

Study Session – Consolidated Transit JPA



Presented to Board of Supervisors
Tulare County Resource Management Agency
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Table of Contents

- TCaT Mission Statement & System Overview
- Tulare County Transit Agencies
- History and Background of Consolidated Transit
- 2019 Tulare County Regional Transit Coordination Study
- Proposed Terms for the Joint Powers Agreement
- Benefits to Riders & Administration
- County's Share of Costs
- Discussion on Proposed Agreement

TCaT Mission Statement

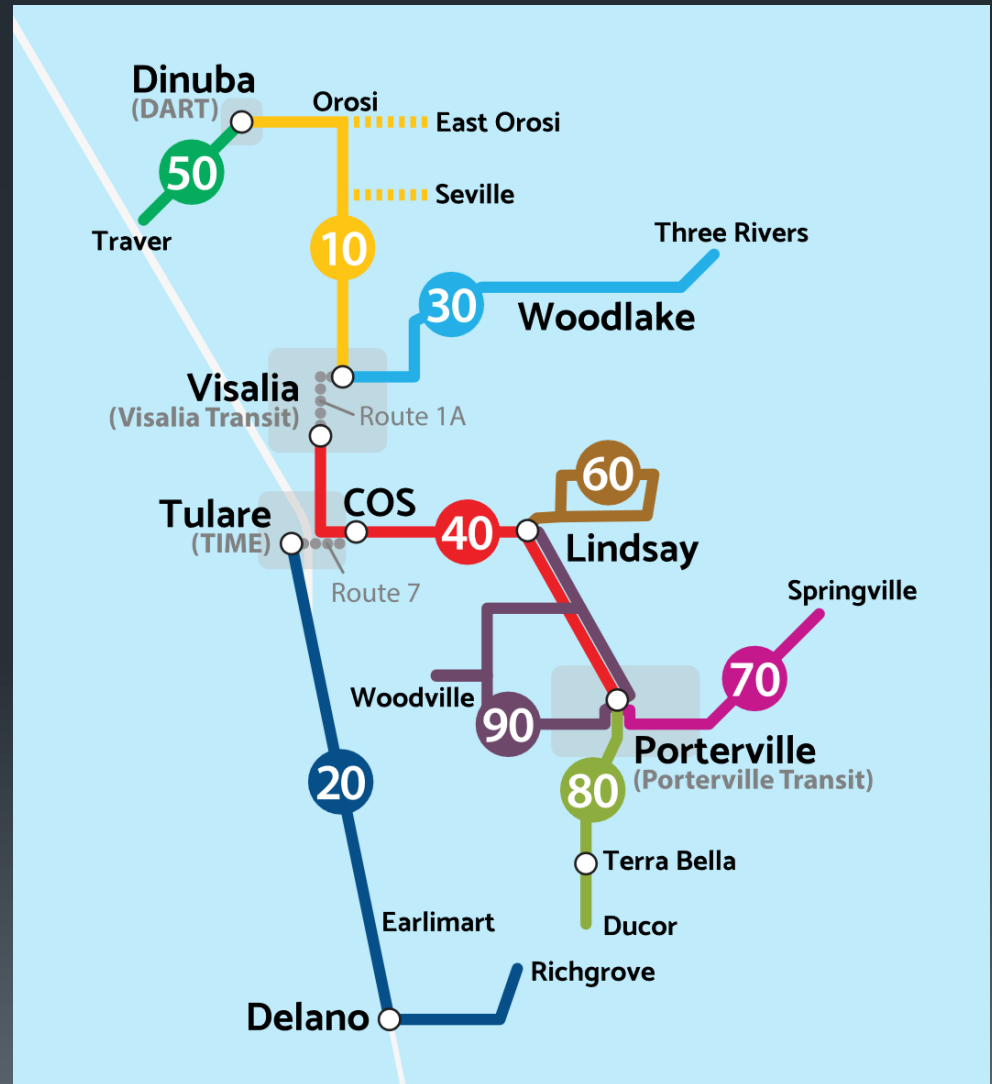
3

Tulare County Area Transit provides customer-focused, safe, friendly, clean, reliable, cost-effective, public transit service, which increases access and mobility for all, reduces congestion, and improves the environment, while supporting economic development.



TCaT System Overview

- Fixed Route Service
 - 5 Inter-City Routes
 - 3 Local Circulators
 - 1 Flex Route
- Dial-A-Ride Services
- Route Deviation for ADA
- LOOP Bus Program
- Fleet Size:
 - 21 Transit Buses, 3 Loop Buses
 - 14 Bus Max Pull Out
- ~3.5 FTEs



Tulare County Transit Agencies

- Visalia Transit (156,230 Service Hours)
 - Serves Cities of Visalia, Farmersville and Exeter plus some unincorporated areas including Goshen with Dial-A-Ride and Fixed Route
 - Operates the Greenline call center for transit information
 - Operates the V-Line and Sequoia Shuttle
- Porterville Transit (52,834 Service Hours)
 - Serves City of Porterville and adjacent unincorporated areas including East Porterville with Dial-A-Ride and Fixed Route
 - Provides service to the Tule River Reservation (with Tribal contributions)
- Woodlake Dial-A-Ride
 - Serves City of Woodlake and adjacent unincorporated areas with Dial-A-Ride

Tulare County Transit Agencies

- Tulare InterModal Express (TIME) (36,841 Service Hours)
 - Serves City of Tulare with Fixed Route and Dial-A-Ride
- Dinuba Area Regional Transit (DART) (14,937 Service Hours)
 - Serves City of Dinuba
 - Operates the Dinuba Connection to Reedley (with funding from FCRTA)
- Tulare County Area Transit (TCaT) (37,513 Service Hours)
 - Provides inter-city services between Visalia-Dinuba, Visalia-Lindsay-Porterville, Visalia-Woodlake, and Tulare-Delano
 - Provides fixed-route services and Dial-A-Ride services in unincorporated areas
 - Provides City of Lindsay with Flex Route services
 - Administrator of T-Pass Program

History and Background of Consolidated Transit

- Transit Forum – Monthly discussions between all transit providers
 - All coordination actions are recommendations
 - No formal decision making powers
- 2017 Tulare County Long Range Transit Plan
 - Identified 35 action plan items in 8 functional areas
 - “Consider Joint Powers Authority (JPA) among Transit Providers”
- 2019 Tulare County Regional Transit Coordination Study
 - TCAG Ad Hoc Committee Formed to Consider JPA
 - Supervisor Shuklian was County Member; Staff attended as support
 - Developed Draft Joint Powers Agreement
 - Recommendations for Policy Makers to Implement Coordinated Transit
- Other regionalization discussions from time to time

2019 Tulare County Regional Transit Coordination Study

- “[D]esigned to assess the potential for the evolution of the six transit systems in Tulare County into a regional network that offers citizens in the urbanized areas improved mobility and improved economic productivity while maintaining the rural transit connections.”
- Proposed either a “Clean Slate Model” or a “One Region Model” for coordinated service levels
- Provided case studies from other consolidations
- Section 6 included “Recommendations for Policy Makers to Implement Coordinated Transit”

2019 Study: *Recommendations for Policy Makers to Implement Coordinated Transit*

1. The region appoints a Task Force to study the details of the transition. *[TCAG Ad Hoc Committee]*
2. The Service Plan options presented herein are the basis of more detailed service decisions.
3. The structure of the Joint Powers Authority including governance and representation is reviewed. *[See Proposed JPA]*
4. Consider leaving the contractor agreements with the local governments through the budget process. *[Per Proposed JPA, to transition later]*
5. Monthly route level serve [sic] productivity for all operations are reviewed.
6. Monthly financial performance for all operations are reviewed.
7. The balance of regional funding allocation and local decision making are reviewed. *[Local decision making in Proposed JPA]*
8. The next three-year capital and operating budgets are evaluated.
9. The decision is considered to transition to JPA in one year or phased in over three years. *[Timeline discussed during Ad Hoc Committee]*
10. If the decision to move to the Joint Powers Authority is no, several regional decision processes would remain.

2019 Study: *Recommendations for Transit Managers to Implement Coordinated Transit*

1. Create a Task Force of the managers. *[transit forum]*
2. Evaluate, improve the service alternatives presented here and prepare public hearings. *[Implemented at each City's meeting]*
3. Implement regional fare process, including free transfers. *[partially implemented]*
4. Consider the impacts on service contracts with private providers. *[contracts to transition to new Agency]*
5. Consider asset transfer by either merger into the JPA, or lease or other coordination action. *[lease]*
6. Explain the possibilities to the employees, customers, and taxpayers. *[various public meetings and hearings]*
7. Explain to bargaining units that existing collective bargaining agreements would be honored. *[TBD]*
8. Determine which regulatory compliance activities and plans can be coordinated. *[partially implemented through TCAG and Transit Forum]*
9. Consider a progression from each of the six systems within a JPA structure to one structure. *[TBD]*

Proposed Terms for the Joint Powers Agreement

- Name: Tulare County Regional Transit Agency
- Boundaries: Will cover the territory of all member agencies within the County
- Voting Members: One Regular and One Alternate from each member agency
- Ex Officio Members: Calvans, TCAG Transit Rep
- Voting: Typically by majority; Unanimous for Budget, LTF Claims, Early Withdrawal of Member Agency, Readmission of Agency
- Level of Service: Minimum level of service for areas determined using established criteria

Proposed Terms for the Joint Powers Agreement, cont.

12

- Service Changes: Member Agency may submit a request to add or reduce services which is then considered by the Agency
- Sources of Funds: (1) All “transit-only” sources: STA, 5311, 5307, etc; (2) Remainder covered by LTF* by a formula (50% for population, 50% for service hours)
- Assets: Separate agreement to lease or transfer existing buses and capital assets (inc. TOMF) to the Agency; Agency to purchase new assets
- Service Agreements: Current agreements to remain in place for remaining effective period

* Member agency may elect to contribute General Fund money but cannot be obligated to do so

Benefits to Riders

13

- Uniform Branding
- More rider focused planning, less concern on geographic boundaries
- Additional Fare Options
 - Weekly passes, daily passes, multi-ride options
 - Zone-based fare options
- Uniform Technology*

*A committee was recently established through the Transit Forum for this purpose

Benefits to Administration



- Economies of Scale
 - More specialization by staff
- Reduced coordination, planning, and reporting requirements with State, FTA, etc (one report/plan vs. six)
- Combined bidding
 - More competition for one larger service contracts

County's Share of Costs – by Hours

	FIXED ROUTE		DIAL A RIDE		TOTAL	
	Hours	Share by Hours	Hours	Share by Hours	Total Hours	Share by Hours
Dinuba Area Regional Transit (with service to Reedley)	12,588	4.7%	2,349	8.2%	14,937	5.0%
Porterville Transit (inc. East Porterville and Tule River Tribe)	49,837	18.5%	2,997	10.5%	52,834	17.7%
Tulare InterModal Express	30,597	11.3%	6,244	21.9%	36,841	12.3%
Visalia Transit (inc. Exeter, Farmersville, some County areas)	143,581	53.2%	12,649	44.3%	156,230	52.4%
Tulare County Area Transit (inc. Lindsay & some City areas)	33,195	12.3%	4,318	15.1%	37,513	12.6%
Countywide Total	269,798	100.0%	28,557	100.0%	298,355	100.0%

- Per Proposed JPA, 50% of costs are allocated by Population and 50% by Revenue Hours of service
- Assuming participation by all potential member agencies

County's Share of Costs – Population & Total

Agency	Population	Share by Pop.
Dinuba	25,328	5.3%
Exeter	11,002	2.3%
Farmersville	11,358	2.4%
Lindsay	13,358	2.8%
Porterville	60,260	12.6%
Tulare	66,967	14.0%
Visalia	138,207	28.8%
Woodlake	7,891	1.6%
County (Unincorporated)	144,741	30.2%
Countywide Total	479,112	

- Per Proposed JPA, 50% of costs are allocated by Population and 50% by Revenue Hours of service
- Assuming participation by all potential member agencies

Total County Share per Proposed JPA: Approximately 21.4% of Agency expenses in excess of “transit-only” funding

Discussion on Proposed Agreement

- County's Share of Costs
 - Largest proportion of unserved/underserved residents
 - No initial budgets are being adopted, County's initial contributions are unclear
 - The Tule River Tribe is eligible for state and/or federal transit funding but their population is included into the County's share of costs under this agreement
 - Policy decisions related to costs and cost sharing are to be determined by the Agency after it is formed
 - The proposed JPA does not obligate the County to contribute general fund money
- Voting Structure
 - County has one vote, which is not proportionate to funding or population
 - Potential impasse on annual budget or LTF contributions (unanimous approval required)
 - County would need to determine which supervisors will serve as the member and the alternate for the Board of Directors

Discussion on Proposed Agreement, cont.

- Road Fund Impacts
 - Excess LTF Funds not needed for Transit may be reallocated to Roads (~\$4.5 million to Roads in FY 2020/21, 7.5% of incoming Roads funds)
 - A new agency would need to build emergency, capital replacement, cash flow, and other reserves and may increase expenses, which may leave less LTF for Roads
 - Administrative cost savings do not necessarily mean an increase in LTF to Roads
- Staffing Concerns and Considerations
 - A Meet and Confer would be required for changes to the Transit Technician position
 - The Transit Manager is an at-will position
 - County Staff may need to participate in Agency planning and coordination efforts
 - County Staff will need to seek Agency assistance in the General Plan and related planning documents

Discussion on Proposed Agreement, cont.

- Transit Services
 - County can no longer unilaterally determine service levels and may only request services or service levels be added or reduced
 - Development agreements would be required to add services for new major developments, such as Sequoia Gateway project
 - Separate agreement(s) would likely be required for LOOP and Emergency Services
- Oversight and Agency Growth
 - A transit-only agency may engage in scope creep or organizational expansions
 - Agency would be subject to financial and performance audits under state and federal law
 - Agency would be subject to performance metrics and goals determined by TCAG
- Limited benefits if not all potential member agencies join
 - Rider and administrative benefits may not be realized if the larger transit agencies do not join the JPA

Summary

- Transit Consolidation has potential great benefits for administration and for the riders
 - Improve Rider Experience
 - Implement Uniform Policies and Technologies
 - Potential for reduced administrative and operational costs
- Current JPA is the result of the 2019 Tulare County Regional Transit Coordination Study
- County Share per Proposed Agreement: ~21.4%
 - Based on Population and Service Hours
 - Exact details to be determined
 - No initial budget(s) or service plan(s) are included



Questions, Comments, & Discussion