

VCAC

VINE Consumer Advisory Committee

AGENDA

Thursday, March 7, 2013

6:00 pm

NCTPA / NVTA Board Room

Note New Address  625 Burnell Street, Napa CA 94559

General Information

All materials relating to an agenda item for an open session of a regular meeting of the VCAC which are provided to a majority or all of the members of the VCAC by VCAC members, staff or the public within 72 hours of but prior to the meeting will be available for public inspection, on and after at the time of such distribution, in the office of the Secretary of the VCAC, 625 Burnell Street, Napa, California 94559, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., except for NCTPA holidays. Materials distributed to a majority or all of the members of the VCAC at the meeting will be available for public inspection at the public meeting if prepared by the members of the VCAC or staff and after the public meeting if prepared by some other person. Availability of materials related to agenda items for public inspection does not include materials which are exempt from public disclosure under Government Code sections 6253.5, 6254, 6254.3, 6254.7, 6254.15, 6254.16, or 6254.22.

**** Members of the public may speak to the VCAC on any item at the time the VCAC is considering the item. Please complete a Speaker's Slip, which is located on the table near the entryway, and then present the slip to the VCAC Staff. Also, members of the public are invited to address the VCAC on any issue not on today's agenda under Public Comment. Speakers are limited to three minutes.*

This Agenda shall be made available upon request in alternate formats to persons with a disability. Persons requesting a disability-related modification or accommodation should contact Deborah Schwarzbach, VCAC Staff, at (707) 259-8327 during regular business hours, at least 48 hours prior to the time of the meeting.

This Agenda may also be viewed online by visiting the NCTPA website at www.nctpa.net, click on Minutes and Agendas.

ITEMS

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call and Introductions
3. Chairperson and Committee Members' Update
4. Correspondence
5. Public Comment ***

Time Estimates

10 Minutes

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

RECOMMENDATION

Time Estimates

- | | | | |
|----|--|------------------------|--------|
| 6. | Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 3, 2012. | APPROVE | 5 min |
| 7. | Update on VINE system changes

The Committee will receive a status update from the Manager of Public Transit on recent changes to the VINE bus system. | INFORMATION
COMMENT | 30 min |
| 8. | Review and approve transit service policies.

The Committee will review and be asked to support and forward to the Board of Directors for approval, policies for transit services. | APPROVE | 45 min |
| 9. | Adjourn. | | |

Estimated Meeting Length: 90 mins

VCAC

VINE Consumer Advisory Committee

MINUTES

Thursday January 3, 2013

ITEMS

1. Call to Order

Jack Wall, VCAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Roll Call and Introductions

Members Present:

George Blackstock
Jack Wall
Doug Weir
Ricardo Huijon

Margret Schlenke
Anna Ernest
Jean-Vincent Deal

Members Absent:

Genji Schmeder

3. Chairperson / Committee Members / Staff Update

A. Several Committee members wished to speak about the new routes and adding a Committee member. They were asked by staff to reserve those comments for the designated agenda items.

4. Correspondence

NONE

5. Public Comment

Stephanie Jack of the Vine Hill neighborhood

Ms. Jack feels like her neighborhood is no longer served effectively. She believes the Route 6 does not get her where she wants to go and now must take three buses to get to her place of work. She also made the point that the Route 6 is chronically late and not a reliable source of transportation. She no longer feels like she can get what she needs done in one day. Her trip to work took 35 minutes and it now takes an hour and fifteen minutes. She loves the drivers and the buses but feels the need to purchase a car due to the fact the system has become unreliable for her.

*MSC – Motion, Seconded and Unanimously Carried

Meryll Gobler representative of Rohlff's Manor

Ms. Gobler reiterated the fact that the Route 6 is chronically late and is causing issues for the residents of Rohlff's Manor. Many of the residents she represents would like the Route 6 to service the Claremont loop so they can have direct access to the Kaiser Medical facilities located there. It was brought to her attention by several residents of Rohlff's that one of the reasons the Route 6 is behind time so often is because the bus is delayed by the traffic at Redwood Middle School. Many of the residents she works with are also frustrated by the automated phone tree at the transit center. It directs people to the website if all the lines are in use, which many seniors do not have access to. She did have positive news saying the residents at Rohlff's like the drivers and enjoy riding on their buses. She finally suggested that the VCAC meetings be held at an earlier time so people could take the bus to get to them.

Carol Hollachech of Rohlff's Manor

Ms. Hollachech stated that she is confused by the new routes and can no longer use the stops that she used before. She would like the meeting times for the VCAC to be announce better so people know ahead of time. She believes the taxi script limit of \$12.00 is too low and because of that she cannot get anywhere she wants to go via taxi. Due to the new routes she no longer wants to use the buses because she can't get anywhere in 30 minutes, it takes 50 for her.

Holly Fitch – Transit Ambassador

Ms. Fitch believes that the new routes are not very good and the system should have been left alone. She stated there is no way to get downtown and that the system is broken.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

6. Approval of meeting minutes of December 6th, 2012

**MSC" SCHLENKE/WEIR to APPROVE
(Approve)**

7. Review of Transit Projects for 2013

NCTPA staff went over several of the issues with the new system as well as solutions. As mentioned in the public comments the majority of the issues with the new system are with the Route 6. It is chronically late and is not getting some people where they would like to go in a timely manner. Staff presented the VCAC with a work plan for the coming year and asked the Committee to approve it.

MSC" WIER/DEAL to APPROVE

Chair Wall stated he would like to have the taxi script limit increased which was met with agreement from members of the audience.

Committee Member Blackstock brought up the fact that with the new system it has become difficult to know what bus is what and wondered if anything could be done to assist people with sight problems in identifying which bus is which.

Committee Member Deal would like to see the later runs on the Route 10 extended to the transit center. He rides at those times as well as a few other folks and would like to get closer to the downtown.

Committee Member Deal had several suggestions about new stop locations and current ones that need better access. Staff responded stating that anyone that had suggestions or observations that they be directed to Tom, Matt, or Diana.

Committee Member Weir volunteered to be the Committee's liaison to assist in the selection process for new fareboxes. Doug also suggested that passes be sold at Sunshine Market in Calistoga. Staff is currently looking into sales centers in the Up Valley communities.

The Committee would like to see the bathrooms reopened at the transit center.

(Information/Comment)

8. Appointment of Committee Members

Chair Wall stated that he would like to have a student member of the VCAC. NCTPA staff responded that one of the people who had applied for the vacant position was in fact a student and would be an excellent addition to the Committee.

(Information/Comment)

9. Adjourn until March 7th, 2013

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Wall at 7:00pm

MSC" WIER/BLACKSTOCK to APPROVE

(Approve)



March 7, 2013
VCAC Agenda Item 7

Action Requested: INFORMATION

NAPA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AND PLANNING AGENCY VCAC Agenda Letter

TO: VINE Consumer Advisory Committee
FROM: Tom Roberts, Manager of Public Transit
(707) 259-8778 / Email: troberts@nctpa.net
SUBJECT: Transit Manager Service Update

RECOMMENDATION

Receive an update from the Manager of Public Transit regarding VINE service changes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2013, the VINE bus system underwent a significant change in service design and delivery. Since the change, ridership system-wide has increased significantly over the comparable period from the prior year. On-time performance has also increased. Based on public feedback, staff plans to make minor service adjustments between the spring and summer of 2013.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Approximately thirteen years ago the VINE transported over a million passengers annually. At that time major changes to the bus system were instituted that resulted in eliminating convenient transfers between routes and the institution of long and indirect routes that significantly increased passenger travel time. The result was the bus system lost nearly half its ridership. Beginning in 2010, NCTPA undertook a variety of studies to ascertain what changes both riders and non-riders wanted to see in the bus system. Specifically, on-board passenger surveys, in-person focus groups, and telephone surveys were conducted. The result was clear direction to the agency that the community desired a bus system that provided more direct paths of travel, more travel options, shorter travel times, and more frequent service.

In December 2012, a completely redesigned transit system was launched connecting neighborhoods more directly with centers of health, education, retail and employment. Overlapping routes and a concept of "transfer anywhere" were introduced along with

increased bus frequency and the creation of a rapid transit corridor along Trancas Street and Soscol Avenue. Combined, the changes provided a service that significantly reduced average travel times while providing for more direct trips and travel options for the vast majority of riders. Buses largely travel down the same streets as before. Therefore, the walking distance to bus stops was not changed for residents in 95% of the service area.

Since the introduction of the new service, comments have been received from riders voicing concerns or offering suggestions about the changes. The majority of complaints expressed have been associated with understanding how to navigate the new system and were easily resolved with additional rider education.

In addition, some excellent observations regarding needed adjustments have been expressed. Among these:

- Additional bus stop locations have been proposed by riders
- The Route 6 cannot be completed in the allotted 30 minutes, is running chronically late, and needs to better service Kaiser Permanente
- The Route 1 is running so ahead of schedule it may as well go back to servicing the upper Brown's Valley neighborhood that was eliminated from service
- The timing is off between bus routes at certain logical transfer points
- The later southbound runs of the Route 10 should terminate at the Transit Center
- The Route 10 and 11 schedules need to be adjusted by time of day to promote better on-time performance
- Because the Route 29 mid-day runs do not service the park and ride lots and the morning runs of the route do not service the transit center, it is impractical to take the Route 29 in the morning and return home mid-day

Staff agrees with these comments and proposes to address them. New stops continue to be added where safe and practical. Changes to the Routes 1 and 6 can be addressed within the next 60 days. Because changes in transfer point timing can impact the schedules of virtually all routes and the changes required for the Routes 10, 11 and 29 may impact driver shift assignments, these will take more lead time to implement.

Conventional transit wisdom suggests that after such significant service changes ridership should initially decrease until people adjust to the new system. System-wide ridership in December 2012 and January 2013 increased over the prior year 12.5% and 19% respectively. System-wide on-time performance increased 2%. Significantly, the new Route 10 exceeded 81% on-time up from 61% a year ago. At 67% on-time, the new Route 11 still requires schedule adjustments to compensate for the traffic through American Canyon.

Staff proposes to make the service changes noted above at the earliest opportunity.

System Wide			
	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Change
Passenger Trips	47,361	56,639	19.6%+
On-time	83.0%	85.0%	
<i>NOTE: The new bus schedules were developed based on time trials. On-time performance will improve further when schedules are next adjusted later in the year to reflect real-time observations.</i>			

County-wide Transit (Routes 10/11)			
In December 2012, the route 10 was split and the frequency increased in order to provide better on-time performance and lay the foundation for increased valley-wide commuter opportunities.			
	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Change
	Rt 10	RT 10/11	
Passenger Trips	18,513	22,064	19%+
On-time	61.1%	81.4% / 67.8%	

Local Napa City Routes			
In December 2012, routes 1 -6 became 1 - 8 and were redesigned to provide more neighborhood service, greater frequency, more direct connections and shorter travel times. Based on public feedback, in the months ahead schedules will be adjusted and minor route modifications are anticipated.			
	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Change
	Rts 1 - 6	Rts 1 - 8	
Passenger Trips	21,962	24,847	13%+
On-time	85.0%	85.7%	
*Poor on-time performance of the new route 6 is lowering the average. Without the route 6 = 89.2%			

Community Transit Services			
Passenger Trips			
	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Change
Am Can Transit	2,692	2,670	0%
Calistoga	468	1,466	313%+
St. Helena	494	744	151%+
Yountville	1,104	2,070	87.5%+

Regional Transit Services			
	Jan 2012	Jan 2013	Change
Route 29 - Trips	2,128	2,374	11.6%+
On-time (29)	86.2%	90.7%	
Route 25 - Trips	Not in service	404	
On-time (25)		97.0%	



March 7, 2013
VCAC Agenda Item 8

Action Requested: APPROVE

NAPA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AND PLANNING AGENCY VCAC Agenda Letter

TO: VINE Consumer Advisory Committee
FROM: Tom Roberts, Manager of Public Transit
(707) 259-8778 / Email: troberts@nctpa.net
SUBJECT: Review Draft Performance and Service Standards and Policies

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee review proposed performance and service standards and policies and forward to the NCTPA Board for adoption.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All transit agencies are required under federal law to establish performance and service standards to measure effectiveness and guide the agency toward consistent transit policy development and equitable allocation of services. Staff is proposing a variety of standards and measures be adopted to meet federal requirements and guide the agency respective to future transit service planning and expansion.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

All transit agencies seek to provide quality, effective and efficient service to the public. Performance standards provide a set of metrics by which the agency can identify areas in need of improvement and assist in establishing priorities for the allocation of staff resources, seeking funding opportunities, and informing strategic management decisions. In addition, as it relates to the allocation of scarce financial resources, service standards can provide a mechanism to ensure the greatest community needs are being addressed and public policy decision making is being carried out objectively.

Staff requests the Council review the proposed performance and service policies and forward to the NCTPA Board for adoption.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Proposed performance and service standards.

SERVICE STANDARDS AND DESIGN

PURPOSE

To accomplish the goal of providing efficient and effective service to the residents of Napa County, the Agency has developed a series of service standards that provide a framework for service allocation as well as measures to continually examine the service to ensure that services meet efficiency and effectiveness standards in accordance with stated objectives. Additionally, these standards are also a requirement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in order to ensure that service is allocated and assessed without regard to race, color, or national origin.

SERVICE DEFINITIONS

A matrix depicting the service standards and goals for the various types of service is contained in Attachment 1 to this policy. The section below provides a definition for each service type operated by NCTPA:

Local – These are the services operating on corridors where residential densities are approximately 5,000 to 4,000 residents per square mile (or comparable commercial densities). These routes operate along the arterial streets as well as local or residential roads, and provide the highest level of service due to the general mobility needs within the urbanized area.

Regional - Provides inter-city service along arterials, highways or freeways to major focal points, destinations and trip attractors. These routes provide connections to regional rail or other transportation options and may include express-type services. Service features wide stop-spacing or areas with closed door operation (most often on the freeway). Underlying local service also contributes to a greater aggregate service frequency along arterials during operating hours.

Community Circulators – These are primarily routes operating in areas of very low density (fewer than 4,000 residents per square mile). Provide service that operates to focal points within the community.

City Dial a Ride – These are services that serve designated areas within the two cities of Calistoga and Yountville. Demand responsive service provides a more flexible operation than traditional fixed route services for areas of very low density where fixed route service may not be warranted. There are largely no allocation standards for these services, as they are generally based on each city's financial contribution toward the operation.

DENSITY STANDARDS

To ensure that the service is able to be both cost efficient and useful, areas with higher density of population or commercial development should be allocated service that is more frequent, with routes and bus stops spaced closer together, and operates more consistently throughout the day. Within each service category, service will be allocated primarily on the basis of demand or use, provided that minimum service levels are provided.

Service Span refers the number of hours that the service operates on any given day. It is generally indicated with beginning and end periods. However, this may be changed based on demand for earlier or later service to meet specific needs of the community.

For example, within the Fixed Route Local category, service will be provided at a minimum of every 30 minutes for at least 11 hours a day for every day except Sunday. More frequent service allocation will be provided on the basis of a combination of demand for service and density.

Route Spacing refers to the general availability of routes within the service area. For Regional routes, due to the nature of operation and design of the service, gaps between routes may be greater than a mile. For local routes, spacing is generally closer and follows the grip of the city.

Table 1: Density, Frequency and Service Span Standard

Persons per Square Mile	Route Spacing	Route Structure	Weekday Frequency Standard	Service Span
5,000 – 4,000 (Medium Density) [such as urban area of Napa]	½ mile	Modified Grid	Local: 30 minutes Peak 60 minutes off peak	7 am to 6 pm (Monday to Saturday)
4,000 – 3,000 (Low Density)	½-1 mile	Focal Point	Community: 45 minutes Peak 90 minutes off peak	7 am to 3 pm (Monday to Friday)
4,000 – 3,000 (Low Density)	½-1 mile	Focal Point	Regional 120 minutes Peak No Midday Service	6 am to 5 pm (Monday to Friday)
3,000 and below	N/A	Focal Point	City Dial a Ride: No Standard	No Standard

VEHICLE LOAD STANDARDS

A Vehicle Load Factor is the ratio of the number of seats on a vehicle to the number of passengers on-board. Load factor is an indicator of the extent or probability of overcrowding, and may indicate the need for additional vehicles to maintain useful service.

The Load factor is determined by taking the number of seats on a specific route which pass the peak load point during the peak hour, and dividing that number into the number of passengers that are actually carried past that point during that hour.

Load factors can vary by service type. Different Vehicle Load thresholds shall be used to measure service effectiveness or to determine remediation. The following thresholds shall be monitored, as reflected in Table 2:

Table 2: Vehicle Load Factor by Route Type

Route Type	Vehicle Load Factor
Local	1.25 (25% standees)
Regional (Urban)	1.00 (no standees)*
Regional (Rural)	1.00 (no standees)*
Community	1.25 (25% standees)

*For purposes of measuring the Vehicle Load Factor for Regional Service, the Vehicle Load Factor shall be measured as the route enters the "non-revenue area" and is operating closed-door, which is generally on the freeway or highway.

SERVICE AVAILABILITY

Service availability refers to the general measure of how the routes are distributed within the NCTPA service area. It can be defined as a measure of the distance a person must travel to gain access to transit service.

NCTPA fixed route bus service will serve 85% of the dwelling units within the urbanized area of Napa within one quarter mile. 90% of the major activity centers will be within one quarter mile of a bus route.

ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

For all fixed route services, regardless of service type, 90% of service will operate on time (between 0 minutes early and 5 minutes late). For City Dial a Ride (demand responsive) 90% of the service will arrive within 30 minutes of call requesting pick up.

PASSENGER PER HOUR

In order to account for Regional service, which can sometimes operate closed-door for large portions of the route, the standards for passenger activity assumes that closed

door portions of the route will not be counted toward overall passengers per hour. Table 3 presents the following thresholds that should be monitored:

Table 3: Passenger Activity by Route Type

Route Type	Passenger Activity
Local	12 passengers per hour
Regional (Urban)	7 passengers per hour
Regional (Rural)	5 passengers per hour
Community	5 passengers per hour
City Dial a Ride	2 passengers per hour

FAREBOX RECOVERY RATIO

Farebox recovery ratio is an efficiency metric that gauges the amount of cost that is covered by passenger fares. In certain instances, outside funding can be used to supplant passenger fares, as is the case of the City Dial a Ride services. Table 4 presents the farebox recovery standard by service type.

Table 4: Farebox Recovery Ratio

Route Type	Farebox Recovery Ratio
Local	Meet or exceed 17%
Regional (Urban)	Meet or exceed 17%
Regional (Rural)	Meet or exceed 15%
Community	Meet or exceed 10%
City Dial a Ride	Meet or exceed 10%

TRANSIT AMENITIES

Transit amenities are those items installed by NCTPA that provide improvements to the traditional bus stop pole and sign. This includes shelters, canopies, benches or other betterments intended to provide comfort or convenience to the rider. In 2012, NCTPA completed a project that prioritized locations for bus stop improvements followed by implementation.

Future implementation of amenities will be based upon availability of funding for improvements, while prioritizing services that operate at 60 minutes or worse at stops with the greatest number of riders per day.

APPLICATION OF STANDARDS

To determine service effectiveness, staff will conduct ridership analyses on a regular basis. This information will be used to determine evaluative components such as passengers per vehicle hour, vehicle load factor, passengers per trip and hour, and farebox recovery ratio.

An assessment of route performance within the service categories will be conducted annually to determine if corrective action is required. Minority Transit routes (those routes that have at least 1/3 of the total route mileage in a census tract with a percentage of minority population greater than the percentage of minority population in the service area) will also be identified in the evaluation.

Service that falls below the standard for all routes within its category will be analyzed for the following:

- Schedule adjustments, if service frequencies exceed the standards provided in this Policy.
- Running time adjustments or minor route changes to improve efficiency or improve route performance.
- Route improvements, including route consolidation or through-routing to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Route discontinuance, should there be no other means to improve efficiency or provide a well-used transit product.
- Other actions, such as grant funded opportunities or targeted marketing, to improve route performance.

NCTPA Service Characteristics and Standards

Attachment 1: Service Standards

Service Type	Peak and Base Frequencies*	Service Span*	Scheduling	Route Structure	Load Factor*	Vehicles	Stop Spacing	Stop Amenities*	Farebox Recovery	Passengers per hour	On-time Performance*
Local (Routes 1 through 11)	Not to exceed 30 minutes in the peak and 60 minutes midday	7 am to 6 pm (Monday to Saturday)	Clock Headways preferred	Modified Grid: uses the lay out of the urban area	1.25	Standard 40' or smaller vehicle to meet load	1/4 to 1/2 mile depending on density	Shelters based on high ridership routes in areas with lower frequency	Meet or exceed 17%	12 passenger per hour	90% of service will operate on time (between 0 minutes early and 5 minutes late)
Regional (Urban) (Routes 20 & 29)	Not to exceed 2 hours in the peak. No midday standard.	6 am to 5 pm (Monday to Friday)	Scheduled to meet regional connections	Focal Point: provides access between two focal areas to provide regional and intercity connectivity	1.00	Standard 40' or smaller vehicle to meet load	1/2 to 1 mile depending on density or trip generators and attractors (such as school, shopping, medical)	Shelters based on high ridership routes in areas with lower frequency	Meet or exceed 17%	7 passengers per hour	90% of service will operate on time (between 0 minutes early and 5 minutes late)
Regional (Rural) (Routes 25)	Not to exceed 2 hours in the peak. No midday standard.	6 am to 5 pm (Monday to Friday)	Scheduled to meet regional connections	Focal Point: provides access to connect rural focal area and regional hubs	1.00	Standard 40' or smaller vehicle to meet load	1 to 2 mile depending on density or trip generators and attractors (such as school, shopping, medical)	Shelters based on high ridership routes in areas with lower frequency	Meet or exceed 15%	5 passengers per hour	90% of service will operate on time (between 0 minutes early and 5 minutes late)
Community (American Canyon and St. Helena)	Not to exceed 45 minutes in the peak and 90 minutes midday	7 am to 5 pm (Monday to Friday)	As required to meet demand	Focal Point: provides access between focal areas within a small community	1.25	30' vehicle or smaller	1/2 to 2/3 mile depending on density or trip generators and attractors (such as school, shopping, medical)	Shelters based on high ridership routes in areas with lower frequency	Meet or exceed 10%	5 passenger per hour	90% of service will operate on time (between 0 minutes early and 5 minutes late)
City Dial a Ride (Calistoga and Yountville)	Upon call in, service will arrive within 15 - 30 minutes.	Service based upon available funds	As requested	No standard	No standard	30' vehicle or smaller	No standard	Shelter locations are responsibility of city partners	Meet or Exceed 10% (includes City or other sponsor funding)	2 passengers per hour	90% of service will arrive within 30 minutes of call in

*Required by Title VI for Fixed Route Service Only