



VCTC Intercity Five-Year Service Plan

Ventura County Transportation Commission

May 2015

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) is to improve mobility within the county to meet transportation needs. VCTC began providing countywide intercity bus service, branded as Ventura Intercity Service Transit Authority (VISTA) in 1994. The number of VISTA routes increased from four to seven during the past 20 years. Route schedules have been expanded and modified to meet increased service demand and adapt to traffic and ridership patterns. In addition to schedule adjustments, the network of bus stops has become more extensive and complex over time. In 2015, VCTC began the process of rebranding VISTA as VCTC Intercity, in an effort to improve the visibility and familiarity of the organization.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The VCTC Intercity Five-Year Plan was developed in conjunction with the Ventura County Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP), which included a transit market analysis that contributed to the development of service recommendations. The SRTP also includes service design guidelines, which served as a basis for proposed VCTC Intercity route modifications. The following summaries include key tasks and identify important findings for each phase of the planning process.

Comprehensive Service Evaluation

The initial phase of the study included a comprehensive evaluation of the VCTC Intercity transit system and service area. Ridership for each route, trip, and bus stop in the system was evaluated to measure performance and identify potential improvements. The evaluation process also included extensive field work in which each bus route was reviewed.

The SRTP process also analyzed demographic and socio-economic characteristics, commute patterns, employee origins and destinations, and regional travel demand data to identify concentrations of high transit demand.

A number of important findings were during the comprehensive service evaluation process:

- VCTC Intercity route alignments and schedules have been developed incrementally and as a result of various partnerships and service requests
- Service allocation (service span, headways, and stops) is generally inconsistent throughout the VCTC Intercity service area
- Ridership and productivity varies significantly across different VCTC routes and based on service level (weekdays, Saturday, and Sunday)
- There are several opportunities for additional and/or streamlined service on many routes

Community Outreach

A transit stakeholder meeting with community organization representatives, transit advocates, and riders was held in September 2014 in South Oxnard. This discussion, along with responses from an online survey that was designed specifically for the SRTP, provided a wide range of feedback on VCTC Intercity service, as well as other countywide transit services. Key opinions expressed during these efforts include:

- Schedule coordination between VCTC Intercity and other service providers is lacking
- Buses assigned to VCTC Intercity routes vary significantly in terms of model and quality
- The limited number of frequent routes within the county makes transferring inconvenient
- The expansion of hours (span) would allow some customers to make trips they otherwise would not make
- Customer facilities (stops and transit center) are inconsistent throughout the county
- Simplified and more easily accessible transit information is desired

Five-Year Service Plan

The VCTC Intercity Five-Year Service Plan focuses on accommodating customer requests, addressing unproductive services, and improving countywide connectivity. The initial phase consists of a redesign of existing route and schedules to increase overall ridership, increase productivity, and improve the cost effectiveness of services. The second phase provides a framework for sustainable growth.

Keys to success for VCTC Intercity service include:

- Improved schedule consistency
 - Regular clockface headways
 - Defined route patterns
- Timed connections at major transit centers
 - Ventura Transit Center
 - Thousand Oaks Transit Center
- Increased efficiency
 - Improved route directness
 - Elimination of underperforming stops
 - Reduced service duplication
- Fewer transfers
 - Consolidated routes

Fare Analysis

A fare analysis focuses on the current fare structure of VCTC Intercity fixed-route services and to a lesser extent, Dial-A-Ride (DAR) services. The primary purpose of this analysis is to highlight key fare revenue trends over the past several years, including impacts of recent fare increases, and to present policy and fare product recommendations. This analysis considers upcoming VCTC Intercity fare changes including the elimination of the Go Ventura pass and transition to using magnetic stripe cards for fare media.

2 SERVICE EVALUATION

HISTORICAL TRENDS

Revenue hours and ridership have fluctuated since FY 2008-2009 to FY 2011-2012, as depicted in the following figures. Additional trips were added to Route 126 in FY 2012-2013 to address overcrowding. Coastal Express ridership spiked in FY 2011-2012 and has since decreased.

Figure 1 Historical System Revenue Hours

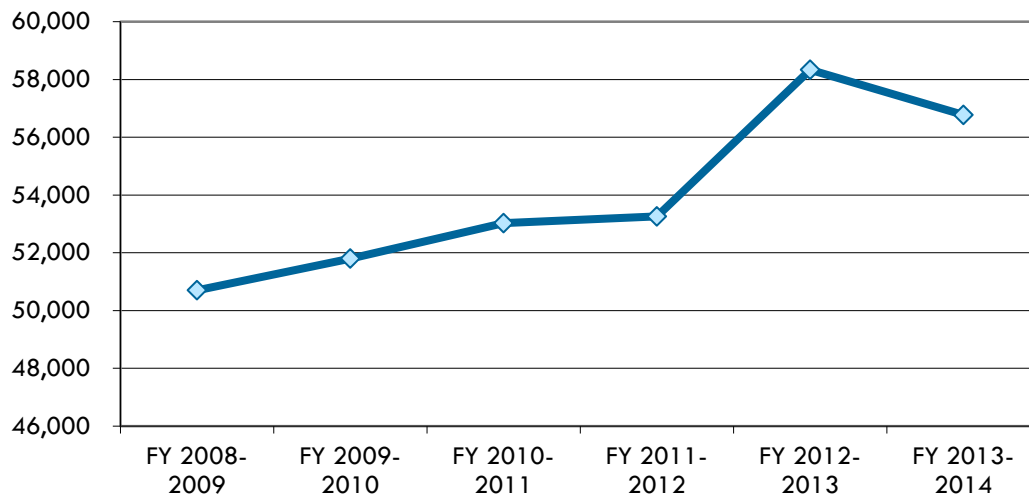
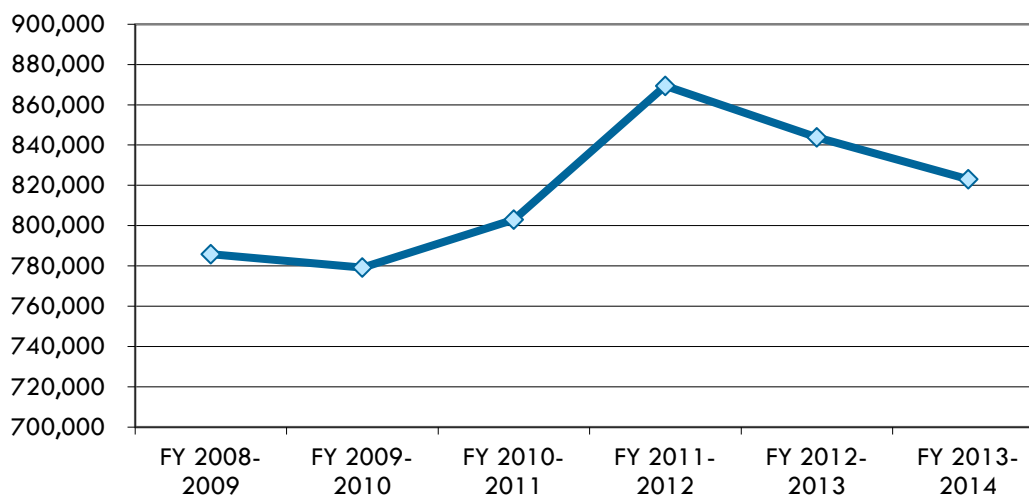


Figure 2 Historical System Ridership



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VCTC Intercity routes have experienced minor changes in ridership over the past six fiscal years, as indicated in Figure 3. During this same timeframe, route productivity (measured in boardings per revenue hour) has remained mostly constant on Route 101, East County, and Conejo Connection. Route 126 and the Coastal Express have become less productive due to additional service while CSUCI ridership and productivity continue to increase, as depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 3 Historical Route Ridership

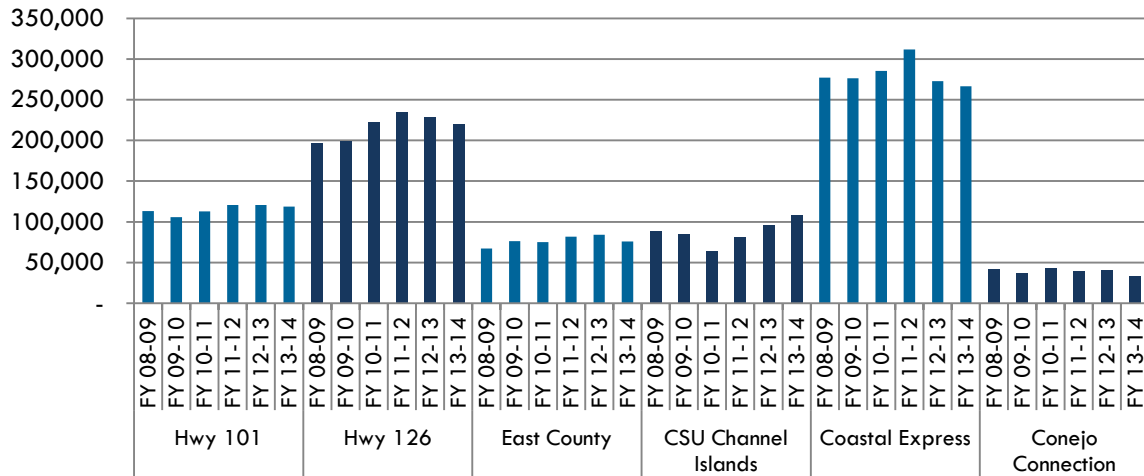
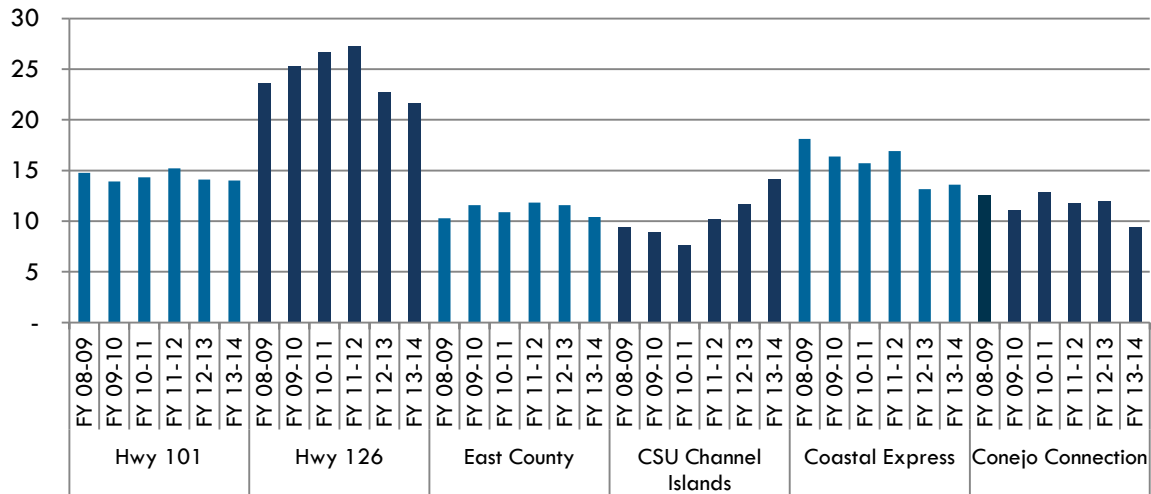


Figure 4 Historical Route Productivity



SERVICE ALLOCATION

While service is distributed fairly evenly among core Ventura intercity routes (Highway 101, Highway 126, and East County), the Coastal Express accounts for 34% of total revenue hours, as depicted in the following charts.

Figure 5 Daily Revenue Hours by Route (2014)

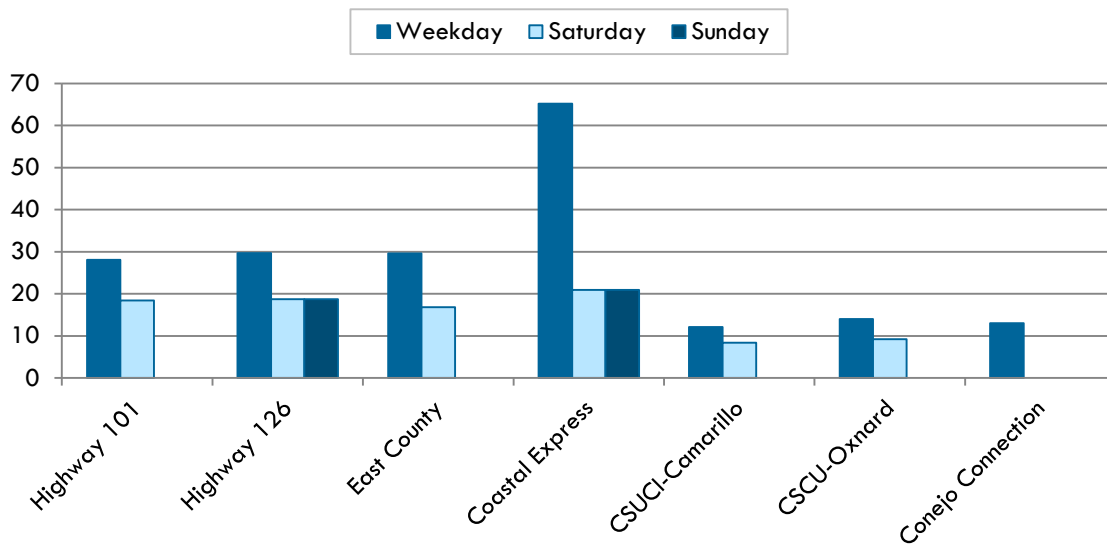
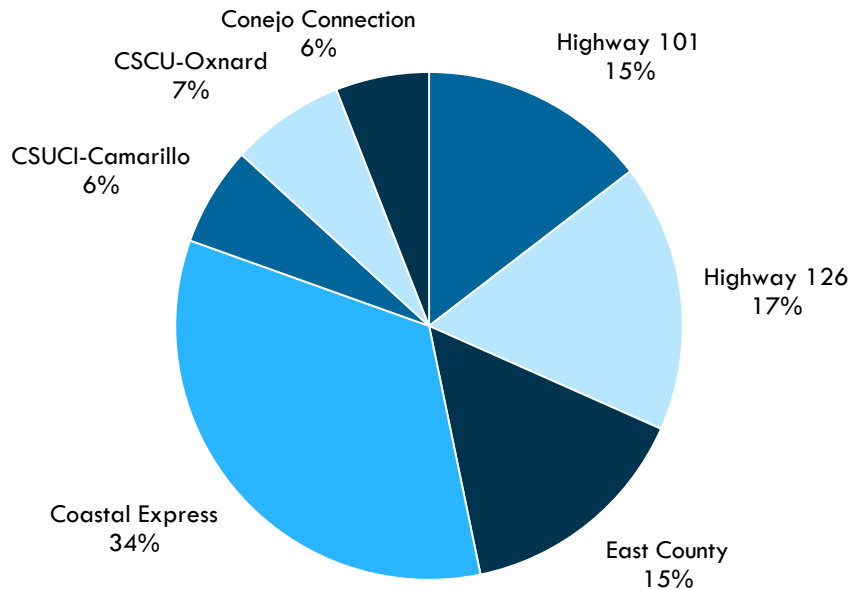
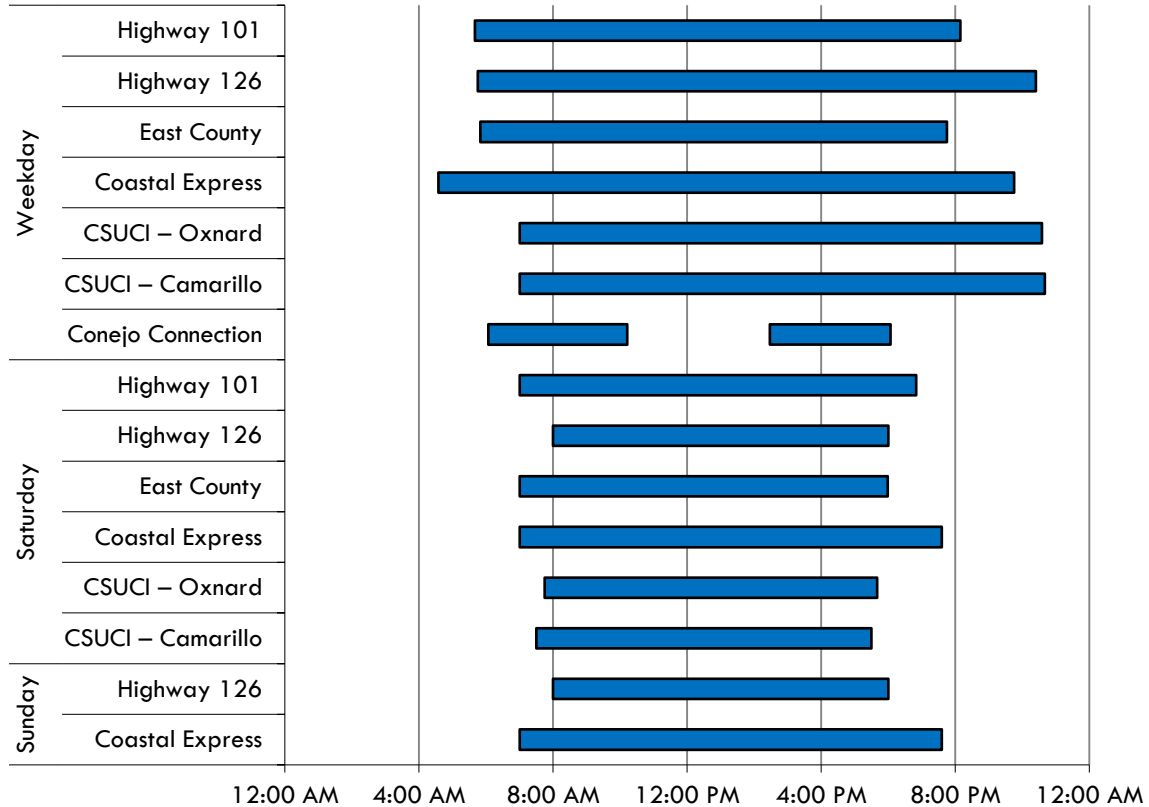


Figure 6 Percentage of Total Revenue Hours (2014)



Service span across VCTC Intercity routes are within a similar range, however, service is not available beyond 6pm during weekends on most routes.

Figure 7 Service Span by Route (2014)



Headways are inconsistent across the VCTC Intercity system at each service level (weekday, Saturday, and Sunday), resulting in missed connections and long waits for transferring customers.

Figure 8 Headways by Route and Service Level (2014)

Route	Weekday			Saturday		Sunday	
	Peak	Off-peak	Night	Peak	Night	Peak	Night
Highway 101	25	55	120	75	110	---	---
Highway 126	30	60	80	60	---	60	---
East County	40	65	140	60	130	---	---
Coastal Express	15	60	60	70	95	70	95
CSUCI Camarillo	30	30	70	30	---	---	---
CSUCI Oxnard	60	60	75	60	---	---	---
Conejo Connection	8 Trips	---	---	---	---	---	---

SYSTEM RIDERSHIP PERFORMANCE

Figure 9 depicts average daily boardings during weekdays for each route based on March 2014 ridership data. While the Coastal Express is the highest ridership route, it also has significantly more resources than other routes. East County and CSUCI ridership drop significantly from weekday to Saturday. Only Highway 126 and Coastal Express routes operate on Sunday.

Figure 9 Daily Ridership by Route

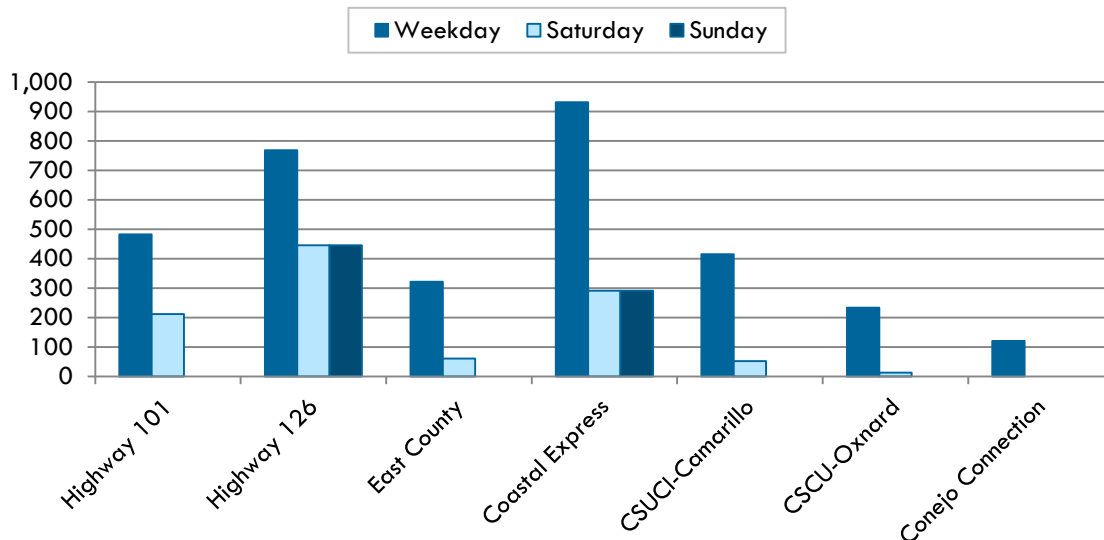


Figure 10 depicts average boardings per revenue hour for each VCTC Intercity routes. CSUCI-Camarillo has the highest productivity due to its short (30 minute) cycle time). Highway 126 has relatively strong ridership every day of the week. Coastal Express and Conejo Connection are included in this chart, however, boardings per revenue trip are a more accurate measure.

Figure 10 Route Ridership Productivity – Boardings per Revenue Hour

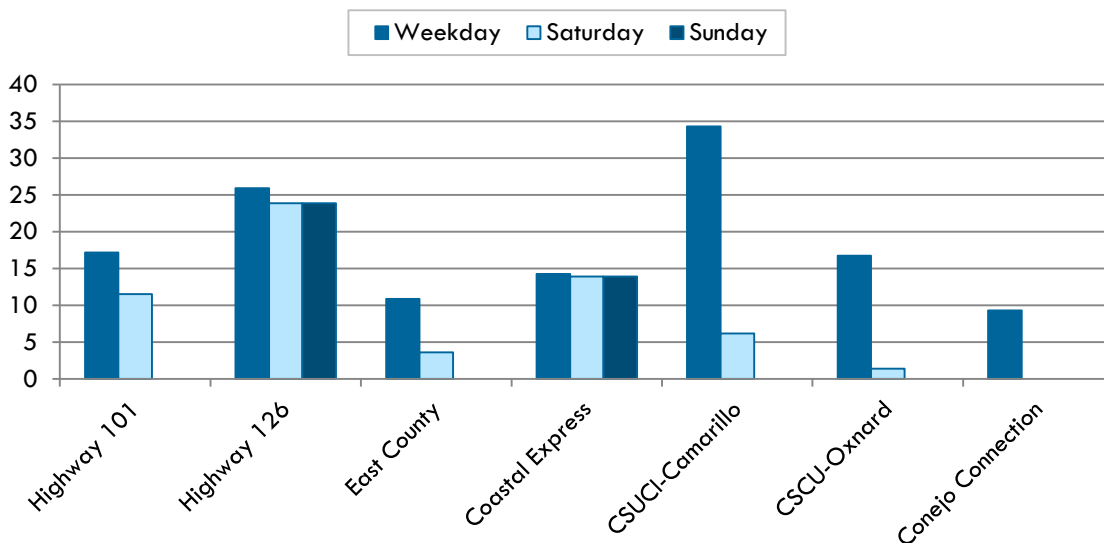
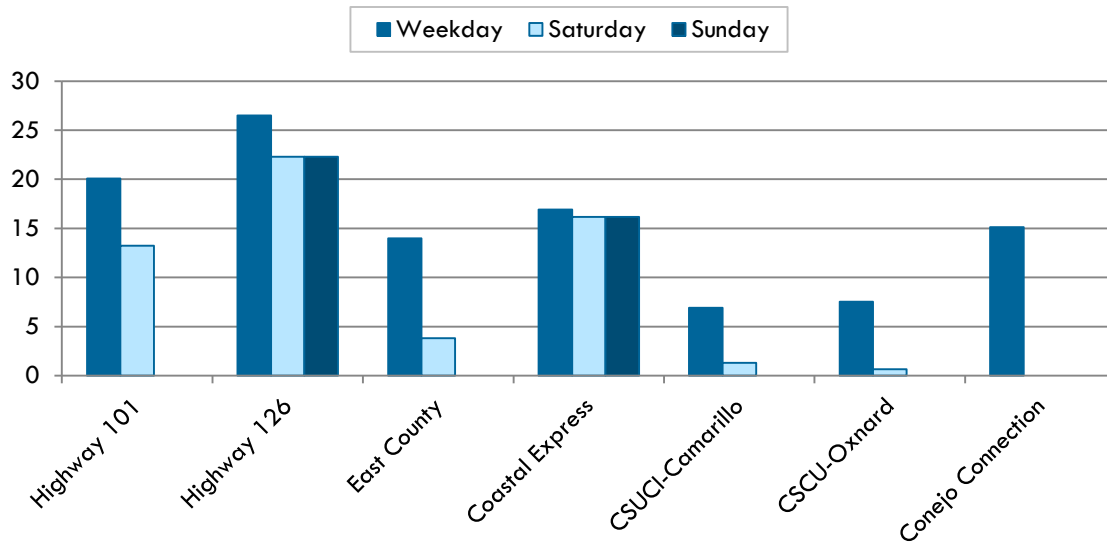


Figure 11 depicts average boardings per revenue trip for each VCTC Intercity routes. This chart is most useful for Coastal Express and Conejo Connection, which both travel long distances and function mostly as commuter express routes. Weekend service on Coastal Express is only slightly less productive than on weekdays. While some Coastal Express trips are near capacity, the majority of trips have low passenger loads resulting in a modest boardings per trip average.

Figure 11 Route Ridership Productivity – Boardings per Revenue Trip



System Ridership

The following maps depict combined system ridership by stop for weekday, Saturday, and Sunday service levels based on March 2014 ridership data. Due to the limited number of samples on weekends and minimal ridership fluctuation between Saturday and Sunday, weekend ridership was combined. As a result, Saturday and Sunday ridership depict identical ridership on active stops.

Stops with over 100 daily boardings include CSUCI, Ventura Transit Center, Ventura County Government Center, Camarillo Station, Fillmore, and Santa Paula, Thousand Oaks Transit Center, and stops near Santa Barbara Transit Center.

Figure 12 System Ridership by Stop – Weekday



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Figure 13 System Ridership by Stop – Saturday



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Figure 14 System Ridership by Stop – Sunday



ROUTE PROFILES

Each route profile provides the following:

- Description of its alignment, destinations, and days of service
- Summary of performance characteristics in comparison to other VCTC Intercity routes
- Route characteristics
- Span
- Frequency by time period
- Daily trips
- Revenue hours
- Route length
- Stops
- Average stop spacing
- Daily boardings (March 2014 data)
- Boardings per trip
- Boarding totals for each trip
- Boarding and alighting totals for each stop
- Ridership maps depicting boarding and alighting totals

Valley Express routes (Santa Paula and Fillmore Circulators) and the Coastal Express Limited (operated by Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District) are not included in this section.

Highway 101

Description

The Highway 101 route provides east-west connectivity across several of the most populated cities within Ventura County, including Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and Thousand Oaks. The Highway 101 route connects to local and regional bus and rail service at several locations, including Ventura Transit Center, Ventura County Government Center, Camarillo Station, The Oaks Mall and Thousand Oaks Transit Center. Highway 101 offers weekday and Saturday service, with shorter span and lower frequencies on Saturday.

The northbound route begins at the Thousand Oaks Transit Center, deviating to serve The Oaks Mall, the Conejo Industrial Park (select trips), the Plaza at Mission Oaks shopping Center, Leisure Village retirement community (select trips), the Camarillo Metrolink station, Camarillo Outlets, and Carmen Plaza. The route returns to Highway 101 between Camarillo and Oxnard before deviating to serve Esplanade Mall, the Ventura Government Center, Ventura College (flag stop), St. Bonaventure High School (flag stop), and terminates at the Ventura Transit Center. The southbound route alignment follows a similar configuration.

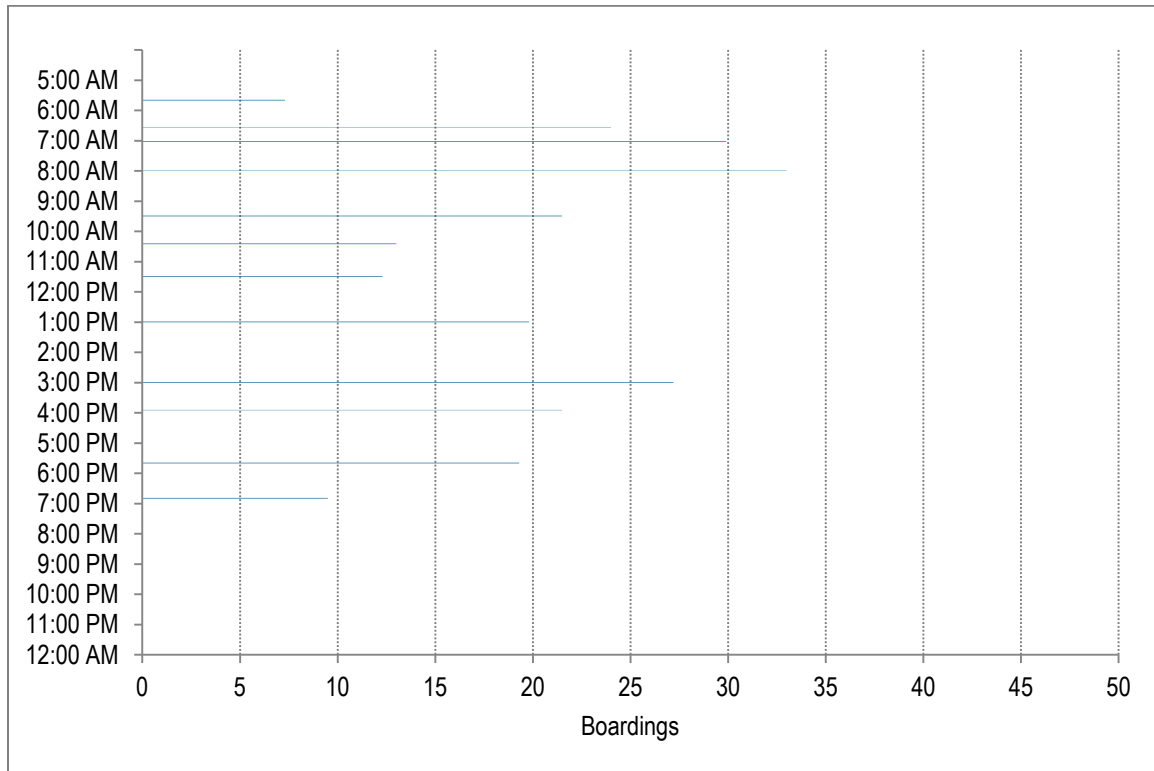
Performance Characteristics

Highway 101 route averages 482 total weekday boardings. Its productivity for weekday boardings per trip is higher than the system average (20.1 compared to 16.3 per day). On Saturday, boardings per trip are slightly higher than the system average (13.2 compared to 11.1 boardings per trip).

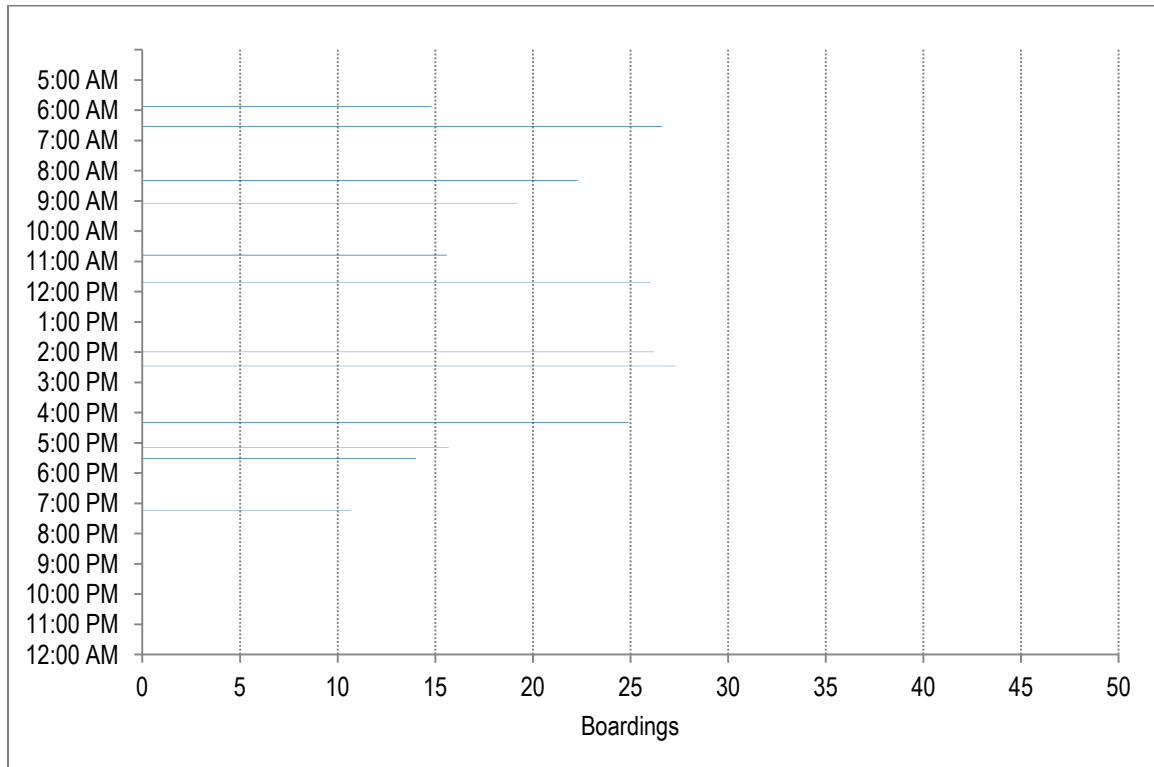
Ridership activity is distributed relatively well along the route. Stops with the highest ridership activity include Pacific View Mall, Carmen Plaza, and Esplanade Mall, each with over 70 average daily boardings.

Highway 101		
Weekday Route Characteristics		
Span		5:40AM-8:09PM
Frequency (min)	Peak	25
	Base	55
	Off-Peak	120
Trips		24
Revenue Hours		29.5
Length (Round-Trip)		54
Stops (Round-Trip)		23
Average Stop Spacing (mi)		2.4
Weekday Route Performance		
Boardings		482
Boardings per Rev. Hour		16.3
Boardings per Trip		20.1
Saturday Route Characteristics		
Span		7:00AM-6:50PM
Frequency (min)	Peak	75
	Base	80
	Off-Peak	110
Trips		16
Revenue Hours		19.7
Stops (Round-Trip)		20
Saturday Route Performance		
Boardings		212
Boardings per Hour		10.8
Boardings per Trip		13.2

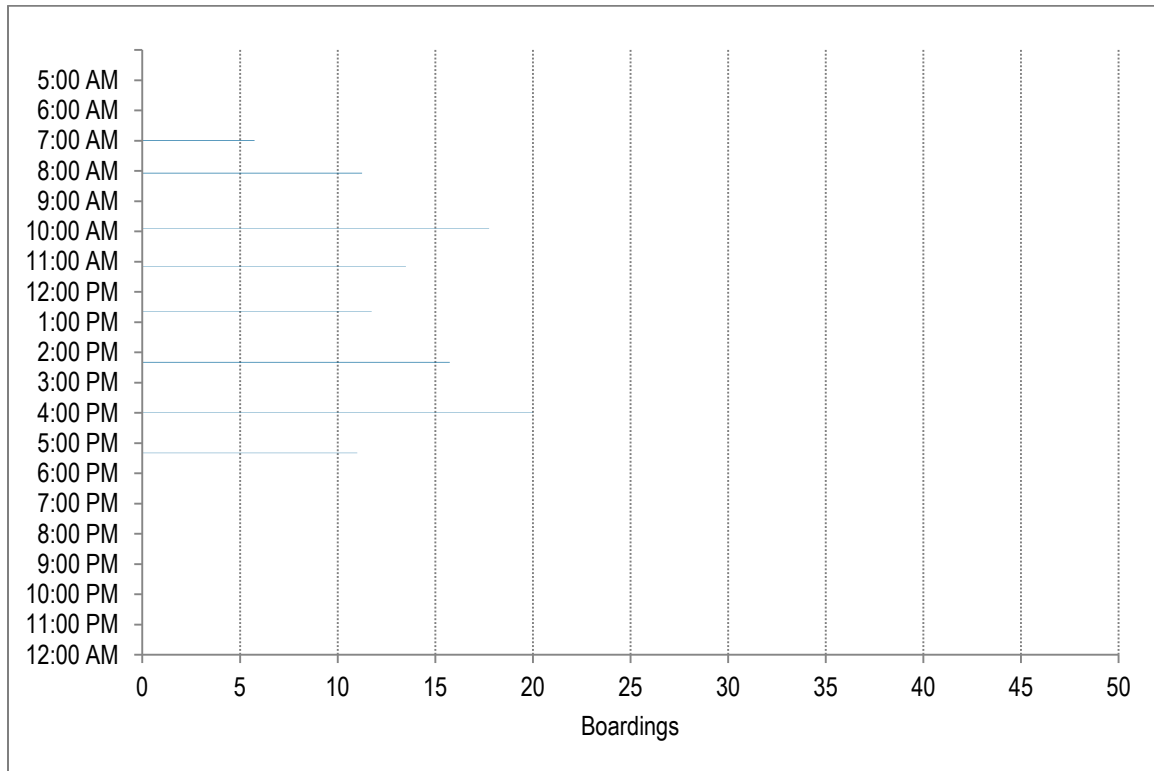
Highway 101 Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Northbound



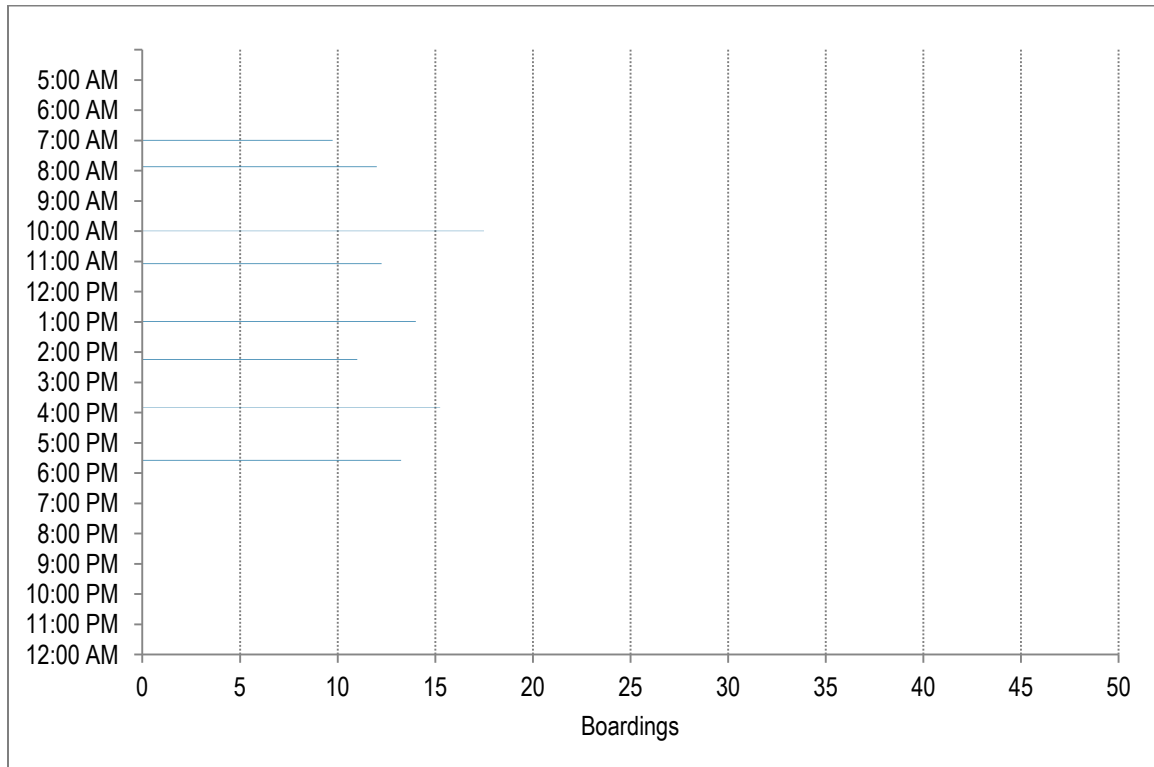
Highway 101 Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Southbound



Highway 101 Ridership by Trip: Saturday – Northbound



Highway 101 Ridership by Trip: Saturday – Southbound



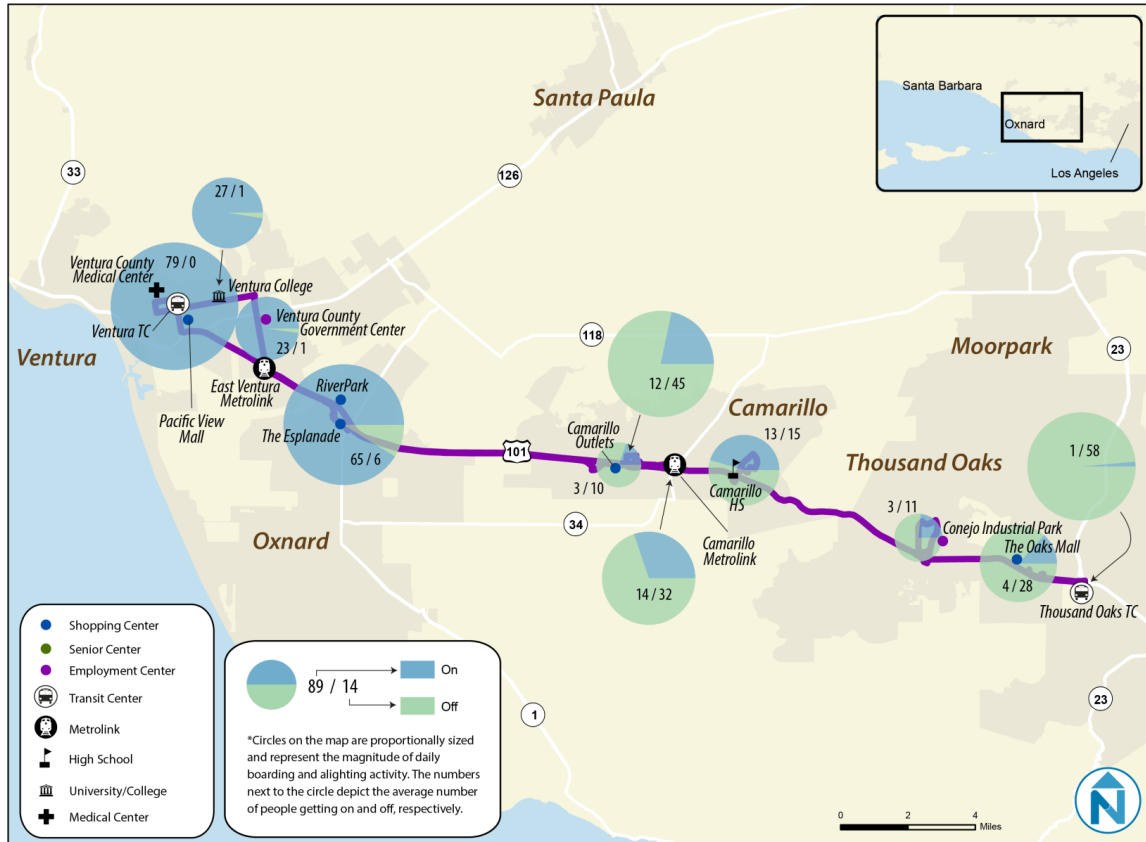
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Highway 101 Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	59	0
2	The Oaks Mall	40	2
3	Conejo Industrial Park	12	1
4	Verdugo Way	13	8
5	Leisure Village	2	0
6	Camarillo Metrolink	38	13
7	Camarillo Outlets	6	3
8	Carmen Plaza	62	15
9	Esplanade Mall	6	44
10	Ventura County Government Center	1	29
11	Ventura College	1	24
12	St. Bonaventure High School	0	15
13	Ventura Transit Center	0	55

Highway 101 Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Southbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Ventura Transit Center	79	0
2	Ventura College	27	1
3	Ventura County Government Center	23	1
4	Esplanade Mall	65	6
5	Camarillo Outlets	3	10
6	Carmen Plaza	12	45
7	Camarillo Metrolink	14	32
8	Verdugo Way	13	15
9	Leisure Village	0	0
10	Conejo Industrial Park	3	11
11	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	1	58
12	The Oaks Mall	4	28

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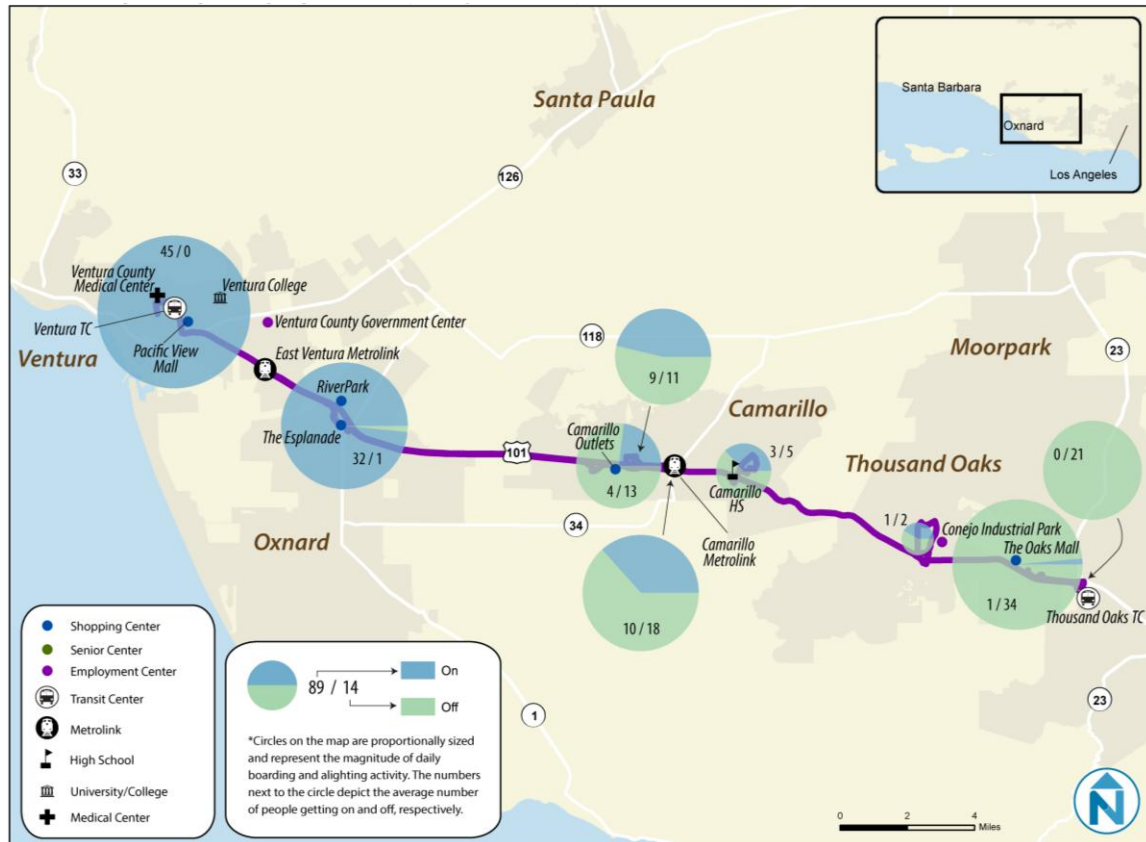
Highway 101 Ridership by Stop: Saturday – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	20	1
2	The Oaks	32	1
3	Conejo Ind. Park	0	1
4	Verdugo Way	4	2
5	Leisure Village	0	0
6	Camarillo Metrolink	20	10
7	Camarillo Outlets	9	2
8	Carmen Plaza	13	6
9	Esplanade Mall	4	34
10	Ventura Pier	4	15
11	Ventura Transit Center	0	35

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Highway 101 Ridership by Stop: Saturday – Southbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Ventura Transit Center	45	0
2	Esplanade Mall	32	1
3	Camarillo Outlets	4	13
4	Carmen Plaza	9	11
5	Camarillo Metrolink	10	18
6	Verdugo Way	3	5
7	Leisure Village	0	0
8	Conejo Ind. Park	1	2
9	The Oaks Mall	1	34
10	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	0	21

Highway 126

Description

The Highway 126 route connects the Heritage Valley cities of Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru with employment, educational, and medical destinations in Ventura. The Highway 126 route also connects to local circulator service in Santa Paula and Fillmore, as well as local and regional routes in Ventura.

The eastbound route departs Pacific View Mall, St. Bonaventure High School (select trips), Ventura County Medical Center (select trips), Ventura College, Ventura County Government Center, Saticoy, Santa Paula K-Mart, Santa Paula City Hall, Fillmore Senior Center, Piru Rancho, and Piru (select trips). The westbound route follows the same configuration, with flag stops at Ventura College and alternating flag stops and scheduled stops at Ventura County Medical Center.

Saturday and Sunday service follow the same configuration, but do not offer service to St. Bonaventure High School, the Ventura County Medical Center, or Piru.

Performance Characteristics

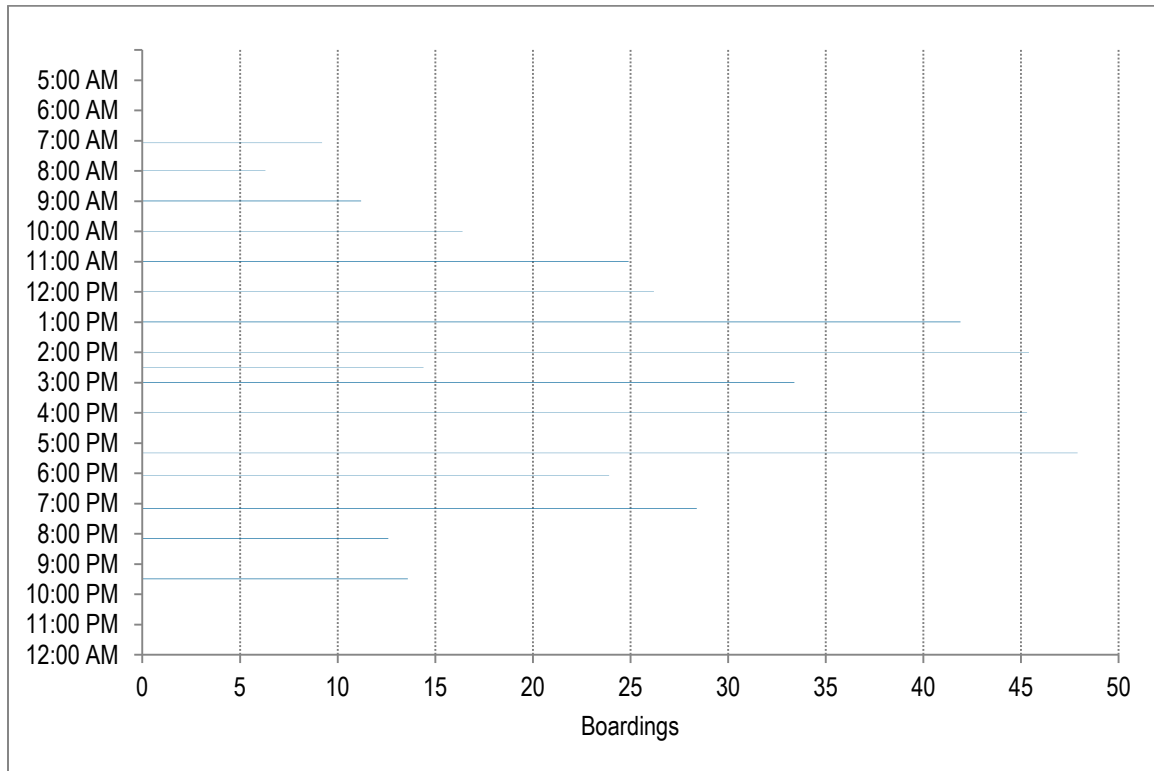
The Highway 126 route has the second-highest average weekday ridership among all VCTC Intercity routes 435 daily boardings. The route has the highest weekday productivity of all routes in the system (26.5 compared to 16.3 system average). On weekends, boardings per trip are also the highest among all routes (22.3 compared to 11.1 boardings per trip).

Weekday westbound passenger loads are highest between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. while eastbound passenger loads are highest between 1:00 and 6:00 p.m. Stops with the highest weekday ridership include Fillmore Senior Center, Santa Paula City Hall, Ventura Transit Center and Ventura College.

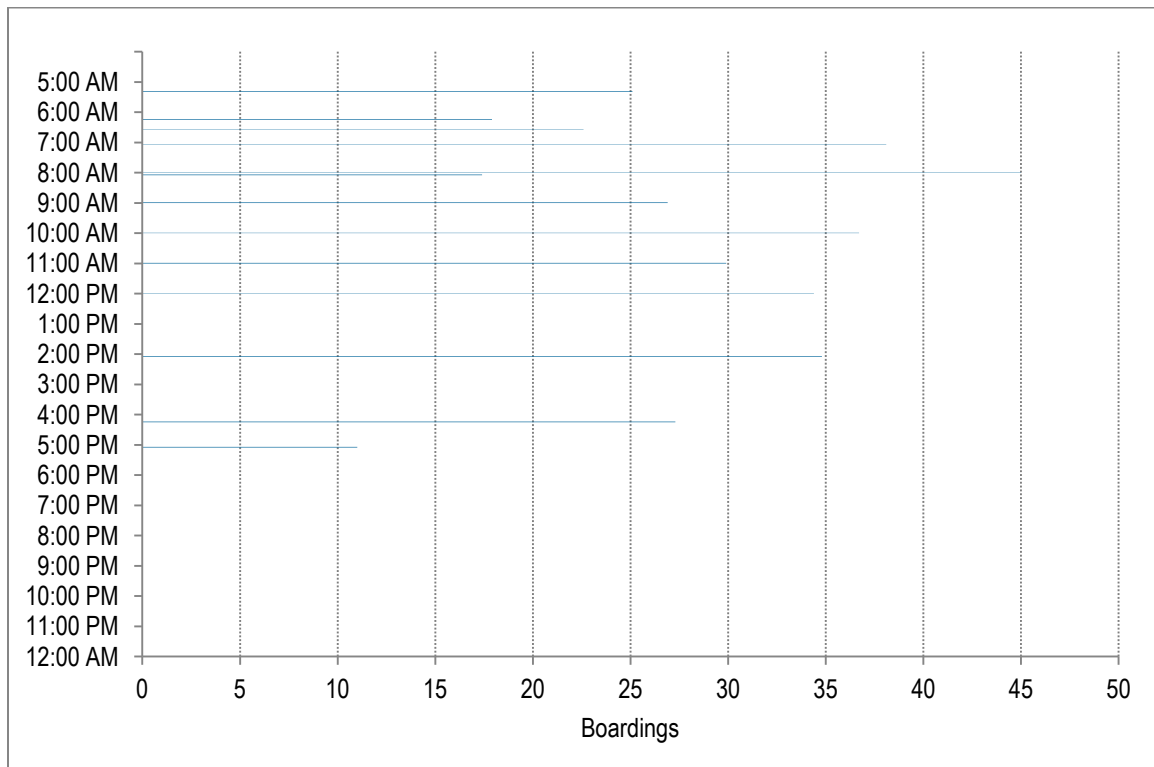
Weekend eastbound ridership increases throughout the day with the highest ridership occurring during the last run at 5:00 p.m. The highest ridership stops on weekends include Santa Paula City Hall, Ventura Transit Center and Fillmore Senior Center.

Highway 126		
Weekday Route Characteristics		
Span		5:20AM-10:24PM
Frequency (min)	Peak	30
	Base	60
	Off-Peak	80
Trips		29
Revenue Hours		29.7
Length (Round-Trip)		64
Stops (Round-Trip)		20
Average Stop Spacing (mi)		3.2
Weekday Route Performance		
Boardings		768
Boardings per Hour		25.9
Boardings per Trip		26.5
Weekend Route Performance		
Span		8:05AM-6:00PM
Frequency (min)		60
Trips		20
Revenue Hours		18.7
Stops (Round-Trip)		11
Weekend Route Performance		
Boardings		446
Boardings per Hour		23.9
Boardings per Trip		22.3

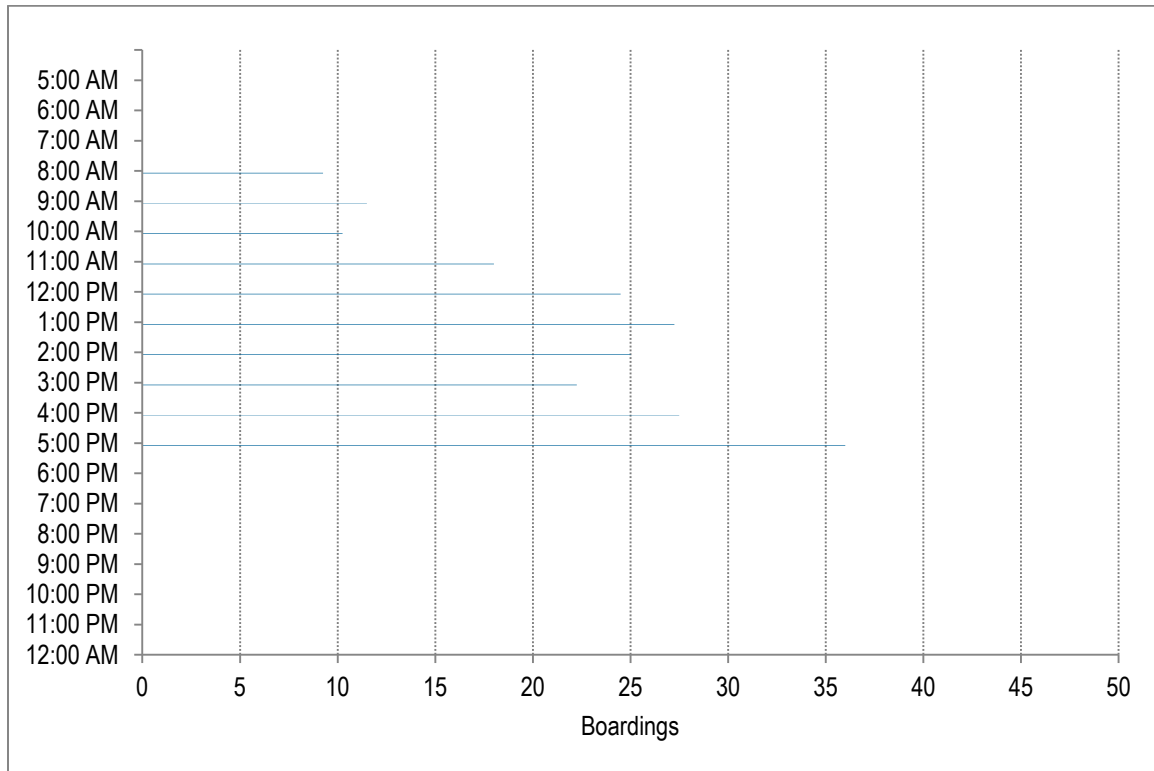
Highway 126 Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Eastbound



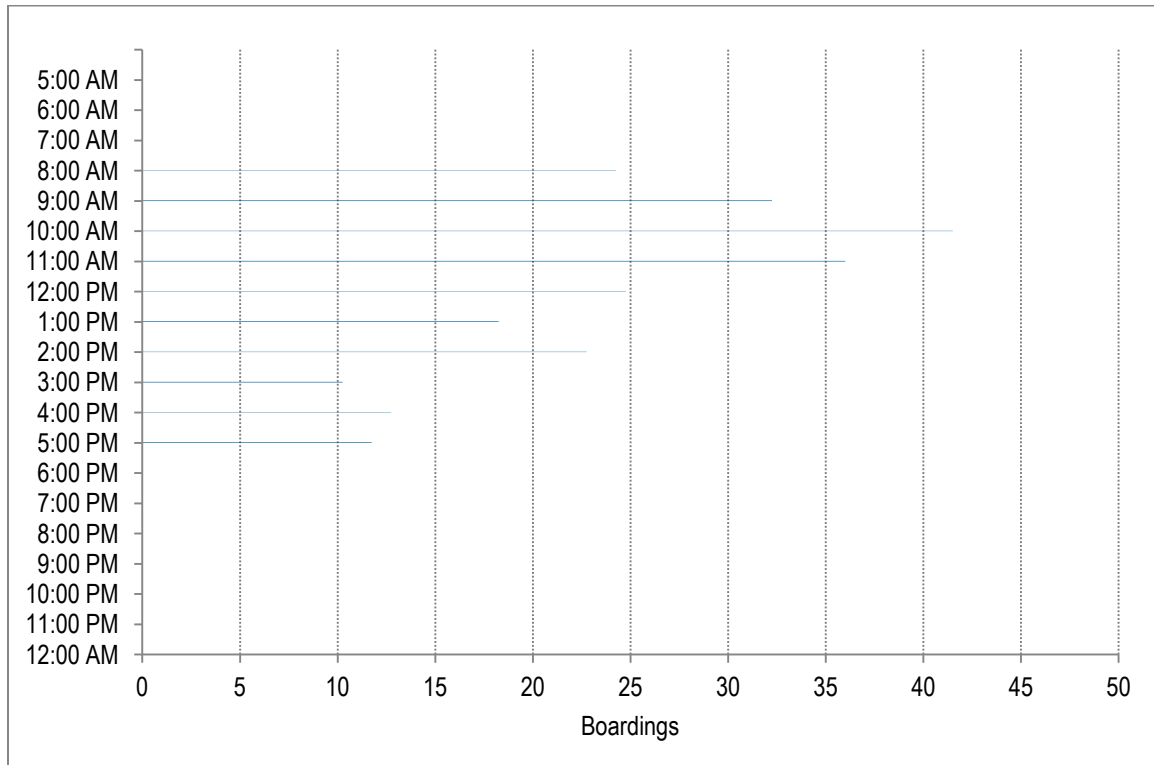
Highway 126 Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Westbound



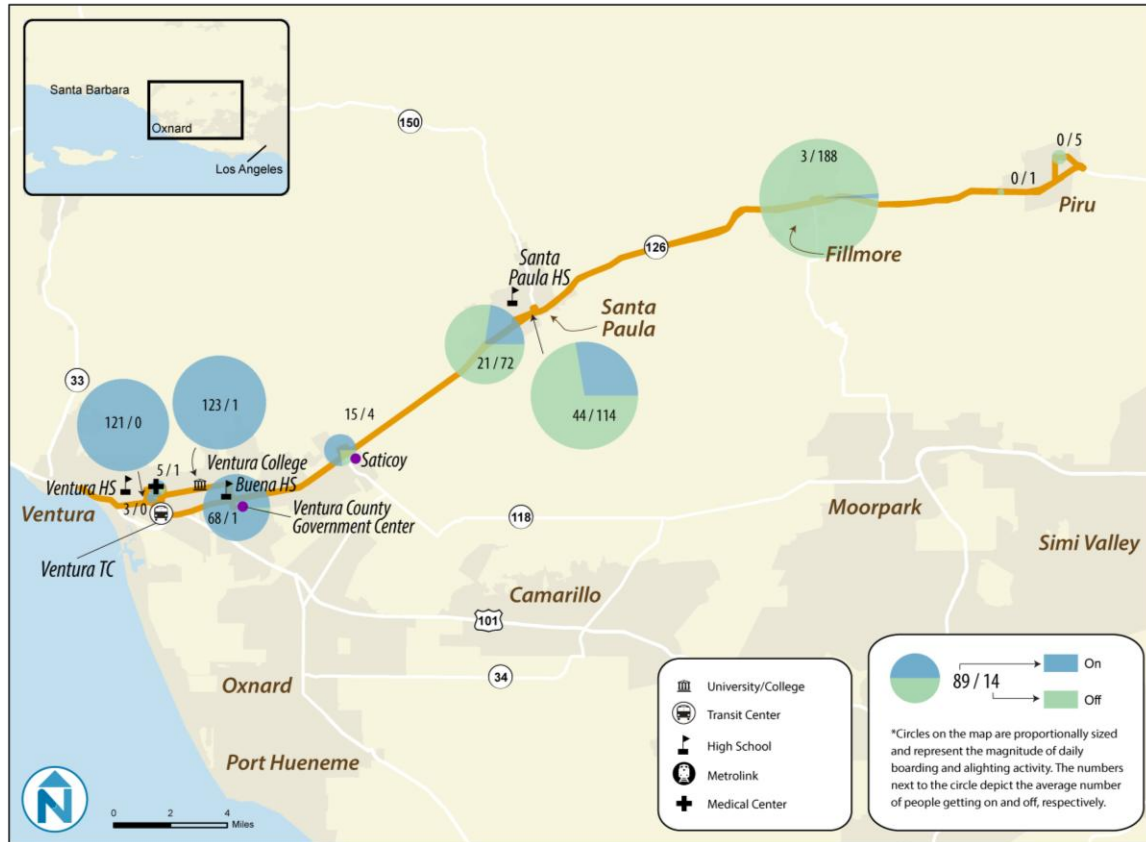
Highway 126 Ridership by Trip: Weekend – Eastbound



Highway 126 Ridership by Trip: Weekend – Westbound

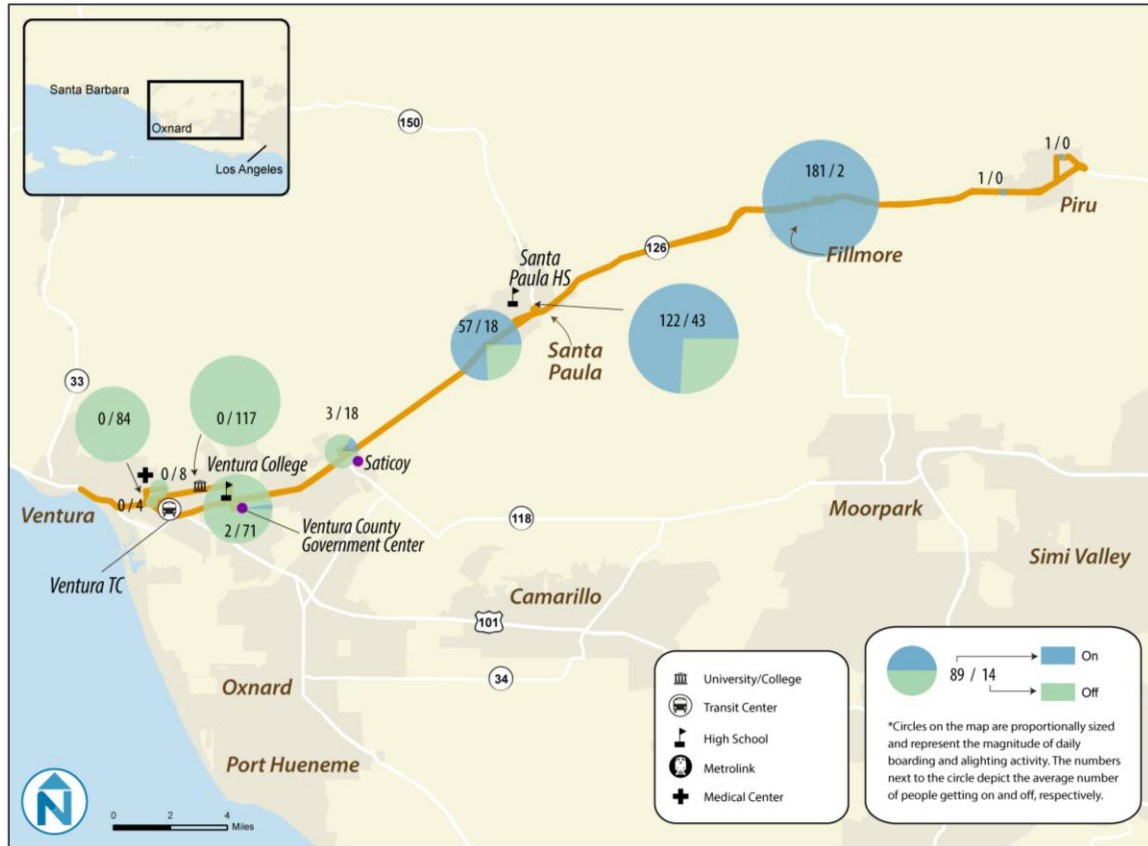


Highway 126 Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Eastbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Ventura Transit Center	121	0
2	St. Bonaventure High School	3	0
3	Ventura County Medical Center	5	1
4	Ventura College	123	1
5	Ventura County Government Center	68	1
6	Wells Center	15	4
7	Santa Paula K-Mart	21	72
8	Santa Paula City Hall	44	114
9	Fillmore Senior Center	3	188
10	Piru Rancho Sespe	0	1
11	Piru - Via Fustero/Center	0	5

Highway 126 Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Westbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Piru Rancho Sespe	1	0
2	Piru - Via Fustero/Center	1	0
3	Fillmore Senior Center	181	2
4	Santa Paula City Hall	122	43
5	Santa Paula K-Mart	57	18
6	Wells Center	3	18
7	Ventura County Government Center	2	71
8	Ventura College	0	117
9	St. Bonaventure High School	0	4
10	Ventura County Medical Center	0	8
11	Ventura Transit Center	0	84

Highway 126 Ridership by Stop: Weekend – Eastbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Ventura Transit Center	113	0
2	Ventura College	35	9
3	Wells Center	14	3
4	Santa Paula K-Mart	16	22
5	Santa Paula City Hall	34	54
6	Fillmore Senior Center	0	75

Highway 126 Ridership by Stop: Weekend – Westbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Fillmore Senior Center	114	5
2	Santa Paula City Hall	85	33
3	Santa Paula K-Mart	29	17
4	Wells Center	4	10
5	Ventura Pier	4	17
6	Ventura Transit Center	0	118

East County

Description

The East County route provides intercity service to the cities of Thousand Oaks, Moorpark, and Simi Valley, and connects with local circulator bus service.

Regional bus connections can also be made at Thousand Oaks Transit Center and Simi Valley Town Center. Metrolink and Amtrak connections can be made at Moorpark Station. The East County route operates weekday and Saturday service, with shorter span and lower frequencies on Saturday.

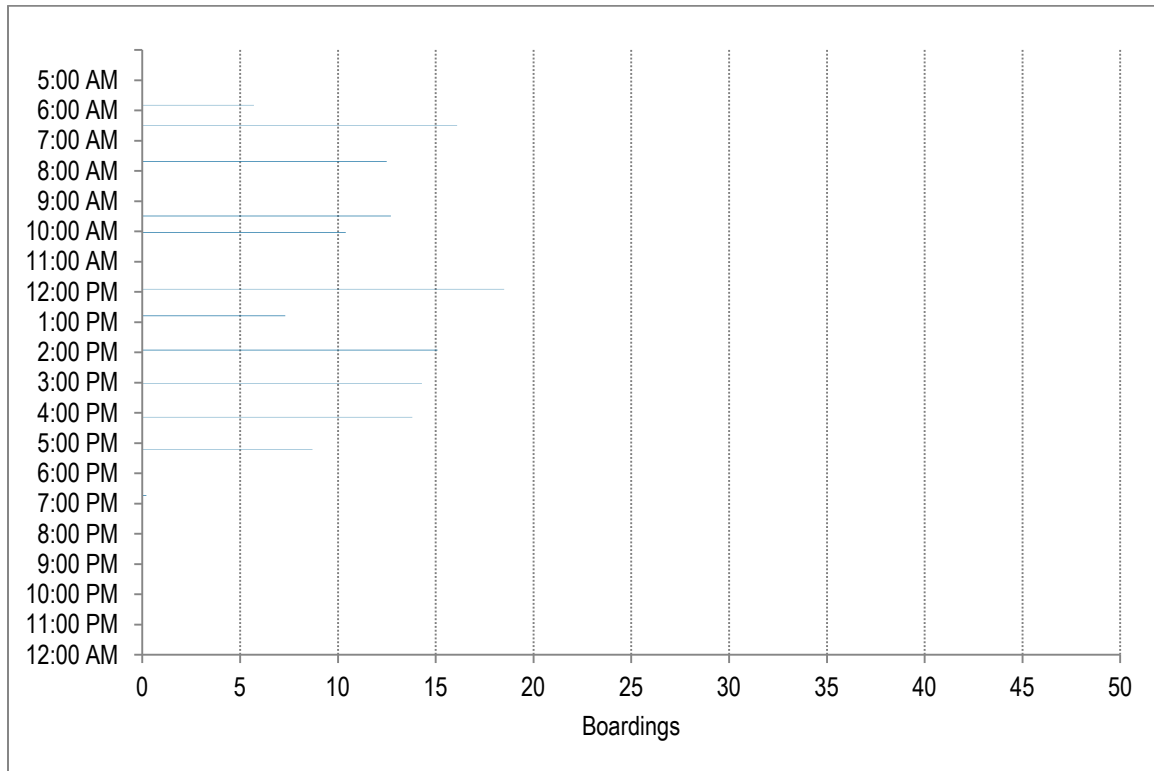
The northbound route departs the Oaks Hall and travels east to Westlake and Townsgate, before continuing north on Moorpark Highway and deviating to serve Moorpark Station and Moorpark College, continuing onto Ronald Reagan Freeway. The route then travels along Hwy 118 and terminates at Simi Valley Town Center. During weekday afternoon peak hours, the northbound route serves Farmers Insurance, a major employer in Simi Valley. The southbound weekday route follows the same configuration, but deviates to serve Farmers Insurance during the morning peak only. Both north and southbound routes deviate via Hillcrest Drive during morning and afternoon weekday peak hours to serve Amgen and Conejo Industrial Park. Conejo Industrial Park and Farmers Insurance are not served on Saturday.

Performance Characteristics

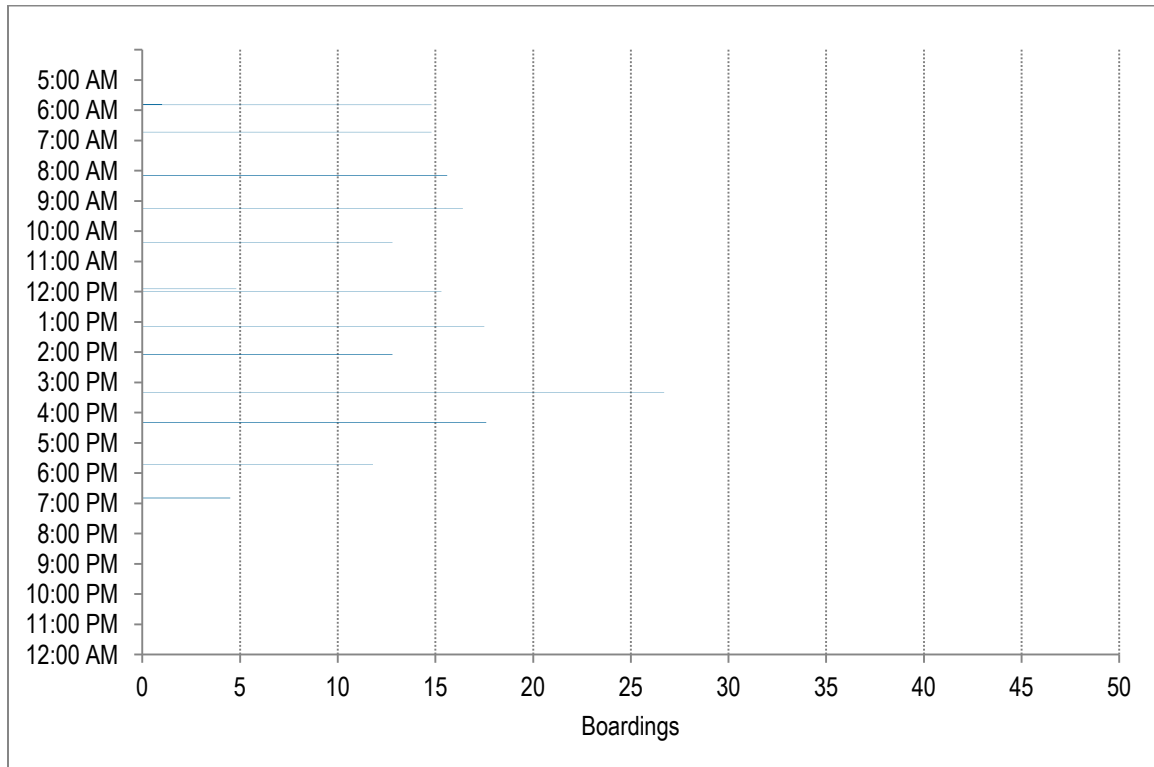
The East County route is the lowest-performing all-day route in terms of weekday ridership productivity at 10.9 boardings per revenue hour. On Saturday, ridership drops dramatically. Moorpark College and Simi Valley Town Center are the highest ridership stops on weekdays. On weekends, Moorpark Station, Simi Valley Town Center, and the Oaks Mall are the highest ridership stops.

East County		
Weekday Route Characteristics		
Span		5:50AM-7:45PM
Frequency (min)	Peak	40
	Base	65
	Off-Peak	140
Trips		23
Revenue Hours		29.6
Length (Round-Trip)		42
Stops (Round-Trip)		16
Average Stop Spacing (mi)		2.6
Weekday Route Performance		
Boardings		322
Boardings per Hour		10.9
Boardings per Trip		14.0
Saturday Route Characteristics		
Span		7:00AM-5:59PM
Frequency (min)	Peak	60
	Base	60
	Off-Peak	130
Trips		16
Revenue Hours		16.8
Saturday Route Performance		
Boardings		61
Boardings per Hour		3.6
Boardings per Trip		3.8

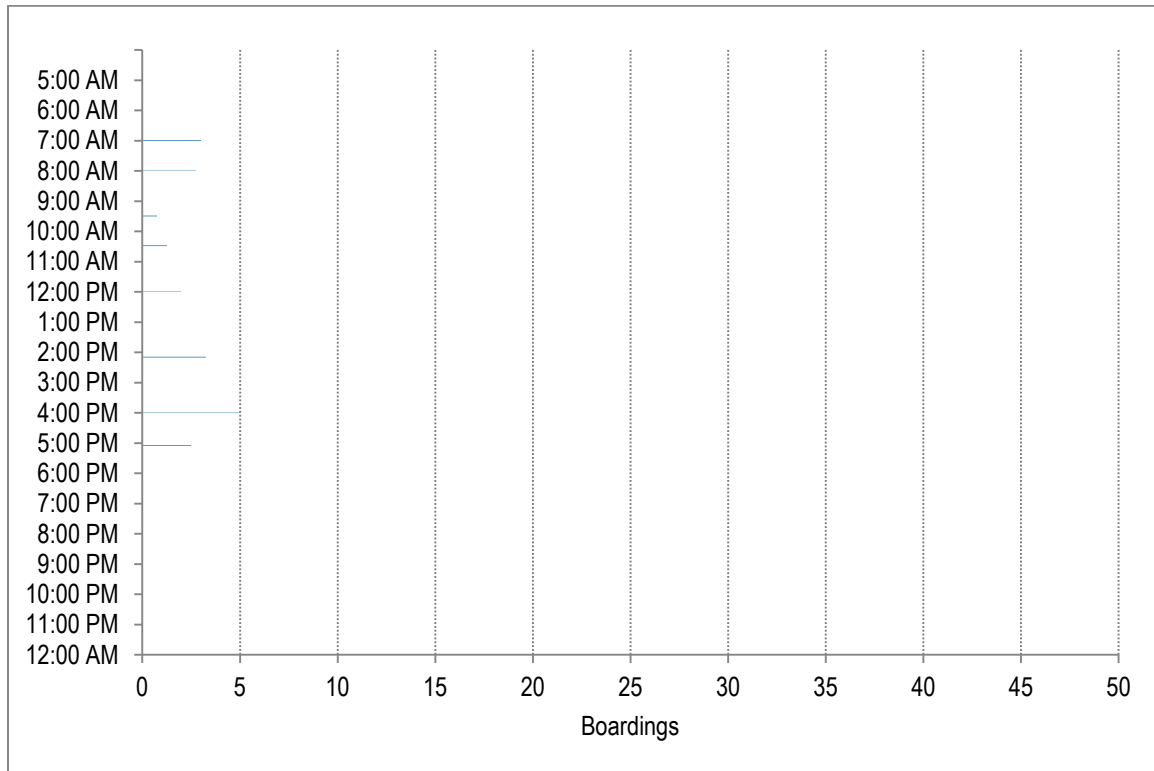
East County Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Northbound



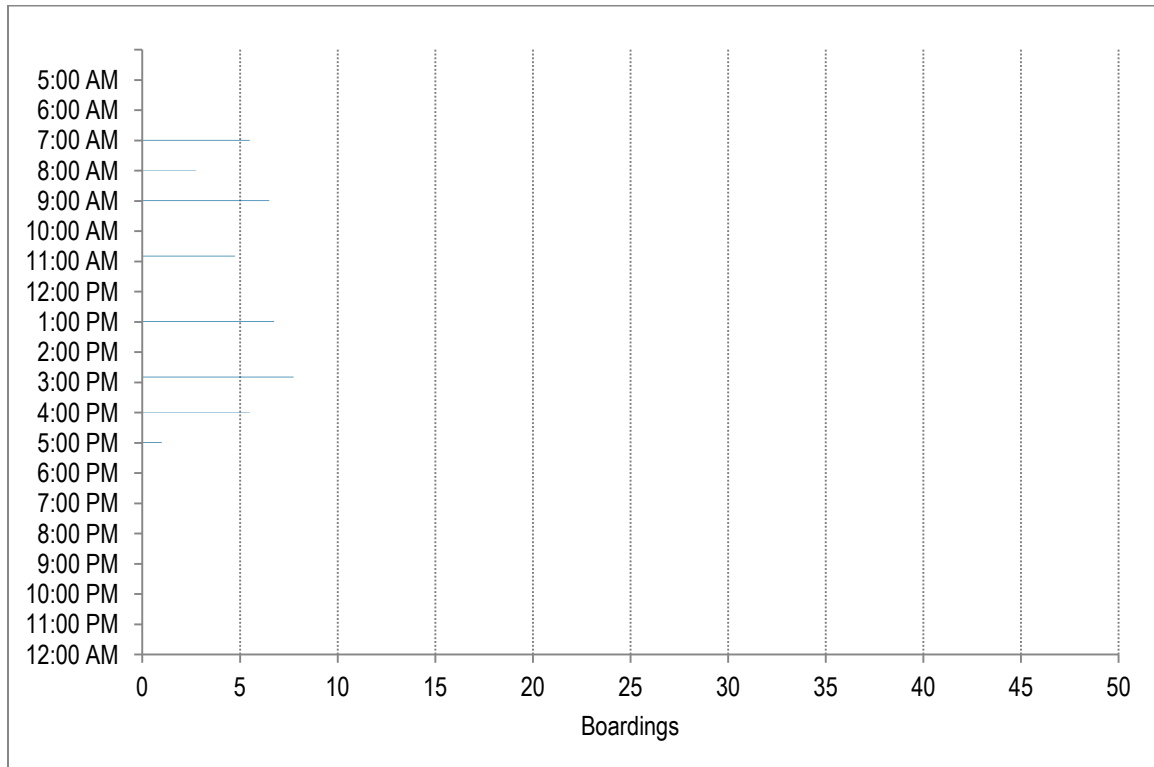
East County Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Southbound



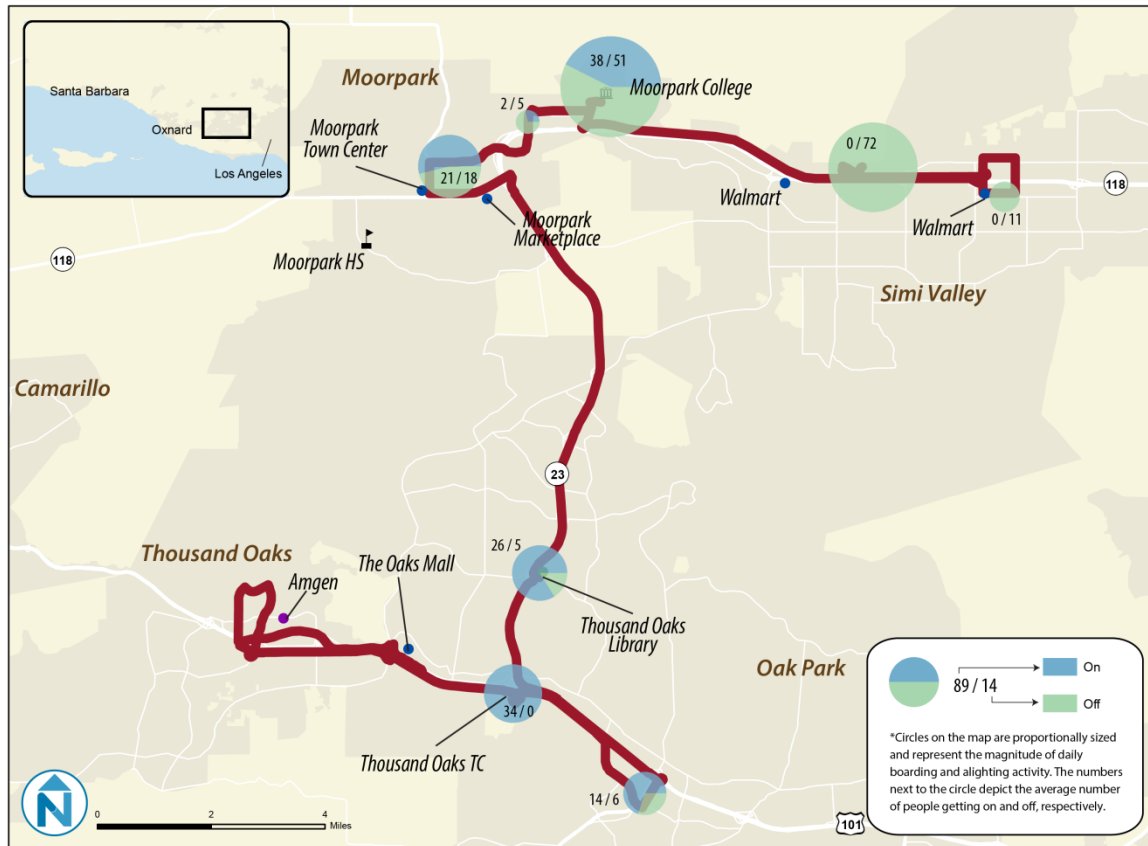
East County Ridership by Trip: Saturday – Northbound



East County Ridership by Trip: Saturday – Southbound

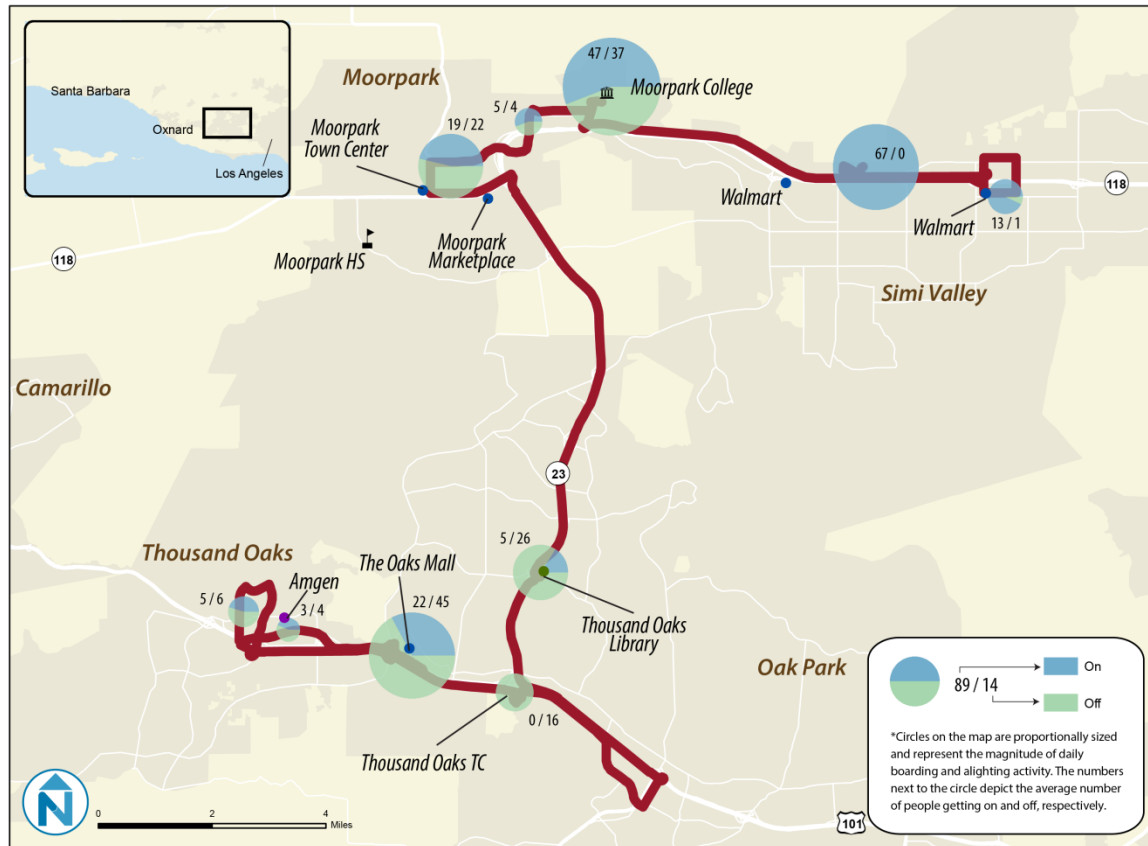


East County Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	34	0
2	Westlake Townsgate	14	6
3	Thousand Oaks Library	26	5
4	High St. Moorpark Station	21	18
5	Princeton Amherst (flag)	2	5
6	Moorpark College	38	51
7	Farmers Insurance	0	11
8	Simi Town Center	0	72

East County Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Southbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Simi Town Center	19	0
2	Moorpark College	1	1
3	Princeton Amherst (flag)	4	1
4	High St. Moorpark Station	6	5
5	Thousand Oaks Library	3	1
6	The Oaks Mall	8	20
7	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	0	4
8	Simi Town Center	19	0
9	Moorpark College	1	1
10	Princeton Amherst (flag)	4	1

East County Ridership by Stop: Saturday – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	8	0
2	Westlake Townsgate	3	1
3	Thousand Oaks Library	2	1
4	High St. Moorpark Station	7	8
5	Princeton Amherst (flag)	1	2
6	Moorpark College	0	1
7	Simi Town Center	0	17

East County Ridership by Stop: Saturday – Southbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	8	0
2	Westlake Townsgate	3	1
3	Thousand Oaks Library	2	1
4	High St. Moorpark Station	7	8
5	Princeton Amherst (flag)	1	2
6	Moorpark College	0	1
7	Simi Town Center	0	17

Coastal Express

Description

The Coastal Express route provides Monday to Friday service to Ventura, Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, and Goleta, primarily via Highway 101. On weekends, an abbreviated route between Ventura and Santa Barbara has a shorter service span and lower frequencies.

The northbound route begins in Ventura at Esplanade Mall, traveling to Highway 101 via Esplanade Drive and Vineyard Avenue, deviating to serve the Ventura County Government Center, the Ventura Transit Center (select trips), and downtown Ventura at Santa Clara & Oak and West Peking & Main. Passing through Carpinteria, the route serves Via Real & Mark (select trips), Carpinteria City Hall (flag stop), and Carpinteria Avenue & Eugenia Place (select trips). Entering Santa Barbara, the route serves East Beach at Cabrillo Boulevard and Puerta Vallarta (select stops), Gutierrez & Garden, the County Courthouse at Santa Barbara Street & De La Guerra, Figueroa Street and Santa Barbara Street, NW Figueroa Street near Chapala, Cottage Hospital at Bath & Pueblo (select trips), and the County Complex at Camino Del Remedio. Entering Goleta, the route serves Cottage Hospital at Hollister Avenue & Patterson Avenue (select trips), then continues on Hollister with stops at Kellogg, Nectarine, Aero Camino, and Cremona. Looping back east via Cortona Drive and Castilian Drive, the route turns south on S Los Carneros Road, west on Mesa Road, then south on Ocean Road to perform a terminal loop at UCSB.

The southbound route follows a similar configuration to the northbound route, except in Santa Barbara, where it serves the library at Anacapa & Anapamu and City Hall at Anacapa & De La Guerra. These stops are in place of those at the County Courthouse and NW Figueroa Street, which are served during northbound service. The northbound route has service to Goleta and UCSB in the mornings only, aside from one afternoon arrival. The southbound route does not serve UCSB and Goleta until after 3:00 P.M.

Coastal Express		
Weekday Route Characteristics		
Span		4:35AM-9:45PM
Frequency (min)	Peak	15
	Base	60
	Off-Peak	60
Trips		55
Revenue Hours		64.2
Length (Round-Trip)		95
Stops (Round-Trip)		40
Average Stop Spacing (mi)		2.4
Weekday Route Performance		
Boardings		931
Boardings per Hour		14.5
Boardings per Trip		16.9
Weekend Route Characteristics		
Span		7:00AM-7:36PM
Frequency (min)	Peak	70
	Base	90
	Off-Peak	95
Trips		18
Revenue Hours		20.9
Weekend Route Performance		
Boardings		291
Boardings per Hour		13.9
Boardings per Trip		16.1

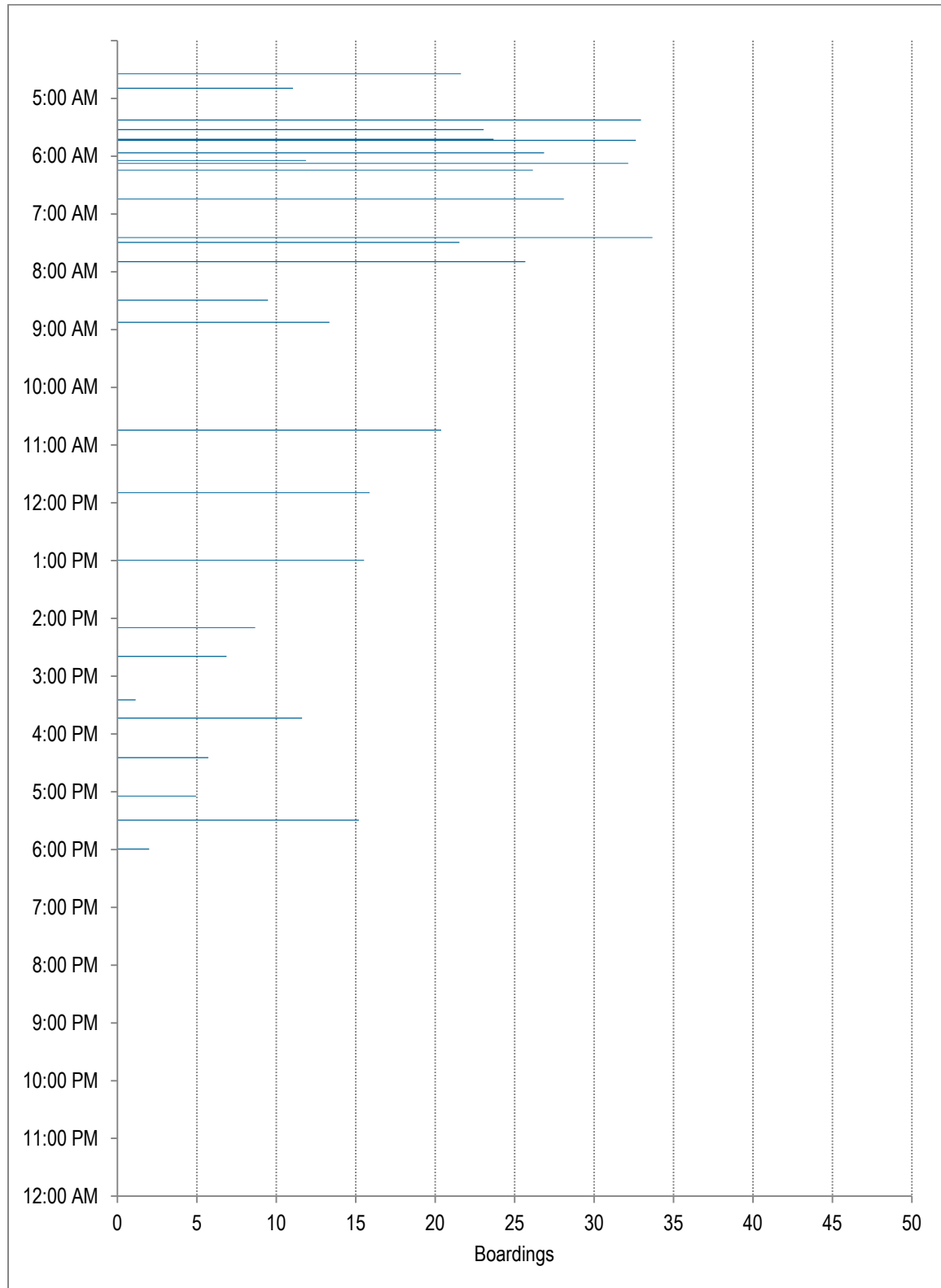
Performance Characteristics

The Coastal Express route has the highest average weekday boardings among all VCTC Intercity routes (931 compared to 435 per day). Its productivity for average weekday boardings per trip is slightly higher than the system average (16.9 compared to 16.3 per day). On weekends, boardings per trip are higher than the system average for (16.1 compared to 11.1 boardings per trip).

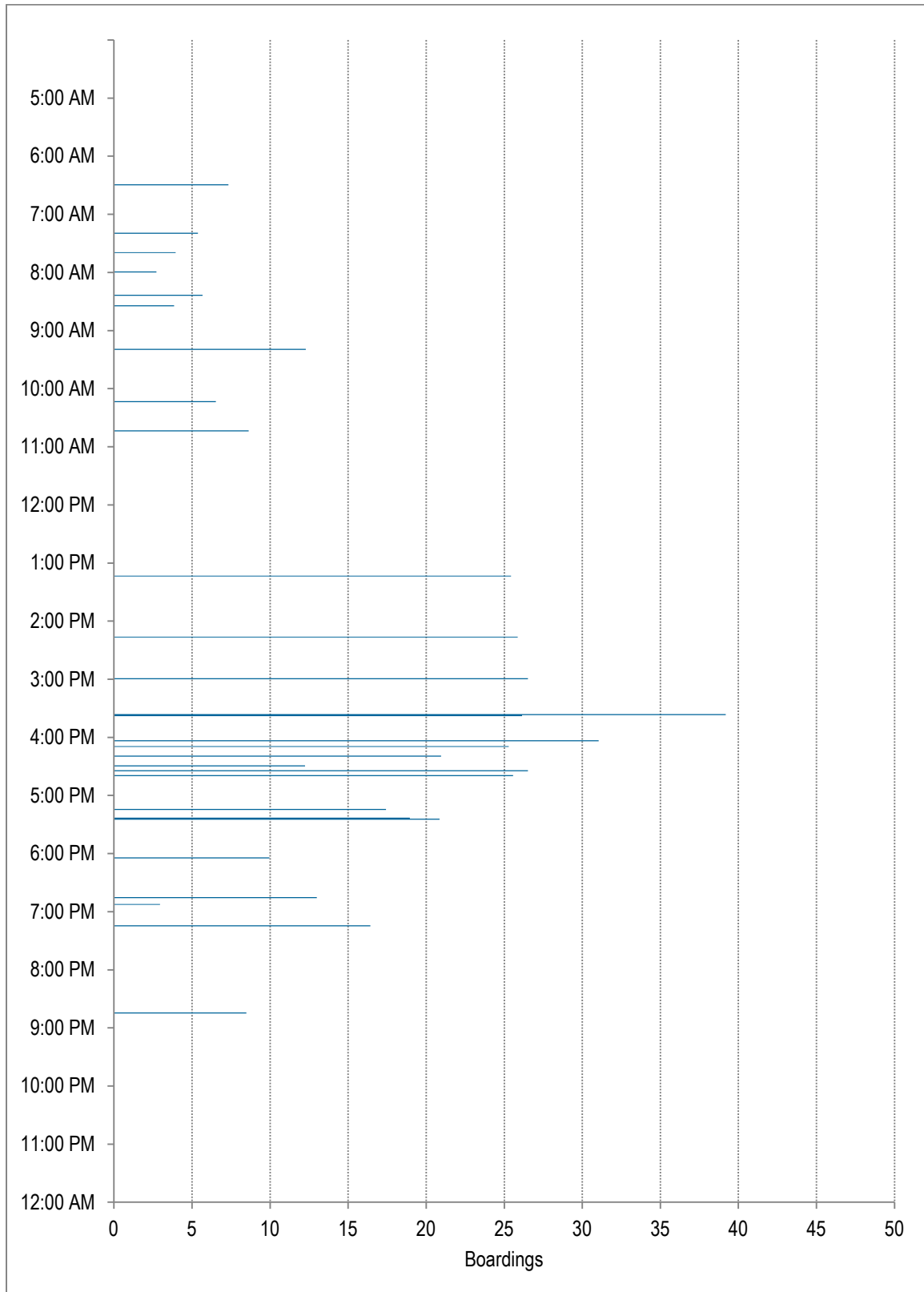
On weekdays, the Coastal Express primarily serves commuters in Ventura County employed in Santa Barbara County. The highest concentration of trips and ridership occur between 5:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. for northbound service and between 3:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. for southbound service.

Stops with the highest ridership in Ventura County include Ventura County Government Center, Ventura Downtown, and Pacific View Mall. Stops with the highest ridership in Santa Barbara County include Figueroa & Chapala, Gutierrez & Garden, and the Hollister corridor.

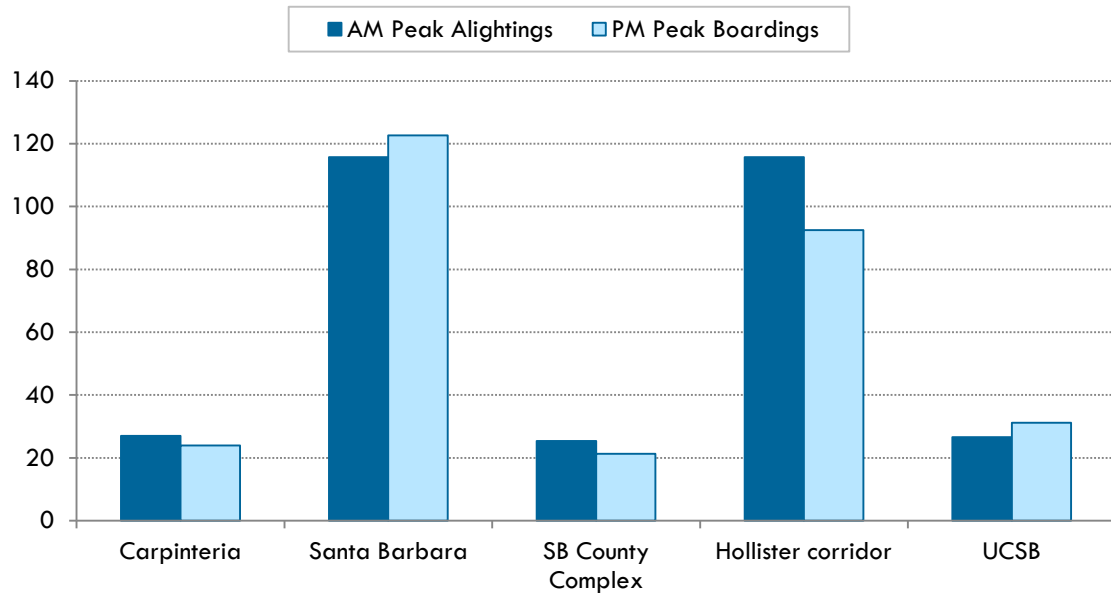
Coastal Express Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Northbound



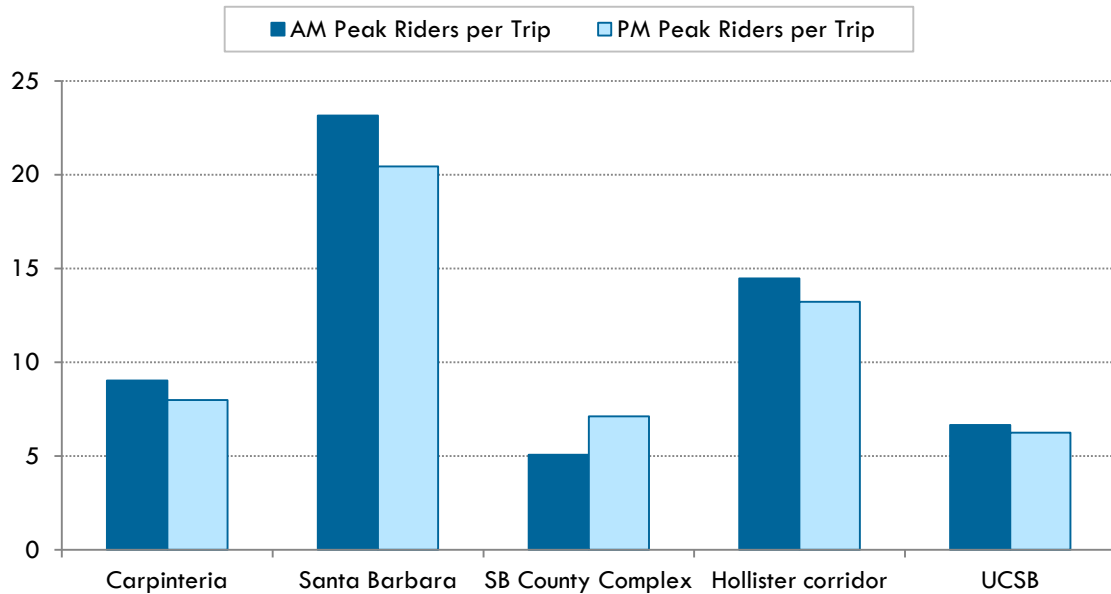
Coastal Express Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Southbound



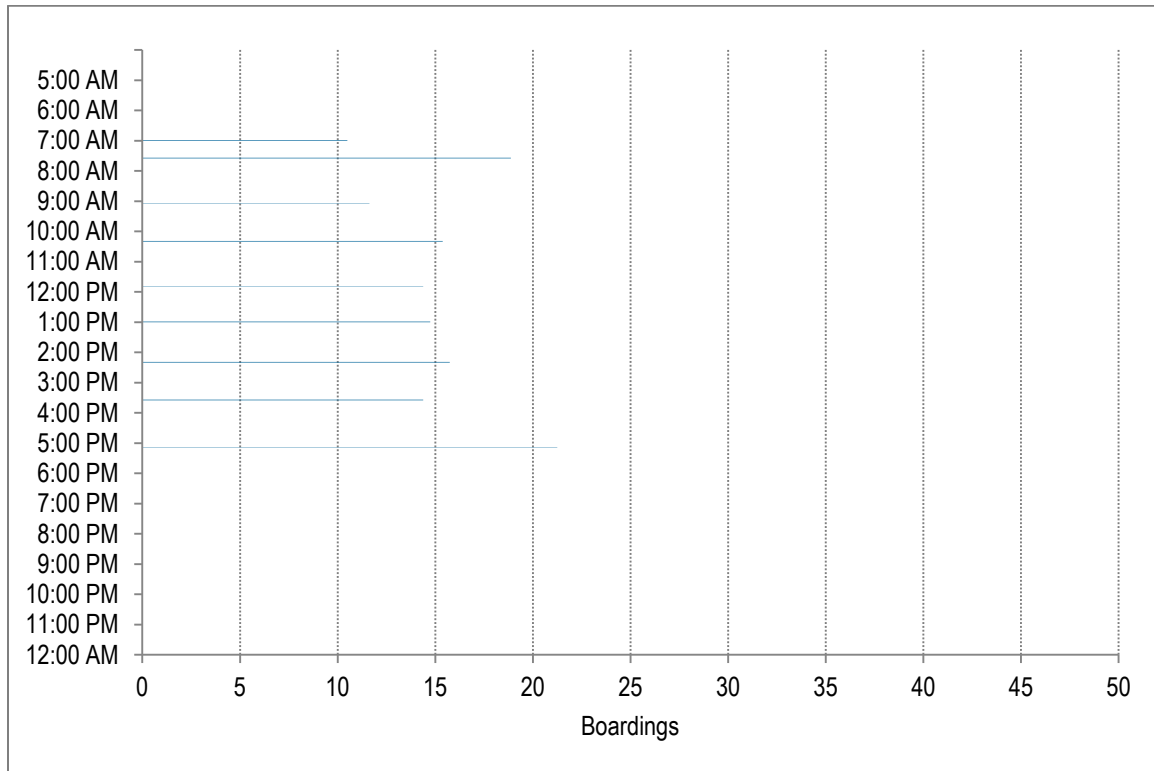
Coastal Express Peak Ridership Breakdown



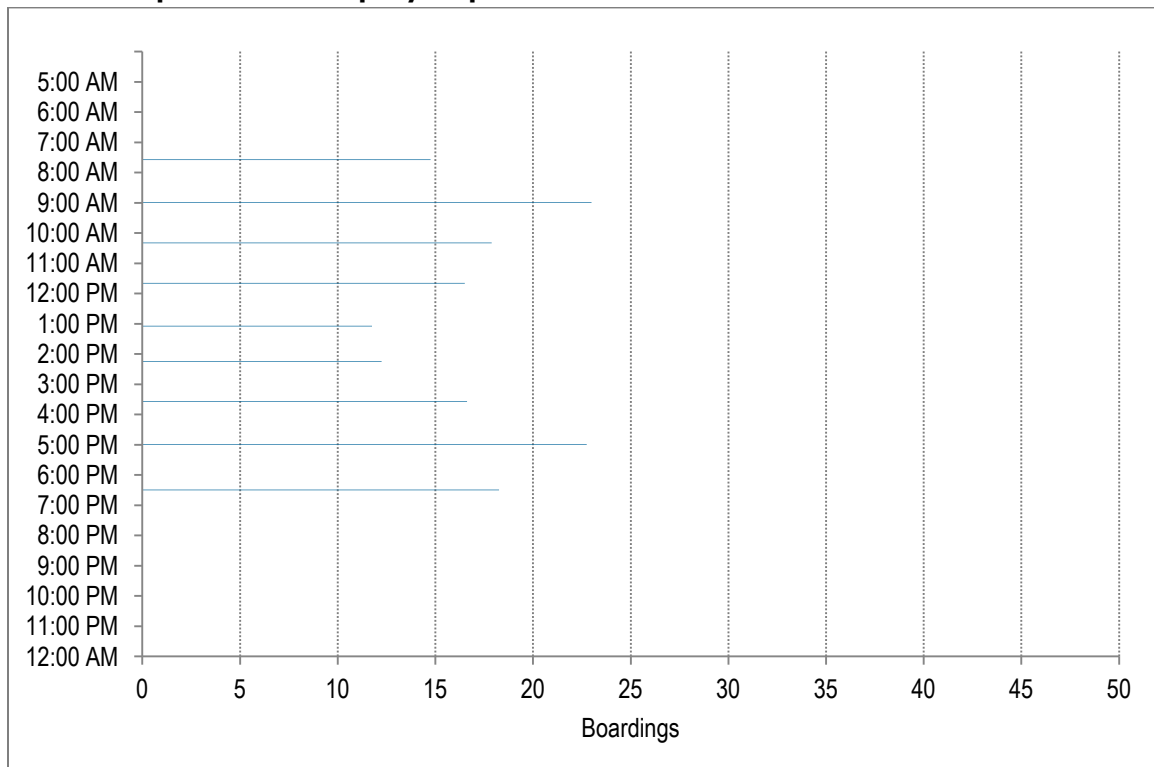
Coastal Express Peak Ridership Productivity Breakdown



Coastal Express Ridership by Trip: Weekend – Northbound



Coastal Express Ridership by Trip: Weekend – Southbound



Coastal Express Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Northbound



Coastal Express Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Northbound

Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Esplanade Mall	44	0
2	Ventura County Government Center	169	0
3	Ventura Transit Center	72	0
4	Ventura Downtown	111	0
5	West Main at Peking	84	0
6	Via Real at Mark	1	8
7	Carpinteria City Hall	0	2
8	Carpinteria Ave at Eugenia	1	28
9	Cabrillo at Calle Puerta Vallarta	0	18
10	Gutierrez at Garden	0	54
11	Santa Barbara at De La Guerra	0	29
12	Figueroa at Santa Barbara	0	44
13	Figueroa at Chapala	0	103
14	Pueblo at Bath	0	18
15	Santa Barbara County Complex	0	25
16	Hollister at Patterson	0	12
17	Hollister at Kellogg	0	13
18	Hollister at Aero Camino	0	58
19	Cortona at Castillian	0	22
20	Castillian at Los Carneros	0	10
21	University of California - Santa Barbara	0	27

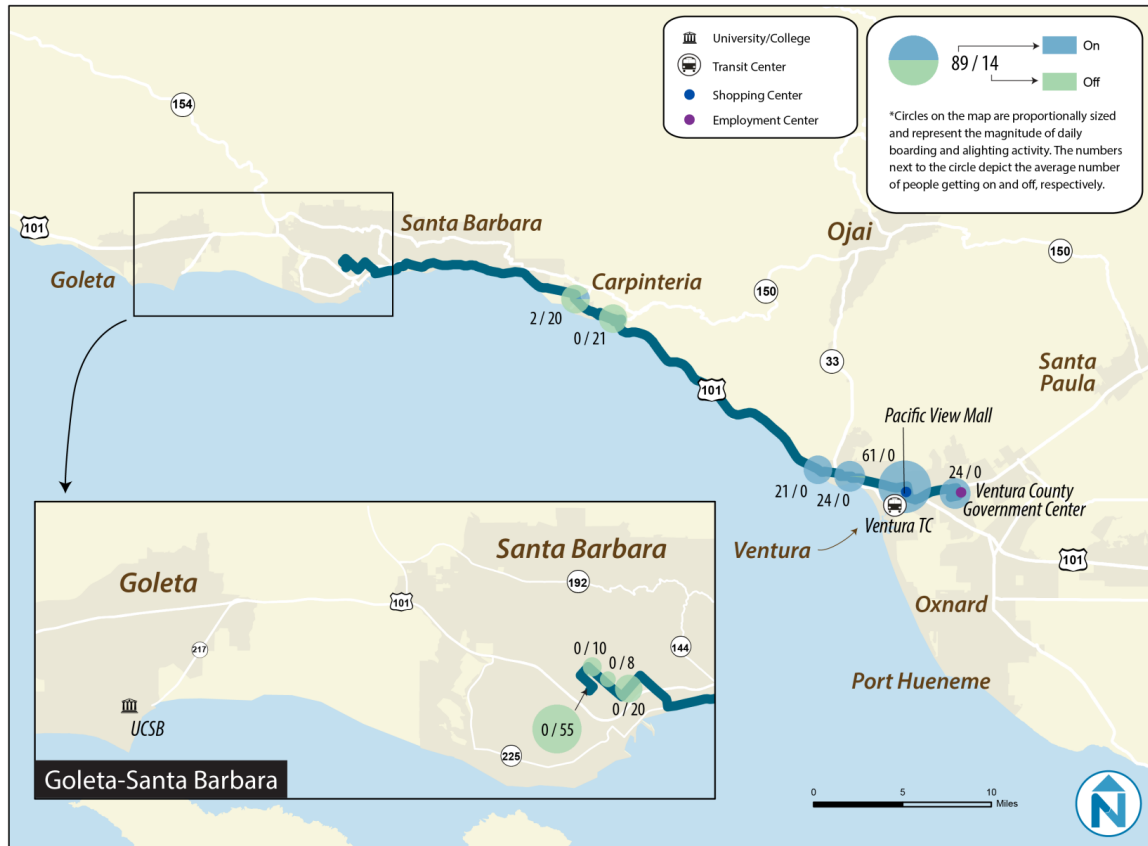
Coastal Express Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Southbound



Coastal Express Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Southbound

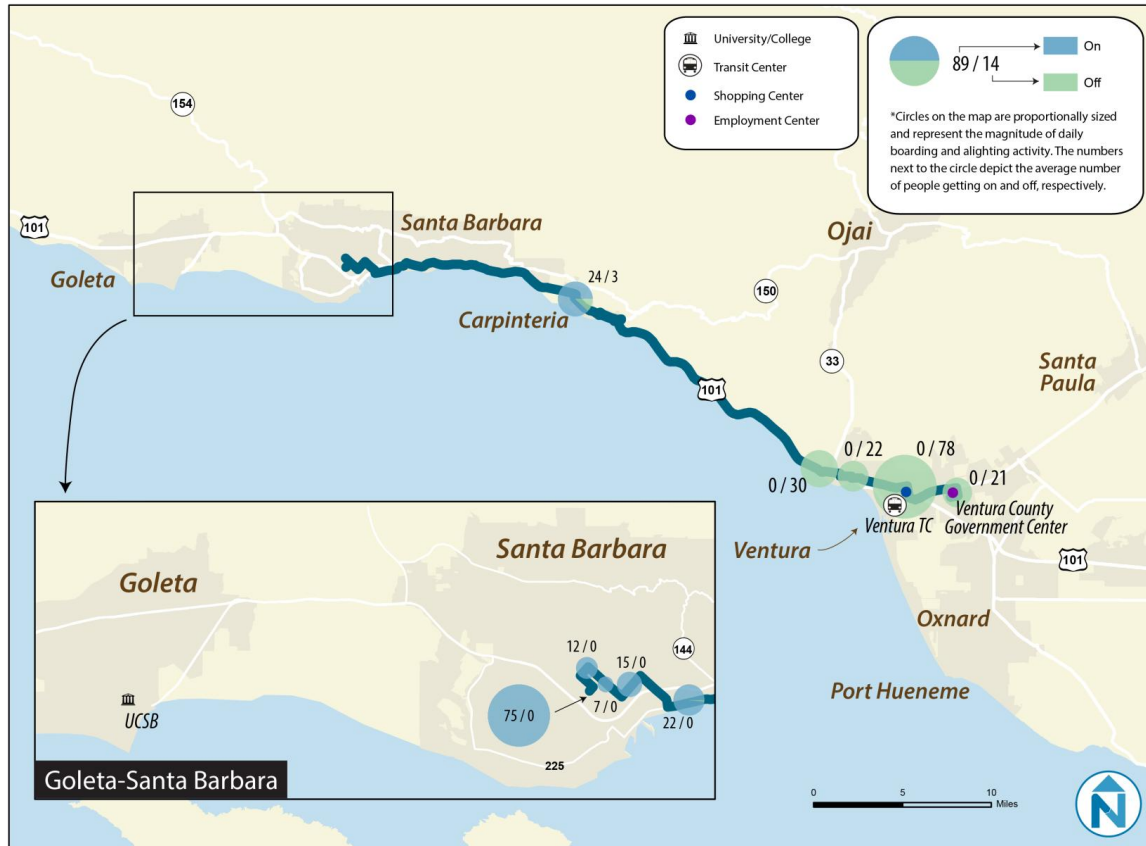
Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	University of California - Santa Barbara	31	0
2	Cortona at Castillian	21	0
3	Castillian at Los Carneros	17	0
4	Hollister at Aero Camino	33	0
5	Hollister at Kellogg	15	0
6	Hollister at Patterson	7	0
7	Santa Barbara County Complex	21	0
8	Cottage Hospital	12	0
9	Chapala at Figueroa	106	0
10	Anacapa at Anapamu	44	0
11	Anacapa at De La Guerra	31	0
12	Haley at Garden	44	0
13	Cabrillo at Calle Puerta Vallarta	26	0
14	Carpinteria at Maple	36	1
15	Carpinteria City Hall	2	0
16	Carpinteria Commercial Park	2	1
17	West Main at Peking	0	92
18	Ventura Downtown	0	89
19	Ventura Transit Center	0	75
20	Ventura County Government Center	0	130
21	Esplanade Mall	0	34

Coastal Express Ridership by Stop: Weekend – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Ventura County Government Center	24	0
2	Ventura Transit Center	61	0
3	Ventura Downtown	24	0
4	West Main at Peking	21	0
5	Carpinteria Ave at Eugenia	2	20
6	Via Real at Mark	0	21
7	Gutierrez at Garden	0	20
8	Santa Barbara at De La Guerra	0	8
9	Figueroa at Santa Barbara	0	10
10	Figueroa at Chapala	0	55

Coastal Express Ridership by Stop: Weekend – Southbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Chapala at Figueroa	75	0
2	Anacapa at Anapamu	12	0
3	Anacapa at De La Guerra	7	0
4	Haley at Garden	15	0
5	Cabrillo at Calle Puerta Vallarta	22	0
6	Carpinteria at Maple	24	3
7	West Main at Peking	0	30
8	Ventura Downtown	0	22
9	Ventura Transit Center	0	78
10	Ventura County Government Center	0	21

CSUCI - Camarillo

Description

The CSUCI Camarillo route operates between CSUCI and the Camarillo Metrolink Station at Lewis Road and Ventura Boulevard, serving Villa Calleguas (flag stop) in between. It provides Monday to Saturday service at 30 minute frequencies. The northbound route leaves CSUCI campus and travels via Camarillo Street, Potrero Road, S Lewis Road, and terminates at the Camarillo Metrolink station. The southbound route follows the same configuration.

Performance Characteristics

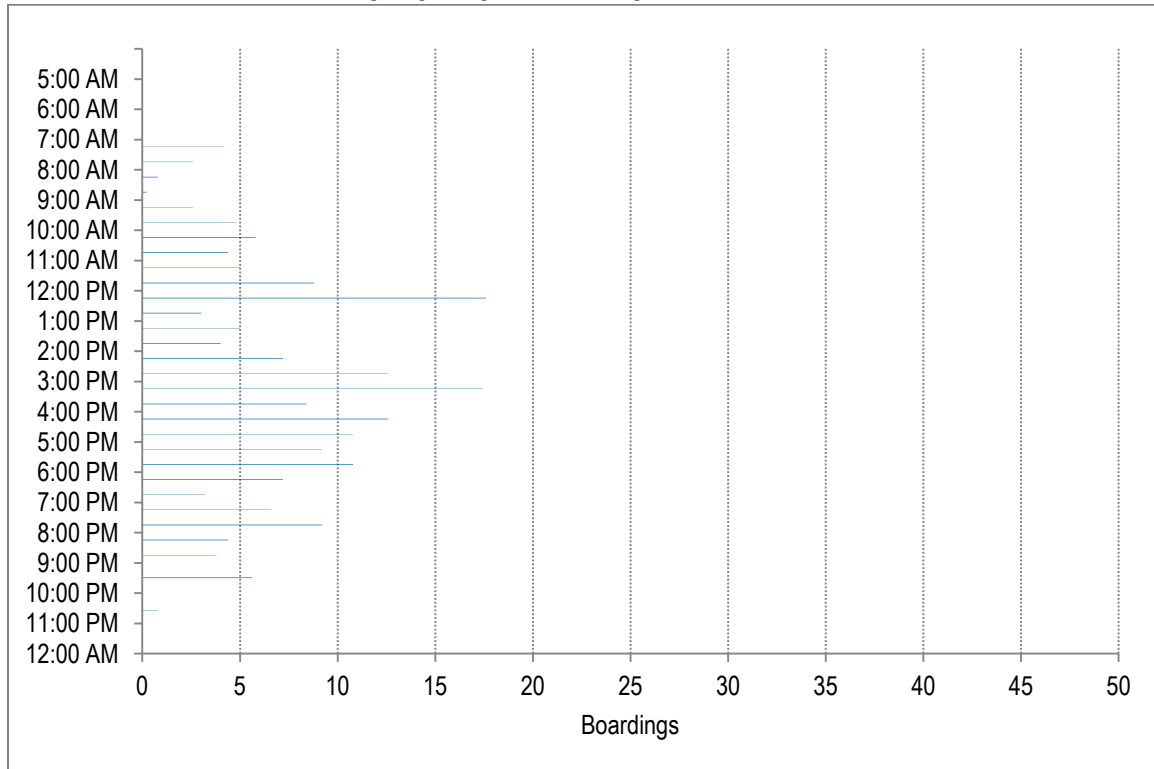
The CSUCI Camarillo route performs slightly below average for total weekday boardings among all VCTC Intercity routes (415 compared to 435 per day). Its productivity for weekday boardings per trip is less than half the system average (6.9 compared to 16.3 per day).

On Saturday, boardings per trip are drastically lower than the system average for weekend service (1.3 compared to 11.1 boardings per trip).

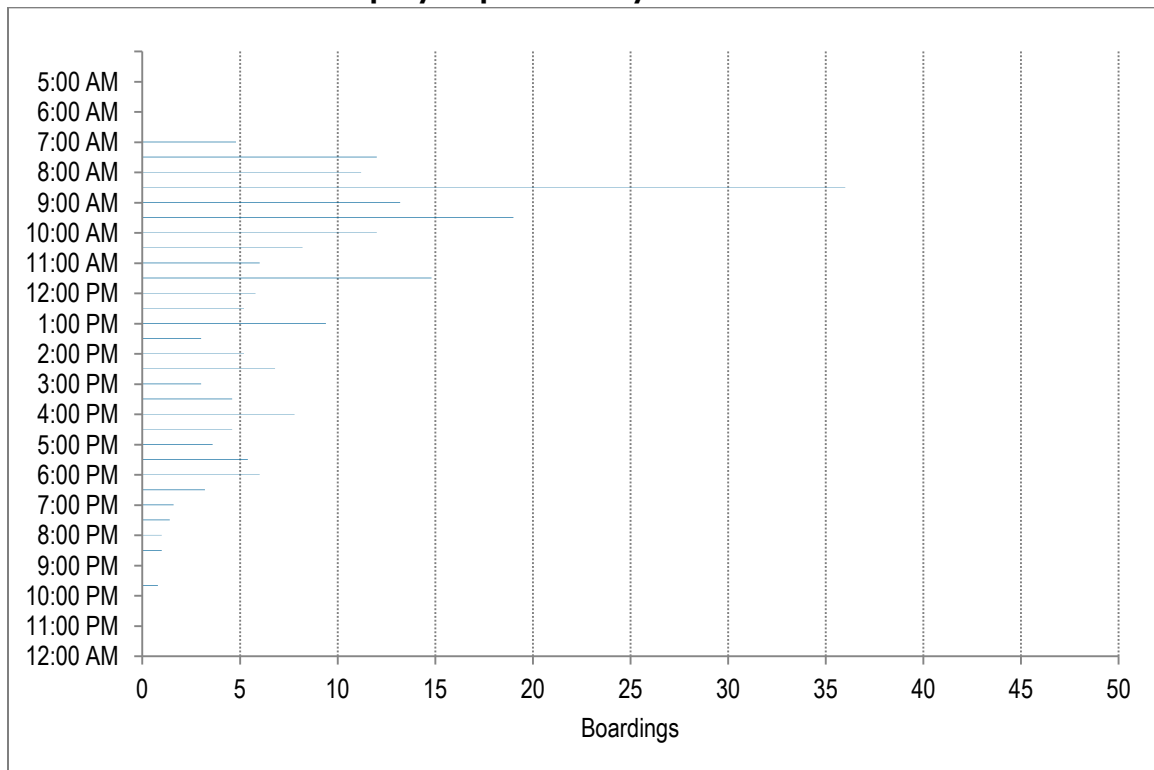
Weekday northbound passenger loads are highest between 8:00-11:00 a.m. in the southbound direction and 2:00-6:00 p.m. in the northbound direction.

CSUCI Camarillo	
Weekday Route Characteristics	
Span	7:00AM-10:35PM
Frequency (min)	30
Trips	60
Revenue Hours	12.1
Length (Round-Trip)	12
Stops (Round-Trip)	3
Average Stop Spacing (mi)	4.0
Weekday Route Performance	
Boardings	415
Boardings per Hour	34.3
Boardings per Trip	6.9
Saturday Route Characteristics	
Span	7:30AM-5:30PM
Frequency (min)	30
Trips	40
Revenue Hours	8.4
Saturday Route Performance	
Boardings	52
Boardings per Hour	6.2
Boardings per Trip	1.3

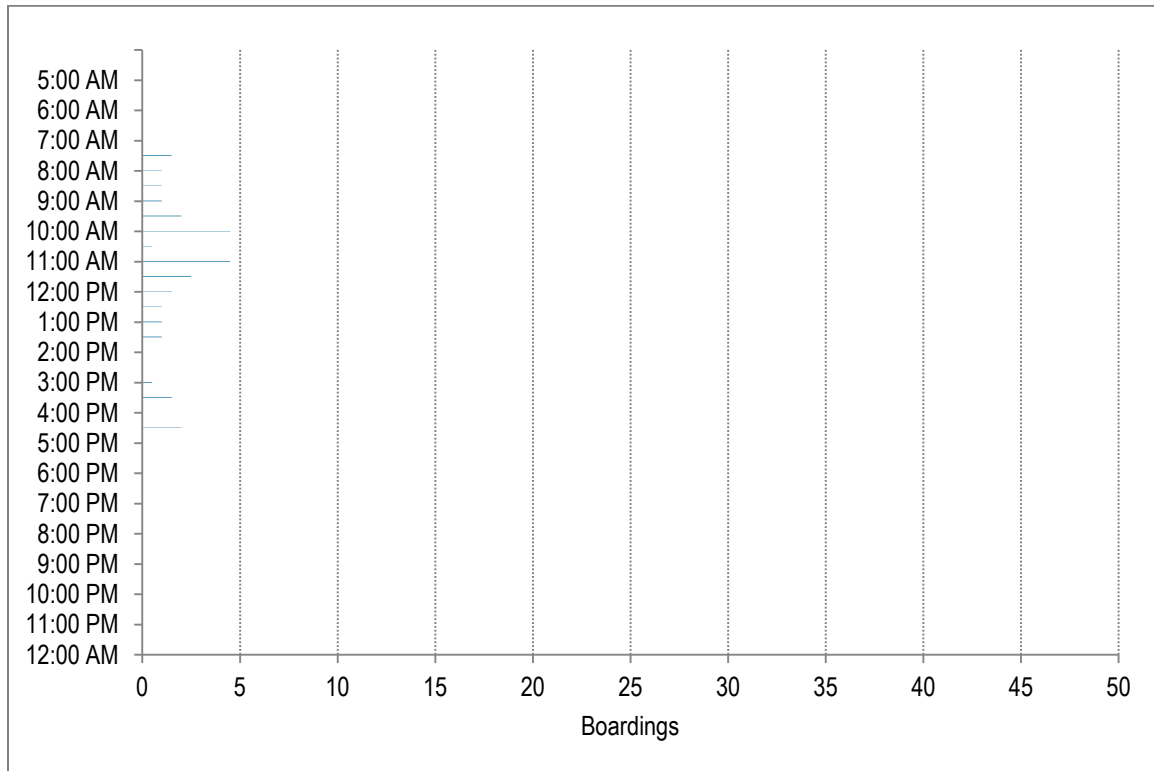
CSUCI-Camarillo Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Northbound



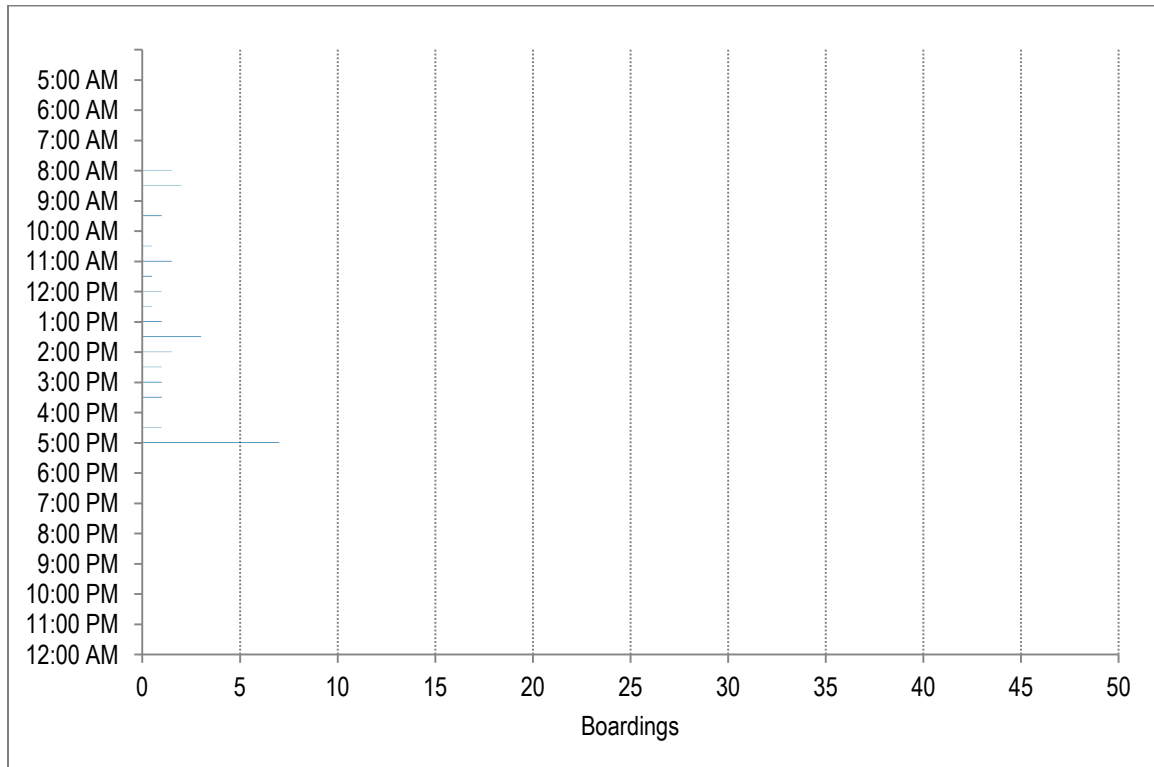
CSUCI-Camarillo Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Southbound



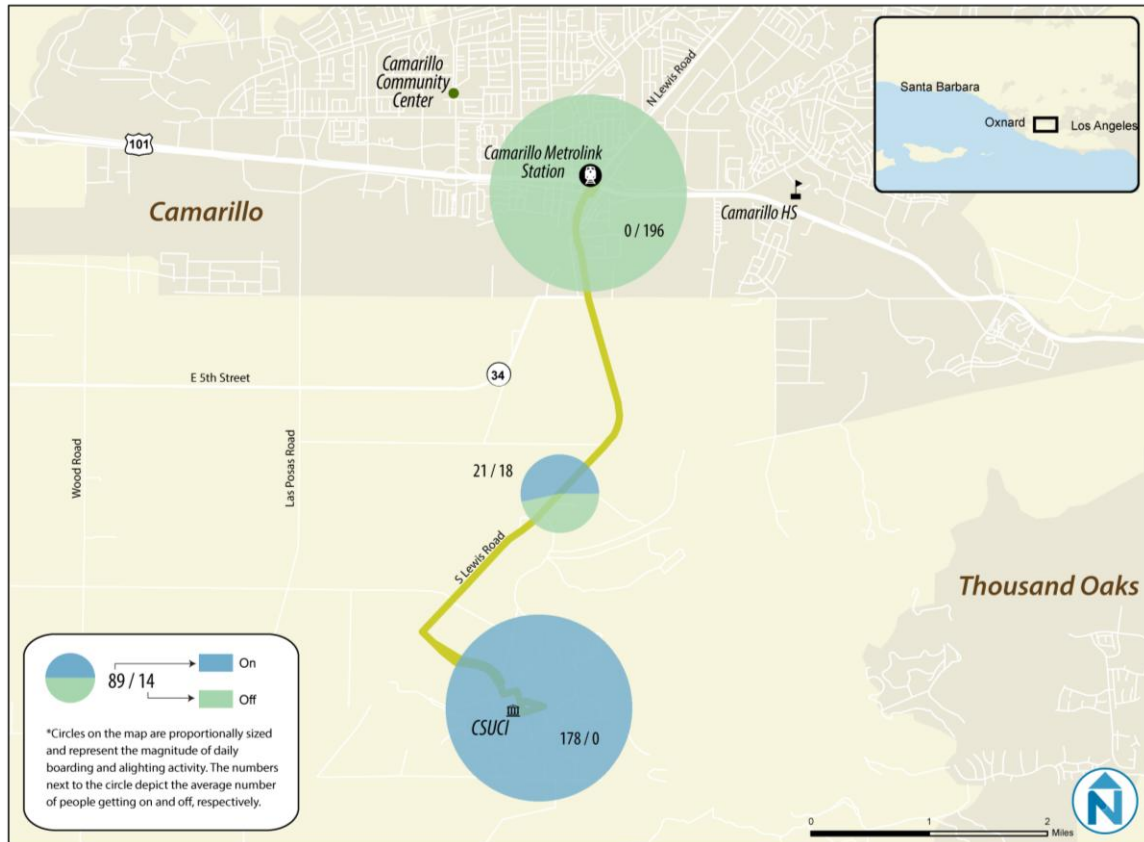
CSUCI-Camarillo Ridership by Trip: Saturday – Northbound



CSUCI-Camarillo Ridership by Trip: Saturday – Southbound



CSUCI-Camarillo Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	California State University – Channel Islands	178	0
2	Villa Calleguas	21	18
3	Camarillo Metrolink Station	0	196

CSUCI-Camarillo Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Southbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Camarillo Metrolink Station	217	0
2	California State University – Channel Islands	0	201

CSUCI-Camarillo Ridership by Stop: Saturday – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	California State University – Channel Islands	21	0
2	Villa Calleguas	7	10
3	Camarillo Metrolink Station	0	26

CSUCI-Camarillo Ridership by Stop: Saturday – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Camarillo Metrolink Station	25	0
2	California State University – Channel Islands	0	17

CSUCI – Oxnard

Description

The CSUCI Oxnard route operates Monday to Saturday between CSUCI and the Oxnard “C” Street Bus Transfer Station (Centerpoint Mall), serving Oxnard College in between. The eastbound route travels via E Channel Islands Boulevard, S Oxnard Boulevard, Pacific Coast Highway, E Hueneme Road, Potrero Road, terminating at CSUCI on Camarillo Road. The westbound route follows the same configuration. Headways are one hour for all service days.

Performance Characteristics

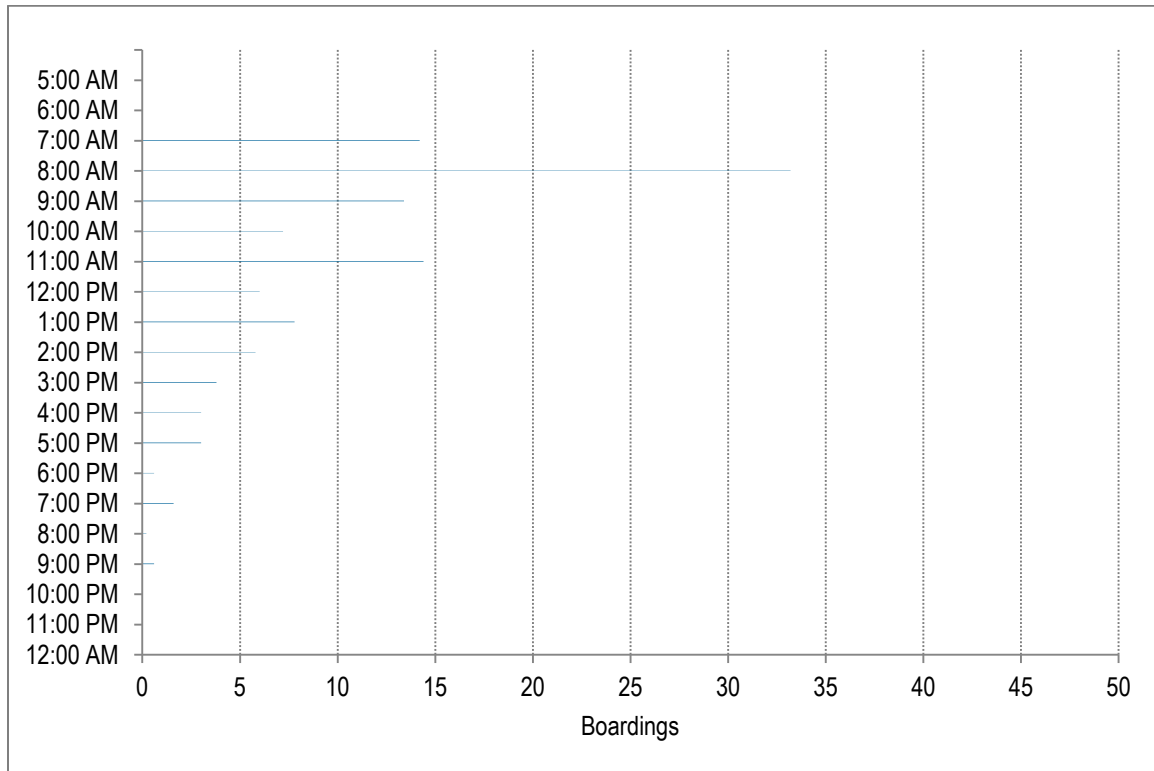
The CSUCI Oxnard route performs below average for total weekday boardings among all VCTC Intercity routes (234 compared to 435 per day). Its productivity for weekday boardings per trip is less than half the system average (7.6 compared to 16.3 per day).

On Saturday, boardings per trip are drastically lower than the system average for weekend service (0.7 compared to 11.1 boardings per trip).

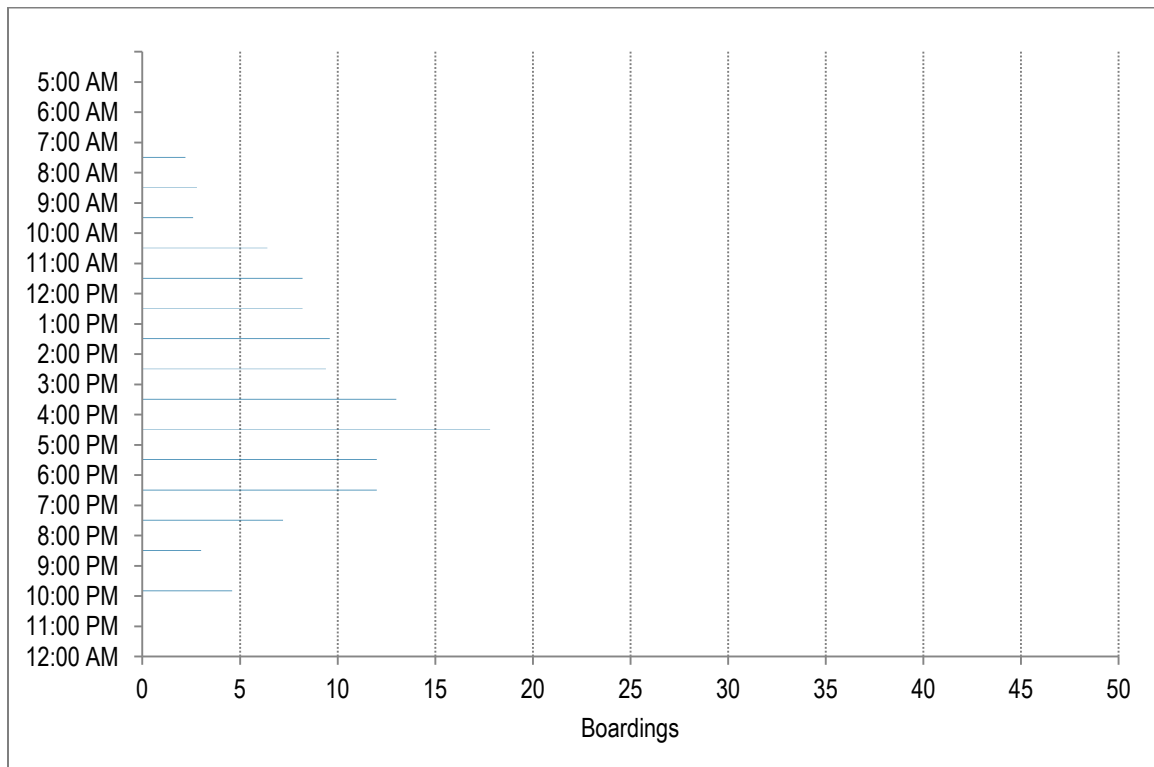
Weekday northbound passenger loads are highest between 7:00-11:00 a.m. in the northbound direction and 2:00-7:00 p.m. in the southbound direction.

CSUCI Oxnard	
Weekday Route Characteristics	
Span	7:00AM-10:35PM
Frequency (min)	60
Trips	31
Revenue Hours	14.0
Length (Round-Trip)	20
Stops (Round-Trip)	4
Average Stop Spacing (mi)	5.0
Weekday Route Performance	
Boardings	234
Boardings per Hour	16.7
Boardings per Trip	7.6
Saturday Route Characteristics	
Span	7:45AM-5:40PM
Frequency (min)	60
Trips	20
Revenue Hours	9.2
Saturday Route Performance	
Boardings	13
Boardings per Hour	1.4
Boardings per Trip	0.6

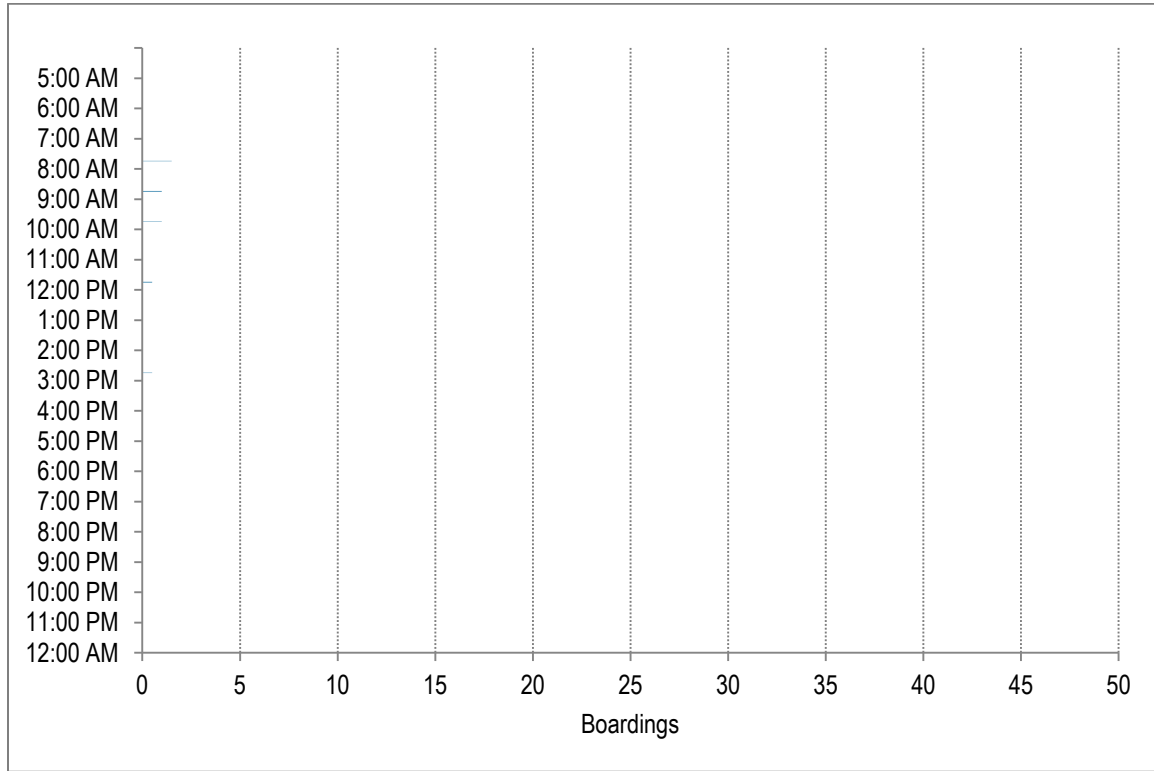
CSUCI-Oxnard Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Northbound



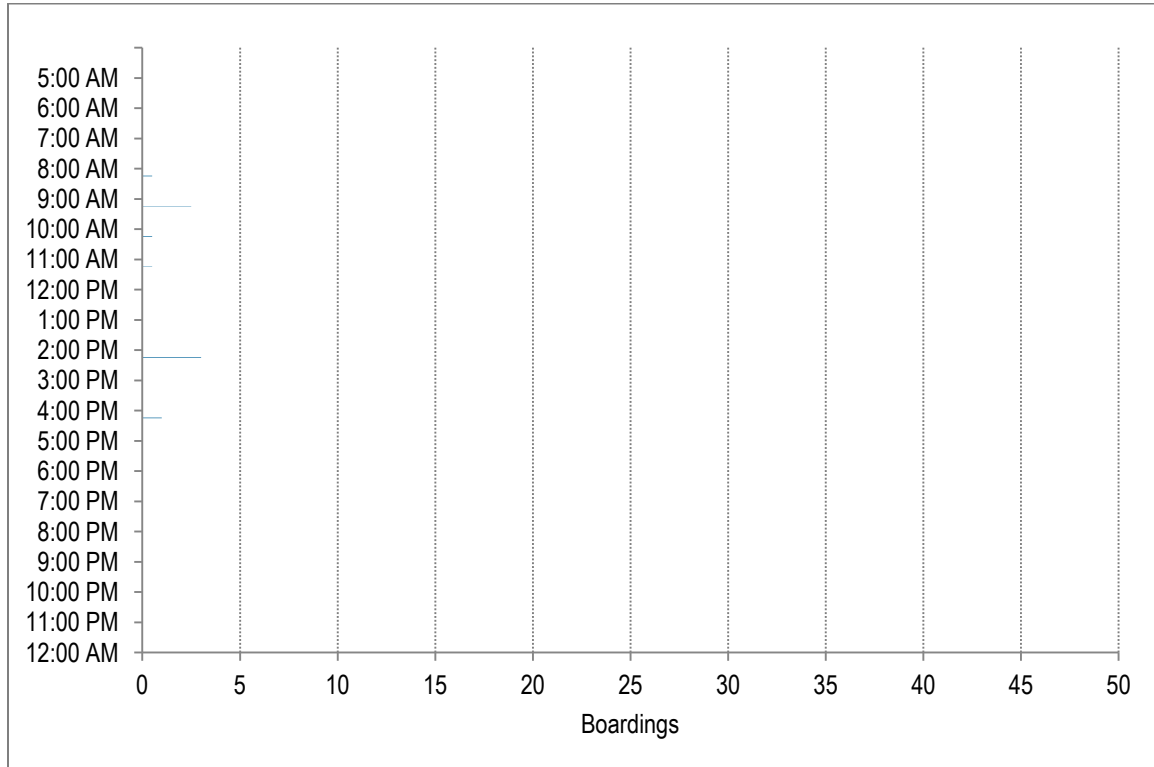
CSUCI-Camarillo Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Southbound



CSUCI-Oxnard Ridership by Trip: Saturday – Northbound



CSUCI-Oxnard Ridership by Trip: Saturday – Southbound

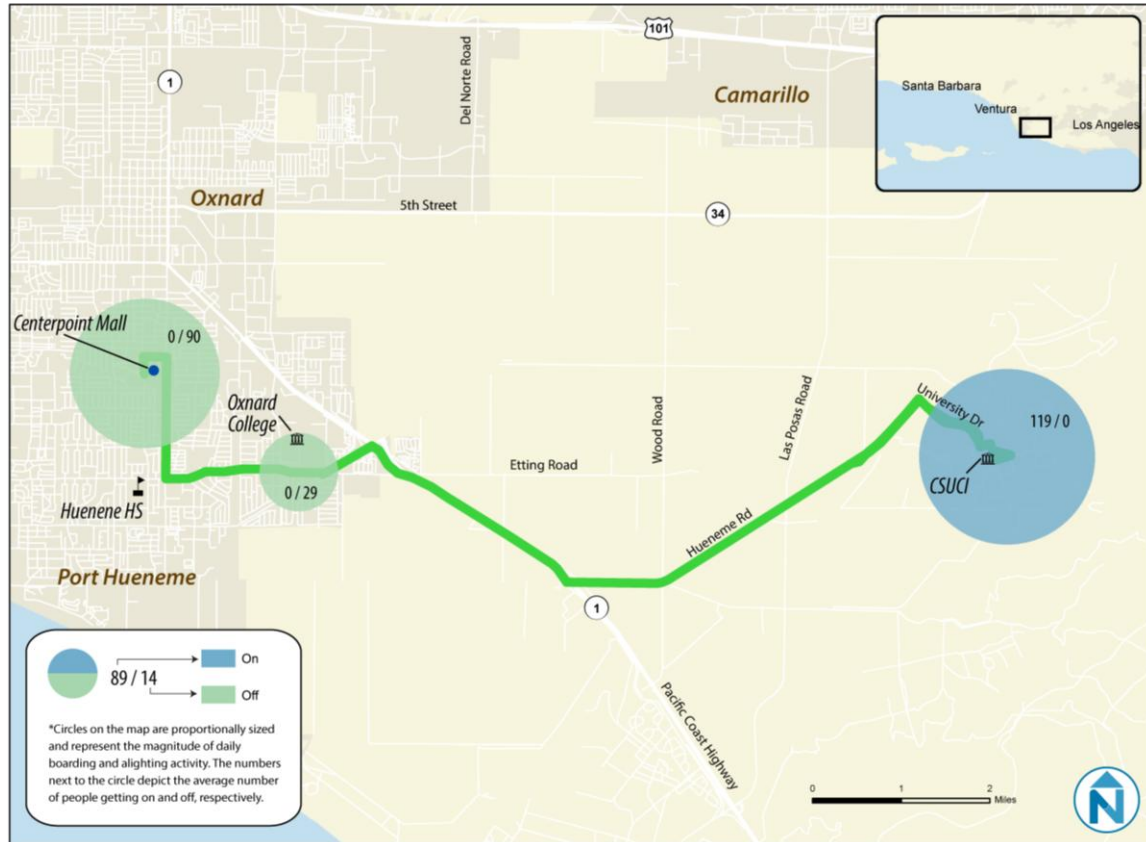


CSUCI-Oxnard Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Northbound



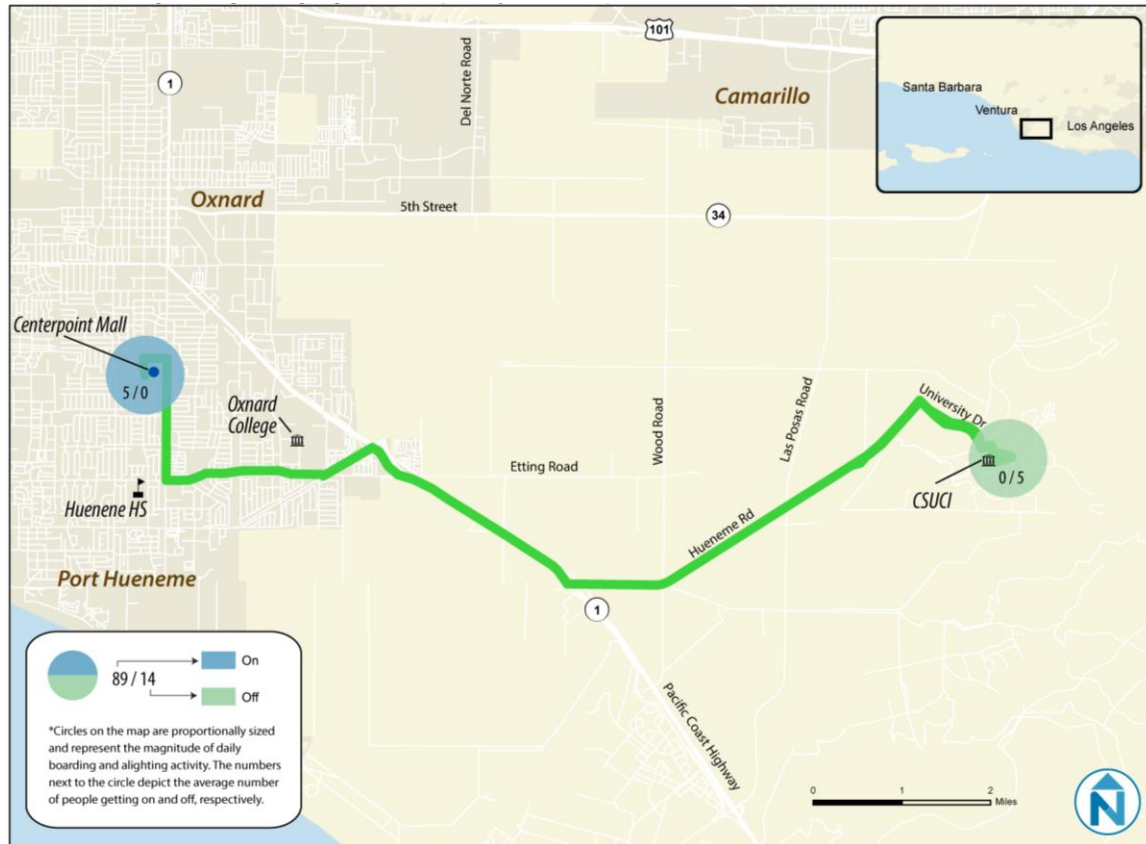
Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Centerpoint Mall	89	0
2	Oxnard College	26	0
3	CSUCI	0	114

CSUCI-Oxnard Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Southbound



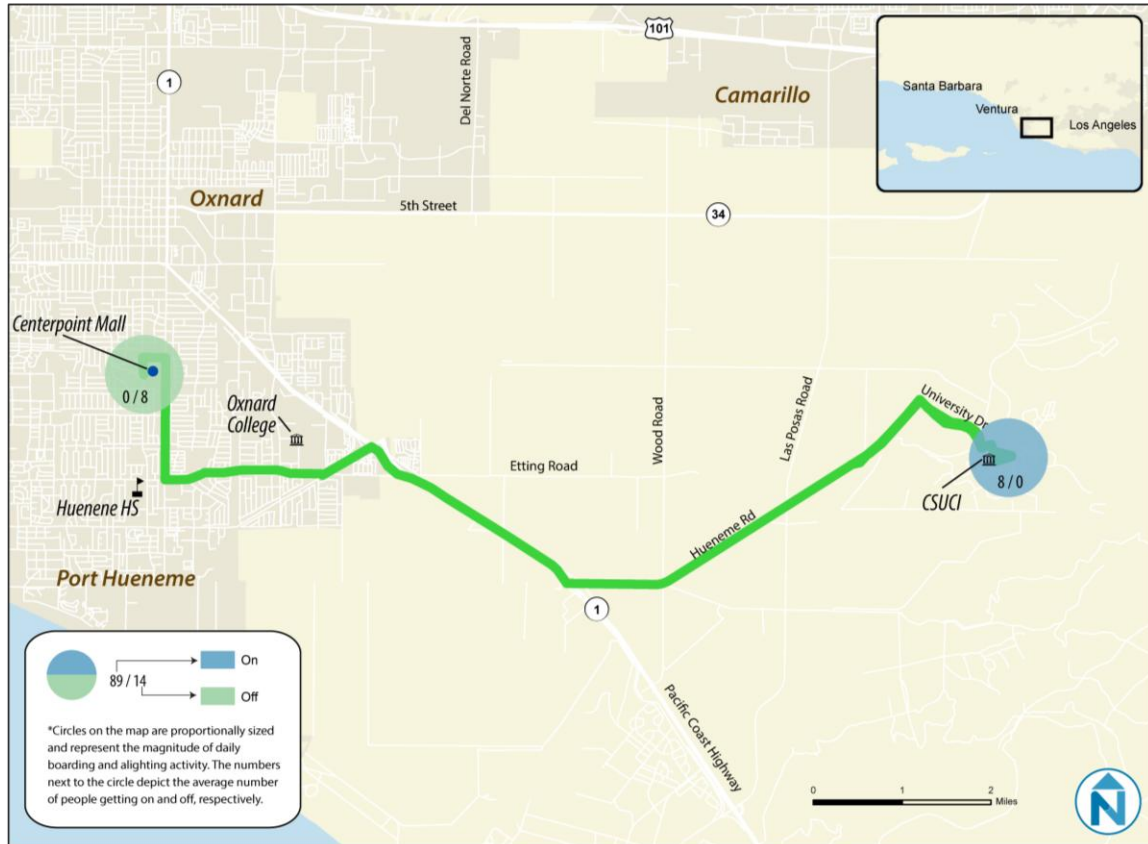
Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	CSUCI Campus	119	0
2	Oxnard College	0	29
3	Centerpoint Mall	0	90

CSUCI-Oxnard Ridership by Stop: Saturday – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	CSUCI	5	0
2	Oxnard College	0	0
3	Centerpoint Mall	0	5

CSUCI-Oxnard Ridership by Stop: Saturday – Southbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Centerpoint Mall	8	0
2	Oxnard College	0	0
3	CSUCI	0	8

Conejo Connection

Description

The Conejo Connection provides weekday commuter service between Ventura, Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, and Woodland Hills, primarily via Highway 101. There are two northbound and two southbound trips during both morning and afternoon service.

The southbound route serves Oxnard Transit Center and Esplanade Mall before traveling southbound on Highway 101. The route then deviates to Camarillo Metrolink Station, Hillcrest Dr, and Thousand Oaks Transit Center in Ventura County. The route then travels along Highway 101 until its endpoint at Warner Center.

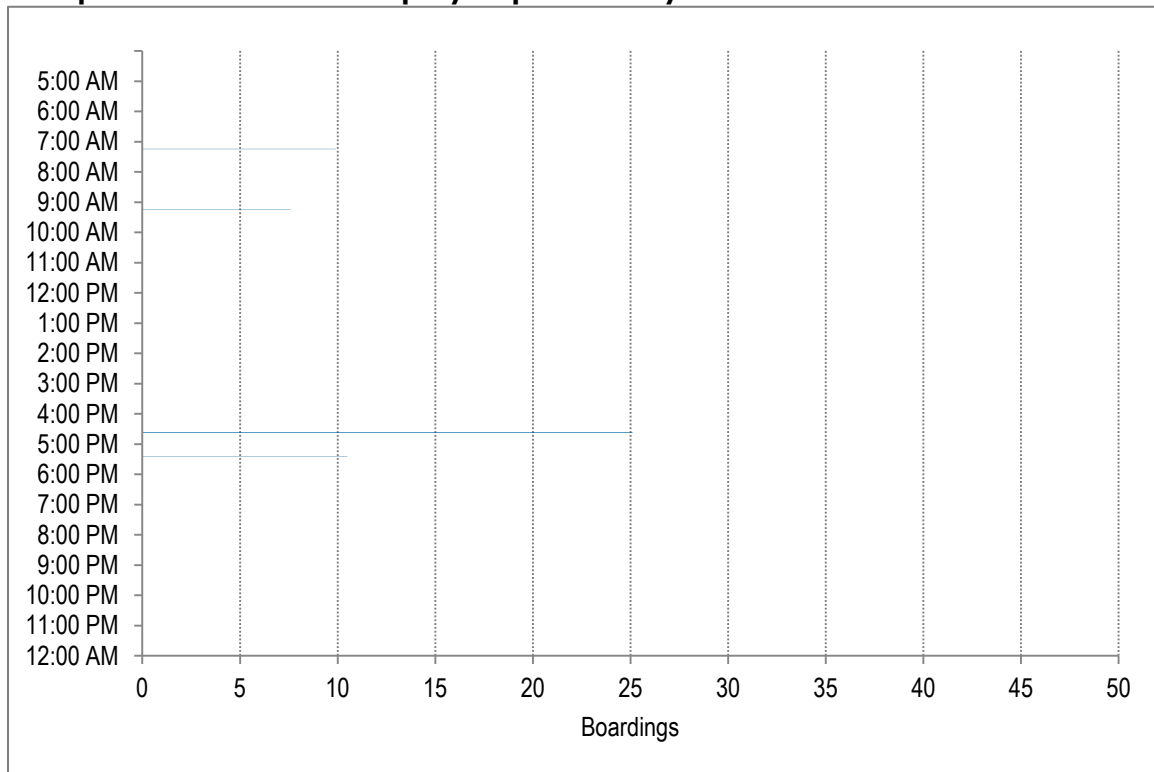
The northbound route follows a similar configuration. Additional deviations to the Ventura Transit Center, Carmen Plaza and The Oaks Mall are made on select trips.

Performance Characteristics

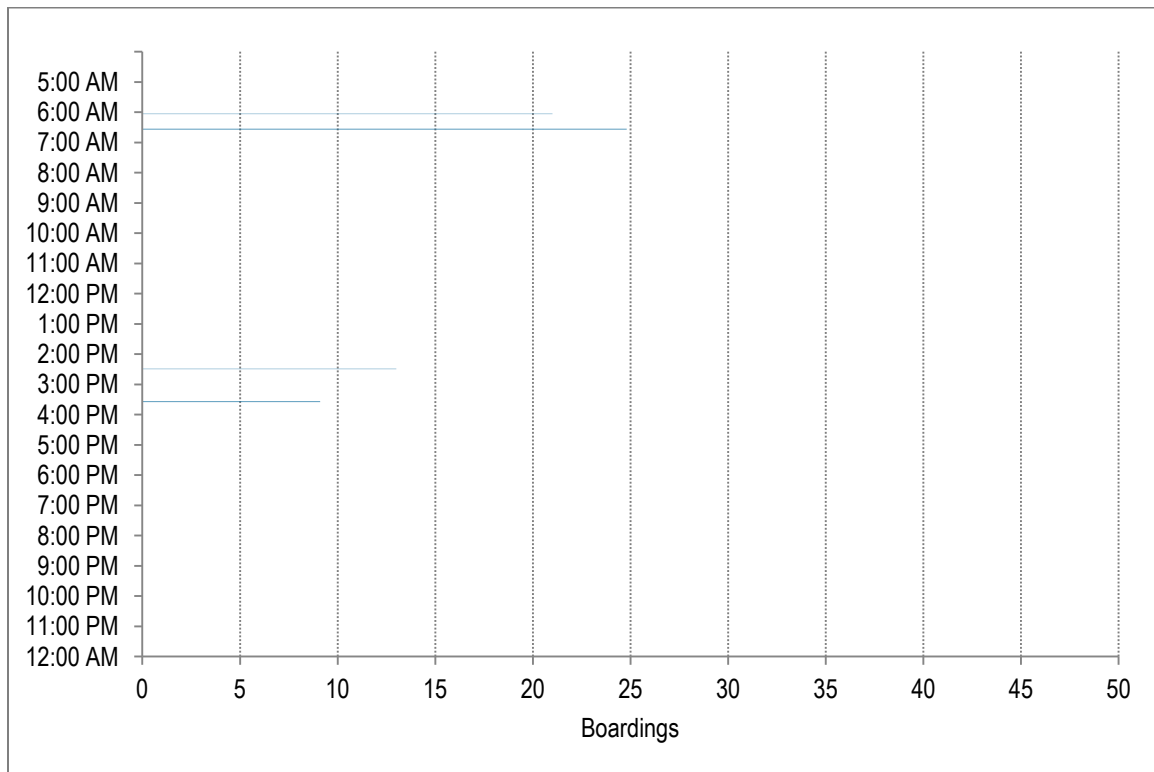
The Conejo Connection performs slightly below the system average for weekday boardings per trip (15.1 compared to 16.3 per day). Most morning commuters travel southbound towards Woodlands Hills, while most afternoon commuters return northbound.

Conejo Connection	
Weekday Route Characteristics	
Span (AM)	6:04AM-11:01AM
Span (PM)	2:30PM-6:39PM
Trips	8
Revenue Hours	13.0
Length (Round-Trip)	80
Stops (Round-Trip)	17
Average Stop Spacing (mi)	4.7
Weekday Route Performance	
Boardings	121
Boardings per Hour	9.3
Boardings per Trip	15.1

Conejo Connection Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Northbound



Conejo Connection Ridership by Trip: Weekday – Southbound



Conejo Connection Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Northbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Warner Center	32	0
2	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	9	12
3	Wendy & Hillcrest	0	2
4	Verdugo Way	1	3
5	Camarillo Metrolink	7	8
6	Carmen Plaza	5	1
7	Esplanade Mall	0	15
8	Oxnard Transit Center	0	15

Conejo Connection Ridership by Stop: Weekday – Southbound



Stop	Location	Boardings	Alightings
1	Oxnard Transit Center	16	0
2	Pacific View Mall	10	0
3	Esplanade Mall	17	2
4	Carmen Plaza	1	5
5	Camarillo Metrolink	11	7
6	Verdugo Way	1	2
7	Wendy & Hillcrest	2	5
8	Thousand Oaks Transit Center	11	9
9	The Oaks Mall	0	3
10	Topanga Canyon Blvd.	0	3
11	Warner Center Loop	0	34

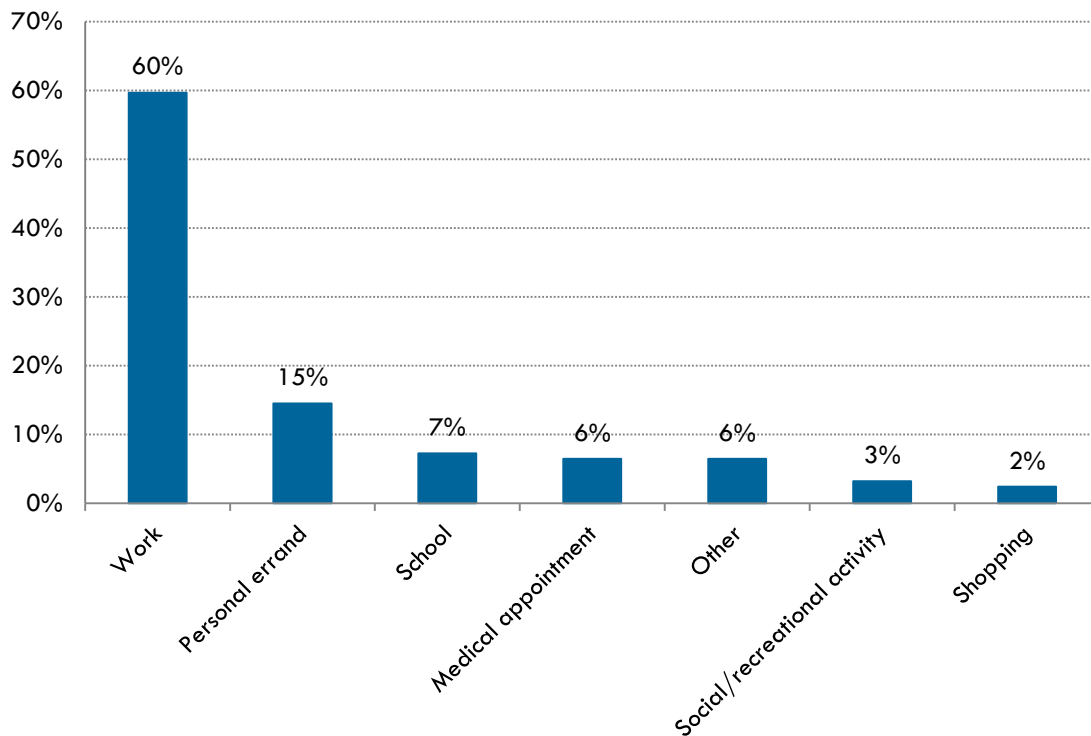
VCTC INTERCITY ON-BOARD SURVEY RESULTS

VCTC conducted an on-board survey during May 2014. The following is a summary of the notable findings from on-board surveys administered on various VCTC Intercity routes. Riders answered a number of questions related to transit use, including: trip origin, trip destination, mode of transport before and after bus trip, desired service improvements, frequency of use, method of payment, age, and income. Each route had varying levels of survey respondents, indicated in each section.

Highway 101 Route

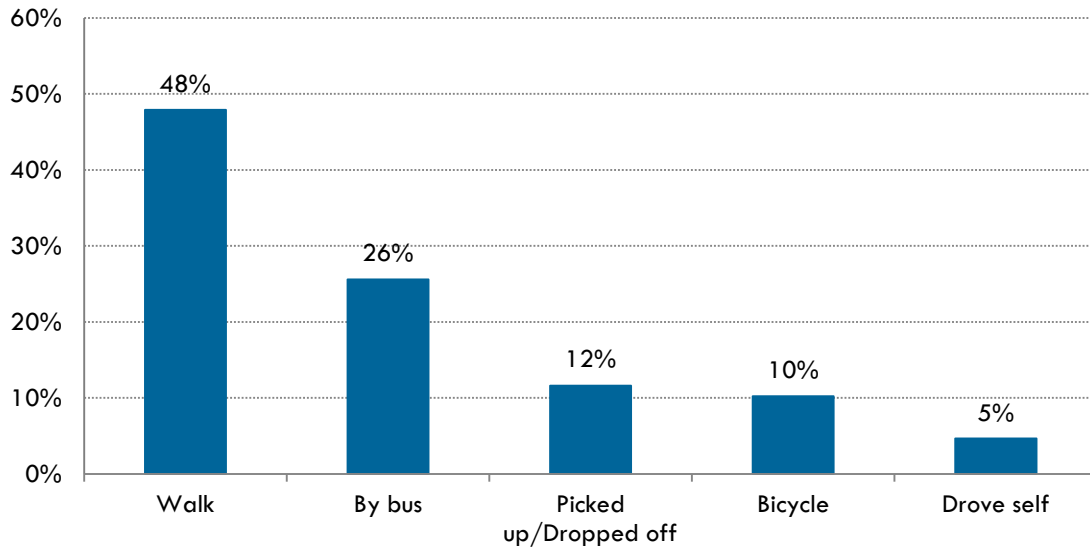
Sixty percent of riders surveyed on the Highway 101 bus were traveling to or from work. Among routes where work was the primary origin or destination, Highway 101 was the only one that did not have school as the second-most frequent trip purpose. Fifteen percent indicated they were on a personal errand, and 7% said they were traveling to or from school.

Figure 15 Highway 101 Riders: Origin/Destination



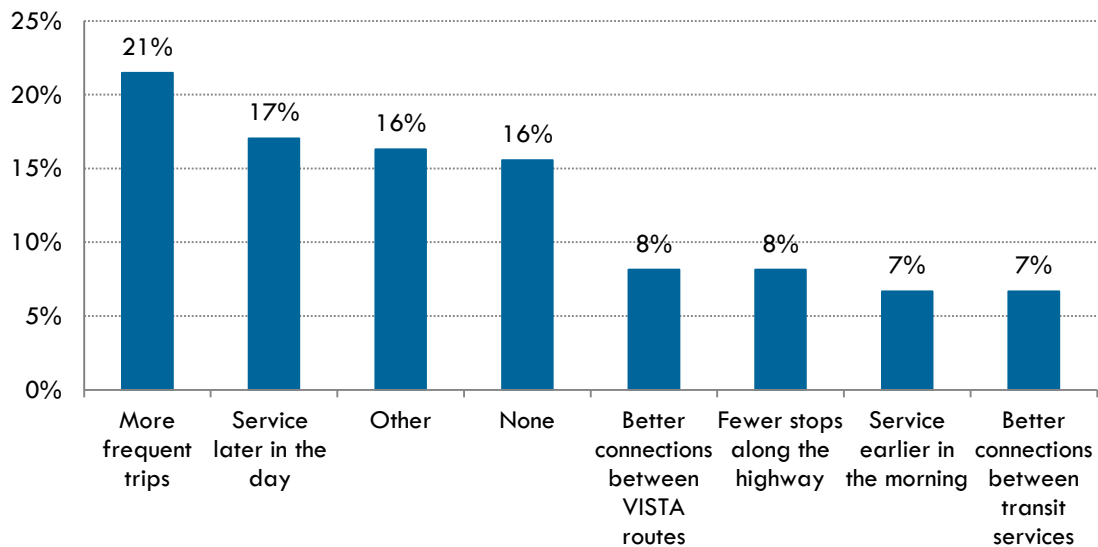
Walking was the primary mode of transport (48%) before or after riding the Highway 101 bus (Figure 16). Along with the East County route, this route saw the highest share of riders linking their trip with another bus (26%).

Figure 16 Highway 101 Riders: Mode of Transport Before and After Bus



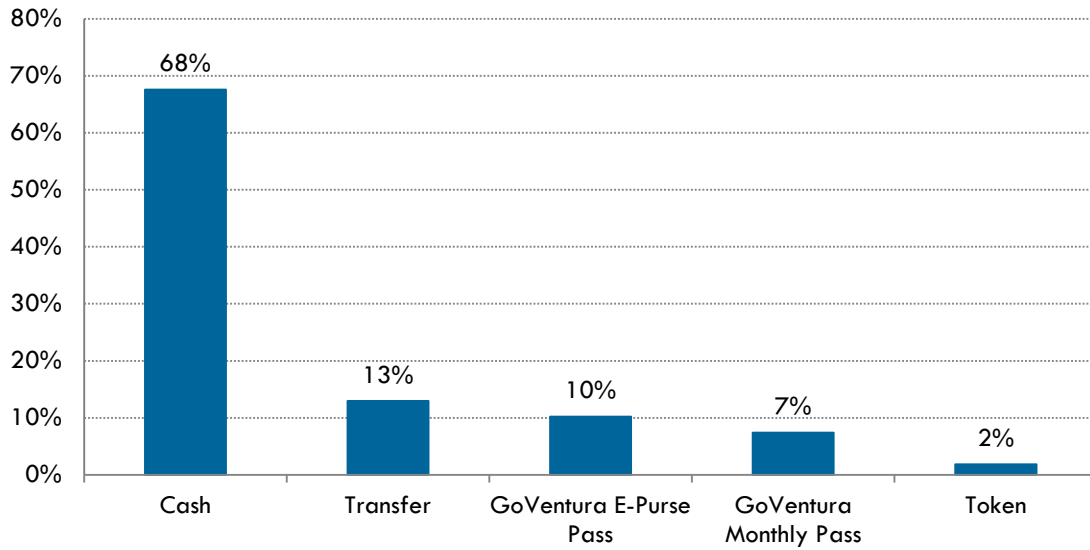
When asked what one change would encourage them to ride the Highway 101 bus more often (Figure 17), the highest percentage of respondents requested more frequent trips (21%). Seventeen percent would like later service. “Other” and “none of these” accounted for 16% of responses each.

Figure 17 Highway 101 Riders: Desired Service Improvements



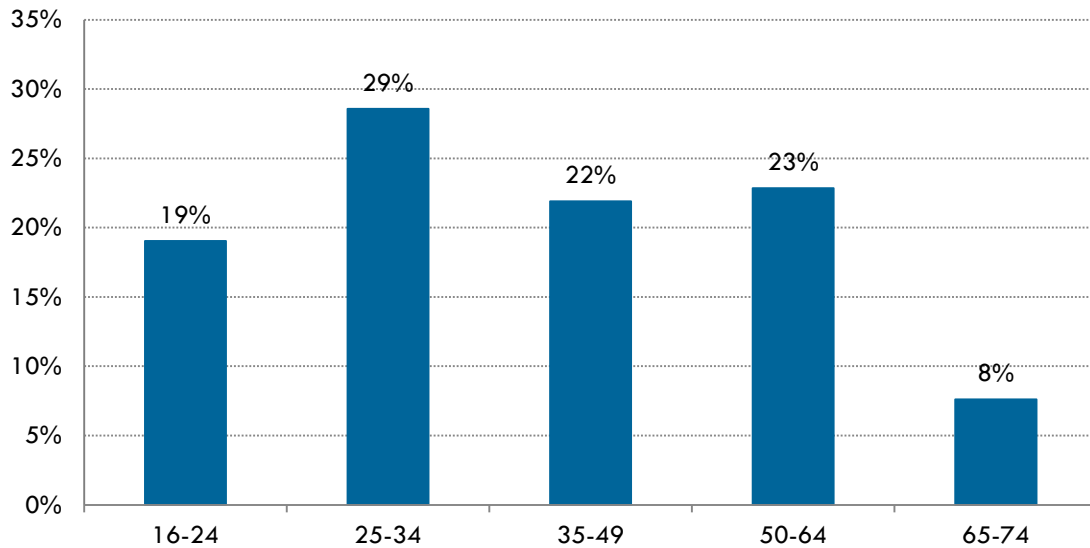
Over two-thirds of riders on the Highway 101 route paid for their fare in cash (Figure 18).

Figure 18 Highway 101 Riders: Payment Method



There was relatively even representation among age groups on the Highway 101 route, with the exception being riders 65 years and older constituting only 8% (Figure 19).

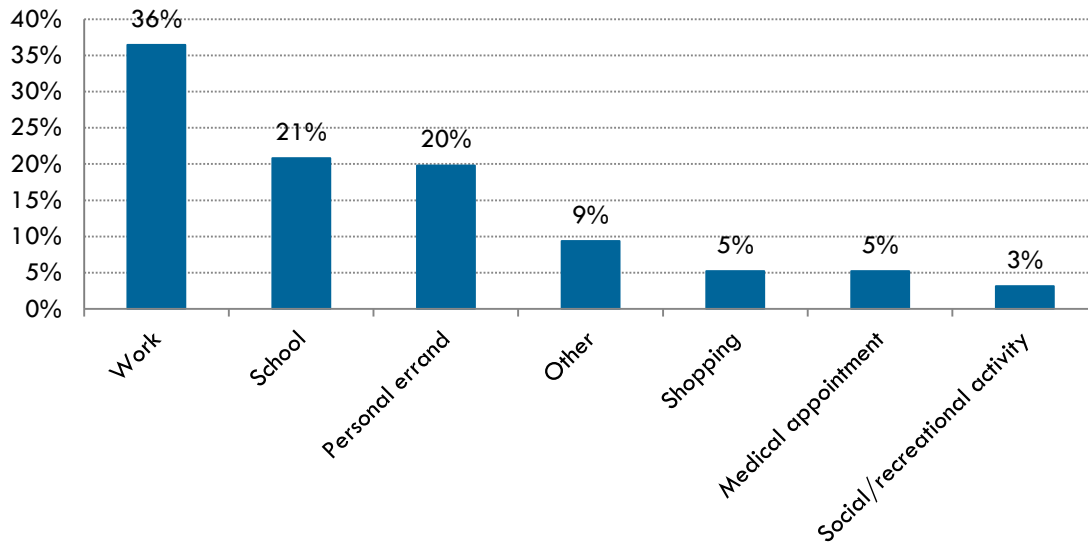
Figure 19 Highway 101 Riders: Age



Highway 126 Route

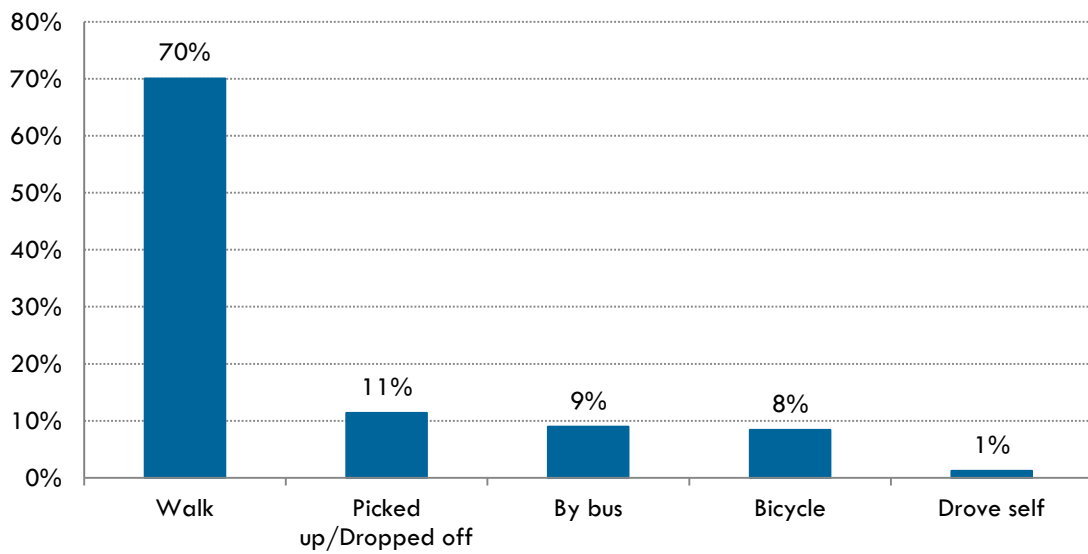
Among those surveyed on the Highway 126 bus, 36% of respondents indicated they were traveling to or from work. School and “personal errand” trips accounted for 21% and 20% of responses, respectively (Figure 20).

Figure 20 Highway 126 Riders: Origin/Destination



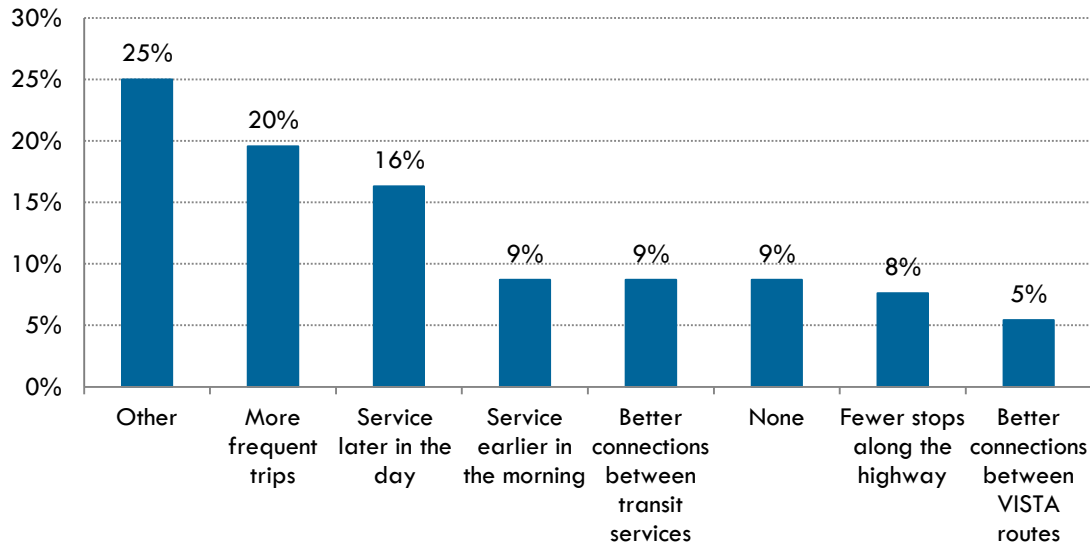
Among routes surveyed, the Highway 126 route saw the highest percentage of users walking before or after their bus trip at 70% and the lowest percentage of users driving themselves at 1% (Figure 21).

Figure 21 Highway 126 Riders: Mode of Transport Before and After Bus



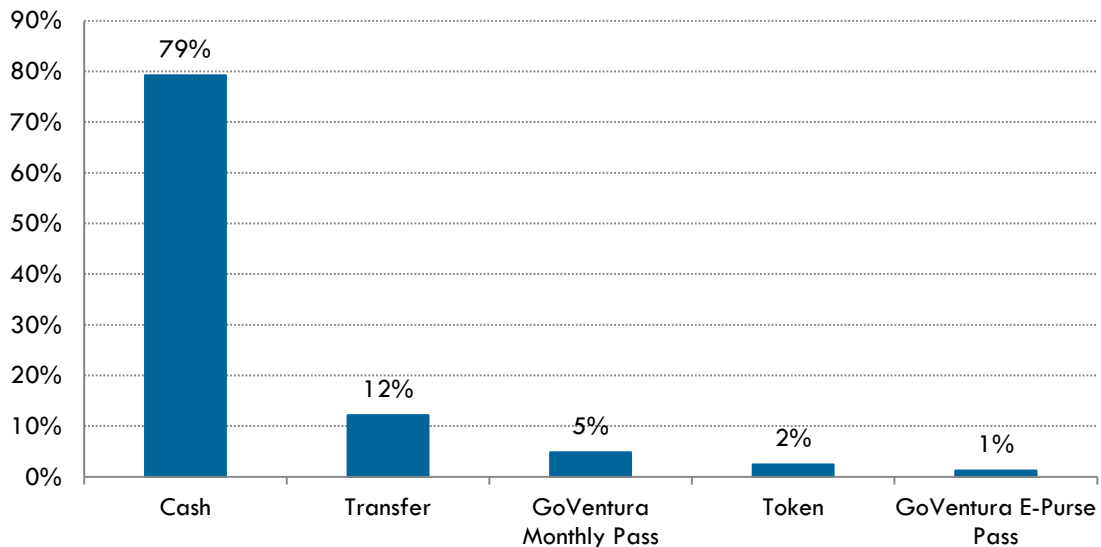
When asked what one change would encourage them to ride the Highway 126 bus more (Figure 22), the highest percentage of respondents chose “other” (25%). Twenty percent requested more frequent service, and 16% requested later service.

Figure 22 Highway 126 Riders: Desired Service Improvements



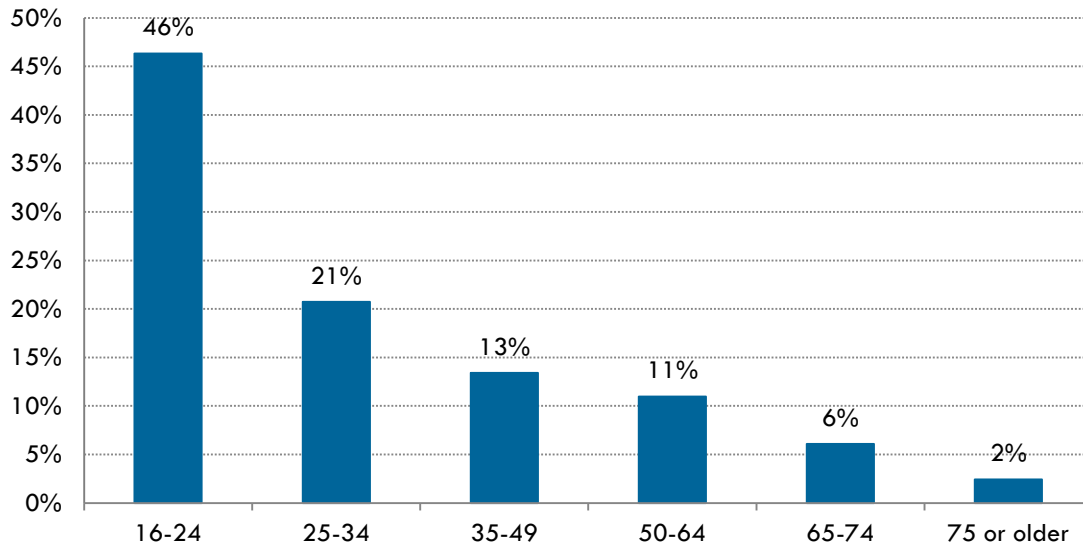
The highest percentage of riders on the Highway 126 bus (79%) paid their fare in cash, followed by 12% who boarded with a transfer (Figure 23). Aside from the CSUCI routes, the Highway 126 saw the lowest percentage of riders using a monthly or E-Purse pass (6%).

Figure 23 Highway 126 Riders: Payment Method



Forty-six percent of riders on the Highway 126 bus were between the ages of 16 and 24 (Figure 24). The second-most represented group was riders between 25 and 34 years old (21%). The remaining age groups accounted for 13% or less among respondents.

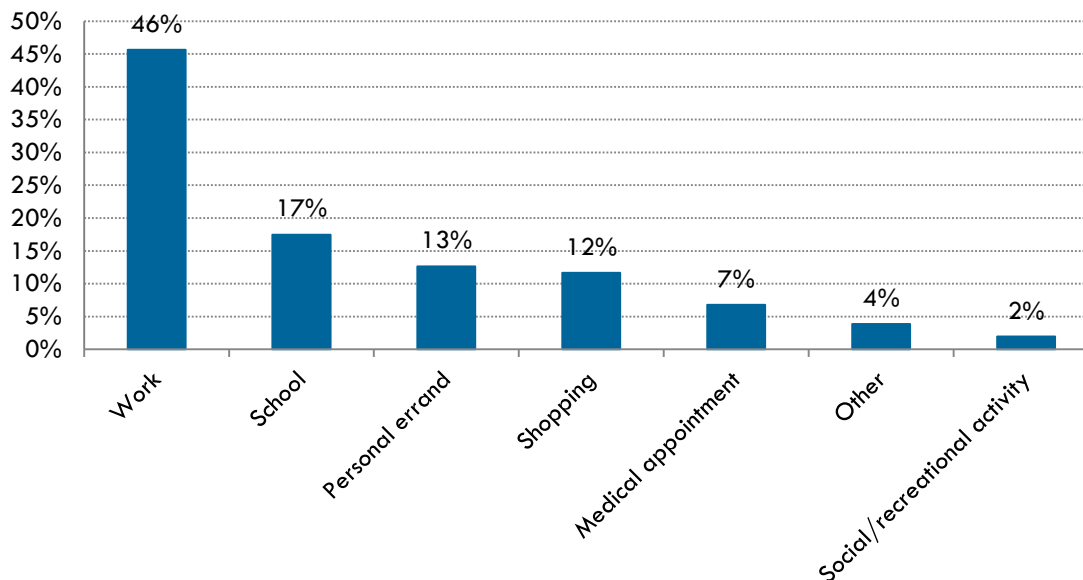
Figure 24 Highway 126 Riders: Age



East County Route

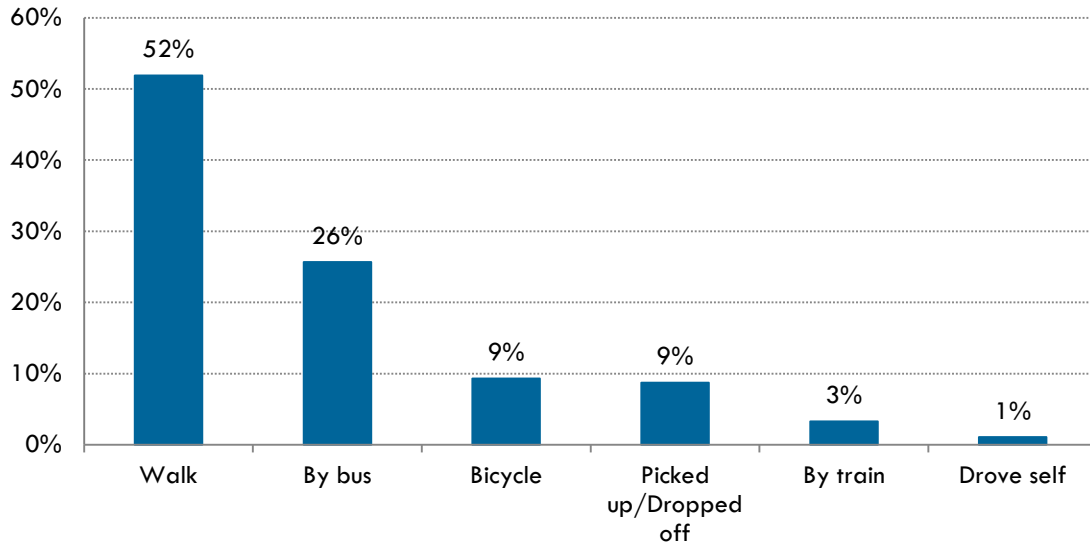
At 46%, the largest share of riders on the East County bus were traveling to or from work (Figure 25). The next-most frequent trip purpose was school (17%), personal errands (12%), and shopping (12%).

Figure 25 East County Riders: Origin/Destination



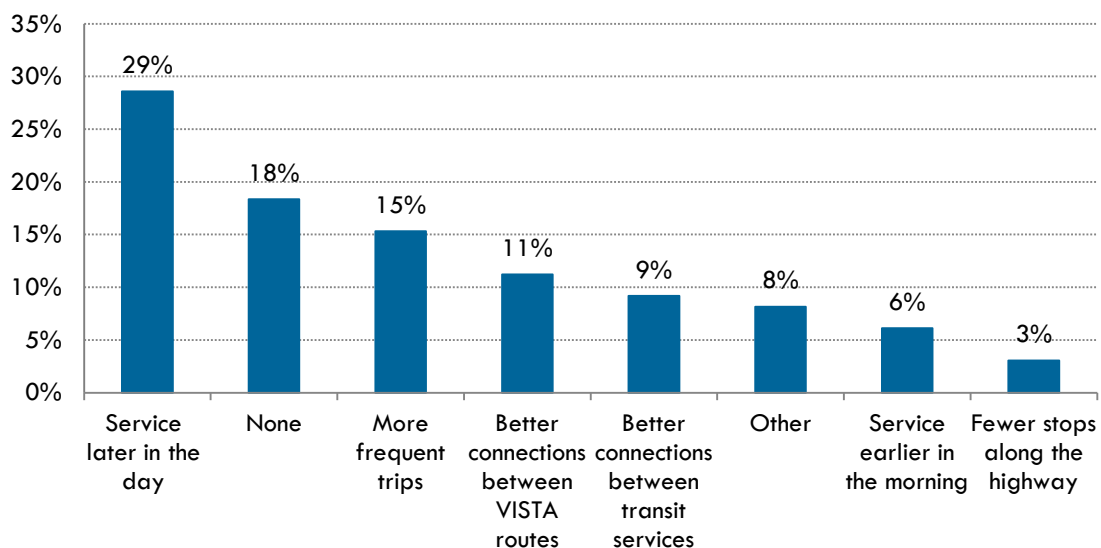
Among riders traveling to or from the East County bus (Figure 26), walking was the highest mode share at 52%. Along with the Highway 101 route, the East County route saw the highest share of riders linking their trip with another bus (26%). It also saw the lowest share of riders driving alone, along with the Highway 126 route, at 1%.

Figure 26 East County Riders: Mode of Transport Before and After Bus



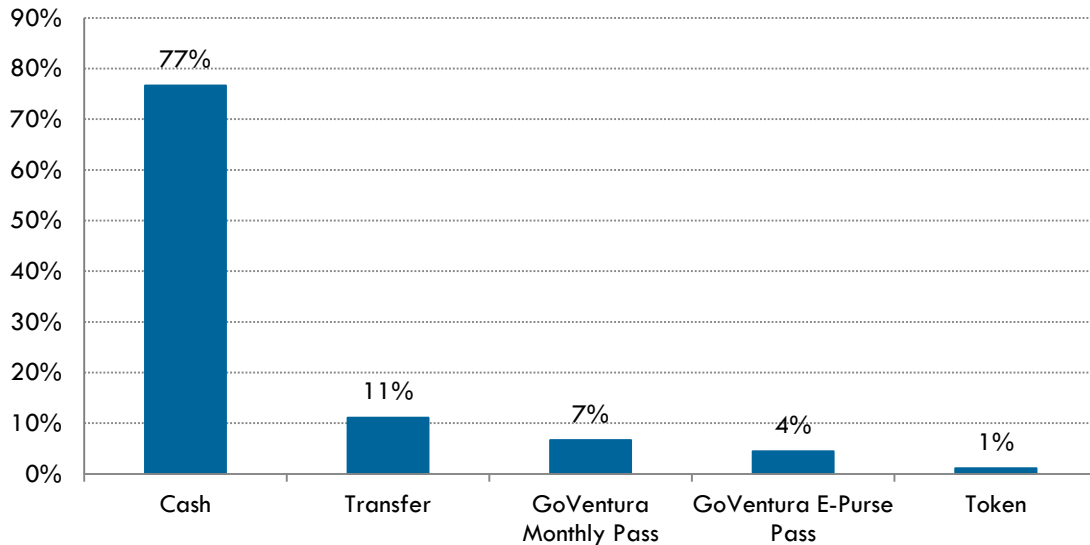
When asked what one change would encourage them to ride the East County bus more often (Figure 27), 28% expressed a need for service later in the day. Eighteen percent chose “none of these,” and 15% wanted more frequent trips. Among surveyed routes, the East County route had the highest share of riders requesting better connections (20%) either among VCTC Intercity routes or transit services in general.

Figure 27 East County Riders: Desired Service Improvements



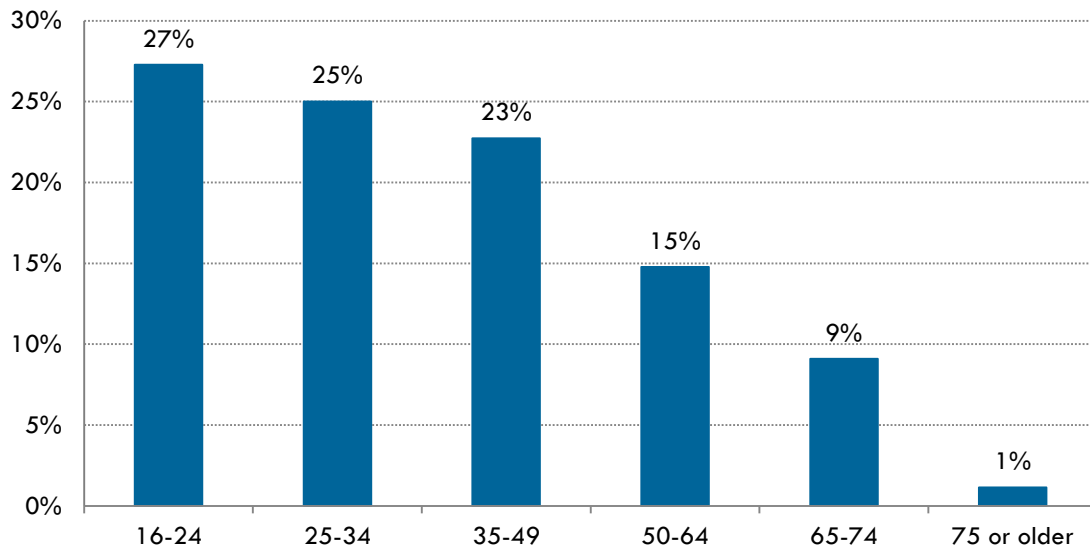
Approximately 77% of riders paid cash fare to board the East County bus (Figure 28). This route also saw relatively low use of monthly or E-Purse passes (13%) as compared to other routes surveyed.

Figure 28 East County Riders: Payment Method



Riders between 16 and 24 years were the most represented age group on the East County bus (27%). Close behind were riders between the ages of 25 to 34 (25%) and 35 to 49 (23%). Riders 50 years or older accounted for roughly a quarter of survey respondents.

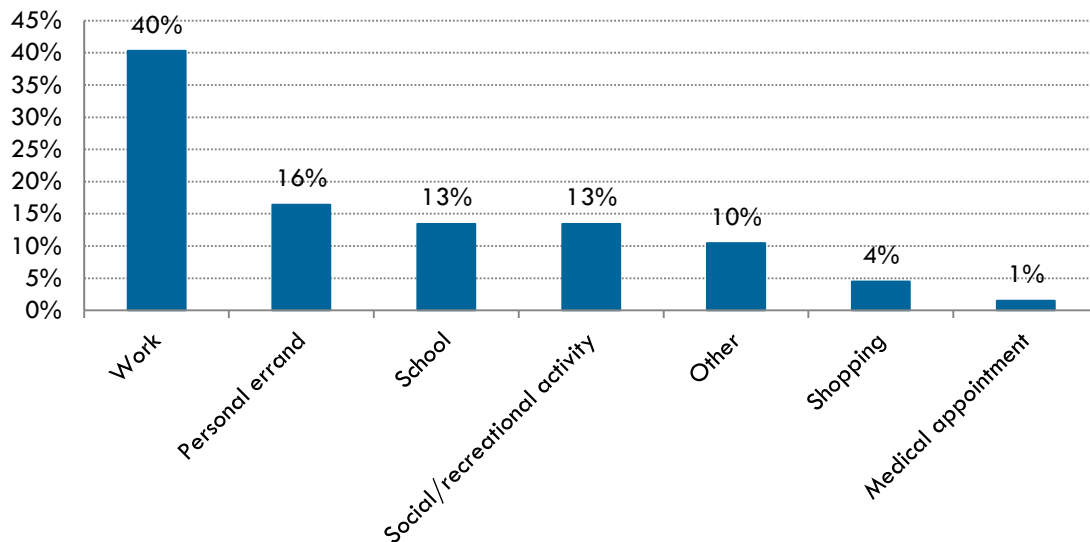
Figure 29 East County Riders: Age



Coastal Express Route

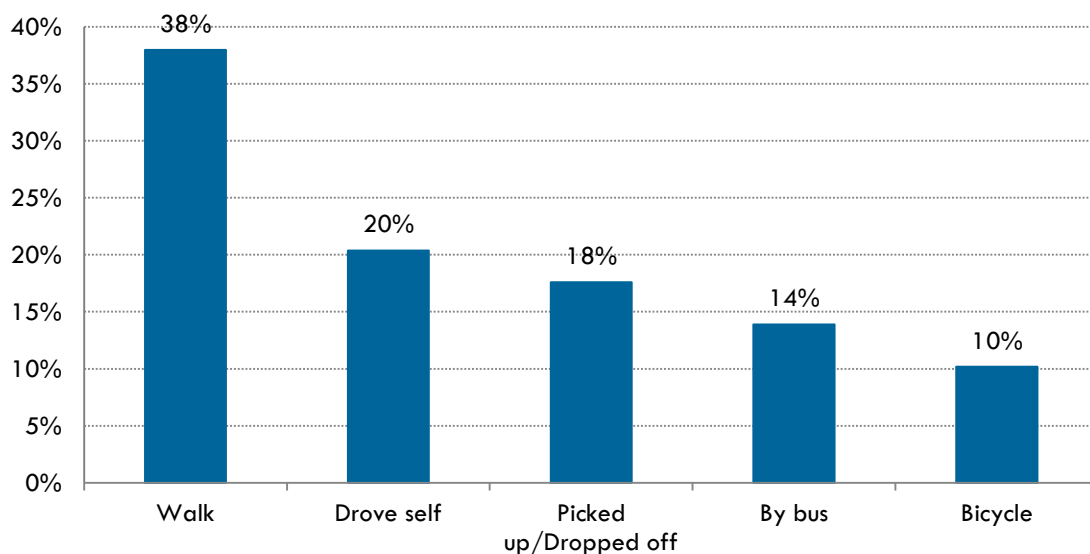
The highest percentage of survey respondents on the Coastal Express (40%) indicated that they were traveling to or from work (Figure 30). Those traveling to or from personal errands, school, or a social/recreational activity accounted for 16%, 13%, and 13% of respondents, respectively.

Figure 30 Coastal Express Riders: Origin/Destination



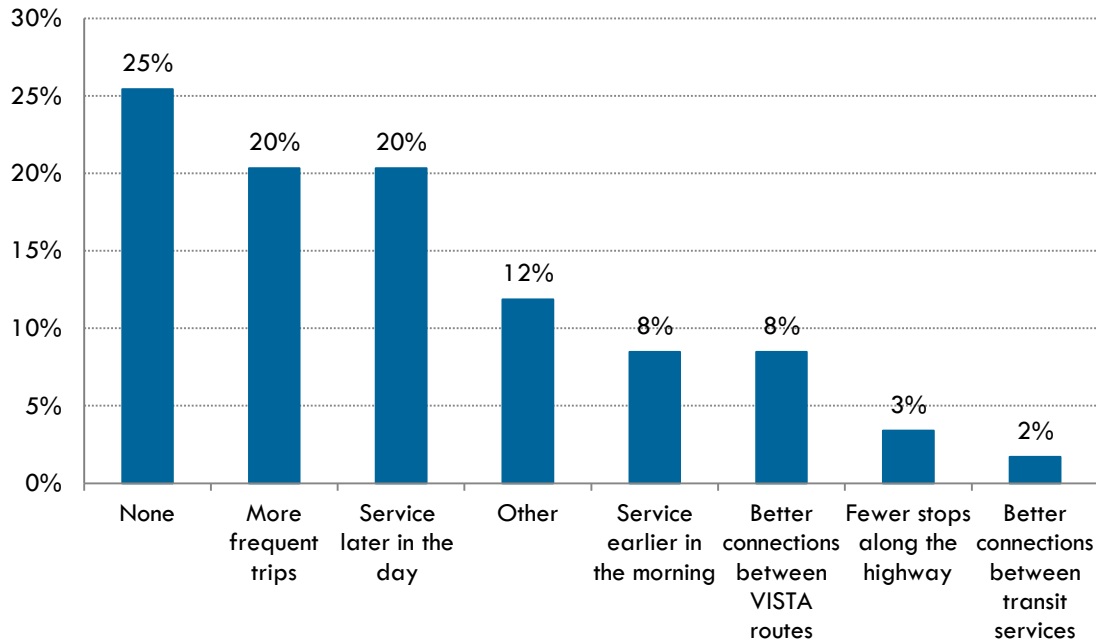
Approximately 38% of riders on the Coastal Express walked to arrive to the bus and/or their final destination (Figure 31). Roughly the same amount rode in a personal vehicle (either driving themselves or catching a ride). Those who connected to/from another bus accounted for 14%, and those who rode a bike accounted for 10%.

Figure 31 Coastal Express Riders: Mode of Transport Before and After Bus Trip



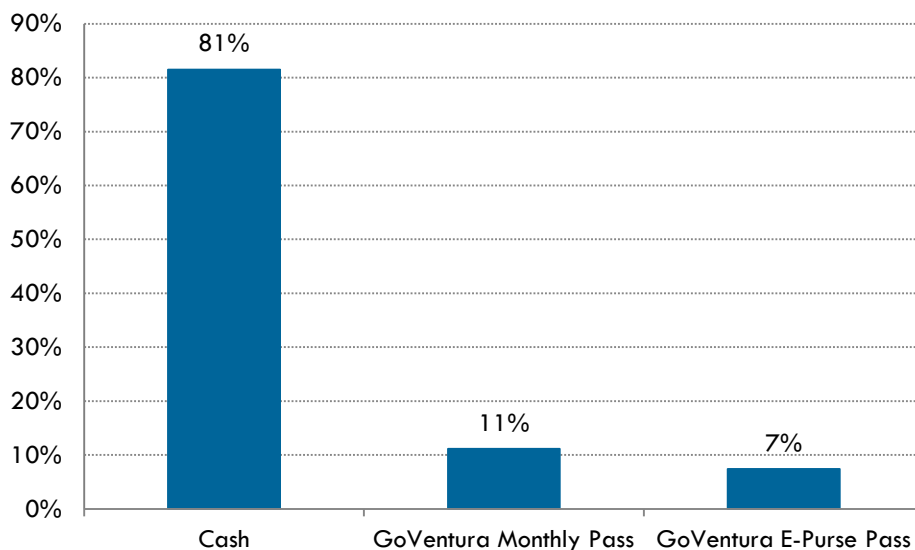
When asked what one change would encourage them to ride the Coastal Express bus more often (Figure 32), the largest percentage of riders (25%) chose “none of these” among available options. The fact that there was also the option to choose “other” (12% of responses) could indicate that these 25% are satisfied with service in its current state. Approximately 20% of riders would like more frequent trips, and the same amount requested service later in the day.

Figure 32 Coastal Express Riders: Desired Service Improvements



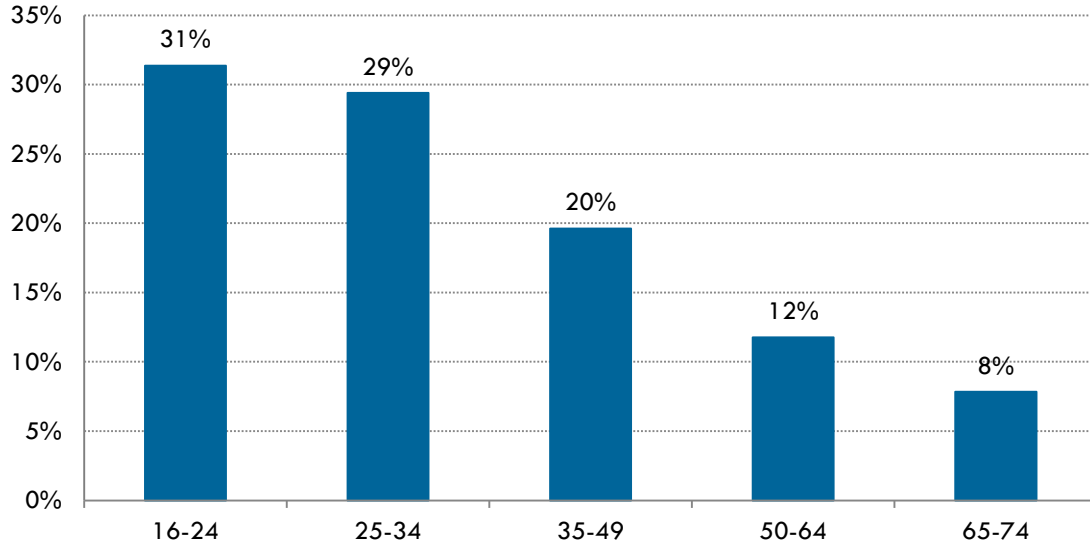
The overwhelming majority of Coastal Express riders (81%) paid their fare with cash (Figure 33).

Figure 33 Coastal Express Riders: Payment Method



Approximately 60% of riders on Coastal Express were between 16 and 34 years old (Figure 34). Riders 65 years or older were the least represented group at 8%.

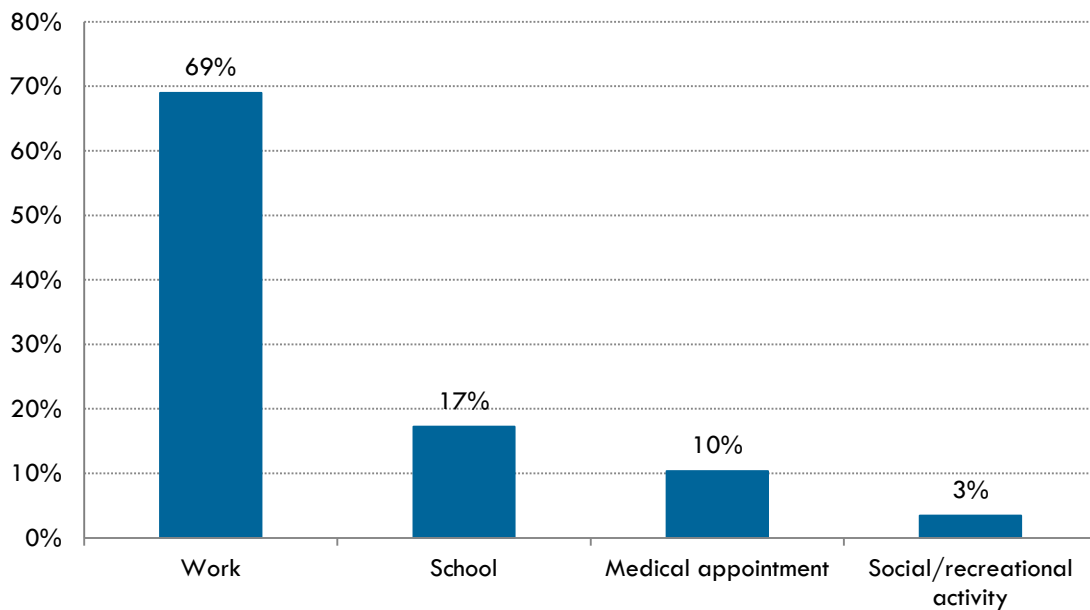
Figure 34 Coastal Express Riders: Age



Conejo Connection Route

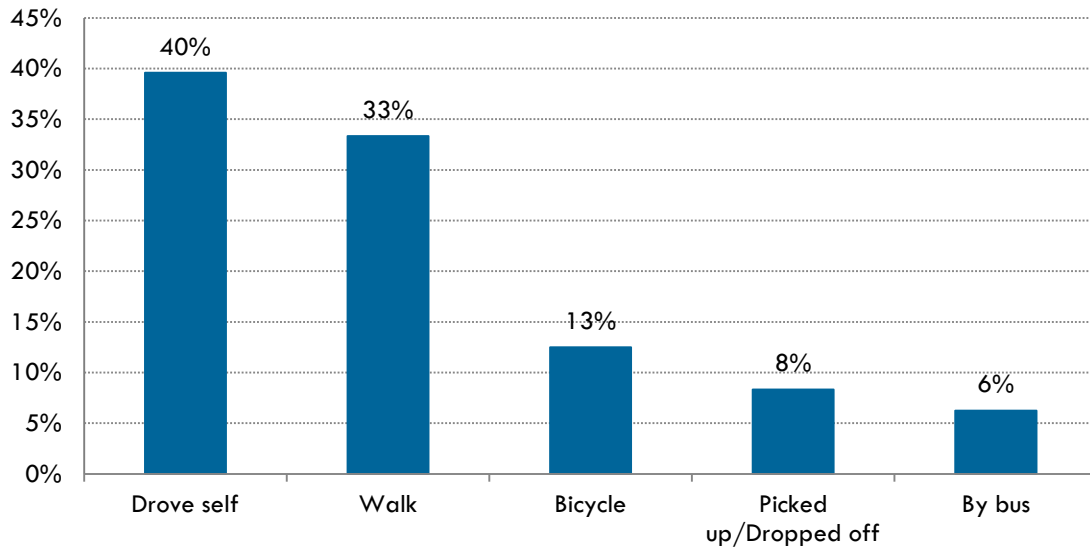
The majority of riders on the Conejo Connection (69%) were traveling to or from work (Figure 35). School and medical trips accounted for 17% and 10% of responses, respectively.

Figure 35 Conejo Connection Riders: Origin/Destination



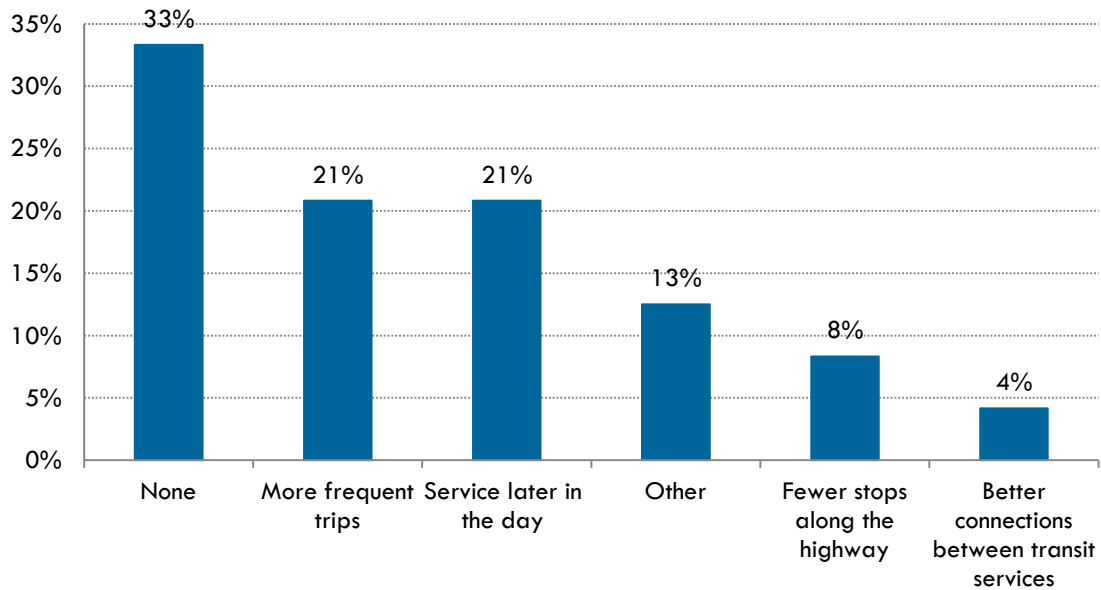
Conejo Express had the largest share of riders traveling to or from the bus via personal automobile, with 40% driving alone and 8% catching a ride (Figure 36). Walking accounted for 33% of the mode share, with bicycling at 13%. Only 6% linked their trip with another bus.

Figure 36 Conejo Connection Riders: Mode of Transport Before and After Bus Trip



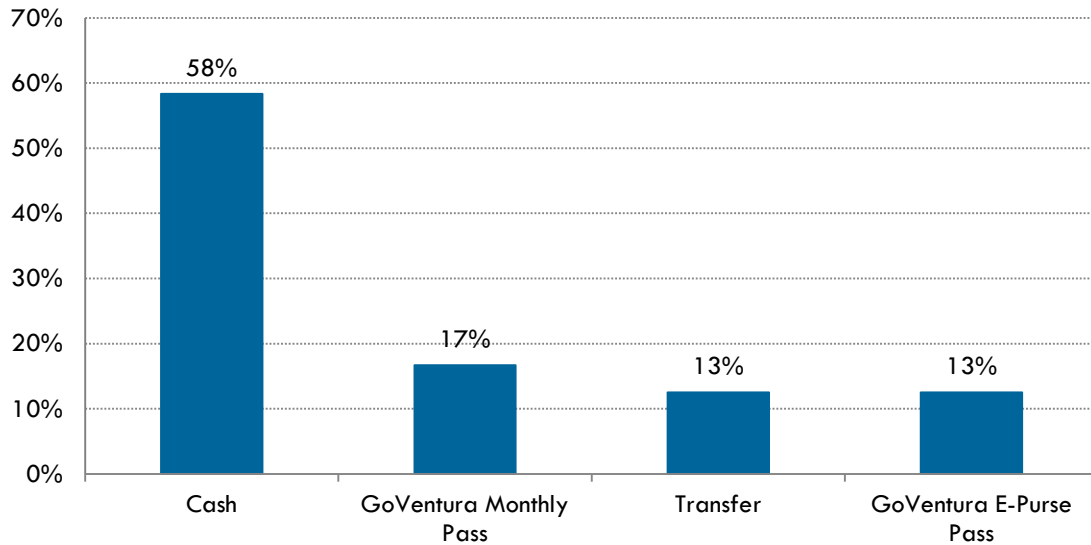
When asked what one change would encourage them to ride the Conejo Express bus more often (Figure 37), 33% chose “none of these” among available options. The fact that there was also the option to choose “other” (13% of responses,) could indicate that these 33% are satisfied with service in its current state. The next-most frequent responses were “more frequent trips” and “service later in the day” at 21% each.

Figure 37 Conejo Connection Riders: Desired Service Improvements



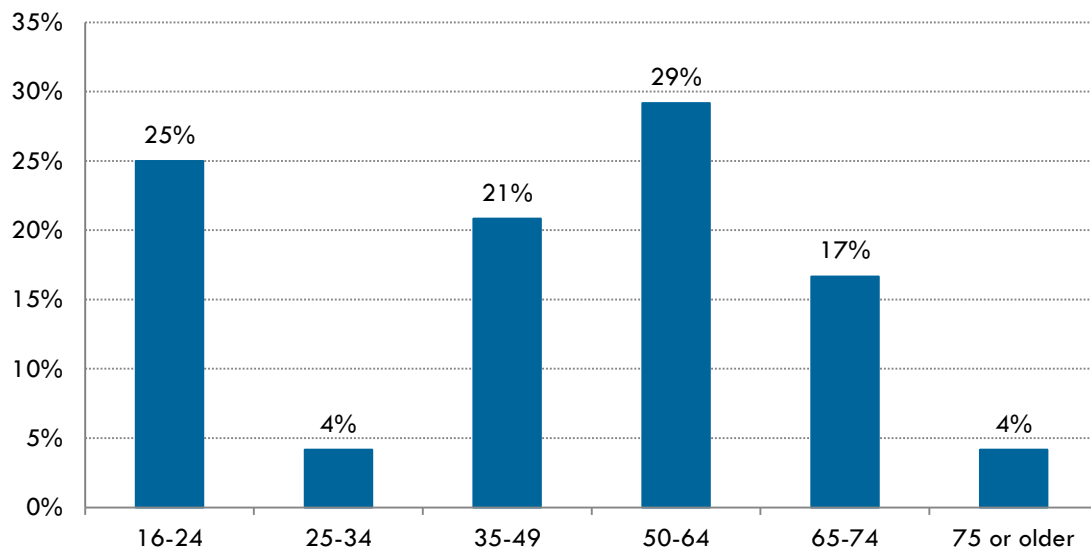
The majority of riders (58%) paid their fare in cash (Figure 38). Those using a monthly or E-Purse pass accounted for 30% of riders. Thirteen percent of respondents boarded the bus with a transfer.

Figure 38 Conejo Connection Riders: Payment Method



Among all VCTC Intercity routes, the Conejo Connection carried the highest share of passengers who were 50 years or older (50%) and the lowest percentage of riders between 25 and 34 years old (4%). Twenty-five percent of riders were between the ages of 16 and 24, and 21% were between the ages of 35 and 49.

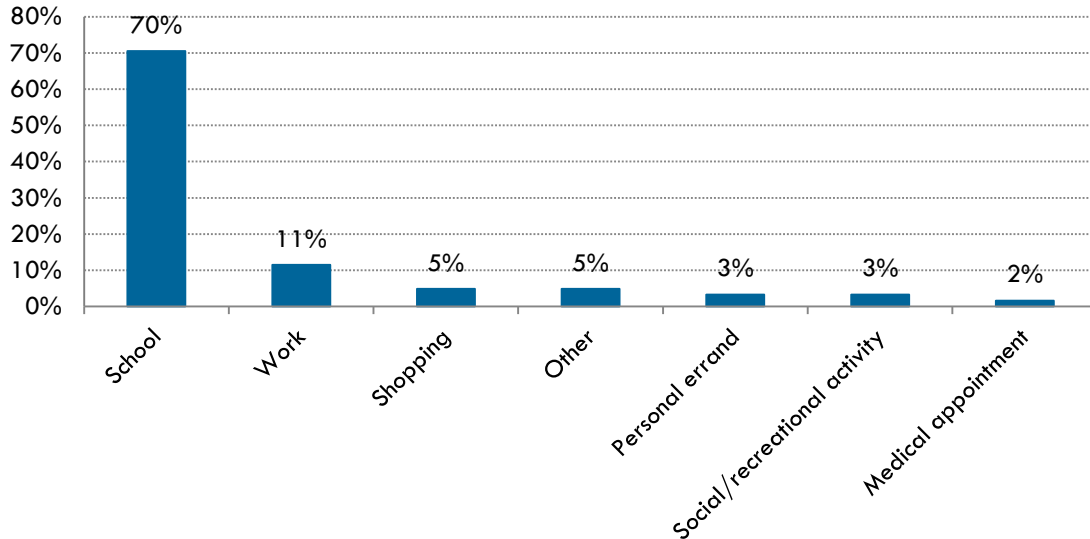
Figure 39 Conejo Connection Riders: Age



CSUCI Camarillo Route

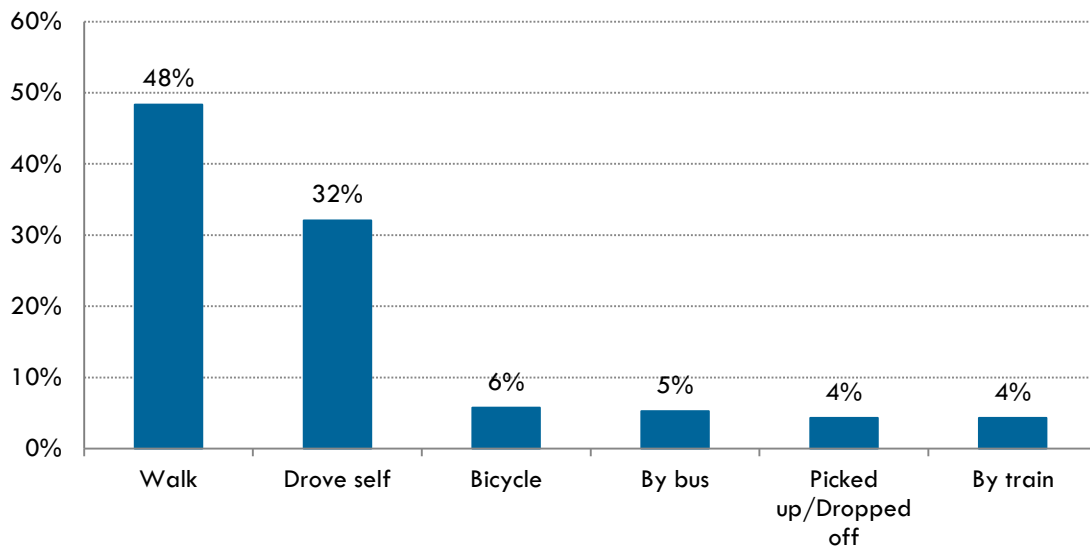
The majority of riders on the CSUCI Camarillo bus were traveling to or from school (70%). All other trip purposes constituted 11% or less of responses (Figure 40).

Figure 40 CSUCI Camarillo Riders: Origin/Destination



The highest percentage of riders (48%) walked before or after their bus trip (Figure 41). Thirty-two percent drove themselves. All other modes accounted for a share of 6% or less among respondents.

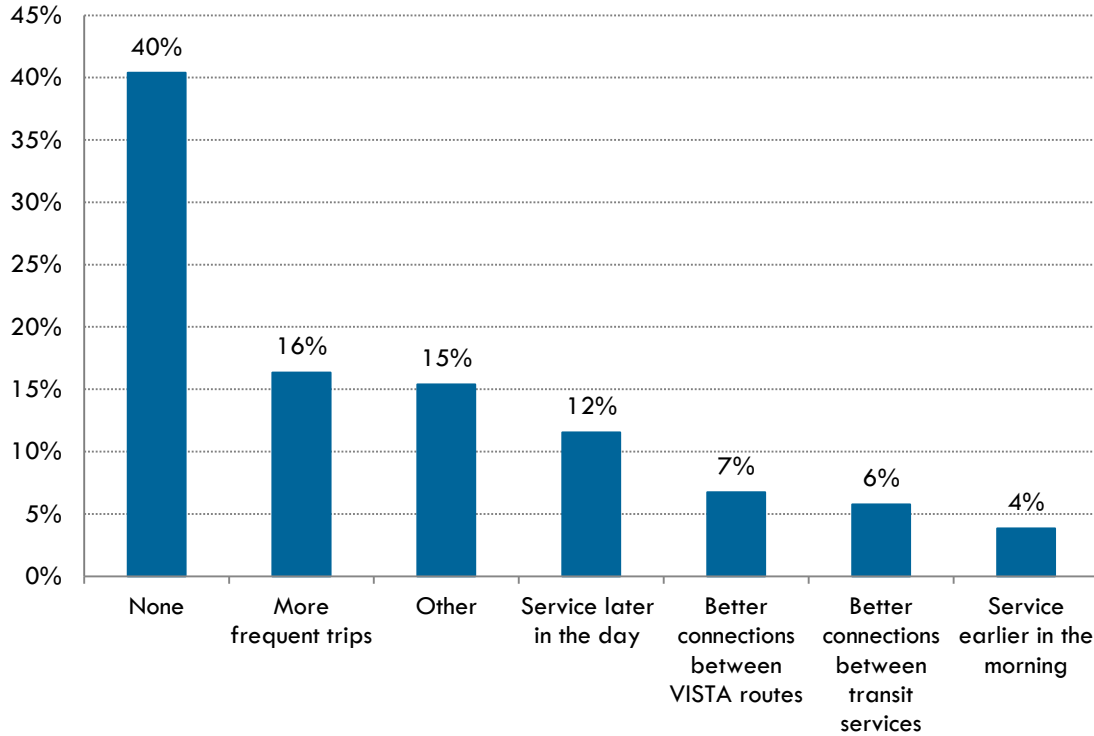
Figure 41 CSUCI Camarillo Riders: Mode of Transport Before and After Bus Trip



When asked what one change would encourage them to ride the CSUCI Camarillo bus more often (Figure 42), the largest percentage of riders (40%) chose “none of these” among available options. The fact that there was also the option to choose “other” (15% of responses) could indicate that

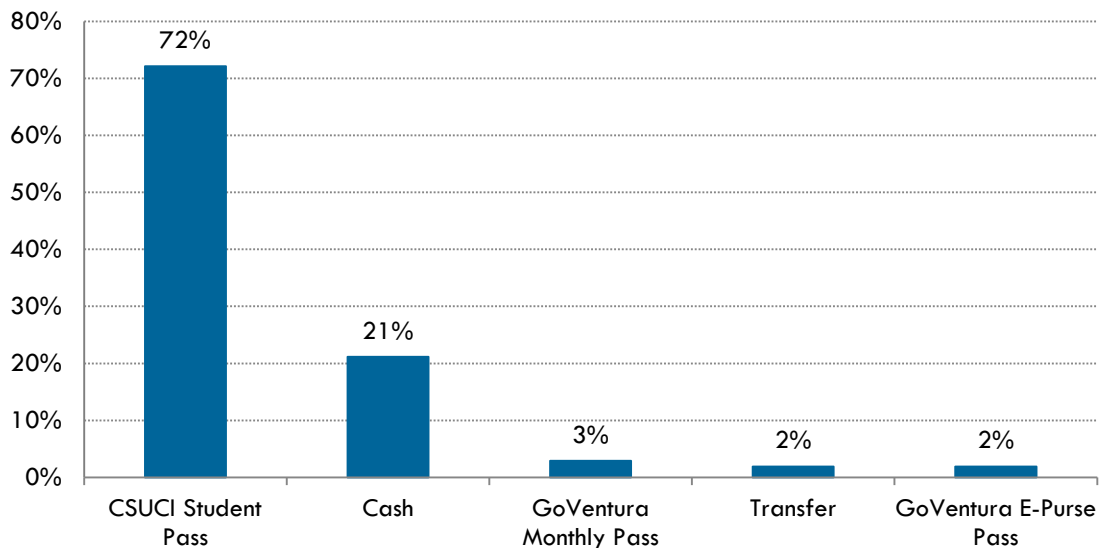
these 40% are satisfied with service in its current state. The next-most popular responses were “more frequent trips” at 16%, “other” at 15%, and “service later in the day” at 12%.

Figure 42 CSUCI Camarillo Riders: Desired Service Improvements



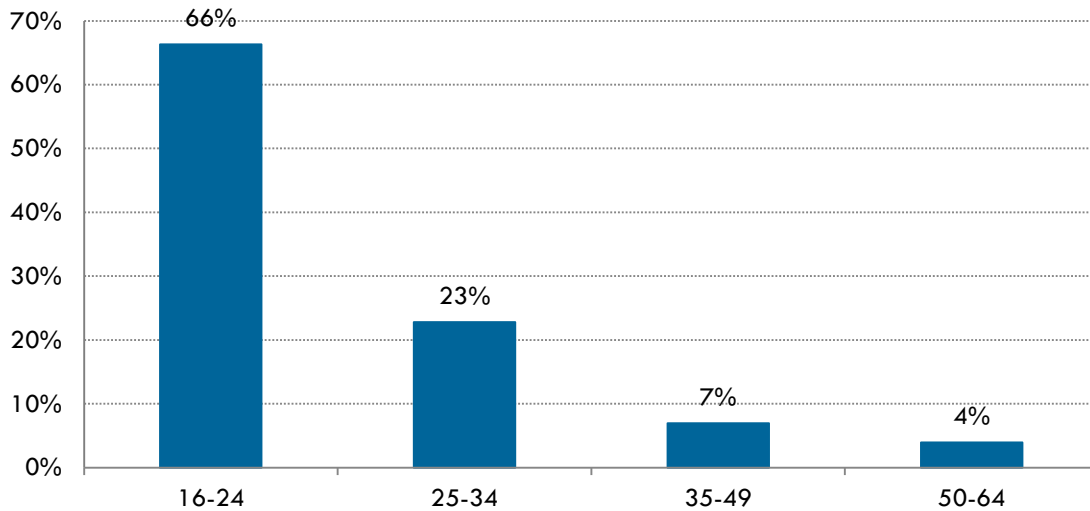
The majority of riders on CSUCI Camarillo (72%) paid their fair with a student pass. Twenty-one percent paid with cash (Figure 43).

Figure 43 CSUCI Camarillo Riders: Payment Method



Among routes surveyed, CSUCI Camarillo had the second-largest share of riders between the ages of 16 and 24 (66%) and the smallest share of riders 50 years or older (4%). Twenty-three percent of riders were between the ages of 25 and 34 (Figure 44).

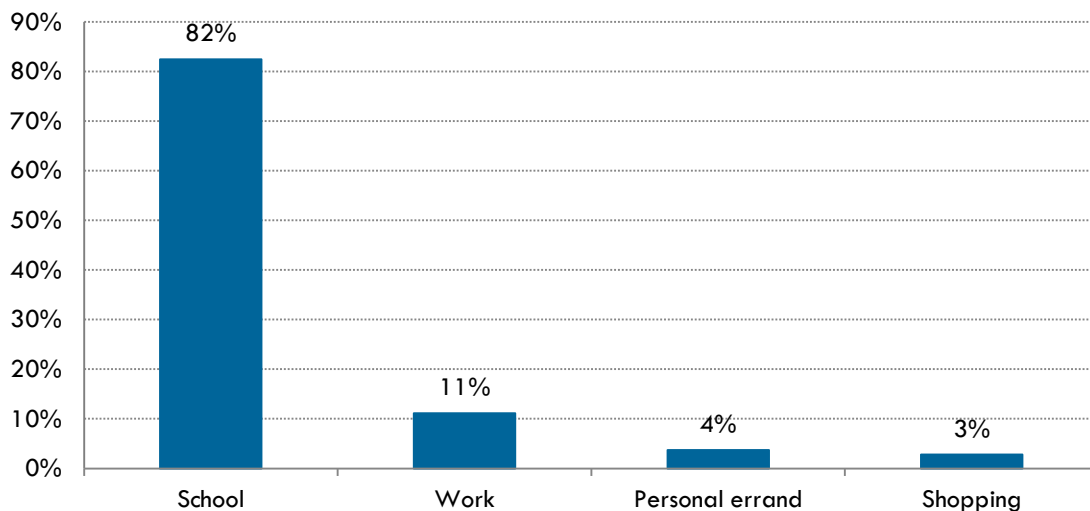
Figure 44 CSUCI Camarillo Riders: Age



CSUCI Oxnard Route

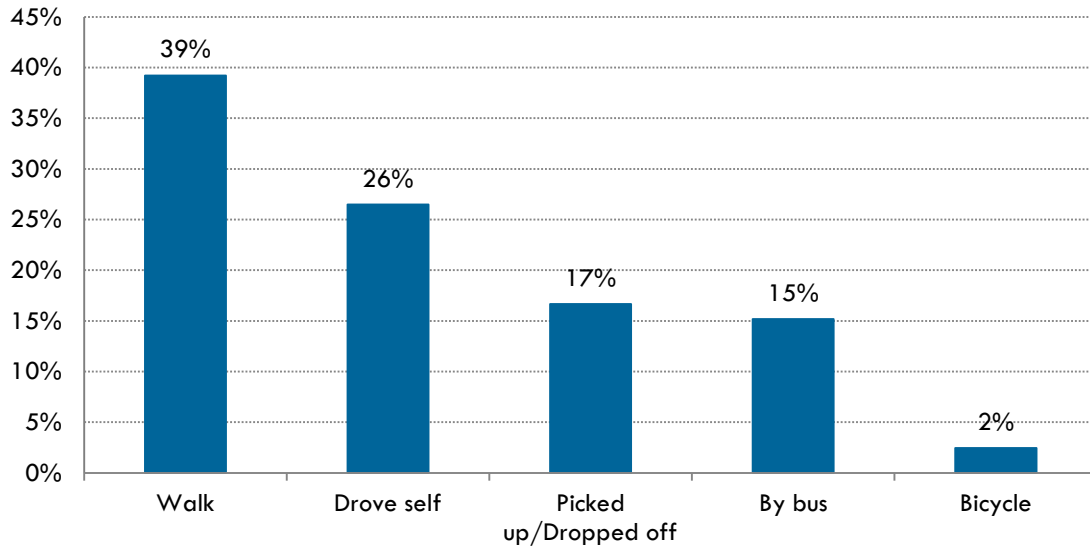
Riders on CSUCI Oxnard accounted for the largest share of riders traveling to or from school (82%) among surveyed routes (Figure 45). Those traveling to or from work accounted for 11% of responses.

Figure 45 CSUCI Oxnard Riders: Origin/Destination



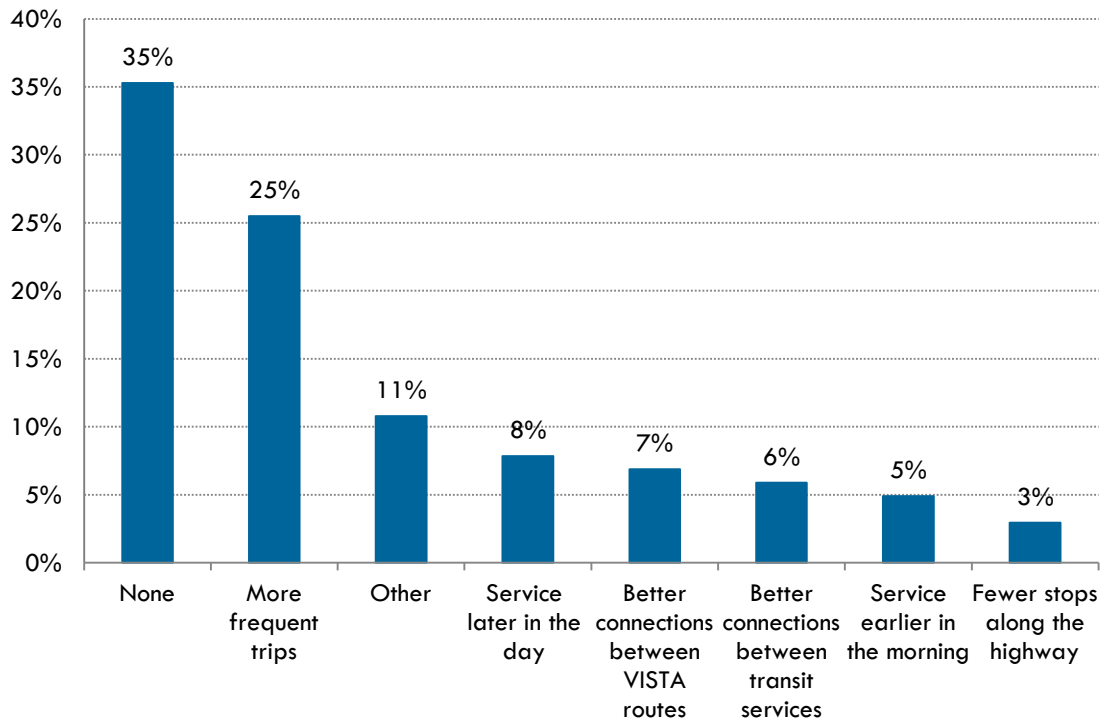
At 39%, walking was the highest mode share among riders traveling to or from the CSUCI Oxnard bus (Figure 46). Among surveyed routes, the CSUCI Oxnard saw the second-highest share of riders arriving or departing by car, with driving alone at 26% and catching a ride at 17%. This route also saw the least share of riders who used a bike before or after their bus trip (2%).

Figure 46 CSUCI Oxnard Riders: Mode of Transport Before and After Bus Trip



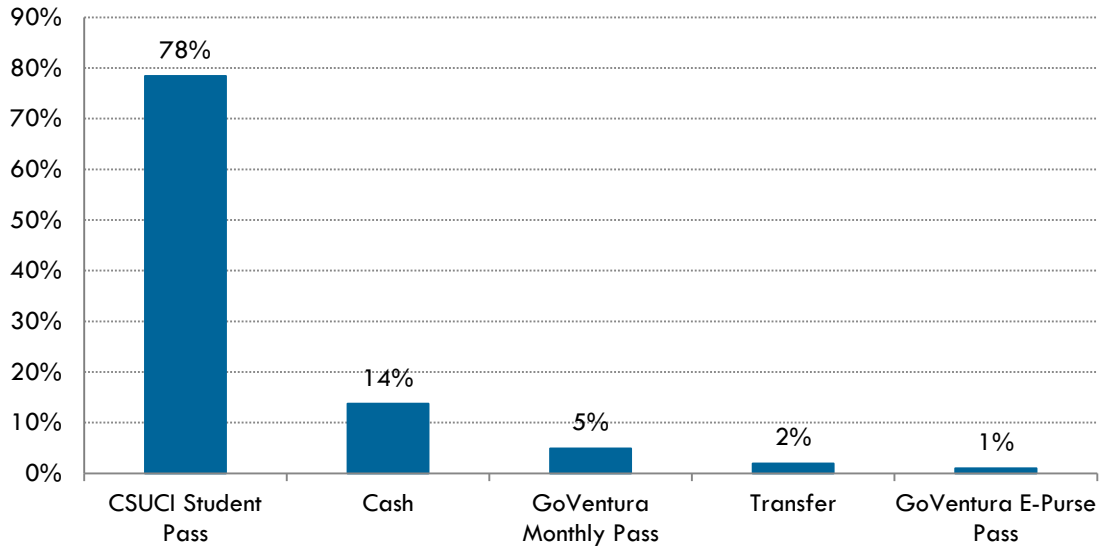
When asked what one change would encourage them to ride the CSUCI Oxnard bus more often (Figure 47), the largest percentage of riders (35%) chose “none of these” among available options. The fact that there was also the option to choose “other” (11% of responses) could indicate that these 35% are satisfied with service in its current state. Twenty-five percent of riders requested more frequent trips.

Figure 47 CSUCI Oxnard Riders: Desired Service Improvements



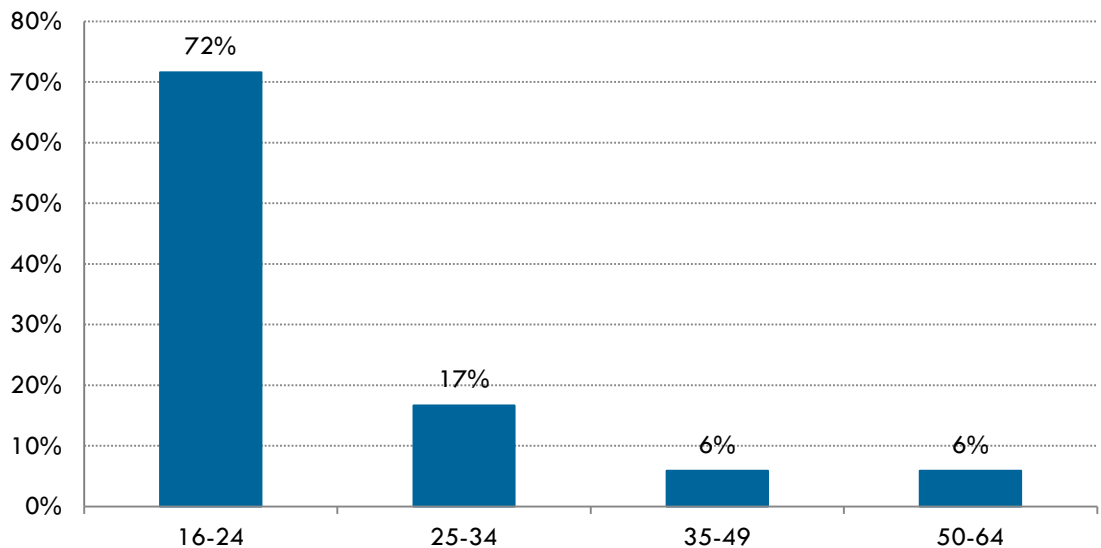
Like the CSUCI Camarillo riders, the majority of respondents (78%) on the CSUCI Oxnard bus paid with a student pass. Fourteen percent paid with cash (Figure 48).

Figure 48 CSUCI Oxnard Riders: Payment Method



Riders between the ages of 16 and 24 accounted for 72% of respondents on the CSUCI Oxnard (Figure 49).

Figure 49 CSUCI Oxnard Riders: Age



3 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

To better understand community perceptions, needs, and priorities related to public transit, the consultant team conducted a stakeholder meeting, direct outreach at transit centers, and administered a countywide online survey.

STAKEHOLDER MEETING

On September 10, 2014, a community stakeholder meeting was conducted at the CAUSE office in Oxnard, CA to assess the needs of bus riders who use inter-city and inner-city services within Ventura County. A total of 16 individuals participated. Participants represented the following agencies and organizations at the meeting.

- Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC)
- Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)
- Ventura County Bus Riders Union
- Gold Coast Health Care

At the beginning of the meeting, participants were given an overview of the project, its goals, methodology, and the importance of public input in drafting a short-range transit plan. Being that connectivity, consistency, and coordination among the Ventura County transit agencies are the main goals of the project, participants were asked to share their experiences and concerns related to taking transit within and between cities in Ventura County. Agency representatives from VCTC were also present to frame the issues and elaborate on opportunities and constraints.

A number of major themes emerged during the meeting, summarized below.

Coordination/Consistency

- Transit providers within Ventura County have expressed strong interest in improving coordination and cooperation with other entities.
- Currently, VCTC has agreements with some agencies in which drivers may alert one another if they are carrying a rider who is planning to transfer, with the connecting bus waiting for a given amount of time.
- Inconsistent route names cause confusion among new and existing riders who are attempting to navigate among multiple transit services in Ventura County. Several transit providers use the same route numbers.
- There is inconsistency with signage and appearance of VCTC buses. Some are not immediately recognizable, due to inconsistencies in coloring. Others do not display a properly lit route name, but instead have a laminated sign visible only when the bus has stopped.

Connectivity

- Riders often have to wait for long periods of time between connections. Transfer stations often lack seating, shade, and restrooms.
- There is a need for more direct service from Oxnard to Camarillo. Currently, VCTC operates two routes that operate from Camarillo to California State University-Channel Islands (CSUCI) and Oxnard to CSUCI. Because these routes are marketed to students and partially subsidized by CSUCI, streamlining them into one, direct service that carries more members from the general community might require coordination with university officials.
- Gold Coast Health Care has relocated from Oxnard to Camarillo and has seen a substantial drop in visits due to a lack of transit accessibility.

Service Span and Frequency

- Some riders expressed preference for improving existing routes, more so than creating new routes. There is the opportunity to improve frequency on some routes by reassigning buses from low-ridership routes.
- There is an expressed need for increased service span during nights and weekends, especially on Sunday. One rider mentioned a need for night service returning from Santa Barbara, being that many community members like to visit Santa Barbara for non-work trips.
- It is not possible for students relying on transit to take night classes at Ventura College.
- CAUSE has trouble staffing youth interns during the summer. Many commute from Simi Valley, and those who rely on transit have no way to return home in the evening.
- Many people work and shop at the outlets on Sundays, but there is no fixed-route Sunday service.

Quality and Location of Transfer Stations

- Several riders mentioned that many transfer stations lack shade, seating, and restrooms.
- There were many references to the quality and location of the Esplanade transfer center. Although it connects to several Gold Coast routes, it is not very amenable to bus riders. With construction in the area planned, there is the opportunity to move to a new location, possibly at River Park.
- There was general consensus among participants that the Thousand Oaks Transportation Center is ideal in terms of bus rider comfort and amenities. However, it is out of the way for many routes.
- The Ventura Transit Center (next to Pacific View Mall) is lacking in shade and is poorly maintained. It is next to a former shopping facility. Riders expressed that it feels pushed off to the side.
- The Government Center Park-and-Ride lacks lighting, seating, and shelter. This location serves a large number of riders and has parking capacity to accommodate increased passenger loads.

Access to Information/Familiarity with Services

- Familiarity with services is a general problem that needs addressing through outreach and marketing campaigns. Proposed solutions included publishing in local media outlets, posting informational kiosks at transfer stations, printing agency websites on buses, campaigning by word-of-mouth and flyers and increasing communication with local colleges and health care providers.
- Many riders participating in the meeting were unaware of Valley Express Dial-a-Ride service.
- Many riders were also unfamiliar with VCTC's website or the third party mobile app. It is Riders cannot rely on services such as Google Transit because not all transit agencies in Ventura County have made their operations data available to the public.
- Some VCTC stops have ride guides (maps) on their stops, but this depends on the cooperation of the city. Santa Barbara does not allow these.
- There are also problems with low-tech and map-illiterate users. VCTC does have an operator line where staff can walk riders through a route over the phone, but the office hours do not cover the beginning and end of service spans.
- Many riders depend on directions and instructions from bus drivers to transfer between different transit agency services. However, many drivers are unfamiliar with other services, posing a problem for new and current riders.

Rebranding

- VCTC is planning to embark upon rebranding efforts, creating an opportunity to improve familiarity with services via community outreach and marketing campaigns.
- As mentioned above, fleet branding presents the opportunity to print the agency website on the buses. There is also the opportunity to improve the visibility and consistency of route signs posted on buses.

Funding

- Staff from VCTC explained that with the onset of discretionary funds, there is a need to establish a protocol for the distribution of funds within the county. Establishing this protocol will rely heavily on data collection and analysis.
- Agency staff expressed the difficulties associated with fare increases. Being that the costs of operations are constantly increasing, along with inflation, it is difficult to balance budgetary demands with the limited spending power of transit riders. Maintaining low fares also depends on cooperation with other agencies who may want to increase fares for commuter services. With these constraints in mind, VCTC is employing data analysis and public surveys to determine how and when to raise fares.
- Community participants expressed concerns about potential fare changes and wanted assurance that VCTC's analysis would be transparent and involve community participation. VCTC staff assured participants that it will be a public process and will follow Title VI guidelines set by the federal government.

SITE VISITS AND BUS RIDER INTERVIEWS

On September 10 and 11, 2014, the consultant team visited the following transit centers and park-and-ride locations to conduct informal interviews with bus riders and distribute information regarding the online survey:

- Ventura County Government Center
- Ventura Transit Center
- Camarillo Station
- Thousand Oaks Transit Center

A total of 400 handouts were distributed during the direct outreach effort. Approximately 50 customers were interviewed during this process. Riders' concerns and suggestions are summarized below:

- Operational improvements
 - There is a demand to extend service into the evenings and to fill the midday gap, especially for commuter routes
 - Buses need to be more clearly labeled; many have only a laminated sheet in the front
 - There are problems with buses running early or late
 - There is a need for direct connections to Oxnard
 - VCTC Intercity has too many stops
 - Mid-route layovers cause delay
- Rider amenities
 - There is a need for bus shelters and improved lighting at bus stops
 - There is a need to improve accessibility for older and disabled riders (inaccessible overpass, limited handicapped parking, and limited parking within walking distance)
 - Seats on the new Volvo buses are too small
 - Onboard bike storage is often limited
 - Request for onboard wifi

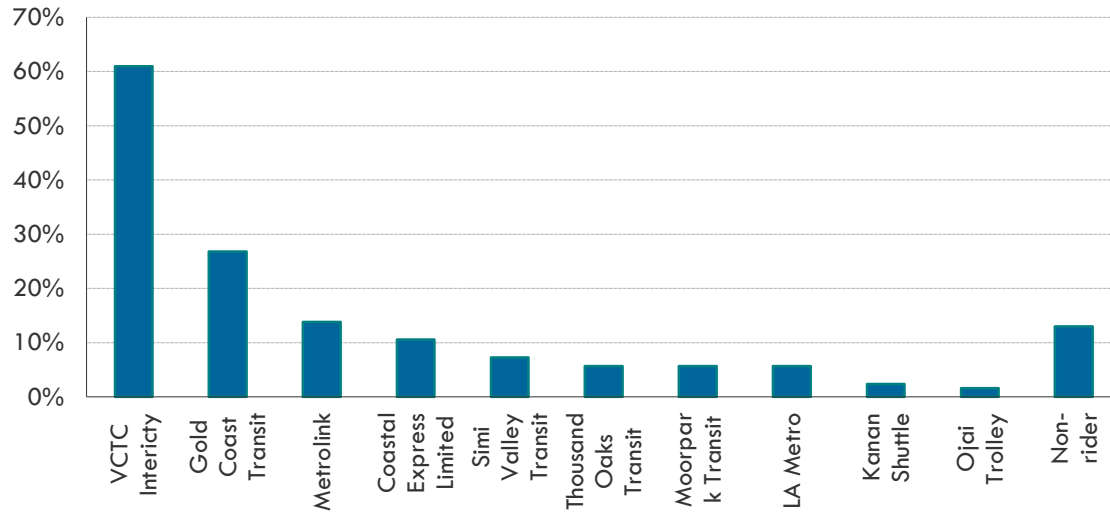
COUNTYWIDE ONLINE SURVEY

The online survey was advertised on the VCTC website and social media platforms and administered during the months of September and October of 2014. The survey was comprised of 23 questions geared towards Ventura County transit riders. Most questions addressed potential service improvements with a focus on intercity connectivity. A total of 123 respondents participated in the survey.

Transit Use

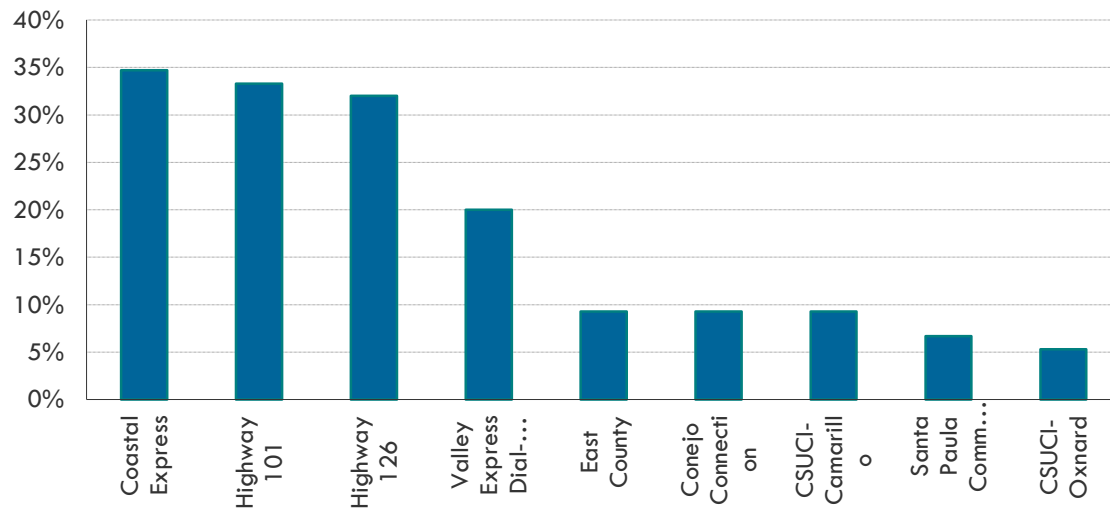
Respondents were asked to indicate which transit services they ride, with multiple responses allowed (Figure 50). The majority (61%) reported to using VCTC Intercity services. Approximately a third of respondents reported to using Gold Coast Transit, with 14% reporting to ride Metrolink. The remaining transit services (Coastal Express Limited, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, Moorpark, and LA Metro) each accounted for 6 to 11% of responses. Thirteen percent of respondents identified as non-riders.

Figure 50 Transit Provider(s) Utilized by Survey Respondents



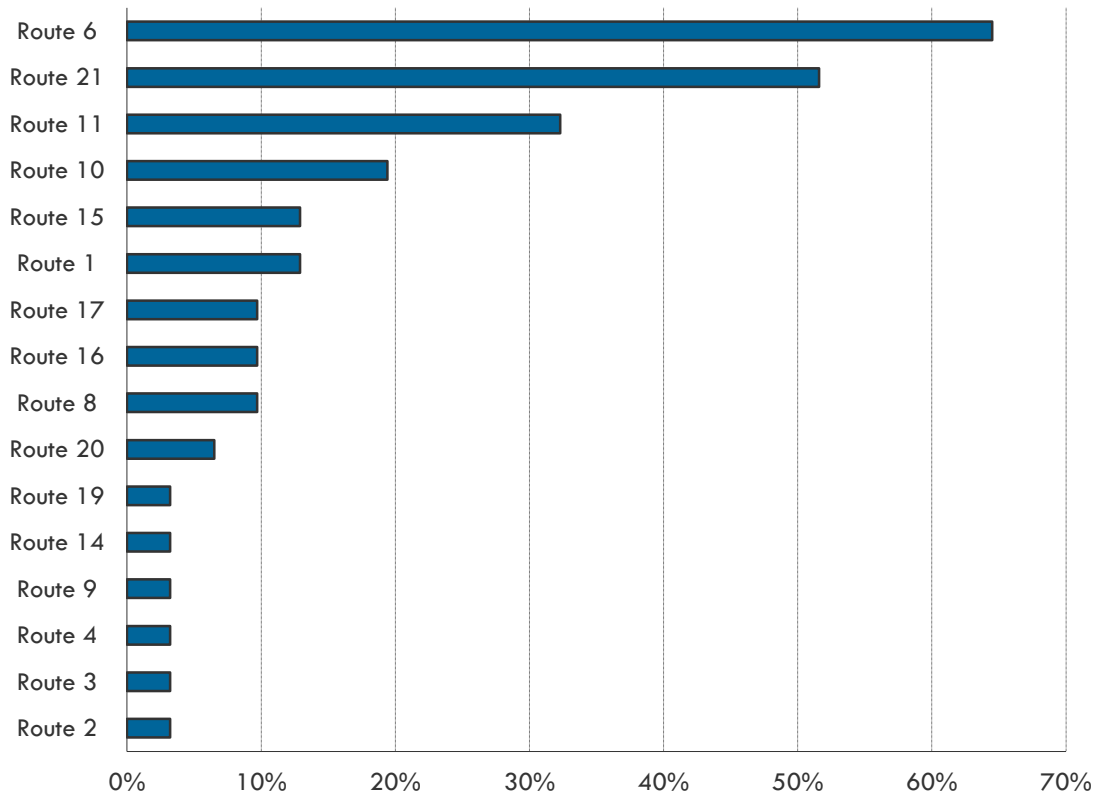
In terms of ridership among VCTC Intercity routes (Figure 51), Coastal Express, Highway 101, and Highway 126 accounted for the most responses at 35%, 33%, and 32%, respectively. The Heritage Valley Dial-A-Ride was the next-most utilized service among respondents at 20%. The remaining five VCTC Intercity routes each accounted for 9% or less of respondents.

Figure 51 VCTC Intercity Route(s) Utilized by Survey Respondents



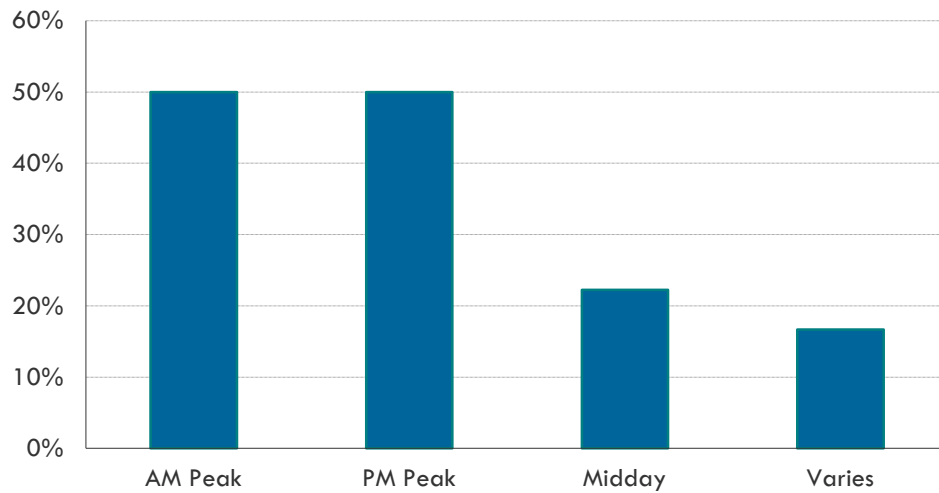
Among Gold Coast riders (Figure 52), the majority of respondents (65%) reported to ride Route 6, with the second-largest group (52%) riding Route 21. Routes 11 and 10 accounted for 32% and 19% of respondents, respectively. The remaining routes each accounted for 13% or less of respondents.

Figure 52 Gold Coast Route(s) Utilized by Survey Respondents



Respondents were also given the option to write in the location and times that they typically make transfers (multiple responses possible). Common responses include the Ventura Transit Center, Esplanade Mall, Government Center, Victoria Avenue, and Piru. Most riders reported to making transfers during the a.m. and p.m. peak travel times (50% of respondents for each). Twenty-two percent of respondents reported to transfer during midday travel times (Figure 53).

Figure 53 Transfers by Time of Day

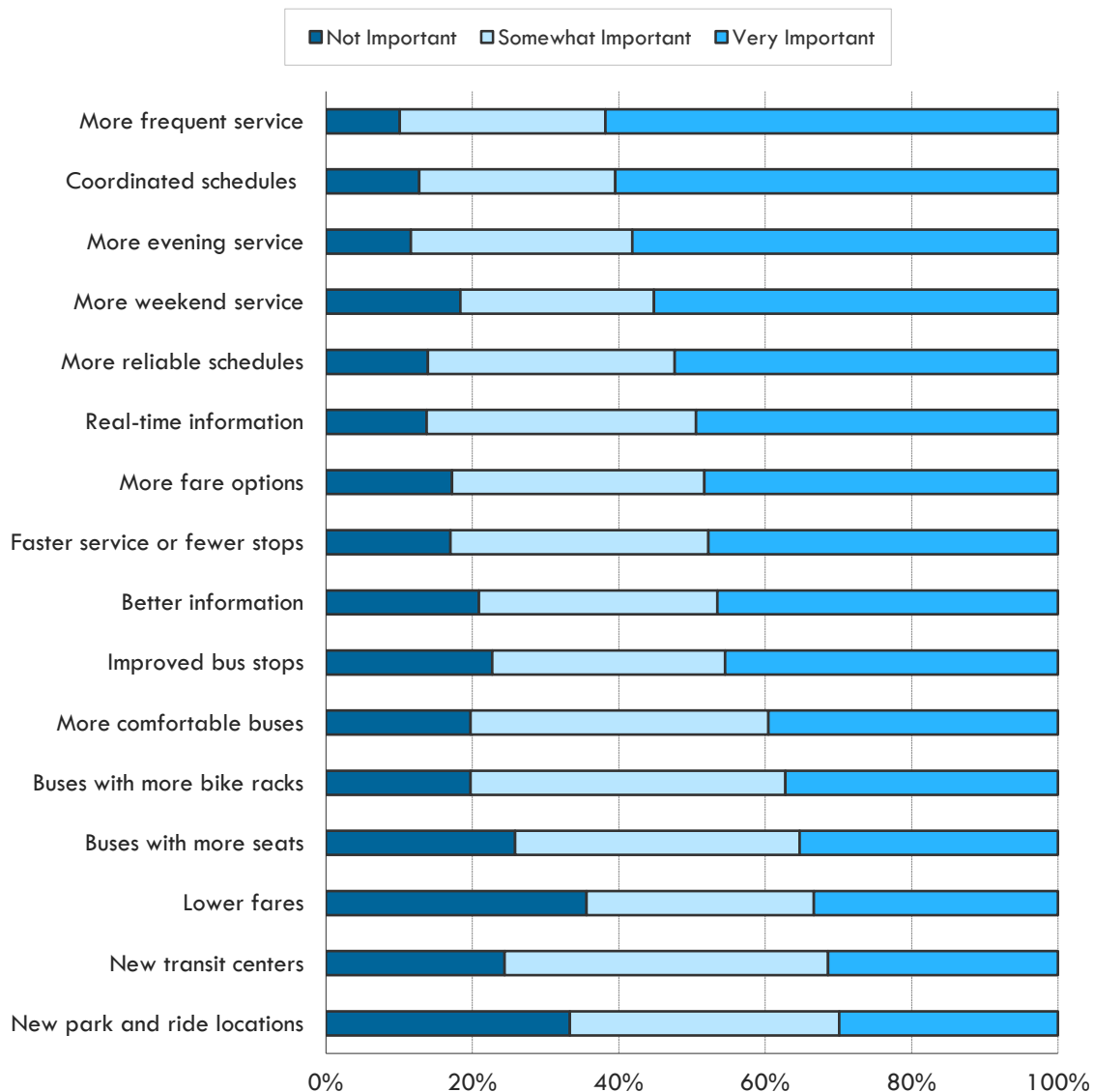


Service Improvements

This section analyzes respondent attitudes towards various potential service improvements. Some questions pertain to general improvements, while others are geared towards specific rider groups.

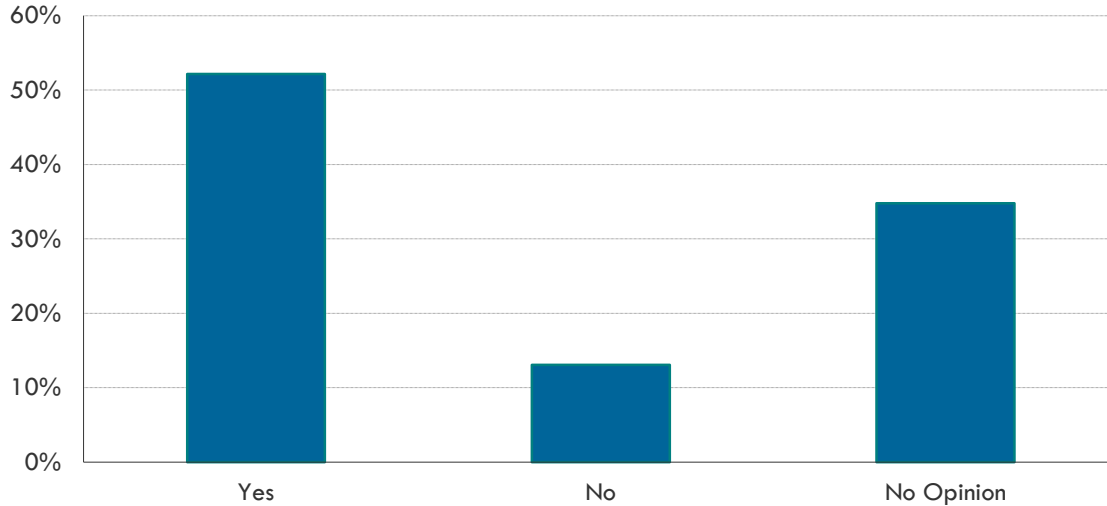
Figure 54 demonstrates the prioritization of proposed improvements at the systemwide level. Respondents were asked to rank a potential improvement as very important, somewhat important, or not important. Based on these criteria, the most desired improvements were more frequent service and coordinated schedules, with 62% and 60% of respondents labeling them as very important. Over 50% of respondents indicated that more evening service, more weekend service, and more reliable schedules were very important. Between 40 and 50% chose very important for real-time information, more fare options, faster service/fewer stops, better information, improved bus stops, and more comfortable buses.

Figure 54 Attitudes towards Transit Improvements



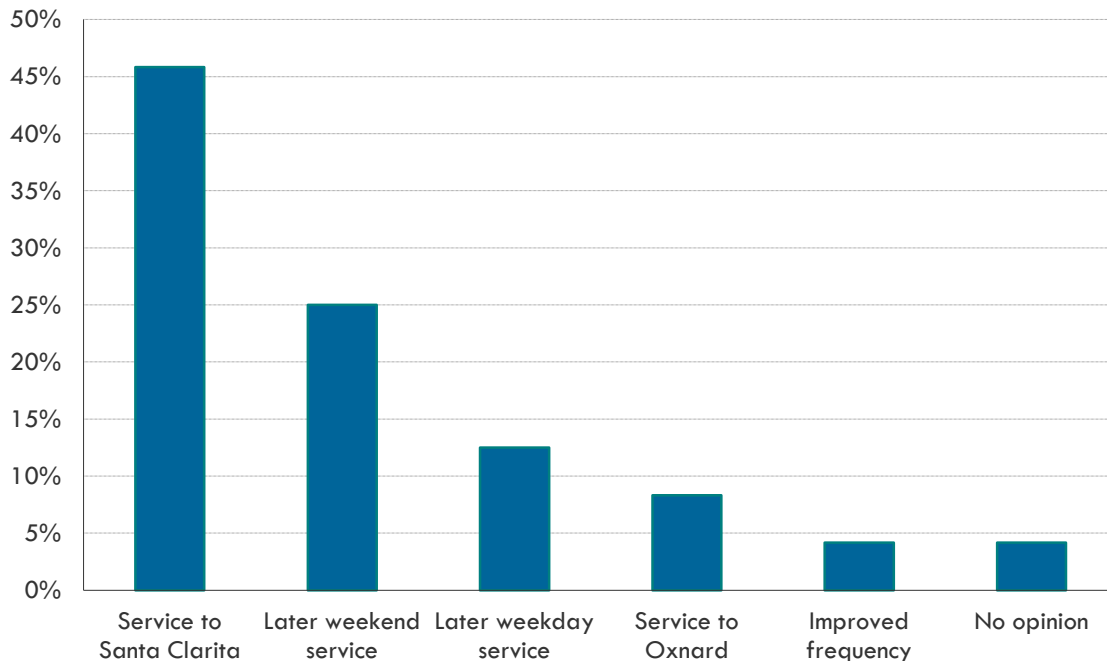
Among Route 101 riders (Figure 55), 52% stated a preference for more stops in Oxnard. Thirty-five percent expressed no opinion, and 13% said they did not prefer to have any more stops.

Figure 55 Route 101 Riders: Demand for More Stops in Oxnard



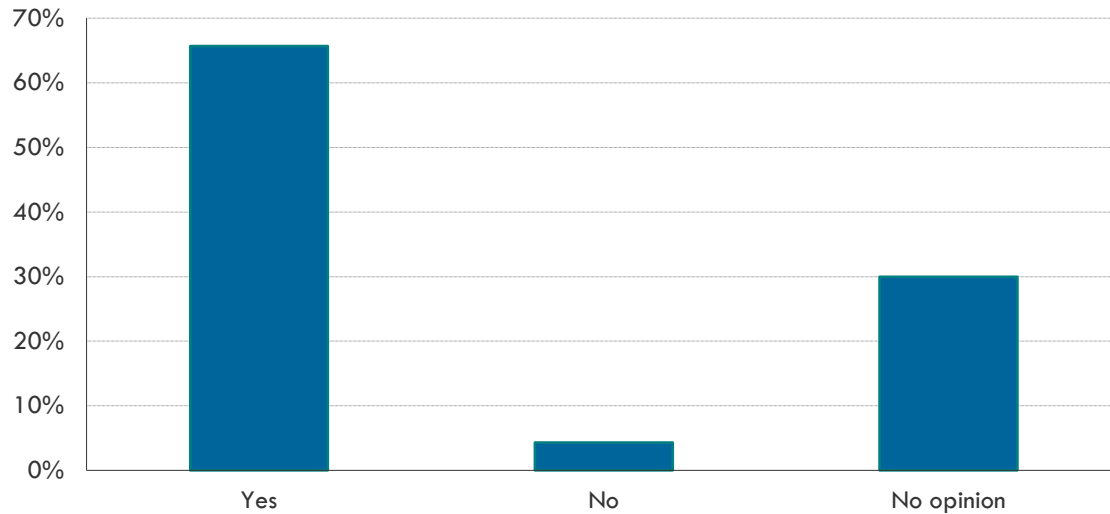
Route 126 riders were asked to choose their most desired service improvement (Figure 56). The highest percentage of respondents (46%) indicated a preference for service to Santa Clarita. The next-most popular responses were later weekend service (25%) and later weekday service (13%).

Figure 56 Route 126 Riders: Most Important Service Improvement



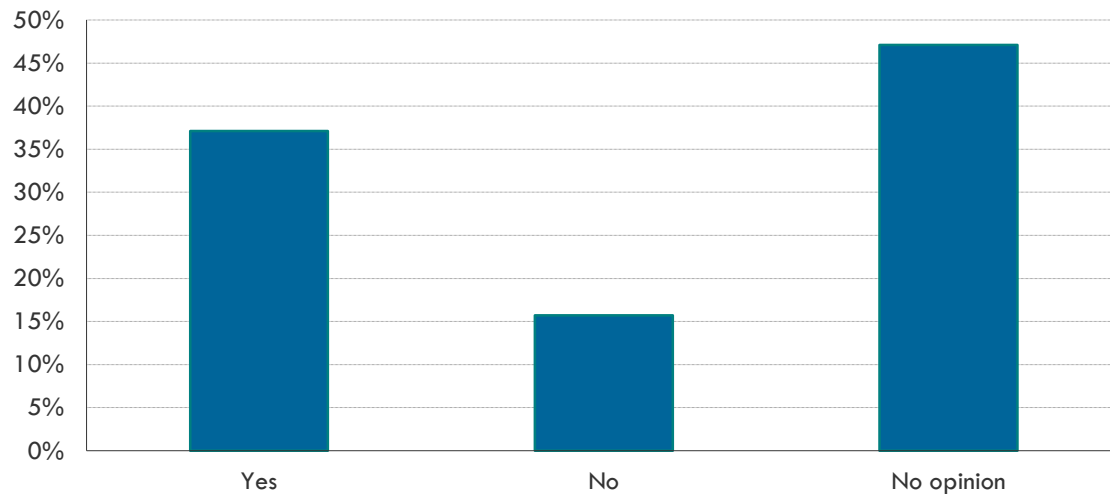
Among all respondents, 66% indicated that the East County route should be extended to Camarillo (Figure 57). For respondents who identified as East County riders, 86% were in support of this proposed route extension. The proposed East-West Connector route will address this need by linking Moorpark with Camarillo, Oxnard, and Ventura.

Figure 57 Demand for East County Route Extension to Camarillo



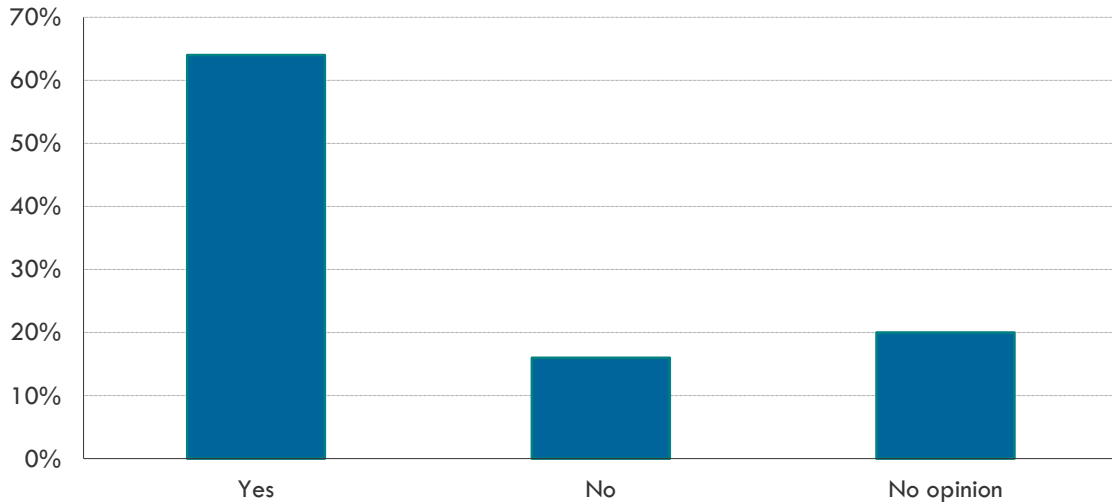
Among all respondents, only 35% expressed demand for direct service between CSUCI and cities situated beyond Oxnard and Camarillo (Figure 58). Self-identified college students indicated demand for this service at a rate of 67%.

Figure 58 Demand for Direct Service to CSUCI from Beyond Camarillo and Oxnard



Based on individual conversations with bus riders, it was determined that there was demand for more consistent route patterns and stops on the Coastal Express. Among those who identified as Coastal Express riders, 62% supported dividing the route into multiple routes with consistent patterns and stops (Figure 59).

Figure 59 Coastal Express Riders: Support for Dividing Route



Demand for Additional Stops and Service

When asked if there were any locations along an existing route where a bus stop is needed, 33% responded affirmatively. For those who expressed need for additional stops, locations mentioned include Oxnard, Camarillo, Piru, Channel Island Boulevard at Victoria Avenue, and Ventura College.

When asked if there were any areas not served along existing routes that needed service, 35% of responded affirmatively. Areas mentioned include Santa Clarita, Simi Valley, Ventura Road, and Moorpark.

Survey Respondent Profile

Among all respondents, 59% identified as full-time employed, 13% as part-time employed, and 28% as unemployed (Figure 60). Thirty-five percent of respondents identified as students (Figure 61). Among currently-enrolled students, 63% identified as high-school or middle-school, 20% as full-time college, and 17% as part-time college (Figure 62).

Figure 60 **Employment**

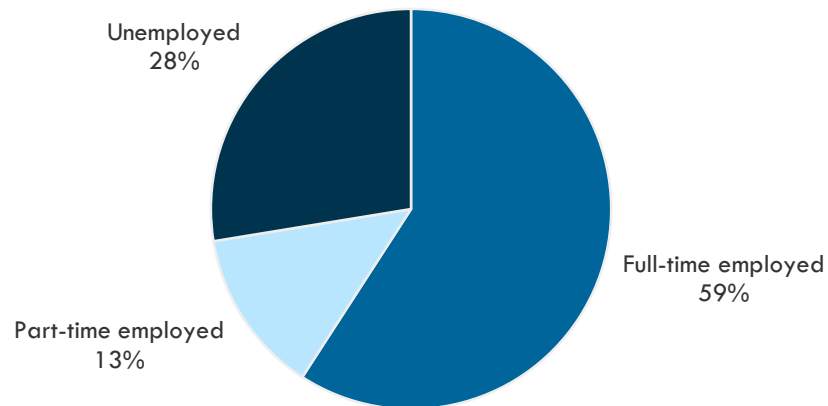


Figure 61 **Student Enrollment**

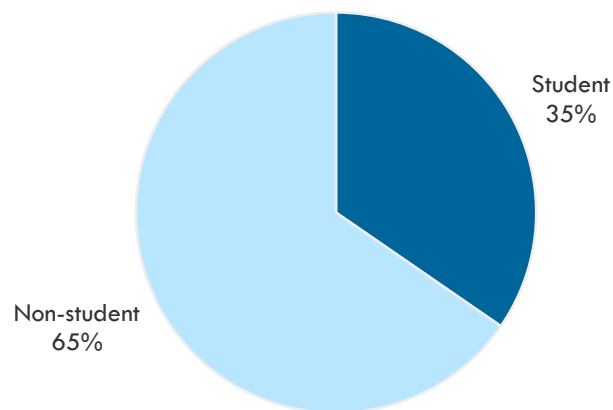
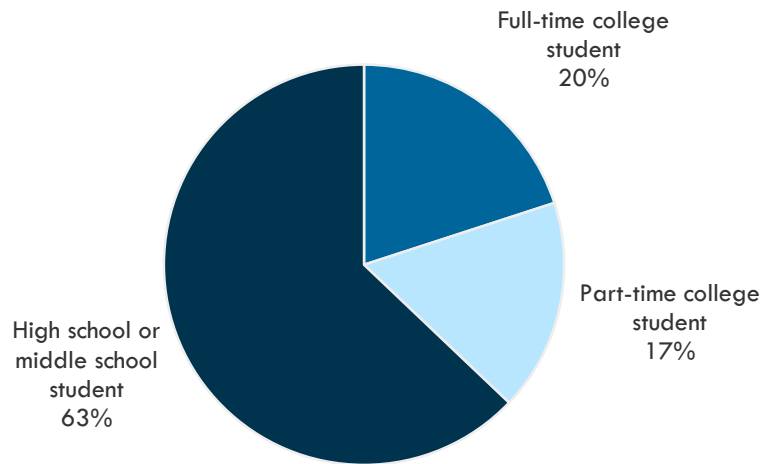
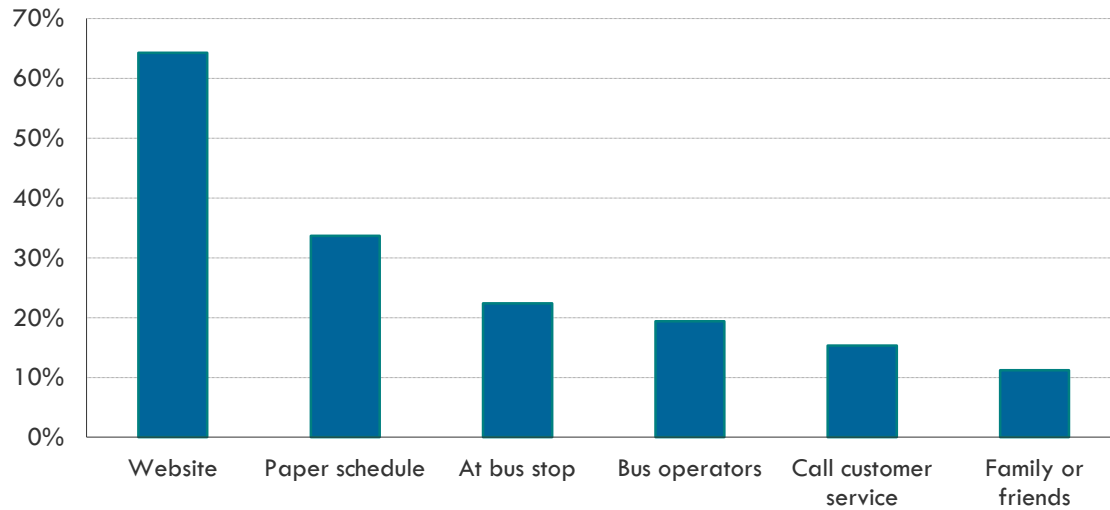


Figure 62 Current Students



Respondents were asked how they access route and schedule information (Figure 63). Sixty-four percent reported to use a website, with 34% reporting to use paper schedules. Twenty-two percent find their information at the bus stop, and 19% ask the bus operators. A total of 82% of respondents reported to have a smart phone.

Figure 63 How Respondents Access Route and Schedule Information



4 FIVE-YEAR SERVICE PLAN

Service recommendations for VCTC Intercity service consist of route modifications, schedule adjustments, service expansion, and the elimination of low-ridership stops. Some routes include two sets of recommendations, which should be implemented at different phases within the five-year planning period. This chapter provides route-specific recommendations with narratives describing proposed service changes, maps depicting route alignments, and tables detailing service levels, vehicle needs, and annual hours. Recommendations focus on achieving the following improvements:

- Simplifying service in terms of consistent headways and direct route alignments with fewer deviations
- Enhancing connectivity between core VCTC Intercity routes (Highway 101, Highway 126, and East County) in the form of common endpoints, matched headways throughout most of the day, and coordinated schedules
- Expanding service along specific corridors to reduce travel time and minimize transfers

ROUTE RECOMMENDATIONS

Maps of the proposed VCTC Intercity system and a detailed implementation are also included at the end of this chapter, which serves as a blueprint for transforming the existing VCTC Intercity system into a more convenient, consistent, and coordinated set of services. Figure 64 lists existing and proposed routes:

Figure 64 Existing and Proposed Routes

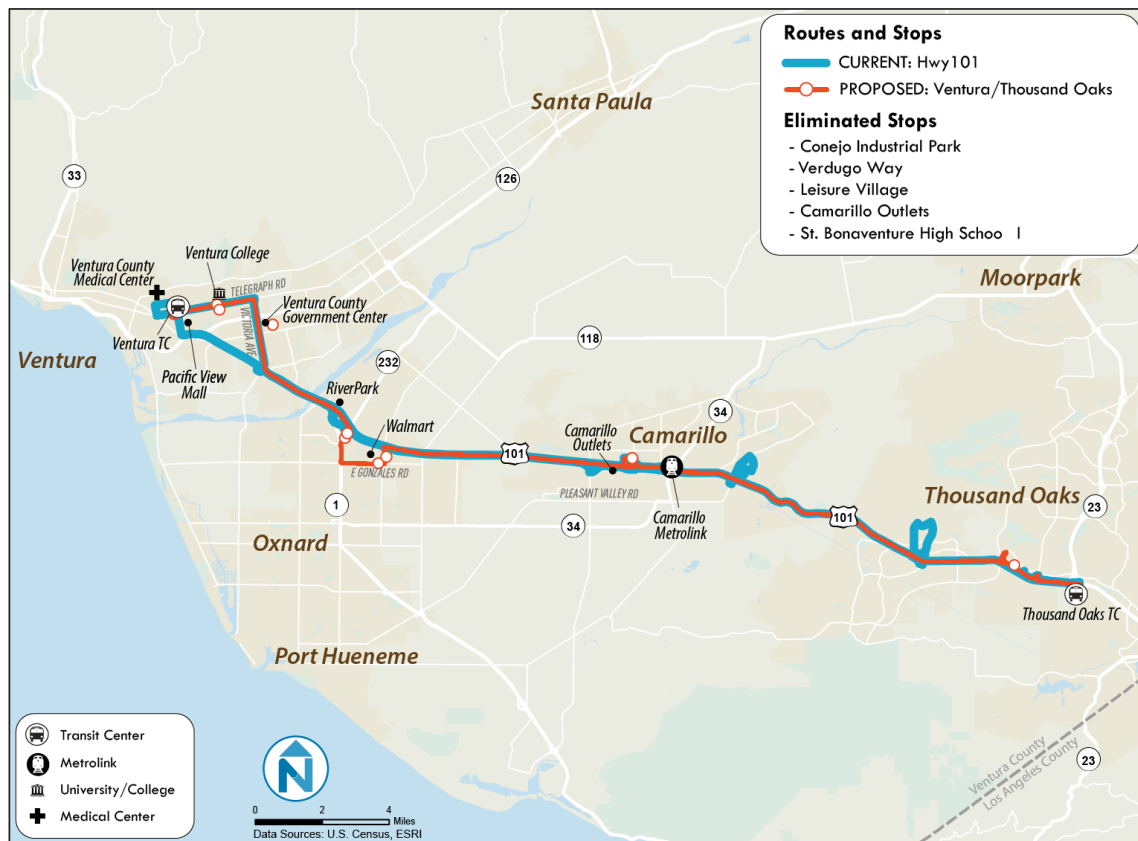
Existing Routes	Proposed Routes
Highway 101	Ventura/Thousand Oaks
Highway 126	Fillmore/Ventura
East County	Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley
CSUCI-Camarillo	Oxnard/Camarillo
CSUCI-Oxnard	
Coastal Express	Ventura/Santa Barbara
	Ventura/Goleta
Conejo Connection	Ventura/Warner Center
N/A	Oxnard/Camarillo

Ventura/Thousand Oaks

Replaces: Highway 101

The Ventura/Thousand Oaks route should operate at a 60-minute headway throughout the entire day to facilitate timed connections with proposed Ventura/Fillmore and Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley routes. A consistent headway would also enable improved connections with routes operated by Gold Coast Transit, Camarillo Area Transit, and Thousand Oaks Transit. Sunday service should be added to improve connectivity with Ventura/Santa Barbara and routes operated by Gold Coast Transit. The route should be extended to Gonzalez and Rose to serve Walmart Supercenter and St. John's Regional Medical Center.

Figure 65 Proposed Ventura/Thousand Oaks



Proposed stops

- Ventura Transit Center
- Ventura College
- Ventura County Government Center
- Vineyard & Esplanade (replaces stop at Esplanade)
- Gonzales & Rose (new stop)
- Carmen & Paseo Camarillo
- Camarillo Metrolink Station
- The Oaks Mall
- Thousand Oaks Transit Center

Eliminated stops

The following low ridership stops should be discontinued to improve schedule reliability:

- Ventura Pier (currently served on weekends only)
- Ventura County Medical Center (1/2 mile from Ventura Transit Center)
- St. Bonaventure High School (1/4 mile from Ventura Transit Center)
- Camarillo Outlets (served by Camarillo Trolley)
- Verdugo Way (within 1 mile of Camarillo Area Transit)
- Leisure Village (served by Camarillo Area Transit)
- Conejo Industrial Park (served by Oxnard/Warner Center)

The following stop will be replaced to improve route directness and schedule reliability:

- Esplanade

Figure 66 Proposed Ventura/Thousand Oaks Specifications

	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Span			
Start	6:00 a.m.	7:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
End	8:00 p.m.	7:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
Headway			
Morning	60	60	60
Midday	60	60	60
Afternoon	60	60	60
Night	60	60	60
Resources			
Peak Vehicles	3	3	3
Base Vehicles	3	3	3
Platform Hours	11,156	1,963	1,651

Expansion Recommendation

The headway should be improved from 60 to 30 minutes during morning (7 a.m.-9 p.m.) and afternoon (3 a.m.-5 p.m.) peak periods to improve connections with other routes.

Figure 67 Proposed Ventura/Thousand Oaks Specifications

	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Span			
Start	6:00 a.m.	7:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
End	8:00 p.m.	7:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
Headway			
Morning	30-60	60	60
Midday	60	60	60
Afternoon	30-60	60	60
Night	60	60	60
Resources			
Peak Vehicles	3	3	3
Base Vehicles	3	3	3
Platform Hours	15,109	1,963	1,651

Fillmore/Ventura

Replaces: Highway 126

The Fillmore/Ventura route should continue to operate at a 60-minute headway and have timed connections with the proposed Ventura/Thousand Oaks route at the Ventura Transit Center. Weekend span should be extended from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. to 7 a.m.-9 p.m. to accommodate work schedules of Fillmore or Santa Paula residents who are employed in other parts of Ventura County. The current 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. trippers should be maintained, and coach buses should be assigned to prevent overcrowding.

Figure 68 Proposed Fillmore/Ventura



Proposed stops

- Ventura Transit Center
- Ventura College
- Ventura County Government Center
- Wells Center
- Santa Paula Kmart
- Santa Paula Veteran's Memorial Park
- Fillmore Senior Center

Eliminated stops

The following low ridership stops should be discontinued to improve schedule reliability:

- St. Bonaventure High School (1/4 mile from Ventura Transit Center)
- Ventura County Medical Center (1/2 mile from Ventura Transit Center)
- Ventura Pier (weekend only service)
- Piru (fewer than 5 boardings)

Figure 69 Proposed Fillmore/Ventura Specifications

	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Span			
Start	5:30 a.m.	7:00 a.m.	7:00 a.m.
End	10:30 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	9:00 p.m.
Headway			
Morning	60	60	60
Midday	60	60	60
Afternoon	60	60	60
Night	60	60	60
Resources			
Peak Vehicles	3	2	2
Base Vehicles	2	2	2
Platform Hours	10,115	1,551	1,551

Expansion Recommendation

The Fillmore/Ventura route is approaching capacity on several trips despite the peak hour trippers. As a result, the headway should be improved from 60 to 30 minutes between 9 a.m.-5 p.m. to provide additional seating capacity and improve connections with other routes. Trippers should be discontinued in conjunction with this headway improvement.

Figure 70 Proposed Fillmore/Ventura Specifications

	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Span			
Start	5:30 a.m.	7:00 a.m.	7:00 a.m.
End	10:30 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	9:00 p.m.
Headway			
Morning	30-60	60	60
Midday	30	60	60
Afternoon	30	60	60
Night	60	60	60
Resources			
Peak Vehicles	3	2	2
Base Vehicles	2	2	2
Platform Hours	13,218	1,551	1,551

Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley

Replaces: East County

The Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley route should operate at 60-minute headways and have timed connections with proposed Ventura/Thousand Oaks route at the Thousand Oaks Transit Center. Simi Valley stops at Walmart and Farmers Insurance should be served on all trips.

All-day deviations to The Oaks Mall (served by Thousand Oaks Transit routes and proposed Ventura/Thousand Oaks) and Westlake & Townsgate (served by Thousand Oaks Transit routes 3 and 4) should be eliminated to reduce service duplication and allow for the 60-minute headway. Peak hour service to Conejo Industrial Park should be eliminated and served by Oxnard/Warner Center. Stops in this area are also served by Thousand Oaks Transit Routes 1 and 3.

Figure 71 Proposed Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley



Proposed stops

- Thousand Oaks Transit Center
- Thousand Oaks Senior Center
- Moorpark Town Center
- Moorpark Metrolink Station
- Princeton & Condor
- Moorpark College
- Simi Valley Town Center
- Alamo & Sycamore
- Galena & Cochran
- Cochran & Sycamore

Eliminated stops

The following stops should be discontinued to reduce service duplication:

- The Oaks Mall
- Westlake & Townsgate
- Conejo Industrial Park

Figure 72 Proposed Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley Specifications

	Weekday	Saturday
Span		
Start	6:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
End	8:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
Headway		
Morning	60	60
Midday	60	60
Afternoon	60	60
Night	60	60
Resources		
Peak Vehicles	2	2
Base Vehicles	2	2
Platform Hours	7,523	1,118

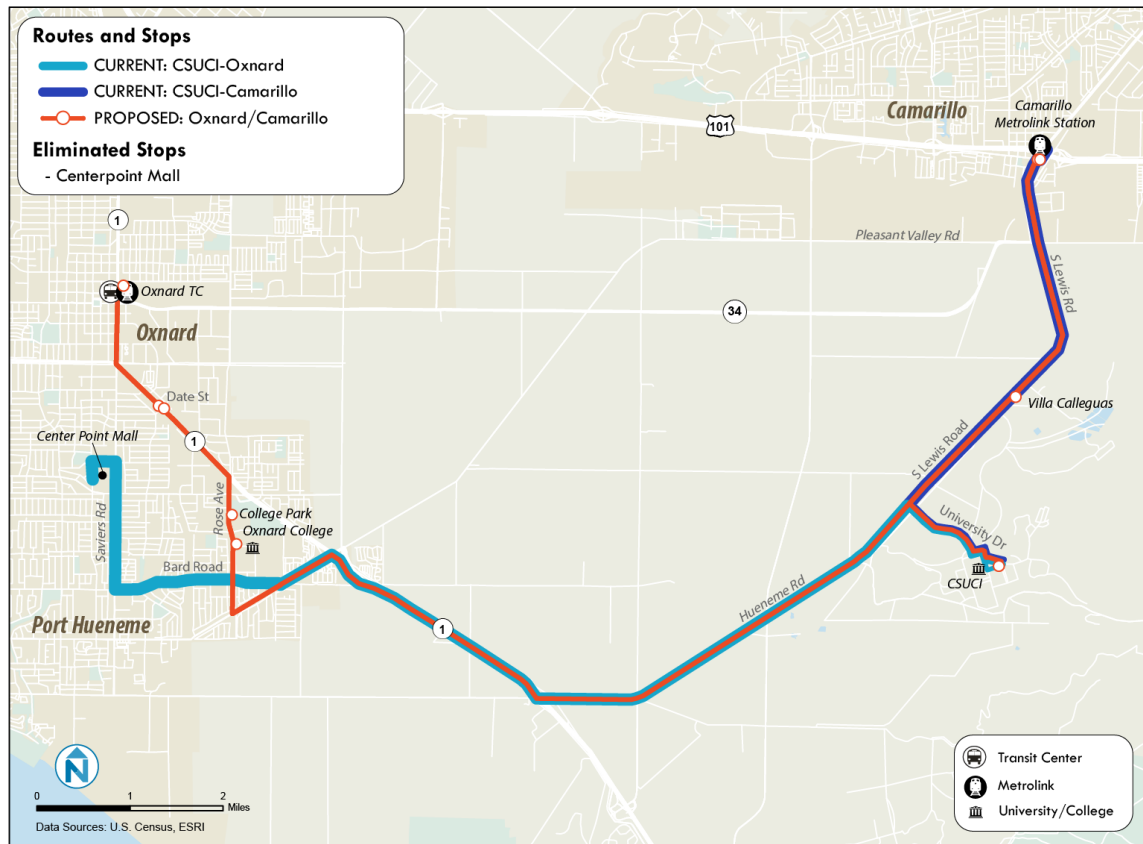
Oxnard/Camarillo

Replaces: CSUCI/Oxnard and CSUCI/Camarillo

The Oxnard/Camarillo route combines the alignments of both CSUCI shuttles to create a single route with improved frequency between Oxnard and California State University-Channel Islands (currently every 60 minutes). The route will also create a one-seat ride (no transfers) between Oxnard and Camarillo. The route should operate at 30-minute headways during fall and spring semesters and 45-minute headways on weeknights and during breaks. The route should terminate at Oxnard Transit Center rather than Centerpoint Mall, to provide connections with more Gold Coast Transit routes. Oxnard/Camarillo will assume the VCTC-assigned bus bay, which will be vacated by the realigned Oxnard/Warner Center. Service span and headways should be reduced to 8 a.m.-6 p.m. at every 45 minutes when CSUCI is not in session.

While stops at Centerpoint Mall and the south side of Oxnard College will no longer be served, new stops will be added along the west side of Oxnard College, at the intersection of Oxnard Boulevard and Date Street, and at Oxnard Transit Center. VCTC should work with the City of Oxnard to allow customer parking at College Park, just north of Oxnard College, to offset the loss of parking at Centerpoint Mall. Saturday service should be discontinued due to extremely low ridership.

Figure 73 Proposed Oxnard/Camarillo



Proposed stops

- Camarillo Metrolink Station
- Villa Calleguas
- California State University-Channel Islands
- Oxnard College
- College Park
- Oxnard Blvd & Date
- Oxnard Station

Eliminated stops

The following stops should be discontinued to reduce service duplication:

- Center Point Mall

Figure 74 Proposed Oxnard/Camarillo Specifications

	Weekday Fall/Spring	Weekday Break
Span		
Start	6:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
End	10:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
Headway		
Morning	30/45	45
Midday	30	45
Afternoon	30	45
Night	45	--
Resources		
Peak Vehicles	3	2
Base Vehicles	2	2
Platform Hours	7,211	1,777

Expansion Recommendation

The headway should be improved from 30 to 20 minutes between 8 a.m.-6 p.m. to provide additional seating capacity, improve connections with other routes, and accommodate the growing student population at CSUCI.

Figure 75 Proposed Oxnard/Camarillo Specifications

	Weekday Fall/Spring	Weekday Break
Span		
Start	6:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
End	10:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
Headway		
Morning	20-30	45
Midday	20	45
Afternoon	20	45
Night	45	--
Resources		
Peak Vehicles	5	2
Base Vehicles	2	2
Platform Hours	10,985	1,777

Ventura/Santa Barbara

Replaces: Coastal Express

The current Coastal Express offers a variety of trip patterns serving multiple destinations in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, and Goleta. In an effort to improve simplicity, the Coastal Express should be split into two routes: Ventura/Santa Barbara and Ventura/Goleta.

Ventura/Santa Barbara should serve stops in Ventura and Santa Barbara on each trip. Select trips (early morning and late afternoon) should start or end at Riverpark in Oxnard to provide a convenient park-and-ride location along Highway 101 and maximize revenue time. Carpinteria should be served by two northbound morning and two afternoon southbound trips. The Carpinteria City Hall stop should be removed due to low ridership.

Simplified, consistent headways should be implemented to improve customer service, with peak headways at every 15-30 minutes and off-peak headways at every 90 minutes. Deadhead trips (traveling between the garage and start or end revenue service) should serve Riverpark.

Figure 76 Proposed Ventura/Santa Barbara



Proposed stops

- Riverpark (select trips only)
- Ventura Government Center
- Ventura Transit Center
- Santa Clara & Oak
- Main & Peking
- Carpinteria & Eugenia (select trips only)
- Cabrillo & Calle Puerto Vallarta
- Downtown Santa Barbara stops
 - Gutierrez & Garden
 - Santa Barbara & De La Guerra
 - Figueroa & Santa Barbara
 - Figueroa & Chapala
 - Cottage Hospital
 - Chapala & Figueroa
 - Anacapa & Anapamu
 - Anacapa & De La Guerra
 - Haley & Garden
- Cottage Hospital

Figure 77 Proposed Ventura/Santa Barbara Schedule

Northbound	Southbound
5:00 a.m.	6:30 a.m.
5:30 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
6:00 a.m.	9:30 a.m.
6:15 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
6:30 a.m.	12:30 p.m.
6:45 a.m.	2:00 p.m.
7:00 a.m.	3:30 p.m.
7:30 a.m.	3:50 p.m.
8:00 a.m.	4:10 p.m.
9:30 a.m.	4:30 p.m.
11:00 a.m.	4:45 p.m.
12:30 p.m.	5:00 p.m.
2:00 p.m.	5:30 p.m.
3:30 p.m.	6:30 p.m.
5:00 p.m.	7:30 p.m.

Figure 78 Proposed Ventura/Santa Barbara Specifications

	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Span			
Start	5:00 a.m.	7:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
End	9:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
Headway			
Morning	15-30	90	90
Midday	90	60	60
Afternoon	15-30	60	60
Night	90	90	90
Resources			
Peak Vehicles	8	3	3
Base Vehicles	2	2	2
Platform Hours	11,900	1,950	1,742

Ventura/Goleta

Replaces: Coastal Express

The current Coastal Express offers a variety of trip patterns serving multiple destinations in Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, and Goleta. In an effort to improve simplicity, the Coastal Express should be split into two routes: Ventura/Santa Barbara and Ventura/Goleta.

Ventura/Goleta should serve the Santa Barbara County Complex, the Hollister corridor in Goleta, and the University of California-Santa Barbara. The route should operate six northbound trip during the morning and six southbound trips during the afternoon. Based on recent Coastal Express and Coastal Express Limited ridership, six trips assigned with 55' coach buses during each peak period should accommodate current commuting passengers on both routes. Select trips (early morning and late afternoon) should start/end at Riverpark in Oxnard to provide a convenient park-and-ride location along Highway 101 and maximize deadhead time.

Figure 79 Proposed Ventura/Goleta



Proposed stops

- Riverpark (select trips only)
- Ventura Government Center
- Ventura Transit Center
- Santa Clara & Oak
- Main & Peking
- Santa Barbara County Complex
- Hollister & Patterson
- Hollister & Kellogg
- Hollister & Aero Camino
- Cortona & Castillian
- Castillian & Cortona
- University of California-Santa Barbara

Figure 80 Proposed Ventura/Goleta Schedule

Northbound	Southbound
4:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
5:00 a.m.	3:30 p.m.
5:30 a.m.	4:00 p.m.
6:00 a.m.	4:15 p.m.
6:30 a.m.	4:30 p.m.
7:00 a.m.	5:00 p.m.

Figure 81 Proposed Ventura/Goleta Specifications

Weekday	
Trips	
Morning	6
Afternoon	6
Resources	
Peak Vehicles	6
Base Vehicles	6
Platform Hours	8,288

Oxnard/Warner Center

Replaces: Conejo Connection

The Oxnard/Warner Express should operate two round trips during the morning and two round trips during the afternoon. The route should begin and end at Riverpark rather than Oxnard Transit Center, which will be served by the proposed Oxnard/Camarillo route. The route should also serve the Conejo Industrial Park and major stops/transfer points in Camarillo and Thousand Oaks.

Figure 82 Proposed Oxnard/Warner Center



Proposed stops

- Riverpark
- Camarillo Metrolink Station
- Camino Dos Rios & Hillcrest
- Rancho Conejo & Corporate Center
- Rancho Conejo & Amgen Center
- The Oaks Mall
- Thousand Oaks Transit Center
- Warner Center Stops
 - Topanga Canyon & Oxnard
 - Victory & Topanga Canyon
 - De Soto & Burbank

Figure 83 Proposed Oxnard/Warner Center Schedule

Eastbound	Westbound
6:00 a.m.	7:30 a.m.
6:30 a.m.	8:30 a.m.
3:00 p.m.	4:30 p.m.
3:30 p.m.	5:30 p.m.

Figure 84 Proposed Oxnard/Warner Center Specifications

Weekday	
Trips	
Morning	2
Afternoon	2
Resources	
Peak Vehicles	2
Base Vehicles	2
Platform Hours	2,805

Oxnard/Camarillo

New route

The Ventura County Transportation Commission approved advancing State Transit Assistance (STA) funding sufficient to purchase one MCI bus and begin a demonstration service utilizing VCTC Cap-and-Trade funds.

The new route will connect Oxnard Transit Center, the Camarillo Outlet Malls, and the Camarillo Metrolink Station. This route is primarily intended to improve access to employment by providing a more direct trip for transit users residing in South Oxnard. The route will operate at a 60-minute headway from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Figure 85 Proposed Oxnard/Camarillo Specifications

Weekday	
Span	
Start	7:30 a.m.
End	7:30 p.m.
Headway	
Morning	60
Midday	60
Afternoon	60
Night	-
Resources	
Peak Vehicles	1
Base Vehicles	1
Platform Hours	3,386

East-West Connector

The Ventura County Transportation Commission and the cities of Simi Valley, Moorpark, Camarillo, and Ventura submitted a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) application for funds to establish a new route that would provide a direct connection from East Ventura County to West Ventura County, using the Highway 118-Highway 34 corridor and Highway 101.

The route would serve Simi Valley, Moorpark, Somis, Camarillo and Ventura on weekdays from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm, with 120 minute headways and a limited number of stops. The proposed route would provide the following benefits:

- The introduction of transit service to Somis
- Direct service from the cities of Simi Valley and Camarillo to Moorpark College
- Improved access from Simi Valley and Moorpark to the CSUCI campus
- Direct access to Ventura County Government Center (jury duty and court dates)

Two buses will be required to maintain 90 minute headways. The service will have a limited number of stops to provide rapid connections to various transit systems and key locations in the corridor. The total cost of this project is estimated at \$2.46 million. Implementation of the proposed route is subject to potential grant funding and would not occur any sooner than January 2016.

Figure 86 Proposed East-West Connector Specifications

Weekday	
Span	
Start	7:30 a.m.
End	7:30 p.m.
Headway	
Morning	90
Midday	90
Afternoon	90
Night	-
Resources	
Peak Vehicles	2
Base Vehicles	2
Platform Hours	6,773

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Figure 87 Recommended VCTC Intercity System



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following implementation plan provides a recommended service changes for each VCTC Intercity route along with platform hour and peak vehicle requirements by fiscal year.

The plan includes an increase of 3,000-5,000 platform hours each fiscal year after initial implementation to account for increased population, employment, enrollment, and transit ridership.

The peak vehicle requirement drops from FY 2015-2016 due to streamlining of the Highway 101 route. Subsequent phases require additional peak vehicles for headway improvements on core VCTC Intercity routes.

Figure 88 Implementation Plan

Fiscal Year	Route	Action	Platform Hours	Peak Vehicles
Current	Highway 101	N/A	9,474	5
	Highway 126	N/A	11,103	3
	East County	N/A	9,821	3
	Coastal Express	N/A	21,917	13
	CSCU-Camarillo	N/A	4,112	1
	CSCU-Oxnard	N/A	4,725	1
	Conejo Connection	N/A	3,867	2
	Total		65,018	28
FY 2015-2016	Highway 101	No change	9,474	5
	Highway 126	No change	11,103	3
	East County	No change	9,821	3
	Ventura/Santa Barbara	Replace Coastal Express	15,592	8
	Ventura/Goleta	Replace Coastal Express	8,288	6
	CSCU-Camarillo	No change	4,112	1
	CSCU-Oxnard	No change	4,725	1
	Conejo Connection	No change	3,867	2
	Oxnard/Camarillo	New route – Cap-and-Trade Demonstration	3,386	1
	East-West Connector	New route – Pending CMAQ Funding	6,773	2
	Total		77,141	32

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Fiscal Year	Route	Action	Platform Hours	Peak Vehicles
FY 2016-2017	Ventura/Thousand Oaks	Replace Hwy 101; improve headway; add Sunday service	14,770	3
	Fillmore/Ventura	Replace Hwy 126; improve weekend span	13,218	3
	Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley	Replace East County; discontinue Saturday service	8,641	2
	Oxnard/Camarillo	Replace CSUCI routes; improve headway; discontinue Saturday service	8,988	3
	Ventura/Santa Barbara	No change	15,592	8
	Ventura/Goleta	No change	8,288	6
	Ventura/Warner Center	Replace Conejo Connection	2,805	2
	Oxnard/Camarillo	No change	3,386	1
	East-West Connector	No change	6,773	2
	Total		82,460	30
FY 2017-2018	Ventura/Thousand Oaks	No change	14,770	3
	Fillmore/Ventura	Improve weekday headway to 30 minutes	16,320	4
	Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley	No change	8,641	2
	Oxnard/Camarillo	No change	8,988	3
	Ventura/Santa Barbara	No change	15,592	8
	Ventura/Goleta	No change	8,288	6
	Ventura/Warner Center	No change	2,805	2
	Oxnard/Camarillo	No change	3,386	1
	East-West Connector	No change	6,773	2
	Total		85,562	31

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Fiscal Year	Route	Action	Platform Hours	Peak Vehicles
FY 2018-2019	Ventura/Thousand Oaks	No change	14,770	3
	Fillmore/Ventura	No change	16,320	4
	Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley	No change	8,641	2
	Oxnard/Camarillo	Improve weekday headway to 20 minutes	12,762	5
	Ventura/Santa Barbara	No change	15,592	8
	Ventura/Goleta	No change	8,288	6
	Ventura/Warner Center	No change	2,805	2
	Oxnard/Camarillo	No change	3,386	1
	East-West Connector	No change	6,773	2
	Total		89,337	33
FY 2019-2020	Ventura/Thousand Oaks	Improve weekday headway to 30 minutes	18,723	6
	Fillmore/Ventura	No change	16,320	4
	Thousand Oaks/Simi Valley	No change	8,641	2
	Oxnard/Camarillo	No change	12,762	5
	Ventura/Santa Barbara	No change	15,592	8
	Ventura/Goleta	No change	8,288	6
	Ventura/Warner Center	No change	2,805	2
	Oxnard/Camarillo	No change	3,386	1
	East-West Connector	No change	6,773	2
	Total		93,289	36

5 FARE STUDY

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Figure 89 shows VCTC Intercity's current fare structure for fixed route bus services. VCTC Intercity has a flat rate fare structure that applies a premium for inter-county Coastal Express and Conejo Connection services. On-board fare payment is accepted via cash (exact change only) and Go Ventura Smartcard (electronic farecard).

Figure 89 One-Way Fixed Route Cash Fares

Fare Product	VCTC Intercity Fixed-Route	Conejo Connection/Coastal Express
Adult/Student	\$1.25	\$3.00 ¹
Discount ²	\$0.60	\$1.50
Child under 5 ³	Free	Free

Fare Categories

VCTC Intercity follows similar fare categories as other transit agencies in the region. These fare categories are briefly described below.

Adult

The adult fare category includes all passengers, except those who meet the qualifications for student or discount fares. Children under age 5 ride for free with a fare paying adult.

Discount

Discounted fares are available for seniors 65 years of age and over, and Medicare or ADA cardholders. When using a Go Ventura card, the first purchase of a senior discounted Go Ventura pass must be made in person at one of the sales locations to show proof of age.

Pass Products

In addition to one-way cash fares, VCTC Intercity offers calendar month passes valid for unlimited trips for various services.⁴ All monthly passes must be loaded onto the Go Ventura card,

¹ Conejo Connection service between Oxnard and Thousand Oaks is \$1.25, consistent with fixed route services within Ventura County

² Senior, Disabled, or Medicare Cardholder (requirements described under "Fare Categories")

³ When accompanied with a fare paying adult

which allow for multiple months of passes to be loaded at one time. Reloading of cards must occur at specified reload locations or via phone (see Fare Distribution below). Valley Express also offers a monthly pass. Pass multipliers are a frequently used method to establish pass prices. The pass multiplier is the number of times one needs to ride the system for the pass to “break even” on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

Pass multipliers on different systems may vary widely based on the unique characteristics of the system including route structure, types of riders and policy incentives that might be in place to incentivize certain pass products over others. Figure 90 provides an overview of fare multipliers for the three VCTC Intercity pass products. As an example, the adult Regular Monthly pass is currently priced to require 40 single ride trips at \$1.25 per single trip to break even. Alternatively, the Inter-county pass requires 35 trips (at \$3.00 per trip) to break even.

Figure 90 VCTC Intercity Monthly Passes (offered on the Go Ventura Card)

Pass Type	Fare Type		Included Services				Adult Fare Multiplier ⁵
	Adult/ Student	Discount ⁶	VCTC Intercity Fixed- Route ⁷	Conejo Connection/ Coastal Express	Valley Express DAR	Other ⁸	
Regular Monthly	\$50.00	\$25.00	X			X	40 (\$1.25)
Premium Monthly	\$60.00	\$38.00	X		X	X	48 (\$1.25)
Inter-county	\$105.00	\$52.00	X	X		X	35 (\$3.00)
Valley Express DAR Monthly	\$30.00	\$30.00			X		11 (\$1.75)

Pass Media: Go Ventura Smartcard

All pass products are currently placed onto the Go Ventura card. The Go Ventura Smartcard is the electronic farecard media utilized by VCTC Intercity and other Ventura County transit operators. The cards can be loaded with monthly passes or an “e-purse”. An e-purse can be loaded with any dollar amount, up to \$200, for the payment of cash fares. Currently, e-purse holders receive a 10% discount over regular cash fares.

Figure 91 Example Go Ventura Card



⁴ Monthly passes are valid starting the first day of the designated month and expire the last day of the same month

⁵ Assumes highest one-way fare within included fixed-route services (in parenthesis)

⁶ Senior, Disabled, or Medicare Cardholder

⁷ Fixed route services include VCTC Intercity Routes Highway 101, 126, East County and CSUCI Oxnard and CSUCI Camarillo Routes.

⁸ Gold Coast Transit, Thousand Oaks Transit, Simi Valley Transit, Moorpark Transit, Camarillo CAT, Camarillo DAR

VCTC staff has noted that the Go Ventura Smartcard system has reached its life expectancy and the system equipment and software can no longer be replaced or repaired. The Go Ventura Smartcard will be discontinued in favor of a traditional magnetic stripe system that is being adopted by other agencies in the county, including Gold Coast Transit, Simi Valley Transit, and Thousand Oaks Transit. The new fare collection system will be introduced toward the end of this fiscal year in May 2015. This new fare collection system will utilize GFI Odyssey fareboxes that will continue to accept cash and will validate and dispense magnetic fare media.

Fare Policies

Transfer Policies

Free transfers between consecutive fixed-route VCTC Intercity services are permitted within a 90-minute span. As of November 2011, inter-agency transfers are also available between VCTC Intercity services and the following agencies:

- Camarillo Area Transit (fixed-route only)
- Gold Coast Transit
- Moorpark City Transit
- Oxnard Harbors & Beaches Dial-A-Ride
- Simi Valley Transit
- Thousand Oaks Transit

Most transfers are free, valid for transferring between two buses in a single direction. Transfers to VCTC Intercity's inter-county Conejo Connection and Coastal Express require a \$1.50 upcharge. In addition, transfers to Valley Express and the Camarillo Dial-A-Ride require a \$0.50 and \$1.00 upcharge respectively. Transfers are only available upon request at time of boarding with payment; transfers are not distributed during alightment.

Recent Fare Increases

Between 1994 (when VCTC Intercity began operation) and 2011, fares for fixed-route VCTC Intercity bus services remained at \$1.00. During that period, annual intercity ridership increased by over 400% while annual operating costs increased 400% from \$400,000 to \$2,000,000. Over the last five years, numerous fare increases have been approved and implemented across fare categories and fare product. In November 2010, one-way fixed route fares were increased to \$1.25 for adults in order to limit service cuts in the face of reduced state transit funding and rising operational costs. Fares for VCTC Intercity's Inter-county Coastal Express and Conejo Connection services (at that time, \$2.00) were also increased in a phased implementation. A \$1.00 fare increase was adopted and was phased in two \$0.50 increments. The first increase occurred in the second quarter of 2009 where the fare increased from \$2.00 to \$2.50. It was again increased on October 1, 2010 from \$2.50 to \$3.00.

During the same period, there were also price increases to the Adult Monthly Pass (\$50), Senior/Disabled/Medicare Monthly Pass (\$25), Adult Premium Monthly Pass (\$60) and Adult Premium Senior/Disabled/Medicare Monthly Pass (\$38). Fares within the Heritage Valley were also increased as the Heritage Valley DAR Monthly Pass increased to \$20, as did local DAR fares (\$1.75, \$0.85) and the DAR/Route 126 Day Pass (\$3.50).

While it is difficult to tie all ridership fluctuations strictly to fare changes, the fare increase had a notable impact on the Conejo Connection while virtually no impact on the Coastal Express. Figure 92 reflects the ridership impacts of the preliminary fare increase. The elasticity factor for the Conejo Connection fare increase was -0.61, which exceeds the industry standard of -0.3 which shows high fare sensitivity of its riders.

Figure 92 Coastal Express and Conejo Connection Fare Elasticity After 25% Increase

	Ridership Before Fare Increase (Oct-Mar 2008/2009)	Ridership After Fare Increase (Oct-Mar 2009/2010)	Percent Change	Elasticity
Coastal	130,621	135,097	3.4%	0.14
Conejo	9,992	8,466	-15.3%	-0.61

Source: Phase 2 Fare Increase Recommendation Memo (July, 2, 2010)

Despite the impact on the Conejo Connection, one should note that even after the second fare increase (+\$0.50), Conejo Connection ridership is significantly up as of FY 2013/2014 highlighting the inconsistency of fare levels with general ridership trends.

Fare Distribution

Figure 93 describes Go Ventura bus pass sales locations. In addition to visiting a sales outlet location, users can currently recharge cards remotely by credit card over the phone. Remote recharges require up to five working days to process onto the card once tagged onboard.

Figure 93 Go Ventura Pass Sales Outlet Locations

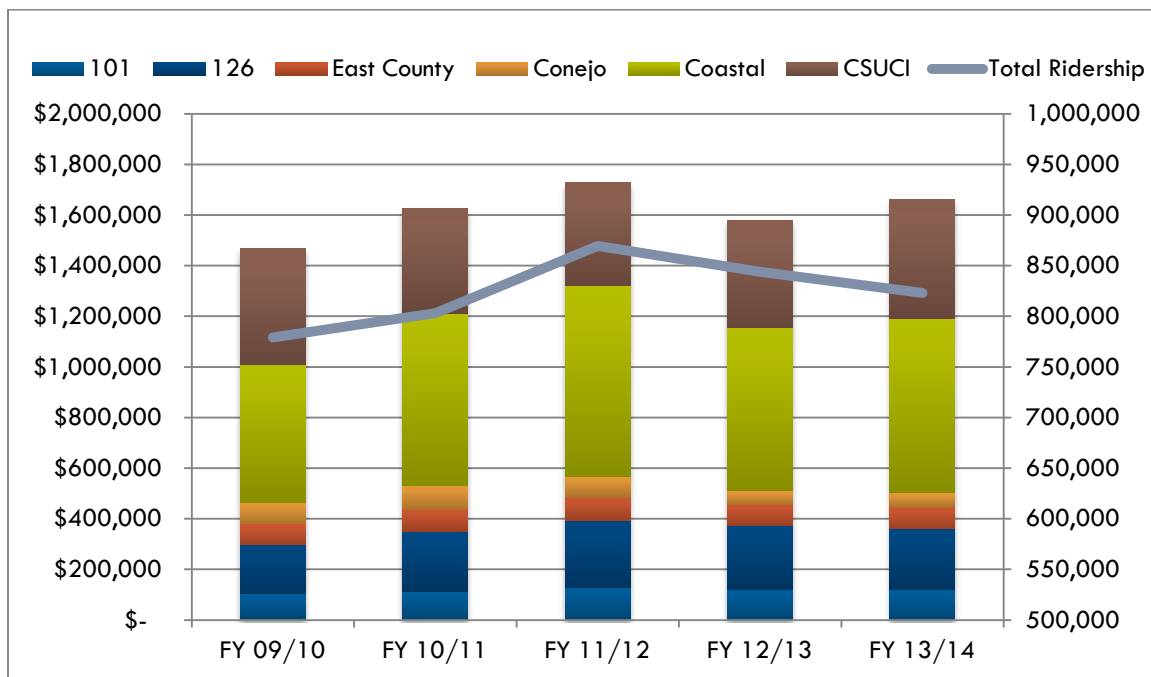
Sales Outlet	Location	Office Hours
VCTC	950 County Square Drive, Suite 108 Ventura, CA 93003	7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Camarillo City Hall	601 North Carmen Drive Camarillo, CA 93010	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Gold Coast Transit Customer Service Center	Oxnard Transportation Center 201 E. Fourth Street Oxnard, CA 93030	7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Simi Valley City Hall	Customer Service Center 2929 Tapo Canyon Road Simi Valley, CA 93063	7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Fillmore Area Transit Company	234 Central Avenue Fillmore, CA 93015	7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Revenue and Ridership Trends

Systemwide Fare Indicators

Over the past several years, revenues from fares have trended upward likely as a combination of fare increases in 2009 and 2010 and increases in overall ridership. Figure 94 illustrates the fare revenues from intercity services between FY 2009/2010 and FY 2012/2013. Coastal Express fares compose the majority of fare revenues followed by CSUCI fares (which are provided through a fare revenue guaranteed from the University). It should be noted that FY 2013/2014 information was not available at the time of writing. Recent information suggests that FY 2013/2014 and beyond have experienced significant ridership increases over the previous years.

Figure 94 Intercity Service Fare Revenue Trend



Investigating other fare indicators, there was a general increase trend for the fare revenue collected per revenue mile for most intercity services through FY 2011/2012. However, this trend declined for all service with exception to the CSUCI services in the following year. This trend is reflected in Figure 95.

Fare revenue per revenue hour also reflects a similar trend with CSUCI fare revenues remaining stagnant with other routes on the decline after FY 2011/2012. This is reflected in Figure 96.

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Figure 95 Fare Revenue per Mile

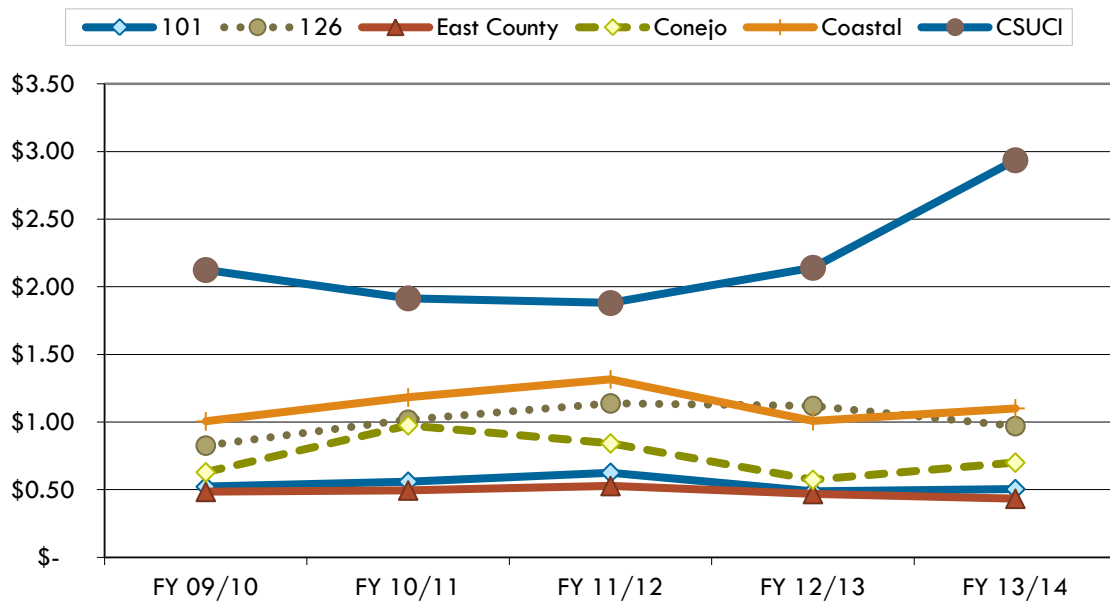
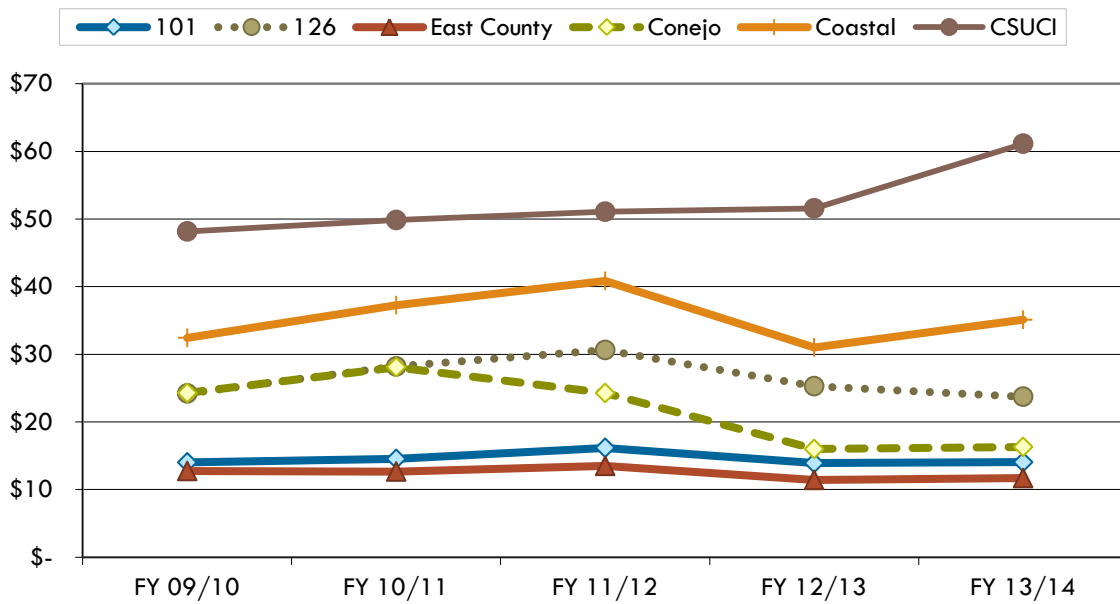


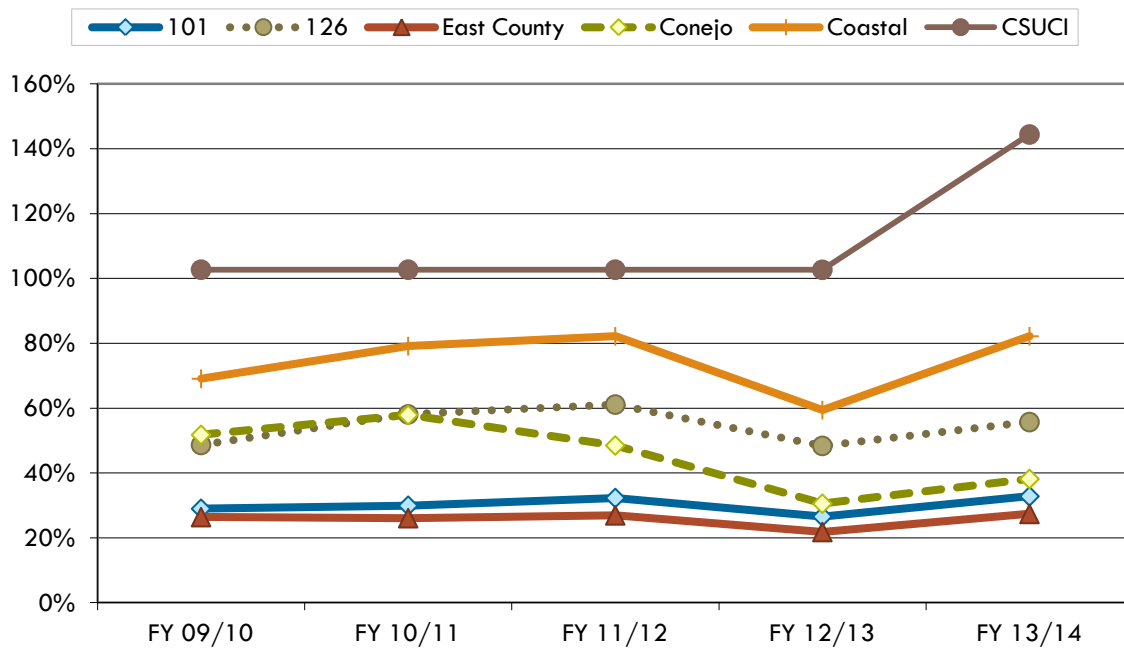
Figure 96 Fare Revenue by Revenue Hour



Since FY 2010/2011, the farebox recovery ratio for all services (except CSUCI services) have been on the decline. However, services are all well above the 20% state farebox recovery requirement (as defined by the Transportation Development Act). Between FY 2011/2012 and FY 2012/2013 both the Coastal Express and Conejo Connection saw significant declines in the farebox recovery ratio (greater than 15%). This information is provided in Figure 97.

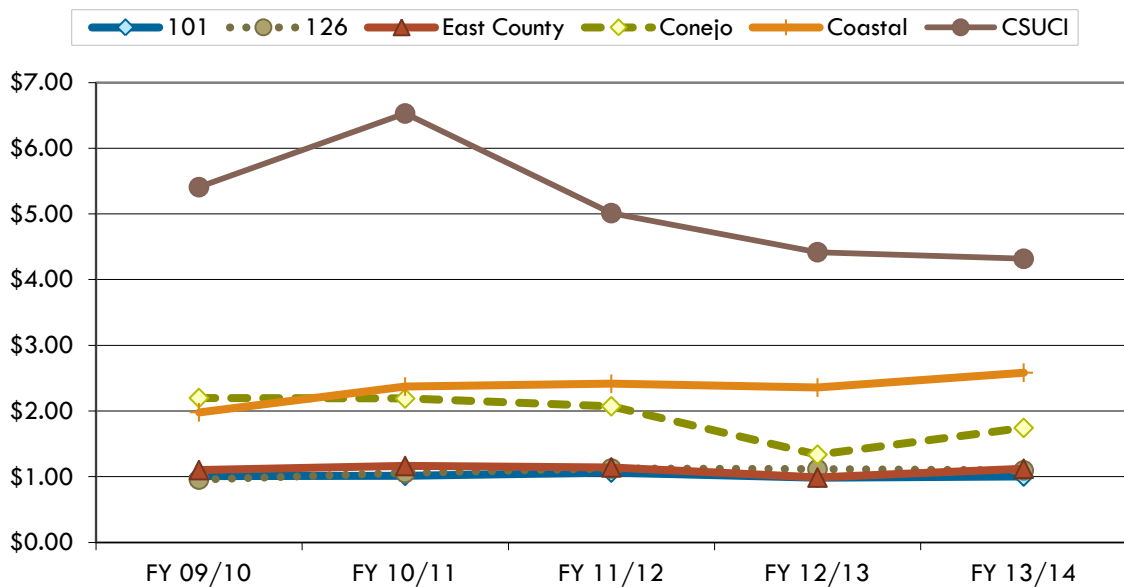
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Figure 97 Farebox Recovery Ratio



Despite the general downward trends in fare revenues, Figure 98 shows that with exception to CSUCI services (which has benefited from general increases in ridership), average fare collected per passenger has remained largely consistent over the past several years. However, the Conejo Connection has seen a decline in average fare per passenger (despite recent fare increases).

Figure 98 Average Fare per Passenger



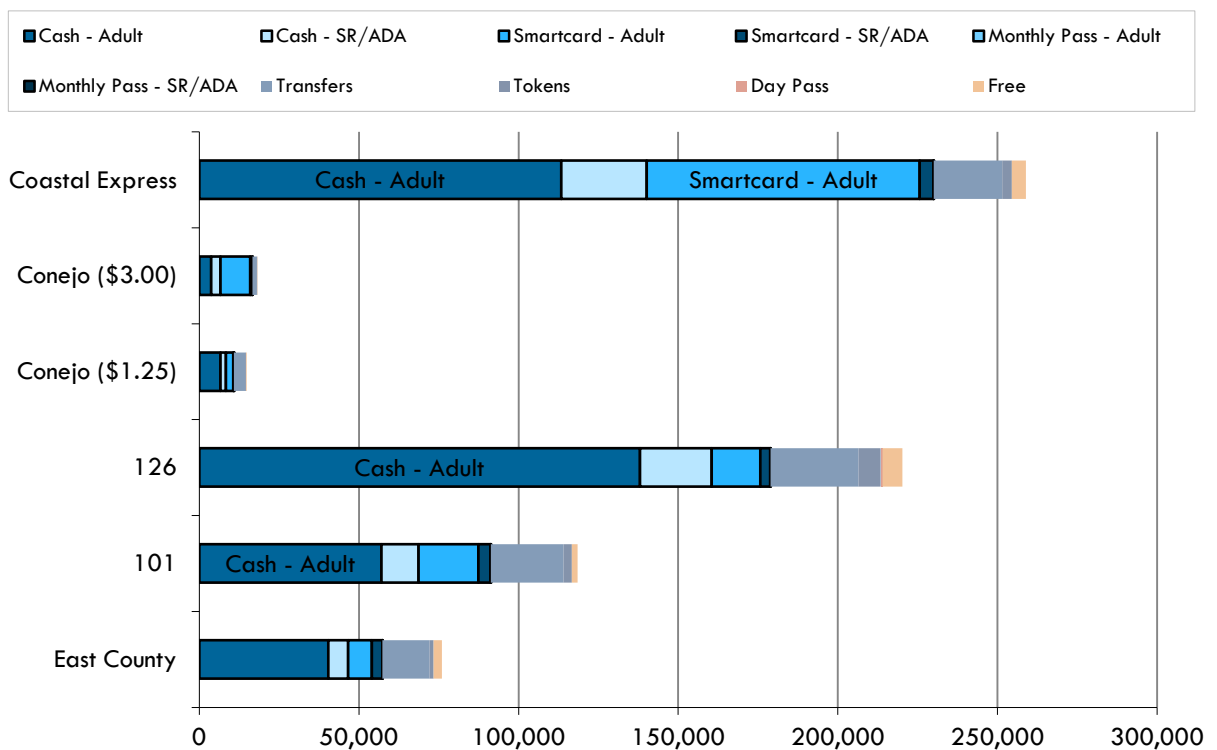
Ridership by Fare Type

Understanding how passengers pay for transit is an important factor in evaluating fare policies. Figure 99 and Figure 100 illustrate intercity service ridership by fare type (or how passengers pay).⁹ The information below supplements the data gathered from the on-board survey regarding fare payment methods.¹⁰ However, the on-board survey suggests a higher percentage of monthly pass users than what farebox data provides.

Among intercity ridership, Coastal Express and Route 126 carry the highest number of riders. As a result, any fare policies that affect these routes would have the largest overall impact on ridership and revenue.

Smartcard usage (for one-way cash payment) varies depending on route. However, usage is higher amongst the Coastal Express (33%) and Conejo Connection (52%). This supports the notion that riders are willing to use a different fare product (Go Ventura e-purse), when an ample savings is possible (\$0.30 saved per ride on Coastal Express and Conejo Connection). Cash payment is approximately 50% for other services, which is consistent with industry standards.

Figure 99 Ridership by Fare Type (by total boardings), FY 2013/2014



Source: VCTC (FY 13/14 ridership data)

⁹ CSUCI has been excluded from these charts given the high usage of Shuttle Passes

¹⁰ 2014 VCTC Intercity On-Board Survey

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Figure 100 Ridership by Fare Type



Source: VCTC (FY 13/14 ridership data)

Future Plans

With the impending shift away from the Go Ventura card, VCTC is investigating other options for fare products with the intent to move towards pre-encoded magnetic stripe fare media in the spring of 2015.. Currently, the following pass products are being considered:

- Unlimited-use pass (31-day rolling pass)
- 10-Ride Pass (sold at 10% off of regular cash fare) – to replace e-purse
- Single-ride tickets (to replace tokens used by social service agencies)

Fare levels would continue to be sold based on level of service which would include an Inter-county zone (Ventura, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles Counties) and a Ventura County-only product. Similar fare categories (adult/student and reduced) would continue to be provided.

PEER REVIEW

As a way to qualify potential future fare options, four peer agencies have been selected based on certain characteristics that are similar to VCTC Intercity. The fare structures and fare policies of these agencies are highlighted and key takeaways are noted that could be used to help inform future recommendations for VCTC’s own fare policies. The purpose of this section is to provide comparative information related to fares for several agencies with similar operating characteristics to VCTC. The peer agencies were selected based on various attributes including service area, service population, operating characteristics, and location.

- **Clean Air Express (Lompoc, CA):** Provides intercity express services between various cities in Northern Santa Barbara County
- **Foothill Transit (West Covina, CA):** Provides local, limited-stop, and commuter express services in the San Gabriel Valley. Express services travel to/from Downtown Los Angeles
- **Butte Regional Transit (Chico, CA):** Provides local and intercity transit service in Butte County
- **San Luis Obispo RTA (San Luis Obispo, CA):** Provides intercity transit service in San Luis Obispo county and some service into northern Santa Barbara County

Agency Characteristics

Data used in this review was collected from a number of sources including the National Transit Database (NTD), US Census Bureau, agency websites, and from one-on-one conversations or emails with agency staff.

Figure 101 presents basic demographic information for VCTC Intercity and other peer services based on NTD submissions.

Figure 101 Demographic Information

	VCTC Intercity	Clean Air Express	Foothill Transit	Butte Regional Transit	San Luis Obispo RTA
Service Population	367,260	55,666	1,515,836	190,000	206,008
Density (pop. per square mile)	4,372	1,392	4,636	1,188	62
Largest Incorporated City	Oxnard, CA	Lompoc, CA	Los Angeles, CA	Chico, CA	San Luis Obispo, CA
Median Income**	\$66,859	\$45,818	\$53,791	\$43,372	\$45,032
Average Gasoline Price*	\$2.65	\$2.66	\$2.67	\$2.54	\$2.80

Data Source: 2012 National Transit Database

*Average Gasoline Price reflects average regular unleaded price on December 29, 2014 from Gasbuddy.com

**Median Household Income reported from the US Census Bureau in 2014 income adjusted dollars

Figure 102 presents various operating statistics for each of the peer agencies. Both Foothill Transit and Butte Regional Transit provide a range of fixed route service types under the NTD category “Bus”. Thus, it may be difficult to accurately provide a “one-to-one” comparison of operating statistics for these services. For example, Foothill Transit operates local fixed route, limited-stop, and commuter express under one NTD category. Clean Air Express is funded

without FTA funds and does not provide reporting to NTD. Their operational data is self-reported.

Clean Air Express operates the least amount of service with approximately 18,000 revenue hours (intercity services only). Foothill Transit operates the most at approximately 672,000 hours per year (which includes all fixed route services). In terms of productivity, three of the four agencies have similar statistics of about 20 passengers per revenue hour. Clean Air Express is least productive with about 12 passengers per revenue hour.

Figure 102 Fixed Route Operating Statistics

	VCTC Intercity	Clean Air Express	Foothill Transit	Butte Regional Transit	San Luis Obispo RTA
Service Area (square miles, land only)	84	40	327	160	3,320
Service Population	367,260	55,666	1,515,836	190,000	206,008
Density (pop. per square mile)	4,372	1,392	4,636	1,188	62
Peak Vehicles	25	10	266	26	19
Annual Revenue Hours	53,109	18,284	671,603	69,503	46,646
Annual Revenue Miles	1,499,743	287,582	99,295,539	1,087,495	1,208,570
Annual Boardings	869,354	221,000	13,860,335	1,306,431	902,746
Annual Operating Cost	3,152,640	\$1,372,000	\$62,614,618	\$5,146,538	\$4,786,178
Annual Passenger Fares	1,336,508	\$1,050,000	\$18,496,259	\$1,246,467	\$1,394,855
Farebox Recovery Ratio	42%	76.5%	29.5%	24.2%	29.1%
Cost/Revenue Hour	\$59.36	\$75.04	\$93.23	\$74.05	\$102.61
Cost/Passenger	\$3.63	\$6.21	\$4.52	\$3.94	\$5.30
Passengers/Revenue Hour	16.37	12.09	20.64	18.80	19.35
Subsidy/Passenger	\$2.09	\$1.46	\$3.18	\$2.99	\$3.76
Average Fare/Passenger	\$1.53	\$4.75	\$1.33	\$0.95	\$1.55

Data Source: 2012 National Transit Database, Clean Air Express website

Peer costs on a revenue hour basis range from approximately \$75 (Butte Regional Transit and Clean Air Express) to \$100 (San Luis Obispo RTA). VCTC Intercity falls below this range at \$59.36.¹¹ Operating costs per passenger range from \$3.94 (Butte Regional Transit) to \$6.21 (Clean Air Express). These statistics are illustrated in Figure 103 and Figure 104. Variations in operating cost may be associated with differences in vehicle types in providing services as some intercity services utilize standard 40' buses while others use over the road coaches. Again, VCTC Intercity falls below its peers with a cost per passenger of \$3.63.

¹¹ This does not include fixed overhead costs i.e. maintenance facilities.

Figure 103 Operating Cost per Revenue Hour

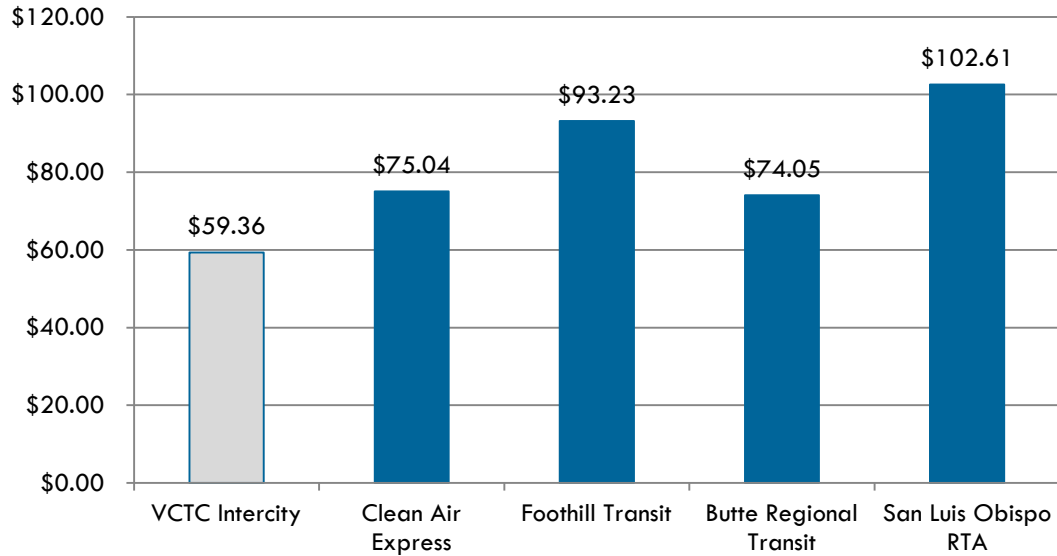
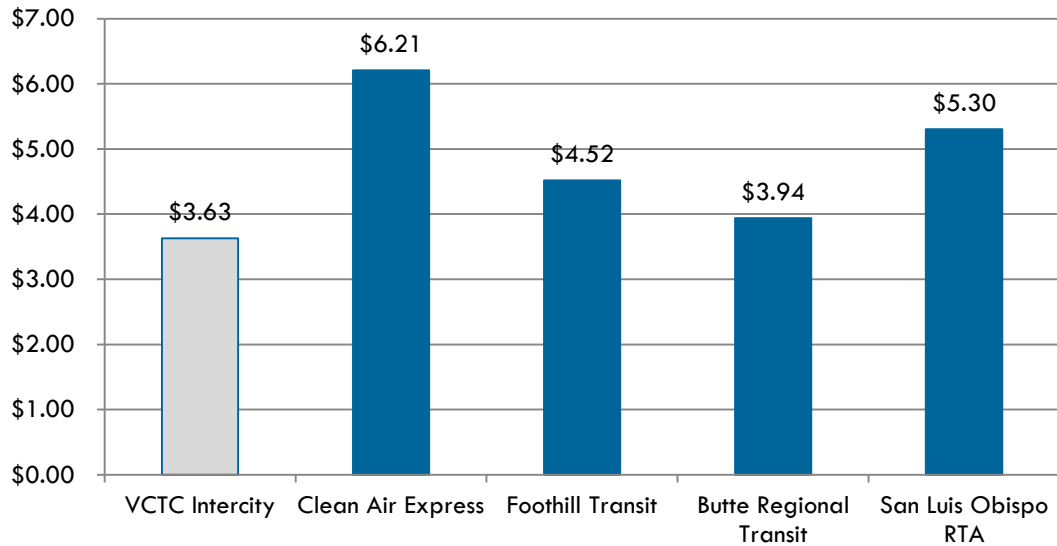
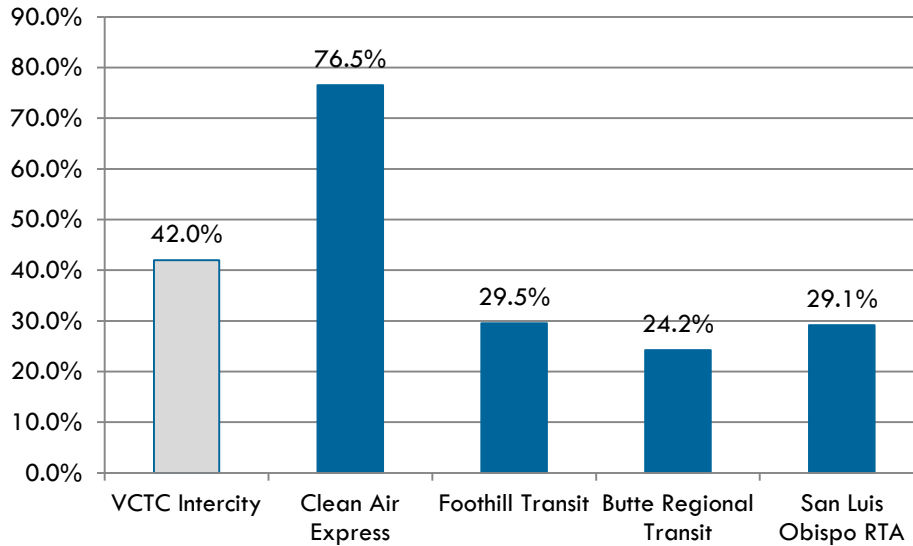


Figure 104 Operating Cost per Passenger



Clean Air Express' farebox recovery ratio (76.5%) is significantly higher than the other three agencies' ratios which all are less than 30% (See Figure 105 below). Additionally, Clean Air has the lowest subsidy per passenger at \$1.46, with the others all near \$3 or more.

Figure 105 Farebox Recovery Ratio



Fare Structure and Passenger Discounts

Fixed Route Fare Structure

Figure 106 compares the fixed route fare structures of VCTC Intercity to the four agencies discussed in this review. Cash fare for all passenger categories and all pre-paid fare instruments including various passes and other special features of each agency's fare structure are shown. All agencies except Clean Air Express charge similar prices for a single, standard ride (roughly \$1.25 to \$3). The Clean Air Express one-way fare (\$7) is significantly higher than the premium fare charged by other agencies that provide similar express types of services. Some other highlights include:

- All of the agencies with the exception of Clean Air Express also offer a discounted cash fare for qualifying children, students, seniors, and disabled.
- All agencies offer multi-trip passes except Foothill Transit, with Clean Air Express offering the most expensive option at \$50 compared to others that charge less than \$20.
- All agencies offer unlimited-ride monthly passes for all their unique services. Costs range from \$37.50 (Butte Transit local service) to \$150 (Clean Air Express).
- Additionally, all agencies with the exception of Clean Air Express offer discounted monthly passes for students, seniors, and the disabled. Agencies charge similar rates (roughly \$30 for students and \$20 for seniors, with certain express Foothill Transit routes being more expensive).
- San Luis Obispo RTA offers a flat rate monthly pass for \$44 that can be used on both RTA routes with \$3 fares and \$1.50 fares. In addition, they offer a countywide pass that can be used on any county transit agency for \$66.
- Children that are offered free service (depending on the agency) must all be accompanied by a paying adult.

Premium and Zonal Fares

Both Butte Regional Transit and Foothill Transit charge a premium for express or intercity services. On Foothill Transit, express routes to/from downtown Los Angeles are more than double the fare of local service. Butte Transit's regional services cost approximately 30% more than the local fixed route fare. San Luis Obispo RTA has a zone fare system and charges \$1.50-\$3 depending on the distance traveled (a city-to-city fare table is provided for each route).

Transfers and Transfer Policies

Currently, a wide variety of policies are being used to handle transfers at peer agencies. These policies can be quite complicated, and cannot be easily summarized without some level of detail. These policies are within the footnotes of Figure 106, but will be explained further below.

- Clean Air Express offers free transfers to those commuting from Santa Maria/Bullerton to UCSB at select stops. These transfers are during rush hour in the morning (towards UCSB) and evening (from UCSB).
- Foothill Transit transfers are \$0.50 when you pay your full fare at time of boarding. These transfers are good for two hours within the system. Customers wishing to use a local transfer to board the Silver Streak, Lines 481 and 690, or Commuter Express service must pay the difference of the fare. Discounts on local transfers are available for qualifying seniors and the disabled.
- Butte Regional Transit offers free transfers from local to local, regional to local, and regional to local. Using a local transfer on a regional route requires an additional \$0.40 fare. Discounts for this extra fare are available for qualifying students and seniors. Local transfer is valid for 1 hour and regional transfer for 2 hours.
- San Luis Obispo RTA does not offer transfers between its intercity routes. However, it does offer a day pass which is typically suggested for riders who need to take more than one route to reach their destination (and do not have a pass product).

Figure 106 presents a comparison of fare structures between the four peer agencies and VCTC Intercity services.

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Figure 106 Peer Agencies Fare Structure Comparison

Fixed Route	VCTC Intercity		Clean Air Express	Foothill Transit		Butte Regional Transit		San Luis Obispo RTA
Service Type	Intra-county	Inter-county		Local Service	Commuter Express	Local Service	Regional Service	
Cash								
Adult (Full Fare Single Ride)	\$1.25	\$3.00	\$7.00	\$1.25	\$4.90	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$1.50 - \$3.00 depending on distance
Student	\$1.25	\$3.00	N/A	1.25 (K-College)	N/A	\$1.00 (ages 6-18)	\$1.50 (ages 6-18)	\$0.75 - \$1.50 (K-12)
Senior /Disabled	\$0.60	\$1.50	N/A	\$0.50	N/A	\$0.75	\$1.00	\$0.75 - \$1.50 (ages 65-79) free (ages 80+ and ADA card holders)
Child	free (5 and under)	free (5 and under)	N/A	free (5 and under)	free (5 and under)	free (under 6)	free (under 6)	free (5 and under)
Transfers ⁽¹⁾ ⁽²⁾ ⁽³⁾ ⁽⁴⁾ ⁽⁵⁾	free	+\$1.50	free	\$0.50 (Senior/Disabled - \$0.25)	Transfer +\$3.65	free	\$0.40 (Student - \$0.30) (Senior - \$0.20)	free
Passes								
10 Ride Pass	N/A	N/A	\$50.00	N/A	N/A	\$13.50 (Student - \$9.00) (Senior - \$6.75)	\$18.00 (Student - \$13.00) (Senior - \$9.00)	\$14.00 (7 day pass)
Monthly Pass	\$50.00	\$105.00	\$150.00	\$70.00	\$170.00	\$37.50	\$48.00	\$44.00
Student Pass	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$33/31 days	N/A	\$25/30 days	\$34/30 days	\$22/31 days
Senior/Disabled Pass	\$25.00	\$52.00	N/A	\$22/31 days	N/A	\$19/30 days	\$25/30 days	\$22/31 days free (ages 80+)
Day Pass	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$5.00

Footnotes:

(1) Clean Air Express offers free transfers to those commuting from Santa Maria/Bullerton to UCSB at select stops.

(2) Foothill Transit transfers are purchasable for \$0.50 when you pay your full fare at time of boarding and good for 2 hours. Transfers are worth the dollar value of the customer's local fare. Customers wishing to use a transfer to board the Silver Streak, Lines 481 and 690, or Commuter Express service must pay the difference.

(3) Butte Regional Transit offers free transfers from local to local, regional to local, and regional to local. Using a local transfer on a regional route requires an additional \$0.40 fare (discounts applicable).

(4) San Luis Obispo RTA offers free transfers between routes/services at select stops. In addition, it offers a \$66 Countywide pass that is valid on all transit services within the county.

(5) Transfers are free between VCTC fixed route services. Transfers to the Coastal Express and Conejo Connection include a \$1.50 upcharge from regular VCTC fixed route services (see Transfer Policies)

Monthly Passes

Figure 107 presents a comparison of various monthly pass fare rates between these four agencies. Foothill Transit's local service has the highest monthly pass multiplier of 56. San Luis Obispo has the lowest range of 11-29 depending on distance traveled.

Figure 107 Pass Cost Comparisons

Fixed Route	VCTC Intercity		Clean Air Express	Foothill Transit		Butte Regional Transit		San Luis Obispo RTA	
	(Intra-county)	(Inter-county)		Local	Commuter Express	Local	Intercity	Shorter Distance Trips	Longer Distance Trips
Adult (Full Fare - Single Ride)	\$1.25	\$3.00	\$7.00	\$1.25	\$4.90	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$1.50	\$3.00
Monthly Pass	\$50.00	\$105.00	\$150.00	\$70.00	\$170.00	\$37.50	\$48.00	\$44	
Monthly Pass Multiplier	40	35	21	56	35	25	24	29	11

Fare Changes

The following section describes in greater detail individual conversations with the peer transit agencies and information associated with fare changes.

Clean Air Express

Clean Air Express has not raised fares in the last five years. The service does not have a policy for setting discounts. However, it does have a designated fare adjustment policy.

Foothill Transit

Foothill Transit's last fare increase occurred in June, 2010 due to a reduction in funding from tax revenue. Base fares were increased from \$1.00 to \$1.25. At present the agency does not have any policies or guidelines (formal or informal) to inform the restructuring of fares.

Butte Regional Transit

The last fare increase for Butte Regional Transit B-Line fixed-route service occurred on May 25, 2014 when cash fares were raised approximately seven percent on local service and ten percent on regional service with slightly higher increases for pre-paid tickets and passes. Paratransit fares were also raised by nine percent, with larger increases for longer distance (zonal) travel. Two-Ride Passes (\$5.50) and 10-Ride Passes (\$27.50) are available for dial-a-ride paratransit service, although these do not provide a value on the one-way fare of \$2.75 for such services.

San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority

San Luis Obispo RTA has raised fares several times over the past ten years. Since 2000, fares were first raised in 2008 as a result of the economic downturn and a need to seek additional revenues. This initial fare increase impacted both cash and pass fares. Fares were again raised in 2010, and then a third time after 2010, but the final fare increase was limited to passes. In addition to using fare increases as a way to generate revenues, RTA also has investigated using fare modifications as a way to manage demand on some of its most heavily used routes. However,

no “peak pricing” has been instituted to date. Up until the most recent fare increase, there have been no specific policies related to when and under what circumstances fares can be modified. However, RTA is looking into instituting a policy that suggests fares should be reviewed on a biannual basis (not yet finalized).

Key Findings

Based on the review of the various peers, the following key observations were made:

- VCTC Intercity’s operating costs are relatively low as compared to the selected peers.
- VCTC’s base one-way fare of \$3.00 is within range of other peers who provide intercity transit services. Clean Air Express’ \$7.00 is an outlier.
- VCTC does not offer an intermediate fare product between one-way cash fares and the monthly pass. Other agencies provide a weekly pass or 10-ride fare product. (VCTC does currently offer the 10% discount if using the Go Ventura Card)
- VCTC’s current monthly pass multiplier is at the high end of the range amongst all peers. Particularly when comparing the Inter-county product (35) to similar products at Butte Regional Transit (24) and San Luis Obispo RTA (11).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the existing conditions and peer review, the following recommendations have been outlined with a focus on fare increase policies and the transition away from the Go Ventura Card. The recommendations here are based on the consultant’s understanding of VCTC’s current policies, recent trends and fare goals supplemented with understanding of industry trends and best practices.

Distance Based Fare Policies

The primary intent of distance based fares is to provide some level of fare equity based on the distance of the transit trip. It is general sentiment that if someone is obtaining more value (e.g., a longer trip or a faster travel time), they should pay a higher fare. However, this is often easier said than done give the different factors at play with transit service characteristics and the transit network itself. Currently, VCTC Intercity fares are route-based, meaning a rider’s fare is based on the route they board¹². This includes two tiers of fares: fixed route services and intercounty services (Conejo Connection and Coastal Express). This arrangement provides a level of simplicity from the rider’s perspective, but may create fare inequities for those traveling different distances. For example, there may be transit trips within Ventura County that are nearly the same distance or longer than the Conejo Connection trip distance, but could be priced at lower fare, simply because the trip stays within Ventura County.

Figure 108 provides a summary of various distance-based fare strategies, including flat fare, route/origin-based, and zone boundary/matrix.

¹² Conejo Connection service between Oxnard and Thousand Oaks is \$1.25, consistent with fixed route services within Ventura County

Figure 108 Example Distance-Based Fare Strategies

	Flat Fare	Route/Origin Based (most similar to VCTC Intercity)	Zone Boundary or Matrix (Rider Based)
Description	All services are charged a single fare which is usually a premium over the local transit fixed route fare.	All routes or origins are categorized to fit under a specific fare zone with fixed fare for all riders on that route	Rider pays a fare based on their own specific distance traveled (regardless of route), the most zones/distance covered, the higher the fare
Benefits	Most simple	Better aligns trip distance with fare	Separates passenger fare from the route's characteristics
Drawbacks	Passenger riding longer-distance trips obtain a greater value than those riding shorter trips	Assumes route's passengers are traveling roughly equal distances (otherwise route itself has multiple fares)	Most complex for passengers and for fare collection
Example	UTA (Salt Lake City) Metro Transit (Twin Cities)	GRTA (Atlanta) MBTA (Boston) VCTC Intercity	Commuter Express (Los Angeles) Golden Gate Transit (San Francisco) RTA (San Luis Obispo)

Zone Boundary or Matrix fare policies are best suited towards systems with simple (or linear) route networks such as rail or commuter bus corridors. However, they are complicated to implement across a transit network, particularly those that are not uniform in terms of directionality and route length. In addition, they are often can be very difficult to communicate to passengers. For example RTA in San Luis Obispo maintains a four fare structure for all of its routes (\$1.50, \$2.00, \$2.50 and \$3.00). However, each route must specify what fares apply between various destinations on that route. This can cause additional confusion at the farebox and also requires operators to be vigilant about asking people's final destination when they board the bus.

In the discussion of a distance-based fare, there is always a tradeoff between achieving true fare equity and fare simplicity from a rider's perspective. In the case of VCTC Intercity, the county's boundaries itself provide a clear and easy to understand boundary for service types. In addition, with only two routes that travel beyond the County's borders (and also are routes that travel the furthest distance), it justifies maintaining the current route-based fare structure. However, it should be made clear that riders traveling within the county on those routes should be charged the Ventura County fare.

Recommendation: Maintain existing two-tier fare structure including intracounty (within Ventura County) and intercounty fares.

Fare Policies

Guidelines for Fare Increases

Several factors need to be considered when raising fares, ranging from how fares are perceived by the transit riding public, whether they are “in line” with peer agencies, to what is the “appropriate” ratio between passenger fares and operating costs. VCTC Intercity has undergone several fare increases across services and fare products within the past four years under pressure from an unstable funding climate. In the future, VCTC should consider a transparent fare increase policy that enables more regular fare increases to stay in-line with inflation and other revenue related trends.

The following guidelines are provided for VCTC’s consideration:

- On a semi-annual basis, VCTC will review the average fare and subsidy per passenger, and the farebox recovery ratio for VCTC Intercity services when developing the annual operating budget. If all three ratios are declining and costs to operate the service are increasing (including contract costs), consider a fare adjustment. VCTC may even establish an internal target for farebox recovery ratio (current farebox recovery ratio average across all VCTC Intercity services is close to 50% when including the CSUCI fare revenue guarantee).
- VCTC will monitor the local consumer price index and if increases are greater than 5% in any given year, consider increasing fares to keep pace with inflation
- Monitor and track use of all passes and if there is a significant drop in sales with any fare product, consider a fare adjustment for that product. Similar to an underperforming route, underperforming fare products should be evaluated for adjustments or elimination.
- For all future fare increases, pass products prices should be rounded to the nearest dollar. Single-ride prices and/or Day Pass products should be rounded to the nearest quarter.
- Fuel prices should be considered as part of a fare adjustment policy. However, given the volatility in fuel prices, it may be difficult to use average cost of fuel as a consistent barometer for a fare increase policy (see Fuel Surcharges below)
- “Across the board” fare increases are simple and transparent, but will often create disproportionate impacts. These types of fare increases should be avoided unless supported by evidence that the strategy meets specific goals at the time of evaluation.
- These guidelines assume that service levels would remain constant. Fare increases paired with service level increases may be warranted assuming support exists for both. Fare increases paired with service cuts should be avoided when possible.
- “Premium” services, or services that offer a competitive time or comfort advantage over vehicle or transit alternatives should be priced at a higher level to differentiate the product

Recommendation: Establish and adopt guidelines for fare increases based on fare analysis guidance.

Fuel Surcharges

In recent years, transit operators have contended with volatile fuel prices, which have fluctuated widely. Prices for diesel have gone as high as nearly \$5.00 per gallon in 2008 to \$3.55 per gallon in December 2014. Given this variability, some transit agencies, particularly those traveling longer distances for intercity routes, have considered a fuel surcharge policy to cope with fuel prices that do not rise in a uniform fashion. The intent of such a policy is to guard against surges in fuel prices by providing supplemental revenues to help cover higher operating costs related to fuel. If VCTC were to consider a fuel surcharge policy, the following guidelines are suggested:

- A surcharge is intended to specifically cover the cost of increased fuel prices. If prices were to drop back to normal levels, the fuel surcharge should be removed.
- Thresholds to enact a fuel surcharge should be based on an independent metric of fuel prices such as the U.S. Energy Information Administration's reports on gasoline and diesel fuel
- A policy could include multiple "tiers" of fuel surcharge based on the current costs of fuel. As an example, the lowest tier could include a \$0.25 surcharge that could increase by \$0.25 as fuel prices increase past certain thresholds or percentages.
- A fuel surcharge policy should be communicated to riders well in advance of any associated fuel-related fare increases
- Given that a fuel surcharge of any type would be considered a fare increase, it is subject to a fare equity analysis as defined by FTA's Title VI requirements

Recommendation: Consider adopting a fuel surcharge policy to guard against significant future fuel price changes, particularly in a time when fuel prices are at historical lows.

Multiple-Ride Products

Context

The Go Ventura smartcard program will be phased out in mid-2015 as equipment has been deteriorating and the cost of replacement has been deemed too high given the return on investment. The Go Ventura card provides customers the ability to store both passes and e-purse funds, which provide fares at a 10% discount. Based on rider feedback, usage for both of these products is relatively low with exception to Coastal Express and Conejo Connection (many routes continue to have combined cash/e-purse usage that exceeds 70%). This provides an opportunity to reevaluate VCTC Intercity multiple-ride products, distribution and pricing. When approaching the development of fare offerings, the following principles apply:

- Each fare product should have a defined market (e.g., frequent users vs. infrequent users, riders who seek the highest discount, etc.)
- Generally, there is an interest in increasing multiple-ride fare product usage (reduced dwell time, increases customer commitment to service) as compared to customers paying cash
- Customer fare discounts should increase based on the volume of service provided (e.g., a monthly pass should provide a higher discount than a shorter-duration pass product).
- Multiple-ride products should be designed to reduce fare evasion and fraudulent use

Recommended Products

Currently, VCTC offers pass products that could be used countywide on various services. This provides several benefits. It reduces the number pass products throughout the county (reducing customer confusion) and increases pass distribution locations (given that more agencies are selling the same pass). In addition, it reduces the need for various permutations of transfers between agencies. However, given the elimination of the Go Ventura card, individual agencies in Ventura County will begin offering their own unique products.

Based on existing data, VCTC Intercity pass usage is not meeting its potential. A variety of reasons could be the cause including:

- Inconvenient access to pass sales outlets
- Long reload times of existing Go Ventura passes (up to 5 days for telephone recharge)
- Prices are too high
- Confusion about what pass to choose

Moving forward, it is suggested that passes be restructured and renamed to align with their specific market demands (while maintaining countywide consistency). The following tiers are suggested:

- **Locals Pass:** Good on any fixed route system within Ventura County (except Coastal Express, Conejo Connection to/from Warner Center, and Dial-A-Ride services)
- **Premium Pass:** Benefits of Local Pass, and includes inter-county services such as Coastal Express and Conejo Connection to/from the Warner Center. Given that the Premium Pass is a relatively expensive fare product, VCTC may want to consider adding a multi-pass product that is at a lower price point for those who cannot afford a Premium Pass (Such as a Premium 10 or 20 Ride product).

These tiers are intended to separate the fare structures for Dial-A-Ride, fixed route services, and express types of services. This structure also eliminates the unlimited usage pass product for Dial-A-Ride in Camarillo where there is also local fixed route service. The Heritage Valley Pass (which allows DAR service) is provided as the Santa Paula Commuter Bus may be eliminated in the future, leaving the study area without fixed route service. 10-Ride pass products are common amongst Dial-A-Ride services as a way to provide financial incentives to prevent overuse, since Dial-A-Ride systems often run into capacity limitations.

Multiple-Ride Pricing

Figure 109 provides a summary of the proposed pass products and guidance on pricing strategies. The pricing strategies below presume a goal of increasing pass usage. The benefits of increasing pass usage include reduced dwell times, up-front revenue collection, reduced costs in fare counting, and fewer farebox problems (jammed fareboxes, etc.). However, this comes at a tradeoff of potentially reducing the average fare per passenger if discounts are provided to incent pass usage. Yet, one must consider the amount of effort to advertise, print and distribute fare products, only to have them not be used.

Before selecting a final fare pricing scheme, VCTC Intercity should establish its fare product goals and outline if fare products are intended only for a select few, or if it has a goal to reach higher percentages of pass usage (it is more typical for agencies to have approximately 50% pass usage and 50% cash usage).

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Figure 109 Proposed Multiple-Ride Products and Pricing

Pass Product	Pricing Strategy	Proposed Range	Notes
Valley Express DAR Pass	This pass replaces the existing VCTC Intercity Monthly Dial-A-Ride Pass	Currently \$30 is a very low price for unlimited access to the Dial-A-Ride service. It is recommended that this fare be evaluated for increase	Pass sales of this product should be offered within the Heritage Valley
Local Pass	This pass product replaces the “Regular Monthly Pass”.	Currently, assuming a base fare of \$1.25, the pass multiplier is 40. A new multiplier between 30-35 should be considered to incentivize usage.	Pass pricing should consider that most riders do not need multiple agencies to complete their trip. A 10-Ride Pass could also be considered for trips within Ventura County, but it is preferred to shift these riders to a Local Pass.
Intercounty Pass	This pass product replaces the “Inter-county Monthly Pass”	Currently, assuming a base fare of \$3.00, the pass multiplier is 35. However, given the longer-distance nature of service, it is common for less consistent ridership, which may warrant a lower multiplier (25-30) to be considered.	Determining the estimated number of rides per month for Conejo Connection and Coastal Express riders is critical in establishing the proposed pass price. Also, this pass strategy presumes expanded distribution opportunities in Ventura.
Intercounty10-Ride	Given the high usage of “e-purse” on Coastal Express and Conejo Connection, this product would offer a replacement with an equivalent 10% discount	Assuming one-way trip prices remain the same, a Premium 10-Ride product should be offered at \$27 (10% discount from \$3)	Assuming farebox capabilities, VCTC may consider vending 10-Ride tickets at the farebox. However, farebox vended fare media tends to wear easily (potentially causing future farebox delays). In addition, vending pass products from the farebox also potentially can increase dwell times.

Pass Media

A major change for VCTC will be the phasing out of electronic fare equipment. In the future, it is likely that most Ventura County transit operators will be moving towards magnetic fare media which can be accepted and validated at the farebox. Similarly, VCTC Intercity fare products should use consistent fare media for all of its fare products. Fare media should be able to be validated within the farebox (magnetic reader) and visually in the case of a malfunctioning farebox or on routes that do not have the proper farebox equipment. Multi-ride products such as 10 or 20 ride farecards should also have the ability to be “hole punched” or manually validated by operators. All farebox-vended fare media, intended for usage longer than one day, should be the most durable (typically thickest) fare media possible. This will help reduce farebox malfunctioning in the future (which may cause future delay and high instances of fare evasion).

Pass Distribution

While there is a general interest to expand fare distribution options throughout the service area, this interest must be weighed against the costs to adequately “protect” fare media from theft and ensure proper sales. Currently, fare media is sold at numerous municipal locations. However, many of these locations are not necessarily convenient for riders. Consider the Coastal Express, which carries the highest volume of VCTC Intercity riders. There currently are no pass sales locations within a short walk to/from the route.

VCTC should consider expanding sales locations for its fare products at a limited number of grocery locations like Vons or Ralphs, which improves rider convenience. Typically, these relationships are under a consignment arrangement where VCTC holds ownership of fare products until they are actually sold to the customer. In these situations, the third-party only facilitates the transaction and serves as the middleman for funds.

Alternatively, VCTC could establish an online order program to distribute pass products by mail (including a convenience fee for postage). Again, these strategies come at a cost, but are critical components if increasing pass usage is a goal.

Implementation

It is our understanding that no fare media equipment will be initially at each point of sale and that pre-encoded magnetic fare media will be available starting in April 2015. Understanding the short time-frame before this change and the changes that will occur to both fare products and fare technology, we want to emphasize the importance of customer and operator communication in advance of this change. Given the low usage of pass products, the switch from Go Ventura cards for pass users will likely generate a low amount of customer service issues. However, given the larger volume of e-purse users, VCTC should prepare for potential customer service questions and complaints as a result of this change. In addition to general communication about fare product changes, additional training materials should be provided for operators and even for riders to inform them on how to use the new fareboxes.