



Solano Transportation Authority

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TRANSIT CONSOLIDATION STEERING COMMITTEE

Members:

- Benicia
- Dixon
- Fairfield
- Rio Vista
- Solano County
- Suisun City
- Vacaville
- Vallejo

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Thursday, December 11, 2008
(Lunch will be provided.)

Suisun City Hall
701 Civic Center Blvd.
Suisun City, CA 94585

MEETING AGENDA

- I. INTRODUCTIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA** Chair Spring
(11:00 – 11:05 a.m.)
- II. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS**
(11:05 – 11:10 a.m.)

Pursuant to the Brown Act, public agencies must provide the public with an opportunity to speak on any matter within the subject matter jurisdiction of the agency and which is not on the agency’s agenda for that meeting. Comments are limited to no more than 3 minutes per speaker. Gov’t Code §54954.3(a). By law, no action may be taken on any item raised during the public comment period although informational answers to questions may be given and matters may be referred to staff for placement on a future agenda of the agency.

This agenda is available upon request in alternative formats to persons with a disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §12132) and the Ralph M. Brown Act (Cal. Govt. Code §54954.2). Persons requesting a disability-related modification or accommodation should contact Johanna Masiplat, Clerk of the Board, at (707) 424-6008 during regular business hours, at least 24 hours prior to the time of the meeting.

- III. CONSENT CALENDAR**
 - A. Transit Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting Minutes of October 24, 2007** Johanna Masiplat
Recommendation
Receive the Transit Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting Minutes of October 24, 2007.
Pg. 1

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

City of Benicia	City of Dixon	City of Fairfield	City of Rio Vista	City of Suisun City	City of Vacaville	City of Vallejo	County of Solano
Elizabeth Patterson Jim Erickson	Jack Batchelor, Jr. Nancy Huston	Harry Price Sean Quinn	Jan Vick Hector de la Rosa	Pete Sanchez Suzanne Bragdon	Len Augustine David Van Kirk	Osby Davis Joseph Tanner	Jim Spering Michael Johnson

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. Purpose and Background of Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study** John Harris,
(11:10 – 11:20 a.m.) Project Manager
Pg. 6
- B. Transit Roles of Transit Operators, STA, and MTC** Elizabeth Richards, STA
(11:20 – 11:30 a.m.)
Pg. 15
- C. Transit Funding Summary** Liz Niedziela, STA
(11:30 – 11:40 p.m.) Derek Wong, Consultant
Pg. 23
- D. Comprehensive Solano Transit Operations Analysis** Joe Story, Consultant
(11:40 – 12:10 p.m.)
Pg. 31
- E. Status of Option 1 (Vallejo/Benicia) Consolidation** John Harris
(12:10 – 12:15 p.m.)
Pg. 47
- F. Option 5 – Functional Consolidation Overview** John Harris
(12:15 – 12:20 p.m.)
Pg. 48

V. ACTION ITEMS

- A. New Phase 2 Issue: Adverse Fiscal Environment Effect on Transit Operations** Joe Story
Recommendation:
Affirm, remove or modify consolidation options based on new information about impending financial shortfalls for transit operations.
(12:20 – 12:35 p.m.)
Pg. 50

- VI. CLOSING COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS** Committee Members
(12:35 – 12:45 p.m.)

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The next Transit Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting is scheduled at **11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Thursday, March 12, 2009** at Suisun City Hall.



SOLANO TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
Transit Consolidation Steering Committee
Minutes for Meeting of
October 24, 2007

I. INTRODUCTIONS/APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Woodruff called the regular meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. A quorum was confirmed.

On a motion by Member Messina, and a second by Member Sanchez, the Transit Consolidation Steering Committee unanimously approved the agenda.

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Steve Messina	Mayor, City of Benicia
Jim Erickson	City Manager, City of Benicia
Mary Ann Courville	Mayor, City of Dixon
Jeff Matheson (Alternate)	Community Svcs. Director, City of Dixon
Harry Price	Mayor, City of Fairfield
Nancy Huston (Alternate)	Assistant City Manager, City of Fairfield
Ed Woodruff (Chair)	Mayor, City of Rio Vista
Hector de la Rosa	City Manager, City of Rio Vista
Pete Sanchez	Mayor, City of Suisun City
Suzanne Bragdon	City Manager, City of Suisun City
Len Augustine	Mayor, City of Vacaville
David Van Kirk	City Manager, City of Vacaville
Anthony Intintoli	Mayor, City of Vallejo
Joseph Tanner	City Manager, City of Vallejo
John Vasquez (Alternate)	Supervisor, District 4, County of Solano
Birgitta Corsello (Alternate)	County of Solano

MEMBERS

ABSENT:

Warren Salmons	City of Dixon
Kevin O'Rourke	City of Fairfield
Jim Spering	County of Solano
Mike Johnson	County of Solano

STAFF

PRESENT:

Daryl K. Halls	Executive Director
Johanna Masiclat	Clerk of the Board
Elizabeth Richards	Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
Elizabeth Niedziela	Transit Program Manager

ALSO

PRESENT: *In Alphabetical Order by Last Name:*

Fernando Bravo	City of Suisun City
Mike Duncan	City of Fairfield
George Fink	City of Fairfield
John Harris	John Harris Consulting
Jeff Knowles	City of Vacaville
Jeff Matheson	City of Dixon
David McCrossan	HDR, Inc.
Brian McLean	City of Vacaville
Crystal Odum Ford	City of Vallejo
Joe Story	DKS Associates
Christina Verdin	MTC
Paul Wiese	County of Solano

II. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Purpose of Meeting

Daryl Halls provided overview and the purpose for the Solano Transit Consolidation Study.

B. Report Card: What We Learned in Phase 1

David McCrossan, Project Consultant, highlighted the Findings Report that describes the existing Solano transit services from a various perspectives: organizational, funding, services, and ridership. He stated that the ridership information was derived from a Countywide Transit Ridership Study the STA conducted in the Fall of 2006. The Transit Ridership Studies were presented, by operator, as enclosures for reference as well.

C. Perspectives and Expectations:

Feedback by Individual Local Jurisdictions

- **County of Solano**
- **City of Benicia**
- **City of Dixon**
- **City of Fairfield**
- **City of Rio Vista**
- **City of Suisun City**
- **City of Vacaville**
- **City of Vallejo**

City of Vallejo

Mayor Intintoli expressed interest in consolidation including option 1 – consolidating with the City of Benicia. He raised the issue that Vallejo is unionized and Benicia isn't. Joseph Tanner stated that he would like to see if 3 cities (Benicia, Fairfield, and Vallejo) could do something together.

City of Suisun City

Mayor Sanchez said there may be an advantage to some consolidation. He cited the current relationship with Fairfield is not great. FST recently proposed cutting routes in Suisun City which is not acceptable to Suisun City. Suzanne Bragdon echoed what the Mayor said. She stated that with consolidation, Suisun City would like to get representation. She noted the train station is not being connected and there may be opportunities for improvement in that area.

City of Fairfield

Mayor Price raised issues relating to the cost, ridership, and how we could improve efficiency by adding more routes. He stated he is interested in consolidation, but Nancy Huston expressed concerns about losing TDA funds. Mike Duncan said consolidation concept is good and suggested including a review of the effectiveness of existing services. Mayor Price noted the location of the new Fairfield/Vacaville Train Station is an opportunity for additional funding.

City of Vacaville

Mayor Augustine stated he is interested in maintaining flexibility to adjust and expand their transit services. He cited that he is more interested in intercity consolidation with connections to ferry and rail stations. David Van Kirk responded that local transit travel time within Vacaville is great.

County of Solano

John Vasquez raised concerns about efforts that may cause inefficiency. He stated the County is protective about their TDA funds.

City of Rio Vista

Chair Woodruff expressed interest in intercity consolidation. He stated that until Rio Vista's economic development ramps up significantly, their citizens are working in other cities and part of the solution is to get them out of their cars. Hector de La Rosa asked what the goals are and should they be prioritized. He raised the issue of customer service versus cost to the city. He noted that Hwy 12 to Lodi is safer than to Fairfield and Rio Vista residents travel eastward. He stated that migration to consolidation should be gradual.

City of Dixon

Mayor Courville commented she is anxious to be here and work on consolidation. She commented there is no way to get out of Dixon so would like to improve intercity transit service to reduce congestion on the freeways, but is worried consolidation will affect their local intercity. Jeff Matheson noted their main challenge is being on the edge of the county. He noted Dixon is interested in staying connected with the other cities via fixed route (Route 30) as well as paratransit and interested in the efficiency of intercity services, but concerned about increasing cost.

City of Benicia

Mayor Messina echoed Mayor Intintoli is interested in looking at Option 1 (Benicia/Vallejo). He noted local routes have not been successful, flat ridership and not a focus on the commuters. Jim Erickson noted expanded express services needed to be effective as well.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Consolidation Options 1 and 2

Option 1 - South County Consolidation

Still interest from Vallejo and Benicia in this option. Impact of Intercity Costs on Fairfield and others. Improve Transit Overall Countywide.

Conclusion: Move forward.

Option 2 – South/Central County Consolidation

This option would add regional clout, 2 larger operators and Benicia consolidating. Mayor Price does not see that this option would be advantageous to Fairfield. Fairfield requested option be dropped. Suisun City concurred.

Conclusion: Drop it.

B. Consolidation Options 3 through 6

Option 3 - North County Intercity (Fixed Route and Paratransit) Consolidation

Discussion and Comments:

City of Vacaville looking at 3 (and Option 4) – Daryl Halls recommended to drop Option 3.

Conclusion: On hold.

Option 4 - All Paratransit and Intercity Fixed Route Consolidation

Discussion and Comments:

They can go separate or go together (Option 1 and 4). Rio Vista requested another ridership survey. Daryl said it is planned to be conducted every 3 years. Rio Vista interest may dependent upon ridership and ridership survey.

Option 4 A&B – Keep in.

Conclusion: Keep 4A & 4B

Option 5 - Functional Countywide Consolidation

Discussion and Comments:

Given Solano transit operators' small staff, everybody has to do everything. Would this option add value? It could add regional clout by coordinating funding. And centralizing expertise. Benicia said this one is a win win situation and they support this one. Daryl Halls stated that we have to be careful with this option. We would need to have greater pooling resources for bigger return for all and keep local sources.

Conclusion: Consider this option. Clarification content and return this item back.

Option 6 – Total Countywide Consolidation

Discussion and Comments:

Mayor Intintoli stated that if you don't keep it, we may have learned from the Ferry experience that it may be imposed upon us. Benicia and Rio Vista agreed. Long term goal to study.

Conclusion: Keep on the table.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Consolidation Options to be Analyzed in Phase II

Recommendation:

Approve the list of consolidation options to be analyzed in Phase II of the Solano Transit Consolidation Study as specified in Attachment B.

On a motion by Alternate Member Vasquez, and a second by Member Messina, the STA Board unanimously approved the recommendation.

B. Work Plan and Next Steps for Phase II

Recommendation:

Approve the work plan for Phase II of the Solano Transit Consolidation Study as specified in Attachment B.

On a motion by Member Messina, and a second by Member Sanchez, the STA Board unanimously approved the recommendation.

VI. CLOSING COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

The next Transit Consolidation Steering Committee Meeting will be determined.



DATE: December 3, 2008
TO: STA Board Transit Consolidation Steering Committee
FROM: Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
John Harris, Project Manager Consultant
RE: Purpose and Background of Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study

Background:

In Solano County, each City and the County fund and/or operate transit services. This includes local and intercity transit services as well as general public and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit services. Subsidized taxi programs and other special transportation services are also funded with local transit funds and operated through local jurisdictions.

Over the past several years, the issue of consolidating some or all of the above services has been discussed and proposed. This topic was specifically discussed by STA Board members at the February 2005 STA Board Retreat. Retreat participants expressed interest and support for transit service becoming more convenient through a seamless system, that there should be a reasonable level of service throughout the county, and that local transit issues and needs would have to be considered and addressed. In March 2005, the STA Board directed STA staff to initiate a countywide Transit Consolidation Study. In April 2005, the STA Board approved goals, objectives and evaluation criteria to be incorporated in the scope of work for this study (see Attachment A). Initial funding for the study was secured in 2006. Subsequently, STA issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) and DKS Associates was selected to lead the Transit Consolidation Study.

Work began in early 2007. The first major task was to conduct an extensive outreach involving comprehensive interviews with transit operator staff, other city staff, public officials, funding partners, and others. Over sixty (60) interviews were conducted from March through June 2007. Focus groups were held with the STA's Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC) members in May and, in addition, two focus group sessions with transit users were held in June in Vacaville and Vallejo.

During Phase I of the Solano Transit Consolidation Study, a preliminary analysis of alternatives was presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Consortium in June. It included five (5) potential transit consolidation alternatives. During discussion at the TAC meeting, a sixth (6th) alternative was requested. The added option is to consider consolidating all intercity fixed-route service and local and intercity American for Disabilities (ADA) paratransit service and became Alternative 4.

At the July 2007 STA Board meeting, staff presented the six (6) transit consolidation options to the STA Board. In brief, the six options are:

1. South County (Vallejo/Benicia) Consolidation
2. South/Central County (Vallejo/Benicia/Fairfield-Suisun Transit) Consolidation
3. Central/North County Fixed Route and Paratransit Intercity Consolidation (not local)
4. All Paratransit and Intercity Fixed Route Consolidation
5. Functional Countywide Consolidation (not operational)
6. Full Countywide Consolidation

The Consortium and TAC submitted further comments on the draft documents and these were discussed in July at a joint meeting of TAC and Consortium staff. Further refinements were requested and incorporated into the Executive Summary, Findings on Current Services, Perceptions, and Trends. These documents were widely distributed in early September identifying and discussing the above six options.

During discussion of the Phase I reports with the TAC and Consortium, it became apparent that with the addition of Option 4, Option 3 became less relevant for additional analysis. Option 3 was originally developed as a possible companion consolidation action to Option 1 (South County Consolidation) if Option 1 is pursued. Option 3 is similar to current operations in the Central/North County and could potentially further clarify and institutionalize the current arrangements. However, it would be a nominal step toward consolidation.

Option 4, originally proposed by the TAC, would be a more substantial step toward consolidation and appears to offer a much greater benefit to public transit users. There are two ways to define Option 4.

- 4A. All intercity fixed-route bus routes and intercity paratransit service.
- 4B. All intercity fixed-route bus routes and all local and intercity paratransit services.

Subsequent to the TAC and Consortium, the STA Executive Committee discussed the Transit Consolidation study progress. The Executive Committee recommended that a Transit Consolidation Steering Committee be created consisting of the Mayors and City Managers of the Cities of Benicia, Fairfield, Suisun City, and Vallejo. This group would guide the study effort after all local jurisdictions' staff have reviewed and commented on the initial documents.

At the July 2007 STA Board meeting, staff presented the revised transit consolidation alternatives to the STA Board along with the Executive Committee's recommendation and a recommendation to release the Findings report and the Options report (other core Phase 1 tasks) once the TAC and Consortium had additional time to review. After discussion, the STA Board modified and approved the membership of the Transit Consolidation Steering Committee to include all eight (8) jurisdictions (Board member and City Manager/County Administrator).

The Consortium and TAC submitted comments on the draft documents discussed by July 20, 2007 and this was followed by a joint meeting of TAC and Consortium staff to discuss comments. Further refinements were requested and were reflected in the Executive Summary, Findings on Current Services, Perceptions, and Trends, and Options Report. (these items are also enclosed in this agenda packet)

The STA Board Transit Consolidation Steering Committee met for the first time on October 17, 2007. In addition to reviewing Phase 1 reports, the Committee acted on the following:

- Voted on whether to continue the analysis of each consolidation alternative after accepting staff's recommendation to drop Option#3. The Committee voted to continue with all of the remaining options except Option#2 (South/Central County (Vallejo/Benicia/Fairfield-Suisun Transit) Consolidation. Fairfield requested this option be dropped from further consideration.

The remaining options in the study therefore are the following:

1. South County (Vallejo/Benicia) Consolidation
 - 4A. All intercity fixed-route bus routes and intercity paratransit service.
 - 4B. All intercity fixed-route bus routes and all local and intercity paratransit services.
 5. Functional Countywide Consolidation
 6. Full Countywide Consolidation
- Reviewed and approved a work plan for Phase II of the Solano Transit Feasibility Consolidation Study (see enclosed Phase II scope of services) Tasks include:
 1. Evaluation of current services above and beyond the description information in the Phase 1 findings report.
 2. Evaluation of the feasibility of the remaining consolidation options after completion of task #1 above.
 3. Guidance and implementation assistance if Steering Committee recommendation option(s) are approved
 - Requested that staff report at the next Steering Committee meeting on the following:
 1. Status of Task 1-Phase II
 2. Status of Option 1 (South County Vallejo/Benicia Consolidation) efforts
 3. Further definition of Option 5 (Functional Countywide Consolidation)

The Task 1-Phase II evaluation of operations began in early 2008. Progress on this effort was delayed so that the consultant team could complete an in-depth assessment of the Benicia Breeze transit system as requested by the City of Benicia. This analysis was focused on providing the most productive selective service given a declining annual budget in the advent of the implementation Route 78 in October 2008. This work was successfully completed in July 2008.

The Phase II work was further delayed as the consultant team was asked to do a separate analysis of Vallejo Transit. Specifically in June 2008, Vallejo Transit formally advised the

STA that the serious budget shortfalls facing the system for FY 2008-09 would have a devastating effect on public transit in Vallejo and the county. Vallejo transit staff developed a budget strategy that incorporated another round of service cuts and a fuel surcharge mechanism in order to guarantee balancing the FY 2008-09 budget. The STA Board voted unanimously to assist Vallejo by offering the consultant team to assist Vallejo Transit in making certain the budget assumptions and shortfalls were accurate and the necessary service cuts were as painless as possible for the public.

Recommendation:

Information and discussion.

Attachments:

- A. STA Transit Consolidation Goals and Criteria

Copies of the following reports may be obtained by contacting the STA office at (707) 424-6075 or on STA's website: <http://www.solanolinks.com/studies.html#tc>

- A. Options Report: Executive Summary
- B. Findings on Current Services, Perceptions, and Trends
- C. Options Report

Enclosure:

- D. Phase II Scope of Service

SOLANO TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

TRANSIT CONSOLIDATION STUDY

STA Board Goals and Criteria

Scope of Consolidation Study:

- All public transit services – local and inter-city fixed route services, local and inter-city paratransit transit, Dial-A-Ride

Potential Goals of Consolidation:

- To streamline transit service, simplifying and improving access to transit use for riders
- To achieve service efficiencies and economies
- To provide a central focus on transit service for the County
- To create a robust transit service to meet the growing transit needs of the County

Potential Criteria for Evaluating Consolidation Options:

- Cost effectiveness
- Efficient use of resources – equipment, facilities, personnel
- Service efficiency
- Improved governance -- Accountability to the public and the community
- Streamline decision-making
- Ridership and productivity impacts
- Service coordination
- Recognize local community needs and priorities
- Protect local transit service as requested by local jurisdiction
- Flexibility to meet local changing needs
- Capacity to deliver new service while maintaining existing service
- Ability to leverage additional funding
- Implementation needs/requirements (e.g., legal, financial)

Draft Scope of Work
Solano Transit Consolidation Study
Phase 2 Scope of Services

Task 1: Evaluation of Current Operations

- **Financial Analysis.** The consultant will evaluate operational financial condition of each transit operation in several areas. The consultant will:
 - Review past year and current budgets for assessing overall financial condition using NTD data where possible. This includes examining measures to describe the relative efficiency of the current system. (ie. Cost per revenue hour, cost per revenue mile etc.)
 - Review all permanent and one-time revenue sources for both capital and operating expenses. Specifically, a review of transit dedicated fund sources (TDA, STA, RM2, 5307 et al) will be made.
 - Request and evaluate five-year financial projections from each operator based on current levels of service (if service changes are anticipated, incorporate those in projections).
 - Summarize costs, terms and conditions of each operational service contract of the current transit operators.
 - Finally, summarize the financial condition of each operator based on the current level of service.

- **Facilities Analysis.** The consultant will review the current facilities and facilities needs of each operator. This will be done as follows:
 - Perform on-site visit with each operator to review all current capital facilities to assess how much of each facility is used for transit including identifying what City facilities would not be available for transit consolidation and why.
 - Review status of all current transit capital projects and proposals for each operator.
 - Review each operator's projected capital needs for the next 20 years based on current and projected levels of service including but not limited to: maintenance facilities, administrative facilities, rolling stock/vessel replacement, parking facilities, dredging, service vehicles and replacement, vessel rehab, engine replacements, fare collection technology improvements etc.
 - Identify current capital resources and capital plans that could be blended into the potential consolidation options.

- **Support Staff Analysis.** The Consultant will examine the organizational systems (staffing) assessment of each transit operator. This will entail the following tasks:
 - Request current org charts and job descriptions from each operation
 - Review the current staffing levels of each operation by cost, FTE, fund source and function.
 - Identify the functional responsibilities and associated staff levels with each service contract.

Identify possible issues or deficiencies with the current structures with each operator.

- **Service Evaluation.** The consultant would evaluate current transit service by examining the following elements:
 - Review current levels of service and accessibility offered with those services.
 - Review SRTPs to identify service plan changes projected by each operator.
- **Paratransit Systems Evaluation.** The consultant will summarize the Paratransit operations according to:
 - Rider and trip eligibility including services offered beyond the required ADA level of service
 - Reservations systems
 - Fares and trip policies
 - Taxi scrip programs
 - Consultant would review SRTPs and service plans for each operator to determine trends and issues surrounding the service.
- **Governance Summary.** The consultant would summarize the way that each transit operation and each transit mode is governed, by examining these areas:
 - Governing Body or Policy Board representation and meeting setting
 - Recent participation by decision-makers on transit operations
 - Public access to staff
 - Ways in which cooperation occurs when transit services in a jurisdiction are governed by another jurisdiction

Task 2: Evaluation of Proposal Consolidation Options.

Each option will be evaluated in terms of these key areas of study. The alternatives would be fully detailed in finance, facilities, support staff and service evaluation.

- **Financial Comparison.** The consultant will evaluate operational financial condition of each option. The consultant will:
 - Develop concept budgets for each option using Task 1 criteria and all pertinent transit cost centers.
 - Propose all permanent and one-time revenue sources for both capital and operating expenses anticipate for each option. Specifically, the use of transit dedicated fund sources (TDA, STA, RM2, 5307 et al) will be assessed.
 - Project current five-year financial projection for each option based on current level of service (if service changes are anticipated, incorporate those in projections).
 - Summarize implementation issues associated with the transfer of each operational service contract or implementation of new contracts in each option, as needed. Summary to include potential labor/union issues.
 - Finally, summarize financial outlook for each option based on current level of service.
 - Compare each option to the status quo.

- **Facilities Comparison.** The consultant will elaborate on the facilities and facilities needs of each option. This will be done as follows:
 - Determine the required facilities of each option.
 - Identify potential shared facilities currently in use that may be used in the proposed option.
 - Determine how to create a shared-use facility or obtain “credit” for FTA funded facilities that would no longer be used for transit purposes.
 - Determine if current transit capital projects and proposals for each operator should be modified based on the option.
 - Project capital needs of a consolidated operation for the next 20 years based on current and projected levels of service including but not limited to: maintenance facilities, administrative facilities, rolling stock/vessel replacement, parking facilities, dredging, service vehicles and replacement, vessel rehab, engine replacements, fare collection technology improvements, etc.
 - Compare each option to the status quo.

- **Support Staff Comparison.** The Consultant will develop and assess the needed organizational systems (staffing) assessment of each option. This will entail the following tasks:
 - Forecast staffing levels of each option by cost, FTE, fund source and function.
 - Identify the functional responsibilities of each staff person.
 - Develop proposed org charts, job descriptions and financial summary of the proposed options.
 - Evaluate the costs and coverage of each of the consolidation options to the status. (Where feasible, use comparably structured transit agencies in the region as benchmarks).

- **Service Comparison.** The consultant would compare each option in the ability to provide service as follows:
 - Review service levels in each option, and what common service policies should be assumed in each option.
 - Identify potential service enhancements and cost savings through possible route optimization (such as route interlining, reduced deadhead hours, vehicle assignments and improved service contracts) for each of the consolidation options.
 - Compare each option to the status quo.

- **Governance Comparisons.** The consultant would develop options to govern the transit facilities in each option. This would include:
 - Summarize alternative governance structures (JPAs, districts, MOUs) to identify which are the most appropriate for each alternative.
 - Specifically propose and define possible governance structures for each of the potential consolidation options and compare to the status quo.

- **Summary Report of Comparisons.** Summarize an evaluation of each consolidation option based on the findings of Task 2 with a:
 - Primary focus on governance issues, financial status and service quality.

Evaluative response to the pros and cons identified in the extensive Phase I interview process and by local agencies.

Task 3: Guidance and Implementation Documentation

- **Steering Committee Support.** The consultant would support Steering Committee activities by assisting on these elements:
 - Identify non-technical and technical “fatal flaws” of a consolidation option and determining if alternatives can be developed.
 - Participate in periodic one-on-one conversations about study findings.
 - Participate in steering committee meetings.
 - Develop press releases.

- **Focus Group Feedback.** The study would have a Focus Group designated for the study to assist elected officials in guiding the study concepts. The Focus Group would be comprised of selected local/regional ridership and Solano citizens selected by the participating elected officials. The consultant would support Focus Group activities by assisting on these elements:
 - Prepare and coordinate Focus Group meetings as needed.
 - Determine the level of interest by the group towards a consolidation option.
 - Present study findings in draft form to obtain feedback.

- **Study Consensus-Building and Presentations.** Choosing and implementing a particular option will require that a level of consensus at the decision-making level. To do this, the consultant will need to provide information and assistance as needed. Specific efforts are anticipated to include:
 - Prepare and coordinate local Council and Board of Supervisor presentations.
 - Prepare and coordinate discussions with key regional agencies and potentially state legislative contacts.
 - Present study findings in draft form to obtain feedback.
 - Research and answer questions about consolidation option details if needed.

- **Final Consolidation Plan (if needed).** A final document describing the preferred option should be prepared, regardless of the outcome. Even if no consolidation is ultimately recommended, this document should consider strategies to achieve a more coordinated system for the users of the fixed-route and paratransit services in Solano County. Specific tasks are to:
 - Prepare a detailed explanation of the proposed organization from the preferred option.
 - Prepare informational materials (such as a four page Summary) about the preferred recommendation.
 - Prepare a strategic plan of actions to achieve the preferred option.



DATE: December 4, 2008
TO: STA Transit Consolidation Steering Committee
FROM: Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
RE: Transit Roles of Transit Operators, STA, and MTC

Background:

The planning, funding, delivery, and monitoring of transit service involve multiple organizations. The most obvious is the transit operator. In Solano, all the bus transit operators are local City governments. The transit operations are typically housed in the Public Works Department, but there are exceptions where transit is located in the Finance Department or the Community Services Department.

Solano transit operators clearly deliver the service to the public. In most cases, City transit staff manage contracts with a private contractor to supply the front line staff as well as handle a multitude of duties associated with the budgeting, funding, and planning for operations and capital programs.

The STA's role in the realm of supporting and advancing transit has evolved over the past ten years toward increasing involvement, coordination and funding. STA is involved in various tasks including planning, funding, operations management, coordination, and marketing among Solano transit operators and liaison with MTC and other regional agencies.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the Bay Area regional transportation planning agency (RTPA). In this function, MTC leads Bay Area regional transportation/transit planning, sets policy and allocates various transit funds, and has liaisons with Caltrans concerning State and Federal transit funding issues. MTC also takes the lead in developing Bay Areawide services and projects to support transit such as the electronic fare instrument (TransLink), travel information (511.org and 511), and transit passenger wayfaring/connectivity.

Discussion:

Some of the roles and responsibilities for planning, funding, delivering, and supporting transit services are firmly tied to the entity currently performing them based on legislation and policy. For others, there is some flexibility on where and how they are performed. The public generally sees the transit operators, or more accurately the transit contract staff, as the purveyors of transit service. There are many levels of effort working together behind the scenes to deliver service. The purpose of this report is to provide greater clarity on how the agencies' roles and responsibilities function together to provide transit service to the public and how the STA's role has evolved over time.

Attached are three lists outlining the general roles and responsibilities of the Transit Operators, MTC, and the evolving role of STA in transit. Since the early 1990s, the STA's role has evolved from a primarily planning and coordination role to increasingly involvement in funding and operational/marketing.

Recommendation:

Informational

Attachment:

- A. Transit Operator Roles and Responsibilities
- B. STA Evolving Transit Roles and Responsibilities
- C. MTC Roles and Responsibilities

SOLANO TRANSIT OPERATORS

- Procure and manage contractors (or staff internally) to drive, dispatch, deliver customer service, fuel, service, maintain, insure, and manage day-to-day operation of transit services
- Manage local, intercity, paratransit, subsidized taxi services
- Procure vehicles and capital to maintain vehicles and facilities
- Purchase fuel and all other supplies and fuel vehicles on-site
- Garage buses and support vehicles, dispatchers, drivers and other operations support staff
- Ensure compliance with ADA, CHP and other local, regional, State, and Federal regulations
- Plan, manage development and construction of facilities (Intermodal facilities, PNRs, transfer facilities, bus stops, benches, etc.)
- Manage and maintain transit capital facilities and other assets
- Comply with CARB guidelines and implement agency's CARB plan
- Collect, tabulate passenger revenue
- Print passes and other fare instruments; distribute, collect and reconcile from multiple sales locations
- Respond to passenger comments and complaints
- Review ADA paratransit rider applications and manage eligibility process
- Design and print schedules and other materials
- Maintain website and web services for local system
- Prepare and submit TDA claim and amendments
- Prepare funding and grant applications for operating and capital transit projects and programs
- Manage funding grants
- Prepare and submit State Comptrollers and National Transit Database reports
- Complete and comply with various audits
- Prepare and submit Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) including transit capital planning
- Complete other local transit studies and collect data
- Participate in multi-regional transit studies and coordination efforts.
- Monitor, analyze, and adjust service and fares to conform to TDA farebox requirements and locally or regionally established guidelines. Hold public hearings prior to City Council review and approval.

STA Transit Role Evolution						
Time Period	Continuing Function	Description	Type of Function			
			Planning	Funding	Operational Oversight/Marketing	Coordination
1990-2000		Americans for Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit report	X			
		Solano Intercity Transit Concept Plan	X			
		Intercity Transit Coordination Study/Conceptual Organization Plan	X			
	*	TDA Claims reviewed by Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC)		X		
		Recommend to MTC State Transit Assistance funds (STAF)/population-based project allocations		X		
	*	Advocate for funding of transit capital projects regionally, State and Federal		X		
	*	Advocate for maintaining and increasing transit funding		X		
	*	STA manages Solano Paratransit as eastern county intercity paratransit provider with Fairfield and Suisun Transit as operator. STA owns vehicles. Managed funding of Solano Paratransit and claimed TDA.		X	X	
	*	STA manages Rt 30 with Yolo bus as operator. Managed funding of Rt. 30 and claimed TDA.		X	X	
	*	Oversee countywide 5310 grant process		X	X	
	*	MTC liaison and information resource for Solano transit operators		X		X
		Solano Express Intercity Transit Marketing Campaign initiated: first countywide, coordinated marketing of multiple systems included design and printing of materials, advertising, and outreach			X	
	*	Formation and staffing of Solano Intercity Transit Consortium				X
	*	Staff Paratransit Coordinating Council (PCC)				X
*	Coordinate Solano response to Unmet Transit Needs Hearing Process				X	

2000-2005	Countywide Solano Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP 2030) included a Transit Element	X				
	I-80/I-680/I-780 Transit Corridor Study	X				
	Solano Senior and Disabled Transit Study	X				
	Manage Countywide Welfare to Work Transportation Plan	X				
	Manage Dixon Community-Based Transportation Plan	X				
	Coordinated and funded Rio Vista Transit Study	X				
	* Prepare countywide TDA matrix to ensure consistency in the preparation of individual TDA claims by operators. Approved by STA and used a verification by MTC.			X		
	* Solano Napa Commuter Information joins STA providing customer, outreach and marketing services to promote transit to Solano employers and general public. Promote transit through promotions, events, displays, website, out-of-county activities, transit rider appreciation days, and more.				X	
	* Marketing of Rt. 30 throughout new service corridor including directly to Davis and Sacramento employer markets; provide customer service support				X	

2005-Present	Update Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan, including Transit Element	X			
	SR-12 Transit Corridor Study (Napa-Rio Vista)	X			
	Transit Consolidation Study Initiated	X			
	Manage Vallejo and Suisun City/Fairfield/County Community-Based Transportation Plans; two more planned for 2009	X			
	Express Rt. 90 is transferred from Vallejo as an operator to FAST as an operator. Fairfield requests STA oversight and funding support.		X	X	
	Solano Paratransit Service Review and Alternatives Analysis		X	X	
	Coordinate countywide State Transit Assistance funds (STAF)/population-based countywide distribution & authorize allocation by MTC		X		X
	Coordinate countywide State Transit Assistance funds (STAF)/Regional Paratransit-Solano countywide distribution & authorize allocation by MTC		X		
	Coordinate countywide Regional Measure 2/bridge tolls (RM2) funding plan		X		
	Monitor funding and development of RM2 transit capital projects and facilitate as needed		X		
Express Rt. 78 is initiated by Vallejo in partnership with STA and Benicia. STA provides oversight and funding support.		X	X	X	

LIFT and Lifeline Solano program management (Call for Projects, approval and monitoring)		X		X
Development of the first intercity transit funding agreement		X		
Series of coordinated transit service changes and fare increases resulted from the first Intercity Transit Funding Agreement (ITF)				X
SolanoLinks marketing evolved to SolanoExpress marketing campaign. Plan, coordinate, implement multi-media campaign and transit incentives. Through STA's Solano Napa Commuter Information (SNCI) program provide customer service support to fulfill incentives and information requests. Establish SolanoExpress website & links; produce/distribute transit passenger comment cards			X	X
RM Marketing Campaign designed, funded, and implemented including transit incentive and schedule printing.			X	
Specialized marketing campaign in Vacaville to promote Rt. 30			X	

MTC TRANSIT ROLE

- Allocates and authorizes distribution of TDA , STAF, RM2, Lifeline, ECMAQ, STIP funds for transit operations, capital and marketing.
- Develops policies related to the distribution of STAF population-based funds
- Coordinates transit funding with Caltrans (5310, 5311, Prop. 1b)
- Coordinates transit issues among operators throughout the Bay Area
- Advocates for transit funding at State and Federal levels
- Manages funding of major transit capital projects via the FMS system and other means
- Bay Area coordination of transit funding and planning
- Funds, review and approves transit operators' Short Range Transit Plans
- Administers the Unmet Transit Needs Process
- Facilitates regional discussion of transit policy and staffs committees such as Transit Finance Working Group, Paratransit Coordinating Committee, and others
- Leads Bay Area long-range and short-range transit planning for operations and capital
- Prepares Bay Area's regional transit documents such as Coordinated Plan
- Advances Bay Area regional transit projects such as TransLink, Transit Wayfinding/Transit Connectivity
- Manages the 511.org website and telephone system which includes centralized consumer transit information for the Bay Area
- Manages the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA)
- Proposed establishment of Regional High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Network to be managed by BATA



DATE: December 5, 2008
TO: STA Consolidation Steering Committee
FROM: Liz Niedziela, Transit Program Manager/Analyst
RE: Transit Funding Summary

Background:

Funding for transit in Solano County is complex and includes a wide variety of revenue sources for transit operations and capital programs. The majority of operation and capital funds come from similar sources such as Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds, passenger fares, and federal funds. Combined, these three sources account for approximately 90% of funds on average countywide.

A variety of other funding sources are also used in Solano County. Solano's transit operators range in size and the type of area they serve which determines qualifications for certain revenue sources. The county is also split between the Bay Area and Sacramento air basins which affects some funding sources. A summary of the various revenue sources used by Solano transit operators is attached and includes a brief description of how these funds are generated. Sales tax, bonds, and vehicle registration fees are just some of the origins of these revenues.

Discussion:

Operating Revenue

The three main revenue sources that Solano County transit operators rely on for approximately 90% of operating revenue are Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 4/8, passenger fare revenue, and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding. TDA is primarily intended for transit purposes. The transit agencies in Solano County rely heavily on this funding source for operational expenditures and also for capital projects. TDA covers approximately an average of **48%** of all operational expenditures combined in the six (6) transit agencies in Solano County ranging from 43% for Rio Vista to 73% for Benicia.

The second major source of revenue used for operations is passenger fare revenue averaged at approximately **24%** for all operators. Vallejo Transit has the highest percentage of revenue generated by passenger fares at 27% and Rio Vista Delta Breeze the lowest at 3%. This is also known as the farebox recovery rate.

The third major source of revenue used for operational expenses are those originating from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) at an approximate operator average of **18%**. These federal funding sources come from several different programs and fund some of the operational costs for Fairfield and Vacaville, preventative maintenance for Vallejo, and portions of specific routes or transit programs that qualify for designated funding. The FTA funding may fluctuate each fiscal year depending on the programming allocations and capital needs of individual transit agencies.

Other revenue sources include Regional Measure 2 (RM2), State Transit Assistance (STAF), and advertising which are also described on the attachment.

Capital Revenue

The most significant federal funds used for capital expenses are FTA Section 5307 funds which are distributed to regions by an urbanized area formula. In general, large urbanized area formula funds can be used for transit capital purposes only. Most of the Bay Area is covered by the SF UZA. Small urbanized area formula funds can be used for both transit capital and transit operations. There are three small UZA's (Fairfield, Vacaville, and Vallejo). Benicia and Vallejo are in the same small UZA. MTC staff works with the region's transit operators to determine how these funds are prioritized. Small rural areas such as Dixon and Rio Vista do not qualify for Federal 5307 but qualify for Federal 5311 which funds transit routes that operate in rural areas. The 5311 program funds a portion of operational expenses and capital bus replacements on a competitive basis. Fairfield and Vacaville use their Federal 5307 for operating assistance while Vallejo is limited to capital projects since Vallejo receives funding from the San Francisco UZA and Benicia uses 5307 for capital. Prop 1B is a new State sponsored capital funding source which assists transit agencies with capital projects.

A more thorough discussion of how each operator utilizes these revenue sources will be outlined in the transit operations analysis to consultant team is preparing.

Recommendation:

Informational.

Attachment:

- A. Summary of Solano Transit Revenue Sources

Solano Transit Revenue Sources

Funding Source	Administered by	Description
TDA (Article 4/8)	MTC and Local Jurisdiction	Formula: Based on 1/4 cent of County generated sales tax and distributed by population share.

STAF		
Revenue-based	MTC	State Transit Assistance fund (STA) , which is derived from the statewide sales tax on gas and diesel fuel and distributed by the following measures: Formula distribution based on transit operator's revenue as a percent of revenue statewide.
Population-based	Solano Transportation Authority (STA)	Formula distribution to MTC; STA receives County share as determined by MTC policy.
Regional Paratransit	Solano Transportation Authority (STA)	Formula distribution to MTC; STA receives County share as determined by MTC policy.
Lifeline	Competitive -STA Selects Solano Projects	Formula distribution to MTC; STA receives County share as determined by MTC policy. Distributed by MTC based on county poverty share. MTC created a Bay Area Regional Lifeline Program to fund projects that result in improved mobility for low-income residents throughout the Bay Area.

Other		
Advertising & Other Revenue	Local Jurisdiction	Revenue generated directly by transit agency.
General Fund	Local Jurisdiction	City General Fund may be used at discretion of local jurisdiction.

Regional		
AB 664 (Bridge Toll)	MTC/BATA	Bridge toll set aside for transit. Most funds are used as match to Federal funds for capital projects.
RM2 (Bridge Toll)	Administered by MTC/BATA	To fund various transportation projects within the region that have been determined to reduce congestion or to make improvements to travel in the toll bridge corridors. STA coordinates RM 2 operating funds through an agreement with Vallejo and FAST.
BAAQMD TFCA		Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) is a grant program funded by a \$4 surcharge on motor vehicles registered in the Bay Area. The purpose of the TFCA program is to provide grants to implement the most cost-effective projects in the Bay Area that will decrease motor vehicle emissions, and thereby improve air quality. Typically for start-up projects and not for on-going transit operations.
Regional	BAAQMD	Competitive among projects in the Bay Area air basin
Program Manager	STA with BAAQMD Concurrence	Competitive among Solano projects in the Bay Area air basin
YSAQMD CAF	YSAQMD	Competitive - The Clean Air Funds (CAF) Program is designed to reduce emissions from motor vehicles by supporting cleaner vehicle technologies, alternative modes of transportation, and educating the public about air pollution for projects in the YSAQMD air basin.

Solano Transit Revenue Sources

Funding Source	Distribution	Description
State		
STIP	MTC	Capital improvements that improve capacity of the transportation system. Funded from the State Highway Account. The CMAs are responsible for developing each county's program of projects. The CMAs submit their final project lists and supporting documentation to MTC in December for inclusion in the next year's RTIP.
Prop 1B - PTMISEA		Voter approved transportation bond in 2006. Capital projects funded from the PTMISEA will help advance the State's policy goals of providing mobility choices for residents, reducing congestion, and protecting the environment.
PTMISEA/Pop-based	MTC/Caltrans	STA coordinates County's submittal to MTC.
Lifeline/Pop-based	STA selects Solano Projects	Competitive - MTC created a Bay Area Regional Lifeline Program to fund projects that result in improved mobility for low-income residents throughout the Bay Area.
PTMISEA/Rev-based	Caltrans	The Controller identifies and develops the list of eligible project sponsors and the amount each is eligible to received, based on calculations outlined in SB 88, Statutes of 2207. Transit operators submit applications to MTC and State.
PTMISEA/Security	MTC/Caltrans	The Controller identifies and develops the list of eligible project sponsors and the amount each is eligible to received, based on calculations outlined in SB 88, Statutes of 2207. Transit operators submit applications to MTC and State.

Solano Transit Revenue Sources

Federal Funding Sources	Grant/Common Reference	Administered by	Description
Metropolitan & Statewide Planning	5303	MTC	These programs provide funding to support cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive planning for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas and statewide. Funding assists transit operators prepare SRTP.
Large and Small Urban Cities	5307	MTC	Primarily formula - Planning, engineering design, capital projects, preventive maintenance, and some paratransit service costs.
Transportation for Elderly Person and Person with Disabilities	5310	Caltrans	Competitive -Assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Public agencies qualify under certain conditions.
Rural and Small Urban Areas	5311 (Rural)	Caltrans	Competitive - Supporting public transportation in nonurbanized areas by providing funding for public transportation projects serving areas that are outside of an urban boundary with a population of 50,000 or less.
Rural Transit Assistance Program	5311 (f)	Caltrans	Competitive -Intercity Bus Program is designed to address the intercity travel needs of residents in rural areas of the state by funding services that provide them access to the intercity bus and transportation networks in California. Both public and private transportation providers are eligible to compete for funding. Capital and operating assistance projects are eligible.
Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (JARC)	5316	Caltrans	Competitive - Improve access to transportation services to employment and employment related activities for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals
New Freedom Program	5317	Caltrans	Competitive - Provide additional tools to overcome existing barriers facing Americans with Disabilities (ADA) seeking integration into the work force and full participation in society.
Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ)	Bay Area Eastern Solano	Caltrans	Competitive - Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds to MTC and other regional planning agencies to be used at their own discretion, subject to federal regulations. MTC develops and administers its own funding programs using STP and CMAQ funds to target Bay Area transportation needs. STA works with MTC to determine the allocations of CMAQ funds associated with Eastern Solano County which is in the Sacramento Air Basin.

Solano Transit Revenue Sources

Solano Transit Revenue Sources

Solano Transit Revenue Sources



DATE: December 5, 2008
TO: STA Transit Consolidation Steering Committee
FROM: Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
Joe Story, DKS and Associates
SUBJECT: Comprehensive Solano Transit Operations Analysis

Background/Discussion:

Joe Story from the consultant team will present the powerpoint for this item to be followed by discussion. The powerpoint is attached.

Recommendation:

Informational

Attachment:

- A. Powerpoint Phase II, Task 1 Findings Summary



Solano *Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study*

PHASE 2 TASK 1 FINDINGS SUMMARY

Prepared for 
Solano Transportation Authority

Prepared by
DKS Associates
TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

In association with
HDR Inc.
HDR
Pacific Municipal Consultants
PMC



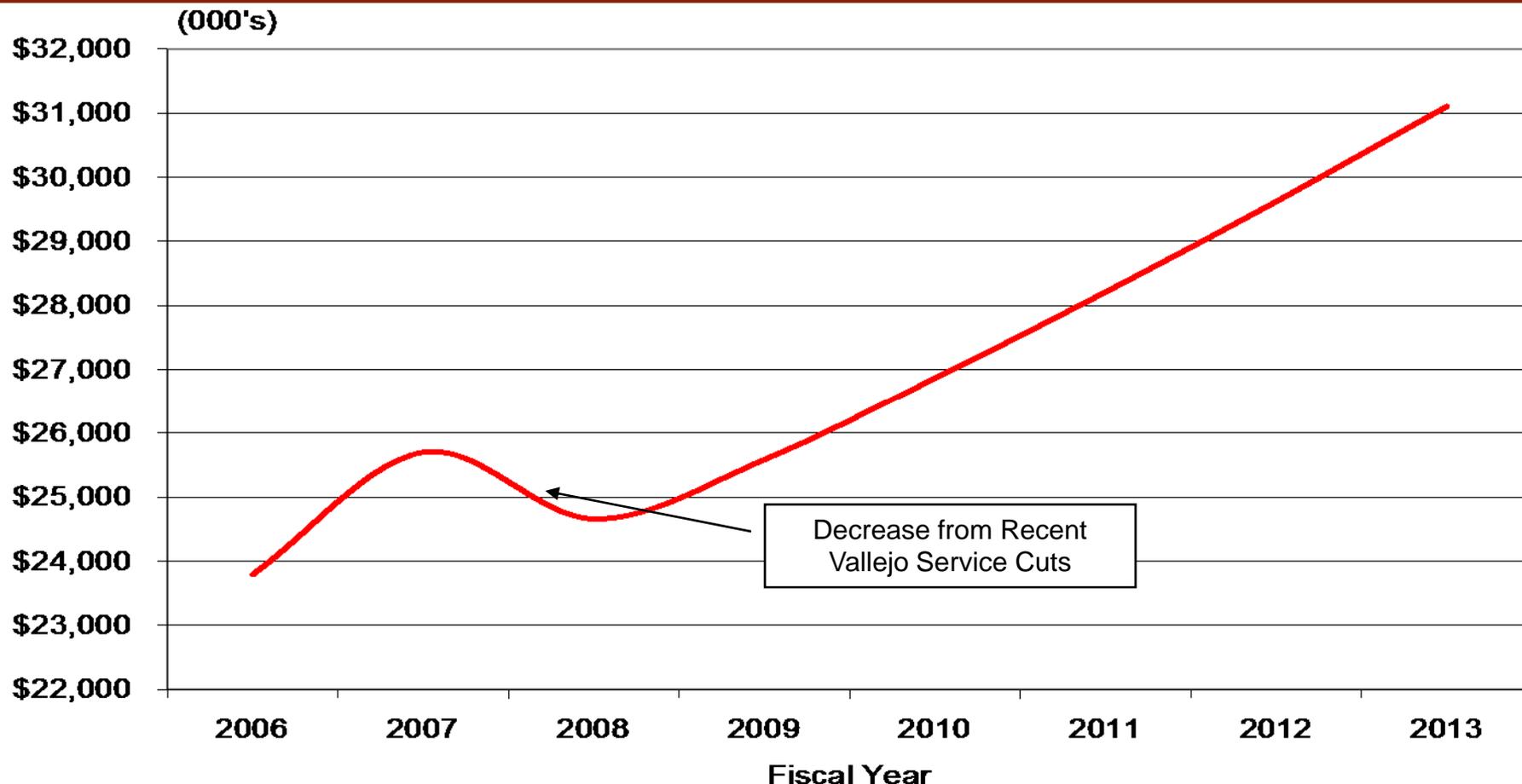
Item IV.D: Operating Funding Crisis – Effect on Transit Consolidation Options

- **Phase 2 Tasks 1 and 2 Continuing**
 - Task includes projections of needs
- **Looming Transit Operating Funding Crisis has Emerged**
 - Governs future facilities and staff needs
 - Provides situation where options on transit governance would react differently
 - Potentially affects interest in one or more of consolidation options

Operating Cost History and Projections

- **Recent Factors**
 - **Some operators have already made major cuts**
 - **Fuel costs are between 10-20% of total operating cost, and vary annually**
- **Financial Assumptions (Projected Trends)**
 - **All unit costs grow by 5% each year**
 - **Existing service levels (No changes)**

Aggregate Operating Cost Trends for all Solano County Operators



Current State of Major Revenue Sources

- **Transportation Development Act (TDA)**
 - **Fixed source from sales tax – Funds about half of all operations**
 - ❖ **Strong economy – more \$\$**
 - ❖ **Weak economy – less \$\$**
 - **Had been gradually increasing for many years**
 - **Current lower sales tax revenue means automatic decreases**
 - **Projected decreases for 2008/2009 and 2009/2010**
 - **May take 5 years to recover to 2007/2008 levels**
- **State Transit Assistance Fund (STAF)**
 - **Subject to legislative variability**
 - **Cut of 50% to 75% being discussed**
 - **Threats of on-going major reductions in future years with projected state budget crisis**

Current State of Major Revenue Sources (continued)

- **Regional Measure 2**

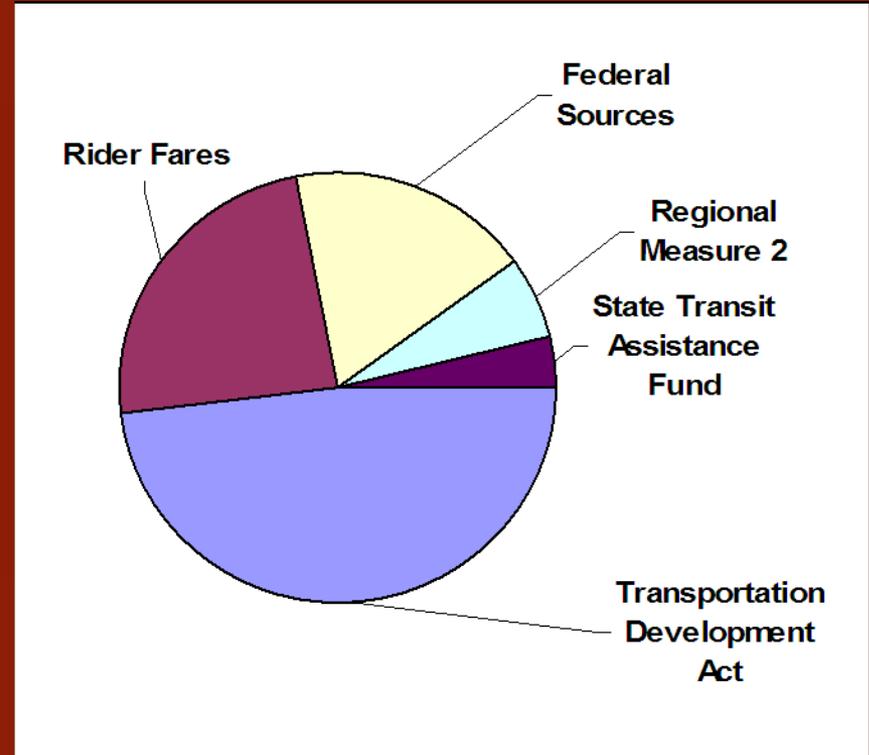
- **Began in 2005**
- **Pool for express service only (over the bridge)**
- **Toll revenue expected to grow marginally**
- **Revenue growth likely to be below inflation**

- **Passenger Fares –**

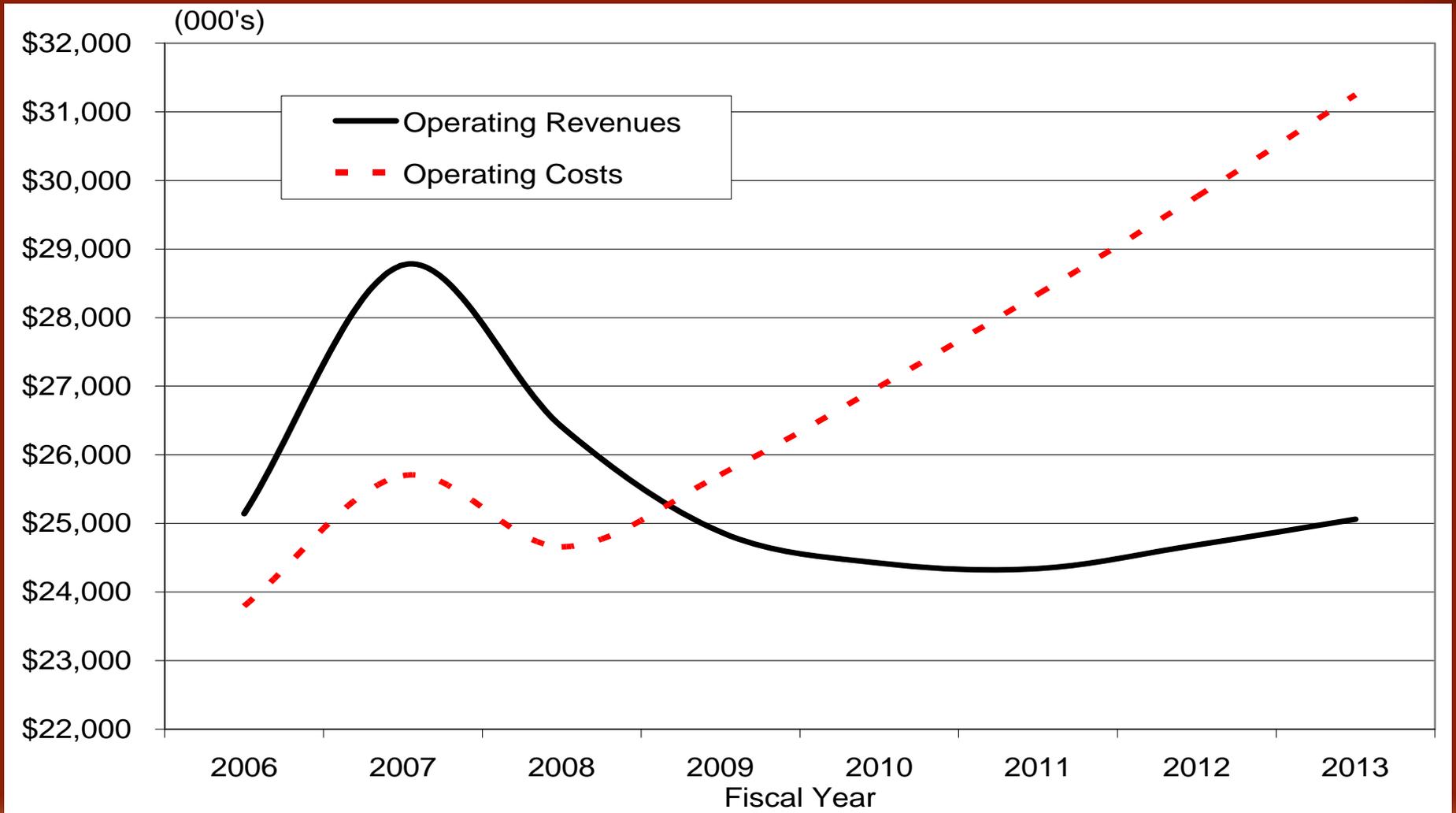
- **Most operators raised fares significantly in past few years**
- **Risk of “over-pricing” to riders**
- **Higher fares will result in lost ridership**

Operating Revenue Assumptions

- **Fare Revenues are Flat Each Year**
- **Transportation Development Act**
 - Decline of 10% in FY 2009-10
 - Flat in FY 2010-11
 - Then growth of 3% starting in FY 2011-12
- **Other Local Revenues are Flat**
- **Federal Revenues are Flat**
- **State Transit Assistance Fund**
 - Decline of 10% per year



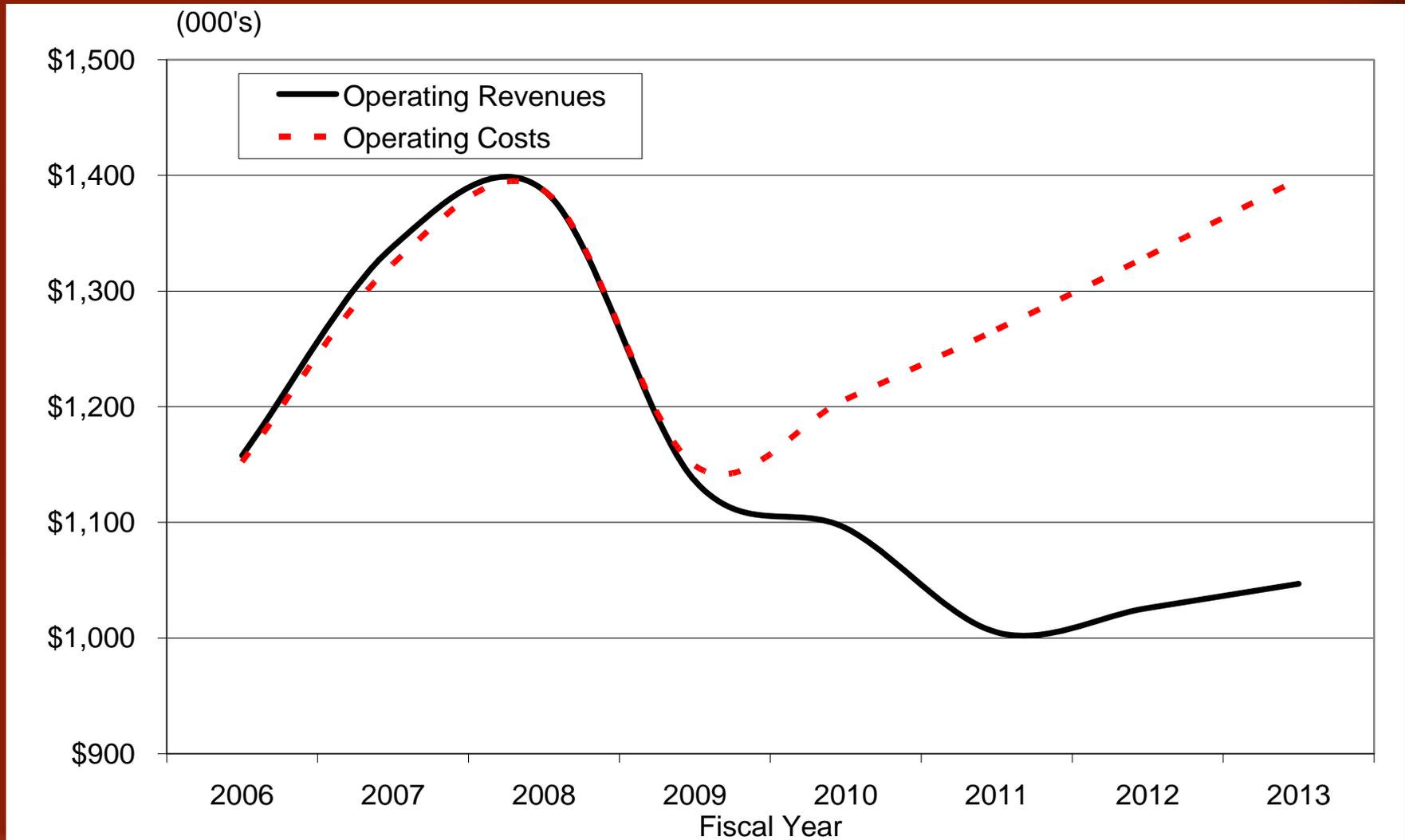
Major Shortfall Projected



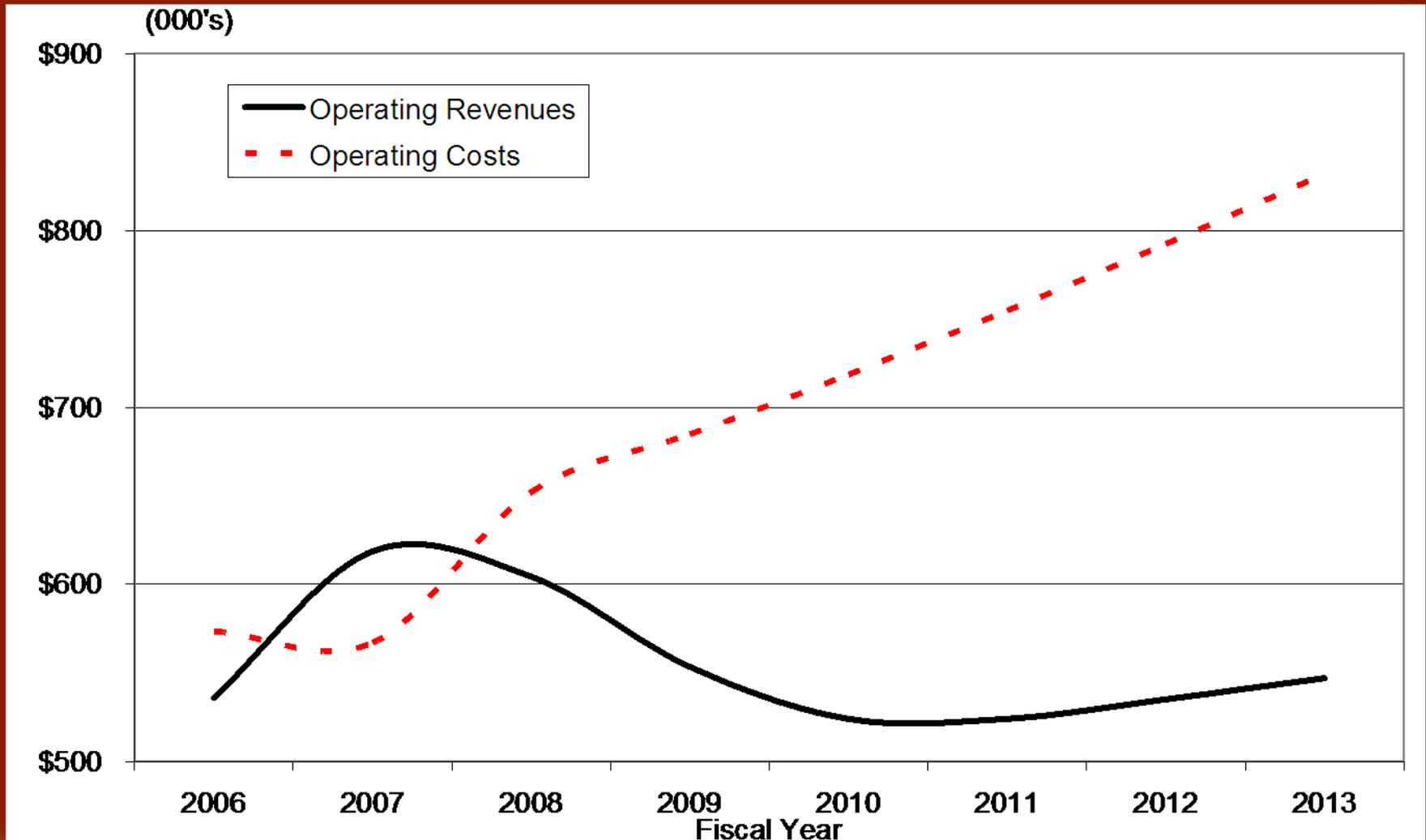
Projected Effects on Current Operators

- **Data Disaggregated for Each Operator**
- **Note: Scales are Different (Because of Different Operator Sizes)**

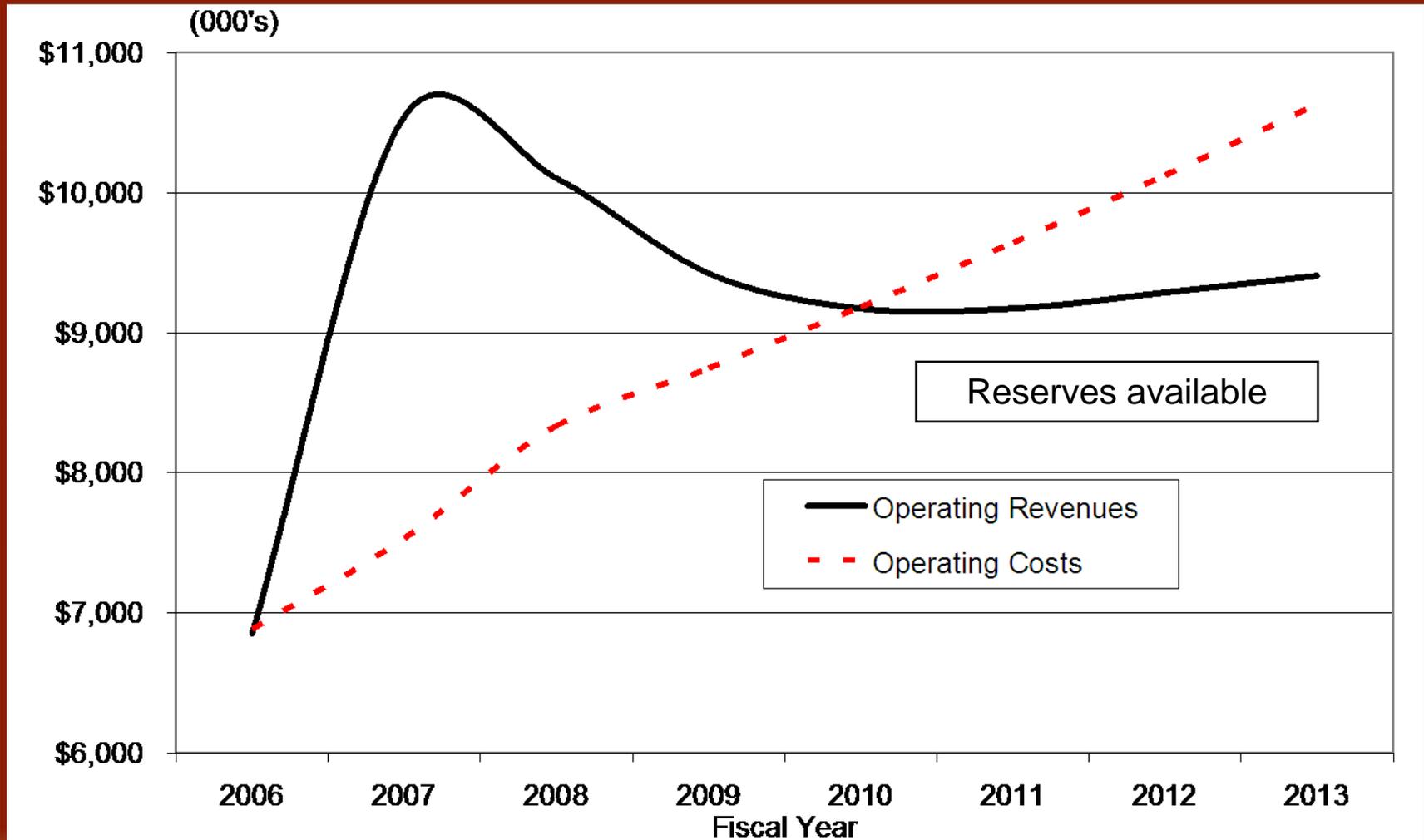
Benicia Breeze Projections



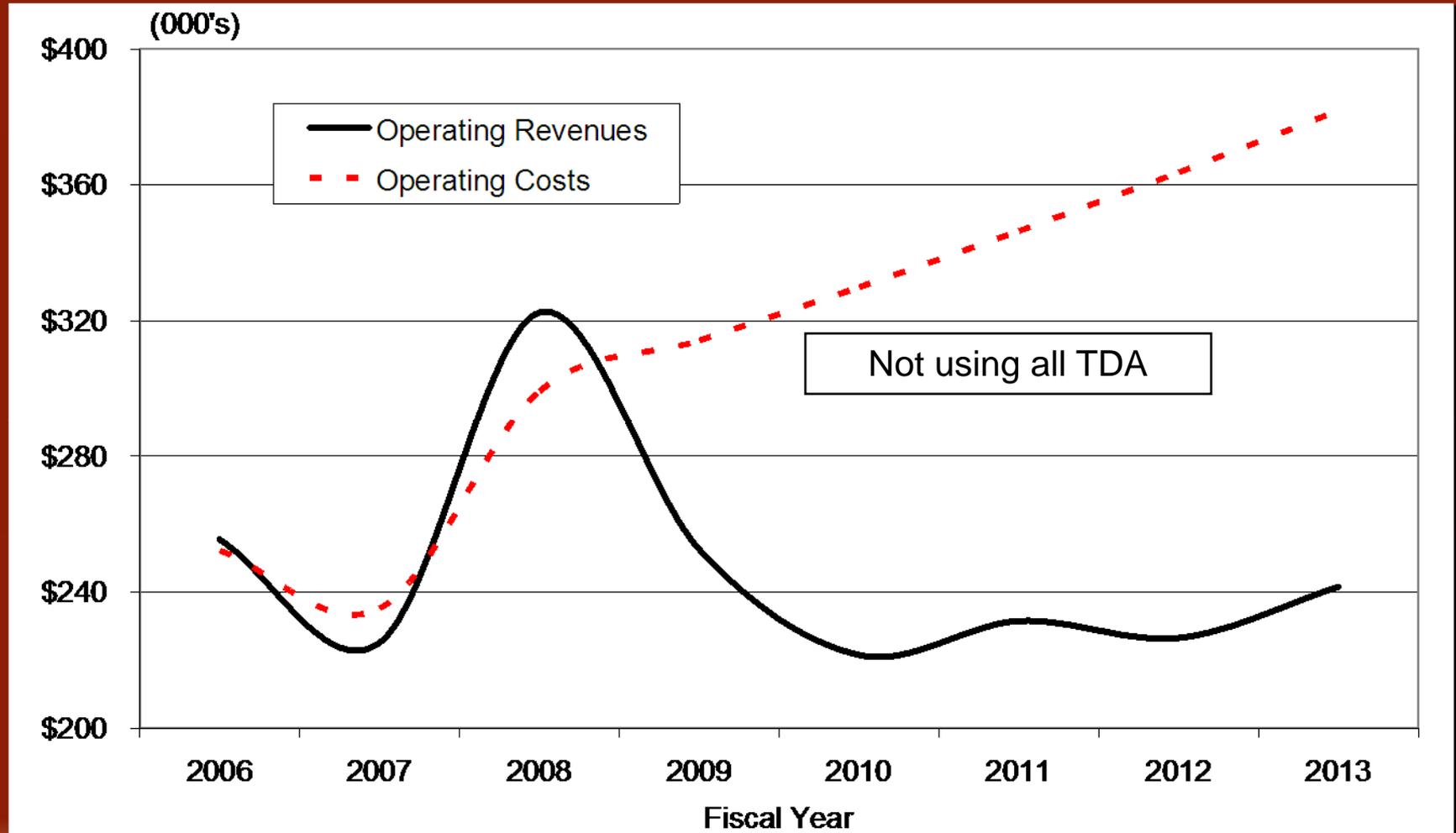
Dixon Read-Ride Projections



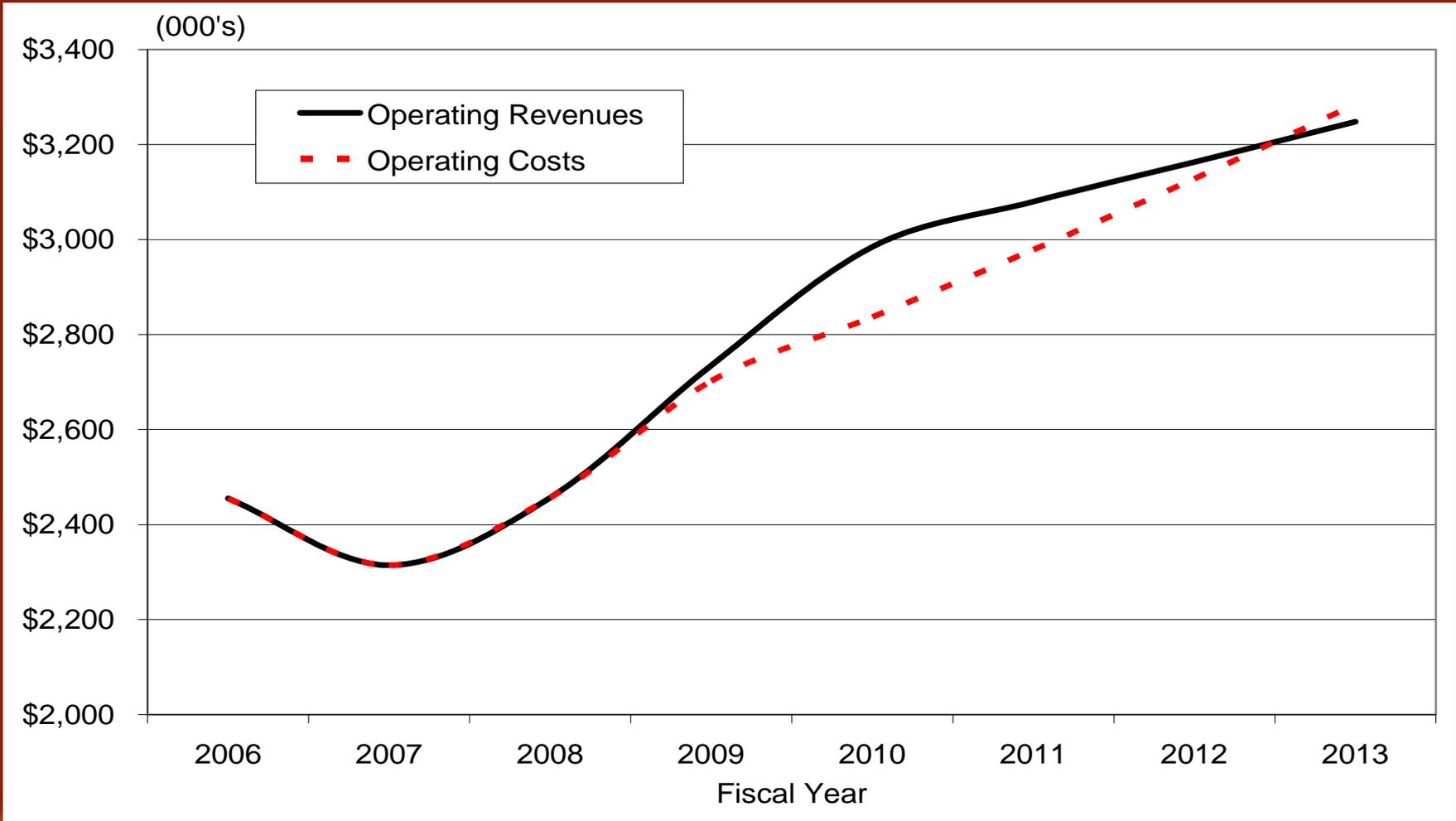
Fairfield and Suisun Transit Projections



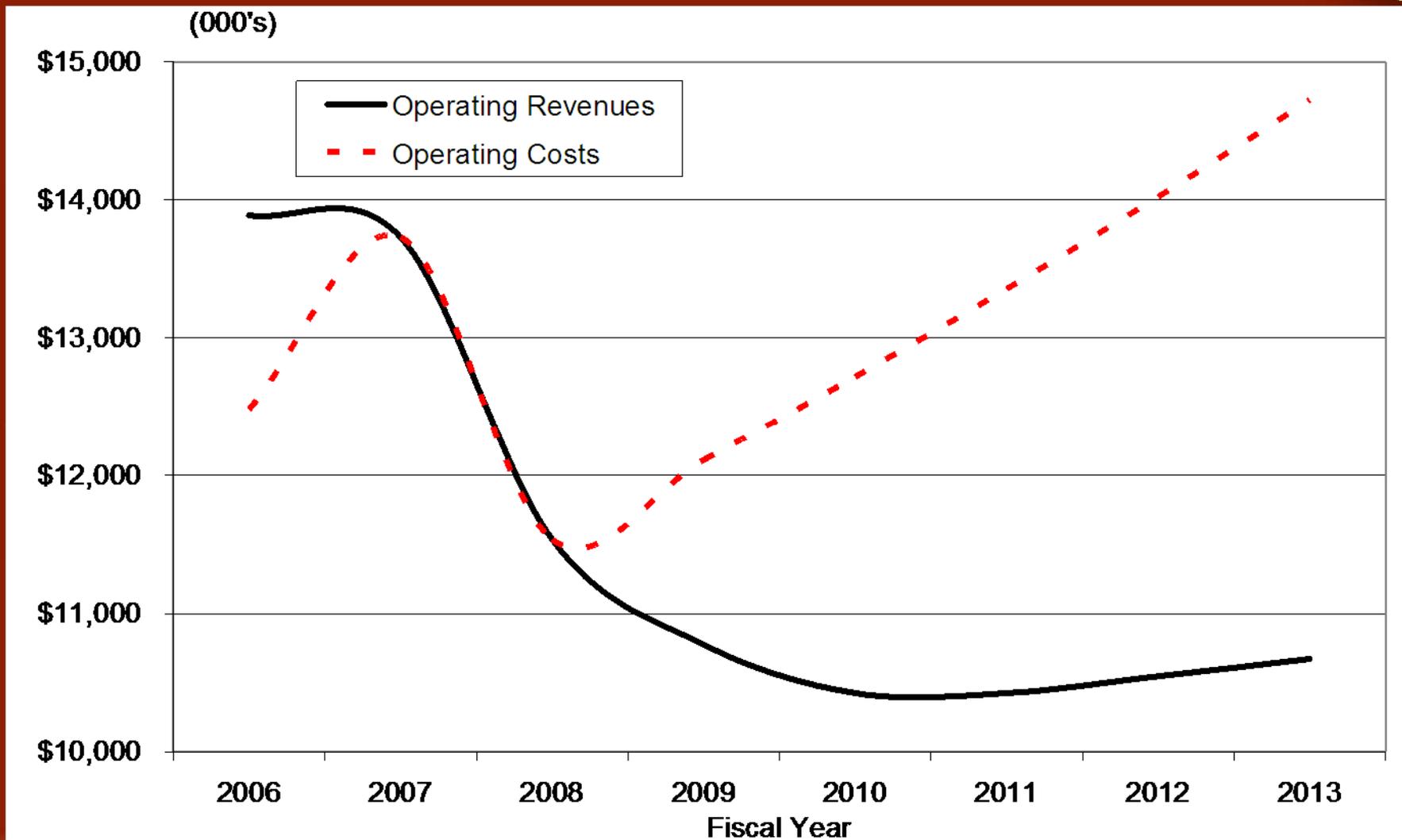
Rio Vista Breeze Projections



Vacaville City Coach Projections



Vallejo Transit Projections





DATE: December 5, 2008
TO: STA Transit Consolidation Steering Committee
FROM: Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
John Harris, Project Manager
SUBJECT: Status of Option 1 (Vallejo/Benicia) Consolidation

Background/Discussion:

There will be a brief verbal presentation of this item by Project Manager John Harris.

Recommendation:

Informational



DATE: December 4, 2008
TO: STA Transit Consolidation Steering Committee
FROM: John Harris, Project Manager
RE: Option 5 – Functional Consolidation Overview

Background:

In Phase I of the Transit Consolidation, one of the issues that arose in the canvassing of regional agency representatives and local elected officials has been a concern that some Solano operators do not have enough staff to manage the service and/or all the specialized skills needed to effectively support their transit system. In Solano, transit management staff size ranges from less than one full-time person to half a dozen staff at a larger operator. The expertise required to successfully operate a transit system has been increasing significantly in recent years. Not only are there issues with the management of operations and interaction with customers and other staff, but there are increasing issues related to funding opportunities and constraints, and mandates such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), California Air Resources Board (CARB), and grant restrictions. The result is that the skill base to run a transit system is complex and diverse which makes it difficult to meet all the operational, funding, procurement and customer service requirements with the small amount of staff allocated for the transit system management.

One potential strategy is to create a single countywide organization to handle many of the administrative, planning and financial responsibilities of the operators, so that transit service managers can focus primarily on service delivery issues. This consolidation would thus be a “functional” consolidation rather than “geographical”.

In this consolidation option, the “support staff” concept that is applied at STA could be expanded and formalized to provide a resource for serving local transit operations of all types. It would not directly operate any local transit service; it could just provide support capabilities for the local operators.

At the last Transit Consolidation Steering Committee, the Committee requested further information on how this Functional Consolidation Alternative would work.

Discussion:

As discussed in an earlier report, the STA has been evolving since the mid-1990s in terms of its role in transit. A Functional Consolidation could be an expansion of these types of responsibilities that could be accomplished with the STA framework or transferred to another new or existing entity.

Functions that could be consolidated could be:

- Coordinate countywide transit capital needs and strategically pursue funding;
- More aggressively pursue transit funding opportunities and play a greater role in grant preparation, implementation and/or monitoring;
- Coordinate multi-jurisdictional grants;
- Monitor, plan, and assist where needed on accomplishing capital purchases and identify opportunities for multi-jurisdictional coordination;
- Plan, coordinate, and implement marketing campaigns within the County and coordinate with entities beyond the County;
- Coordinate and produce transit information materials and customer service technology enhancements as part of a sustained countywide information and outreach strategy;
- Plan, coordinate, and implement branding of a seamless transit system operated by multiple transit operators;
- Increased levels of liaisons with regional transportation agencies (MTC, SACOG and others) on special projects of multi-jurisdictional interest on behalf of Solano transit operators such as emergency preparedness, transit connectivity, information travel systems, etc;
- Coordinate TDA claims and funding requests countywide and streamline process for MTC;
- Management oversight of additional transit operations;
- Greater role in planning and coordinating service changes and/or fare changes among multiple transit operators;
- Create centralized special transit support services such as ADA eligibility process, Regional Transit Card processing, GIS based materials, etc;
- More aggressively conduct research and collect data to support transit operators such as those required by the National Transit Database (NTD) and Short Range Transit Plans (SRTP);
- Provide technical assistance in SRTP development: coordinate surveys, supply data, etc;
- Provide technical assistance, as needed, to local operators in times of need for transit financial planning, grant preparation, transit study development, report preparation, customer service particularly when there is staff turnover at the local operator.

Option 5/Functional Consolidation would just provide support capabilities for the existing six operators or a subset of the existing group if some take the path of consolidation. The Functional Consolidation would not reduce the number of operators as the entity that housed these responsibilities would not directly operate any transit service. This Option can be considered and/or developed in conjunction with other consolidation options. Implementation of this option could be accomplished through a variety of means through such as a letter of an agreement or memorandum of understanding among 2 or more jurisdictions.

Recommendation:

Informational.



DATE: December 5, 2008
TO: STA Transit Consolidation Steering Committee
FROM: Elizabeth Richards, Director of Transit and Rideshare Services
Joe Story, DKS and Associates
SUBJECT: New Phase 2 Issue: Adverse Fiscal Environment Effect on Transit Operations

Background/Discussion:

Joe Story from the consultant team will present the powerpoint for this item to be followed by discussion and action. The powerpoint is attached.

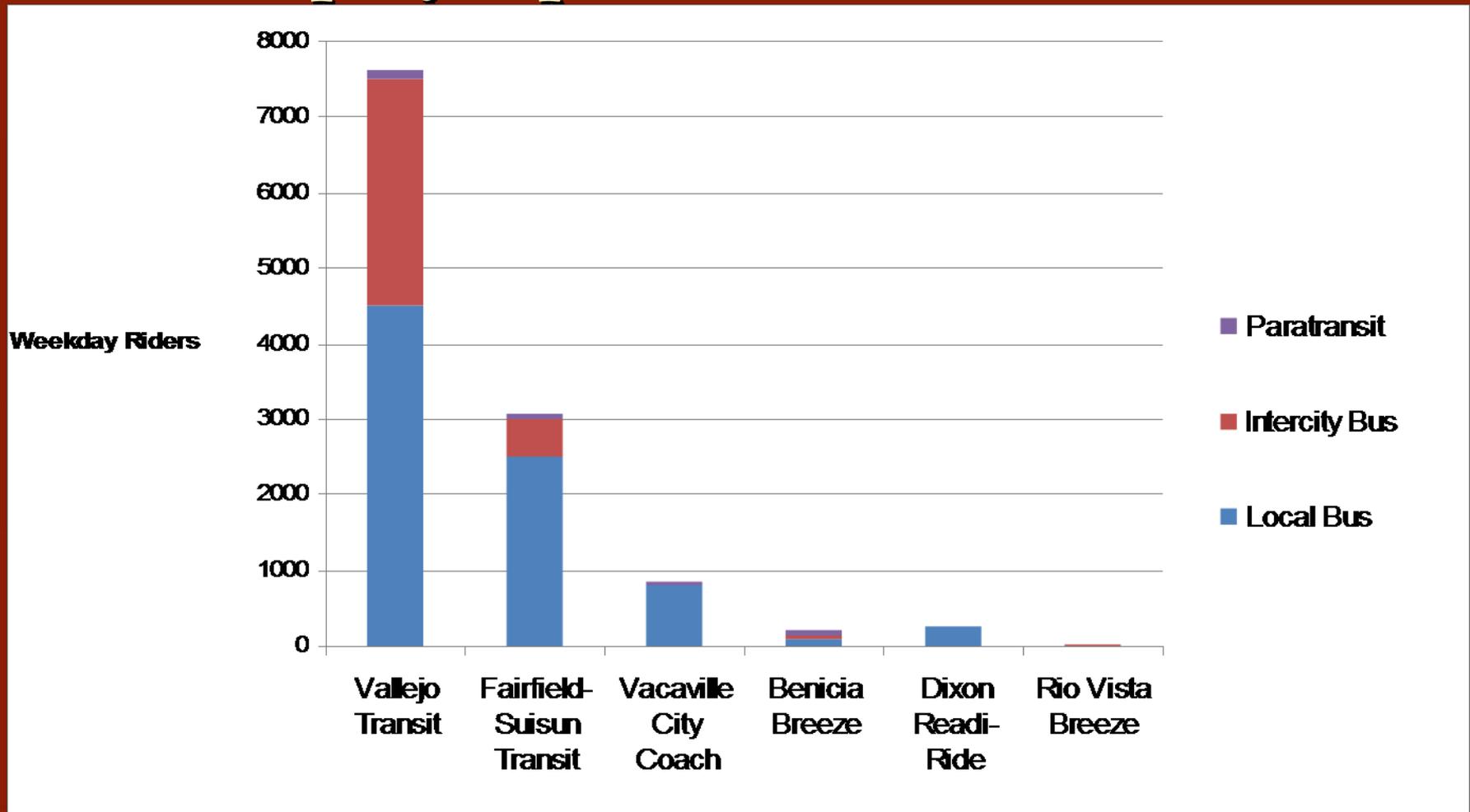
Recommendation:

Affirm, remove or modify consolidation options based on new information about impending financial shortfalls for transit operations.

Attachment:

- A. Powerpoint Phase II, Task 1 Findings Summary

Ridership by Operator



Result of Financial Challenge on Operators

- **Financial challenge being faced by transit operators statewide and nationally**
- **Three local operators will face a deficit next year**
- **By 2012, all operators will face a deficit**
- **Cost savings will require each community to consider:**
 - **Service cuts**
 - **Higher fares**
 - **New revenue sources OR general fund subsidies**
- ***Not only a Solano County issue!***

Effect of Undertaking Different Approaches

- **Operators will be affected differently and may take different approaches**
 1. **Significantly increased fares → Will likely reduce ridership (resulting in less revenue)**
 2. **Service cuts → Fewer hours, shorter routes, less frequency (even if some of the dependent population is affected)**
 3. **New funding sources or general fund subsidies → Will require debate at board levels**
- **Funding restrictions (such as RM2) will limit what services can be cut**

Effect of Financial Challenges on Capital Facilities and Staff

- **Reduced operations would likely mean less need for expansion (larger fleets and maintenance facilities)**
- **Reduction of service could reduce the number of bus driver jobs**
 - **May need to eliminate positions**
 - **May need to shift responsibilities**
- **Maintenance and Administration staff already lean**
- **Reduced operations could result in paratransit service reductions (depending on operator willingness to modify eligibility)**

Item V.A:

Action: Affirm, Remove or Modify Consolidation Options

- **Potential Factors in Actions:**
 - **Cuts in service with existing funding sources**
 - **Maintain current service with new dedicated funding source**
 - **Expand current service with new dedicated funding source**