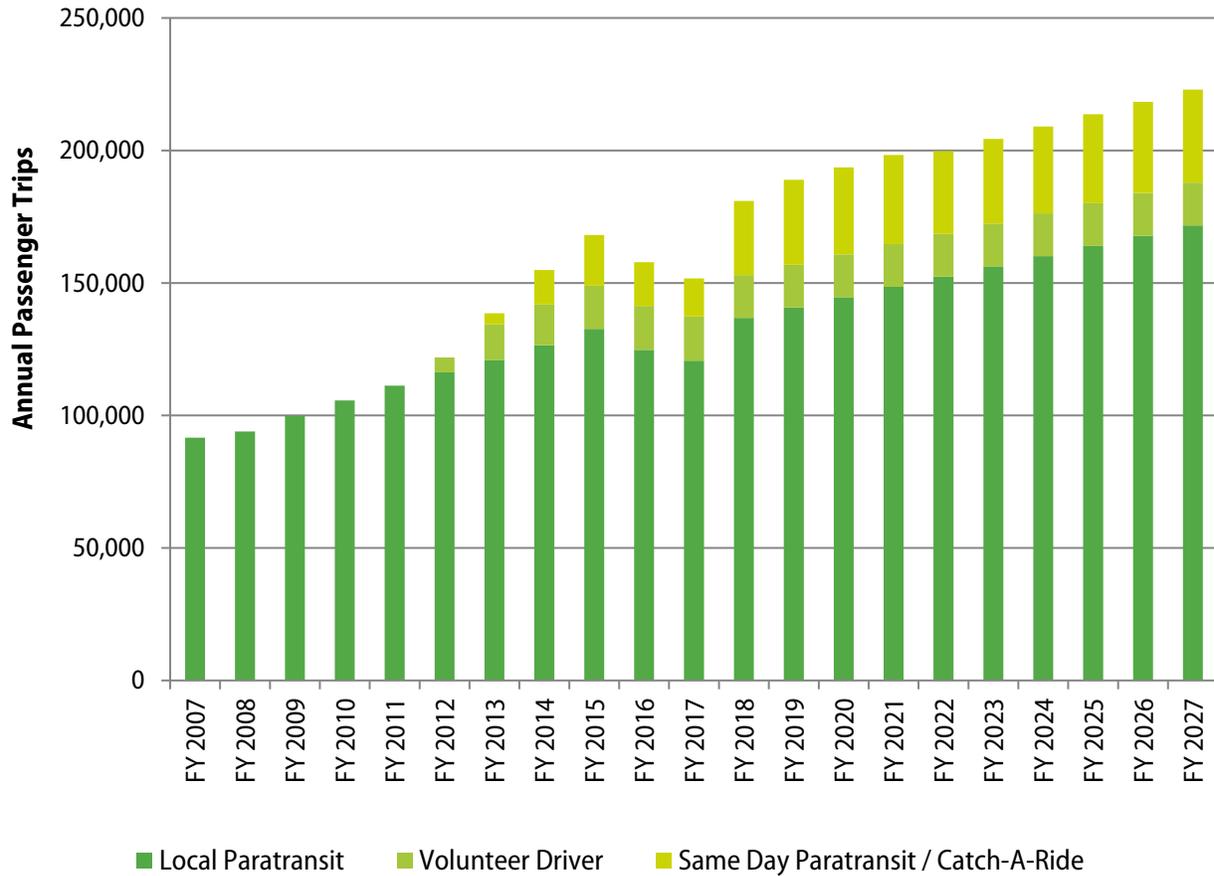
- **Evaluate Fare Policies and Eligibility Criteria for Marin Access Programs.** Marin Transit charges a flat \$2.00 fare for all mandated paratransit services and \$2.50 for all non-mandated paratransit trips countywide. The Catch-A-Ride program pays for the first \$14.00 for up to eight trips per month for qualified users. Marin Transit has reviewed ridership trends on both the Catch-A-Ride and paratransit programs. The results indicate a need to bring the out-of-pocket user costs of the two programs into line. Making them comparable will enable clients to select the best program that serves their needs.

Eligibility for nearly all Marin Access programs differs. This creates confusion for the user. Many Marin Access clients also rely on services not operated by Marin Transit that are subject to their own requirements and eligibility thresholds. It will be important to establish a consistent and clear eligibility process for all Marin Access programs to ensure programs are easy to understand and use. The District will consider any changes to Marin Access eligibility thresholds jointly with potential fare policy changes and in light of eligibility requirements established by other service providers in the county and the Bay Area.

- **Pursue effective partnerships to test and support innovative modes and services.** Marin Transit has taken the lead in coordinating and providing transportation for seniors and ADA-paratransit eligible individuals. Long-term stability of these programs will need the support of new transportation services. In the past, the District’s gap grant program has provided seed funding for new services. These include a Shopper Shuttle in West Marin and a grassroots Volunteer Driver program in Sausalito. Based on findings from the *Marin Access Strategic Analysis & Recommendations* study, the District refocused its gap grant funding to solicit new, innovative and wide-ranging proposals. The focus of the newly branded “Innovation Incubator” is on cultivating projects that do not duplicate Marin Access program offerings, test new and innovative practices, and will be sustainable without District support. Through the Innovation Incubator, the District will continue to expand partnerships to ensure new services are well coordinated and sustainable.
- **“Establish a wider audience”** One of the biggest challenges for many people seeking transportation assistance is to know their available options and how to utilize them. The Travel Navigator program serves as a resource for riders, family members, friends, or caregivers to get assistance without having to piece together information from multiple sources. Additionally, the travel training program provides an orientation for riders to Marin Transit’s most flexible service—the local fixed route bus. The Travel Navigator and travel training programs will need to extend their reach into the community, physically through satellite hours at locations throughout the County and visibly through consistent and accessible marketing and outreach.

- **Support new and expanded volunteer driver programs within the county.** In Fall 2016, staff conducted a survey and a workshop with community-based volunteer driver programs in Marin. The purpose of the outreach was to determine how Marin Transit can best support new and expanded volunteer driver programs. Based on the results, the District will establish a Volunteer Driver Resource Center that operates under the Marin Access umbrella and provides support and training to community-based volunteer driver programs. Marin Transit-sponsored volunteer driver programs successfully supported 16,570 rides in FY 2015/16. Yet, the District recognizes that these programs do not attract and retain the broadest selection of volunteers or serve the widest range of needs. To foster this low-cost and high-impact transportation solution, the Resource Center will encourage and support organizations with more significant member ties and diverse missions to develop and manage future volunteer driver programs.

As demand for these services increase, the District must allocate a higher percentage of the budget to support these programs. Marin Transit anticipates a 23% growth in ridership over the next ten years on Marin Access services. Figure 3-6 shows a projection for how the District anticipates this cumulative growth to be distributed between current programs.

Figure 3-6: Estimated Paratransit and Mobility Management Program Growth

The following is a program-by-program summary of future service projections for each Marin Access program.

Local Paratransit

Historically, demand for paratransit in Marin County has grown year-over-year as Marin County ages. The current fiscal year is the second year of ridership declines and corresponding declines in revenue service hours. Service is currently at FY 2012/13 levels (Figure 3-6). Regional paratransit is experiencing a similar decline for mandated trips in FY 2016/17. Staff continue to evaluate and monitor paratransit trends. Ridership may have declined due to many of the same external factors as fixed route transit. It may also reflect the availability of new or expanded services that also fill the needs of paratransit riders. These services tend to increase when the economy is strong and wither during a recession. Such services include:

- Non-Emergency Medical Transportation services arranged by managed care organizations;
- Private transportation providers hired under contract to institutions typically served by paratransit, such as adult day care centers;
- Trips taken on Uber or Lyft; and
- Volunteer transportation services that Marin Transit may support that do not report their ridership in the District's performance statistics.

Table 3-1 and Table 3-2 provide annual revenue hour and revenue miles estimates. The FY 2017/18 paratransit service levels are projected at the same level as the FY 2016/17 budget (62,455 hours), and represent 31% of total service hours. This is significantly higher than FY 2015/16 actuals (>10%). The budget does allow for a return to prior service levels if paratransit demand increases. Marin Access Paratransit will be able to respond to same-day requests with the Catch-A-Ride program and serve additional non-mandated trips.

Marin Transit is budgeting for an average annual increase of 2.4% in paratransit hours during the first eight years of the plan using internal modeling based on historic usage and financial resources. If additional mandated service is needed, this may impact Marin Transit's ability to continue to provide the majority of non-mandated trips.

Marin Transit provides regional paratransit services on behalf of Golden Gate Transit at requested levels, based on demand for these services. Hours associated with regional service are not included in this service plan.

Catch-A-Ride / Same Day ADA Service

In FY 2017/18, Marin Transit will expand the Catch-A-Ride program to include other same-day services operated in new accessible vans owned by the District. The operation of these new vans will be funded by a federal 5310 grant that was awarded at the end of FY 2016/17. Their purchase is also federally funded, and the procurement will be completed in the first half of FY 2017/18. The Plan assumes that Catch-A-Ride and Same Day ADA Service will provide approximately 28,000 annual trips in the first year of the plan and grow approximately 2.5% per year through the first eight years of the plan period. A small drop in ridership is expected once 5310 grant funding expires in FY 2021/22 and the program is cut following the loss of Measure A.

Volunteer Driver

The STAR and TRIP Volunteer Driver reimbursement programs are available in the urbanized and rural parts of the county. They have experienced steady growth from their inception in 2012 and provide an average of approximately 15,000 trips annually. The first eight years of the plan estimates ridership on these Marin Transit sponsored programs will continue at current levels and the program is cut in the final two years following the loss of Measure A. The plan identifies funding for these service levels. It also provides for future increases in per-mile reimbursements and continued operation of the Volunteer Driver Program Resource Center.

In FY 2016/17, the District made two changes that will impact service delivery moving forward. The first change was to restructure the reimbursement process for STAR and TRIP to improve administrative efficiencies. This change shifted much of the administrative burden away from West Marin Senior Services and streamlined the reimbursement process through the Travel Navigator office. In addition to improving operational efficiencies, the change encouraged and supported West Marin Senior Services to spend more time on matching riders with drivers. The second change was to increase mileage reimbursement caps for both reimbursement per mile and total miles reimbursed per month. This enabled the District to continue growing the amount of travel these programs support. The cost savings from revising the administrative process offset the cost of increasing reimbursement caps.

Marin Transit transitioned CarePool, a grant-funded Traditional Volunteer Driver pilot program that matched drivers and passengers, to Whistlestop during FY 2016/17. The program reduced dependency on the driver

reimbursement program and provided additional mobility. Most important, it provided Marin Transit with insight into its most appropriate role in supporting volunteer driver programs. Based on analysis of the pilot program and community outreach, Marin Transit will focus future efforts on bolstering the reimbursement programs with higher and more attractive subsidies, particularly for rides that are hard to serve, and a Volunteer Driver Program Resource Center that supports existing and new traditional volunteer driver programs operated by community-based organizations.

School Bus Support

Marin Transit supports school service through several different programs as outlined in the *Countywide School Coordinated Study*. A Board workshop in December 2015 reviewed the study results and recommendations. Following the workshop, the Board formed an Ad Hoc Committee on Student Transportation to advance the strategic planning phase of the study and develop a five-year implementation plan. Advancing the plan means focusing resources on two distinct services:

- **Supplemental School Service.** As identified in the School Coordinated Study, this service is most appropriate for high school students. With the Board's support, Marin Transit is working to provide more service for high schools where demand is high and the need for additional buses is urgent. In order to redirect transit resources to high school services, staff is working on specific actions such as transitioning K-8 and private schools to Yellow Bus. This is a more appropriate service for primary and middle school students.
- **Yellow Bus Service.** School districts no longer receive dedicated funding for home to school transportation services for the general student population. Cities that are concerned about traffic congestion are partnering with school districts to revive yellow bus programs. School districts, which lack in-house expertise for route planning and contractor management, have contracted with Marin Transit to provide this operational support. The Tiburon Traffic Relief JPA provides yellow bus service for the Reed Union School District. The JPA and the Mill Valley School District executed contracts with Marin Transit in 2016 to provide operational support. These partnerships are a model that Marin Transit can replicate with school districts across the county to continue to grow yellow bus services.

Uniquely, Marin Transit directly contracts with a yellow bus service provider to provide yellow bus service to two schools in the Ross Valley School District (White Hill Middle School and Hidden Valley Elementary School). This model presents long term challenges, and Marin Transit is investigating opportunities to transition this service to the same operational support model described above.

Supplemental and Yellow Bus services account for just 2% of all service hours in the 10-year plan, and the plan assumes no future growth in total hours during the first eight years of the plan and elimination of the program following the loss of Measure A. The ability to increase service will be based largely on achieving efficiencies through better coordination of bell times. Their operating costs are affected by an elevated level of financial instability due to the lack of a dedicated parking and maintenance facility for these services. A competitive procurement for all school services will take place in the winter of 2017. The District anticipates a new contract will be in place for the FY 2018/19 school year.

Unfunded Service Needs

There are limited financial resources available for transit services within the life of this study. The District has developed recommendations for service improvements and unfunded expansion opportunities (expansion needs) that are beyond the District's financial means. These changes are needed to achieve many of the goals of the Measure A Expenditure Plan. They will create a transit network that provides a feasible and sustainable mobility options while reducing roadway congestion within the County.

The District evaluates unfunded expansion opportunities using the Measure A Expenditure Plan performance criteria for transit investments. These criteria are:

- Fill gap in the bus transit network
- Meets productivity standards (passengers per hour)
- Meets cost effectiveness standards (subsidy per passenger)
- Relieves congestion (total ridership)
- Provides seamless connections (to regional service)
- Eliminates "pass ups" (overcrowding on routes)
- Promotes environmental justice (demographic analysis)
- Attracts outside funding (federal, state, toll, other local)

Staff have identified a total of 25 expansion services in the unfunded needs assessment and assigned them to seven categories. Table 3-3 provides a summary of the expansion project (in no particular order) and a brief description. These are described in detail in Appendix C.

Table 3-3: Service Expansion Projects

Route / Service Area	Description
<i>Expand and Enhance Shuttle Services</i>	
New Shuttle: Mill Valley	New circulator shuttle in Mill Valley
New Shuttle: Sausalito	New circulator shuttle in Sausalito
Expand Shuttle: Tiburon Evenings (219)	Expanded evening service for employees and patrons
Expand Shuttle: Novato Evenings (251)	Expanded evening service for residents
Expand Shuttle: Novato Hamilton (251 or 257)	Deviate Route 251 or 257 to serve Bolling Circle areas of Hamilton
<i>Expand and Enhance K-12 School Bus Services</i>	
Yellow Bus Expansion Phase 1	Kentfield and Larkspur-Corte Madera School Districts
Yellow Bus Expansion Phase 2	Reed Union, Mill Valley, Ross Valley, San Rafael Elementary & Dixie School Districts
Yellow Bus Expansion Phase 3	Novato School District
Expand Supplemental Transit Program	Tamalpais Union, San Rafael High, and Novato High Districts
<i>Enhance Service Frequency in Transit Corridors</i>	
San Rafael – San Anselmo Corridor	Expand off peak and weekend frequency from 20 minutes to 15 minutes
San Rafael – Civic Center Corridor	Expand off peak and weekend frequency from 20 minutes to 15 minutes
Hamilton –Downtown Novato Corridor	Expand off peak and weekend frequency from 60 minutes to 30 minutes
<i>Provide Limited Stop or Express Services</i>	
Mill Valley Express (Route 17x)	New weekday peak only express service connecting Downtown San Rafael to Mill Valley
<i>Expand Rural and Recreational Services</i>	
Provide new service between Golden Gate Bridge and West Marin	New route connecting the Golden Gate Bridge to Muir Woods and West Marin
Increase weekend service on Route 61	Increase weekend service on Route 61 to support weekend and holiday demands
Increase weekday service on Route 61	Increase weekday service on Route 61 to support locals and students
<i>Provide and Support Flexible First/Last Mile Services</i>	
Novato connector services	Services to better connect rail and bus in Novato
East San Rafael Connector Bus	Services to better connect rail, bus and ferry to residents in East San Rafael
Provide flex route services for general public	New directly operated flex route services for general public
Partner to provide new flexible first/last mile options	Hybrid program where the District and private sector partner to fill the gaps in the transit network
Support outside providers to strengthen first/last mile connections	Support outside providers – free transfer agreements