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1. Demographic Profile
1. Demographic Profile

This section includes a review of key demographic indicators in Mariposa County. Demographic data used for this profile was compiled from a combination of the United States Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, the California Department of Finance estimates, and the State of California Employment Development Department.

County Description and Demographic Summary

Mariposa County is located in the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and is bordered by Tuolumne County to the north, Madera County to the southeast, and Merced County to the west. The county seat is located in the census designated place (CDP) of Mariposa. Mariposa is located to the north of Fresno, east of Merced and southeast of Stockton.

Mariposa County is approximately 1,463 square miles in area and is primarily rural with a dispersed population. The County contains no incorporated cities, but contains the following unincorporated communities: Bootjack, Mariposa, Yosemite Valley, Coulterville, Hornitos, El Portal, Midpines, Yosemite Village, Wawona, and Cathey’s Valley. A portion of Yosemite National Park is within the boundaries of Mariposa County.

Population Characteristics

According to the United States Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates for 2015-2019, Mariposa County has a population of 17,420. The Mariposa CDP has a population of 1,186, which represents 7% of the County’s total population. The median household income of Mariposa County is lower than the median household income statewide ($48,820 versus $80,440), and the median household income is lower in the Mariposa CDP than in Mariposa County ($27,454 versus $48,830).

The number of persons per household is lower in both Mariposa County and the Mariposa CDP than statewide (2.1 in Mariposa County, 1.6 in the Mariposa CDP versus 2.9 statewide). A population comparison between the State of California, Mariposa County, and the county seat of Mariposa is shown in Table 1.

As shown in Table 2, Mariposa County and the town of Mariposa have an older population than the statewide average. In Mariposa County, only 16% of the population is under the age of 18, while 23% of the statewide population is under 18 years old. 27% of Mariposa County residents are seniors (65 years and over), which is significantly higher than the statewide average of 14%. As stated in the Mariposa County Community Needs Assessment, “Mariposa County has historically had a higher proportion of retirement-aged residents and a lower proportion of young adults. This demographic characteristic of the County is maintained and propelled by the attractiveness of the location for retirement, which pulls retirement-aged individuals into the County, and by a lack of job opportunities which pushes younger adults out of the County in search of gainful employment.”

---

The percentage of the population with a disability in Mariposa County is higher than for the state overall (20% versus 11%). Also, 15% of the population in Mariposa County is below the poverty line, which is higher than the statewide average of 12%.

In summary, the population of Mariposa County has been declining slightly but concentrating more seniors, persons with disabilities and people living at or below the poverty line than the state average.

Additionally, the Mariposa CDP has a higher percentage of the population who are seniors than the County overall (36% versus 27%), higher percentage of the population with a disability (31% versus 20%), and higher percent below the poverty line (17% versus 15%).

For the disability question in the American Community Survey, six disability types are included:

- **Hearing difficulty**: deaf or having serious difficulty hearing.
- **Vision difficulty**: blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses.
- **Cognitive difficulty**: because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions.
- **Ambulatory difficulty**: having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs.
- **Self-care difficulty**: having difficulty bathing or dressing.
- **Independent living difficulty**: because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping.

ACS respondents that report any one of the six disability types are considered to have a disability. It should be noted that this definition differs from that used to determine eligibility for paratransit services required by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). To qualify for ADA paratransit services, an individual’s disability must prevent them from independently using fixed-route transit service, even if the vehicle itself is accessible to persons with disabilities (i.e., lift or ramp equipped).

Table 1: Total Population and Median Household Income (2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population &amp; Households</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>Mariposa County</th>
<th>Mariposa CDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>39,283,497</td>
<td>17,420</td>
<td>1,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Households</td>
<td>13,157,873</td>
<td>7,643</td>
<td>699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons per Household</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$80,440</td>
<td>$48,820</td>
<td>$27,454</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Key Demographic Characteristics (2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristics</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>Mariposa County</th>
<th>Mariposa CDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>% of Total*</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population under 5 years old</td>
<td>2,451,528</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population under 18 years old</td>
<td>9,022,146</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>2,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 65 years and older</td>
<td>5,486,041</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population with Disability</td>
<td>4,101,034</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Population</td>
<td>1,574,531</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Born Population</td>
<td>10,547,210</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>1,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Population</td>
<td>15,830,275</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino Population</td>
<td>15,327,688</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>1,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Below Poverty Line</td>
<td>4,552,837</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2,616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
<td>8,980,726</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>3,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bachelor's Degree or Higher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percent of total population, with the exception of population with disability, poverty, and educational attainment in which the percentage is based on a subset of the population in which these demographic characteristics are determined.

Table 3 and Table 4 summarize the demographic characteristics of the State of California, Mariposa County, and the Mariposa CDP according to the 2010 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

Table 3: Population and Median Household Income (2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population &amp; Households</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>Mariposa County</th>
<th>Mariposa CDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>36,637,290</td>
<td>18,290</td>
<td>2,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Households</td>
<td>12,398,852</td>
<td>7,724</td>
<td>937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons per Household</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$60,883</td>
<td>$49,098</td>
<td>$47,905</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Key Demographic Characteristics (2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristics</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>Mariposa County</th>
<th>Mariposa CDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>% of Total*</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population under 5 years old</td>
<td>2,545,065</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population under 18 years old</td>
<td>9,325,329</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3,467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 65 years and older</td>
<td>4,060,596</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population with Disability</td>
<td>3,640,092</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3,245*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Population</td>
<td>2,051,959</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Born Population</td>
<td>9,962,472</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Population</td>
<td>14,244,577</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>1,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino Population</td>
<td>13,456,157</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>1,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Below Poverty Line</td>
<td>5,783,043</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2,647^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment - Bachelor's Degree or Higher</td>
<td>7,063,690</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2,789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Percent of total population, with the exception of population with disability, poverty, and educational attainment in which the percentage is based on a subset of the population in which these demographic characteristics are determined.

^ Data from 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, as 2010 5-Year Estimate data was not available.

Table 5 summarizes the percent change in demographic characteristics between 2010 and 2019. Mariposa County’s population decreased by 5% from 2010 to 2019 (from 18,290 residents to 17,420 residents, respectively). In the Mariposa CDP, the population decreased by 44% from 2010 to 2019 (from 2,122 residents to 1,186 residents, respectively).

Table 5: Percent Increase/Decrease in Population and Income between 2010 and 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population &amp; Households</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>Mariposa County</th>
<th>Mariposa CDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Households</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons per Household</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-9%</td>
<td>-27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


While the overall population and youth has decreased in both Mariposa County and the Mariposa CDP, the senior population in contrast has increased by 32% in the County and by 32% in the CDP.
In Mariposa County, there has been an increase in persons with disabilities (8% increase), but not as much as for the state overall (13% increase). There has been a substantial reduction in veteran population in Mariposa County and the Mariposa CDP (32% and 61% decrease respectively), more so than for the state overall (23% decrease). The foreign-born population has increased substantially in Mariposa County (49% increase) in sharp contrast to the Mariposa CDP, where the foreign-born population has substantially decreased (51% decrease). Similarly, while the Hispanic or Latino population has increased in Mariposa County (16% increase), it has substantially decreased in the Mariposa CDP (61% decrease). The reduction in poverty in the Mariposa CDP (69% reduction) is substantially higher than for the state overall (21% reduction). Mariposa County’s poverty level has had very little change (1% decrease).

Table 6: Percent Increase/Decrease in Key Demographic Indicators between 2010 and 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristics</th>
<th>California</th>
<th>Mariposa County</th>
<th>Mariposa CDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population under 5</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>-9%</td>
<td>-71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population under 18</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>-18%</td>
<td>-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 65 and older</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population with Disability</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%*</td>
<td>-5%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Population</td>
<td>-23%</td>
<td>-32%</td>
<td>-61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Born Population</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>-51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Population</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>-61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino Population</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>-61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Below Poverty Line</td>
<td>-21%</td>
<td>-1%*</td>
<td>-69%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment - Bachelor’s Degree or Higher</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>-41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data from 2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, as 2010 5-Year Estimate data was not available.

Population Growth Projections

Figure 1 shows the projected population growth in Mariposa County according to the State of California Department of Finance. It is important to note that the population estimates differ slightly from those described above in the American Community Survey. The population in Mariposa County has slightly declined over the last ten years. The population is projected to stay at about the same level in the next 20 years (from 17,571 in 2020 to 17,490 in 2040). This data is intended to project population growth over time for planning purposes.

Figure 2 displays the projected population growth of seniors (65 years and older) in Mariposa County according to the State of California Department of Finance. As shown in the figure, the senior population is expected to grow for the next several years, and then decline starting in 2027.
Figure 1: Future Population Growth in Mariposa County


Figure 2: Future Senior Population Growth in Mariposa County

Despite low growth in population, the aging population in the County, point to an increase in healthcare and mobility needs of many old adults in the next 10 years.

Employment

According to the California Employment Development Department, the unemployment rate in Mariposa County as of March 2021 was 9.4%, compared to California’s rate of 8.2%. In March 2021, Mariposa County’s civilian labor force was 6,690, which is approximately 38% of the County’s total population. Table 7 summarizes the list of major employers in Mariposa County with 100 or more employees. The major employers consist of hospitality, government, real estate, and medical entities.

Three of the major hospitality employers are located within Yosemite National Park.

Table 7: Employers in Mariposa County with 100 or more Employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer Name</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yosemite Concession Services</td>
<td>Concessionaires</td>
<td>Yosemite National Park</td>
<td>1,000-4,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry and Fire Projection</td>
<td>Government Offices</td>
<td>Mariposa</td>
<td>500-999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariposa County*</td>
<td>Government Offices</td>
<td>Mariposa</td>
<td>500-999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenaya Lodge Inc</td>
<td>Resorts</td>
<td>Fish Camp</td>
<td>250-499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Trees Lodge</td>
<td>Hotels &amp; Motels</td>
<td>Yosemite National Park</td>
<td>100-249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majestic Yosemite Hotel</td>
<td>Hotels &amp; Motels</td>
<td>Yosemite National Park</td>
<td>100-249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Association of Realtors</td>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>Mariposa</td>
<td>100-249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John C Fremont Healthcare District</td>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>Mariposa</td>
<td>100-249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: California Employment Development Department

* Data from Mariposa County staff.
Population and Employment Density

Most of the population in Mariposa County primarily lives within, or within proximity to, the Mariposa and Bootjack CDPs. The highest population densities occur closest to these core areas. With a significant portion of land in Mariposa County devoted to national parks, population density is generally low throughout the rest of the County, other than near Hayward and Granite Springs in the northwest region. Figure 3 shows graphically the population density in Mariposa County by U.S. Census Block Groups.

Figure 3: Mariposa County Population Density (2019)

Source: Data - American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2019; Graphic – Walker Consultants, 2021
Figure 4 below shows the home locations of all people working in the County. It shows both the location of workers that live and work in the County and those that live outside the County but commute to the County for work.

The map shows the Mariposa and Bootjack CDPs having the highest concentration of residents who work in the County, and it shows the distribution of other county areas that have lower residential density such as Yosemite Valley and Coulterville.

The map also shows people who work in the County but live outside of it, with a particularly high concentration in the City of Merced and around Oakhurst, in Madera County. Route 49 between Mariposa and Oakhurst and Route 140 between Merced and Mariposa appear as primary markets for transit service in the County, due to their proximity to many residents and workers.

Figure 4: Home Locations of County Workers

Figure 5 shows the work locations of County residents. The highest concentration of employment locations for County residents are primarily in the Mariposa CDP area and secondarily in the Bootjack CDP area.

There are also concentrations of employment in El Portal (related to Yosemite National Park) and around Wawona and Fish Camp, on Highway 41, likely related to the park’s tourist and visitor-driven activity.

There are also many County residents who work outside of Mariposa County in Merced, Madera, and Tuolumne Counties, and specifically in Merced, Oakhurst and Sonora.

**Figure 5: Work Locations of County Residents**


**Transit Dependency**

There are three key demographic characteristics that are shared among current Mariposa County transit users and that explain their reliance on county transit services for basic mobility. They include the presence of seniors (65 years old and older), people who are experiencing poverty (at or below the poverty line, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau), and people with disabilities.
Figure 6 shows the relative concentration of seniors for each U.S. Census Block group in the County. The map shows that the senior population is not only concentrated in the Mariposa and Bootjack CDP areas, where most people live, but also in the northwest region of Mariposa County (primarily in Coulterville and Greeley Hill), and in the southeast region of the County (in Wawona and Fish Camp).

The map shows that a larger proportion of seniors live in outlying areas of the County, away from Mariposa and closer to Sonora and Oakhurst, in Tuolumne and Madera counties, respectively.

Figure 6: Senior Population

Source: Data - American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2019; Graphic – Walker Consultants, 2021
Figure 7 shows the relative concentration of people below the poverty line for each U.S. Census Block Group in the County. The map shows that the highest concentrations of those experiencing poverty are located not only in areas of high population density, but also in more rural areas of county such as Bear Valley, Hornitos and Cathey’s Valley, and away from the Mariposa, Bootjack and Coulterville CDP areas.

The map shows that rural areas in the central part of the County, away from Highway 49 have a particular need for transit service.

Figure 7: Population Below the Poverty Line

Persons with disabilities is reported at an aggregated level by U.S. Census Tract (each containing data for several block groups). The combination of senior population, population at or below the poverty line, and persons with disabilities, creates a combined index of transit dependency that helps identifying areas of greater need for transit service in the County.

To calculate the Transit Dependency Index (TDI), the density per square mile of seniors, population below the poverty line, and persons with a disability was determined for each block group. These three values were added
together to determine the number of persons with transit dependency characteristics per square mile in each block group.

The average density of transit dependent people per square mile in Mariposa County is 16. Based on this average, TDI categories were developed by breaking down the range of values into five transit dependency groups, with 16 being the average number of transit dependent people per square mile.

Figure 8 shows the final TDI categories ranging from “Very Low” (less than 1.3 persons per sq. mile) to “Very High” (more than 30 persons per sq. mile). Based on this analysis, transit dependency was found to be highest in the central region of the County, along Highway 49, and especially around Mariposa, Bootjack, Cathey’s Valley and Midpines, with multiple block groups experiencing moderate to very high transit dependency.

Figure 8: Transit Dependency Index

Source: Data - American Community Survey, U.S. Census, 2019; Graphic & Analysis – Walker Consultants, 2021
Projected Demand for Public Transportation

While the population in Mariposa County overall is projected to stay at about the same level in the next 10 years (see Figure 1), the senior population is projected to increase over the next 6-7 years and peak in year 2027, and then decrease steadily in the continuing years (see Figure 2). Since the Mariposa County transit services are primarily used by seniors, this trend indicates that in the short-term (next 5 years) transit need is likely to increase.

However, growth in senior population is not the only indicator of projected demand for transit. Another important indicator is the amount of service and convenience of service that is provided. The transit services that are currently offered by Mariposa County are limited and cater to a small portion of the County population. Transit services in the County can also increase ridership by improving its operational efficiency and service offering to attract other segments of the population. This is explored in more detail in the next chapters.
2. Existing Transit Services
2. Existing Transit Services

This section includes an overview of existing public transit services operating in Mariposa County as well as social service transportation services and private transportation operators. Table 8 summarizes the transportation services available in Mariposa County. The remaining portion of this section describes each service in further detail.

Table 8: Transportation Services Available in Mariposa County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Operator</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mari-Go</td>
<td>Mariposa County Transit</td>
<td>Dial-a-ride service that provides curb-to-curb service to the general public. The service is provided in designated areas of Mariposa County on specific days of the week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medi-Trans</td>
<td>Mariposa County Transit</td>
<td>Curb-to-curb non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) service for seniors, persons with disabilities, and veterans. Provides service for Mariposa County residents to travel to medical appointments and in-office procedures within Mariposa County, and to Merced, Oakhurst and Fresno.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS)</td>
<td>YARTS</td>
<td>Provides public fixed-route transit service into Yosemite Valley in Yosemite National Park from various gateway communities in the eastern and western slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. YARTS serves the counties of Fresno, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Mono, and Tuolumne.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuolumne County Transit</td>
<td>Tuolumne County Transit</td>
<td>Operates fixed-route and a general public demand response zone. Serves communities in Tuolumne County, including Sonora, Jamestown, Columbia, Tuolumne, Twain Harte, Sierra Village, Crystal Falls, and Groveland. Mariposa County residents can use Mari-Go service to connect to Tuolumne County Transit in Sonora.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merced County Transit (The Bus)</td>
<td>The Bus</td>
<td>Operates fixed routes and two deviated fixed routes throughout Merced County and provides paratransit service for those qualifying individuals who cannot access the fixed route. Can be accessed from Mariposa County by taking the YARTS bus to Merced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greyhound Bus</td>
<td>Greyhound</td>
<td>Merced is served by Greyhound bus at its downtown station. Mariposa County residents can ride YARTS to Merced and transfer to Greyhound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amtrak</td>
<td>Amtrak</td>
<td>The Amtrak San Joaquin operates between the southern terminus of Bakersfield and northern termini of Sacramento and San Francisco. Mariposa County residents can connect to the Amtrak station in Merced via YARTS connector bus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi Service</td>
<td>Sierra Taxi</td>
<td>Sierra Taxi provides taxi service in Mariposa County.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Public Transit Operators

Mariposa County Transit

Prior to 2018, Mariposa County Transit was housed within the Mariposa County Community Services Department. As of July 1, 2018, the Community Services Department, the Health Department, and the Human Services Department were consolidated into an integrated Health and Human Service Department. Now, Mariposa County Transit is housed in the Mariposa County Department of Health and Human Services.
Mariposa County Transit provides two transit services: Mari-Go is a public dial-a-ride service providing curb-to-curb service to residents of Mariposa County for general purpose trips into the Mariposa CDP, Merced in Merced County and Sonora in Tuolumne County. Medi-Trans is a dial-a-ride service, also curb-to-curb, that provides medical transportation within and outside of Mariposa County for seniors, persons with disabilities, and veterans.

For both services, riders must call in dispatch at least a day in advance to arrange for a ride. Dispatch is managed out of the Health and Human Services Agency. Dispatchers do not have a software system to schedule riders, the schedules are made using a spreadsheet that includes the following information: pick-up time, location, phone number, medical appointment time, payment method, whether a wheelchair, and the type of vehicle that is needed to complete the trip. This spreadsheet is prepared the day before and paper copies of the daily schedule are distributed to the driver for the next day.

Mariposa County Transit consists of an Administrative Analyst, two Program Assistants (two dispatchers/schedulers), 2.6 bus drivers for the Mari-Go service, one bus driver that provides extra help, and four drivers for Medi-Trans (shared with the Health and Human Services Agency social services transportation).

Mari-Go Service

Mari-Go is a dial-a-ride or demand responsive service that provides curb-to-curb service to the general public. The service is provided in designated areas of Mariposa County on specific days of the week. Mari-Go operates most of its service in the southern part of the County with service provided along different corridors and communities each day of the week.

The service is available Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., except holidays. All buses are equipped with a lift and tie-down straps for wheelchair passengers. The daily schedule generally picks up riders in the morning and brings them into Mariposa, then provides them with transit service within the town (riders and driver arrange this informally on the day of service), and at around 1:30 p.m. starts picking up riders to take them back home.

On Tuesday, Mari-Go operates two different services: a North County Mari-Go that provides general public service from Greeley Hill and Coulterville to Sonora, in Tuolumne County, and a South County Mari-Go that provides general public service from Mariposa to Merced, in Merced County.

Thursdays are also different in that Mari-Go is provided within the Mariposa CDP on demand, with service requests allowed on the day of service. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the service is provided to communities north, south and east of Mariposa.
Table 9 summarizes the services available by area and day of the week. As shown in the table, Mari-Go fares vary by area and distance. In the South County area, within the Mariposa CDP, all rides are $2 each way, with discounts for seniors. All other routes have a fare of $2 for trips up to 2 miles in length and $4 for trips outside the County. Fares have not been raised since July 1, 2010.
Table 9: Summary of Mariposa County Transit Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Day</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Fare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>South County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Hornitos, Bear Valley, Mt. Bullion and Cathey’s Valley</td>
<td>$2.00 for 2 miles or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Mariposa to Merced</td>
<td>$4.00 one-way from Mariposa to Merced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Highway 49 South (Bootjack)</td>
<td>$2.00 for 2 miles or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Local service within Mariposa (within 3-mile radius of Transit Office)</td>
<td>$2.00 one way $1.00 for seniors $1.00 round trip to Senior Center lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Midpines</td>
<td>$2.00 for 2 miles or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North County</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Greeley Hill and Coulterville to Sonora</td>
<td>$4.00 one way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Mariposa County, Walker Consultants, 2021.*

Figure 9 displays the Mari-Go service corridors and areas that are served each day of the week that service is provided (Monday through Friday).
Figure 9: Mari-Go Service Area Map

Mari-Go Transit Service

Legend

Mari-Go Service Areas
- Red: Hornitos/Cathey’s Valley
- Purple: Merced
- Green: Coulterville/Greeley Hill, Sonora
- Blue: 49 South
- Orange: Mariposa Local
- Yellow: Midpines

YARTS: Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System
- HWY 140 Route

Medi-Trans Service

Medi-Trans service is a curb-to-curb non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) service for seniors, persons with disabilities, and veterans. The hours of service are typically 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. but can vary depending on the need. The service is available Monday through Friday, with the exception of holidays. Medi-Trans provides service for Mariposa County residents to travel to medical appointments and in-office procedures within Mariposa County, and to Merced, Oakhurst and Fresno. The service is available for medical trips such as doctor or dental appointments, trips to the pharmacy, or therapy appointment. The rider needs to be able to get to the vehicle, then the driver assists the passenger in and out of the vehicle.

Caregivers can accompany the passenger at no additional charge. Non-seniors are also served, if they are going to roughly the same place at the same time as a senior, and there would be no additional expense to Mariposa County Transit.

The service is funded through State Transit Assistance, 5311, and TDA funds. The fares for the service are listed below:

- Round trip fare outside of Mariposa County = $15
- Local trip fare to appointments within Mariposa County = $5

Many of the people who use the service use it for medical appointments out of town. The Medi-Trans service is highly utilized, and at times dispatchers have had to turn down requests for service. Due to the limited number of spaces available for Medi-Trans, passengers are encouraged to coordinate scheduling of a medical appointment with Medi-Trans to ensure availability at their desired time slot. Typically, a 2:00 p.m. medical appointment is the latest appointment that would be eligible for use of the Medi-Trans service.

Service Fleet

Table 10 includes a summary of Mariposa County Transit’s fleet of 8 vehicles. All vehicles are housed at the senior center and are maintained by the Fleet Department of Public Works. All shuttles and vans are wheelchair accessible. Shuttles have lifts and minivans are ADA accessible with a manual ramp.

The Mari-Go service is provided with any of the 4 shuttle vehicles that have capacity for 11-16 passengers and 2 wheelchair positions. Medi-Trans service is generally provided with either the SUVs or the minivans, depending on passenger need.
### Table 10: Mariposa County Transit Fleet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle ID</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Make/Model</th>
<th>Mileage</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Wheelchair Capacity</th>
<th>Useful Life Benchmark (ULB)</th>
<th>Past ULB</th>
<th>Replacement Plan/Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Chevy Equinox 4WD</td>
<td>1,390,687</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Maintain &amp; monitor until FY2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Chevy Equinox 4WD</td>
<td>1,463,868</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Maintain &amp; monitor until FY2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Ford E-350 Braun</td>
<td>1,258,280</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7 Passenger w/2 Wheelchairs</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Replace w/same capacity by early FY 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Starcraft Allstar Bus</td>
<td>1,335,793</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10 Passenger w/2 Wheelchairs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Investigating funding sources to replace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Starcraft Allstar Bus</td>
<td>1,366,250</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10 Passenger w/2 Wheelchairs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Investigating funding sources to replace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Starcraft Allstar Bus</td>
<td>1,366,251</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10 Passenger w/2 Wheelchairs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Investigating funding sources to replace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Dodge Grand Caravan</td>
<td>1,366,338</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5 Passenger w/1 Wheelchair</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Replace w/same capacity end of FY2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Eldorado Entervan</td>
<td>1,366,337</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5 Passenger w/1 Wheelchair</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Replace w/same capacity end of FY2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Mariposa County Department of Health and Human Services Transportation

Human Services encompasses both Social Services and Behavioral Health. Within Social Services are Child Protective Services (CPS), Adult Services and Eligibility. Social Services vehicles are mostly automobiles for use by social workers and others on staff, but clients are occasionally transported using one of these vehicles. DHHS has roughly 14 to 15 vehicles which they use to transport clients.

CPS has 6 vehicles to transport children in protective services. Children in CPS include foster children and detained children, many of whom are low income. Any of the 14 CPS staff members are qualified to drive the van. Children are transported as needed, but typically there is at least one trip per day.

### Mariposa County Transit Performance

Table 11 summarizes a nine-year financial and operating performance of the Mari-Go and Medi-Trans services.
Table 11: Nine-Year Mariposa County Transit Financial and Operating Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Cost</td>
<td>$248,857</td>
<td>$254,534</td>
<td>$222,633</td>
<td>$276,746</td>
<td>$247,684</td>
<td>$284,860</td>
<td>$349,816</td>
<td>$287,161</td>
<td>$278,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger Trips</td>
<td>5,993</td>
<td>5,291</td>
<td>4,859</td>
<td>5,655</td>
<td>5,904</td>
<td>5,314</td>
<td>4,265</td>
<td>5,910</td>
<td>4,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Hours</td>
<td>2,224</td>
<td>1,948</td>
<td>1,617</td>
<td>1,649</td>
<td>1,513</td>
<td>1,369</td>
<td>1,205</td>
<td>1,336</td>
<td>1,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Hours</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>3,640</td>
<td>3,813</td>
<td>3,863</td>
<td>3,497</td>
<td>3,387</td>
<td>3,002</td>
<td>3,162</td>
<td>4,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Miles</td>
<td>48,242</td>
<td>46,052</td>
<td>49,265</td>
<td>49,158</td>
<td>42,683</td>
<td>40,900</td>
<td>33,921</td>
<td>35,510</td>
<td>44,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fare Revenue</td>
<td>$33,082</td>
<td>$40,658</td>
<td>$32,579</td>
<td>$45,462</td>
<td>$38,428</td>
<td>$37,423</td>
<td>$45,907</td>
<td>$70,638</td>
<td>$59,562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost per Passenger</td>
<td>$41.52</td>
<td>$48.11</td>
<td>$45.82</td>
<td>$48.94</td>
<td>$41.95</td>
<td>$53.61</td>
<td>$82.02</td>
<td>$48.59</td>
<td>$64.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost per Service Hour</td>
<td>$111.90</td>
<td>$130.66</td>
<td>$137.68</td>
<td>$167.83</td>
<td>$163.70</td>
<td>$208.08</td>
<td>$290.30</td>
<td>$214.94</td>
<td>$187.96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost per Vehicle Hour</td>
<td>$62.22</td>
<td>$69.93</td>
<td>$58.39</td>
<td>$71.63</td>
<td>$70.83</td>
<td>$84.10</td>
<td>$116.55</td>
<td>$90.83</td>
<td>$62.97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass. per Service Hour</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fare per Passenger</td>
<td>$5.52</td>
<td>$7.68</td>
<td>$6.70</td>
<td>$8.04</td>
<td>$6.51</td>
<td>$7.04</td>
<td>$10.76</td>
<td>$11.95</td>
<td>$13.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidy per Passenger</td>
<td>$36.00</td>
<td>$40.42</td>
<td>$39.11</td>
<td>$40.90</td>
<td>$35.44</td>
<td>$46.56</td>
<td>$71.26</td>
<td>$36.64</td>
<td>$50.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fare Recovery Ratio</td>
<td>13.29%</td>
<td>15.97%</td>
<td>14.63%</td>
<td>16.43%</td>
<td>15.51%</td>
<td>13.14%</td>
<td>13.12%</td>
<td>24.60%</td>
<td>21.41%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Hours Ratio</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10 displays the operating cost and vehicle hours over a nine-year period. As shown in the figure, operating cost has trended upward over the nine-year period, while vehicle hours have trended downward. Therefore, the cost per vehicle hour has been increasing over the nine-year period. Vehicle hours were significantly higher in FY 2019/2020 due to the modified service operation that was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The main takeaway is that as operating costs have increased, fewer vehicle hours can be afforded.

Figure 10: Operating Cost and Vehicle Hours

![Operating Cost and Vehicle Hours Graph](source: Walker Consultants, 2021)

Figure 11 summarizes vehicle hours and service hours. Both the vehicle hours and service hours have trended downward for the past nine years. Again, vehicle hours trended upward during FY 2019/2020, due to the modified service operation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 12 summarizes the passengers per service hour for the Mari-Go versus the Medi-Trans service. As shown in the figure, the Mari-Go service serves substantially more passengers per hour than the Medi-Trans service.
Figure 11: Vehicle Hours and Service Hours


Figure 12: Passengers per Service Hour

Figure 13 displays the ratio of service hours to vehicle hours for the Mari-Go and Medi-Trans services. Overall, the service efficiency of the Mariposa County Transit system has decreased to below 50%. This indicates that less than half of vehicle hours are spent operating service. Starting in FY 2013/2014, the Medi-Trans service had a higher ratio of service hour/vehicle hour than the Mari-Go service.

This is an area of concern. The service efficiency ratio of the Mari-Go service has been below 40% for the past 8 years. This indicates that vehicles are spending a good amount of time idling and not providing service, on a daily basis. Mari-Go should review the scheduling and reporting of its service and target an increase of its service efficiency to at least 50% in the next few years.

Figure 13: Service Efficiency Ratio (Service Hours per Vehicle Hours)

![Service Efficiency Ratio Graph](image)


Local and Regional Transportation Services

This section provides an overview of transportation services provided in Mariposa County by other public transit agencies in the region.

Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS)

The Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) began operating regional transit buses in year 2000 and provides public fixed-route transit service into Yosemite Valley in Yosemite National Park from various gateway communities in the eastern and western slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. YARTS serves the counties of Fresno, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Mono, and Tuolumne. YARTS also operates the National Park Service’s Yosemite Valley shuttle bus system that provides free public access around Yosemite Valley.
YARTS operates one year-round route, the Merced – Hwy 140 route (from Merced to Yosemite Valley, via Mariposa) and three seasonal routes, typically from May to September, the Fresno – Hwy 41 route (from Fresno to Yosemite Valley, via Oakhurst), the Sonora – Hwy 120 route (from Sonora to Yosemite Valley), and the Mammoth Lakes – Hwy 120/395 route (from Mammoth Lakes to Yosemite Valley).

Both the Merced – Hwy 140 and Fresno – Hwy 41 routes provide service through communities in Mariposa County, with the Hwy 140 route providing service to Cathey’s Valley, Mariposa and Midpines, and the Hwy 41 route providing service to Wawona and Fish Camp.

YARTS fares vary based on distance, and all fares include the entrance fee to Yosemite National Park. Full fares are roughly equal to 18 cents per mile on the full length of the Hwy 120 route, and 15 cents per mile on the Hwy 140, Hwy 120/395, and Hwy 41 routes. Discounted fares are offered for persons 62 years old and older, children 12 years old and younger, and persons with disabilities. The discount is 18% on the Hwy 140 and Hwy 120 routes, 33% on the Hwy 41 route, but only 17% on the Hwy 120/395 route.

In addition to one-way and round-trip fares, commuter passes are offered on the Hwy 140 and Hwy 41 routes. Monthly passes, 20-ride passes, and 10-ride passes are all offered. The monthly pass and 20-ride passes are priced identically, while the 10-ride pass is offered for half the price. Commuter passes also vary based on distance. Table 12 summarizes service and fare cost for the four YARTS routes.

Table 12: Summary of YARTS Routes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Time of Year</th>
<th>Communities Served</th>
<th>Inbound Trips to Yosemite</th>
<th>Outbound Trips from Yosemite</th>
<th>Round Trip and Monthly Pass Fares*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hwy 140</td>
<td>365 days/year</td>
<td>Merced, Planada, Mariposa</td>
<td>8 trips in peak season</td>
<td>9 trips in peak season</td>
<td>Regular: $6-$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 trip on weekends and holidays</td>
<td>1 trip on weekends and holidays</td>
<td>Discounted: $2-$18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 trips in the morning for</td>
<td>3 trips in the afternoon</td>
<td>Monthly Pass/20 round trips: $26-$220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>most of summer</td>
<td>for most of summer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Between May 14-28 and</td>
<td>Between May 14-28 and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in September after Labor Day, one trip</td>
<td>in September after Labor Day, one trip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>is operated daily</td>
<td>is operated daily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hwy 41</td>
<td>7 days/week mid-May to mid-</td>
<td>Fresno, Yosemite Lakes, Oakhurst</td>
<td>4 trips from Fresno to</td>
<td>4 trips from Yosemite Valley to</td>
<td>Regular: $6-$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yosemite Valley via Oakhurst</td>
<td>Fresno via Oakhurst</td>
<td>Discounted: $4-$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 trip from Oakhurst to</td>
<td>1 trip from Yosemite Valley to</td>
<td>Monthly Pass/20 round trips: $33-$252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yosemite Valley</td>
<td>Oakhurst</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hwy 120</td>
<td>May 14 to September after</td>
<td>Sonora/ Jamestown</td>
<td>3 trips in the morning for</td>
<td>3 trips in the afternoon</td>
<td>Regular: $4-$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
<td></td>
<td>most of summer</td>
<td>for most of summer</td>
<td>Discounted: $3-$18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Between May 14-28 and</td>
<td>Between May 14-28 and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in September after Labor Day, one trip</td>
<td>in September after Labor Day, one trip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>is operated daily</td>
<td>is operated daily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hwy 120/395</td>
<td>7 days/week July 1 to</td>
<td>Mammoth Lakes, Jane Lake</td>
<td>2 trips</td>
<td>2 trips</td>
<td>Regular: $6-$36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Labor Day Only on weekends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discounted: $4-$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June through September</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Discounted fares are offered for persons 62 years old and older, children 12 years old and younger, and persons with disabilities. Discounted fares are 50% of the price of the regular fare. 10 round-trip passes are available for 50% of the price of a monthly pass.
Tuolumne County Transit

Tuolumne County Transit serves communities in Tuolumne County, including Sonora, Jamestown, Columbia, Tuolumne, Twain Harte, Sierra Village, Crystal Falls, and Groveland. Five fixed route services are offered which operate Monday through Friday, with limited service provided for select routes on Saturday. The fixed-route fares are $2 ($1 for seniors, ADA, Medicare, students, and veterans). Day passes are available for $5/day and monthly passes are available for $60 ($40 for a discounted monthly pass, $28 for a 15-ticket book, and $14 for a discounted 15-ticket book).

General public on demand service is available to all riders with prior reservations. The general fare for the dial-a-ride service is $3, the day pass is $7, a 15-ticket book is $45, and a monthly pass is $100.

Tuolumne County Transit also operates the SkiBus, which provides services from Sonora to Dodge Ridge on weekends and holidays during the winter months. The fare for this service is $10 round trip and $25 for a family four pack. Additionally, Tuolumne County Transit operates a free summer trolley from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. every Saturday from May through September.

Mariposa County residents can connect to Tuolumne County Transit on Tuesdays when the North County Mari-Go service goes to Sonora.

Merced County Transit (The Bus)

The Bus operates 15 fixed routes and two deviated fixed routes throughout Merced County and provides paratransit service for those qualifying individuals who cannot access the fixed route. The Bus can be accessed from Mariposa County by taking the YARTS bus to Merced. Transfers between YARTS and the Bus can be made at most of YARTS scheduled stops including the Merced Transit Center on 16th and O Streets. The service operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Local fixed route service is within a city or community including Merced-Atwater-Winton area and the fare is $1.50. Intercity fixed route service is provided from any city or community to another, and the fare is $3.00. Seniors, veterans and ADA eligible passengers can ride all fixed routes for free. The following passes are offered:

- **Regular fixed route pass**: unlimited use for 31 consecutive calendar days = $60
- **Student route pass**: student unlimited use for 31 consecutive calendar days = $45
- **Student semester pass**: unlimited use for either the spring semester (January through May) or the fall semester (August through December).
- **7-day pass**: unlimited use for seven consecutive calendar days from the date of the first use = $20
- **All day local pass**: unlimited use on all fixed routes traveling within a city or community = $3
- **All day intercity pass**: unlimited use on all fixed routes, including commuter routes = $6

Greyhound

Merced is served by Greyhound bus at its downtown station. Mariposa County residents can ride YARTS to Merced and transfer to Greyhound. The Merced Greyhound station is located at 710 W 16th Street. Buses travelling
northbound from Merced travel to Sacramento or San Francisco and southbound buses travel to Los Angeles. Typical one-way fares from Merced are listed below:

- Merced – Bay Area: 3 hours = $26-$41
- Merced – Sacramento: 2.5 hours = $28 to $55
- Merced – Los Angeles: 6 hours = $40-$91

Amtrak

The Amtrak San Joaquin operates between the southern terminus of Bakersfield and northern termini of Sacramento and San Francisco. The San Joaquin stops at the Merced station located at 324 W 24th Street. Mariposa County residents can connect to the Amtrak station in Merced via YARTS connector bus.

Taxi Service

Sierra Taxi is a taxi service operated out of Mariposa and provides taxi service in Mariposa County.
3. Stakeholder Outreach
3. Stakeholder Outreach

Driver and Dispatcher Interviews

To gain a better understanding of Mariposa County Transit services, interviews were conducted with drivers and dispatchers on April 27, 2021, and April 29, 2021. Key findings from these interviews are as follows:

Overview

- Mariposa County Transit recently moved from the Community Services Department to the Department of Health and Human Services.
- Rides for both Mari-Go and Medi-Trans are booked ahead of time by calling in.
- The population that uses Mari-Go is often seniors. New clients have been referred to the service from the Mariposa County Department of Health and Human Services. There tends to be a lot of repeat customers for the transit services.

Scheduling

- There are two dispatchers that are responsible for scheduling rides.
- Drivers work from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Typically the first pick-up is at 8:30 a.m. and try to have drivers back by 4:00 p.m. to complete the paperwork by 4:30 p.m.
- Drivers communicate with dispatcher via cell phone, radios are not often used. Cell service can be poor depending on the location in the County.
- For dispatchers, it takes time to train them and get them to know the layout of the town and learn how to schedule routes and get used to the system.
- A software system is not available to schedule rides, everything is done on a MS Excel spreadsheet, including the following information: pick up time, location, phone number, medical appointment time (if applicable), payment method, whether need a wheelchair lift, what kind of vehicle is needed (try to do medical vans for medical appointments). As riders call in, the dispatcher fills out the spreadsheet and prepares schedules for the next day. Drivers get a printed copy of the schedule and fill out throughout the day, as they pick up and drop off passengers. At the end of the day, drivers submit their completed forms, and the dispatcher enters it into Excel. Prior to September 2019, the schedules were hand-written. In October 2019, the Excel spreadsheet was started.
- Drivers need to review the area that they are serving ahead of time to determine the appropriate vehicle into the area, for example the width of the driveway may prohibit certain vehicles.
- There are visibility issues depending on the lighting and weather conditions (e.g., snow, wind, fires, floods). Animals can be in the middle of the road. These issues impact scheduling of rides early in the morning.
Vehicle Maintenance

- There is often a lack of staff to maintain the fleet vehicles, and drivers indicated that sometimes maintenance items are missed.
- Often times, there is a shortage of ADA accessible buses as they are in maintenance.

Mari-Go

- All riders are typically traveling in Mariposa County – different areas of the County are served on different days of the week. The service does not have a specific route.
- Schedule (prior to COVID):
  - Monday – Cathey’s Valley, Bear Valley
  - Tuesday – Merced
  - Wednesday – Highway 49 South, drivers referred as “grocery day”
  - Thursday – in and around Mariposa (3-mile radius)
  - Friday – Midpines area
- Certain days are busier than others – Wednesday is typically the busiest day, followed by Friday.
- 14 passenger buses are typically used for the service, seats were barricaded due to COVID-19, and vehicles were reduced to a 4 or 5-seat maximum capacity.
- When the bus arrives in town, drivers decide what order passengers are dropped off depending on their destinations. Passengers tend to do more than one thing in town.
- Sometimes drivers and dispatchers have to educate riders that there are certain areas served, and the service does not operate like a taxi service.
- During COVID, use of the Mari-Go service was limited. During COVID, Mariposa County Transit delivered groceries and pharmacy prescriptions.

Medi-Trans

- Medi-Trans is exclusively for medical trips on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Dispatchers will pair trips if people are going to a destination such as Fresno, at the same time.
- 90% of Medi-Trans users travel to appointments out of town, such as in Merced or Fresno.
- Medi-Trans provides service to physical therapy or medical appointments.
- The service accommodates walkers and wheelchairs.
- The call volume for the service has increased.
- Trips are made from Mariposa down to dialysis in Merced – there are sanitation considerations for dialysis patients.
- Mariposa County Transit delivered groceries to resident’s homes during COVID.
- Sometimes the driver days are longer than the 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., if a medical appointment is longer than anticipated, or trips are far away. Some trips can be very long – 450 miles round trip.
- If a trip is scheduled for a far-away destination such as Fresno, dispatchers check with drivers if they can arrive earlier.
- December, February, March are busy times for the service, as riders start working on insurance deductibles and there are more colds coming out of winter season. Slow times is August when doctors take their vacations.
- Typically, a 2:00 p.m. doctor’s appointment would be the latest that would be scheduled.
- The Medi-Trans service is a popular service. At times, dispatchers have to turn down a lot of people, who have to say no to appointments.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Riders have suggested more drivers are needed.
- Field trips to places such as Yosemite would be helpful.
- Drivers and dispatchers suggest having a software system to make things easier with a tablet [on board the bus] than can be used.
- Drivers and dispatchers expressed that more drivers are needed for the service. Mariposa county is in the process of hiring additional drivers.
- Drivers expressed a desire that a document is created to see what maintenance has been done to the vehicle.
- Drivers expressed a desire that vehicles should be more easily identified with County-markings.
- There have been positive remarks about the services from riders, drivers try to be accommodating and are sensitive to client’s needs and unique situation.
- Quite a few passengers ask about Mari-Go service to Oakhurst.
- Eventually would like to open the Mari-Go service to general population and have a set route with set destinations, such as the library, grocery store, etc.

Stakeholder Interviews

Walker interviewed individuals who could provide insight into current efforts that may inform the SRTP.

Mikey Goralnik, Mariposa County Department of Planning

The following are key findings from the discussion with Mikey Goralnik with the Mariposa County Department of Planning on June 21, 2021:

Population and Housing Trends

- While the population in the County is going down, senior population is going up.
- Some of the population is moving out of state to states such as Idaho and Wyoming.
- More high-income individuals are moving to Mariposa County, due to the ability to work remotely during COVID, and many of these individuals are moving into the rural parts of the County.
- More people are moving to the highway 49 corridor: Oakhurst, Bootjack, Ponderosa Basin, Ahwahnee, Nipinnawasee.
- There are issues with housing affordability in Mariposa County, which is in part due to the vacation rental market; therefore, it can be difficult for long-term residents to find a place to rent.
- There is a lack of housing for all users, from people with mental health issues, emergency shelters.
• It is challenging to add new housing supply due to landscape, topography and utility challenges.

• The County has hired a Housing staff member to help address the County’s lack of housing availability.

Current and Future Projects and planning efforts in Mariposa County

• Caltrans is working on the Ferguson Rock Shed project for the Highway 140 Ferguson Slide Permanent Restoration Project.

• Caltrans is also leading a pedestrian safety improvement project, from the State Route 140 & Route 49 South junction to 12th Street. The project will include installation of pedestrian-activated signal phases, in-roadway warning lights, textured concrete crosswalks, sidewalk enhancements, historical style overhead lighting at intersections, ADA-compliant ramps with cast iron detectable warning pads, handrails, a raised textured concrete boardwalk within Art Park, and many more unique features.

• Mariposa County Department of Public Works received a disaster recovery federal grant for pedestrian improvements projects.

• Mariposa County Department of Public Works is conducting a Safe Routes to School project in Downtown Mariposa.

• Mariposa County Department of Planning received a grant for the Mariposa Creek Parkway which include a linear park along Mariposa Creek in Mariposa.

• Mariposa County is working on a Mobility and Housing Strategy.

• Mariposa County has a Recreation and Resiliency Master Plan, which calls to improve the Midpines County Park to make it more of a destination for recreation, and to improve its resiliency.

• The Midpines County Park site is also the location of a YARTS bus stop and park-and-ride.

Debra Barcellos, Alliance for Community Transformation

The following are key findings from the discussion with Debra Barcellos with the Alliance for Community Transformation on June 30, 2021.

The Alliance for Community Transformations provides responsive and preventive services to individuals and families. The Alliance operates five programs in Mariposa County:

Programs

• Mountain Crisis Services – aimed to prevent domestic and sexual violence.

• Ethos Youth Center – empowers diverse young people in the community.

• Mariposa Heritage House – offers peer-counseling and recovery support services, drop-in center providing essential needs Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

• Court-Appointed Special Advocates of Mariposa – volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children.

• Connections - emergency shelter for people with a housing crisis.

Current transportation services

• Transportation to AA meetings, drug court appointments, behavioral health appointments.

• They currently operate a van that picks up three times per day to ensure homeless individuals can access services, including the Heritage House and emergency shelter.
Grants to expand transit services

- They recently applied for an implementation grant to purchase two vehicles (one for fixed route and one for health care), to bring back fixed route access to service in Mariposa – target population is those experiencing homeless or underserved population, but service would be open to the public:
  - The route would serve the emergency shelter, courthouse, library, legal self-help centers, schools, Pioneer Market, post office, park and ride, Health and Human Services, and the hospital.
- And another grant to hire a healthcare navigator to connect individuals to medical appointments.

Current housing and transportation issues

- There is tremendous need for housing in community.
- There is a lack of public transportation options in the community:
  - Mari-Go service needs to be booked in advance, and
  - YARTS fare can be cost prohibitive for low-income individuals ($8 per ride, and a monthly pass is $30-$40). The YARTS fare from Mariposa to Merced is more than double that of the Mariposa County Transit fare.
- Communication and advertising strategies are different in the Mariposa community, social media will only work in certain parts of the community where they can afford the internet or have access to it.

Planning Advisory Committee

For the SRTP update, a Planning Advisory Committee was formed, a team of community-minded leaders helping to guide the project process and ensure the strategies and recommendations developed will work well for Mariposa County.

Planning Advisory Committee Meeting #1

The first Project Advisory Meeting occurred on June 23, 2021, and included a discussion of existing transit service needs, challenges and opportunities. The list of attendees at the first Project Advisory Committee Meeting included:

Mauricio Torres – Merced County Association of Governments  
Debra Barcellos – Alliance 4 You  
Margarita King – Mariposa County  
Jeannie Morvay- Clayton – Mariposa County  
Kelly Taute – Mariposa County  
Chrissy Mancini Nichols – Walker Consultants  
Manuel Soto – Walker Consultants  
Tania Schleck – Walker Consultants  
Kholoud Rashid – DRAIL  
Michael Cornwell – Mariposa County  
Joshua Skunca – Mariposa County

The following are key findings from the meeting discussion:
Existing Trends and Challenges

- In recent years, many people have moved from Mariposa to rural areas of the County.
- Majority of Mariposa County Transit riders do not pay standard fares, but rather use Area 12 on Aging (an agency on aging program provided by Mariposa County Health and Human Services) vouchers.
- The distance from Mariposa to [out of county] healthcare providers is far, often at least 45 minutes.
- A lack of sufficient funding for transit.
- For the existing Mariposa County transit services, need to call a week or two ahead to get a transit ride.
- Mariposa County does not currently have a thorough unmet needs assessment process.
- Lack of localized [transit] services in Mariposa.
- Finding sufficient drivers to grow the service is a challenge, need individuals who have transit certificate.
- Potentially unmet demand on the Highway 49 South corridor.
- General lack of sidewalks to access potential fixed-route service.

Local Stakeholder Needs and Initiatives

- Mariposa County Health and Human Services’ public health clients are primarily the maternal child adolescence population. The existing concern is not having reliable transportation.
- The Disability Resources Agency for Independent Living (DRAIL) helps to provide back-up transportation services, such as transporting people to nearby hotels during power shut offs.
- Alliance 4 You works with low-income individuals who do not have access to a vehicle or cannot maintain vehicles and offers specific transportation services to a select population.
  - Provides food boxes to individuals.
  - Completed a County Medical Services Program Local Indigent Care Needs planning grant to identify the needs and barriers to individuals accessing healthcare (preventive and primary). Transportation was identified as a major barrier for the houseless population in accessing healthcare.
  - Applied for a grant to implement a program for healthcare navigation and transportation.
- Prior to COVID, Mariposa Health and Human Services implemented a pilot fixed route service in town that ran every hour, serving Health and Human Services, Heritage House drop-in center, Pioneer Market, and the courthouse area.
  - The service was provided using an 8-passenger van. Service was slow because an 8-passenger van takes longer to load and unload than a larger shuttle vehicle with wider doors and aisle to access seats. Access to seats in a van often requires other customers to get off and back on, slowing down the loading and unloading process.
  - There are plans to re-implement the service by mid-July [of 2021]. It would be beneficial to use a shuttle bus for this service.
- Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)
  - MCAG provides administrative services and operational support for YARTS.
  - YARTS provides transportation from Mariposa to Yosemite National Park and from Merced to Yosemite National Park – service has historically been used primarily by tourists.
  - YARTS also serves the Midpines area and El Portal.
  - YARTS also operates a summer service from Sonora to Yosemite National Park.
  - YARTS manages the transit service in Merced, called The Bus.
And recently implemented a micro-transit [on-demand shared-ride] service on the west side of Merced County using a third-party vendor (Ride-Co).

YARTS has identified the service from Mariposa to Oakhurst as an additional corridor that would be provided by YARTS, if funding becomes available.

Desired Service Goals in the Next Five Years

- Fixed route service around town
  - Service should be predictable.
  - Rebranding of service so that people know the service is for the general public, not just seniors.
  - Infrastructure delineating fixed-route stops. YARTS bus stops have a pole, sign, and concrete pad for a ramp, and depending on location a shelter, trash cans and bike racks.
- The service should be accessible for everyone (general population, seniors and persons with disabilities).
- Current operation Monday through Friday during normal business hours; however, to attract younger rides the service needs to extend hours to weekends or later in the day on weekdays.
- Outreach efforts:
  - Mariposa County should display details of all the types of transportation services that are available or provided by the County on their website, similar to San Joaquin County.
  - Cell service is a challenge throughout the County; therefore, there is still a need for traditional methods like newspaper and radio ads, mailers, and flyers for advertising.
  - Better coordination between transit agencies could be helpful to promote awareness of services – there is currently a quarterly transit managers’ luncheon, where transit managers of surrounding counties meet to share knowledge and experiences.
  - Another option is to do an on-bus focus group or survey to gather rider feedback.
  - It would be helpful to disperse transit information to independent living centers.

Project Advisory Committee Meeting #2

The second Project Advisory meeting occurred on August 11, 2021 and included a discussion of draft SRTP recommendations. The list of attendees at the second Project Advisory Committee Meeting included:

- Shannon Gadd – Mariposa County
- Jeannie Morvay-Clayton – Mariposa County
- Kelly Taute – Mariposa County
- Michael Cornwell – Mariposa County
- Donna Santi – Mariposa Safe Families
- Manuel Soto – Walker Consultants
- Chrissy Mancini Nichols – Walker Consultants
- Tania Schleck – Walker Consultants

The following are key findings from the meeting discussion:
• Potential unmet service needs
  o A route that brings people from the Coulterville area and brings to appointments and destinations in Mariposa
  o The possibility of operating on later hours and on Saturday (unmet need)
    ▪ Cost of operating the service until 6:30 p.m. and to add Saturday service
    ▪ Will need more drivers to operate this route
• Potential alternatives
  o Potential for County to pay people to operate private on-demand transportation programs
  o Potential to provide vouchers for TNCs such as Uber/Lyft
  o The fixed route service could be operated as a micro-transit service
• Community-based transportation such as taxis and TNCs are expensive—community relies on the Mari-Go transportation
• Keeping the service in-house versus contracting the service out
  o The potential to operate the service by a third-party similar to The Bus
  o Contracting service to a third-party can help save on operating costs
  o Third-party providers do not typically procure electric vehicles which could conflict with County goals
  o An analysis of current County staffing roles would be needed
  o There are benefits and considerations to both approaches
• Taxi service
  o There is a taxi service based in Merced
  o There is also a taxi service in Mariposa – Sierra Taxi – owned by George Ship service is operated out of Mariposa
• A lot of people in the County are unaware of current services, routes, schedules – ideas discussed to market the service include:
  o Rebranding the service
  o Targeted social media advertisement, including Facebook
  o Updating the Mariposa County website
  o Newsletters
  o Working with partners
  o Regular mailers to households in the County

Passengers Surveys

A passenger survey campaign was conducted during the month of June 2021. Passenger surveys were distributed on board of Mariposa County Transit buses for a period of four weeks, from June 1st to June 25th. A post card was also mailed to former riders of Mari-Go and Medi-Trans services. Both the on-board survey and postcard included a QR code with the option to fill out the survey online. This section provides a summary of the survey responses:

• 23 total people responded to the passenger surveys, 12 of which use Mari-Go and 11 of which use Medi-Trans.
• 16 surveys were filled out on-board buses and 7 surveys were filled out online.
• Not all survey respondents responded to each survey question; therefore, the number of responses often do not add up to the total number of surveys issued.
Mari-Go Users

- Respondents live in the Town of Mariposa (5 respondents), Coulterville (2 respondents), and Cathey’s Valley (2 respondents).
- The most common trip destination that Mari-Go passengers reported was medical (5 respondents) followed by shopping (4 respondents) and work (1 respondent).
- Respondents reported that their trip started in Mariposa (3 respondents), Coulterville (2 respondents), Cathey’s Valley (1 respondent), and Bootjack (1 respondent), and ended in Mariposa (2 respondents), Coulterville (2 respondents), Cathey’s Valley (2 respondents), and Merced (1 respondent). Everyone who responded was making a round-trip.
- Respondents reported that once they are dropped off, they either walk or get a ride to their destination.
- 1 respondent indicated they transferred to/from YARTS, and 1 respondent indicated they transferred to/from The Bus.
- 5 respondents indicated that if the service was not available, they would not make their trip, and 4 respondents indicated they would get a ride from someone.
- When asked to rate the service, all respondents either “strongly agree” or “agree” that the driver was courteous, and that the vehicle was clean and comfortable, and the fare is reasonable.
- All but 1 respondent reported that arranging a ride is easy and that the scheduled hours and days meet their needs. However, only 2 respondents reported that the website and printed brochure have the information they need.
- Overall, 7 out of 9 respondents rated the service as “excellent,” 1 passenger rated the service as “very good,” and 1 rated the service as “poor.”
- When asked to select the top 3 improvements they would like to see implemented on the Mari-Go service, the top responses were “early morning service,” “Saturday service,” and “more frequent service.”
- 2 respondents reported that they use Mari-Go for five or more trips per week, 1 respondent takes two to three trips per week, 3 respondents take one trip per week, and 3 respondents take two to three trips per month.
- Respondents reported that they have used the service for some time, ranging from riding the Mari-Go service less than six months (2 respondents), six months-one year (2 respondents), one to three years (2 respondents), three to five years (1 respondent), and more than five years (2 respondents).
- Demographic characteristics of the riders were as follows:
  - 6 male respondents and 4 female respondents
  - 1 respondent was under 16 years old, 1 was in the 25-44 years of age, 2 were 45-64 years old, 4 were 65-74 years old, and 2 were 75 years or older.
  - When asked about annual household income, 5 respondents reported under $15,000 per year, 3 respondents reported $15,001-$30,000 per year, and 1 respondent reported $30,001-$45,000.
- When asked to include additional comments, respondents indicated drivers are helpful and the service meets their needs.
- One respondent indicated that they have difficulty getting a ride on the bus.
Medi-Trans Users

- Most respondents live in the Town of Mariposa and 1 respondent lives in Cathey’s Valley.
- All respondents were using the Medi-trans service for a medical appointment.
- Respondents reported that their trip started in Mariposa (5 respondents), Midpines (2 respondents), Hunters Valley (1 respondent) and Mt. Bullion (1 respondent), and ended in Merced (4 respondents), Mariposa (3 respondents), Hunters Valley (1 respondent), Fresno (1 respondent), and Los Baños (1 respondent). Most (9 out of 12) respondents were making a round trip.
- Similar to Mari-Go respondents, approximately half of Medi-Trans respondents indicated that if the Medi-Trans service was not available, they would not make their trip.
- When asked to rate the Medi-Trans service, similar to Mari-Go respondents, all respondents either indicated that they “agree” or “strongly agree” that the driver was courteous and helpful, the vehicle is clean, the scheduled hours and days meet their needs, and the fare was reasonable.
- All except for 1 respondent either “agree” or “strongly agree” that the vehicle was comfortable, and all except for 2 respondents indicated that arranging for a ride is easy.
- However, only 2 respondents indicated the website and printed brochure has the information they needed.
- Overall, 6 respondents rated the service as “excellent,” 3 respondents rated the service as “very good,” and 2 respondents rated the service as “good.”
- As with the Mari-Go respondents, when asked to select the top three improvements they would like to see implemented on the Medi-Trans service, the top responses were “more frequent service,” “Saturday service,” and “earlier morning service.”
- When asked about what other areas or destinations they would like to see served by Medi-Trans, respondents listed Fresno, Oakhurst, and Merced.
- 4 respondents reported that they take Medi-Trans two to four times per year, 4 respondents reported that they take the service once per week, 1 respondent reported that they take the service two to three times per month, and 2 respondents reported that they take the service very rarely.
- Similar to the Mari-Go respondents, Medi-Trans respondents ranged from riding the Mari-Go service less than six months (2 respondents), six months to one year (3 respondents), one to three years (3 respondents), three to five years (1 respondent), and more than five years (2 respondents).
- Demographic characteristics of the riders are as follows:
  - 10 female respondents and 1 male respondent.
  - 4 respondents were 45-64 years old, 1 respondent was 65-74 years old, and 6 respondents were 75 years or older.
  - When asked about annual household income, 3 respondents reported under $15,000, 4 respondents reported $15,000-$30,000, and 2 respondents reported $30,001-$45,000.
- When asked to include additional comments, respondents indicated that they were thankful for the service. One respondent filed a complaint about a driver indicating the following: “filed official complaint about driver that was eating and drinking while driving and looking back while talking to passenger. Left us waiting on the bus while she got off at Walmart for 30 minutes, texting and meeting boyfriend at In&Out Burger. I avoid riding with her.”
4. Peer Transit Agency Review
4. Peer Transit Agency Review

A peer review was conducted of transit providers comparable to Mariposa County Transit. The transit agencies selected are consistent with those selected in the previous Mariposa County Transit Short Range Transit Plan prepared in August 2011. The transit agencies selected operate primarily in a rural environment, are largely dial-a-ride services and provide connections to a larger regional transit network. The dial-a-ride services from the following transit agencies were evaluated:

- Eastern Sierra Transit Authority
- Lassen Transit Service Agency
- Tuolumne County Transit
- Douglas Rides Community Transportation

Eastern Sierra Transit Authority

In 2006, Inyo and Mono counties, together with the City of Bishop and the Town of Mammoth Lakes, entered into a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) to administer and operate the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA). ESTA provides service for the four member jurisdictions and throughout the Eastern Sierra region. ESTA offers a variety of bus services, including deviated fixed routes, local in-town dial-a-ride services, town-to-town services, and interregional service.

There are four dial-a-ride services within the ESTA service area, serving in and around Bishop and Lone Pine in Inyo County, and Mammoth and Walker in Mono County. All four services are provided year-round and serve both general public and special needs riders. Similar to Mari-Go, riders call dispatch to schedule a ride during operating hours. Each of the four services have a different dispatch number. Each service is divided into two or more zones, and unlike Mari-Go in which a different portion of the County is served each day of the week, in most cases, the ESTA service is operated in the entire service area each day of the week the service is in operation. A discounted fare is offered for persons with disabilities, seniors 60 years and older, and youth passengers 5 to 15 years old. Children under 5 years old and Personal Care Attendants ride for free when accompanied by paying passenger. All four of the services provide curb-to-curb service. Each trip is scheduled within a 20-minute pick-up window. Riders are picked up by the next available driver, and wait times vary depending on the dial-a-ride service demand. Priority for the service is given to seniors and people with disabilities.

- The Bishop dial-a-ride service operates Monday through Thursday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The service consists of two zones: one within the greater Bishop area and another in the outlying areas (fare are $3.00 and $4.20 per one-way trip, depending on the zone). There is also “check point” dial-a-ride service, where riders are taken to their desired location within the service area, and this service is $1.00 cheaper per ride.
- The Lone Pine dial-a-ride service operates Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and consists of two zones: one within the greater Lone Pine area and another in the outlying area of Alabama Hills (fare is $4.20 per one-way trip).
- The Mammoth Lakes dial-a-ride service operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and consists of two zones: one within the greater Mammoth area and one in the outlying areas of Mammoth
Airport and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area Main Lodge (fares are $2.40 to $4.20 per one-way trip, depending on the zone).

- The Walker dial-a-ride service operates Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and consists of four zones: Walker, Coleville, Topaz, Topaz Lodge, and Holbrook Junction (fares are $3.00 to $6.50 per one-way trip, depending on the zone).

Monthly passes are also available for dial-a-ride services and can be purchased online. A 30-day pass for all areas is available for $86.40 to $108.00. Dial-a-ride 10-ride ticket books are available for Bishop, Lone Pine and Mammoth Lakes for $21.60 to $27.00.

Lassen Transit Service Agency

Lassen Rural Bus (LRB) provides dial-a-ride service that complements the Susanville City fixed route service. Outside Susanville City limits, the fixed route bus will deviate up to three-quarters of a mile from its normal route to pick up an eligible rider at a more suitable or accessible location. Within Susanville City limits, LRB will typically use dial-a-ride to pick up passengers and bring them to their destination.

To book a ride, riders must call at least one day in advance of their scheduled ride time. All dial-a-ride passenger trips are $1.75 per trip. If an attendant or caregiver is necessary to provide assistance to a passenger, their trip is free of charge. The service is in operation Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:52 p.m. and on Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:52 p.m. The bus arrives within 15 minutes before or after the scheduled time of the ride.

Tuolumne County Transit

Tuolumne County Transit operates dial-a-ride service within three quarters of a mile of all fixed routes Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday. Unlike Mari-Go, the service is offered in the entire service area each day of the week that service is provided. The service is available on weekdays for ADA-certified and non-certified people with disabilities and seniors who are 60 years or older. On Saturdays, the service is available to the general public if space is available. The dial-a-ride general fare is $3.00 per passenger for a one-way trip. A dial-a-ride day pass is available for $7.00 and is valid for unlimited trips on the day in which it was first used. A dial-a-ride monthly pass is $100 and is valid for dial-a-ride and fixed route services. Dial-a-ride 15-ride ticket books are also available for $45.00.

Riders call to make a reservation for service at least one day in advance of the scheduled ride. Same day service may be accommodated on a space available basis. The bus arrives within 15 minutes before or after the scheduled time of the ride.

Douglas Rides Community Transportation

Douglas Rides is a network of community transportation services, including Dial-a-Ride, for Douglas County, Oregon. Douglas Rides offers transportation services for six service area: Reedsport, Yoncalla/Drain/Elkton, Sutherlin/Oakland, Roseburg, Winston, and Myrtle Creek/Riddle/Canyonville. The dial-a-ride service is provided free of charge, with the exception of Reedsport. Dial-a-ride service is open to the general public, but older adults and persons with disabilities receive priority if space is limited. Service is provided in all service areas Monday through Friday, and the hours of operation vary depending on the service area. Advanced reservations (prior day
or sooner) are preferred, but same day requests are accepted on a space available basis. Reservations can be made via phone or online.

Operating Characteristics and System Performance

This section includes a summary of the peer agency characteristics, as well as financial and operating performance data. The data was extracted from the Federal Transit Administration National Transit Database (NTP) from calendar year 2019 (the most recent available year on the NTP website). The following performance measures were benchmarked across the peer agencies:

- **Farebox Recovery Ratio**: Calculated by dividing all farebox revenue by total operating costs.
- **Operating Cost per Passenger Trip**: Calculated by dividing all operating costs by total unlinked boardings.
- **Subsidy per Passenger Trip**: Calculated by subtracting farebox revenue from operating costs and dividing by total passenger trips. This measure is useful when service cuts or enhancements are being considered.
- **Operating Cost per Revenue Hour**: Calculated by dividing all operating and administrative costs by the total number of vehicle revenue hours (with revenue hours defined as time when the vehicle is in service). Operating cost per revenue hour measures system-wide efficiency and should be tracked on a monthly and annual basis.
- **Passenger Trips per Revenue Hour**: Calculated by dividing the total number of passenger trips by the total number of vehicle revenue hours. The number of passengers per hour is a good measure of service productivity.

Table 13 below provides a summary of the peer agencies’ service areas, including size of service area, population, density of population and types of service offered.

**Table 13: Peer Agencies’ Service Area Characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mariposa County Transit</th>
<th>Eastern Sierra Transit Authority</th>
<th>Lassen Transit Service Agency</th>
<th>Tuolumne County Transit</th>
<th>Douglas Rides Community Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>Mariposa County, CA</td>
<td>Inyo and Mono Counties, CA</td>
<td>Lassen County, CA</td>
<td>Tuolumne County, CA</td>
<td>Douglas County, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of Service</strong></td>
<td>Dial-a-Ride for medical and non-medical trips</td>
<td>Dial-a-Ride for general public and persons with special needs</td>
<td>Dial-a-Ride for seniors/persons with disabilities</td>
<td>Dial-a-Ride for seniors/persons with disabilities</td>
<td>Dial-a-Ride for general public, seniors, and persons with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service Area (sq. miles)</strong></td>
<td>1,448</td>
<td>13,226</td>
<td>4,540</td>
<td>2,220</td>
<td>5,034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong></td>
<td>17,420</td>
<td>32,287</td>
<td>30,818</td>
<td>54,045</td>
<td>109,114</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Population Density (persons/sq. mile)</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Largest Community</strong></td>
<td>Mariposa</td>
<td>Mammoth Lakes</td>
<td>Susanville</td>
<td>Sonora</td>
<td>Roseburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population of Largest Community (2019)</strong></td>
<td>1,186</td>
<td>8,169</td>
<td>15,064</td>
<td>4,844</td>
<td>23,083</td>
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</table>

Table 14 below provides a summary of operating statistics, costs and revenue for each peer agency. Mariposa County operates a similar number of revenue hours than Lassen Transit, but twice as many revenue miles, while carrying about one third of the riders.

Table 14: Financial and Operating Statistics of Peers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating Statistics</th>
<th>Mariposa County Transit</th>
<th>Eastern Sierra Transit Authority</th>
<th>Lassen Transit Service Agency</th>
<th>Tuolumne County Transit</th>
<th>Douglas Rides Community Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Revenue Miles</td>
<td>35,510</td>
<td>165,559</td>
<td>15,897</td>
<td>130,882</td>
<td>258,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Revenue Hours</td>
<td>1,336</td>
<td>17,821</td>
<td>1,165</td>
<td>8,904</td>
<td>21,845</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unlinked Boardings</td>
<td>5,910</td>
<td>57,722</td>
<td>21,791</td>
<td>32,008</td>
<td>42,417</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating Costs</td>
<td>$287,161</td>
<td>$1,142,581</td>
<td>$128,097</td>
<td>$924,645</td>
<td>$598,109</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fare Revenue</td>
<td>$70,638</td>
<td>$137,339</td>
<td>$56,277</td>
<td>$83,197</td>
<td>$13,511</td>
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</table>


Table 15 summarizes performance by peer agency. Overall, Mariposa County Transit has, by far, the highest operating cost per revenue hour and the highest operating cost per passenger trip as compared to peer agencies. However, Mariposa County Transit has the second highest farebox recovery ratio, passenger trip per revenue hour, and fare revenue per passenger trip.

Table 15: Performance Indicators of Peers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Mariposa County Transit</th>
<th>Eastern Sierra Transit Authority</th>
<th>Lassen Transit Service Agency</th>
<th>Tuolumne County Transit</th>
<th>Douglas Rides Community Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farebox Recovery %</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost per Boarding</td>
<td>$48.59</td>
<td>$19.79</td>
<td>$5.88</td>
<td>$28.89</td>
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<td>Subsidy per Boarding</td>
<td>$36.64</td>
<td>$17.42</td>
<td>$3.30</td>
<td>$26.29</td>
<td>$13.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fare Revenue per Passenger Trip</td>
<td>$11.95</td>
<td>$2.38</td>
<td>$2.58</td>
<td>$2.60</td>
<td>$0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost per Revenue Hour</td>
<td>$214.94</td>
<td>$64.11</td>
<td>$109.95</td>
<td>$103.85</td>
<td>$27.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardings per Revenue Hour</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>18.70</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 14 summarizes passengers per revenue hour. Mariposa County Transit has 4.42 passengers per revenue hour, which is the second highest of the peer transit agencies. Lassen Transit Service Agency has the highest productivity at 18.70 passengers per revenue hour.
Figure 14: Passengers per Revenue Hour

- Douglas Rides Community Transportation: 1.94
- Tuolumne County Transit: 3.59
- Lassen Transit Service Agency: 18.70
- Eastern Sierra Transit Authority: 3.24
- Mariposa County Transit: 4.42

Source: data - Federal Transit Administration National Transit Database 2019 Transit Agency Profiles

Figure 15 summarizes the operating cost per revenue hour. Mariposa County Transit has the highest operating cost per revenue hour at $214.94, which is almost double that of the second highest (Lassen Transit Service Agency at $109.95).

Figure 15: Operating Cost per Revenue Hour

- Douglas Rides Community Transportation: $27.38
- Tuolumne County Transit: $103.85
- Lassen Transit Service Agency: $109.95
- Eastern Sierra Transit Authority: $64.11
- Mariposa County Transit: $214.94

Source: data - Federal Transit Administration National Transit Database 2019 Transit Agency Profiles

Figure 16 summarizes the operating cost per passenger trip. Mariposa County Transit has the highest operating cost per passenger trip ($48.59) as compared to the peer transit agencies.
Figure 16: Operating Cost per Passenger Trip

![Operating Cost per Passenger Trip Graph]

Source: data - Federal Transit Administration National Transit Database 2019 Transit Agency Profiles

Figure 17 summarizes the subsidy per passenger trip. Mariposa County Transit has the highest subsidy per passenger trip ($36.64) as compared to the peer transit agencies.

Figure 17: Subsidy per Passenger Trip

![Subsidy per Passenger Trip Graph]

Source: data - Federal Transit Administration National Transit Database 2019 Transit Agency Profiles

Figure 18 summarizes the fare revenue per passenger trip. Mariposa County Transit has the highest fare revenue per passenger trip by far ($11.95 versus $2.60 for Tuolumne County Transit, the second highest fare revenue per passenger trip).
Figure 18: Fare Revenue/Passenger Trip

Source: data - Federal Transit Administration National Transit Database 2019 Transit Agency Profiles

Figure 19 summarizes the farebox recovery ratio. Mariposa County Transit has the second highest farebox recovery ratio (24.6%). Lassen Transit Service Agency has the highest farebox recovery ratio of all the peer agencies (43.9%).

Figure 19: Farebox Recovery Ratio

Source: data - Federal Transit Administration National Transit Database 2019 Transit Agency Profiles
5. Capital and Financial Plan
5. Capital and Financial Plan

This section presents the operating and capital needs of Mariposa County Transit for a six-year projection period. First, this chapter presents operating costs and key assumptions followed by a review of projected performance indicators. Then, this chapter discusses capital needs including vehicle replacements and other capital projects. The section concludes with a five-year funding plan outlining existing funding sources and potential new funding opportunities.

Revenue Sources

The current sources of funding for Mariposa County Transit’s operating costs include Transportation Development Act’s (TDA) Local Transportation Fund and State Transit Assistance fund, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5311, Area Agency on Aging (AAA), and Passenger Fares.

Transportation Development Act (TDA)

The State of California Transportation Development Act of 1971 provides funding for transit and non-transit related purposes that comply with regional transportation plans. TDA established two funding sources: the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) and the State Transit Assistance (STA) Fund.

Local Transportation Fund (LTF)

The Local Transportation Fund (LTF) is derived from a one-quarter cent of the general sales tax collected statewide. The State Board of Equalization, based on sales tax collected in each county, returns the general sales tax revenues to each county’s LTF. Each county then apportions the LTF funds based on population. Provided that certain conditions are met, counties with a population under 500,000 (per the 1970 US Census) may also use the LTF funds for local streets and roads, construction, and maintenance. Mariposa County Transit LTF allocation was $15,000 in FY 2020/2021. While inflation may increase the sales tax amount, the funding is also based on population, which is expected to slightly decline in Mariposa County. Therefore, this plan projects that LTF funds will stay constant. Mariposa County Transit also received $190,000 of LTF funds in FY 2020/2021 to pass through to YARTS. This plan assumes that this amount will also stay constant.

State Transit Assistance (STA)

The State Transit Assistance (STA) funds are derived from a statewide tax on diesel fuel and appropriated by the legislature to the State Controller’s Office (SCO). The SCO then allocates the tax revenue, by formula, to planning agencies and other selected agencies. Statute requires that 50 percent of STA funds be allocated according to population and 50 percent be allocated according to transit operator revenues from the prior fiscal year. The STA funds can only be used for transportation planning and mass transportation purposes. Mariposa County Transit was allocated $186,536 in STA funds for FY 2020/2021. Similar to the LTF funds, this plan projects that STA funds will stay constant.
Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5311

FTA 5311 (Formula Grants for Rural Areas) funds are distributed to non-urbanized areas with populations under 50,000 people. The funds can be used for transit operating or capital expenses. The fund allocation is based on actual expenses from the prior fiscal year. Mariposa County Transit was allocated $110,488 in FY 2020/2021. This plan assumes that the 5311 funds will increase by two (2) percent per year, consistent with the operating expense projection.

Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

Area Agency on Aging funds are awarded by formula and provide supportive services to older persons, including operation of senior centers and transit vouchers. This plan assumes $36,000 per year from this funding source. As communicated by Mariposa County Transit staff, many passengers ride with vouchers funded by AAA funds.

Passenger Fares

For those who do not ride Mariposa County Transit services with vouchers, passenger fare revenues are a source of funding for the Mariposa County Transit services.

Table 16 below provides a summary of projected revenues, along with operating costs, for the system in the next six years, from FY 2020/2021 to FY 2025/2026.

Table 16: Operating Revenue Projections

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LTF to Mariposa County Transit</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTF to YARTS</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>STA</td>
<td>$95,703</td>
<td>$95,703</td>
<td>$95,703</td>
<td>$95,703</td>
<td>$95,703</td>
<td>$95,703</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTA Section 5311</td>
<td>$110,488</td>
<td>$112,635</td>
<td>$114,824</td>
<td>$117,055</td>
<td>$119,329</td>
<td>$121,648</td>
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<td>AAA</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
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<td>Passenger Fares</td>
<td>$75,584</td>
<td>$79,363</td>
<td>$83,332</td>
<td>$87,498</td>
<td>$91,873</td>
<td>$96,467</td>
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<td>Total – Operating Revenues</td>
<td>$523,775</td>
<td>$529,701</td>
<td>$535,858</td>
<td>$542,256</td>
<td>$548,905</td>
<td>$555,817</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dial-a-Ride and Medi-Trans</td>
<td>$304,643</td>
<td>$311,746</td>
<td>$318,850</td>
<td>$325,953</td>
<td>$333,057</td>
<td>$340,160</td>
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<tr>
<td>YARTS Funding Contribution</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total – Operating Costs</td>
<td>$495,643</td>
<td>$502,746</td>
<td>$509,850</td>
<td>$516,953</td>
<td>$524,057</td>
<td>$531,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Surplus</td>
<td>$28,132</td>
<td>$26,955</td>
<td>$26,008</td>
<td>$25,302</td>
<td>$24,848</td>
<td>$24,657</td>
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</table>

Operating Costs Projections

As shown in Table 16, operating costs are projected to be less than revenues and there is a projected surplus of operating revenue. Operating costs projections were made under the following assumptions:

- **Number of Vehicle Hours.** The number of vehicle hours is projected to be 3,600 per year. Currently Mariposa County Transit operates service approximately 295 vehicle days per year, and about 12 vehicle hours per day on both its Mari-Go and Medi-Trans services. The product of vehicle days and vehicle hours is 3,540 vehicle hours per year. This number has been rounded to 3,600 vehicle hours and held constant year over year, as a minimum level of service measure for the system.

- **Operating Cost per Vehicle Hour.** The cost per vehicle hour for FY 2020/2021 is based on historical cost per vehicle hour trends. Mariposa County Transit’s National Transit Database reports show that the cost per vehicle hour has increased year over year, at a rate of about 2 percent, between 2014 and 2019.

- **Service Hours per Vehicle Hours (Service Efficiency).** As discussed in Section 2 of this report, the number of service hours that are operated for each vehicle hour of the Mari-Go service has trended downward, which has brought down the efficiency of the overall service. As of FY 2018/2019, the service efficiency was 42 percent. This plan recommends that Mariposa County Transit aim to increase the service efficiency by 2 percent points per year to achieve 50 percent by FY 2025/2026.

- **Number of Service Hours.** The number of service hours is projected to be the number of vehicle hours multiplied by the target service efficiency ratio for each year. The service hours are projected to increase each year because the service efficiency is assumed to increase by 2 percent points each year.

- **Number of Passenger Trips.** The number of passenger trips for FY 2020/2021 is projected to be the average number of yearly passenger trips from FY 2011/2012 to FY 2018/2019 (FY 2019/2020 was excluded from the average due to modified service during the COVID-19 pandemic). Since the number of passenger trips is highly correlated with actual service hours, the number of passenger trips is projected to increase at the same rate as the service hours (5 percent per year).

- **Fare per Passenger Trip.** The fare per passenger trip is based on the fares collected in FY 2019/2020 ($13.83 per trip) rounded to the nearest dollar ($14.00).

- **Operating Cost.** The operating costs (in Table 16 above) are the result of multiplying the target vehicle hours (3,600 vehicle hours per year) by the projected cost per vehicle hour.

- **YARTS Funding Contribution.** The YARTS funding contribution is assumed to be the same amount of TDA funding that Mariposa County Transit receives for the YARTS service. The YARTS funding contribution is assumed to remain constant.

Table 17 below presents the performance indicators projections that were made for the system. The main factor driving changes in performance and projections is to increase the service efficiency of the system (service hours per vehicle hour) from 40% currently to 50% in the next five years. This is a key goal and measure of performance for the system. The more service hours that can be operated per each vehicle hour, the more passenger trip opportunities the system will provide to existing and potential riders. This will increase the number of passenger trips and fare revenues, it will improve the farebox recovery ratio and all other performance indicators (including lower cost per passenger and cost per service hour, increased passengers per service hour, and decreased subsidy per passenger trip).
Table 17: Projected Performance Indicators

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service Hours, Vehicle Hours and Trips</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Hours</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>1,512</td>
<td>1,584</td>
<td>1,656</td>
<td>1,728</td>
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<td>Vehicle Hours</td>
<td>3,600</td>
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<td>Passenger Trips</td>
<td>5,399</td>
<td>5,669</td>
<td>5,952</td>
<td>6,250</td>
<td>6,562</td>
<td>6,890</td>
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<td><strong>Performance Indicators</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost per Passenger Trip</td>
<td>$56.4</td>
<td>$55.0</td>
<td>$53.6</td>
<td>$52.2</td>
<td>$50.8</td>
<td>$49.4</td>
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<td>Cost per Service Hour</td>
<td>$211.6</td>
<td>$206.2</td>
<td>$201.3</td>
<td>$196.8</td>
<td>$192.7</td>
<td>$189.0</td>
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<td>Cost per Vehicle Hour</td>
<td>$84.62</td>
<td>$86.60</td>
<td>$88.57</td>
<td>$90.54</td>
<td>$92.52</td>
<td>$94.49</td>
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<td>Passengers per Service Hour</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fare Recovery Ratio</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
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<td>Subsidy per Passenger Trip</td>
<td>$42.4</td>
<td>$41.0</td>
<td>$39.6</td>
<td>$38.2</td>
<td>$36.8</td>
<td>$35.4</td>
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<td>Fare per Passenger Trip</td>
<td>$14.0</td>
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<td>$14.0</td>
<td>$14.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Efficiency Ratio</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Capital Requirements

Table 18 summarizes the six-year capital budget. The following items are included in the capital budget:

- **Vehicle Replacement.** The budget assumes the replacement of one of the existing 2011 Starcraft Allstar buses, which has exceeded its useful life. The capital budget assumes that the shuttles will cost approximately $80,000 per shuttle. The one vehicle replacement would be in addition to the already approved purchase of two vans in 2021.

- **Dispatch Scheduling Software.** The budget assumes purchase of dispatch and scheduling software to improve the efficiency of the ride scheduling process. The capital budget assumes the software would cost approximately $45,000, which has been amortized over 6 years at a cost of $7,500 per year.

- **Hardware.** The budget assumes purchase and installation of hardware for each of the six vehicles in operation, which would include two-way radios, GPS/AVL, and a tablet to keep track of passenger boardings and trip schedules. The GPS/AVL would allow dispatch to track buses when in service, without needing cellular signal, and will also record routing and trip service time data that can be used for analytical and service improvement purposes. The tablets would allow bus drivers to enter data from their rides throughout the day, eliminating paperwork and the need for additional time entering data at the end of the day at the depot. The radios would allow for more effective communication between bus drivers and dispatch, reducing reliance on cellular signal. The capital budget assumes the hardware would cost approximately $5,000 per vehicle and would need to be upgraded every three years to stay current with...
advances in technology. Therefore, it is assumed hardware would cost $60,000 spread over the six-year period ($5,000 investment for 6 vehicles, twice during the six-year period).

- **Office Space Purchase.** The last capital expense line item included is budget to purchase new office space. Mariposa County Department of Health and Human Services staff have communicated that it is challenging for the dispatch, vehicle storage, and management staff to be at different locations, and have expressed a desire to consolidate at one location. An example of an available building that could be rehabilitated for this purpose is located at 4995 Gold Leaf Drive, approximately two miles up Highway 49 from the Mariposa County Health and Human Services Agency. The property’s listed sale price is $449,000.\(^2\) It is assumed that Mariposa County could purchase the property with an annuity of $5,000 per month over 30 years. To fund the interior improvements, it is assumed that a grant would be obtained or another County budget source.

Table 18: Six-Year Capital Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Capital Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vehicle Replacement (^1)</td>
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<td>$13,333</td>
<td>$13,333</td>
<td>$13,333</td>
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<td>Dispatch Scheduling Software</td>
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<td>$7,500</td>
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<td>Hardware</td>
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<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Space Purchase (^2)</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Capital Expenses</strong></td>
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<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Capital Revenues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STA Funds (^3)</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Capital Revenues</strong></td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
<td>$90,833</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Assumes the replacement of one 2011 Starcraft Allstar bus. The one vehicle replacement would be in addition to the already approved purchase of two vans in 2021.

\(^2\) Assumes the purchase price of a property is approximately $450,000 and an annuity of $5,000 per month for 30 years.

\(^3\) Assumes STA funds would be used for capital expenses.

**Financial Summary**

Table 19 summarizes the six-year financial plan, including both capital and operating expenses/revenues. The six-year financial plan shows that increasing the service efficiency ratio (more service hours per each vehicle hour) will bring additional riders and revenue to the system, and that that will be able to compensate for increases in the costs of operating service and the cost of each vehicle hour. Operating 3,600 vehicle hours will get more expensive overtime and the system needs to increase its efficiency by operating more revenue hours of service.

The six-year plan also considers investments in scheduling software, hardware for tracking and reporting of passenger trips and service schedules (to increase efficiency and performance), and capital funds to replace one

shuttle vehicle every five years and lease or buy a facility to house all service operation functions and staff, including admin office space, dispatch and scheduling functions, driver break rooms, maintenance, and vehicle parking areas.

Table 19: Summary Six-Year Financial Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>System Expenses</strong></td>
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<td>Operating Expenses</td>
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<td>Capital Expenses</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$586,476</td>
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<td>$600,683</td>
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<td><strong>System Revenues</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Passenger Fares</td>
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<td>FTA Section 5311</td>
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<td>LTF to Mariposa County Transit</td>
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<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>LTF to YARTS</td>
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<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
<td>$191,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenues</strong></td>
<td>$614,608</td>
<td>$620,534</td>
<td>$626,691</td>
<td>$633,089</td>
<td>$639,738</td>
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<td><strong>Projected Surplus</strong></td>
<td>$28,132</td>
<td>$26,955</td>
<td>$26,008</td>
<td>$25,302</td>
<td>$24,848</td>
<td>$24,657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Additional Revenue Sources

The following funding sources could also be considered and pursued for capital and operating expenses:

**FTA 5539 Bus and Bus Facilities**

The FTA 5539 Bus and Bus Facilities program is a federal program for replacement and purchase of buses, bus equipment, and bus-related facilities such as signs and shelters for transportation providers in small urban and rural areas with population of 199,999 or less. The funds are competitive on an annual basis. For vehicles there is a required 15 percent local match and for vehicle-related equipment and facilities there is a required 20 percent local match.

**FTA 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities**

The 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program can fund operations, mobility management, purchased service, and preventive maintenance. The 5310 funds are competitive on an annual basis.
For operations, there is a minimum match requirement of 50 percent and for capital, there is a minimum match requirement of 20 percent.

Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) Low or No Emission Program (Low-No Program)

The Low-No Program is for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses. This also includes acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities. An eligible applicant is a designated recipient of FTA 5307 grants, as well as states, local governmental authorities, and Indian tribes. Caltrans applies on behalf of subrecipients who are not 5307 direct recipients.

The funds are competitive on an annual basis. For vehicles, there is a minimum match requirement of 15 percent and for bus-related equipment and facilities (such as recharging or refueling facilities), there is a minimum 10 percent local match requirement.

California VW Mitigation Trust

The VW Mitigation Trust provides funds to California communities to replace older, high-polluting transit, school, and shuttle buses with new battery-electric or fuel-cell buses. Eligible applicants are owners of transit buses, school buses, and shuttle buses. As of the 2021 funding cycle, the maximum funding amount for a shuttle bus is $160,000 per vehicle.

Hybrid and Zero-Emission Truck and Bus Voucher Incentive Project (HVIP)

The HVIP program is provided through the California Air Resources Board and provides price breaks on hybrid and zero-emission vehicles. The incentive amount is included in the vehicle purchase order (purchaser gets the discount upon purchase and dealer submits the voucher request). Applications can be submitted on a rolling basis. As of the 2021 HVIP funding cycle, the incentive amount for an electric shuttle bus is approximately $45,000-$85,000 per vehicle.

Clean Mobility Options

The Clean Mobility Options program is funded by California cap-and-trade funds. The program provides funding for two different types of projects. One type of project is Clean Mobility projects such as zero-emission carsharing, carpooling/vanpooling, bike-sharing/scooter-sharing, innovative transit services, and ride on-demand services.

The other type of project is Community Transportation Needs Assessments which are used to help identify and understand unmet mobility needs of communities and develop solutions in collaboration with residents. Each new mobility project can receive up to $1,000,000, a project expanding existing mobility service can receive up to $600,000, and community transportation needs assessment can receive up to $50,000.
6. Service Recommendations
6. Service Change Recommendations

Mari-Go Transit Service Plan

This section includes a series of alternatives and recommendations for the Mari-Go transit service operation, administration, and marketing in Mariposa County. Service alternatives were developed based on the stakeholder outreach effort, review of existing conditions, and opportunities to address identified needs or travel demands.

Mari-Go Service to Merced

Based on conversations with Mariposa County Transit staff, the Mari-Go service is already being operated slightly different than before the pandemic, for instance the North County service is provided on Mondays as opposed to Tuesdays, and the 49 South corridor has gotten so much demand that trips are provided on additional days, typically Thursdays. The demographic analysis (Chapter 1 of this report) also shows that the Highway 49 South corridor concentrates a large portion of the population of the County, and demand for transit service and unmet need.

Additionally, the financial analysis shows that a large portion of the Mariposa County Local Transportation Fund goes to fund the operation of YARTS, which provides year-round service along Highway 140, from Merced to Yosemite National Park with service through Cathey’s Valley, Mariposa and Midpines. Mari-Go is currently duplicating this service on Tuesdays with operation of a service trip to Merced, that most riders use to go shopping for essentials in Merced, although Mari-Go provides a more personalized service for a discounted price.

Table 20 summarizes the differences between the two services. Mari-Go only operates on Tuesdays, while YARTS operates 365 days per year and offers more times to travel to Merced. The Mari-Go fare is less than half the price of the YARTS fare and it is a flex-route transit service, that deviates to pick up passengers, while YARTS serves designated transit stops and designated times.

Table 20: Mariposa County Transit versus YARTS Merced Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transit Service</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Fare</th>
<th>Hours of Operation</th>
<th>Days of Operation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mariposa County Transit</td>
<td>Mariposa Any location</td>
<td>Merced Any location</td>
<td>$4 (one way)</td>
<td>1 trip to Merced in the morning</td>
<td>Tuesdays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YARTS</td>
<td>Mariposa 3 designated stops</td>
<td>Merced 3 designated stops</td>
<td>$10 (one way)</td>
<td>9 westbound trips to Merced operated throughout the day in peak season, 1 trip on weekends and holidays</td>
<td>365 days/year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Mari-Go service to Merced is redundant. Mariposa County Transit is in essence funding two services that are largely duplicative. Due to the long distance of this service, the cost of operation and subsidy per passenger trip are high. Under the current limited financial conditions, this plan recommends re-allocating the resources dedicated to the Mari-Go Merced service and use those to fund a new service to Oakhurst.
Lifeline Service to Oakhurst

The 2019 Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) recommended new transit service corridors based on public input that informed the YARTS SRTP and stakeholder interviews. One of the new transit service corridors included a YARTS route connecting Oakhurst and Mariposa. The proposed service would consist of a single vehicle operating along a route between the shopping district of Oakhurst and the Mariposa park-and-ride. The route would be operated on a schedule with scheduled stops at key locations and would also accommodate on-demand stops at pre-determined locations. A sample schedule was provided in the YARTS SRTP that would operate the service between 8:00 a.m. and 8:15 p.m. A 15-20 passenger shuttle vehicle (similar to Mari-Go vehicles) was anticipated to provide the service.

The YARTS SRTP estimates that 4,000 passenger trips per year would be provided. The recommended passenger fare was $4.00 for each one-way trip and $2.50 for seniors and persons with disabilities, children, and veterans (similar to the fares on the current Mari-Go Merced service). While the YARTS SRTP recommends this proposed service corridor, it would only be provided if additional local funding is provided.

Because YARTS does not have immediate plans to provide the service from Mariposa to Oakhurst, the recommendation of this SRTP is for Mariposa County Transit to replace the service to Merced with the service to Oakhurst. The previous Mariposa County Transit Short Range Transit Plan (completed in 2011), the stakeholder process of this plan and the market analysis, show that a service between Mariposa and Oakhurst is a real need and a priority for service implementation.

Weekly Service Plan

Figure 20 below illustrates the proposed service plan for each day of the week, in consideration of current operations and recommendations to re-allocate the Merced service hours and vehicles. The daily service would be as follows:

- **Monday:** service in North County – Coulterville and Greeley Hill to Sonora, and service from Hornitos, Bear Valley and Cathey’s Valley to Mariposa.

- **Tuesday:** service in the 49 South corridor, from the Madera County border to Mariposa with deviations to Ponderosa Basin, Elliott Corner and Bootjack.

- **Wednesday:** same as Tuesday.

- **Thursday:** in-town circulation service – same-day on-demand Mariposa Local service from any point within 3 miles of town, and new service to Oakhurst – to operate two roundtrips between Mariposa and Oakhurst with designated stops along Hwy 49.

- **Friday:** service from Midpines to Mariposa and in-town circulation service – Mariposa Local

An alternative to this plan is to operate the Oakhurst service on Saturday instead of Thursday.

Additionally, the Mariposa Local service could be replaced with a fixed-route transportation service that operates every day, during the middle of the day, that would replace not only the Mariposa Local service, but also the personalized trips that are currently provided by Mari-Go services on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, that seem to be reducing the number of service hours that get operated every day and the overall efficiency of service.
North County to Mariposa Service

Some stakeholders have indicated that there is need for a route from North County to Mariposa. This option is informally available to the public as an on-demand service, but it is not widely publicized, and no fares have been formally established. Most North County residents can address medical and social service needs within North County and can access Sonora for retail and other recreational purchases.

However, in instances where North County residents need access to County services in Mariposa, Mariposa County Transit should identify specific times in the month in which the service can be made available, as well as the fare for the service, to pool passengers and allow North County residents to plan trips.

Mariposa County Transit does not currently have financial and staffing capacity to allocate an additional vehicle to provide this service once a week between North County and Mariposa on its Mari-Go service, but it has capacity to accommodate requests on-demand on the Medi-Trans service.

Defining a set of clear policies on how to access and use this service would allow Mariposa County to publicize and promote the service, would help increase public awareness of the service, and help Mariposa County Transit address an unmet need.
Figure 20: Proposed Mari-Go Transit Service

Mariposa Circulator Alternatives

Local demand-response service is currently provided in Mariposa on Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from about 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday service are essentially a personalized circulation service for passengers of the Hornitos/Bear Valley/Cathey’s Valley, 49 South and Midpines service areas.

The hypothesis that this plan makes is that during these times vehicles are idling for a large portion of the time and not providing revenue service, which in turn impacts the overall efficiency of service.

Additionally, Mariposa County Transit staff, the Department of Health and Human Services and key stakeholders such as the Alliance for Transformation, have stated unmet local circulation needs and proposed operation of fixed-route transportation services in town, in addition to the existing Mari-Go services.

The previous SRTP (completed in 2011) also included alternatives for the operation of a circulator service in Mariposa, that range from hybrid operations (dial-a-ride and midday circulation service) to a fixed-route operation that allowed for deviations on-demand. A circulator service is a fixed-route service with designated stops at most major destinations in town, that provides frequent service (every 30 minutes or better) throughout the day.

This plan recommends implementation and operation of a fixed-route service in town that can deviate to specific destinations on demand. There are several benefits of operating a “community circulator” route in Mariposa that include addressing existing unmet transportation needs in the community, but also liberating Mari-Go vehicle resources to provide additional service trips from surrounding communities in Hornitos, Bear Valley/Mt. Bullion, Cathey’s Valley, Bootjack/Hwy 49 South, and Midpines.

Operating a fixed-route transportation service in Mariposa provides a win-win opportunity to address mobility needs and improve efficiency of operations.

Department of Health and Human Services Transportation Pilot

The Mariposa Department of Health and Human Services initiated a three-month pilot fixed-route transit service in the Town of Mariposa in early 2020. The goal of the service was to help Mariposa County residents better access services, especially at the Connections shelter. The fixed-route service operated Monday through Friday and was operated using a Mariposa County van or SUV.

The fixed-route service served five key locations:

- Connections (5069 St Andrews)
- Health and Human Services (5362 Lemee Ln)
- Pioneer Market (5034 Coakley Cir)
- Courthouse (5808 Bullion St)
- Heritage House (5200 Hwy 49 N)

For the pilot service, (2) Extra-Help Program Assistant positions were required, who worked 6 hours per day. The route was divided into two 6-hour shifts:
The pilot fixed-route service ceased operation in early 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic. Mariposa County plans to reinstate the service in July 2021, evaluate the ridership after two weeks, and make adjustments to route days and times accordingly.

Figure 21: DHHS Fixed-Route Transportation Pilot Route

Alliance for Transformation Grant Proposal for Transportation

The Alliance for Transformation submitted a grant proposal for an implementation project focusing on four areas: Healthcare Navigation, Transportation, Partnership Efficiencies, and Client Outreach and Education. The transportation component included two types of services – a regular route through Mariposa and transportation of individuals to healthcare appointments.

The fixed-route transit service would be provided using an eight-passenger van. The regular route through Mariposa would be offered five days a week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 11 times per day. The services would be operated by a Program Aide. The vehicle would make six stops through town: Mariposa Heritage House, Connections Emergency Shelter, Mariposa County Health and Human Services, two pharmacies, and at the Courthouse/Probation Department.
The transportation of individuals would be operated by a Program Aide who would be responsible for scheduling client transportation and transporting clients to healthcare appointments within Mariposa County and outside of the County. The service would be operated using an ADA van. If the grant is successful, it is anticipated the service would start operation no later than December 2021.

**Long-Term Fixed-Route Proposal**

An alternative proposal, or long-term proposal, for the operation of a community circulation service is to design the route and schedule to provide service trips to a wider segment of the population. Both the DHHS fixed-route pilot and Alliance for Transformation grant are being designed to provide service to groups with specific needs, and to a certain extent risk becoming over-specialized services that do not cater to the general population.

*This plan recommends implementing the DHHS pilot service as a start, to prove the concept, and start growing the service to provide a midday circulation option for all residents and visitors of Mariposa.*

**Figure 22: Long-Term Fixed-Route Proposal**

In general, successful transit services are those that provide a convenient, easy to use, and easy to understand service that provides direct connections between multiple origins and destinations, and that provide usable service to multiple transportation markets and user groups.
Figure 22 above presents a possible future evolution of the service towards a fixed-route operation that provides service in both directions of travel – from DHHS to downtown and back, that can connect multiple origins and destinations within the town (DHHS, senior housing, hospital, pharmacies, park & ride and rest stop facilities, grocery shopping, bank and post office services, library, courts and utility offices, parks, shelters and social services, and retail and employment locations).

The recommendation is to operate the service with a shuttle vehicle, use designated stops like YARTS, and operate it at a frequency of 30 minutes or better (at least 2 trips per hour in any direction).

Other Recommendations

Upgrade to a Zero Emissions Fleet

Over the next ten years, Mariposa County should begin the transition to an all-electric fleet. In 2019, the Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) regulation, which is implemented by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), states that starting in 2029, public agencies will be limited to the purchase of Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) buses only, with a goal of complete transition to zero emissions buses by 2040. Further, CARB requires transit agencies to submit a ZEV Bus Rollout Plan by July 1, 2023, to be in compliance with this Innovative Clean Transit Regulation.

There are many funding sources at the federal and local level that can be used to purchase ZEV transit vehicles. These funding sources are presented in Chapter 5 Capital and Financial Plan.

Marketing and Branding

Project Advisory Committee members discussed the need to raise awareness about Mari-Go and Medi-Trans services and promote them throughout the community. Mariposa County residents complain about lack of public transportation options while not knowing that there are services available to them. The recent consolidation of Mariposa transit services under the Department of Health and Human Services opens the possibility to rebrand the service and develop a concerted marketing plan to increase awareness and use of service by other population groups in the county, in addition to current users.

Mariposa County should take a few simple steps to promote and raise the profile of Mari-Go and Medi-Trans services, these include:

- Rebranding the service, including a new name, logo and livery that can be applied to shuttle vehicles and collateral materials.
- Creating a standalone website for the service that is mobile friendly and easy to access from any personal computer device.
- Creating a social media campaign including paid advertisement to targeted groups, via Facebook and other platforms such as Twitter.
- Working with all public agency partners and social organizations to promote the service and create links to the new website on their websites.
- Sending mailers to all households in the County once or twice per year to build and maintain brand recognition of the service.
- Implement incentive campaigns such as ride-free days to attract new riders to the service.
Delivery and Responsiveness of Service

Project Advisory Committee members also discussed the possibility of increasing the responsiveness of service to make it “on-demand.” This refers to the idea that Mari-Go and Medi-Trans services (although operating on demand), require booking trips at least 24 hours in advance, which makes them not practical for the majority of potential users.

This Short-Range Transit Plan recommends investing in scheduling software to automate the process of scheduling rides and communication hardware, such as radios and tablets, to communicate with vehicles and update service changes on the go, as close as real-time as it is possible in a mountainous region such as Mariposa County. This would allow service schedulers and dispatchers to handle requests more quickly, on demand, include them on the route service plans and communicate it to drivers while they are out providing the service, to deliver a more responsive system.

Coverage gaps in the cellular network to access the internet from mobile devices do create challenges and will continue to generate challenges for real-time communication between dispatcher and vehicle on-board systems, for the next few years. However, it is possible to operate the service with a latency\(^3\) of one hour. This will be a significant increase in response time for all users, and it could deliver a much more responsive system to all County residents, on par with the responsiveness of an Uber-like service.

Investing in scheduling software and communication systems between dispatch and vehicle on-board systems, also allows the service to be more flexible in its operation. For instance, the community circulation route that is recommended for Mariposa, can be operated as a micro-transit service, which is truly an on-demand service that aggregates passenger trips while providing individual passengers with trips from “Point A to Point B.” So, instead of having a fixed route the service can flex throughout the community on demand.

The micro-transit service operation can provide similar levels of service than the fixed-route service for the same operating cost. The main advantage of micro-transit services over fixed-route services is that in areas of low density and demand, it can provide users with higher customer service and reduced wait times, because users book rides through an app on their phones, which gives them maximum flexibility, certainty and control over their travel plans.

Contracting Service Operation

Another consideration that will be recurrent, in addition to operation of on-demand and microtransit services, is the possibility of contracting out the service to reduce costs or simply administration burden. This is something that deserves further study. There are pros and cons of contracting out the service and there are different models to do this, that range from a turnkey operation that includes provision of vehicles, drivers, operations management (schedulers, dispatchers and supervisors), maintenance of vehicles and customer service, to hybrid arrangements that only include drivers, operations management and maintenance of vehicles.

The ICT regulation that mandates transition to a ZEV fleet may require Mariposa County to retain vehicle procurement functions to access funding for battery electric vehicles.

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\(^3\) In computing, latency is defined as the delay before a transfer of data begins following an instruction for its transfer.
Similarly, the Department of Health and Human Services may be able to achieve higher cost efficiencies by sharing driver staff across Mari-Go, Medi-Trans and Human Services transportation operations. Therefore, outsourcing the operation of the service may end up providing Mariposa County with limited advantages to operating the system in-house. This needs to be researched further.