

MARIN TRANSIT REVISED SERVICE REDUCTION CHANGES FOR MARCH 2010

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

<http://www.marintransit.org> | info@marintransit.org | 415-226-0855

Why do we need to reduce service?

The funding necessary to provide transit service in Marin County comes from many sources. The majority (75%) of the funding comes from State and local sales tax revenues. Marin Transit has lost over \$2 million annually in Measure A Sales Tax, Property Tax, and State Transit Assistance annually due to the recent economic crisis. Combined with continually increasing service costs, these significant funding losses will lead to a \$16 million deficit over the next 10 years without service cuts. Fare increases alone cannot close the projected budget shortfalls. Therefore, Marin Transit is forced to reduce transit operation costs by making service adjustments.

How did you decide what services to change and/or cut?

Marin Transit staff reviewed the performance of seven types of service that it provides. Local Service is the most expensive service to operate, and is the only service that has experienced a continuous decrease in ridership. All other services show ridership increases. As a result, Marin Transit decided to focus the service reduction strategy on the 12 Local Service routes. No service reductions are proposed for any of the other services provided by Marin Transit.¹

Why is my route being cut?

Once it was determined that the service reductions will be limited to the Local Service routes, Marin Transit staff reviewed the performance of each route. Routes performing well were targeted for minor or no reductions. Routes performing at or near productivity standards were eligible for frequency reductions or other minor reductions. Under-performing routes were eligible for span of service reductions and other significant reductions. At this time, no service reductions are proposed for supplemental school service, rural Stagecoach routes, shuttle routes, Novato Dial-A-Ride, or the Muir Woods seasonal service.

¹ Marin Transit is not proposing to reduce the complementary paratransit budget. Mandated paratransit service will be reduced as determined by law, but the overall budget for providing service will continue to increase approximately 5% per year. This includes funding to continue to provide non-mandated trips whenever possible.

What are the proposed reductions?

The proposed reductions affect 10 of the 12 local routes provided by Marin Transit. The table below summarizes the proposed changes for each of the 10 routes. No service reductions are proposed for any of the other services provided by Marin Transit.²

Route		Proposed Changes	Final Recommendations
17	Mill Valley – San Rafael	Weekday service hours would be reduced by 1 hour in the morning and 1 hour (NB) in the evening. Four midday trips that are not meeting performance standards would be discontinued. Saturday northbound service would be reduced by 1 hour.	Maintain one early morning trip. Weekday late night service provided by the deviation of the Route 22 10:49 PM NB trip.
19	Tiburon – Marin City	Weekday and Weekend midday service between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm would be eliminated. Weekday, northbound service would be reduced by one evening hour and weekend southbound service would be reduced by one morning hour.	No Change
22	San Anselmo – Sausalito	Weekday service would be reduced by one evening hour and 30 minutes in the morning northbound. Weekend northbound service would be reduced by one evening hour.	Maintain two late evening trips, and add an extension to Mill Valley on the 10:49 PM NB trip.
23	Fairfax – San Rafael	Weekday frequency reduced from 30 to 60 minutes. See Route 29 for new service between San Anselmo and Fairfax/Manor.	Adjust arrival/departure times from San Rafael Transit Center to allow for timed transfers to the 49, 52, and 101.
29	San Anselmo – San Rafael	Route is extended from San Anselmo to Fairfax and Manor.	Adjust arrival/departure times from San Rafael Transit Center during the off-peak.
36	Canal – SRTC- Marin City	The last southbound evening trip would be discontinued.	No Change
45	SRTC – Terra Linda	Weekday service would be reduced by one morning hour and one trip northbound in the evening. Weekend service would be reduced by the first southbound morning trip.	Maintain one early morning trip.
49	SRTC – Hamilton	Weekday service would be reduced by one evening hour. Alternative service from Northgate Mall is available on Route 45.	Adjust arrival/departure times from San Rafael Transit Center to allow for timed transfers to the 23, 52, and 101.

² Marin Transit is not proposing to reduce the complementary paratransit budget. Mandated paratransit service will be reduced as determined by law, but the overall budget for providing service will continue to increase approximately 5% per year. This includes funding to continue to provide non-mandated trips whenever possible.

51	Novato	Weekday evening service would be reduced by one evening hour.	Adjust schedule 15 minutes later to connect with Route 49 schedule. Add service to meet demand of Novato High School.
52	Novato – San Rafael	Weekend evening service would be reduced one morning hour and one evening hour.	No Change

How can I get more information?

- Visit our website at <http://www.marintransit.org>
- Attend the Public Hearing on November 16 at 10:00 AM, or watch on the web (<http://www.marintransit.org/board.html>)
- Email info@marintransit.org
- Call 415-226-0855
- [Join](#) our email list (see website).
- Follow us on [twitter](#)
- Find us on facebook.

How can I make comments about the proposed changes?

The Marin Transit Board will hear final comments and vote on the reductions on at the Public Hearing on Monday, November 16, at 10:00 AM. This meeting will be held in the Marin Civic Center, Board of Supervisors' Chambers (Room 330 on the 3rd floor).

Marin Transit continues to welcome public comment. Call us at 415-226-0855, submit written comments via email to info@marintransit.org, or submit written comments to:

Marin Transit, Service Reduction Comments
750 Lindero Street, #200
San Rafael, CA 94901

Why is there a budget deficit and how much is it?

The budget deficit is primarily the result of unprecedented cuts in state funding and a decline in sales-tax and property-tax revenue due to the recession. The majority (75%) of the funding to provide Marin Transit services comes from State and local tax revenues. Marin Transit has lost over \$2 million in Measure Sales Tax, Property Tax and State Transit Assistance annually due to the recent economic crisis. Combined with continually increasing service costs, these significant funding losses will lead to a \$16 million deficit over the next 10 years if service is not reduced.

What happened with the state funding?

The state has taken \$250,000 dollars from Marin Transit's property tax dollars for fiscal year 2009/2010, and there was a 14% reduction in sales tax revenue between fiscal years 2007/2008 and 2008/2009. It is unclear when State transit revenues will be available due to the State budget crisis.

Voter's passed Measure A transportation sales tax in 2004.

Why isn't this enough?

Measure A sales tax typically provides 40% of Marin Transit's operating budget. Due to the recession, there was a 14% reduction in sales tax revenue between fiscal years 2007/2008 and 2008/2009, and this trend is projected to continue into future years. At the same time that revenues are declining, bus operating costs continue to rise. Local sales tax revenues will continue to maintain the other services that Marin Transit provides, including the supplemental school service, West Marin Stagecoach, Community Shuttles, Novato Dial-a-Ride, and Muir Woods Shuttles.

Isn't Marin Transit getting federal stimulus money?

Marin Transit received federal stimulus money to fund four projects this year, for a total of \$1.2 million dollars. The money available through the federal stimulus program is specifically available for capital improvement projects and cannot be spent on transit operations (such as maintenance, fuel, or salaries). Marin Transit is using the federal stimulus money to fund two types of capital projects: one that includes purchasing new vehicles, which will reduce maintenance and operating costs, and one that includes purchasing and installing information-based systems which will help Marin Transit services be more reliable for our customers and will provide information that will help staff make better planning decisions in the future.

Can't Marin Transit reduce expenses without cutting service?

Marin Transit is a lean organization that consists of only six full-time County employees and two grant-funded contract employees. There are few opportunities to reduce expenses in an organization of this size while continuing to complete the tasks that are necessary to maintain operation of a transit agency. Even through efficient use of remaining state funds and grant funds, it is not possible to close the projected budget shortfalls without reducing the services that we provide.

What kind of public outreach efforts are you going to undertake before you decide on service cuts?

Marin Transit invited the public to review and comment on the proposed service reductions starting on October 15, 2009. The last day to submit comments to be considered in the revised service reduction proposal was November 6, 2009. During that time, our public outreach included:

- Conducting four public meetings in Northern, Central, and Southern Marin
- Posting flyers at major bus stops
- Publishing press releases and articles in local newspapers
- Airing public service announcements on Public Access Stations
- Posting information on the Marin Transit website, Facebook page, and Twitter page
- Posting flyers at local libraries
- Putting posters on buses and shuttles
- Sending information via email
- Distributing flyers on buses

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Why is Marin Transit still spending money to purchase new buses if there is a deficit?

The money used to purchase new buses is specifically available for that purpose (known as “capital improvements”) and cannot be spent on transit operations (such as maintenance, fuel, or salaries). Marin Transit typically replaces buses when they are at the end of their “useful service life”, which is a proactive way to keep maintenance costs down.

What is a service frequency reduction?

“Frequency” is a transit term that defines how many times per hour a bus arrives at a bus stop. A service frequency reduction is one where certain bus trips are discontinued, resulting in a longer time between when buses arrive at a bus stop.

What is a span of service reduction?

“Span of Service” is a transit term that defines how long transit service is provided over the course of a day from the time of the first bus in the morning to the last bus at night. A span of service reduction is one where either early morning and/or late evening bus trips are discontinued.

What are the performance measures Marin Transit uses to evaluate transit service?

Marin Transit uses productivity standards to evaluate transit service on route and trip levels. These service standards are shown in the table below and can also be found in the *2009 Short Range Transit Plan*.

Service Type	Passengers per Hour	Subsidy per Passenger Trip
Large Bus Fixed Route	20	\$5
Community Shuttles	7	\$8
Rural Fixed Route	4	\$12
Supplemental School Routes	20 per trip	\$4
Paratransit/Special Needs	2	\$30

Are other transit agencies around the country experiencing similar financial troubles?

The funding crisis is a widespread problem that is impacting transit agencies around the country, both large and small. A survey of transit agencies conducted in 2009 (*Stranded at the Station – The Impact of the Financial Crisis in Public Transportation*, Transportation for America and Nelson Nygaard, August 2009) identified 97 transit operators of which 34 are proposing service reductions, 36 are proposing fare increases, and 27 are proposing service reductions and fare increases. Listed below are examples of several Bay Area transit agencies who have announced service reductions. The revised 7% service reduction proposed by Marin Transit is within the range of what other agencies are proposing:

- AC Transit (Contra Costa County) – 15% service reduction
- Regional Transit (Sacramento) – 9.4% to 12.5% service reduction
- County Express (Hollister) – 35% service reduction
- VTA (Santa Clara) – 8.3% service reduction (bus), 6.5% service reduction (light rail)
- Sonoma County Transit – 15% service reduction