



**Board of Supervisors  
COUNTY OF TULARE  
AGENDA ITEM**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

KUYLER CROCKER  
District One

PETE VANDER POEL  
District Two

AMY SHUKLIAN  
District Three

J. STEVEN WORTHLEY  
District Four

MIKE ENNIS  
District Five

**AGENDA DATE:** June 5, 2018 – REVISED

Public Hearing Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scheduled Public Hearing w/Clerk	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Published Notice Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advertised Published Notice	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
County Counsel Sign-Off	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contract via Streamline	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meet & Confer Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Electronic file(s) has been sent	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Transfer (Aud 308) attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personnel Resolution attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agreements are attached and signature line for Chairman is marked with tab(s)/flag(s)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CONTACT PERSON: Samantha Ferrero    PHONE: 559-636-5000				

**SUBJECT:** Approval of Loop Bus Policy

**REQUEST(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the policy changes to the Step Up Loop Bus program; and
2. Authorize staff to apply the policy changes to the Loop Bus application

**SUMMARY:**

In 2007, in conjunction with the Tulare County Gang Prevention Task Force, the County of Tulare established the Loop Bus Transportation Program for at-risk youth. The pilot program was established to connect youth in the communities of Ivanhoe and Goshen to established youth centers in the City of Visalia. The Loop Bus was created as part of the Step Up Program which aimed to create meaningful opportunities for youth to make positive contributions in their community, encourage extra-curricular involvement and to diminish arrest rates, referral rates, substance abuse, and teen pregnancy by fostering positive associations and social networks. The Loop Bus is a key component to the Step Up Program as it provides a safe and reliable form of transportation to connect youth to mentoring and gang prevention programs throughout Tulare County. The original intent of the bus was to provide a fixed-route safe alternative for youth walking while trying to access community recreation centers. The Loop Bus program targeted K-12 students who did not have access or money to use traditional public transportation to take them from unincorporated areas in the County to community events and youth programs in the incorporated cities.

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In 2008, this program expanded to include routes in additional rural communities throughout Tulare County, such as Cutler-Orosi, Allensworth, and Seville. Part of this expansion included a shift from a fixed-route bus service to an on-demand bus service that accepted requests from organizations throughout the county who used the bus to transport program participants to activities, programs, and events.

Due to the popularity of the on-demand service, the Loop Bus has been consistently utilized by a variety of youth-focused organizations in Tulare County, such as: school districts, after school programs, non-profits, faith-based organizations, and local government entities who use the bus to take youth to a variety of activities and events throughout Tulare County.

Loop Bus requests are first received by Board of Supervisors staff, who make a conditional approval of the request if it meets very minimal requirements. Requests are declined by staff when applications received are to transport youth outside of County boundaries, have a destination in excess of 2,000 feet, occur during school hours, are used to transport youth to religious education or proselytizing activities, do not meet the required advance notice, or when the requested destination activity is not free for the youth being transported. Once approved by Board of Supervisors staff, the request is then sent to the County's transit contractor who then makes arrangements for the origin and destination pickups. This process is "first come first served". If there are no buses available, the request will be denied for this reason.

At this time there is no formal policy for this program. The current Loop Bus application does not capture a description of how the trip is connected with the mission of the Step Up program nor how the organization serves the intended at-risk youth demographic. There is a high volume of last-minute cancellations and changes to the pick up or drop off location which is very difficult for the transit contractor to accommodate. Previously, accommodation of changes to existing requests were at the discretion of staff.

Staff receives a high volume of Loop Bus requests from school districts throughout Tulare County. In the last six months of requests, 143 of the 486 requests have been from school districts to transport youth to activities after school instructional hours. There is a concern that school districts already have access to transportation services in the form of school buses and this creates a barrier for other organizations, such as non-profits, from using the Loop Bus as they do not have the access to this resource and may face financial barriers from accessing private charter services.

The Loop Bus is funded by Measure R, a countywide sales tax for use on transportation, with an annual budget of \$150,000. Currently, only the revenue hours and revenue miles for the Loop Bus program are tracked. There are additional costs associated with this program that are requested to be included in the Loop Bus policy to accurately track the true cost of this service.

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Please see the attachment for the items staff is requesting to be included in the Loop Bus Policy.

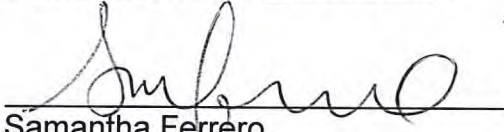
**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:**

There is no net County cost to the General Fund.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:**

This item is linked to the Quality of Life initiative as the Loop Bus service helps provide greater recreational and cultural opportunities and promotes youth-oriented activities in small communities.

**ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:**



Samantha Ferrero  
Board Representative

cc: County Administrative Office

Attachment(s): Loop Bus Policy

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF TULARE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE MATTER OF APPROVAL OF LOOP )  
BUS POLICY

) Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_  
) Agreement No. \_\_\_\_\_

UPON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_, SECONDED BY  
SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_, THE FOLLOWING WAS ADOPTED BY THE  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, AT AN OFFICIAL MEETING HELD \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSTAIN:  
ABSENT:

ATTEST: MICHAEL C. SPATA  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/  
CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Approved the policy changes to the Step Up Loop Bus program; and
2. Authorized staff to apply the policy changes to the Loop Bus application

# **Attachment “A”**

## Loop Bus Policy

**Request process:**

Staff is recommending requiring the request to be submitted at least four weeks in advance. This would provide a one-week window for the requesting organization to be notified if their request was approved or denied and would allow for them to make changes or cancellations within that weeks' time. This change would allow for staff to implement a cancellation timeline that fits with the notice needed to schedule bus drivers for this service.

**Religious Activities and Events:**

Proposed language in the Loop Bus Policy would include, "In order to comply with the U.S. and California Constitutions, the Loop Bus shall not be used to transport persons to religious activities, including, but not limited to, activities *whose sole intent* consists of prayer, religious instruction, and/or proselytism".

**Chaperone Requirement:**

At least one chaperone must be on the bus with the students at all times. If no chaperone is with the students at the time of pick up, the trip will be canceled and considered a no show. The chaperone must be identified on the application by name and phone number.

**Allocation of Shared/Common Costs with the Transit Department:**

Costs which are directly attributable to the operation of the Loop Bus program shall be paid for by the Loop Bus budget, including all costs for revenue hours, revenue miles, county staff time, major repairs for any of the Loop bus fleet.

Costs which are shared between or are common among the Loop Bus and other transit programs shall be reasonably and proportionately allocated between the Loop Bus and other transit programs as follows:

- Contractor Fixed Rate & Facility Costs – These costs be allocated between the other transit programs and the Loop Bus based upon the fraction of all Revenue Hours for the Loop Bus as compared to the total of all Revenue Hours for the all transit programs including Loop Bus. This allocation was selected so that these fixed costs which are shared by all transit programs will correlate with total operation requirements of each transit program. Facility costs may include any leases for transit operations or maintenance as well as building costs for same.
- Fuel - These costs be allocated between the other transit programs and the Loop Bus based upon the fraction of Total Miles for the Loop Bus as compared to the Total Miles for the all transit programs including Loop Bus. This allocation was selected so that this variable cost will most accurately reflect actual fuel use, which is correlated with vehicle mileage.

These allocations shall be updated each fiscal year based upon Revenue Hours and Total Miles for Loop Bus and other transit programs as recorded during the previous fiscal year. Revenue Hours and Total Miles shall be as defined in the agreement between the County

and its transit services contractor.

**Allowable trips and organizations:**

Staff would like to amend the current application to gather more information about the organization requesting to use the Loop Bus and the trip they are using it for to ensure that the requested trip meets the mission of the Step Up Program. To ensure that the Loop Bus is being utilized by the target demographic, staff is recommending to include a text box in the application which would require the organization to describe how their program works with the target youth demographic and how the proposed trip aligns with the mission of Step Up.

To ensure that the bus is used by organizations that need this free transportation service the most and to avoid conflict with school bus operations, staff is proposing to restrict school districts from accessing the Loop Bus service.

**Rider Minimum and Maximum:**

To combat the bus from being used by only one or two riders at a time, Staff is proposing to implement a rider minimum of 12 riders. Additionally, to ensure that this service is open and available to a variety of organizations, staff would like to implement a rider maximum of one bus per request (Note: Two of the Loop Buses can fit twenty-eight passengers and the other two buses can accommodate thirty passengers). If an organization's requested trip has less than the minimum or more than the maximum amount of passengers, staff is proposing to have an option for the organization to describe their special circumstances. This would then be approved by staff on a case by case basis and would not guarantee use of the bus.

**Overnight Trips:**

Staff is recommending no overnight trips; i.e. pick up and drop off must be on the same date.

**Step Up Events:**

Preference will be given to organizations requesting to use the Loop Bus service for Step Up events, such as the Youth Challenge and Summer Night Lights.