

MARIN TRANSIT

West Marin Transit Needs Assessment Existing Conditions Report



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Executive Summary

Background and Project Goals

The purpose of this project is to focus attention on the transportation needs of West Marin, and to suggest a range of strategies and solutions to address those needs. The project is sponsored by Marin Transit and is intended to:

- Identify and quantify unmet transportation needs of residents and visitors in West Marin
- Describe and evaluate the effectiveness of the West Marin Stagecoach and compare its performance to its peers
- Prepare financial projections to document future funding assumptions
- Develop a range of potential service enhancements and evaluation criteria to assess the feasibility of implementing suggested new strategies
- Identify a preferred alternative, or combination of alternatives, to improve services in West Marin
- Develop a service plan for implementation of the preferred alternative

As discussed in Chapter 2, West Marin is a very low-density rural area characterized by small towns with local-serving retail, businesses that cater to recreational tourists, and agriculturally oriented businesses such as feed and farm supply stores, organic food outlets, and milk processors. This part of Marin has fewer seniors and people with disabilities than other parts of the county, and residents overall have lower average incomes than Marin as a whole. The population is not expected to increase; housing opportunities are very limited, even within more developed areas, as land is extremely expensive and is sought after for vacation homes. West Marin has important connections to the eastern part of Marin and to southern Sonoma County for jobs, shopping, schools, entertainment, and access to regional transit.

Residents of West Marin are relatively isolated, in part because the geography restricts access between communities, and also because there are few transportation alternatives available for those without a car.

The project findings are supported, in part, by an extensive public outreach effort. To date, a Steering Committee has been formed to provide project oversight and guidance, three public outreach meetings have been convened to solicit comments from members of the public, a survey was conducted of current Stagecoach riders, and numerous one-on-one stakeholder interviews documented local needs and perceptions. The findings and results of these outreach efforts are described further in this report.

Existing Services

One of the goals of this project is to assess the effectiveness and recommend improvements for the existing public transportation service for this region, the West Marin Stagecoach. The Stagecoach began operation in 2002 as a two-year demonstration program to provide residents of West Marin improved access to medical, educational, civic, shopping and workplace sites throughout the County. The Stagecoach is administered by Marin Transit, and operates under contract with MV Transportation. West Marin Stagecoach ridership has grown significantly in the past year, with a significant increase throughout the spring and summer.

An on-board survey was conducted during the course of the project to learn more about who uses the Stagecoach, as well as their experiences with the system. The following provides a “snapshot” profile of Stagecoach riders.

- Two-thirds of Stagecoach riders are of working age; of interest, however, is that 26% of riders are age 17 or younger
- Forty-two percent of Stagecoach riders are female, and 58% are male
- Of survey respondents, 30% have an annual income of \$10,000 or less. In general, the incomes reported for Stagecoach riders are lower than the general population of Marin County.
- The two reasons cited most frequently for using the Stagecoach are that no car is available, and to improve the environment.
- Usage on the Stagecoach varies weekdays compared to weekends. Those commuting for work or school account for the majority of riders during the week, and only 2% of trips connect to outside Marin County. By comparison, 17% of riders connect outside the county on weekends, and 55% of the trips are for recreational purposes.

A peer review was conducted of transit providers operating in contexts similar to those of West Marin. The specific purpose of the exercise was to identify transit service and funding alternatives that might be adapted to West Marin. Six key performance indicators were identified for each of the peers:

- Passengers per revenue hour
- Operating cost per revenue hour
- Operating cost per passenger
- Subsidy per passenger
- Average fare per passenger
- Farebox recovery ratio

The results of the peer review are presented in Chapter 3.

Stakeholder Consultation and Public Outreach

Stakeholder consultation has been solicited through a variety of methods, including:

Project Steering Committee: Steering Committee members represent a range of interests, and bring a high level of expertise to the project. The Committee is providing oversight and guidance throughout the project, and will review specific project deliverables.

Passenger Survey: During the week of November 2 through 9, 2008, a passenger survey was conducted on each of the Stagecoach routes on a typical weekday, Saturday and Sunday (except the Route 62, which does not run on Sunday). Surveyors distributed passenger surveys as riders boarded the bus, instructing them to fill out only one survey during the survey period. Passengers were asked to complete the survey while on the bus and return it to the surveyor prior to alighting. A total of 190 surveys were submitted, which provide useful information about users of the Stagecoach.

Stakeholder Interviews: One-on-one stakeholder interviews were conducted with about 30 representatives of farms and agriculture, schools, senior housing and medical services, residents, recreation and tourism, affordable housing, local businesses, environmental protection and growth management.

Public Meetings: Three public meetings were held as follows: Tuesday, December 9 (afternoon) in Point Reyes Station, Tuesday, December 9 (evening) in Stinson Beach, and Saturday, December 13 in San Geronimo.

Focus Groups: Three specialized focus groups will be convened in January 2009 to learn more about the transportation needs and issues specific to the Hispanic or Spanish speaking community, residents of Bolinas, and agencies serving recreational sites.

Key Findings

Following are highlights from the analysis of survey data, stakeholder interviews and public meetings:

- West Marin residents who use the Stagecoach are generally very satisfied with it, and consider it a lifeline to employment, schools, and connections to other transit.
- The system is used regularly by youth to go to high school in both Fairfax and Mill Valley. Service to Tomales High School was also requested.
- Compared with the general population of Marin County, Stagecoach riders are younger, have slightly lower household incomes, and are of virtually the same racial percentages. Three quarters of the riders live in Marin, and of those, 66% live in West Marin.
- The majority of riders accessed the bus and their final destination by walking, with some transferring to and from other transit.
- If the Stagecoach service were not available, almost half the riders would have no transportation alternative, while others would bicycle, walk, or hitchhike.
- West Marin residents are highly supportive of public transportation services for those unable to drive, and would like to see more marketing of these services to visitors.
- The residential population in West Marin is growing older on average, and schools are shrinking; very little change in housing growth or development patterns is expected.
- Transportation needs for seniors are expected to grow. Many organizations are concerned about access to health care, and suggested direct transit service to area hospitals.
- Students are another user group of concern to many organizations. One parent made the point that a new state law prohibits teens from driving other teens, making carpooling more difficult. The bus is an important part of providing mobility to this age group.
- Employers expect that housing affordability will remain an issue and workers will continue to commute from East Marin and Sonoma County; farm workers are an exception, as they are typically housed on site.
- The needs most frequently expressed in public meetings are to extend the Stagecoach service later in the evening, to provide daily service between Bolinas and Point Reyes Station, to provide service to the mesa in Bolinas, and to increase capacity for carrying bicycles.
- Although the Stagecoach deviates up to $\frac{3}{4}$ mile off route, upon request, many people don't know about this feature, or have experienced difficulty when trying to arrange for it.

Financial Overview

Chapter 6 discusses the current financial overview, and sets the stage for projecting future revenues needed to support ongoing service. The two primary funding sources support the operations of the Stagecoach. These are Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 funds and local sales tax revenues, or Measure A. Measure A accounts for two-thirds of operating revenues and about 28% of the costs are covered by FTA Section 5311 funds. Passenger fare revenues account for only five percent of operating revenues.

These funding sources are relatively stable and can be counted on from year to year. The next step is to review and refine revenue projections and identify potential funding sources that could be available to enhance and expand service levels to meet the growing needs in West Marin County. Five-year operating cost projections based on service recommendations will be developed along with the capital needs.

Next Steps

As a next step, this Existing Conditions Report will be reviewed with the Project Steering Committee in January 2009. In addition, three focus group meetings are planned for January, in order to learn in more detail about the transportation needs for three specific customer groups: Hispanic/Spanish speaking riders, recreational users, and residents of Bolinas.

Consultant staff will also begin to develop a range of potential service alternatives to enhance and improve transportation services in West Marin. The goal of developing these alternatives is to build upon the strengths of the Stagecoach and to identify strategies that can best address needs and concerns expressed to date. Criteria will also be developed to evaluate and assess the feasibility of implementing these alternatives; a major challenge, given current economic conditions, is to be able to support service improvements over the long run.

Chapter 1. Introduction

The purpose of the West Marin Transit Needs Assessment project is to focus attention on the transportation needs of West Marin, and to suggest a range of strategies and solutions to address those needs. The first step in this process is to document and assess existing conditions in order to better understand what service exists today, who uses it, and how efficient and effective the current service is compared to its peers. This Existing Conditions Report provides a baseline of information about overall travel demand in West Marin, and sets the stage for future planning tasks. This report includes an evaluation of the West Marin Stagecoach and Muir Beach Dial-a-Ride service, key demographic and employment data and trends in the study area, current operating information, and financial data. It also reports on stakeholder consultation conducted thus far.

Methodology

The findings generated through this study are based, in part, on data available from a number of sources, including US Census data for 2000 and 2005, Marin Transit records, the California Department of Finance, and previous transportation studies. Where applicable, these references are cited.

Another key component of the project is that of conducting extensive public outreach and consulting with key stakeholders in order to hear directly about transportation issues specific to West Marin. These outreach efforts have consisted of:

- Convening a Project Steering Committee composed of representatives from key community concerns which will meet regularly throughout the project to provide oversight and feedback on project deliverables
- Conducting one-on-one interviews with numerous stakeholders, including individuals representing social service, recreational, worker, agricultural, and business interests as well as Marin Transit managers and drivers
- Sponsoring three public meetings in West Marin open to members of the public. A second set of three meetings will be held to review service alternatives.
- Holding three focus groups to look more closely at transportation needs of recreational users, the Latino Community, and residents of Bolinas. Focus groups will be held in January 2009.

Finally, data on ridership by stop, rider origins and destinations, and rider comments were collected from all Stagecoach routes on both weekdays and weekends. A survey of the Muir Beach Dial-a-Ride is scheduled for later this winter and is not included in this report.

Study Area

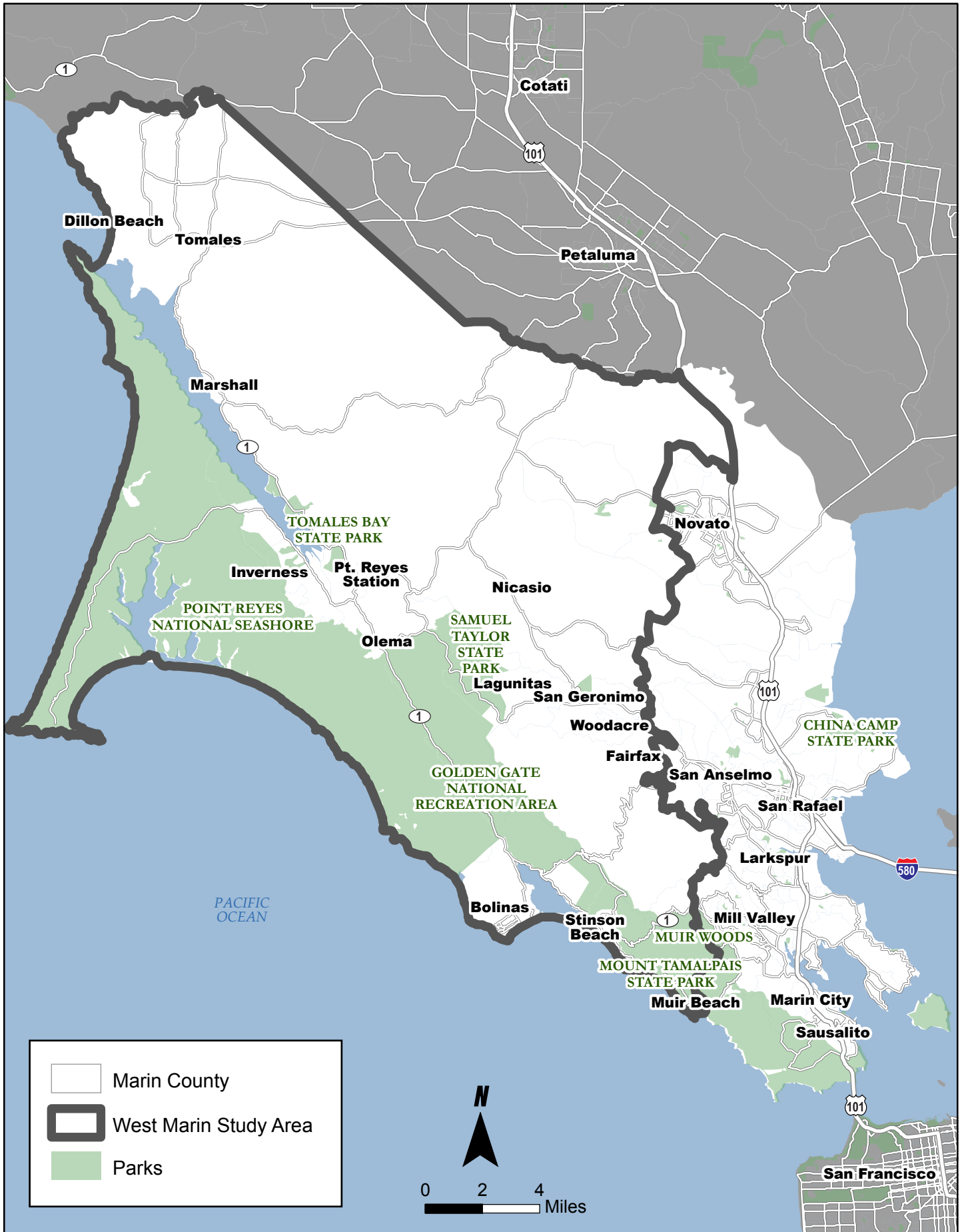
For the purpose of this study, West Marin has been defined as the communities west of San Rafael adjacent to Sir Francis Drake Boulevard — Inverness, Point Reyes Station, and towns in the San Geronimo Valley connecting to Fairfax, San Anselmo and San Rafael. In the southern portion of West Marin, communities adjacent to Route 1 are included — Muir Beach, Stinson Beach and Bolinas, connecting to Mt. Tamalpais State Park, Tam Junction, Mill Valley and Marin City. Coastal towns north of Point Reyes are also included.

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As of the US Census 2000, there were 16,289 residents within the 19 Census Block Groups that comprise the scope of the study area. Figure 1-1 shows the study area with the location of major towns and protected open space.

Protected areas within Marin include the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (Muir Woods and Stinson Beach), Muir Woods National Monument, Point Reyes National Seashore, Samuel P. Taylor State Park, Mount Tamalpais State Park, and Tomales Bay State Park, as well as some private non-profit parks such as the Audubon Canyon Ranch and Green Gulch Farm.

Figure 1-1 Map of Study Area



Report Organization

This Existing Conditions Report details the current status of Marin Transit services in West Marin County. The chapters following this introduction include:

Chapter 2 Demographic Analysis

Chapter 2 summarizes West Marin's land use and demographic characteristics. The chapter presents maps that highlight where key ridership groups are located and where land uses are most appropriate for transit (based on employment and residential densities).

Chapter 3 Existing Fixed-Route Transit Services

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the West Marin Stagecoach, the only fixed-route transit in West Marin, with information on system performance, system wide ridership and productivity trends. The chapter also presents a route-by- route analysis.

Chapter 4 Fixed-Route Passenger Survey Results

Chapter 4 presents the results of the on-board passenger survey conducted on the Stagecoach service by Marin Transit over weekdays and a weekend in November 2008. Results include passenger opinions on service quality, origin and destination data, and demographic information.

Chapter 5 Stakeholder Interviews

Chapter 5 summarizes stakeholder interviews conducted with individuals in Marin representing key ridership groups, employers, and the business community..

Chapter 6 Financial Overview

Chapter 6 presents a financial picture of Marin Transit service in West Marin: the West Marin Stagecoach and the Muir Beach Dial-a-Ride service. It includes a description of funding types (FTA rural operating funds, sales tax), and both past and possible future operating and capital revenues and expenditures.

Chapter 2. Demographic Profile of West Marin

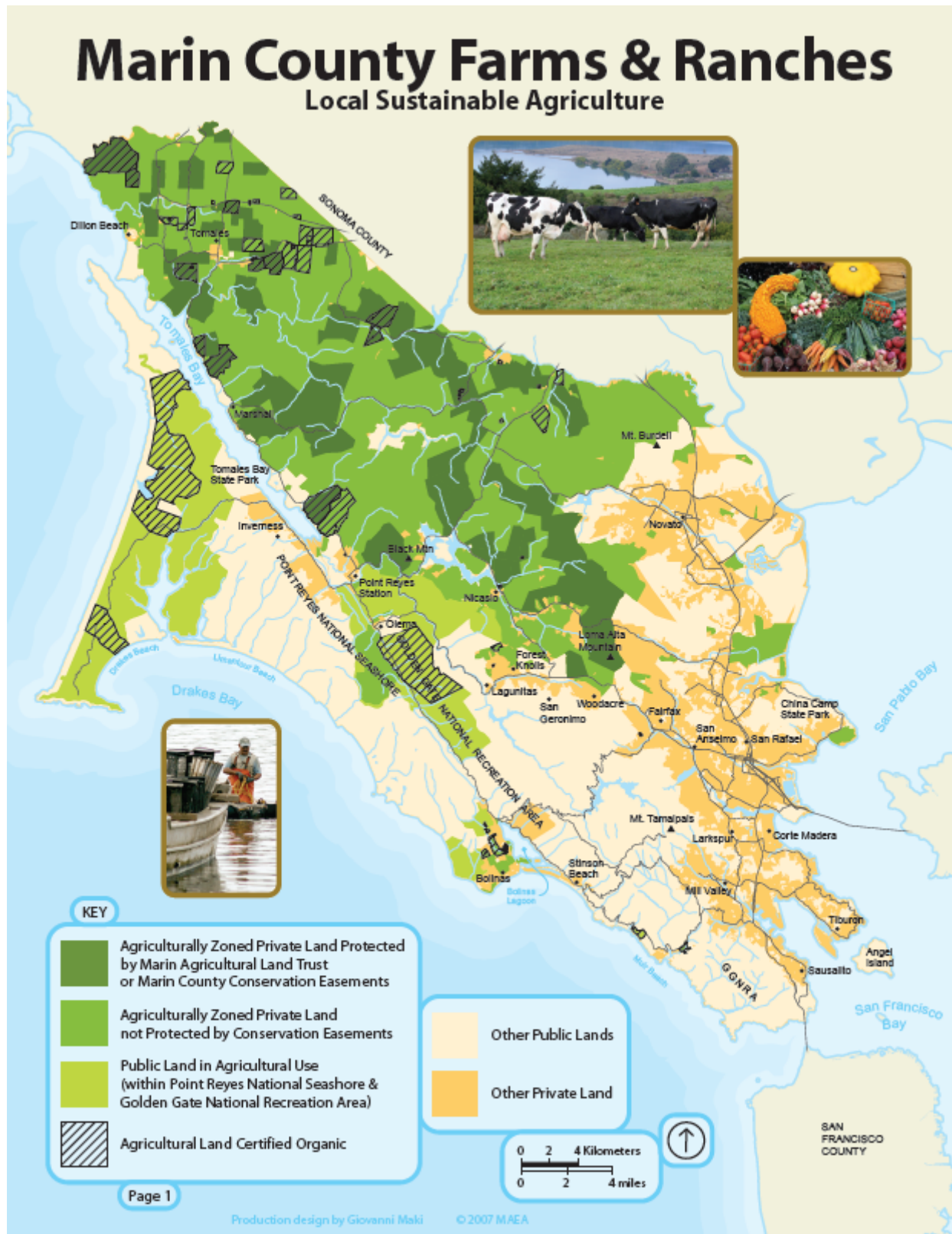
This section provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of West Marin, as defined in the previous chapter, and includes information about current travel habits as well as projections for future transit needs.

Land Use

West Marin is characterized by small communities surrounded by open space and agriculture. As a result, population densities range from 8.2 persons per square mile to 2887 person per square mile in the 19 block groups, with an average of 478 people per square mile in West Marin. There are over 150,000 acres, or 230 square miles, dedicated to agriculture in Marin County, all of it in West Marin. In addition, 71,000 acres, or 110 square miles, are designates as the Point Reyes National Seashore.

Figure 2-1 below shows the agricultural areas in West Marin County.

Figure 2-1 Agricultural Lands of Marin County



Source: Marin Agricultural Land Trust

Population

As of the 2000 US Census, Marin County was home to 247,289 residents. West Marin (as defined above) comprises almost half of the land area of Marin (392 sq. mi. of a total of 828 sq. mi), but has a very low proportion of the population with 16,289 residents, or approximately 6.5% of the total in the county. This is a result of the significant portions of West Marin dedicated to open space, national and state parks, and agriculture. The California Department of Finance projects that as of 2008, Marin's population will have increased to 257,406 residents throughout the County, representing approximately 5% growth in 8 years. However, the same growth is not expected in the western part of the County.

Figure 2-2 Population of Marin County

	Population, 2000	Projected Growth, 2008
California	33,871,648	
Marin County	247,289	257,406 (5% increase)
West Marin	16,289	

Sources: US Census 2000 and California Department of Finance Projections

Density

West Marin is mostly rural and sparsely populated, with a few areas of modest density; the overall population density of West Marin averages 480 people per square mile. However, population density varies widely among census blocks. Large portions of West Marin have no population at all, being designated as National Seashore or part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Transit service is most successful in areas with higher population density. A map of population density can be found at the end of this chapter.

Transportation Disadvantaged Populations: Seniors, People with Disabilities, and Low Income Households

A key focus of any transit plan is to improve transportation options for those who are transit-dependent - seniors, people with disabilities, and people with lower incomes. People in these groups tend to have less access to an automobile as their primary mode of transportation. Transportation needs for individuals who are transit dependent can be especially acute in rural areas with limited local services and low population densities that are not easily served by public transit.

No-Car Households

In 1999, 5.1% of households in Marin¹ reported that they did not own a vehicle. In West Marin, 140 residents, or approximately 1% of the West Marin population, reported not owning a car. It is likely that this number is lower than the county average as a result of the much lower density of the development pattern in communities of West Marin. Non-car owners are equally likely to be homeowners or renters.

¹ US Census 2000, QT-H11: Vehicles and Household Income in 1999

Age

Marin County is a “graying county,” with the median age of the County at 41.3 and rising. As of 2006, 15% of Marin’s population was over the age of 65, with only 20% under the age of 18.² The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimates that over 35% of Marin’s population will be over the age of 65 by the year 2020. West Marin last counted 1,629 persons over the age of 65, or 10.3% of the population. Over 10% of households in West Marin are headed by people over age 65, roughly equal to California as a whole, but almost 5% less than Marin overall.

Disabilities

In Marin County, 14% of residents report having a disability. Households in West Marin report a lower percentage of people with disabilities (12.6%) than in either Marin or California overall.

Income

In 2000, the median household income in Marin County was \$71,306, significantly higher than the median household income of \$53,629 for California households. West Marin has an average household income of \$65,965, with the lowest income block group at \$45,667 annually and the highest income block group at an average of \$125,000 annually. In West Marin, 8.5% of households in 2000 had incomes below the poverty line, slightly more than Marin County overall, but a smaller proportion than in California. Figure 2-3 below shows the relative percentages of these three populations for California, Marin, and West Marin.

Figure 2-3 Transit-dependent Households

	Households, 65+	People with Disabilities	Households below Poverty Line
California	10.8%	16.3%	13.2%
Marin County	14.9%	14.0%	7.0%
West Marin	10.4%	12.6%	8.5%

Sources: California and Marin – Census 2006 estimates; West Marin – Census 2000

A map showing the location and density of transit-dependent populations in West Marin can be found at the end of this chapter.

Employment and Employment Density

Employment in West Marin follows the land use pattern, with service jobs in the large towns such as Point Reyes and Stinson Beach, and other employment based on ranches, farms and fisheries. The Census Transportation Planning Package reports 8850 employees working in West Marin, with approximately 2,700 employed in agricultural operations³. National and State Parks employ workers in West Marin, accounting for between 150 and 200 employees, most commuting from outside of the West Marin area. The following table shows the approximate number of employees at each park in the study area.

² Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Agricultural Statistics Service, National Center for Health Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau.

³ CA Department of Finance, 2002 Marin County Data

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Point Reyes National Seashore	115 in the winter, 165 in the travel season
Muir Woods National Monument	30 - 35
Stinson Beach (GGNRA)	5-10 employees during peak season
Mount Tamalpais State Park	11 employees (permanent and seasonal) with extra maintenance workers in the summer
Samuel P. Taylor State Park	20 employees, permanent and seasonal

Following are three maps showing demographic characteristics of West Marin, based on Census 2000 block groups for this study area. Figure 2-4 shows the population density of West Marin, or where people live; Figure 2-5 shows the density of employment in the area, or where people work; and Figure 2-6 presents concentrations of populations with higher dependency on public transportation—older adults (65 year or older), individuals with disabilities, and those with limited incomes (150% of poverty level).

Figure 2-4 Population Density of West Marin

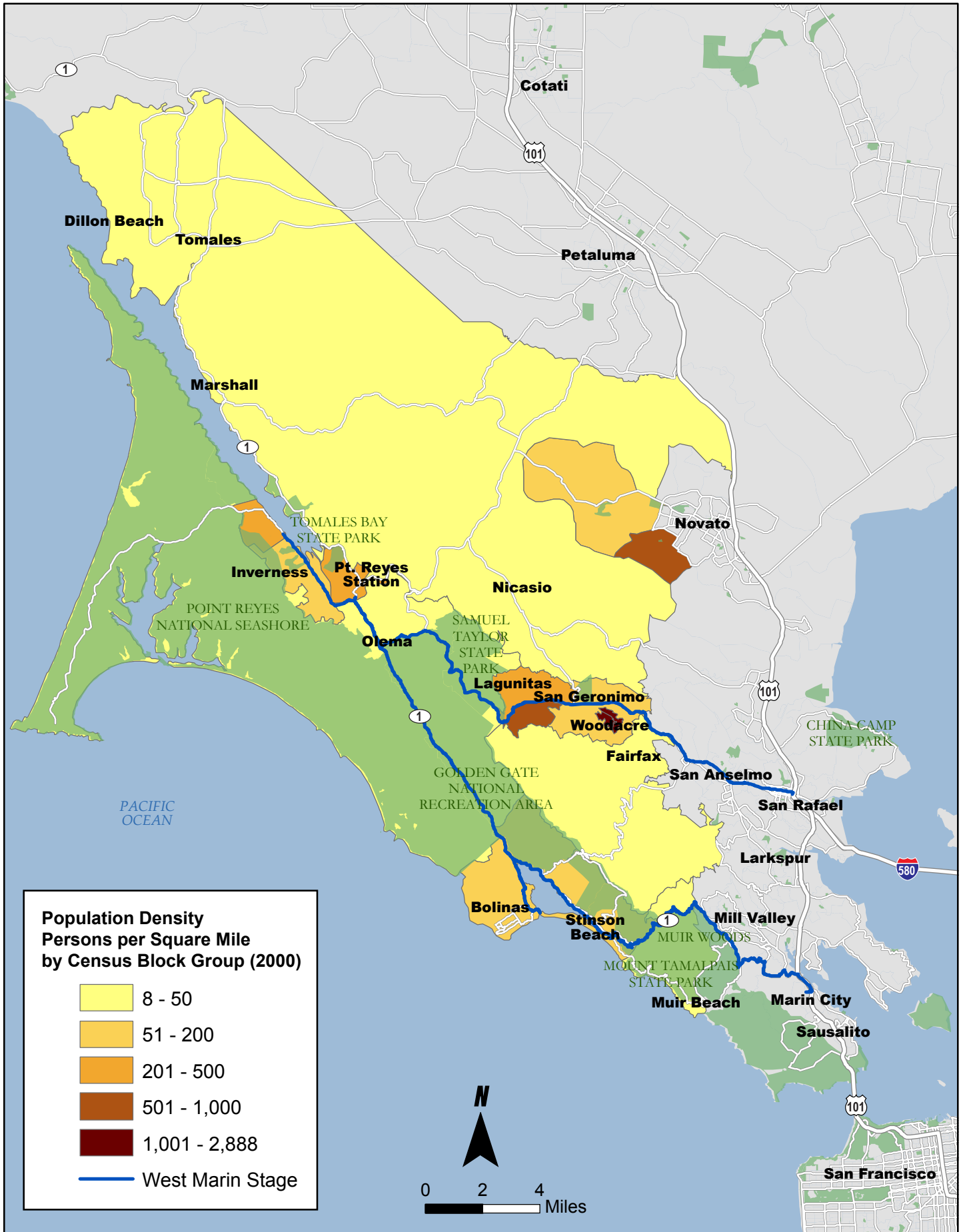


Figure 2-5 Employment Density

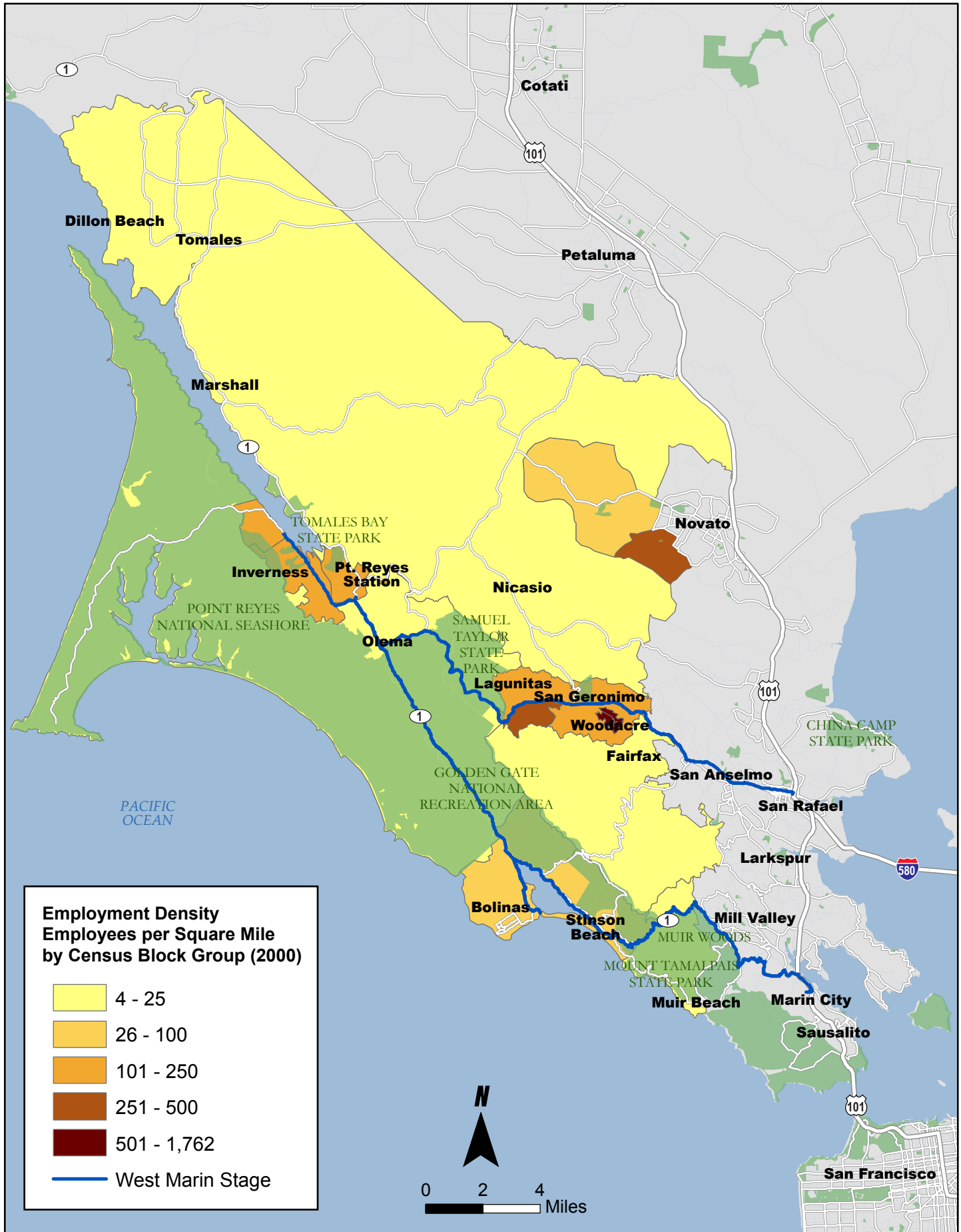
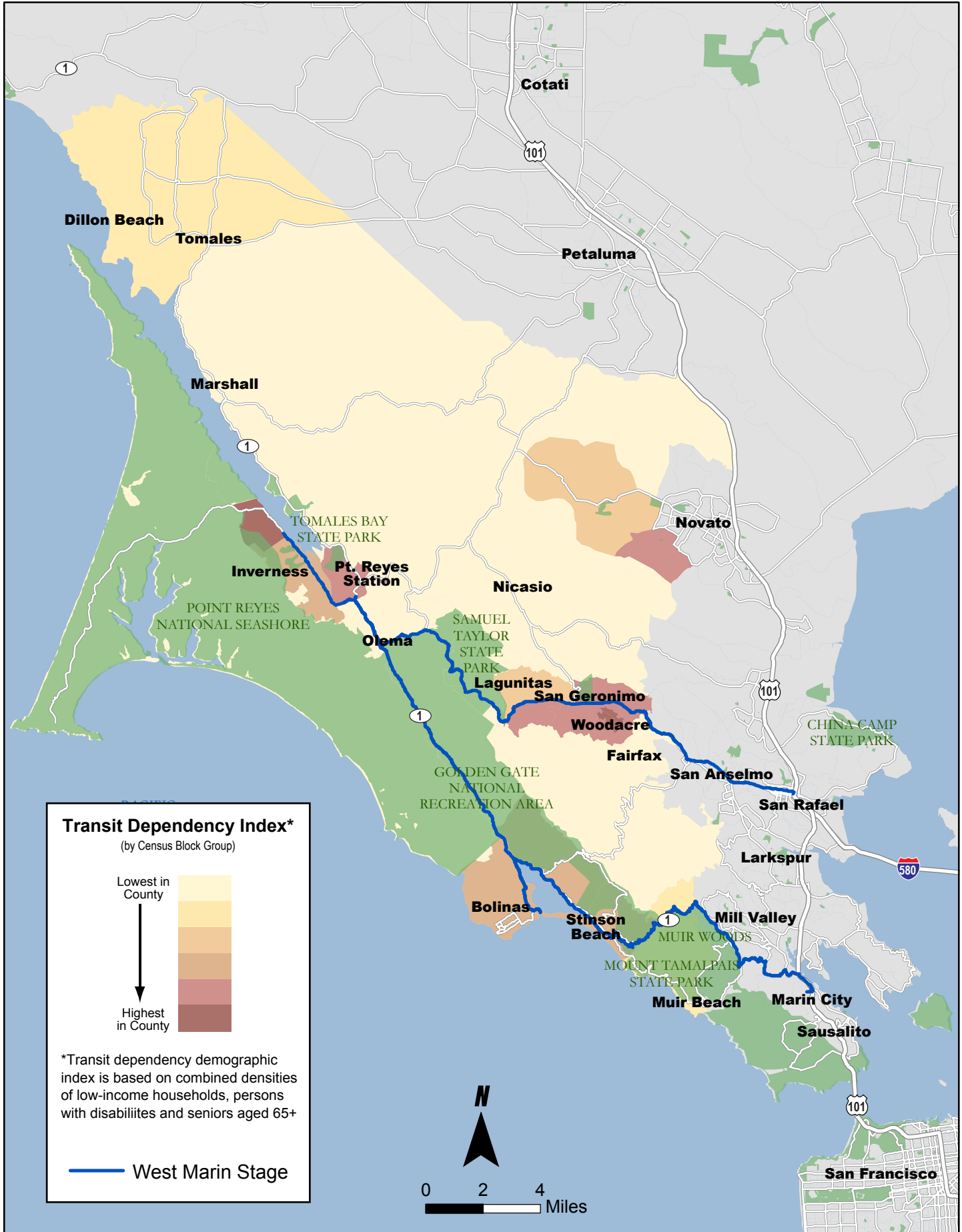


Figure 2-6 Transit Dependency



Transit Demand and Forecast Change

Forecasting future demand for all modes on the transportation network is accomplished through the use of a travel demand model. Travel demand modeling uses a mathematical process to replicate observed travel patterns under existing demographic and land use conditions and then assigns future traffic to the street network based on projected conditions. The demographic data establishes relationships between population centers and employment, shopping, recreation, school, and other trip generators. The model can be used to identify streets that may have future congestion problems and can be used to test alternatives for reducing congestion, including land use changes or provision of improved transit mode service.

Marin County's EMME2 travel demand model was calibrated to Year 2005 traffic volume conditions and predicts Year 2030 traffic conditions using demographic information provided by the Association of Bay Area Governments as well as actual street network conditions within Marin County. Land uses and land use intensity are key factors in travel demand estimation. This information is provided to the County by the Cities and towns based on their general plans and other locally generated land use information, and incorporated into the travel model. The County model predicts person-trip origins and destinations between each of the County's 116 traffic analysis zones (TAZs), as well as between these TAZs and other counties in the Bay Area.

The County's model was developed to predict operating conditions on roadways within Marin. While the model does assign person-trips to various modes, including transit, it was not designed as a tool for estimating transit ridership on a more micro level or to predict ridership on a single route. However, the model's person-trip origin and destination data is extremely valuable as a tool to predict the potential attractiveness of local transit service. Overall travel demand is an excellent predictor of transit ridership because a transit route can only be successful if it serves a market where travel demand is already high. Thinking of potential transit ridership as a percentage of total trip making between a given origin and destination, it is logical that higher ridership will be generated in areas with high overall travel demand.

Trip Purposes

Marin County's travel demand model predicts five trip purposes:

- Home-based work trips, i.e., commuter trips, consist of any trip that has home at one end of the trip and work at the other end.
- Home-based shopping/other trips consist of any trip that has home at one end of the trip and a shopping or other location at the other end.
- Home-based social/recreation trips consist of any trip that has home at one end of the trip and a shopping or recreation location at the other end.
- Home-based school trips consist of any trip that has home at one end of the trip and a school location at the other end.
- Non home-based trips consist of any trip that does not start or end at home. For example, a trip from work to run an errand would be a non home-based trip.

Analysis in this section focuses on trip data and projections related to West Marin only, which includes TAZ 150, 151 and 152. The ABAG data for 2005 indicates that West Marin has 4005 households, a population of 9898, 4026 jobs (1072 retail employees, 2390 Service employees and 564 other employees) and 6182 employee residents (workers).

Trip purpose is important to predicting transit ridership because some types of trips are more likely to be made on transit than others. Recurring trips made at regular times, like home based work or school trips are more likely to be captured on transit than occasional trips that are more difficult to schedule, or trips made to deliver goods and services.

Figure 2-7 shows daily Year 2005 and estimated Year 2030 trip purposes for trips originating and ending in West Marin. In 2005, over 12,000 person-trips were made each weekday from a West Marin-based traffic analysis zone (TAZ) to another zone within West Marin. While the model shows only 1% of these being home-based work trips, this figure may not reflect the agricultural workers who live on the farms and ranches where they work. Approximately 35% of the trips were home-based shopping/other trips, 16% were home-based recreation/other trips, and 37% were non home-based work trips (for example, deliveries). Finally, 11% of weekday trips were between home and school, with the morning end of these trips occurring during the commute peak period.

Figure 2-7 Person-Trips by Purpose 2005 and 2030 Within West Marin

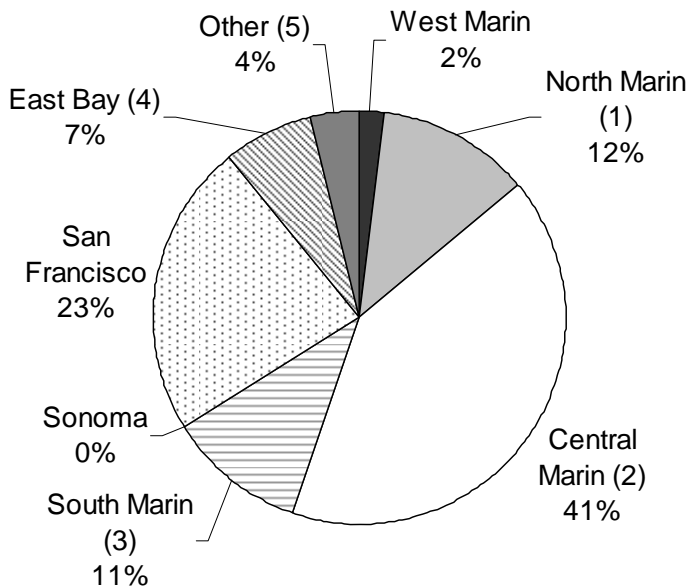
Trip Type	Year 2005		Year 2030		Change
	Person-Trips	Percent	Person-Trips	Percent	
Home-Based Work	120	1.0%	185	1.0%	54.2%
Home-Based Shopping/Other	4,298	34.9%	6,593	35.2%	53.4%
Home-Based Social/Recreational	1,933	15.7%	3,064	16.4%	58.5%
Home-Based School	1,404	11.4%	1,751	9.4%	24.7%
Non Home-Based	4,551	37.0%	7,120	38.0%	56.4%
Total	12,306	100.0%	18,713	100.0%	52.1%

By 2030, it is expected that the number of person-trips within West Marin will increase to almost 19,000 trips per weekday, or a 52% increase over Year 2005 conditions. As shown above, the proportion of trip purposes are expected to remain consistent with Year 2005 conditions, with a slightly smaller proportion in school trips.

Home-Based Work Trips To/From West Marin

ABAG data for 2005 shows 6,411 trips originating in West Marin bound for work. These data show only 2% of these workers remaining in West Marin, with over 40% working in central Marin, 23% working in San Francisco and 11% working in southern Marin. Figure 2-8 below shows where West Marin residents worked in 2005.

Figure 2-8 Home-Based Work Trips from West Marin, 2005



(1) Novato (2) San Rafael, Larkspur, Corte Madera, Kentfield/Greenbrae, Ross, San Anselmo, Fairfax (3) Tiburon/Strawberry, Mill Valley, Marin City, Sausalito (4) Alameda County, Contra Costa County (5) S. Bay (San Mateo, Santa Clara), Napa/Solano

Projections for 2030 show a 60% increase in the number of home-based work trips originating in West Marin, to 10,236. A greater percentage of workers are projected to work in Novato (5%) and Sonoma (2.6%) than work there now, balanced by a decrease in the percentage of workers travelling to central Marin (-4%). Figure 2-9 below shows where West Marin residents travel to go to work, for 2005 and projected for 2030.

Figure 2-9 Destinations of Home-Based Work Trips from West Marin, 2005 and 2030

Destination	2005		2030		Difference, No. of trips	Difference, percentage
	Trips	Percent	Trips	Percent		
West Marin	120	1.9%	185	1.8%	54.2%	-0.1%
North Marin (1)	774	12.1%	1,750	17.1%	126.1%	5.0%
Central Marin (2)	2,656	41.4%	3,823	37.3%	43.9%	-4.1%
South Marin (3)	685	10.7%	897	8.8%	30.9%	-1.9%
Sonoma	0	0.0%	271	2.6%	(n/a)	2.6%
San Francisco	1,475	23.0%	2,434	23.8%	65.0%	0.8%
East Bay (4)	452	7.1%	591	5.8%	30.8%	-1.3%
Other (5)	249	3.9%	285	2.8%	14.5%	-1.1%
TOTAL	6,411	100.0%	10,236	100.0%	59.7%	

(1) Novato (2) San Rafael, Larkspur, Corte Madera, Kentfield/Greenbrae, Ross, San Anselmo, Fairfax (3) Tiburon/Strawberry, Mill Valley, Marin City, Sausalito (4) Alameda County, Contra Costa County (5) S. Bay (San Mateo, Santa Clara), Napa/Solano

As of 2005, there were an estimated 6,400 commuters coming to West Marin to work. While over half come from other parts of Marin County, 15% come from Sonoma County, and another 15% come from Napa and Solano Counties. Projections for 2030 show a 20% increase in workers commuting into West Marin. The balance will remain almost the same, with slight gains in the proportion of residents of other parts of Marin working in West Marin, and fewer coming from Napa and Solano counties. Figure 2-10 below shows the origin of people travelling to West Marin to work, for 2005 and projected for 2030.

Figure 2-10 Origin of Home-Based Work Trips to West Marin

Origin	2005		2030		Difference, No. of trips	Difference, percentage
	Trips	Percent	Trips	Percent		
West Marin	120	1.9%	185	2.5%	54.2%	0.5%
North Marin (1)	672	10.7%	918	12.2%	36.6%	1.5%
Central Marin (2)	1,777	28.3%	2,288	30.3%	28.8%	2.0%
South Marin (3)	933	14.9%	1,126	14.9%	20.7%	0.1%
Sonoma	912	14.5%	1,156	15.3%	26.8%	0.8%
San Francisco	319	5.1%	331	4.4%	3.8%	-0.7%
East Bay (4)	538	8.6%	570	7.6%	5.9%	-1.0%
Napa/Solano	912	14.5%	906	12.0%	-0.7%	-2.5%
South Bay	87	1.4%	60	0.8%	-31.0%	-0.6%
TOTAL	6,270	100.0%	7,540	100.0%	20.3%	

(1) Novato (2) San Rafael, Larkspur, Corte Madera, Kentfield/Greenbrae, Ross, San Anselmo, Fairfax (3) Tiburon/Strawberry, Mill Valley, Marin City, Sausalito (4) Alameda County, Contra Costa County

Summary of Demographics

West Marin is a very low-density rural area characterized by small towns with local-serving retail, businesses that cater to recreational tourists, and agriculturally oriented businesses such as feed and farm supply stores, organic food outlets, and milk processors. This part of Marin has fewer seniors and people with disabilities than other parts of the county, and residents overall have lower average incomes than Marin as a whole. The population is not expected to increase; housing opportunities are very limited, even within more developed areas, as land is extremely expensive and is sought after for vacation homes. Increases in ridership on the West Marin Stagecoach in the next five to ten years would most likely come through increasing the proportion of the population taking transit rather than through population growth.

West Marin has important connections to the eastern part of Marin and to southern Sonoma County for jobs, shopping, schools, entertainment, and access to regional transit. The West Marin Stagecoach will continue to play an important role in making these connections. Based on work-trip projections, increased service to Central Marin and Novato might be considered.

Chapter 3. Existing Transit Services

West Marin Stagecoach

The West Marin Stagecoach began operation in 2002 as a two-year demonstration program created by Marin County to provide residents of West Marin improved access to medical, educational, civic, shopping and workplace sites throughout the County. In addition to providing connectivity between West Marin and the urbanized parts of Marin County, the service connects small farms and ranches and the dispersed coastal towns with a reliable public transit option.

The Stagecoach's three original fixed routes were designed to serve the dispersed and difficult to access portions of West Marin: South Route 61, Coastal Route 62 and North Route 68. The success of these initial services have led to the need for larger vehicles and for service changes, allowing the Stagecoach to continue to effectively connect key West Marin communities and provide an auto alternative for weekend visitors to West Marin recreational destinations. Efforts are made to coordinate with Golden Gate Transit, Marin Transit, other West Marin Stagecoach routes and school schedules in order to allow for trip-chaining and to accommodate the particular needs of targeted riders.

The Stagecoach is administered by Marin Transit, and operates under contract with MV Transportation. The primary sources of funds that support the service are Marin County Measure A sales tax funds, and federal Section 5311 funds available through the Federal Transit Administration. Additional information about funding sources can be found in Chapter 6, Financial Analysis.

Current (2008) Fixed Route Service

The West Marin Stagecoach operates three routes. The **North Route 68** begins in Inverness and continues through Point Reyes, Lagunitas, and Fairfax until reaching San Rafael. This service runs four times a day every day from each end point, with an additional mid-day trip on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

The **South Route 61** travels from downtown Bolinas through Stinson Beach with a short detour to Tamalpais High School in Mill Valley en route to Marin City, with four round trips per day on weekdays. On the weekends from early March through early December, the bus originating in Bolinas completes three round trips, while an additional bus starts in Marin City and completes four round trips. This service has been added in order to better serve weekend tourists and others. In this report, the weekend-only Route 61 originating in Marin City is referred to as Route 61A.

The **Coastal Route 62** runs 3 times a day on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays between Point Reyes Station to Bolinas via Stinson Beach.

In the six years since Stagecoach operations began, schedules and routes have been revised in order to improve efficiency, system understanding and ridership. From 2006 to 2007, Route 61 connected Marin City to Stinson Beach on two different routes, alternating between Shoreline Highway and Panoramic Highway. Major construction along the Shoreline Highway began in November 2006 and Route 61 was unofficially changed to the Panoramic Highway. This routing proved confusing for many potential riders, and in April 2007 the bus was permanently routed along Panoramic Highway. In addition, a route extension to Point Reyes was permanently added in 2007 to the Route 62, running on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Figure 3-1 below shows

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the West Marin Stagecoach routes for 2008, and Figure 3-2 shows the current Stagecoach schedule.

Figure 3-1 Current Service Map - 2008



Figure 3-2 West Marin Stagecoach– Schedule

Route	Route Description	Service Hours			Number of Trips (per day)		
		Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun
68	North Rt - Eastbound	6:30 AM -6:11 PM	6:30 AM - 6:11 PM	6:30 AM - 6:11 PM	8*	8*	8
68	North Rt - Westbound	8:05 AM -7:53 PM	8:05 AM - 7:53 PM	8:05 AM - 7:53 PM	8*	8*	8
61	South Rt - Eastbound	6:55 AM -6:40 PM	-	-	8	-	-
61	South Rt - Westbound	8:20 AM -8:00 PM	-	-	8	-	-
61A	South Rt - Eastbound	-	10:00 AM - 7:44 PM	10:00AM - 7:44 PM	-	8**	8**
61A	South Rt - Westbound	-	8:40 AM - 7:59 PM	8:40 AM - 7:59 PM	-	8**	8**
62	Coastal Rt - South	9:15 AM -5:01 PM	9:15 AM - 5:01 PM	-	6	6	-
62	Coastal Rt - North	8:15 AM -4:01 PM	8:15 AM - 4:01 PM	-	6	6	-

* Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, the Rt 62 extends to San Rafael to add one mid day run to this route.

** Three additional round trips are provided from March to December for a total of 11.

Deviated Route Service

The West Marin Stagecoach provides its own paratransit service for ADA eligible riders. The Stagecoach will deviate up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the regular fixed route during regular service hours to pick up or drop off riders. Requests must be made by phone to Marin Transit at least 24 hours in advance. The Stagecoach Route 61 (South route) does not deviate on weekends.

Muir Beach Dial-A-Ride

Dial-a-Ride service to Muir Beach was established in March, 2008. The service is operated through a contract with Whistlestop Wheels, providing curb-to-curb Dial-A-Ride service between the Muir Beach area and Tam Junction, Tam High School, Manzanita Park & Ride or Marin City during specific days and times. Rides must be booked a minimum of one day to a maximum of seven days in advance by phone.

The service operates Wednesday-Sunday. Weekday service is from 6:00 AM to 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Weekend service operates between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

Fares and Transfers

Fares

West Marin Stagecoach offers a variety of fare options for passengers including one-way cash fares, discount ticket books, youth passes, and transfers. The one-way adult cash fare is \$2.00 on local West Marin Stagecoach routes and \$1.00 for seniors, youth under 18 and disabled riders. Children under 6 with an adult ride for free. Marin Transit Youth Passes and Marin Local Tickets are available. Currently all fares must be paid in cash.

Figure 3-3 Cash Fares – West Marin Stagecoach

	Fare
Adults (age 19-64)	\$2.00
Youth (age 6-18)	\$1.00
Seniors (age 65+)	\$1.00
Disabled	\$1.00
Medicare Cardholder	\$1.00
Children 6 and under (accompanied by an adult)	Free

Transfers

Marin County local riders can get free transfers between the West Marin Stage, Marin Transit Community Shuttles (221, 233 & 259) and the Golden Gate Transit routes within Marin County. Transfers are issued only at time of boarding and are not valid for travel on Golden Gate buses outside of Marin County. Transfers from Transbay buses and ferries are accepted on shuttles and the West Marin Stagecoach.

Fleet and Facilities

As shown in Figure 3-4, West Marin's fixed-route fleet includes 7 vehicles; five of them are in regular service, and two are in reserve. All vehicles are maintained in Santa Rosa at the MV facility. Three new vehicles were added to the fleet in 2008. The last is an older vehicle, purchased in 2002, with less seating capacity. All buses can accommodate two wheelchairs, and are equipped with front-mounted bicycle racks that hold two to three bicycles.

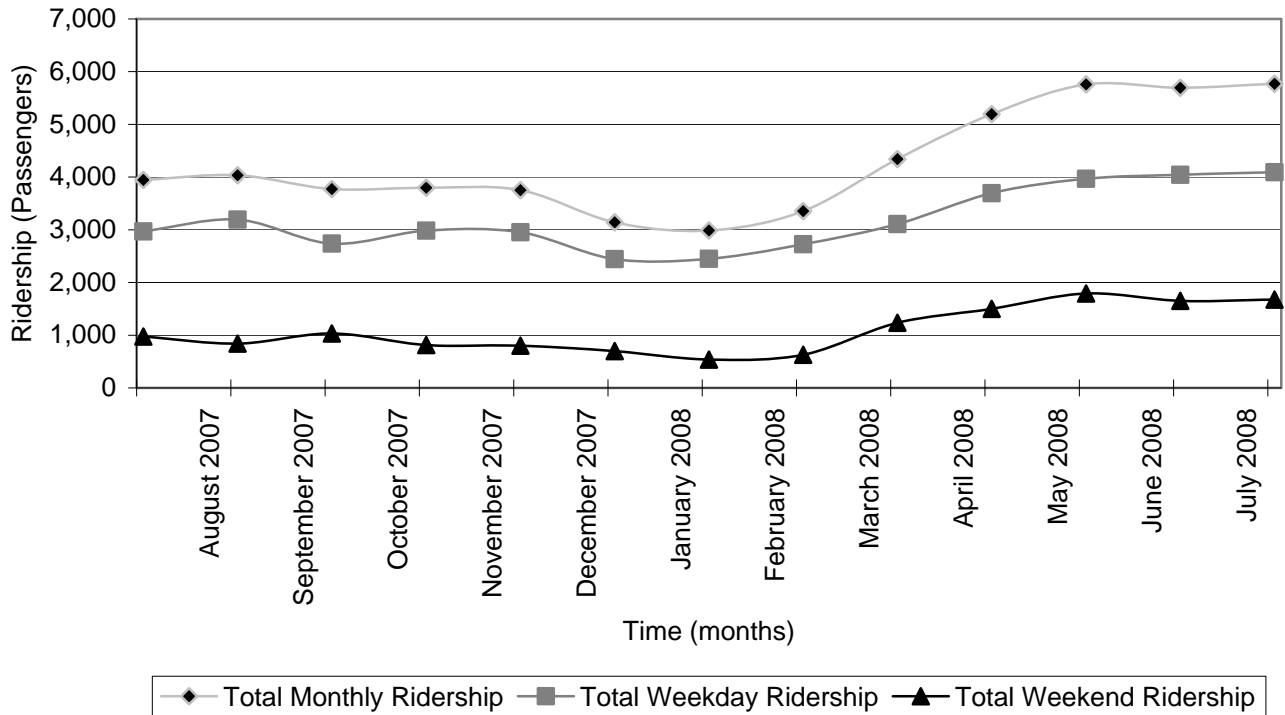
Figure 3-4 Fixed Route Fleet Information

Vehicle #	Year	Make	Owned by	Seat Capacity
166	2002	Chevy	Marin	7
614	2000	Ford	MV	20
615	2008	Ford	MV	18
616	2008	Chevy	Marin	26
617	2008	Chevy	Marin	26
1133	2007	GMC	MV	28
1134	2008	GMC	Marin	28

Total System Ridership

West Marin Stagecoach ridership has grown significantly in the past year, with a significant increase throughout the spring and summer (see Figure 3-5). Weekend usage has grown steadily since March when additional service was added to the schedule. Total monthly ridership was highest in June 2008 with 5,758 riders, and lowest in February 2008 with 2,900 riders.

Figure 3-5 Total Monthly Ridership



System Performance

Six key performance indicators were identified and evaluated for Stagecoach fixed route service. Year-to-year comparison data for the past two fiscal years are presented below for the following performance indicators:

- Passengers per revenue hour
- Operating cost per revenue hour
- Operating cost per passenger
- Subsidy per passenger.
- Average fare per passenger
- Farebox recovery ratio

Figure 3-6 Fixed Route Operating Statistics

	FY 2006/07 Actual	FY 2007/08 Actual
Fixed Route Service		
Passengers	30,442	49,707
<i>% Change</i>		63.3%
Operating Cost	\$380,966	\$561,079
<i>% Change</i>		47.3%
Farebox Revenue	\$36,641	\$59,447
<i>% Change</i>		62.2%
Revenue Hours	7,776	9,621
<i>% Change</i>		23.7%
Revenue Miles	139,751	173,779
<i>% Change</i>		24.3%
Passengers/Revenue Hour	3.9	5.2
<i>% Change</i>		32.0%
Operating Cost/Revenue Hour	\$48.99	\$58.32
<i>% Change</i>		19.0%
Operating Cost/Passenger	\$12.51	\$11.29
<i>% Change</i>		-9.8%
Subsidy/Passenger	\$11.31	\$10.09
<i>% Change</i>		-10.8%
Average Fare/Passenger	\$1.20	\$1.20
<i>% Change</i>		-0.6%
Farebox Recovery Ratio	9.6%	10.6%
<i>% Change</i>		10.2%

Fixed-Route Annual Ridership and Passengers per Revenue Hour

Fixed-route ridership grew dramatically in FY 2007/08. While some of this growth can be attributed to the addition of the Coastal Route, the increase was far greater than would be expected solely due to the service increase. Between FY 2006/07 and FY 2007/08 there was a 63% growth in fixed-route ridership, while there was only a 24% increase in fixed-route service miles and a 24% increase in fixed-route service hours.

All three routes experienced over a 50% growth rate in annual passenger trips. Of all of West Marin's fixed routes, North Route 68 had the highest ridership. In FY 2007/08 it served nearly 25,000 passenger trips. Coastal Route 62 is a newer service and served only about 2,400 passenger trips in FY 2007/08 (Figure 3-7).

Because fixed-route ridership growth outpaced increases in service hours, productivity, as measured in the number of passengers per revenue hour increased between FY 2006/07 and FY 2007/08. Overall, there was a 32% increase in passengers per service hour comparing FY 2008

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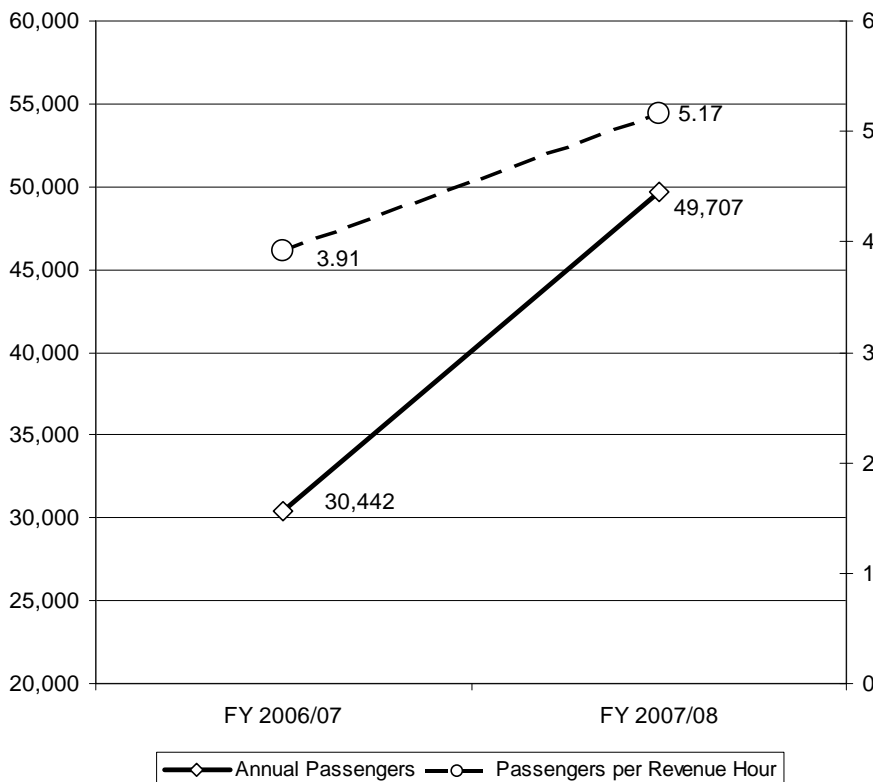
with the prior fiscal year. Routes 68 and 61 increased the number of passengers per revenue hour by over 40%. Route 68 was the most productive route as measured by passengers per revenue service hour, carrying over six passengers per hour. Despite these improvements in ridership and productivity, the Coastal Route remains a poor performer, carrying less than 2 passengers per revenue service hour.

Figure 3-7 Annual Ridership & Passengers per Revenue Hour

Route	Annual Passenger Trips		Passengers per Revenue Hour	
	FY 2006-2007	FY 2007-2008	FY 2006-2007	FY 2007-2008
68 - North Route	16,139	24,681	4.31	6.13
% Change		52.9%		42.2%
61 - South Route	13,761	22,604	3.72	5.25
% Change		64.3%		41.3%
62 - Coastal Route	542*	2,422	1.63	1.87
% Change		NA		14.6%

Source: West Marin Stagecoach Operating Data FY 2007-08
 * 62- Coastal Route began in April 2007.

Figure 3-8 Fixed-Route Annual Ridership and Productivity

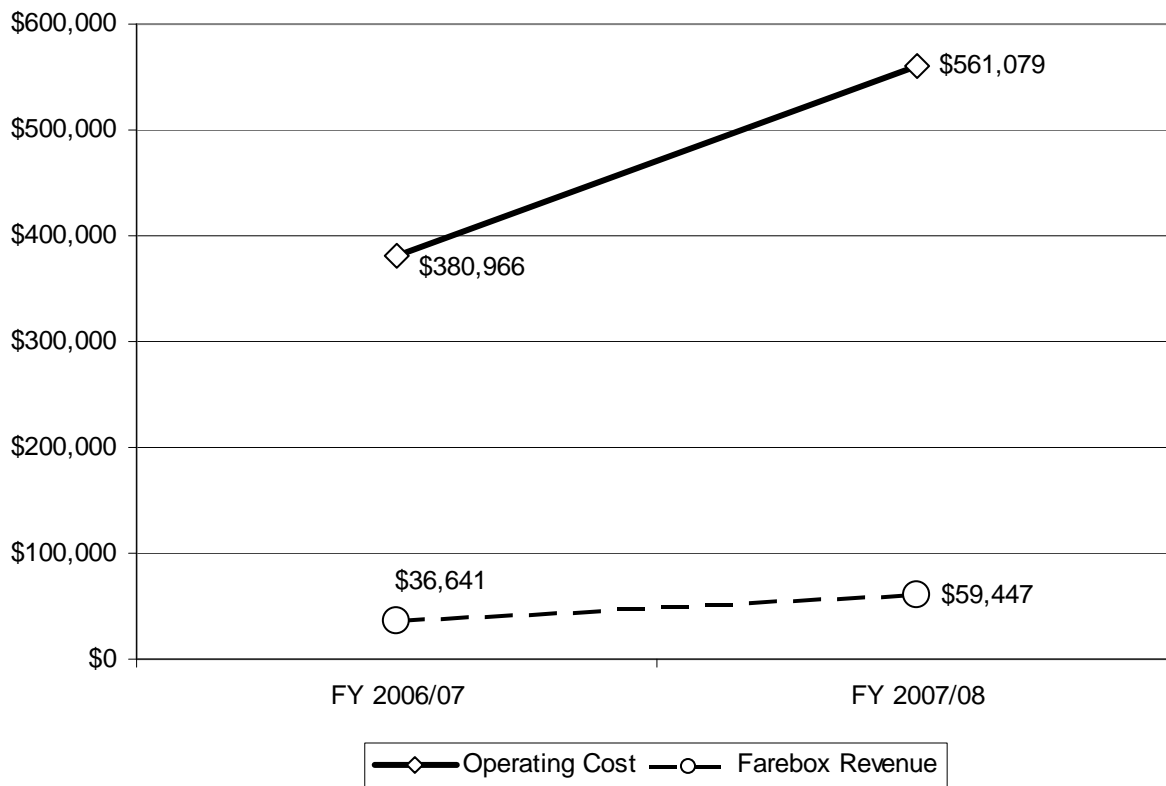


Fixed-Route Operating Costs and Fare Revenues

Fixed-route operating costs increased by approximately 47% between FY 2006/07 and FY 2007/08. In FY 2006/07, approximately \$380,000 was spent to operate the fixed-route service and in FY 2007/08 about \$561,000 was spent. Costs increased at a faster rate than both service miles and service hours in FY 2007/08. However, average gasoline prices rose 21% from FY 2007 to FY 20084 . With a 24% increase in service miles, the increase in the cost of gas would be a large contributor to the increase in operating costs.

As would be expected with increasing ridership, fixed-route revenue grew substantially (62%) between FY 2006/07 and FY 2007/08. The fixed-route farebox recovery ratio also increased, from 9.6% to 10.6%.

Figure 3-9 Fixed-Route Operating Costs and Fare Revenue



Fixed-Route Operating Cost per Revenue Hour

Fixed-route operating costs grew at a faster pace than fixed-route revenue hours between FY 2006/07 and FY 2007/08. As a result, operating cost per revenue hour increased by 19% during this period.

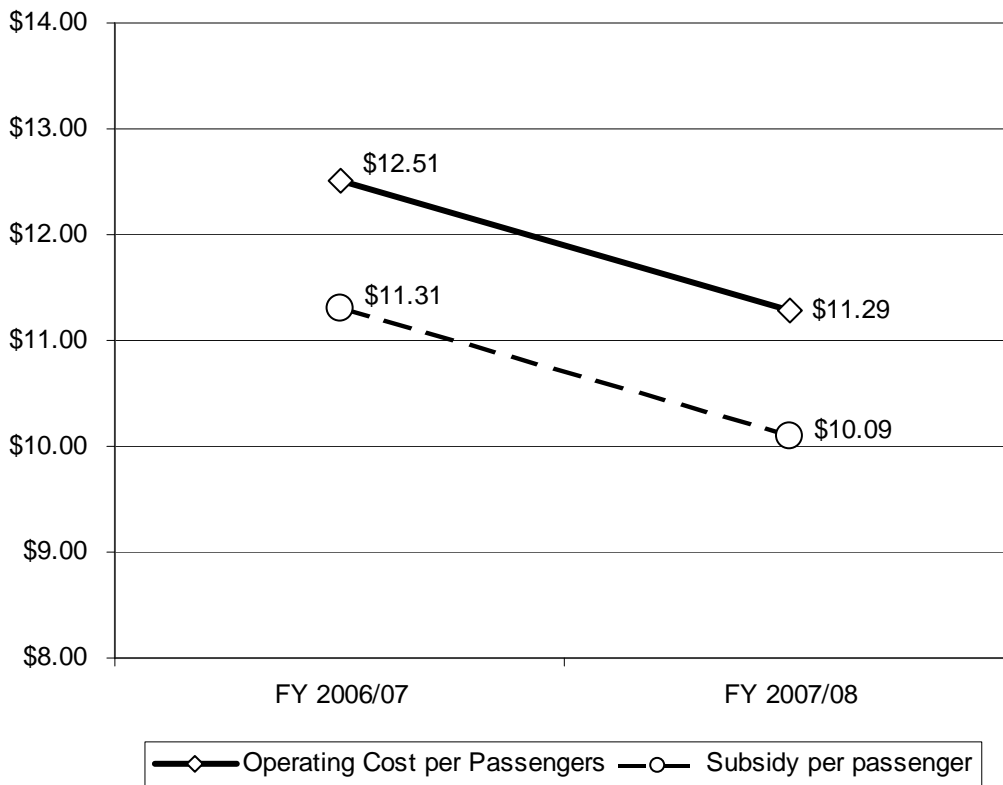
⁴ Energy Information Administration, http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/dnav/pet/hist/mg_tt_usw.htm July 1 to June 30 FY

Fixed-Route Operating Cost per Passenger and Subsidy per Passenger

Despite the increases in fixed-route costs that took place between FY 2006/07 and FY 2007/08, cost per passenger actually declined due to the dramatic increase in ridership that took place during this period. In FY 2007/08, the cost per passenger was \$11.29, compared to \$12.51 in FY 2006/07. This was nearly a 10% decrease in operating cost per passenger.

The subsidy per passenger on fixed-route transit decreased by nearly 11% between FY 2006/07 and FY 2007/08. This was primarily due to significant increases in ridership and fare revenue.

Figure 3-10 Fixed-Route Operating Cost per Passenger and Subsidy per Passenger



Route by Route Analysis: Fixed Route Services

The following section details operating and performance data for each of the West Marin Stagecoach routes. The information presented in this section is based on findings from on-board ridechecks conducted in November 2008.

In order to accurately gauge boarding patterns and on-time performance, Nelson\Nygaard performed a ridecheck on all three of West Marin Stagecoach fixed routes, covering weekday and weekend trips. Surveyors rode each trip one time, recording passenger activity at all bus stops, as well as the arrival and departure time at timepoints noted in the printed schedule. They also distributed surveys to all passengers — survey results are discussed in Chapter 4 of this report. Data collection was performed from November 2nd through November 9th excluding Monday,

Friday and Tuesday (Election Day). Since the ridecheck was conducted in November, recreational trips on the weekend were lighter and few people were traveling to the beach areas.

Information collected via the ridecheck was supplemented by historical data provided by Marin Transit.

On-Time Performance

On-time performance refers to the level of success of the bus remaining on the published schedule. A route is considered “on time” if it arrives at and departs from all designated timepoints no later than five minutes after their scheduled time and does not leave any time point prior to their scheduled departure time.⁵

Recent changes and an emphasis on reliability, along with incentives and penalties attached to performance, have led to significant improvements for on-time reliability in the past year. In FY 2007-2008, each route consistently had a greater than 95% on-time performance rate, with all routes performing at better than 97.5% on-time in the 4th quarter. This reliability is exceptional, especially for long routes that are often in single lane, hilly roads. Figure 3-11 shows the on-time performance for all Stagecoach routes for the four quarters of FY 2008 (July 1 2007 to June 30 2008).

Figure 3-11 On-time Performance FY 2007/08

	South Route 61	Coastal Route 62	North Route 68
July	95%	99%	97%
August	98%	97%	94%
September	95%	96%	98%
FY07-08, Q1 Average	96%	97%	96%
October	98%	93%	99%
November	98%	96%	93%
December	97%	100%	98%
FY07-08 Q2 Average	98%	96%	97%
January	96%	100%	96%
February	100%	100%	100%
March	99%	99%	97%
FY07-08 Q3 Average	98%	100%	97%
April	99%	99%	99%
May	98%	94%	98%
June	100%	100%	98%
FY07-08 Q4 Average	99%	98%	98%

Source: West Marin Stagecoach Operating Data FY 2007-08

⁵ Marin Transit Service Performance Standards, 2008

Route 68 – North Route

Route Description

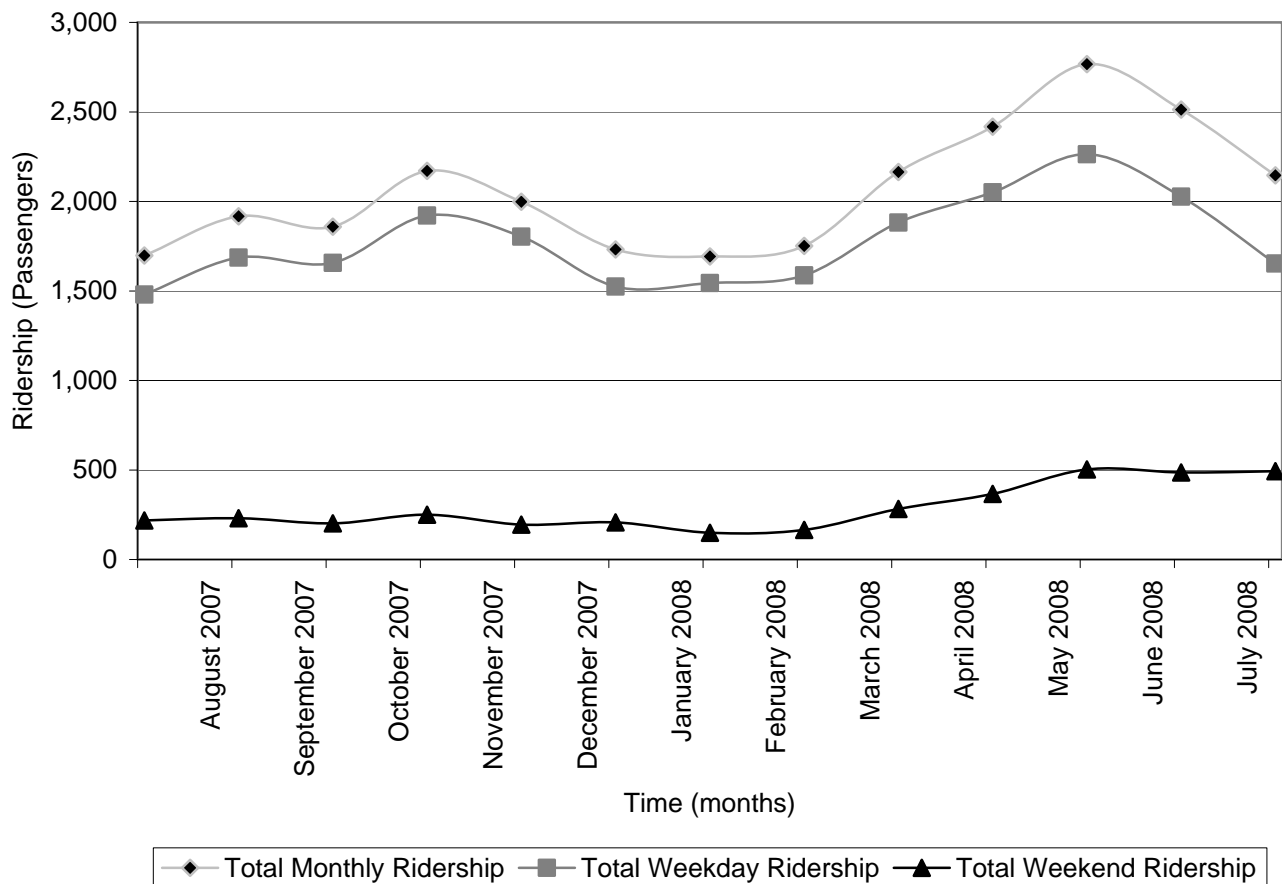
North Route 68 travels between Inverness and San Rafael Transit Center via Sir Francis Drake Blvd with service to Pt Reyes National Seashore Bear Valley Visitor Center, Samuel P. Taylor State Park, San Geronimo Valley and Fairfax. Route 68 operates 7 days per week.

Four eastbound and westbound trips run daily, with an extra trip in each direction running on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Weekday service begins at approximately 6:30 AM and ends at approximately 8:00 PM.

Ridership

The annual ridership for FY 2007/08 on West Marin Stagecoach Routes 68 was 24,681 passengers. Route 68 had the highest ridership for all three West Marin Stagecoach Routes and was the most productive fixed route, carrying over 6 passengers per revenue hour. Ridership was the highest during May – July, 2008. Weekend ridership was significantly lower during the summer months when school is not in session and during the winter when weather conditions may make riding transit more challenging.

Figure 3-12 North Route 68 Monthly Ridership, August 07- July 08

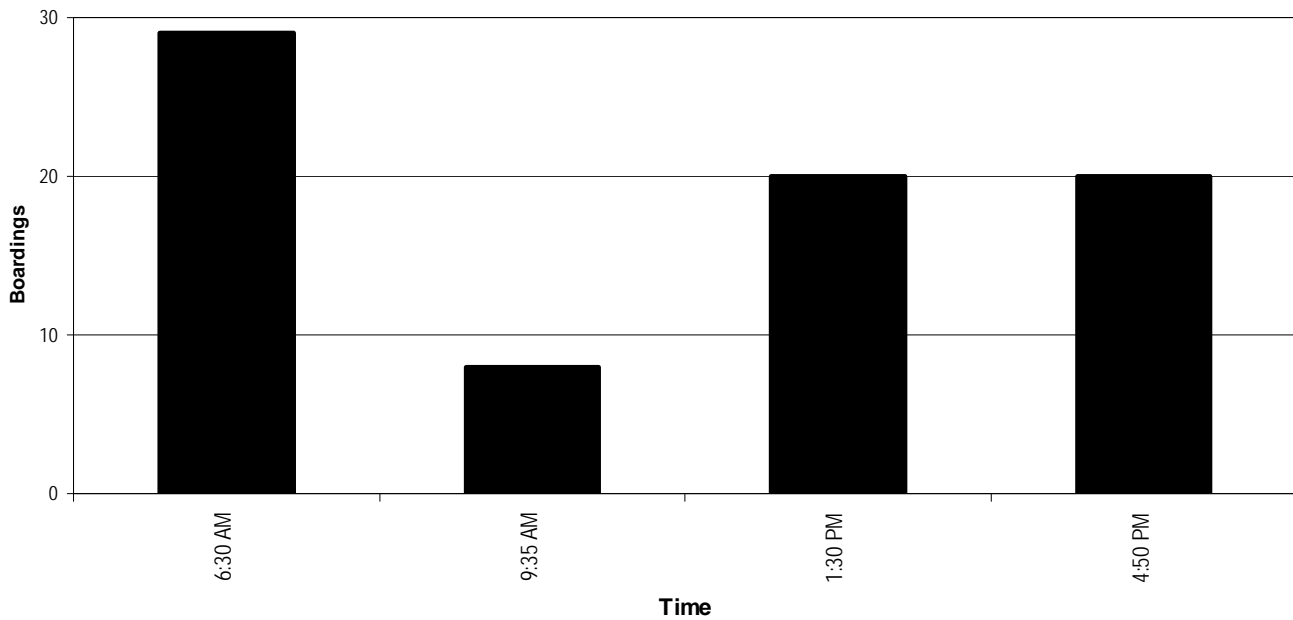


Boardings by Trip

Weekday

During the ridecheck a total of 77 weekday passenger boardings were recorded on Route 68. Boarding activity on Route 68 was heaviest during the first run of the day (6:30 am), and dropped off significantly during the second run at 9:35 am. Boardings remained relatively steady between 1:30 pm and 4:50 pm.

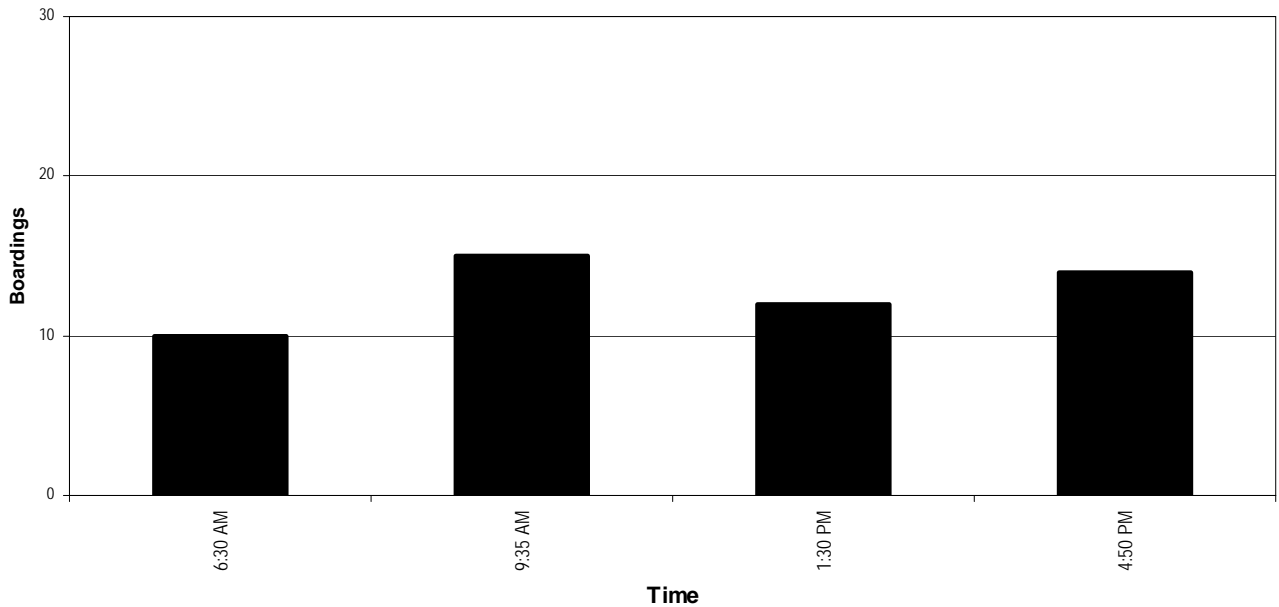
Figure 3-13 **Route 68 Weekday Boardings by Trip**



Saturday

A total of 51 passenger boardings were recorded on Saturday on Route 68. Saturday boarding activity was lighter than weekday boarding activity, with boardings typically falling well below fifteen passengers per trip. The Saturday ridership trends were the reverse of the weekday ridership; the fewest boardings took place on the first run and the most boardings occurred during the second run at 9:35 am. Boarding remained steady at 12 and 14 passengers during the last two runs of the day.

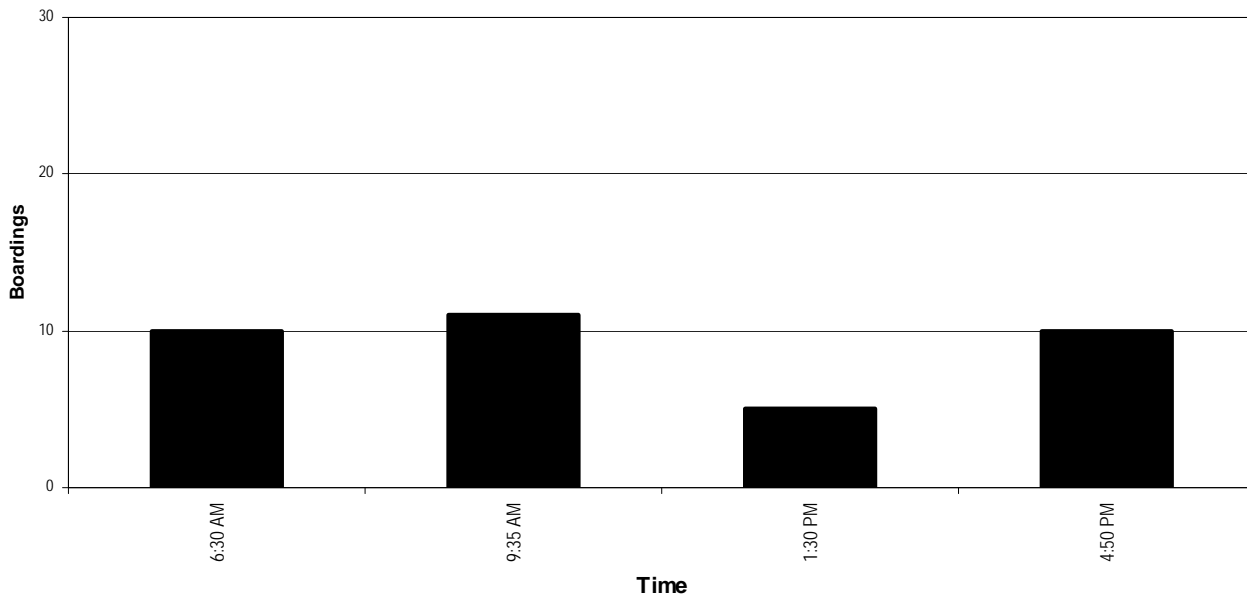
Figure 3-14 **Route 68 Saturday Boardings by Trip**



Sunday

A total of 36 Sunday passenger boardings were recorded on Route 68. Sunday had the lowest daily ridership, with 10 passenger boardings in the first, second, and last run of the day and only five passengers boarding the third run.

Figure 3-15 Route 68 Sunday Boardings by Trip



Stop Activity

The stops with the highest number of passengers boarding and alighting on Eastbound Route 68 were San Rafael Transit Center and Drake High School, followed by San Anselmo Bus Hub and Forest Knolls Post Office. The Westbound bus saw less activity overall than the Eastbound bus. The top boarding and alighting locations for the Westbound Route 68 were Fairfax Downtown, Forest Knolls P.O. and Lagunitas General Store.

Stop activity was similar for weekend service. San Rafael and San Anselmo had the highest boarding and alightings for the eastbound bus and Fairfax and Point Reyes had the highest activity for the westbound bus.

Figure 3-16 Route 68 Eastbound Weekday Stop Activity

Stop	Cross Street	Boardings & Alightings
San Rafael Transit Center	3rd & Heatherton	25
Drake High School		13
San Anselmo Bus Hub		10
Forest Knolls P.O.	Castro & Montezuma	10

Figure 3-17 Route 68 Westbound Weekday Stop Activity

Stop	Cross Street	Boardings & Alightings
Fairfax Downtown	SFDrake & Claus Rd	14
Forest Knolls P.O.	Castro & Montezuma	7
Lagunitas General Store	SFD and Lagunitas Rd	7

For detailed route maps showing specific boardings and alightings on weekday, Saturday, and Sunday Route 68, see Figure 3 – 18 through 3 - 20.

Figure 3-18 Boardings and Alightings: Route 68 Saturday



Figure 3-19 Boardings and Alightings: Route 68 Sunday



Figure 3-20 Boardings and Alightings: Route 68 Wednesday

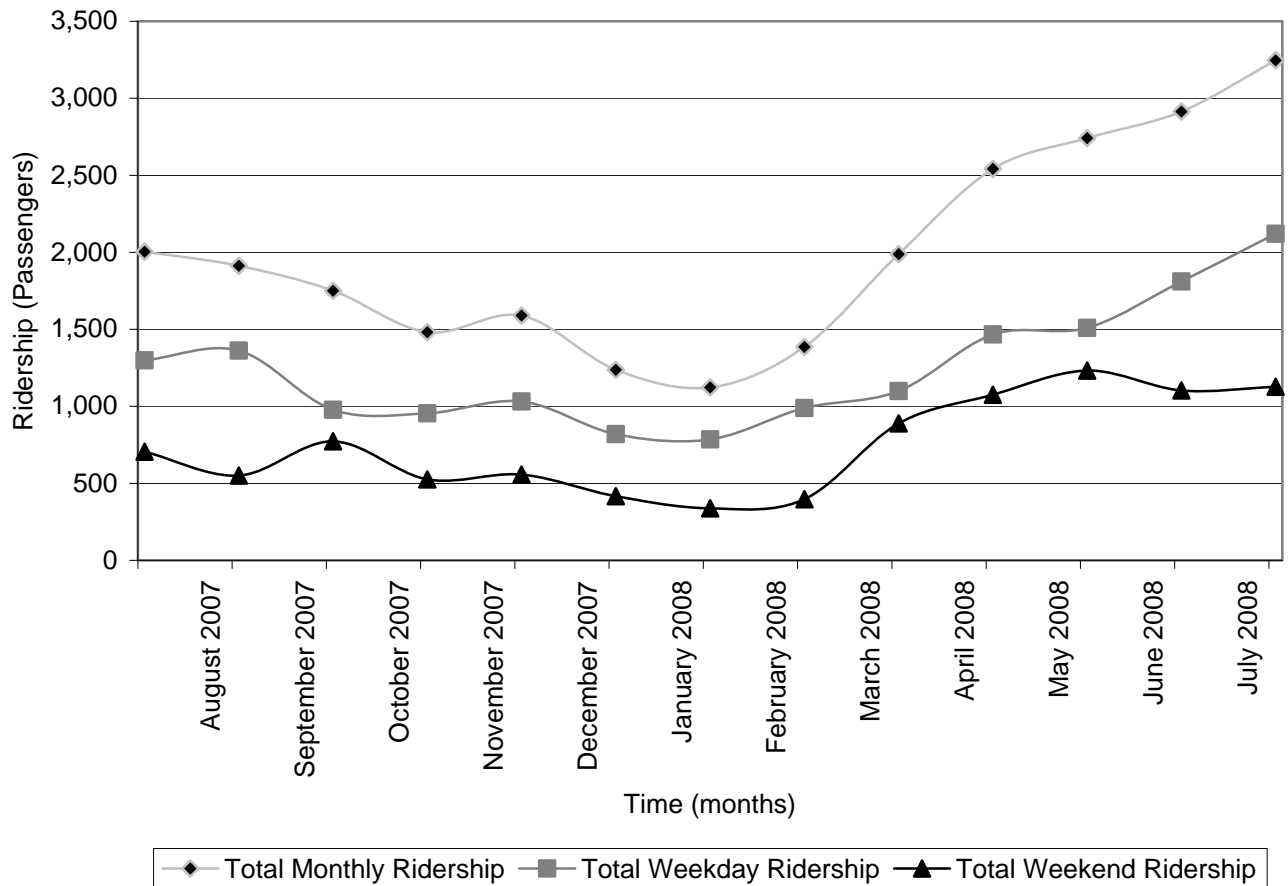


Route 61 – South Route

Route Description

Route 61 (South Route) travels between Bolinas, Stinson Beach, and Marin City via Panoramic Highway with service to Mt. Tamalpais State Park. Route 61 has added three extra round-trips on weekends that are in service from March to early December, doubling the service between Marin City and Stinson Beach. Ridership grew rapidly from March – July, 2008, due to the increased service on weekends. Weekday service begins at approximately 7:00 am and ends at 8:00 pm and weekend service runs from 8:40 am to 8:00 pm.

Figure 3-21 South Route 61 Monthly Ridership, August 07 - July 08

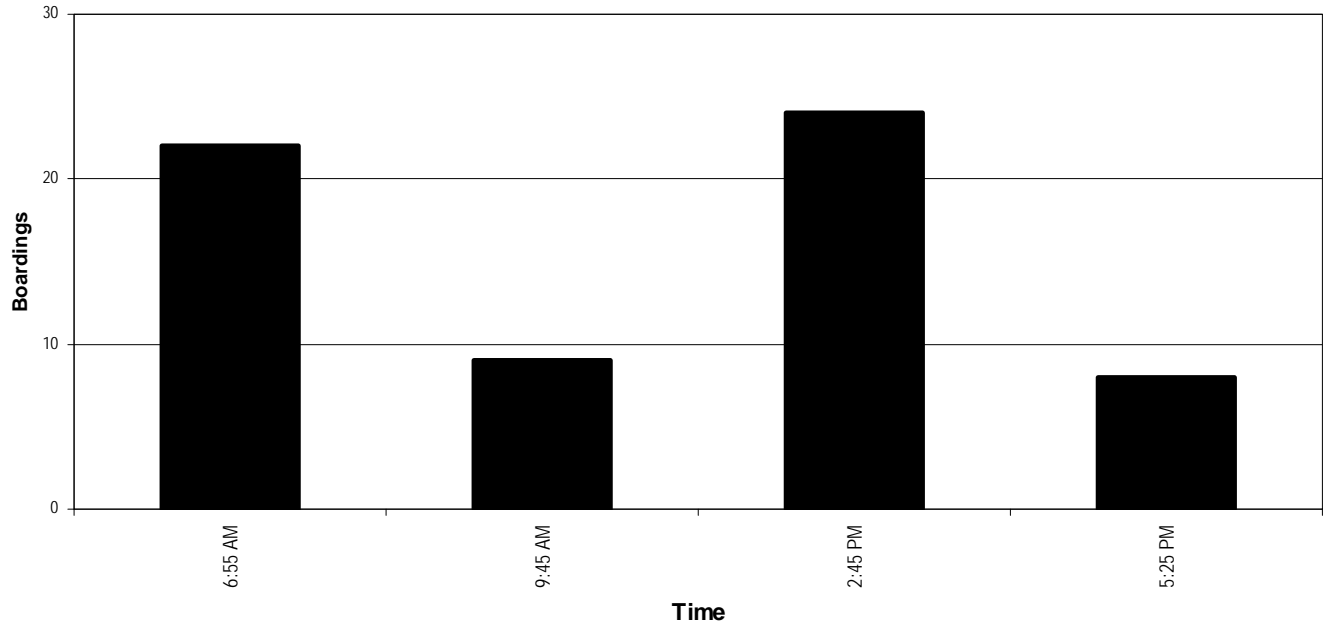


Boardings by Trip

Weekday

During the ridecheck a total of 63 weekday passenger boardings were recorded on Route 61. Boarding activity on Route 61 was heaviest during the third run of the day (2:45 pm) which carries students returning from school, followed by the first run of the day (6:55 am). Boarding dropped off significantly during the second and last run of the day when student activity is lightest.

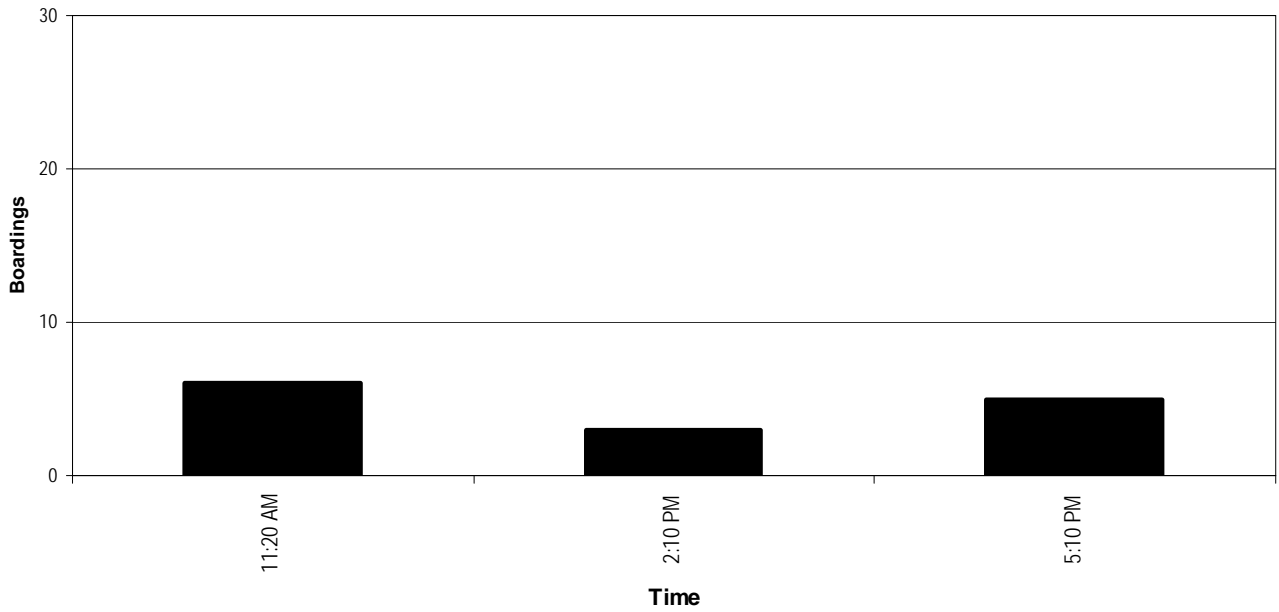
Figure 3-22 **Route 61 Weekday Boardings by Trip**



Saturday

Saturday boarding activity was lower than on weekdays, with 14 boardings recorded. Boardings fell well below ten passengers per trip. The highest boarding activity occurred during the first run of the day at 11:20 am.

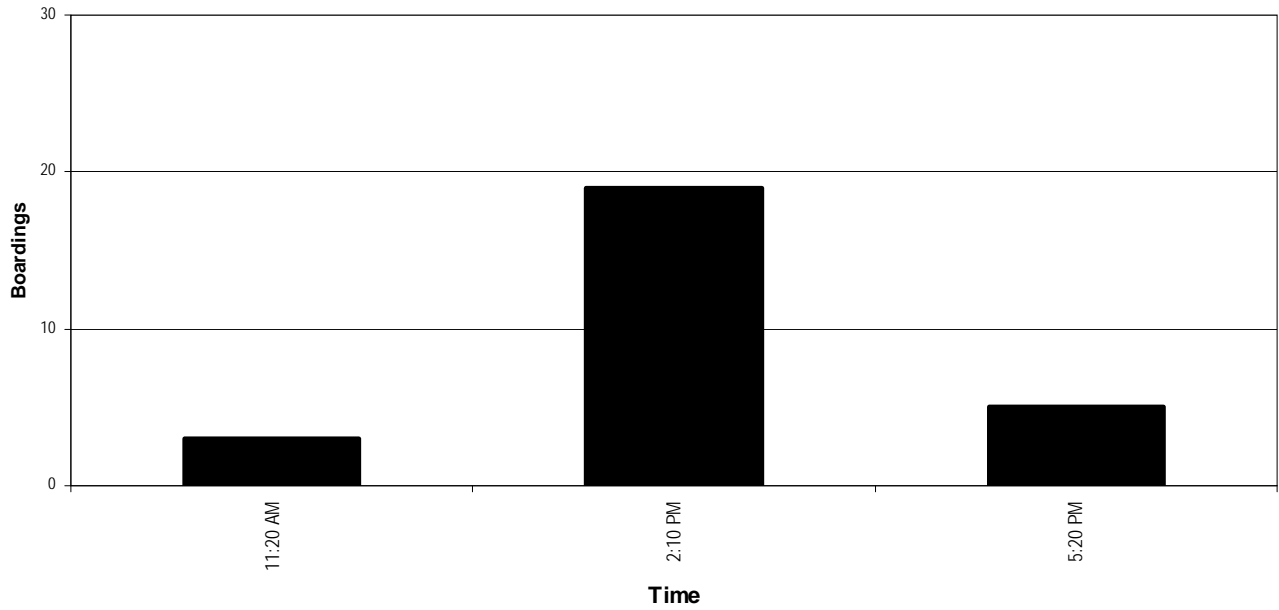
Figure 3-23 Route 61 Saturday Boardings by Trip



Sunday

Sunday boardings were higher than on Saturday, with nearly 20 boardings occurring during the second run of the day at 2:10 pm. The first run of the day had three boardings and the last run had five boardings.

Figure 3-24 Route 61 Sunday Boardings by Trip



Stop Activity

The stops with the highest number of passengers boarding and alighting on Eastbound Route 61 were Marin City, Stinson Beach, and Bolinas Community Center. The top boarding and alighting locations for the Westbound Route 61 were Bolinas Community Center, Mill Valley Tam Junction, and Stinson Beach.

Stop activity for the westbound bus service varied somewhat on the weekend service. On Sunday, the major stop activity took place at Bolinas, Audubon Canyon Ranch, and TAM High. Weekend stop activity on the eastbound bus was similar to weekday activity, with Marin City and Stinson Beach having the highest number of passengers boarding and alighting.

Figure 3-25 Route 61 Eastbound Weekday Top Boarding and Alighting Locations

Stop	Cross Street	Boardings & Alightings
Marin City	Existing GGT bus stop	27
Stinson Beach	Shoreline Hwy in front of Community Park	17
Bolinas Community Center	Front of the Community Center	11

Figure 3-26 Route 61 Westbound Weekday Top Boarding and Alighting Locations

Stop	Cross Street	Boardings & Alightings
Bolinas Community Center	Front of the Community Center	16
Mill Valley Tam Junction	Miller Ave at Camino Alto, GGT bus stop in front of Safeway	12
Stinson Beach	Shoreline Hwy in front of Community Park	11

For detailed route maps showing stop-specific boardings for the Route 61 on a weekday, Saturday, and Sunday, see Figures 3 – 27 through 3-29.

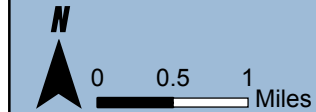
Figure 3-27 Boardings and Alightings: Route 61 Saturday



Figure 3-28 Boardings and Alightings: Route 61 Sunday



Figure 3-29 Boardings and Alightings: Route 61 Wednesday



Route 61A – South Route Weekends

Route Description

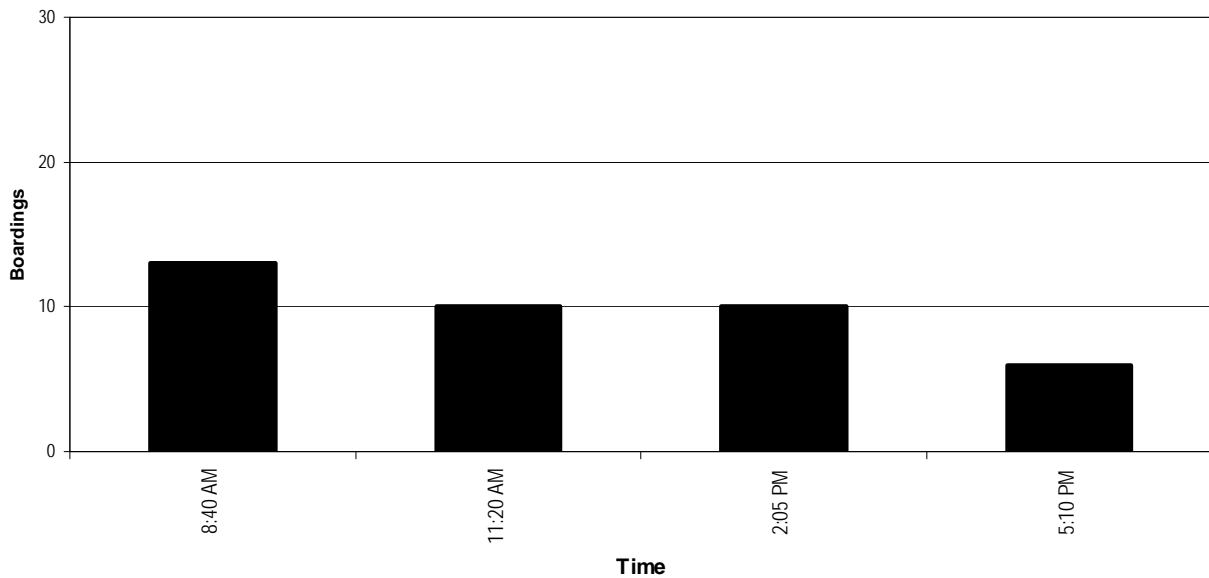
Route 61A runs east to west, from Marin City to Bolinas and crisscrosses Route 61, providing additional transportation from Marin to Stinson Beach and Bolinas on weekends.

Boardings by Trip

Saturday

During the ridecheck a total of 39 Saturday passenger boardings were recorded by surveying staff on Route 61A. Boarding activity on Route 61A was heaviest during the first run of the day (8:40 am) with 13 boardings. The second and third run remained steady with 10 boardings each. Boarding dropped off significantly during the last run of the day at 5:10 pm with only 6 passenger boardings. Route 61A had nearly three times as many Saturday passenger boardings than Route 61.

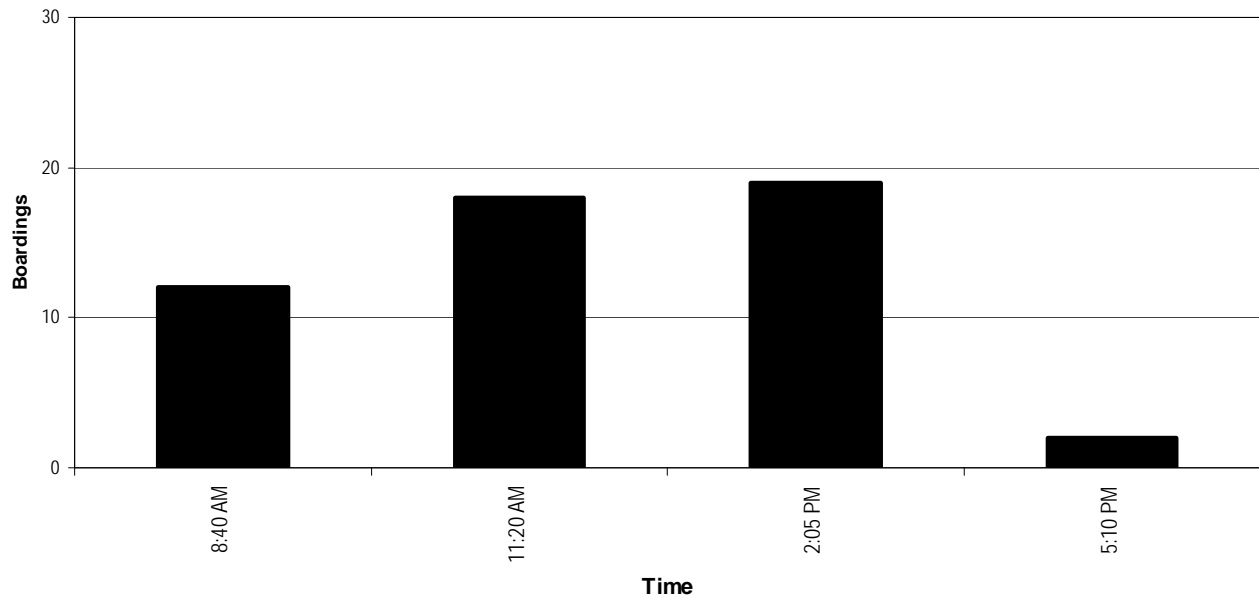
Figure 3-30 **Route 61A Saturday Boardings by Trip**



Sunday

During the ridecheck a total of 51 Sunday passenger boardings were recorded by surveying staff on Route 61A. The majority of boardings occurred during the third run of the day at 2:05 pm with 19 passenger boardings. Boardings on the last run of the day dropped significantly to only two passenger boardings. Sunday ridership in Route 61A also surpassed Route 61.

Figure 3-31 Route 61A Sunday Boardings by Trip



Stop Activity

The stops with the highest number of passengers boarding and alighting on Eastbound Route 61A were the two end stops—Marin City and Bolinas—as well as Stinson Beach. Since this route only runs on the weekends, people use this route to access the beach from Marin City to Stinson Beach or Bolinas.

Figure 3-32 Route 61A Westbound Saturday Top Boarding and Alighting Locations

Stop	Cross Street	Boardings & Alightings
Bolinas Community Center	Front of the Community Center	13
Marin City	Existing GGT bus stop	12
Stinson Beach	Shoreline Hwy in front of Community Park	9

Figure 3-33 Route 61A Eastbound Saturday Top Boarding and Alighting Locations

Stop	Cross Street	Boardings & Alightings
Bolinas Community Center	Front of the Community Center	13
Stinson Beach	Shoreline Hwy in front of Community Park	10
Marin City	Existing GGT bus stop	9

For detailed route maps showing stop-specific boardings for the Route 61 A on a Saturday and Sunday, see Figures 3 – 34 and 3 – 35.

Figure 3-34 Boardings and Alightings: Route 61A Saturday

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Figure 3-35 Boardings and Alightings: Route 61A Sunday

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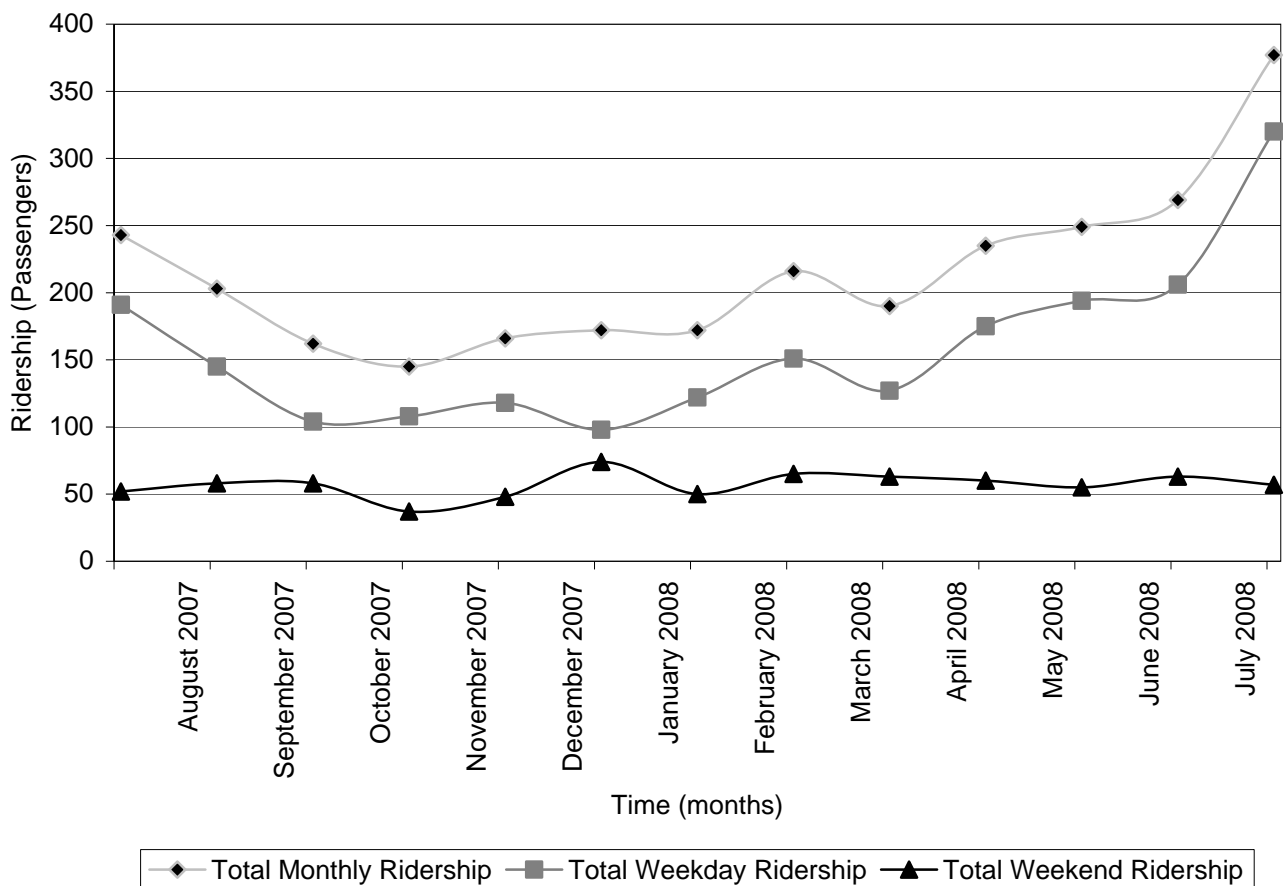
Route 62 – Coastal Route

Route Description

Route 62 travels between Stinson Beach, Bolinas, Olema and Point Reyes Station. One trip on Route 62 connects with Route 68 allowing travel to Lagunitas, Fairfax, San Anselmo, and San Rafael. There was a dramatic increase in weekday ridership between June and July, 2008. Saturday ridership remained steady throughout the year.

Three Northbound and Southbound trips run on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from the hours of 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.

Figure 3-36 Coastal Route 62 Monthly Ridership, August 07 - July 08

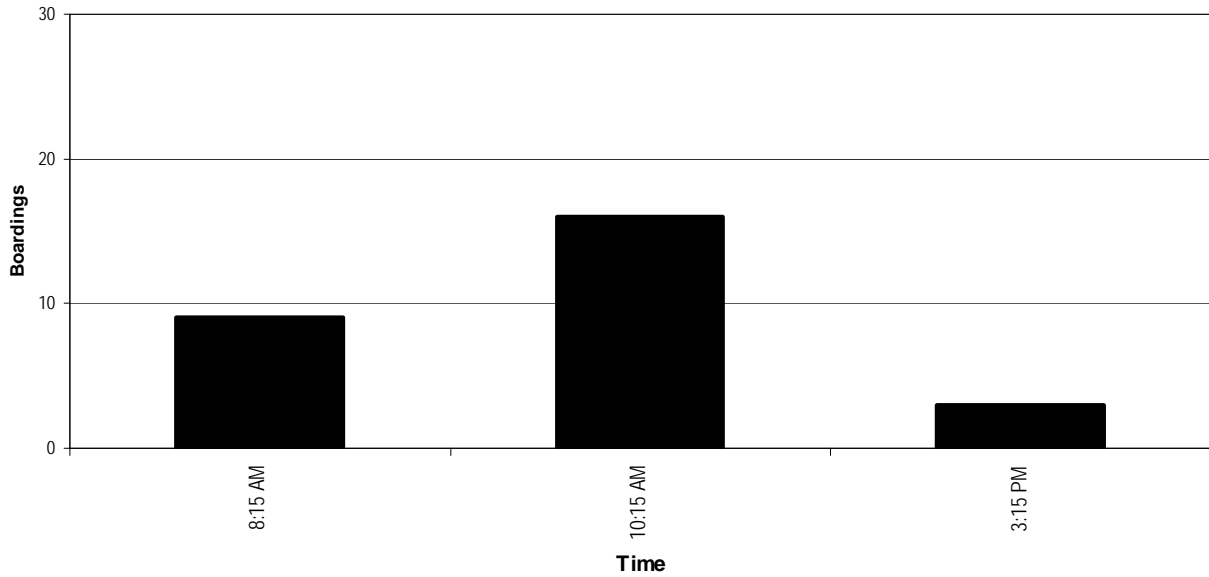


Boardings by Trip

Weekday

During the ridecheck a total of 28 weekday passenger boardings were recorded on Route 62. Boarding activity on Route 62 was heaviest during the second run of the day (10:15 am), followed by the first run of the day (8:15 am). Ridership dropped off significantly during the last run of the day at 3:15 pm.

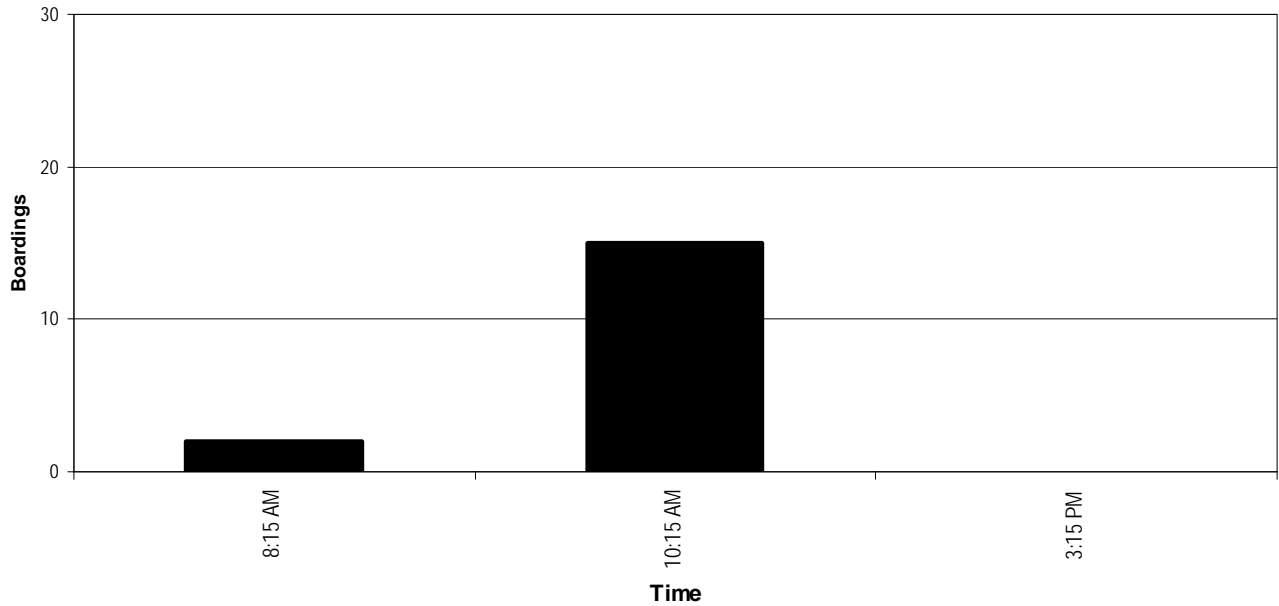
Figure 3-37 **Route 62 Weekday Boardings by Trip**



Saturday

During the ridecheck a total of 17 Saturday passenger boardings were recorded on Route 62. The majority of boardings occurred during the second run of the day at 10:15 am. There were two boardings on the first run of the day and none on the last run.

Figure 3-38 Route 62 Saturday Boardings by Trip



Stop Activity

The stops with the highest number of passengers boarding and alighting on Northbound Route 62 were Point Reyes Downtown and Stinson Beach Downtown, followed by Bolinas. The Southbound bus saw slightly less activity than the northbound bus. The top boarding and alighting locations for the southbound Route 62 were Bolinas and Point Reyes Downtown.

Stop activity was similar for Saturday service, with slightly more activity at Olema stop.

Figure 3-39 Route 62 Northbound Weekday Top Boarding and Alighting Locations

Stop	Cross Street	Boardings & Alighting
Point Reyes Downtown	Toby's	8
Stinson Beach Downtown	Calle del Mar	6
Bolinas	Downtown	4

Figure 3-40 Route 62 Southbound Weekday Top Boarding and Alighting Locations

Stop	Cross Street	Boardings & Alighting
Bolinas	Downtown	9
Point Reyes Downtown	Toby's	3

For detailed route maps showing stop-specific boardings for the Route 62 on a weekday and Saturday, see Figures 3 -41 and 3-42.

Figure 3-41 Boardings and Alightings: Route 62 Saturday

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Figure 3-42 Boardings and Alightings: Route 62 Thursday

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Bicycle Use

West Marin Stagecoach vehicles are equipped with bicycle racks that can carry 2 to 3 bikes. Bringing a bicycle on a bus allows a bicycle to be used at both ends of the journey, and helps cyclists who experience a mechanical failure or unexpected bad weather. It also allows cyclists to pass major barriers, such as tunnels or bridges, where cycling is prohibited or particularly difficult.

Bicycle usage on West Marin Stagecoach has increased in FY 2007-2008. The number of bicycles on Route 68 more than doubled. There was also a significant increase of bicycle usage on Route 62.⁶

Figure 3-43 Bicycle Use on West Marin Stagecoach

Route	Bicycles	
	FY 2006-2007	FY 2007-2008
68 - North Route	213	497
<i>% Change</i>		<i>133.3%</i>
61 - South Route	460	522
<i>% Change</i>		<i>13.5%</i>
62 - Coastal Route	18	113
<i>% Change</i>		<i>N/A</i>

Other Existing Transportation Services

Besides Marin Transit, several specialized transportation services are provided in West Marin.

Whistlestop Wheels provides paratransit services for elderly and disabled persons of Marin County who are deemed eligible under criteria set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act. They do not serve West Marin directly, but will arrange to meet the Stagecoach at or within 3/4 of a mile of a Golden Gate Transit fixed route stop to transfer an ADA rider to their service.⁷ Eligible persons may schedule rides for any purpose with no restriction or priority, on a first-come/first-served basis. Rides are typically scheduled for medical appointments, shopping, therapy, or visits with family and friends. In short, paratransit service is provided for any purpose where one might use a fixed route bus.⁸ Riders may call 7 days in advance, or at a minimum, up to 1 day before the scheduled trip. WSW provides mandated paratransit service to complement a regular bus route during the hours it is scheduled to operate. Whistlestop charges a \$2 fare each way, or \$2.50 for pickups and drop-offs out of the service area.

The Muir Woods Shuttle is a summer weekend-only service connecting the Sausalito Ferry, Marin City and the Manzanita Park and Ride on the eastern end of the route to Muir Woods National Monument, with no intermediate stops. This service started as a 3-year pilot project with

⁶ Service on Route 62 began in April 2007.

⁷ Interview, Whistlestop Wheels, 12/16/2008

⁸ Whistlestop Wheels web site, 12/16/2008, <http://www.thewhistlestop.org/transportation.html>

a Federal Public Lands Discretionary Grant. The County of Marin managed the service contract, in cooperation with the National Park Service, for 2005 through 2008. In 2008, remaining discretionary funding was used to continue the service one more year. For the 2009 summer season, the cost of the shuttle service will be shared between Marin Transit and the National Park Service under a three-year agreement. During its pilot phase, the service was evaluated each year, leading to adjustments in fares, frequency and route. Service starts in mid-May and ends at the end of September, with increased frequency during the peak summer months. This service has been very successful, showing increased ridership every year, and carrying up to 15% of all park visitors on some weekends.

After it leaves Marin City, the shuttle follows the same route as the Stagecoach Route 61 until it gets to the junction of Panoramic Highway and Shoreline Highway, where it turns south to stay on Shoreline, passing through Muir Beach on the way to Muir Woods. There have been many requests from riders to stop at Muir Beach in either direction, but there are obstacles to establishing a stop there, particularly safety concerns associated with crossing the Highway for those boarding and alighting.

Point Reyes National Seashore runs a shuttle from Drake's Beach to the Point Reyes Lighthouse during the winter whale-watching season. This shuttle provides the only access to areas where people can observe sea lions and whales, since when the shuttle is operating, the road to the Lighthouse is closed. There is no transit to Drake's Beach, so this shuttle runs independently of any other local transit.

PRNS ran a pilot summer shuttle from the Bear Valley Visitor's Center to Limantour Beach on weekends during the month of July, 2008. While it did attract riders and was rated highly by those who took it, there is no source of ongoing funding, and ridership was low. The West Marin Stage stops at the Bear Valley Visitor's Center seven days a week, thus a summer shuttle would provide a way for people to get from Marin City or San Rafael all the way to the beach on transit.

Tamalpais High School provides transportation for their students who live in the southern area of West Marin. The bus starts in Bolinas, goes through Stinson Beach, and then proceeds to Mill Valley via Panoramic Highway. There is one trip in and one trip out each day.

The Shoreline Unified School District runs a bus system for its students that covers about 1000 miles a day⁹. Routes extend from Santa Rosa in Sonoma County and Novato in Marin, to north of Bodega Bay, along the coast through Dillon Beach, Tomales Bay, Marshall and Point Reyes. Elementary school students are picked up on their ranches. Other than the school buses, there is no transit service to the Shoreline District schools in Tomales.

Drake High School in Fairfax does not provide any transportation for its students; many West Marin students attending Drake High take the Stage's North Route 68.

The Coast Guard Training Center in Two Rock operates a shuttle for its students called the "Liberty Van." Some employees at the center also commute by vanpool using a service operated by Enterprise Vanpool¹⁰ for commuters from Santa Rosa to Two Rock.

There is an informal community-based dial-a-ride service operated by volunteers in Inverness called the "Over the Hill Gang." Similar community-based ridesharing organizations have operated in the past in other West Marin towns. For instance, "Go Geronimo" used to organize

⁹ Interview, Steve Rosenthal, Superintendent, Shoreline Unified School District

¹⁰ Enterprise Vanpool is a division of the Enterprise rental car agency.

carpools in San Geronimo Valley, and “Green Wheels” was a ridesharing initiative among employees of the various organizations within Point Reyes Seashore National Park.

Peer Review

A peer review was conducted of transit providers operating in contexts similar to those of West Marin. These characteristics include:

- Operates primarily in a rural environment, with only a few routes and relatively modest ridership
- Serves a range of demographic markets, including recreational travelers, commuters, students, and agricultural workers
- Includes a major recreational destination within the service area
- Experiences seasonal fluctuations in ridership
- Offers connections to a larger regional transit network

The specific purpose of the exercise was to identify transit service and funding alternatives that might be adapted to West Marin. Each transit operator’s context is unique, and the systems identified differ from West Marin Stage in key ways. Nonetheless, a number of useful lessons can be drawn.

The transit operators in this peer review are:

- Downeast Transportation of Hancock County, Maine
- Lake Transit of Lake County, California
- L.E.W.I.S. Mountain Highway Transit of Lewis County, Washington
- Mountain Area Regional Transit Authority (MARTA) of San Bernardino County, California
- Yamhill County Transit Area (YCTA) of Yamhill County, Oregon

Peer System Descriptions

Downeast Transportation

Downeast Transportation is a private, not-for-profit organization contracted by the Maine Department of Transportation to provide transit service in Hancock County, in the state’s Down East region. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Hancock County’s population is approximately 52,000. Hancock County includes a major tourist destination, Mt. Desert Island, which in turn includes Acadia National Park as well as the historic gateway community of Bar Harbor. The Bangor metropolitan area in adjacent Penobscot County has a population of approximately 145,000.

For many years, Downeast Transportation consisted primarily of a route network designed to serve a program called “Meals for Me,” which provided meals for low-income seniors at a central location. In 1998, the agency began operating a seasonal shuttle route on Mt. Desert Island called Island Explorer. Downeast’s network now consists of nine Island Explorer routes with combined annual ridership over a 21-week season of 405,000; a fully booked subscription service for commuters from as far away as Bangor to the county’s largest employer, the Jackson

Laboratory genetic research complex in Bar Harbor; additional off-peak service to Bangor; and additional local service within the county.

Downeast Transportation is notable for its creative approach to finding and securing funding for expansion of services, as well as its creativity in ensuring cost-effective service delivery.

- The Island Explorer service, while a much larger operation than the West Marin Stagecoach, may nonetheless prove instructive. Essentially, Downeast Transportation identified an opportunity to leverage one potentially sizable market – tourists – to provide service for locals. While tourists account for approximately four-fifths of Island Explorer ridership, the remaining 20% of riders are local riders. The service is also free to users due to sizable donations from the National Park Service (more than 40% of total funding) and the L.L. Bean corporation, which renewed its initial multiyear grant after a sidewalk survey in Bar Harbor found that the buying decisions of close to 40% of respondents were influenced by their awareness of L.L. Bean's association with the service. Island Explorer is also partially funded by a group called Friends of Acadia, as well as hotels and campgrounds, which effectively serve as park-and-ride lots for the service.
- Downeast Transportation's subscription-based commuter service to Jackson Laboratory is similarly opportunistic in nature. As the agency's general manager explained it: "What we learned from Island Explorer is that if you have an anchor, and Acadia is both a funding and a location anchor, then you can use that anchor to build." Based on its experience with Island Explorer, Downeast Transportation approached management of Jackson, which had both "exhausted" the local labor market and was running out of room to add parking at its Bar Harbor campus, and suggested that it might be more cost-effective to help fund transit service to remote locations. The agency also secured federal Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funding, but the farebox revenue has been so high that part of the grant funding has not been spent.
- Finally, Downeast Transportation is able to provide mid-day lifeline service for transit-dependent riders on multiple routes using just two vehicles. For example, in the southern part of the county, a bus provides subscription-based service for students between Ellsworth and the Bay School in Blue Hill in the morning and afternoon; during the mid-day, that same bus serves different routes on different days. Each of five shuttle routes (Bucksport, Ellsworth, Bar Harbor, Southwest Harbor, and Stonington) runs one or two days a week, while the Bar Harbor to Ellsworth shuttle runs Monday through Friday.

Lake Transit

The Lake Transit Authority is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) operating in Lake County, just north of the San Francisco Bay Area. Although the total population of the county is close to 60,000, development patterns around Clear Lake are relatively dispersed, and five of Lake Transit's seven fixed routes are inter-city services. One of those routes connects to Ukiah in Mendocino County (where connections can be made to Greyhound and Amtrak buses), and another goes to St. Helena in Napa County.

Lake Transit has been gradually growing its service, increasing frequencies on routes along either side of the lake and simplifying its intercounty service by timing connections between the routes and describing the entire corridor in marketing materials as a "single" route from St. Helena to Ukiah.

Lake Transit spent \$2,553,413 on operating and capital expenses in FY2006-2007 with \$1,671,130 spent on operating expenses and \$882,283 on capital expenses. TDA funds provide

more than 50% of Lake Transit's operating funds. Other sources include farebox revenue (12%), State Transit Assistance (STA) funds (11%), and Federal Transit Administration 5311 and 5311(f) funds (12% combined). For many years, the agency was able to fund expansions using spillover revenue from state transit assistance funds, but like other California transit operators, it now faces a challenging funding environment. A local sales taxes for transportation has been rejected (although the agency's manager has proposed to officials a transit-only alternative), and other funding sources, such as federal JARC funds, are viewed as unreliable.

However, Lake Transit has been able to secure revenue from two less-traditional sources. St. Helena Hospital provides funding under a "route-guarantee" program ensuring continued service to its facility, and when the county's Department of Social Services moved its offices to a relatively remote location, it entered into a discounted monthly pass program that now, in exchange for 325 passes per month, guarantees Lake Transit \$75,000 a year.

L.E.W.I.S. Mountain Highway Transit

L.E.W.I.S. Mountain Highway Transit consists of two weekday-only, long-distance routes connecting communities in rural eastern Lewis County, Washington, to the county's largest town, Centralia along Interstate 5 to the west, and to the outermost reaches of the Puget Sound metropolitan region to the north. It is operated by a nonprofit called the White Pass Community Services Coalition, and receives no local government support; virtually its entire budget consists of state and federal grants, and yet it has survived from one grant cycle to the next for nearly two decades.

Mountain Highway Transit's Highway 7 route was recently realigned in response to local requests to serve a pair of Tacoma-area schools that are part of the Bethel School District, which extends into Lewis County. For students and teachers, a round-trip ride for just \$4 – compared to a round-trip drive of as much as 100 miles – has proven an attractive alternative, and ridership on the route increased by one-third in 2008.

The Community Services Coalition has also applied for funding for a new route, a seasonal, weekend-only service from Elk Plain – where riders of Pierce Transit buses from Tacoma could connect – to Ashford, where riders could then connect to shuttle service to Mt. Rainier National Park. Because service on the Highway 7 route could be reduced over the summer when school is out of session with little impact on riders, the new route would cost the Coalition little to operate. And based on surveys of visitors to the national park as well as statements of support from community groups, the potential market for public transit from the greater Seattle area to Mt. Rainier is so large that Mountain Highway Transit's executive director worries that the service will be unable to meet demand. However, he noted, if it is a success, it might make political and financial sense for the larger Pierce Transit (Tacoma, WA) to eventually operate this service.

Mountain Area Regional Transit Authority

MARTA is a Joint Powers Authority providing local transit service to communities in the San Bernardino Mountains of Southern California, as well as "Off the Mountain" service to the city of San Bernardino, where connections can be made to Metrolink rail service to Los Angeles and Orange County. Its local service area, including the communities of Big Bear Valley, Running Springs, Lake Arrowhead and Crestline, has a population of approximately 45,000 and is a mix of low-density, high-income resort communities with many retirees and part-time residents as well as middle- and low-income communities housing many service workers. Many of the employees of the Bear Mountain and Summit resorts are guest workers from Brazil.

As a result, MARTA's operational context is challenging. Its ridership is highly seasonal in nature, and in the winter in particular it must serve many transit-dependent riders. Much of its service – 36% of annual revenue hours – is dial-a-ride service, which is much more expensive to provide than fixed-route service. Because it serves resort communities popular with middle-class day-trippers from the Los Angeles Basin, it is also highly exposed to fluctuations in both the economy and the climate. In recent months, it has suffered a steep decline in ridership, attributed to both the economic decline and below-average snowfall levels.

Despite this, the agency is moving ahead with plans for expansion. It has instituted half-hourly service along the trunk route of Big Bear Boulevard, and will be adding an Off the Mountain run in January. Fare increases have been postponed. Perhaps more importantly, however, MARTA has initiated an aggressive marketing strategy. Off the Mountain service will be promoted to students and others from outside the service area as a low-cost option for ski trips to Big Bear. Bus stops will be made more visible, and branding will be updated. The agency is also seeking public-private partnerships with resorts, hotels and other businesses. Funding is uncertain, although unlike many rural transit providers, MARTA is able to rely in part on local sales tax revenue.

Yamhill County Transit Area

YCTA is a newly formed transit district in an area southwest of metropolitan Portland that is currently undergoing a rapid transition from rural to exurban, and is attempting to keep its transit offerings on pace with this growth. The county's population has grown from approximately 85,000 in the 2000 census to more than 95,000 today; its largest city, McMinnville, now has approximately 30,000 residents.

For roughly two decades, transit service in Yamhill County was primarily social service-oriented, and was administered by a pair of nonprofits (which still operate the service today, under contract). The county government began discussing formation of a public transit district in the early 1990s. But only in the last few years has transit in Yamhill County finally grown into its own. "LINK" commuter service was established three years ago, and now includes routes to a MAX light rail station outside Portland, to the neighboring community of Sherwood and to the state capitol of Salem to the southeast. YCTA was finally formed in 2007, commuter ridership has "skyrocketed" in the past year, according to the agency's manager, and traditional, fixed-route transit service now accounts for roughly half of all ridership.

But just as transit service in Yamhill County has come into its own, funding the service has grown more challenging. For several years, YCTA and its primary predecessor, YAMCO Transit (the name under which YCAP, the Yamhill Community Action Partnership, operated its service) were successful in securing large grants through a competitive State of Oregon program. Recently, however, the program shifted to formula-based allocation, so YCTA responded by applying its reduced share toward maintenance of its recently expanded service, and resolved to find funds for vehicle replacement elsewhere. It has applied for Federal Transit Administration earmarks, and the county is now discussing a levy for transit. "When you could ask for unlimited money, we'd shoot for the moon," the agency manager says. "But we've had to get very creative." The agency is also involved or has been involved in cost-sharing arrangements with several public and private entities, including local physicians.

Operating and Financial Characteristics

Six key performance indicators were identified for each of the peers, comparable to figures for the Marin Stagecoach discussed earlier in this chapter:

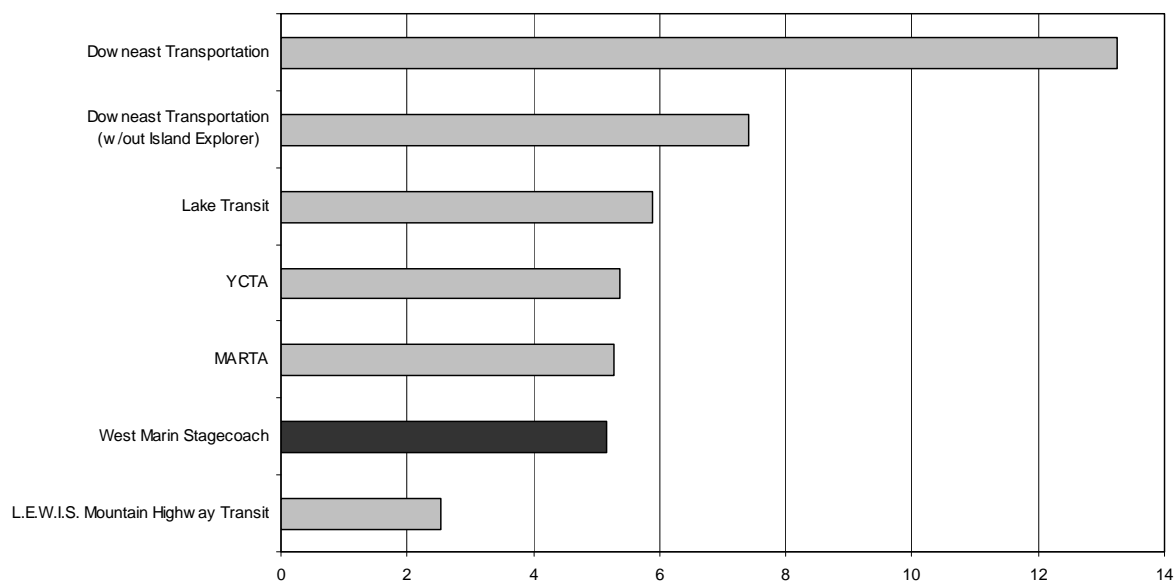
- Passengers per revenue hour
- Operating cost per revenue hour
- Operating cost per passenger
- Subsidy per passenger
- Average fare per passenger
- Farebox recovery ratio

Managers of peer systems were asked for available data. The time periods covered by the data vary slightly¹¹, and on occasion, rounded figures were used. However, all data are relatively recent and were determined to be accurate enough for meaningful comparison, with the caveats included in the descriptions for the categories. All data are system wide, including both fixed-route and demand-responsive service if available. For Downeast Transportation, separate figures excluding Island Explorer service are provided.

Passengers per Revenue Service Hour

Passengers per hour of revenue service is a key measure of productivity. Stagecoach performance in this category was below that of the other systems reviewed, but is within a reasonable range of performance. Downeast Transportation’s system productivity is an obvious outlier; this is due to its Island Explorer service, which not only serves a large and transit-dependent market of extended-stay tourists, but is free to users.

Figure 3-44 Passengers per Revenue Service Hour

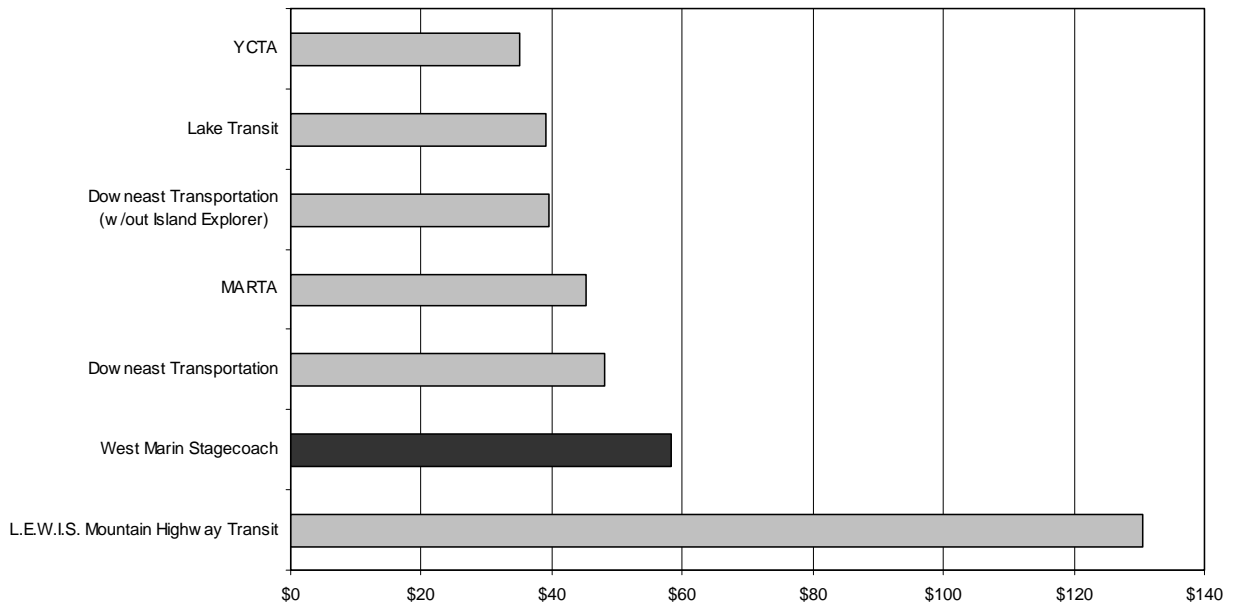


¹¹ Time periods for data are: Downeast Transportation, Fiscal Year 2008-09 (budget); Lake Transit, FY 2006-07; MARTA, FY 2005-06; YCTA, FY 2007-08; L.E.W.I.S., 2005-2006

Operating Cost per Revenue Hour

In general, Stagecoach costs were somewhat higher than for peer systems. However, this can be explained in large part by two factors: the Bay Area, and in particular Marin County, is among America’s most costly labor markets; and data for some peers dates from periods when fuel costs were somewhat lower than in the Fiscal 2007-2008 period for which Stage data was collected. As these two factors – labor and fuel – account for much of a transit system’s operating costs, it is not especially surprising that Stagecoach costs are higher than for the other systems reviewed. In this category, L.E.W.I.S. Mountain Transit is an outlier, with per hour operating costs double that of Marin transit.

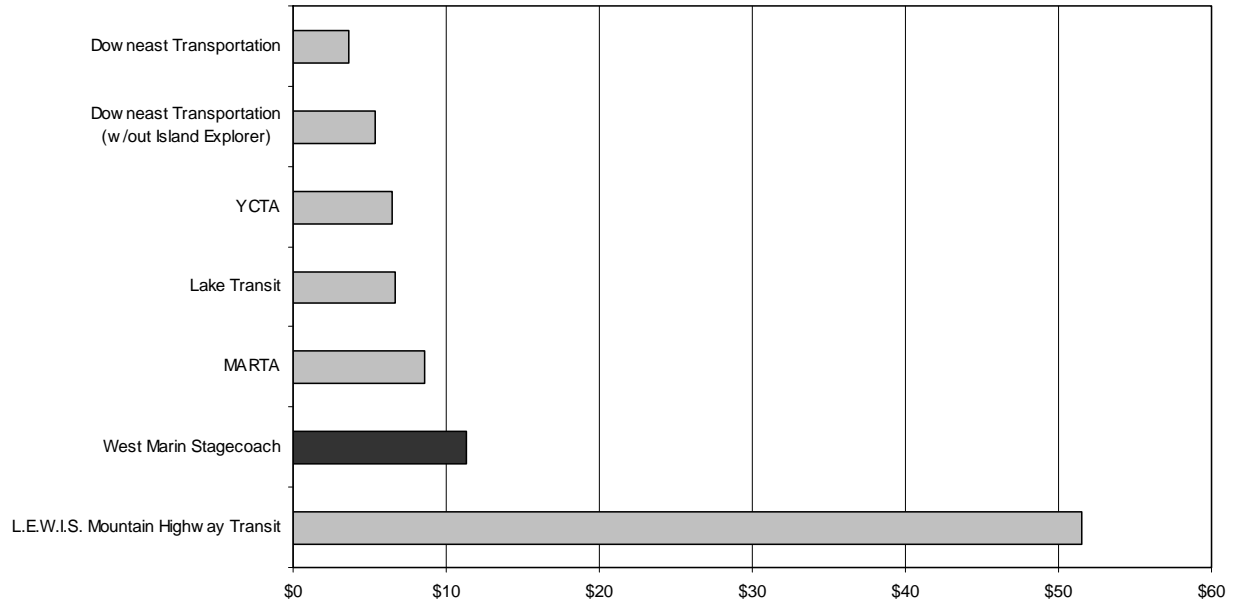
Figure 3-45 Operating Cost per Revenue Hour



Operating Cost per Passenger

Higher operating costs and slightly lower ridership translate into slightly higher costs per passenger than peer systems. Again, L.E.W.I.S. Mountain Transit shows significantly higher costs than any other systems.

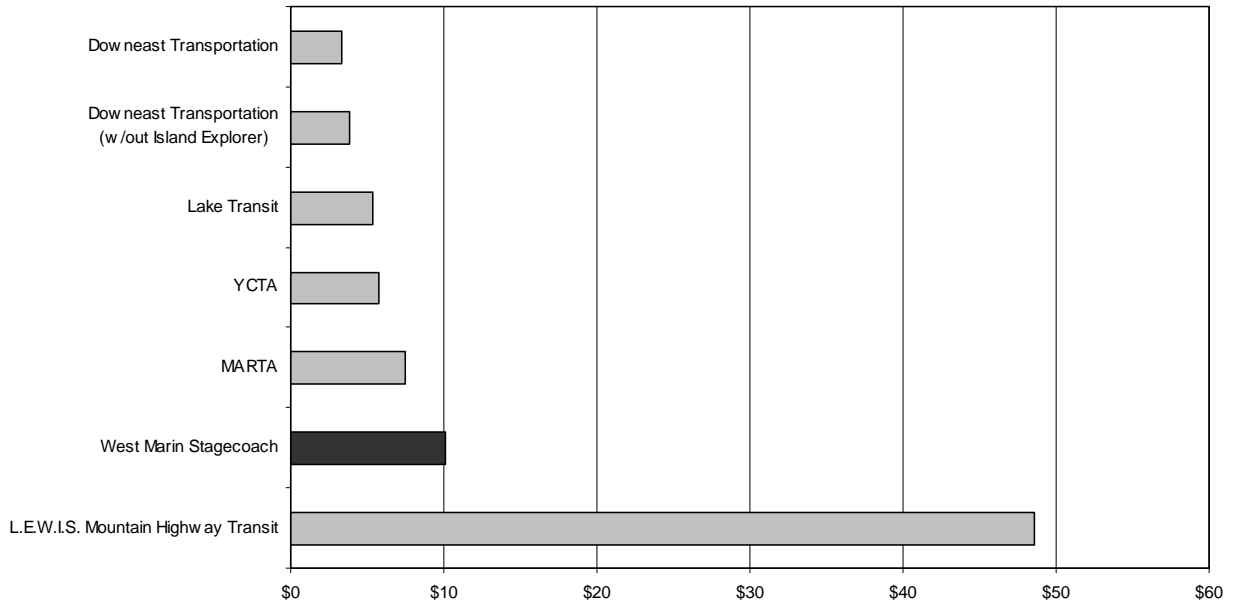
Figure 3-46 Operating Cost per Passenger



Subsidy per Passenger

Likewise, the Stagecoach's subsidy per passenger was somewhat higher than for peer systems.

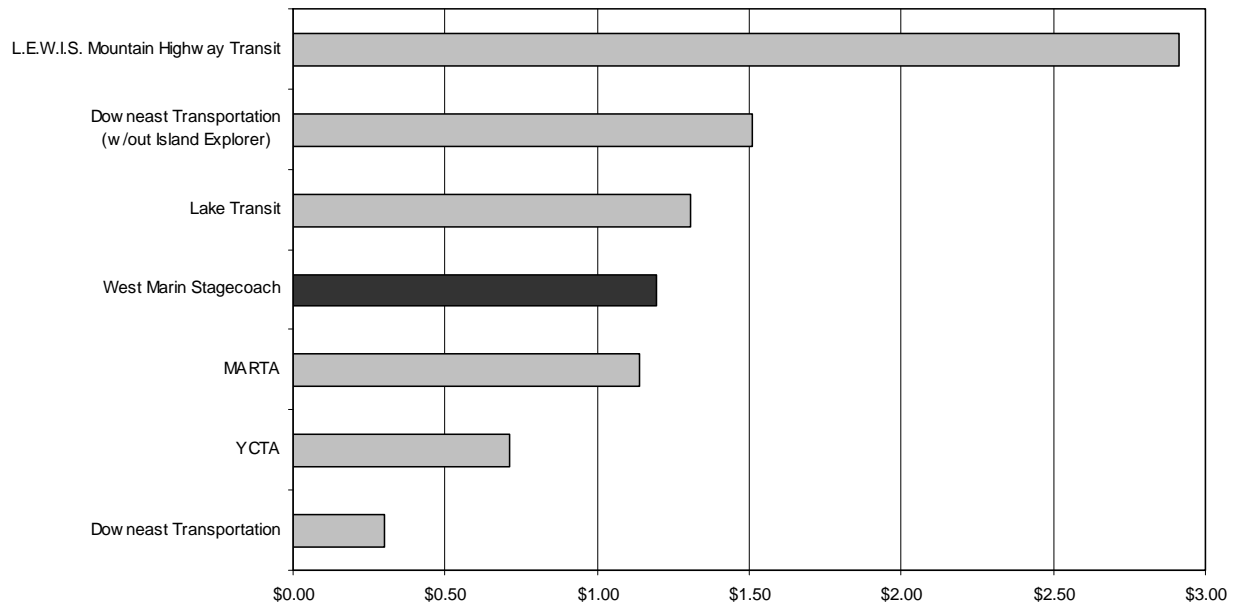
Figure 3-47 Subsidy per Passenger



Average Fare per Passenger

In this category, the Stagecoach performed in the middle range of systems reviewed. Downeast Transportation’s figure for service excluding the Island Explorer includes relatively expensive subscription-based services.. While L.E.W.I.S. Mountain Transit’s fares are very reasonable for the service provided, they have the highest fares for this group.

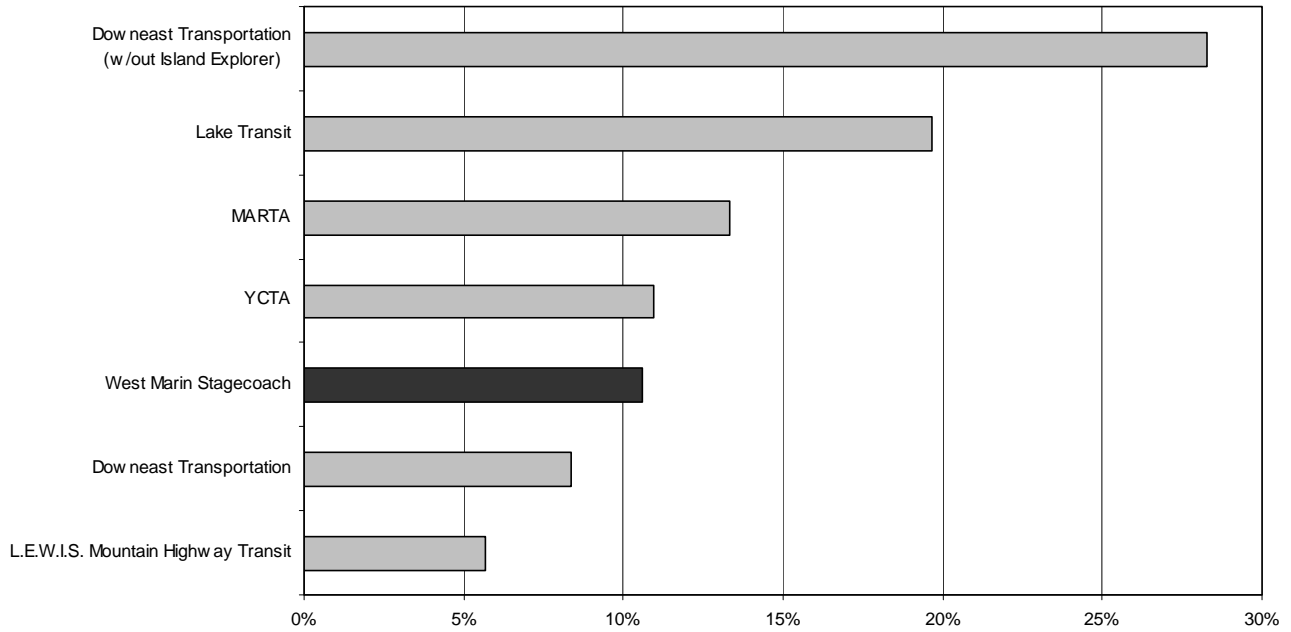
Figure 3-48 Average Fare per Passenger



Farebox Recovery Ratio

The Stagecoach’s farebox recovery ratio, a key measure of cost-effectiveness, is lower than that of most of its peers. When taken together with other categories that take ridership into account, this indicates that overall, the Stage lags behind its peers in terms of attracting patronage. However, while the systems reviewed for this exercise operate in contexts similar to that of West Marin, most of the area served by the Stage is particularly rural with lower population densities.

Figure 3-49 Farebox Recovery Ratio



Chapter 4. On-Board Survey Analysis

This chapter summarizes the results of the on-board passenger survey conducted on the West Marin Stagecoach during the first week of November, 2008. Understanding the market currently served by local transit is critical to improving the system. An on-board survey is the most cost-effective means of obtaining reliable information about current riders and their travel behavior and provides critical information about rider attitudes which can be used to improve transit service. Expanding the number of trips made by current riders by addressing their concerns is often the best way to increase ridership on a local transit system.

Methodology

During the week of November 2 through 9, 2008, a passenger survey was conducted on each of the Stagecoach routes on a typical weekday, Saturday and Sunday (except the Route 62, which does not run on Sunday). Mondays and Fridays were avoided because travel patterns are often different from normal on those days. In addition, Tuesday November 4, Election Day, was avoided for the same reason. Since the survey was taken in early November, summer recreational usage is not reflected. Seasonal ridership by route is shown in the monthly ridership charts in Chapter 3.

Surveyors distributed passenger surveys as riders boarded the bus, instructing them to fill out only one survey during the survey period. Passengers were asked to complete the survey while on the bus and return it to the surveyor prior to alighting. They also had the option of returning the survey by postage-paid mail. Surveys in both English and Spanish were distributed. Figure 4-1 below shows the days on which data from each route was collected.

Figure 4-1 Survey Collection – Routes, Days, and Quantities

Route	Starts in	Sunday Nov 2	Wednesday Nov 5	Thursday Nov 6	Saturday Nov 8	Sunday Nov 9	Totals by route
Route 61 (South route)	Bolinas	19	36		14		69
Route 61A (South weekend)	Marin City				17	23	40
Route 62 (Coastal)	Stinson Beach			9	7		16
Route 68 (North route)	Inverness	15 (PM runs)	24		16	10 (AM runs)	65
Totals by day		34	60	9	54	33	190

A copy of the survey forms can be found in Appendix A, and a map of the current routes can be found in Chapter 3.

A total of 190 surveys were collected: 69 on weekdays, 54 on Saturday and the remainder on Sunday. The combined weekday and weekend survey responses were analyzed by route and as

a whole. Questions covered trip origin, destination and purpose; demographic information; and an open-ended request for comments on any aspect of the service.

Of the 190 surveys returned, 14% were Spanish. For routes 61, 62 and 68, between 13% and 17% of surveys were in Spanish, while the lowest number, 7.5%, were collected from the weekend-only 61A route from Marin City to Bolinas.

Summary of Findings

Following are highlights from the analysis of survey data.

- West Marin residents are generally very satisfied with the service, and consider it a lifeline to employment, schools, and connections to other transit. Comments were predominately favorable, with the most common requests being for increased frequency, earlier and later service, and service to the Bolinas Mesa.
- The system is used regularly by youth to go to high school in both Fairfax and Mill Valley. Service to Tomales High School was also requested.
- Compared with the general population of Marin County, Stagecoach riders are younger, have slightly lower household incomes, and are of virtually the same racial percentages. Three quarters of the riders live in Marin, and of those, 66% live in West Marin.
- Certain factors varied significantly between weekday riders and weekend riders. During the week, 85% of riders live within Marin County with over 60% going to work or to school. On the weekends, just under 70% live in Marin, with 21% coming to Marin from San Francisco. On weekends, recreational users comprise 55% of Stagecoach riders.
- The majority of riders accessed the bus and their final destination by walking, with some transferring to and from other transit.
- If the Stagecoach service were not available, almost half the riders would have no transportation alternative, while others would bicycle, walk, or hitchhike.

Who Rides the West Marin Stagecoach?

The following sections provide a profile of current transit riders on the MCTD local system. The data shows that the system is used for a variety of trip types to access school, work and recreation. Most current riders have no auto alternative available. Stagecoach riders have somewhat lower incomes than the general population in the County.

Age

The majority of the current Stagecoach riders are in the “prime working ages” of 22-64. Two-thirds of all riders were in that age group, equal to the proportion of that age group throughout Marin. On the ride check days, 26.5% of riders reported being 17 years of age or younger, 6 percentage points higher than that age group in Marin overall. The Route 68, running between Point Reyes Station and San Rafael, has the highest number of youth riders, as this is the route that serves Sir Frances Drake High School in Fairfax. The next highest was the Route 61, connecting Bolinas and Stinson to Mill Valley, stopping at Tamalpais High School. Riders under age 18 varied by route as follows:

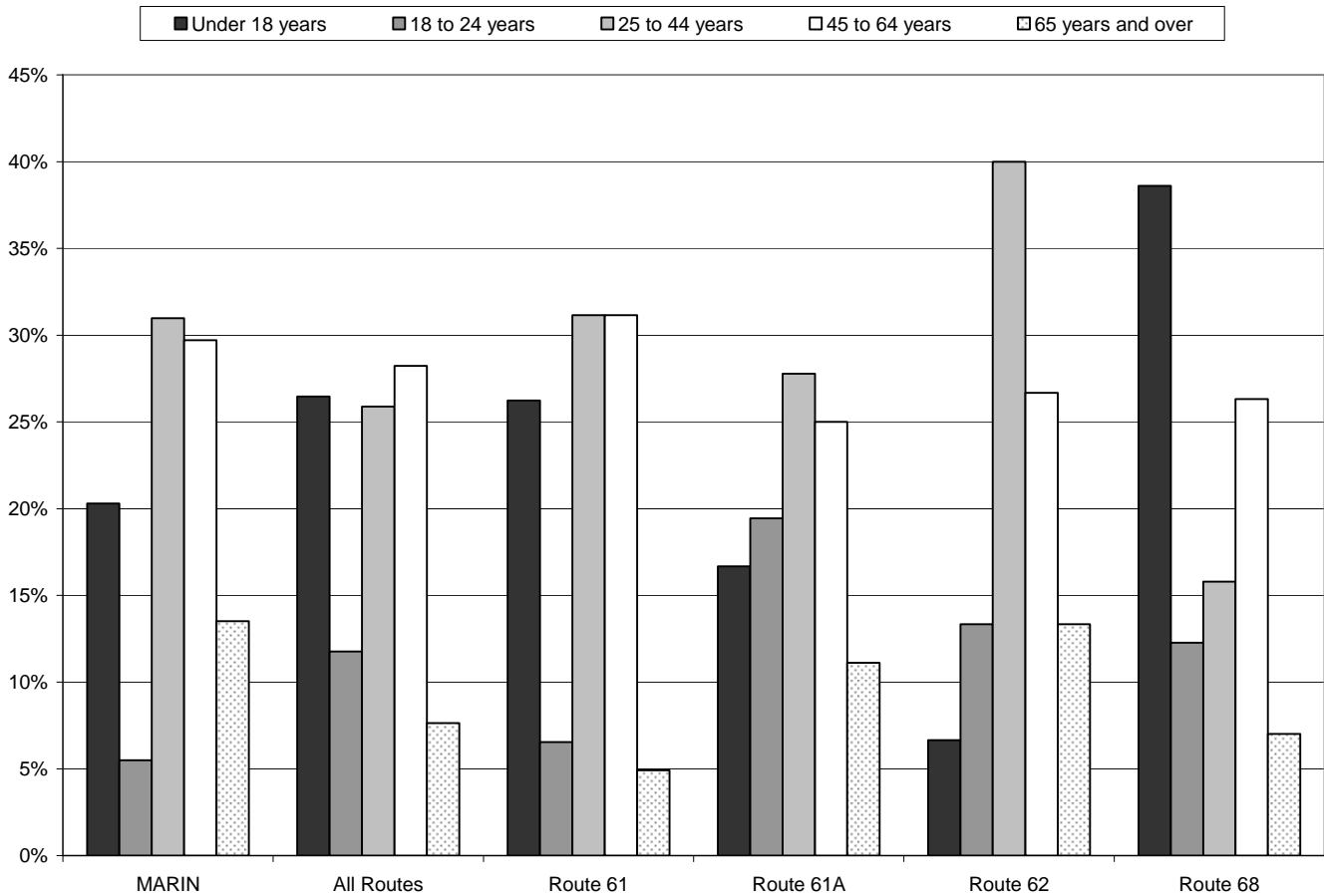
- Route 61 25%
- Route 61A 15%

MARIN TRANSIT

- Route 62 6%
- Route 68 37%

While 14% of Marin residents are over 65, only 8% of Stage riders are in that age group. Figure 4-2 shows the percentage in each age group for all of Marin (Census 2000), for all Stagecoach routes combined, and for each route. Note the large percentage of riders under 18 on the 61 and the 68.

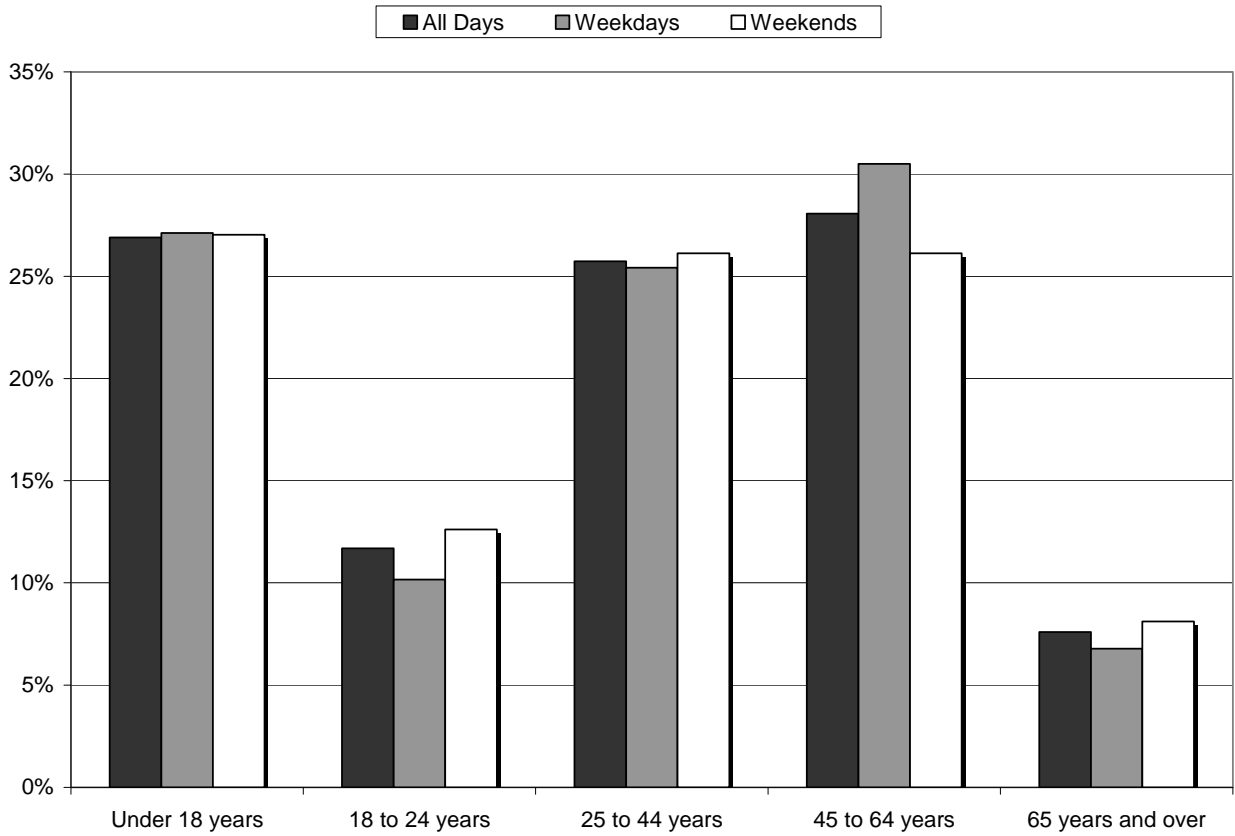
Figure 4-2 Riders by Age and Route



N = 170

While age varied by route, the age of travelers remained fairly steady regardless of whether they traveled on a weekday or a weekend. Overall, over 35% of riders was under age 18, regardless of the day, with 8% or less being over 65. The greatest difference based on weekday vs. weekend was a slight increase (4%) in riders in the 45 to 64 age range on weekdays.

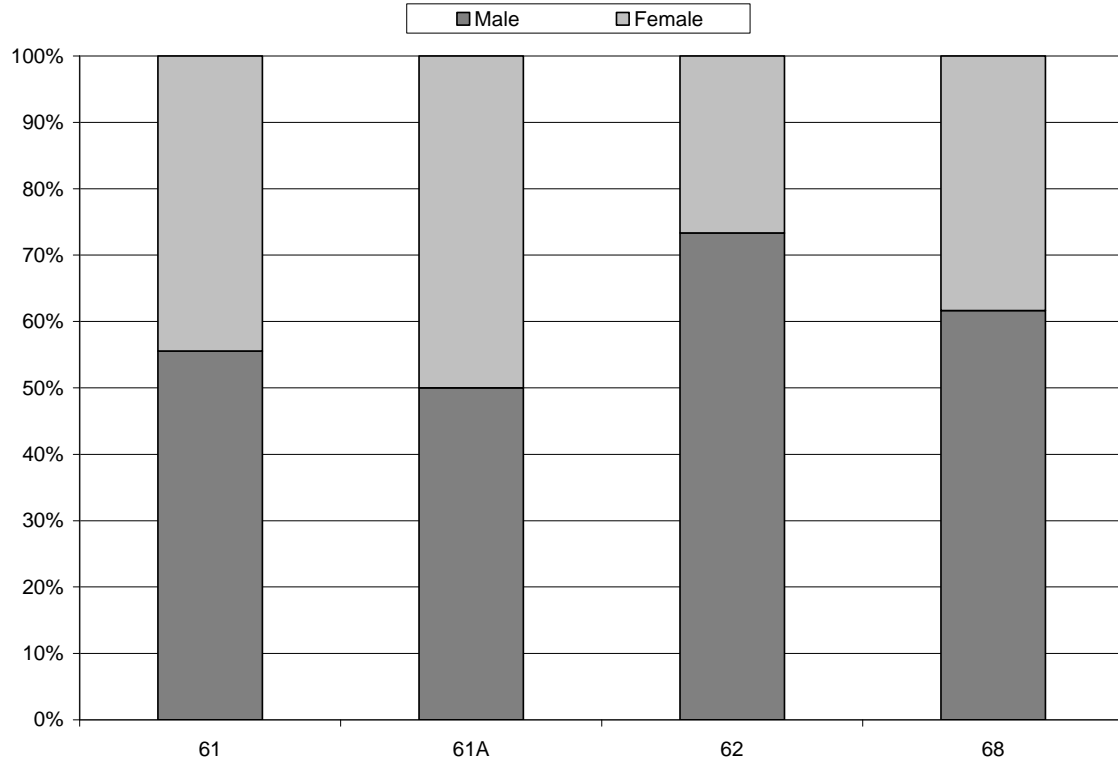
Figure 4-3 Rider Age by Weekday / Weekend



Gender

Of the 177 survey respondents reporting gender, 42% of riders were female and 58% were male. Route 62 carried over 70% male riders. Figure 4-4 below shows the balance of male and female riders by route based on the ridecheck surveys.

Figure 4-4 Rider Gender by Route

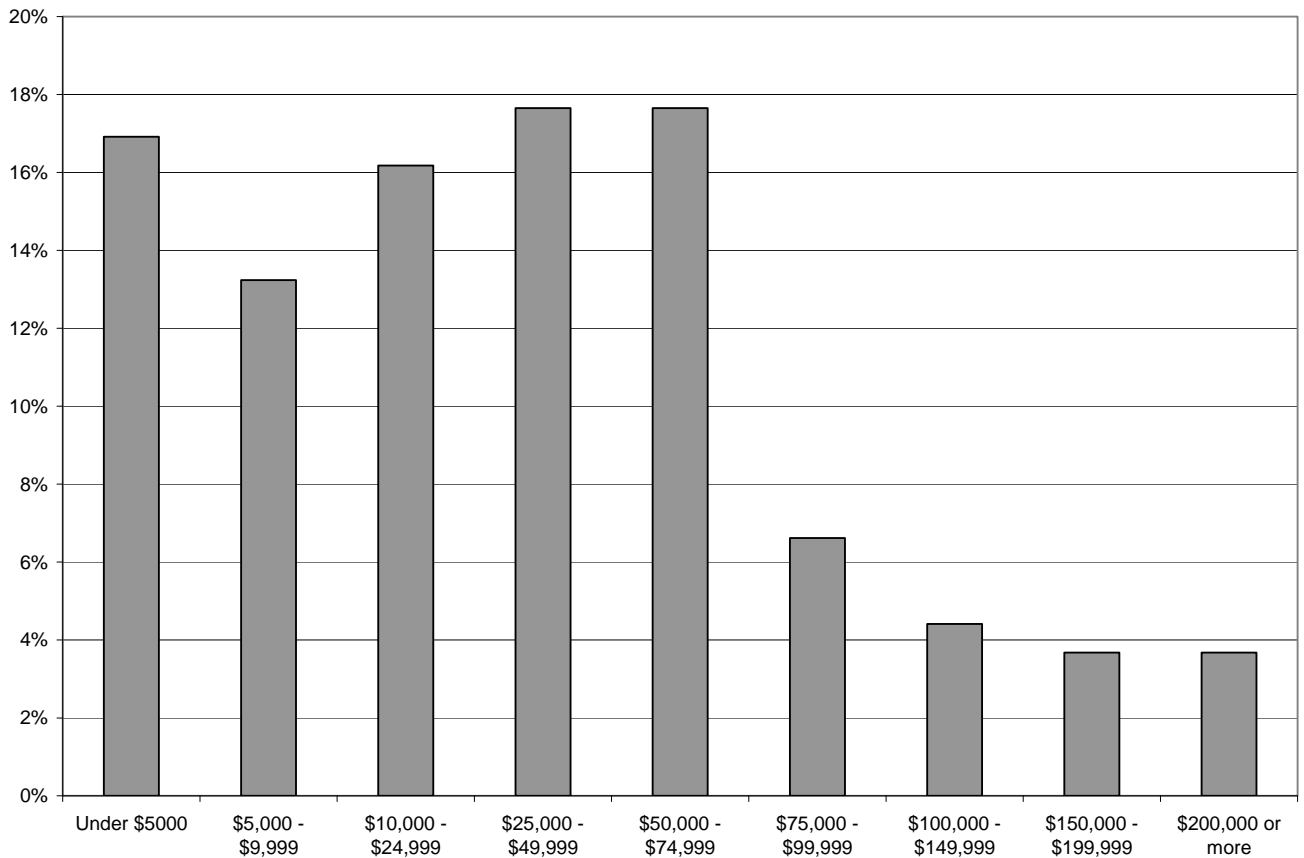


N = 176

Income

Of the 190 surveys collected, 136 or just over 70% reported their household income. About 30% of respondents report household incomes of less than \$10,000 per year. Almost half of survey respondents (46%) reported incomes below \$25,000, and 64% have incomes under \$50,000. In comparison, the 2004 median income for all of Marin is \$67,731¹², indicating that West Marin residents are of lower income than the county overall. Figure 4-5 below shows the distribution of household incomes for all surveys reporting this information.

Figure 4-5 Household Income of Riders



N = 136

Race/Ethnicity

The survey asked the race of the rider, asking that they check all races that apply from a list as shown below. The great majority – 76% - stated their race as Caucasian/White only, with an additional 5% stating White in addition to other races. Eleven percent stated their race as Hispanic, and 4% were Asian / Pacific Islander. This racial distribution matches almost exactly the racial makeup of Marin County as a whole, with 76% non-Hispanic White, 13% Hispanic, 5% Asian, 3% Black, and 0.6% Native Americans. While less than 1% self-reported as Black, 3.6% noted their race as Black plus some other race.

¹² Source: US Census Bureau State & County QuickFacts

Figure 4-6 Race/Ethnicity of Surveyed Riders

Number	Percent	Caucasian/ White	Hispanic	African Am/ Black	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Native American	Other
127	76.5%	x					
19	11.4%		x				
7	4.2%				x		
3	1.8%	x		x		x	
1	0.6%			x			x Middle Eastern
1	0.6%			x			
1	0.6%					x	
1	0.6%						x unstated
1	0.6%	x	x				
1	0.6%		x		x		
1	0.6%	x		x			
1	0.6%	x				x	
1	0.6%	x			x		
1	0.6%	x	x	x			

N = 166

Where do Riders Live?

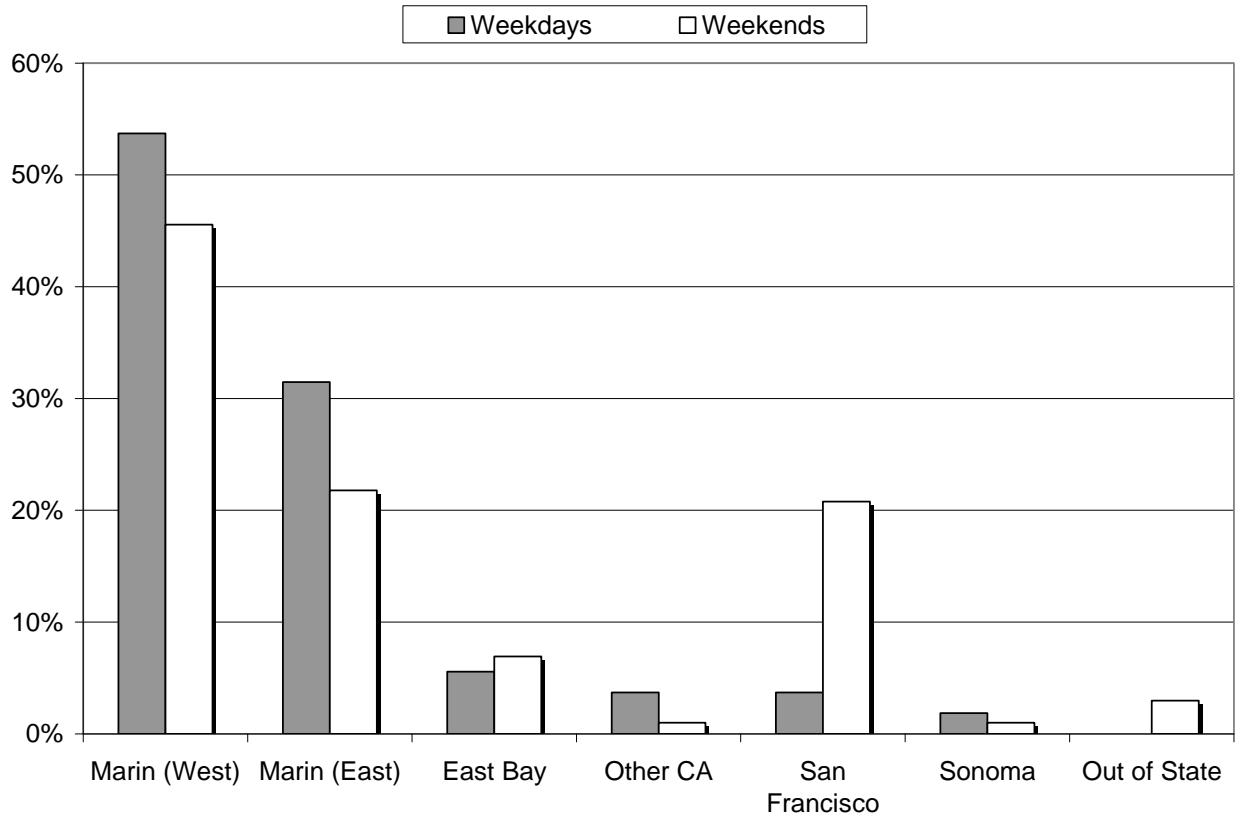
Riders were asked to supply the ZIP code for their residence. Over 70% of the Stagecoach riders live in Marin County, with 66% of those living in West Marin and a third in the more central or eastern part of the county. Of the remaining riders, 15% are from San Francisco, and 6% are from the East Bay. Figure 4-7 below shows the distribution of home locations for respondents to the survey.

Figure 4-7 Home locations of Stagecoach Riders

Home ZIP Code	Number	Percent
Marin	114	73%
San Francisco	23	15%
East Bay	10	6%
Out of State	5	3%
Other CA	3	2%
Sonoma	2	1%
Total	157	
Marin Residents only		
West Marin	75	66%
East Marin	39	34%
Total	114	

However, as might be expected, visitors from San Francisco, the East Bay and out of state comprise a larger percentage of riders on the weekends. On the weekdays surveyed, only 4% of riders were from San Francisco, compared to 22% on the weekends, with no out of state visitors during the week.

Figure 4-8 Home locations of Stagecoach Riders by Weekday/Weekend



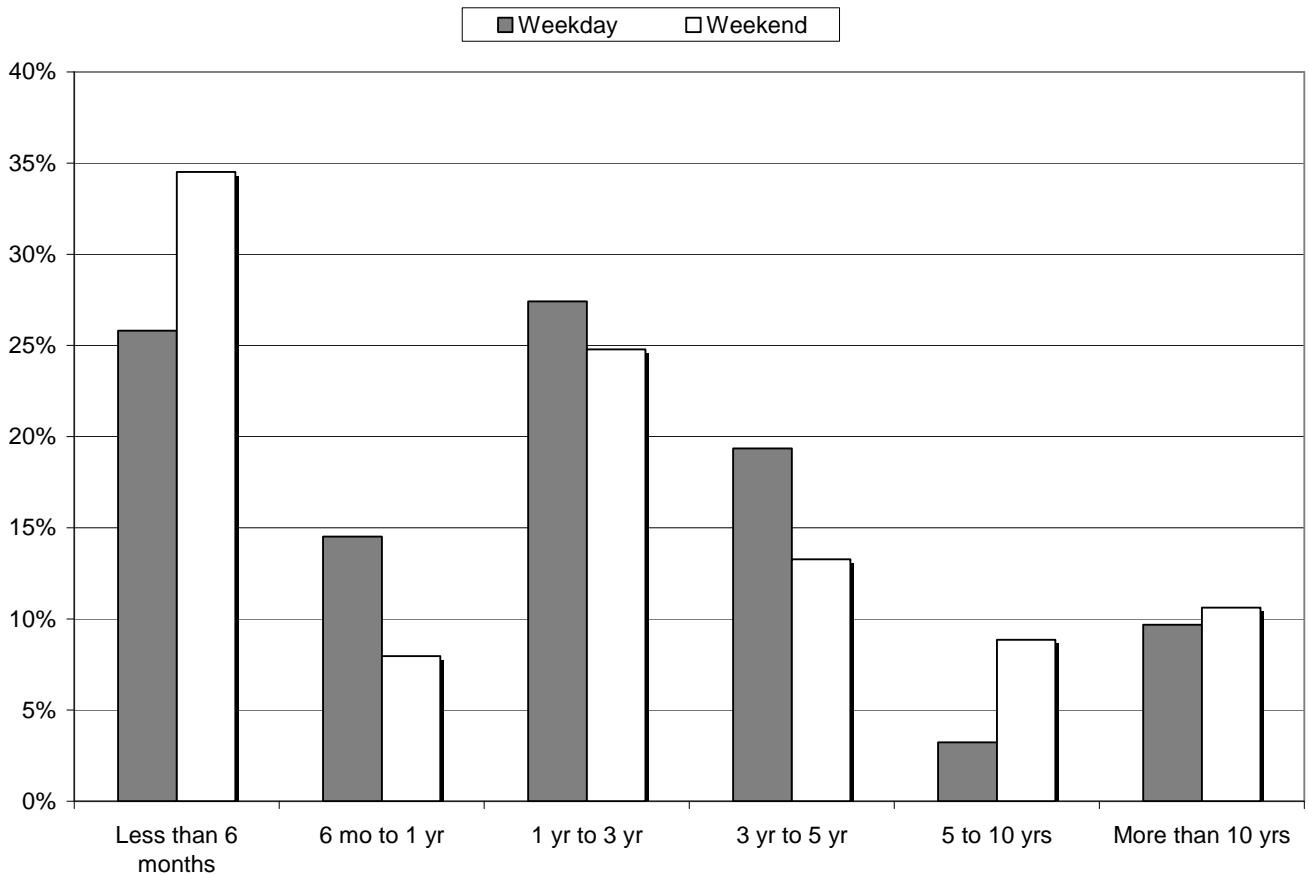
Transit Usage

This section describes the transit riding habits of Stagecoach riders – how long respondents have used transit, why they use it, and what alternatives they have to using transit.

Stagecoach Use

Riders were asked, “How long have you been using Marin Transit buses?” Almost a third of those surveyed had used the Marin Transit less than six months, while the next largest group, at 26%, had used Marin Transit for between one and three years. However, weekday riders tended to have ridden the Stagecoach for a longer period of time, with 47% having ridden between one and five years. In contrast, 35% of weekend riders had ridden the Stage less than six-months. Figure 4-9 below shows how long weekday and weekend riders have used Marin Transit.

Figure 4-9 Longevity of Ridership by Weekday/Weekend



When looked at by route, the Route 61 showed 31% riding Marin Transit for one to three years, the longest for any single route. Figure 4-10 below shows the longevity of ridership by route. However, note that the question asked about riding Marin transit in general, rather than the Stagecoach alone; while it appears that most people referred to this particular trip or route in their answers, the correlation to these specific routes may not be perfect.

Figure 4-10 Longevity of Ridership by Route

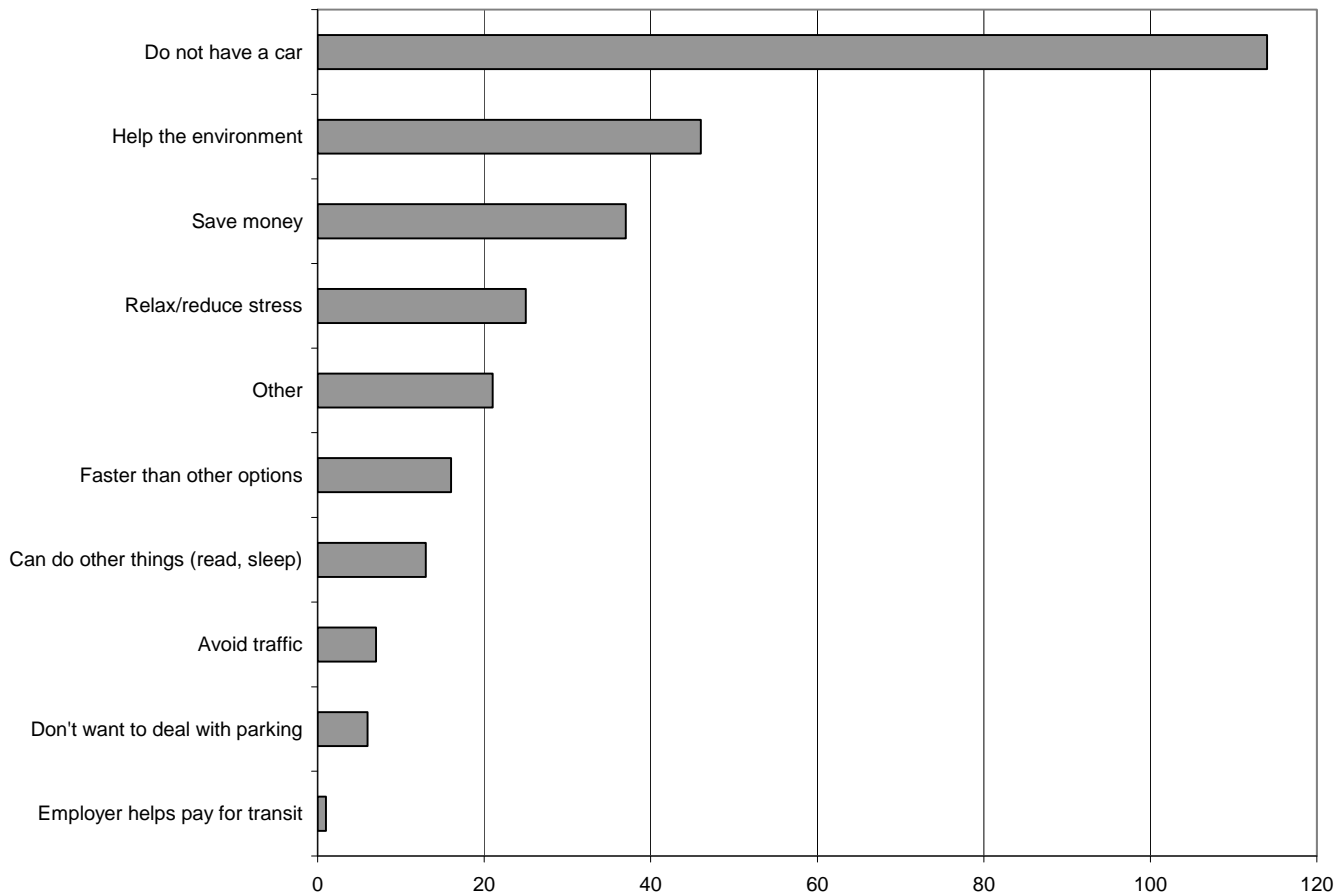
Rt #	Less than 6 months	6 mo to 1 yr	1 to 3 yrs	3 to 5 yrs	5 to 10 yrs	More than 10 yrs
61	27%	9%	31%	14%	6%	13%
61A	45%	11%	21%	11%	5%	8%
62	33%	7%	20%	20%	7%	13%
68	28%	12%	24%	19%	9%	9%
All Routes	31%	10%	26%	15%	7%	10%

N = 175

Why Use Transit

Respondents were asked for up to two main reasons for riding Marin Transit, as shown below in Figure 4-11. The highest number responded that they did not own a car, followed by the desire to help the environment, and to save money.

Figure 4-11 Why Respondents Ride Marin Transit



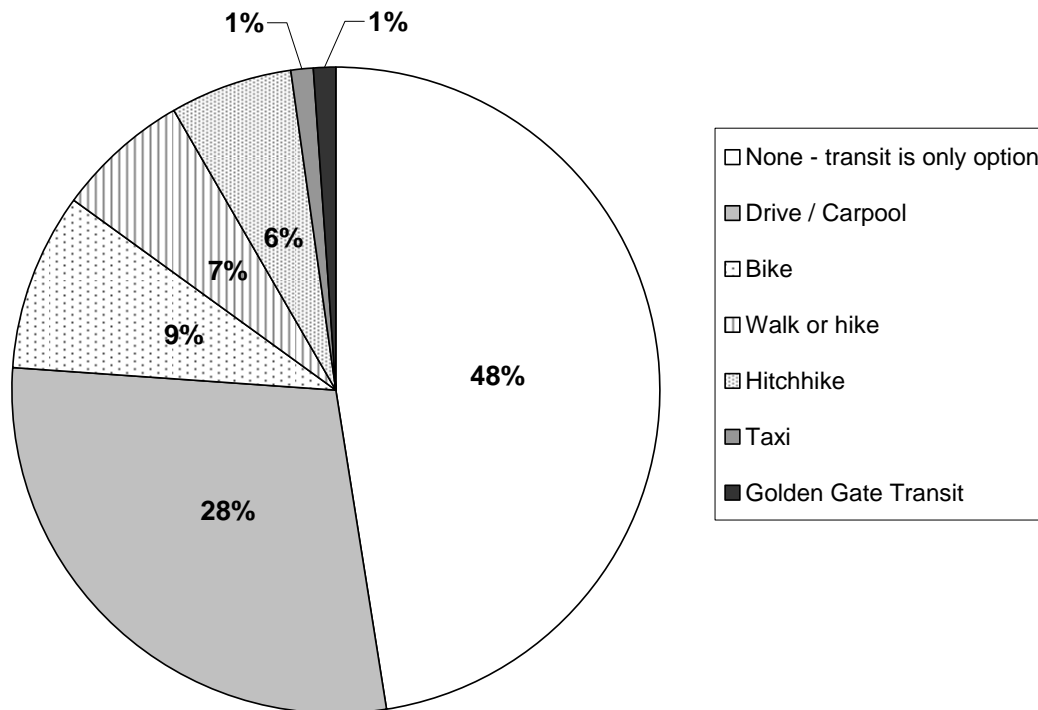
N=168

Of the 21 respondents answering “Other”, seven said they use the bus to get to or return from hiking; all of these comments were given by riders on the Route 61 or 61A on a weekend day. Others said for convenience, to look at the scenery, to avoid hitchhiking, or “all of the above”.

Alternatives to Transit

Riders were asked how they would have made their trip if Marin Transit had not been available. Almost half of respondents had no alternative transportation for this trip. Almost 30% said they could drive or carpool, and 13% would have walked or biked. Only 2% said they could take either a taxi or another bus, most likely because except for sections of Route 68, the Stage routes do not overlap with other transit services. One surprising finding was that 6% of respondents said that without the Stage, they would hitchhike. These responses highlight the lack of alternatives to the Stage service in West Marin and the degree to which riders must rely on it for transportation in this area. This dependence on the West Marin Stage is also reflected in the Rider Comments later in this chapter.

Figure 4-12 Alternatives to Stagecoach



Trip Details

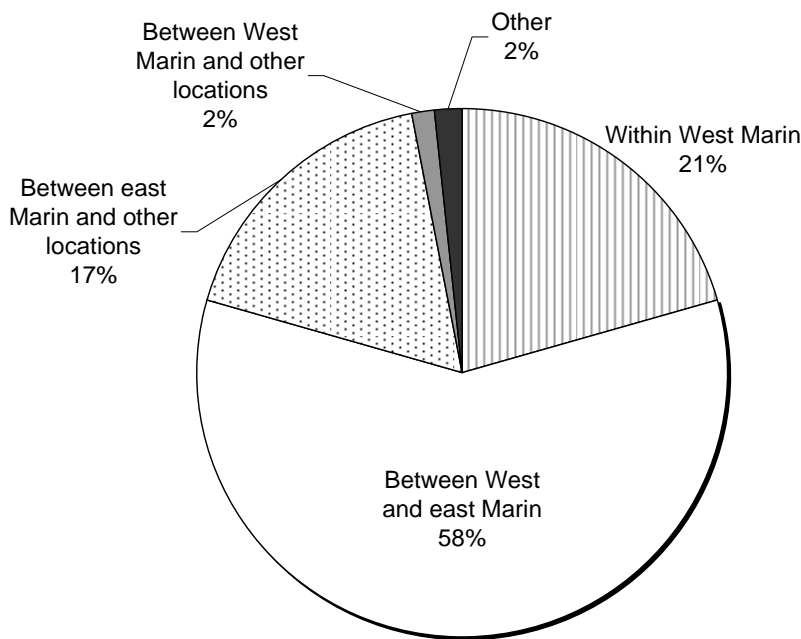
This section covers information from the surveys related to the particular trip the rider was taking, and includes information like trip origin and destination, access to transit, payment, and trip purpose.

Trip Origins and Destinations

Riders were asked for the starting point of their trip and the final destination – specifically not the bus stop, but the city, intersection and or place or landmark for their trip origin and destination.

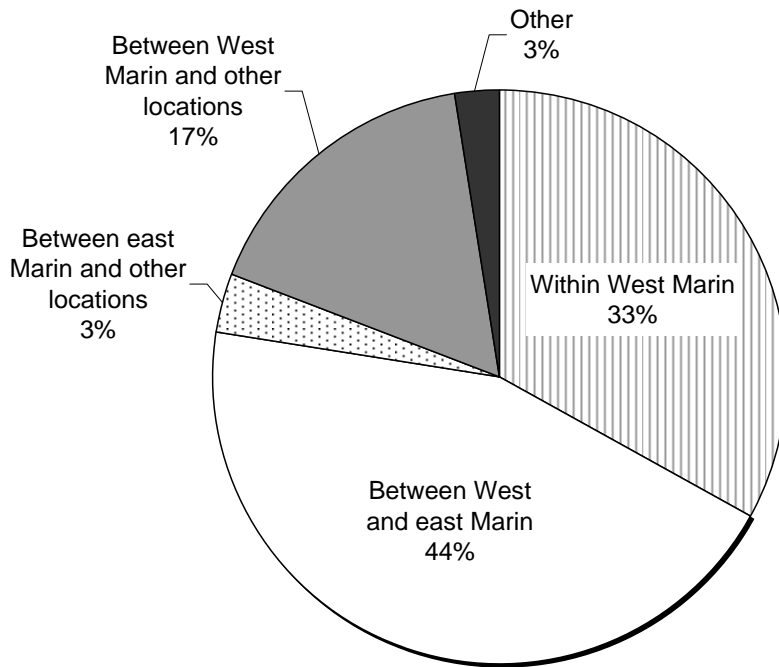
Weekday and weekend trips show different patterns of travel, reflecting the number of visitors from outside West Marin and varying recreational usage. During the weekdays, there are fewer trips strictly within West Marin, with greater traffic between West Marin and other parts of Marin, reflecting people commuting to work and school within the County, with only 2% connecting to locations outside the Marin. The 17% of trips not entering West Marin at all are taken on the 61 between Marin City and Mill Valley, and on the 68 between the San Rafael Transit Center and Fairfax. For transit-dependant residents of Marin City, the Route 61 provides an easy way to get to and from the Mill Valley Safeway near Tam High School. With no formal stops between San Rafael and San Anselmo, the Route 68 can provide an express to the San Anselmo transit hub, continuing on to Fairfax with one stop at Drake High School.

Figure 4-13 Weekday Trip Regional Patterns



On weekends, trips tend to stay more within West Marin, with 17% of trips connecting West Marin to locations outside Marin County, such as San Francisco and the East Bay – most likely recreational visitors going to the parks and the beach. Trips not entering West Marin at all fall from 17% to 3% of trips, supporting the idea that these are primarily school and work trips.

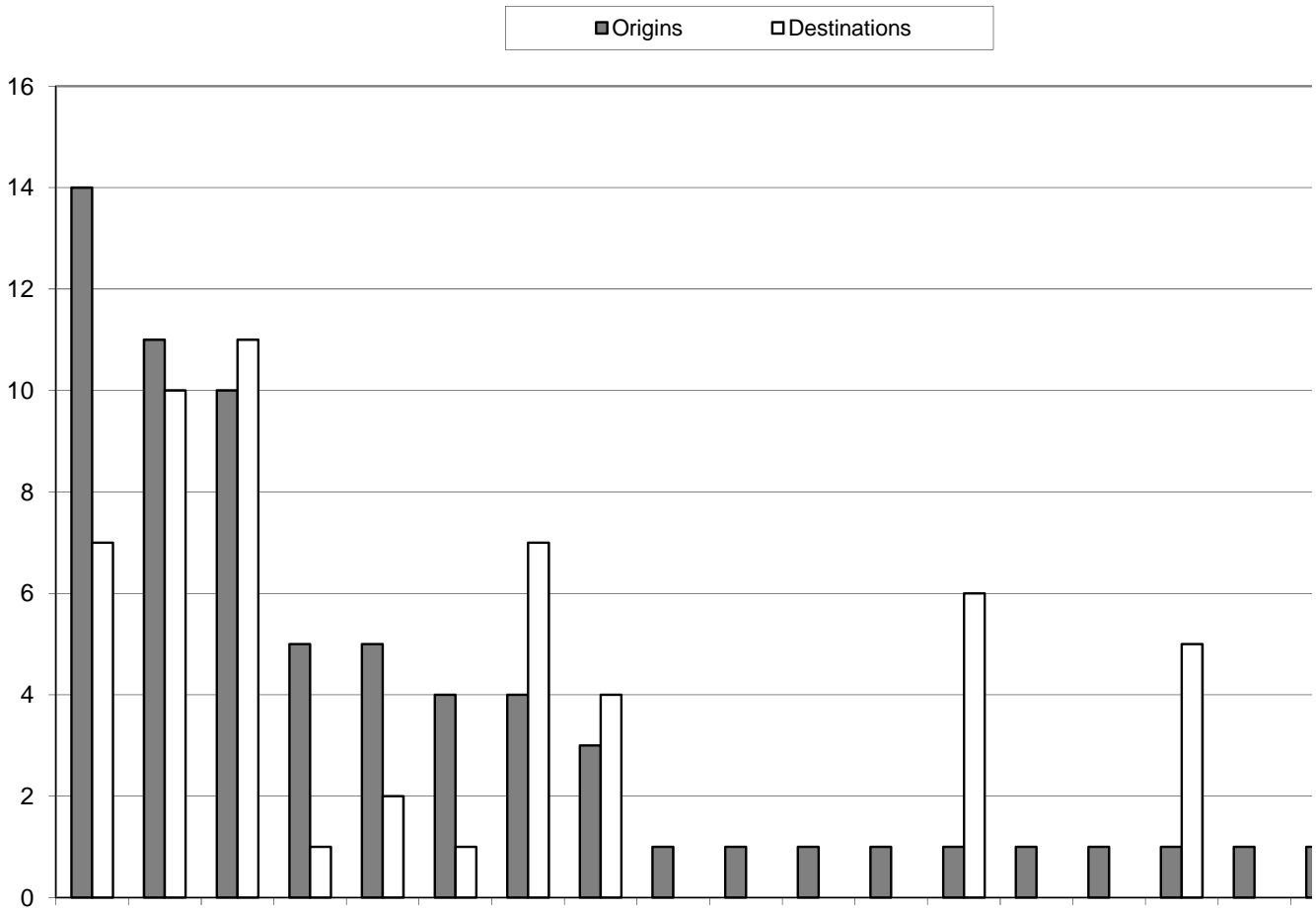
Figure 4-14 **Weekend Trip Regional Patterns**



MARIN TRANSIT

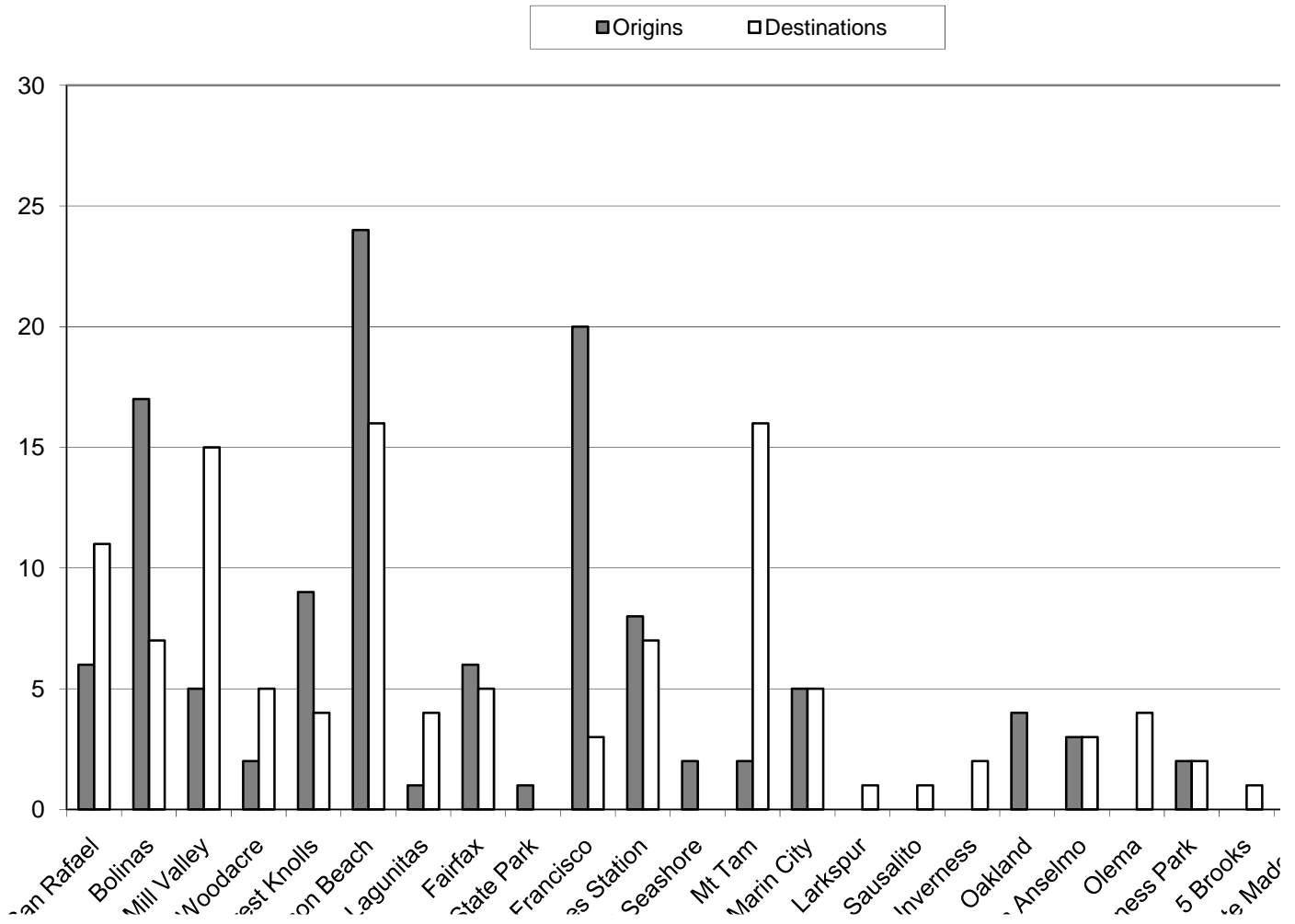
As might be expected, for all routes, the major origin points and destination points were the larger towns and transfer points along the routes. San Rafael was the major origin point for weekday riders, followed by Bolinas and Mill Valley, indicating a two-way flow between the east and west parts of Marin during the workweek. Important destinations were San Anselmo, Stinson Beach, Marin City and Point Reyes Station. Figure 4-15 below shows weekday trip origins and destinations; this data includes all riders on all routes.

Figure 4-15 Weekday Origins and Destinations



On the weekend, San Francisco becomes an important point of origin for Stagecoach riders, as well as Stinson Beach and Bolinas. Recreational sites such as Mount Tamalpais and Stinson Beach were major destinations, as well as San Rafael and Mill Valley, possibly as a shopping destination. Figure 4-16 shows origin and destinations points for all routes on weekend survey days.

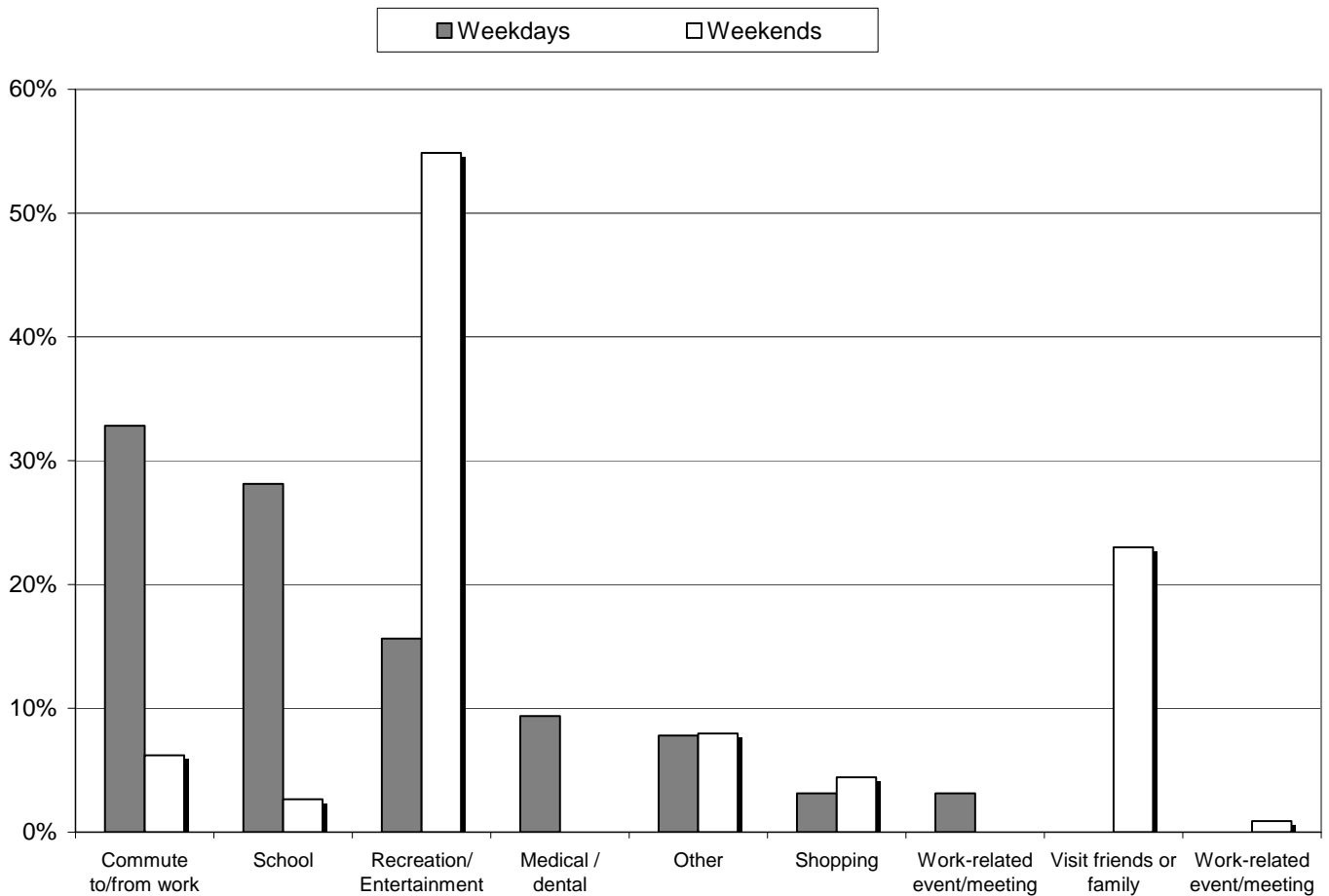
Figure 4-16 Weekend Origins and Destinations



Trip Purpose

Trip purpose varied significantly between weekdays and weekends. During the week, most riders were going to work (33%) or school (28%), with 16% participating in recreational activities. On the weekends, the majority (55%) were engaging in recreational activities or visiting friends and family (23%), with only 6% going to work.

Figure 4-17 Trip Purposes by Weekday and Weekend



Access to and from the Bus

Riders were asked how they got to the bus stop where they boarded, and how they planned to complete their trip. The majority of people (over 60%) walked both to the bus from their starting point, and then from the bus to their final destination. Figures 4-18 and 4-19 show how people got to the bus and then from the bus to their final destination.

Figure 4-18 Access to the Bus

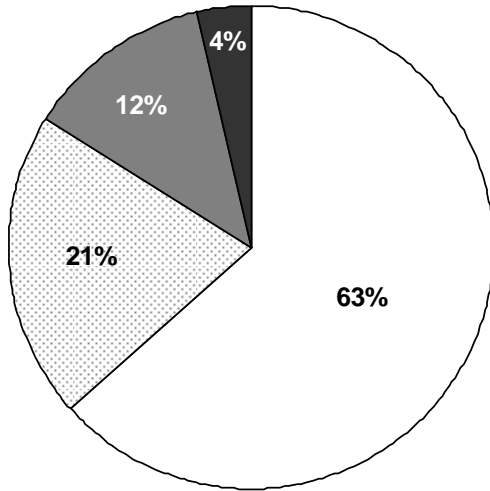
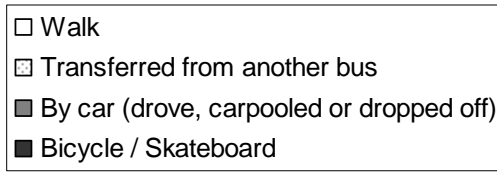
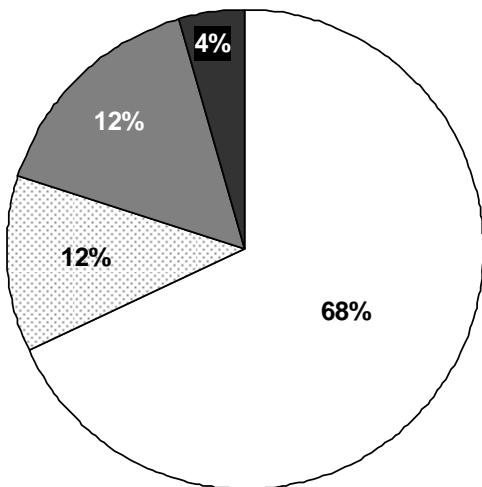
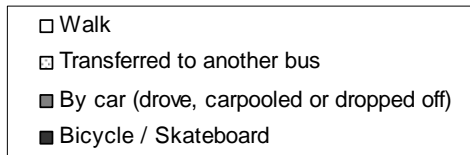


Figure 4-19 Access from the Bus to Final Destination



Transfers

As noted in Chapter 3, Marin County local riders can get free transfers between the West Marin Stagecoach and the Community Shuttles (221, 233 & 259) and Golden Gate Transit routes within Marin County. Transfers are issued only at time of boarding and are not valid for travel on Golden Gate buses outside of Marin County. Transfers from transbay buses and ferries are accepted on the Stage.

Of the 191 people responding to the survey, 58 (30%) transferred to or from another bus during their trip. Of those who transferred during their trip, 57% transferred once, 28% transferred twice, and 16% transferred three times or more. Route 68, traveling between Inverness through Point Reyes, Fairfax, San Anselmo and San Rafael, had the smallest percentage of transfers (22%), while Route 62, traveling between Stinson Beach and Point Reyes, had the largest percentage of transferring riders (44%).

Fares and Payment

The majority of riders (almost 60%) paid the regular adult fare for their Stagecoach ride, while close to 30% paid the Youth fare, reflecting the high number of young riders on these routes.

Fare Category	Number	Percent
Adult	106	59%
Youth	51	28%
Senior	15	8%
Disabled	6	3%
Student	3	2%
	181	100%

By far the most common method of payment was cash, with 86% of riders using this payment method. Of the 51 riders paying the Youth fare, only nine used a Youth pass. Translink is not an available payment method on the Stagecoach.

Payment methods	Number	Percent
Cash	151	86%
Transfer	12	7%
Youth pass	9	5%
Ticket (from book)	3	2%
Translink	0	0%
Other	0	0%
	175	100%

Traveling with children

Only eight survey respondents indicated that they were traveling with children on the bus, with 5 traveling with two children, and one with three or more.

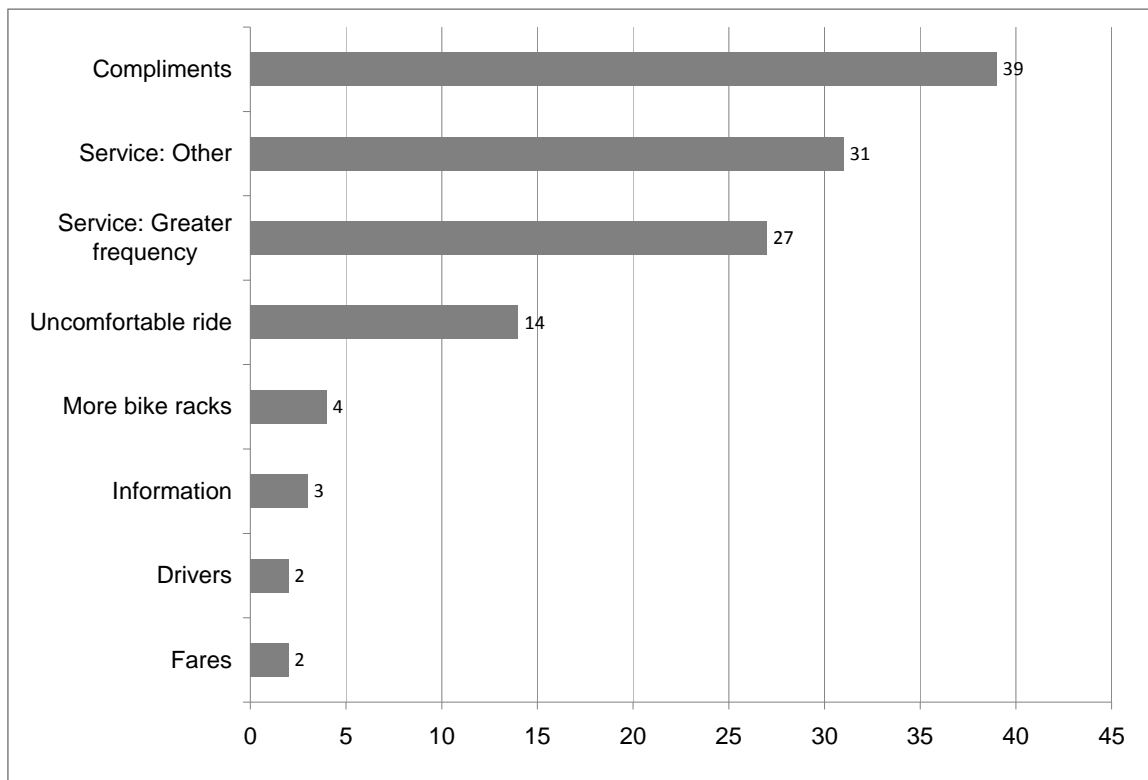
Suggestions and Comments from Riders

The end of the survey provided an open-ended section where respondents could make any sort of comment or suggestion. The 122 comments collected have been categorized as shown below in Figure 4-20. Almost a third complimented the service, referring to how much it is needed, how convenient it is, that it runs on schedule, and that the drivers are friendly. About one fifth of the comments requested greater frequency of service, with 25% making comments on other aspects of the service (covered in more detail below).

About 12% made specific comments about discomfort on the bus; half of those complained about the very bumpy ride, while acknowledging also that very rough road conditions along some sections of the routes are the greatest contributing factor. Others requested more comfortable seats, and more or less music on board, while one requested storage space for two car seats.

The remainder of the comments asked for more bike racks on the buses, and lower fares and passes to make payment easier. They also commented on specific drivers, and made requests and suggestions for more real-time information on when the bus would arrive, or if or schedules or stop locations had changed. Figure 4-20 below shows the major categories of comments from riders.

Figure 4-20 All Rider Comments



N = 122

Service Requests – “Other”

Thirty one of the comments related to service changes other than frequency. Eight of these requested service to the Mesa in Bolinas in addition to the downtown Bolinas stop. There were five requests for earlier service, particularly to Marin City and to Point Reyes, so that people could use the service to get to work. In addition, an earlier bus was requested from Bolinas to Tomales High School so that students who wish to go there could get there on time (there is no school bus service from Bolinas to Tomales High School). The remainder of service requests asked for better connections to Golden Gate Transit, route changes or stop additions, and adherence to schedules.

All comments are included in Appendix B.

Chapter 5. Stakeholder Interviews

This section summarizes stakeholder interviews conducted with individuals in Marin representing key ridership groups, employers, and the business community. Interviews with more than twenty key stakeholders were conducted in November of 2008. Some interviewees circulated the questionnaire to members of their organization, providing seven additional responses. A complete list of the individuals and organizations interviewed is contained in Appendix C, as well as the questionnaire used to guide the conversations.

Overview

- West Marin residents are highly supportive of public transportation services for those unable to drive, and would like to see more marketing of these services to visitors.
- The residential population in West Marin is growing older on average, and schools are shrinking; very little change in housing growth or development patterns is expected.
- Transportation needs for seniors are expected to grow. Many organizations are concerned about access to health care, and suggested direct transit service to area hospitals.
- Students are another user group of concern to many organizations. One parent made the point that a new state law prohibits teens from driving other teens, making carpooling more difficult. The bus is an important part of providing mobility to this age group.
- Employers expect that housing affordability will remain an issue and workers will continue to commute from East Marin and Sonoma County; farm workers are an exception, as they are typically housed on site.

Purpose

The purpose of the stakeholder interview process was to identify what is working well with the transit system, where there are issues, visions for a future system, and perspectives on the future of the communities in the study area. A list of stakeholders and community leaders was developed with Marin Transit together with local leaders, representing a variety of interests in public transportation services, including:

- Farms and agriculture
- Schools
- Senior housing and medical services
- Residents
- Recreation and tourism
- Affordable housing
- Local businesses
- Environmental protection and growth management

Findings

West Marin is a rural and largely agricultural area where many needs are met through strong neighborly relationships. In general, respondents said that ride-sharing is commonplace. People

tend to know each other and are likely to arrange carpools or pick each other up from the side of the road as needed. Within the towns, people tend to walk or bike to school or work. Parents in areas where the population is more scattered routinely organize carpools to get children to school. Most residents feel that a car is a necessity to living in West Marin.

Respondents said public transportation services are most highly utilized by those who are unable or cannot afford to drive. This includes teenagers, senior citizens, immigrant workers, and foreign tourists.

Perceptions of existing services

Stakeholders were asked if they were aware of and using the Stage, and about half said they were riders. There were several positive and no negative comments regarding the quality of existing services:

- “The location and security at the existing bus stop are good.”
- “This is great – kids are using it too. We are just beginning to appreciate the Stage.”
- “The Stage is widely used by students and workers alike, and we’re very grateful for it.”
- “Bus drivers are willing to stop at points closer to the hostel on request, and we appreciate that a lot.”

Adequacy of Transit Services

Stakeholders were then asked to rate the adequacy of existing public transportation services in West Marin. Many respondents said that they do not use public transportation services themselves, but expressed concern for those who do use it, naming students, seniors, farm workers, and visitors. These residents were more likely to rate existing services as “good” for most residents, and but that they were “inadequate” for particular groups and visitors. Many of the homeowner association interviewees felt that transit services were “irrelevant” for themselves, but they valued the service as an option for those unable to drive. In some cases they are strongly supportive of service expansions. In particular, respondents in Nicasio and Muir Beach expressed interest in services to their area.

Respondents in the business and recreational sectors echoed residents’ concerns that transit services are inadequate for visitors. There is a strong desire to provide tourists with alternatives to driving to popular beach and park destinations in West Marin. Many respondents suggested integrating services with existing or new shuttle services operated by the National Parks.

Respondents with clients or staff using the Stage valued it highly, but were more likely to rate existing services as inadequate. This includes affordable housing providers, community centers, and schools. They had more nuanced comments about connectivity, frequency, and scheduling issues. Many commented that the Stage’s schedule with four to five hours between drop-off and pick-up is not conducive for short shopping trips, particularly Route 62. In general, Route 61 and 68 got more positive comments than Route 62.

Lack of Transportation as a Barrier

Respondents were also asked whether the lack of transportation keeps people from participating in their organization’s programs, activities, or services. Most respondents indicated that a lack of transit service was not a barrier to participation in their organization or business, however, this was not the case for teenagers. Many respondents indicated that transit was especially needed by teenagers for a wide variety of trip purposes. “Transportation is a barrier for kids in West Marin

in general,” said one respondent. Middle and high school students currently use the Stage to get to school in the morning, home from after-school activities, and for recreational activities and visiting friends in East Marin towns. The service schedule may prevent students from participating in some after-school activities with later end times. Sometimes teens “got stuck” overnight if they missed the last bus.

Respondents indicated that the isolation of West Marin makes it more difficult to hire for lower-wage jobs, like teacher’s aides. Eligible workers tend to live far away in Petaluma or San Rafael, and it is difficult to justify driving 45 minutes to an hour to work for three or four hours for minimum wage. These respondents suggested that increased public transit service might help, but that housing affordability is a closely related issue.

Stakeholders representing agricultural concerns did not find transportation a barrier to hiring, as most farm workers live on-site. They said that those without cars relied upon others for rides, but would likely use transit service if it were available.

Those involved in the tourism industry said that transportation is a significant barrier to accessing their services and recreational areas in general. “Whether they have transportation is the first question we ask when making a reservation, because if not they probably can’t come,” said a respondent from one of the two hostels in West Marin.

Key trip origins, destinations, and travel patterns within the service area

Stakeholders were asked where people in West Marin tend to go to meet their work, shopping, health and recreational needs. These specific places were mentioned by multiple stakeholders:

- Within Marin County, the towns of Sausalito, Stinson Beach, Point Reyes, Point Reyes Station, Inverness, Bolinas, San Rafael, Woodacre, Olema, Mill Valley, Lagunitas
- Recreational areas at Muir Woods Park, Point Reyes beaches and lighthouse, Tomales Bay State Park
- Hospitals in Greenbrae, Terra Linda and Petaluma, the Point Reyes Clinic, and Coastal Health Alliance Clinics in Bolinas, Stinson Beach, and Point Reyes Station
- Shopping malls in Corte Madera and San Rafael, United Market, Marshall Store
- Connecting to Golden Gate Transit at San Rafael and the Sausalito Ferry
- San Francisco and the airport
- Petaluma in Sonoma County

Potential changes in demand

Stakeholders were asked to comment on anticipated changes in population growth and demographics. A respondent from the Marin County Planning Commission said simply, “Very little change is expected.” Some common themes emerged from other responses:

- Housing growth in West Marin is very constrained, and will remain so
- Land prices and rents have been rising for the last decade, and will continue to rise
- Lack of affordable housing means that lower wage workers commute long distances from East Marin and Sonoma County to work in West Marin
- Full-time residents are increasingly replaced by weekend and part-time residents

- The percentage of senior residents is increasing as long-time residents get older, and most newcomers are retirees. “The next ten years will likely look just like the last ten years, with about 40% retirees.”
- As more land shifts from agriculture to conservation, there are fewer farm workers and families. “We are not talking about an influx of workers on a seasonal basis, but a year-round resident population.”
- West Marin schools have been shrinking and will continue. “We expect more part-time residents and families without school-age children.” and “As dairies and oyster production close down, there are fewer farm workers and families, and we anticipate shrinking.”
- Growth in tourism and recreation is expected. “We are increasing guest capacity and exploring shuttle services.” and “We anticipate more tourists and more tourist-serving businesses”

Housing affordability is a factor affecting demand for transit services, because the people most likely to use transit cannot afford housing in West Marin. One agricultural respondent explained, “There is not a diversity of housing in Point Reyes, so it’s hard to find people who can have just work-a-day jobs, the housing is just so expensive. A lot of our people are in the affordable housing in Point Reyes, but most of our people are commuting from Petaluma to Point Reyes.” Residents recognize this and address it informally by allowing the development of small units added on to existing residences. “There are a lot of illegal second units where we look the other way, because it helps keep the demographics more diverse,” commented a respondent from a homeowner’s association. There are also ongoing efforts to develop more “official” affordable housing units. Some low-cost worker housing was built in Point Reyes after much community debate, and the number of units was reduced from the original proposal. “We anticipate adding 6-10 units for low-income families, looking for locations all over West Marin,” commented a respondent housing provider.

Most farms solve this problem by housing workers on site, “Our workers live here on site, or in Bolinas, for practical reasons because the dairies start work at 4 or 5 am.” The Marin County Agricultural Commission is working on a fund to support development of more worker housing on ranches. In addition, “teaching” organic farms like Green Gulch house student interns who lack cars.

Service expectations and desires

Service desires were expressed by several respondents on the following themes:

- More frequent service on all routes, for example six times daily instead of four times
- Earlier service on routes 61 and 68 to support morning commuters, and later evening service to support students participating in after-school activities
- Connectivity with shuttle services in the National Parks on Coastal Route 62
- Direct service to hospitals in East Marin (Kaiser, Sutter, Marin General)
- Inter-county service (direct or with connection) to Petaluma
- Better marketing of services, especially to visitors and senior citizens
- More frequent service on Coastal route 62 connecting Stinson Beach/Bolinas to Point Reyes
- More frequent trips between Olema and Stinson/Bolinas, especially on weekends

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- Earlier service hours for connections with Golden Gate transit services, like 6 AM
- Later service hours for students participating in after-school activities, like 5:30pm. (Tamalpais High and GMBNA)
- Later service hours for evening recreational activities, like 10 PM. “The Stage doesn’t come in the evening when we have our programs”. (Point Reyes Dance Palace)

A common theme was that four times daily leaves too large a gap between busses. Many stakeholders expressed a desire for additional mid-day service. “The Stage schedule is not conducive to seniors because they like to take short trips. They don’t like waiting 4 or 5 hours for the next service.”

Because most agricultural workers live on the farms and ranches where they work, transportation is not an issue. For the few operations where employees commute, most of them live in Santa Rosa or Petaluma and carpool or drive alone to their jobs in West Marin. One example is the Strauss Family Creamery, which has 65 employees who commute to work. This would be a difficult group to serve with transit, because their schedule coincides with the times the cows are milked – 4:00 AM to 12:30 PM, and then 1:30 PM to 10:00 PM. Another ranch that uses non-resident labor is the McEvoy Ranch, which uses seasonal labor to harvest their olives. These workers are obtained through a labor contractor in Santa Rosa, and drive or carpool to the work site for the three weeks of the harvest season.

When asked to describe their ideal bus service, these respondents made the following comments:

- A free network of mini-vans
- Small shuttle or mini-bus that can make the rounds of the communities and go the hills to pick people up, but not on-demand with an appointment
- “Not one of our schools is covered by West Marin Stagecoach routes. It would be nice if there was a backup option available to them in case they miss the bus or come in later in the day.” (Shoreline USD)
- A bus going all the way up and down West Marin, connecting Tomales and Bolinas
- Fixed-route service to Muir Beach marketed to weekend visitors
- One Friday or Saturday night per month designated “movie night” with a late return from San Rafael and Fairfax, around 10 PM
- An express service that only stops in four places – Point Reyes Station, Lagunitas, Fairfax and downtown San Rafael
- Environmentally friendly vehicles, like a hybrid

Transportation challenges in West Marin

Stakeholders were asked to describe their transportation issues, particularly how and for whom transportation is a barrier, and how transportation services could be improved to address unmet needs. Some common themes emerged:

- Residents who cannot drive are isolated and cut off from the wider community. “Because the Base is located in the middle of nowhere, it does in fact present challenges, i.e. morale and education. Some students do not have cars, driver licenses, or family or friends in the area.” (Coast Guard)

- Teens of middle and high school age are dependent on getting rides and on public transportation for mobility. Middle-schoolers use the Stage regularly to go to the mall, and kids in our summer programs use it. Seniors seem less willing to take transit. There needs to be a way of connecting with the seniors about using the Stage, maybe sit down with people and tell them how to use it.”
- Getting to school is an issue for many families. “Our biggest challenge is getting high school kids to Drake High.” and “Our dial-a-ride service is only available on three weekdays, many kids use it to get to school and have to be driven the other days. Its hours do not work for kids in after-school activities at Tam High.” and “There is a new law which prohibits teens from transporting other teens, and this has made carpooling much more difficult.”
- Low-density residential areas make getting from the home to the bus stop difficult. “The bus stops at the bottom of the ridge, and you have to drive to get there. Visitors catch a ride up the hill.”
- Public transportation services may not be transparent or convenient for visitors to use. “Providing transit for people to visit the area without using cars.”
- Lack of affordable housing and inter-county transportation services can make hiring difficult. “It’s difficult to hire people for lower-wage jobs who need to drive an hour each way just to work a part-time job here.” and “The majority of our commuting workforce lives in Sonoma County. We hope you will try and figure out inter-County transportation options.”

Many respondents suggested specific transit service expansions, which are shown in Table 1 below.

Figure 5-1 Transit service expansion requests

Service Request	Stakeholders
To Two Rock and Bodega Bay areas	Coast Guard
Direct service to Marin General Hospital, Kaiser, Petaluma Hospital	Point Reyes Lodging and Visitors Bureau, Point Reyes Dance Palace, Inverness Ridge Association
Between San Geronimo and Fairfax *	San Geronimo Community Center
Between Tomales and Petaluma	Tomales Valley Community Services District
To Nicasio Town Square	Nicasio School, Nicasio Landowners Association
Between Muir Beach and Tamalpais High, Strawberry Elementary, and McGuire Elementary	Greater Muir Beach Neighbors Community Association
Between Muir Beach and Sausalito Ferry	Greater Muir Beach Neighbors Community Association
Between Point Reyes and Tomales	Point Reyes Lodging and Visitors Bureau, Shoreline United School District
Between Point Reyes and Sausalito Ferry	Point Reyes Lodging and Visitors Bureau
Between Point Reyes and San Rafael main bus depot *	Point Reyes Village Association
Between Point Reyes and Petaluma	Environmental Action Committee of West Marin, Point Reyes Village Association, Cowgirl Creamery, Point Reyes Lodging and Visitors Bureau
Between Point Reyes and Bolinas/Stinson Beach*, and to the Marshall Store	Environmental Action Committee of West Marin, Inverness Association
Between Point Reyes and the San Rafael canal area	Point Reyes Lodging and Visitors Bureau, Point Reyes Village Association
Between Point Reyes and Corte Madera shopping malls and Marin Civic Center	Point Reyes Lodging and Visitors Bureau, Point Reyes Dance Palace
Connecting to free shuttle service within PRNSS Park: Bear Valley Trailhead, Five Brooks trailhead, Lighthouse, youth hostel, beaches,	Point Reyes Lodging and Visitors Bureau, Inverness Assn, Inverness Ridge Association
Stops at Marin Headlands Visitor Center, Fort Cronkite Beach, junction of Bunker and Field Rd, Surfer's parking lot	Marin Headlands Hostel

* Routes already served by the Stagecoach

Chapter 6. Financial Analysis

This chapter presents the funding context for rural transit services in West Marin. The objective is to ensure that when a recommended service plan is developed and the required capital needs are identified, they are affordable and financially sustainable in the next five years. The financial goals of this needs assessment are to develop a plan that is based on realistic revenue projections and to recommend services that can be sustained over time.

The following section reviews the funds currently used to support rural transit services in West Marin. The operating budget for Marin Transit's rural transit services for FY 2008/09 is presented followed by a review of the individual funding programs and how these funds can be used. A summary of vehicle replacements and capital equipment needs is presented. The chapter concludes by identifying the next steps in developing a financial plan for rural services in West Marin County.

FY 2008/09 Operating Costs and Revenues

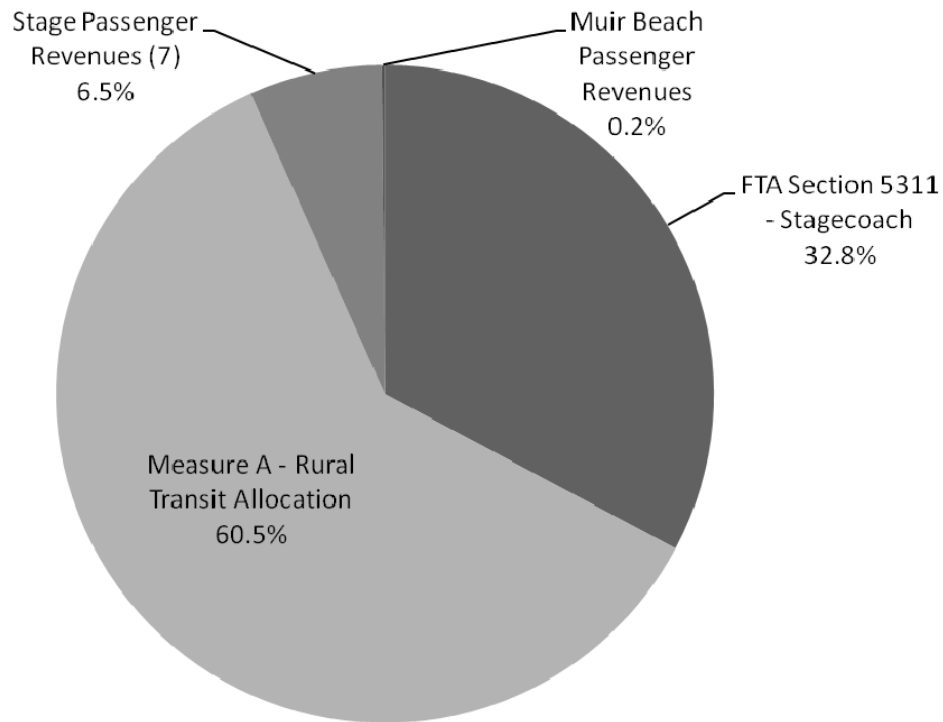
Figure 6-1 presents the FY 2008/09 operating budget for rural transit services in West Marin. Estimated costs for all services are \$892,955. Approximately \$661,000 is budgeted for the Stagecoach and \$42,000 is budgeted for Muir Beach Dial-a-Ride (DAR). Administrative costs total \$168,000, and the remaining \$22,000 is for marketing services.

The two primary funding sources are Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 funds and local transportation sales tax revenues or Measure A. The percentage share of each operating fund source is graphically displayed in Figure 6-2. It shows that Measure A accounts for 61% of operating revenues, and about 33% of the costs are covered by FTA Section 5311 funds. Passenger fare revenues account for only 7% of operating revenues.

**Figure 6-1 Rural Transit Services — West Marin Transit District
FY 2008/09 Operating Costs and Revenues**

Service Level and Costs	FY2008/09 Budget
Stage Operating Costs	\$660,877
Muir Beach Dial-A-Ride	\$42,000
Marketing, Stagecoach	\$20,000
Marketing Muir Beach DAR	\$2,000
Administration	\$168,078
Total Rural Transit Costs	\$892,955
Operating Revenues	
FTA Section 5311 - Stagecoach	\$326,291
Measure A - Rural Transit Allocation	\$602,626
Stage Passenger Revenues (7)	\$65,500
Muir Beach Passenger Revenues	\$1,500
Total Operating Revenues	\$995,417
<i>Surplus/(Deficit)</i>	<i>\$102,462</i>

Source: Marin County Transit FY 2008/09 budget and Nelson\Nygaard

Figure 6-2 Percentage Share of Operating Revenues

Measure A Funds

Beginning in 1970, the State legislature passed several bills that authorize County governments to levy sales taxes for transportation purposes within their jurisdiction. Counties with a 1/2 cent sales tax dedicated to transportation purposes are known as self help counties. On November 2, 2004 Marin County residents overwhelmingly approved Measure A, a half cent transportation sales tax that is expected to raise approximately \$331 million over the next 20 years for local transportation projects. Of this amount, 55% or \$182 million is dedicated to local bus services, rural service, specialized services, and capital needs. One objective of Measure A is to provide a dedicated source of local funds for public bus transit enabling Marin Transit to plan and implement services tailored to the needs of local residents. The Measure A allocation for Marin Transit's rural services in FY 2008/09 is approximately \$603,000 including carryover funds from the prior year. Measure A was projected to increase 9% per year, which would generate nearly \$1.0 million per year in the next five years. However, the recent downward trend in the economy has negatively impacted sales tax receipts and the most recent projections anticipate a 13% decline in Measure A revenues for next fiscal year.

FTA Section 5311

This is a federal formula grant program to support transit in rural areas and small urban areas (less than 50,000 in population). This program nearly doubled in funding with the passage of SAFETEA-LU. These funds can be used for transit capital and operating purposes in nonurbanized areas. Section 5311 funds can provide up to 50% of operating costs to support

transit operations. Marin Transit expects to receive \$326,000 in FTA 5311 funds to support operations in FY 2008/09.

Passenger Fares

Passenger fares account for just under 7% of rural transit services in West Marin including fare collected on the Stagecoach and Muir Beach Dial-A-Ride services. The farebox recovery ratio on the Stagecoach hovers at 6.5% with less than 1% for Muir Beach DAR. A 5% farebox recovery ratio is typical within the transit industry for a rural system of this size operating within a low density environment.

The Stagecoach is expecting to install new registering fareboxes in March 2009 and introduce new fare instruments; a day pass and weekly pass that will be sold onboard the bus in June 2009. There will be no corresponding fare increase.

Capital Needs

There are no capital projects programmed for FY 2008/09. The major capital need in the next several years is fleet replacement when vehicles reach their useful life cycle. Other capital needs include passenger amenities such as bus stops and shelters. Funds to pay for vehicles and other capital equipment in future years will be from a separate pot of money from the day-to-day funds that support operations. These sources will be from FTA Section 5311(f) with matching funds from dedicated Measure A funds.

Four accessible taxis were purchased by Marin Transit. These vehicles could be dedicated to programs or services recommended by this study.

Summary and Next Steps

This chapter presents the funding context for Marin County's rural transit services. It focuses on the FY 2008/09 operating budget and anticipated capital needs and reviews the federal and local funds relied upon to support these services. These funding sources are relatively stable and can be counted on from year to year. The next step is to review and refine revenue projections and identify potential funding sources that could be available to enhance and expand service levels to meet the growing needs in West Marin. Five-year operating cost projections based on service recommendations will be developed along with the capital needs. The result will be a funding plan based on realistic revenue projections for Marin Transit.

APPENDIX A

CUSTOMER SURVEYS, ENGLISH AND SPANISH

APPENDIX B

RIDER COMMENTS

APPENDIX C

STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

