

KINGS COUNTY AREA PUBLIC TRANSIT AGENCY
SPECIAL MEETING
Board of Directors

610 W. 7th Street - Hanford, California 93230 (559) 852-2692 www.kartbus.org

Meeting Date: September 15, 2021
Time: 3:30 PM
Place: **Special Virtual Board Meeting**
Please call (415) 655-0003
Participant Code: 2457 512 8331#

If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting or language assistance, please contact the Clerk of the Board at (559)852-4623 by 4:00 PM on the Monday before this meeting. Agenda backup information and any public records provided to the Board after the posting of the agenda for this meeting will be available for public review at 610 W. 7th Street, Hanford, CA 93230.

SPECIAL VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING AGENDA

California Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-25-20 on March 12, 2020, relating to the convening of public meetings in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 17, 2020, the County of Kings adopted a Resolution ratifying the Health Office's declaration of a local health emergency regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The Kings County Area Public Transit Agency (KCAPTA) hereby provides notice that it will continue to convene its regularly scheduled public meetings via telecommuting until further notice.

Pursuant to the Executive Order, Kings County Resolution, and to maintain the orderly conduct of the meeting, the KCAPTA will allow Board Members to attend the meeting telephonically and to participate in the meeting to the same extent as if they were present.

- **WEB ACCESS:** To access the meeting via computer, please visit KART's website at <https://www.kartbus.org/category/board/> and click on the link that says **Join Meeting**. You may also join from your smartphone by downloading the WebEx Meetings app. After opening the app, click on **Join Meeting**, and enter the meeting information. The meeting number is 2457 512 8331#, and the password is **Kart0915**
- If you have trouble logging in through the internet, you may join the meeting via telephone by calling (415) 655-0003, then enter the access code of 2457 512 8331
- For members of the public who wish to participate but not to attend in person, you may submit written comments on any matter within the Board's subject matter jurisdiction, regardless of whether it is on the agenda for Board consideration or action. Those comments will be entered into the administrative record of the meeting. To submit written comments by U.S. Mail or email for inclusion in the meeting record, they must be received by the Clerk of the Board of KCAPTA no later than 11:00 AM on the morning of the noticed meeting. To submit written comments by email, please forward them info@kartbus.org. To provide such comments by U.S. Mail, please send them to:

Clerk of the Board of KCAPTA, 610 W. 7th St., Hanford, CA 93230

<u>ITEM #</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
1.	CALL TO ORDER <i>Roll Call – Clerk of the Board</i>	
2.	UNSCHEDULED APPEARANCE <i>Any person may directly address the Board at this time on any item on the agenda or on any other topics of interest to the public that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board. Five (5) minutes are allowed for each item.</i>	
3.	CONSENT ITEMS <i>All items listed as consent items are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion. Any discussion of any consent item will be removed at the request of any Board member and made a part of the regular agenda.</i> A. <i>Summary minutes of Regular Meeting August 25, 2021</i>	ACTION
4.	AWARD CNG BUS PURCHASE TO GILLIG	ACTION
5.	TEMPORARY FARE MODIFICATION	ACTION
6.	REIMAGINE TRANSIT	ACTION
7.	APPROVE OUT OF STATE TRAVEL FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	ACTION
8.	UPDATE ON SEASONAL PASSES	INFORMATION
9.	MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS FROM STAFF	INFORMATION

Attachments:

A – Minutes of August 25, 2021

STAFF REPORT

3. CONSENT ITEM:

A. Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting August 25, 2021

4. AWARD CNG BUS PURCHASE TO GILLIG: (Heather Corder)

KCAPTA has a fixed route bus fleet of 26 – 35' CNG buses, and as we entered our bus replacement phase, staff applied for and received three grants to purchase three buses. KCAPTA received a 5339 grant for \$536,000, a 5307 grant for \$536,000, and a 5311 grant for \$104,694. The matching portion will be paid for with STA and SGR funds.

These grants will replace three (3) 35' CNG Buses and continue our bus replacement schedule.

The California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT) created a buying consortium in 2010 to assist small to medium transit systems in purchasing buses and equipment. CalACT drafted bid specifications for various transit vehicles and received pricing and option costs from dealers; CalACT charges a procurement fee of 1.5% that is included in the purchase price.

Staff reviewed all the 35' CNG buses available through the consortium and determined the Gillig 35' CNG Heavy Duty bus provides the best value for KCAPTA. In determining the best value, staff compared prices, the options available, and past performance. The bus specification and options are outlined in the CalACT RFP along with the vendor's proposals.

Staff has included the purchase in the current year's capital budget. If approved, staff will issue the Purchase order with the notice to proceed after the Buy America Compliance is completed.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board approve the purchase of three (3) 35' CNG Buses from Gillig and authorize the Executive Director to issue a Purchase order to Gillig in an amount not to exceed \$1,728,461

5. TEMPORARY FARE MODIFICATION: (Angie Dow)

The COVID 19 Pandemic has effective public transit ridership. Nationally, transit ridership has dropped by 79%. While some riders have returned to public transit, ridership remains about 65% below pre-pandemic levels.

Although forecasts early in the pandemic suggested a possible “V-shaped” economic recovery, conditions worsened as the pandemic endured, and public health measures intended to control the virus have prolonged negative financial impacts on transit agencies. Even with the release and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine, most forecasts suggest the economy will not reach pre-pandemic employment levels again until 2025. The depressed economy is expected to impact transit revenue through reduced ridership and reductions in other revenue sources, such as fuel taxes. With the loss of ridership and increasing operating costs, the federal government included transit in the stimulus bills to support transit systems' operational costs. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) and American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) of 2021 provide additional funding to ensure transportation systems operating.

Like the National COVID ridership trends, KCAPTA's ridership dropped 58%, from an average of 58,000 trips per month to 24,000 trips per month. Early in the pandemic, KCAPTA's service hours were modified to shut the system down by 7:00 PM Monday through Friday. With the release of the vaccine and restriction beginning to lift, KCAPTA extended our service hours and increased route frequency in Hanford from every hour to every thirty minutes.

KCAPTA Fares are set to meet a 15% Farebox Recovery Ratio required by State of California Transportation Development Act funding. Since the Pandemic, the State of California has waived this requirement until June 30, 2022. This has allowed transit agencies across California to focus on ridership recovery.

In March of 2021, the Board authorized the sale of the Spring and Summer Seasonal Passes for \$20, and in August, authorized the Autumn Seasonal Pass for \$20. These passes are very popular and are helping in our ridership recovery efforts. August 2021 ridership compared to August 2020 ridership increased 6% or 6,760 trips.

With the release of the vaccine, businesses, and schools opening, staff recommends the Board approve the sale of these Fixed Route seasonal passes through June 2022. If approved, KCAPTA would offer a Winter Pass (January 2022 – March 2022) and a Spring Pass (April 2022 – June 2022).

Additionally, staff is recommending, through June 2022, children under 12 may ride free with an adult on the Fixed Routes. Per our Policy, Children under the age of 6 may ride for free with an adult, and passengers under the age of 12 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Both of these measures are the first steps in recovering ridership on the Fixed Route System. However, to fully recover and exceed pre-pandemic ridership, KCAPTA will need to reimagine the public transit system in Kings County to meet our community’s needs, demands, and expectations. This will be accomplished by designing a system to work with new mobility options to provide customers with a modern, relevant transit system that is frequent, reliable, and connected.

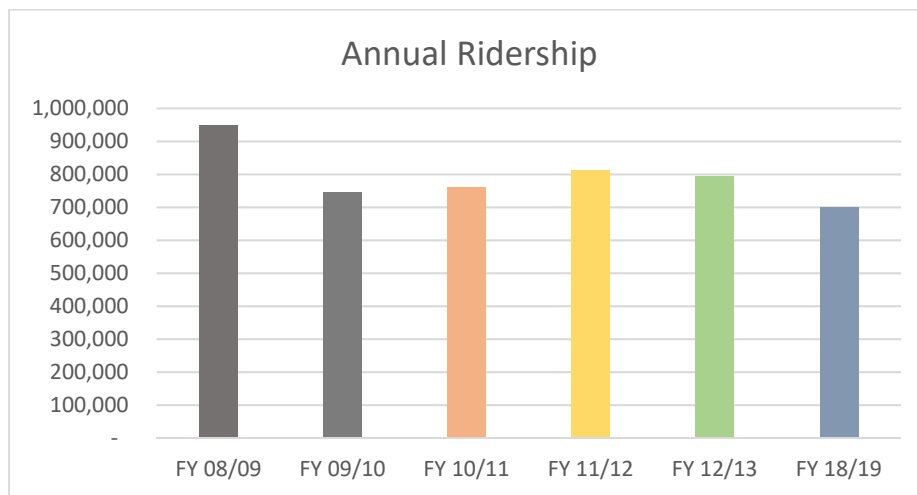
Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board Approve offering a Quarter pass on the Fixed Route System for 2022: Winter (January – March 2022) and Spring (April – June 2022) for \$20 and effective September 13, 2021, allow children under the age of 12 to ride free with an adult on the Fixed Route System.

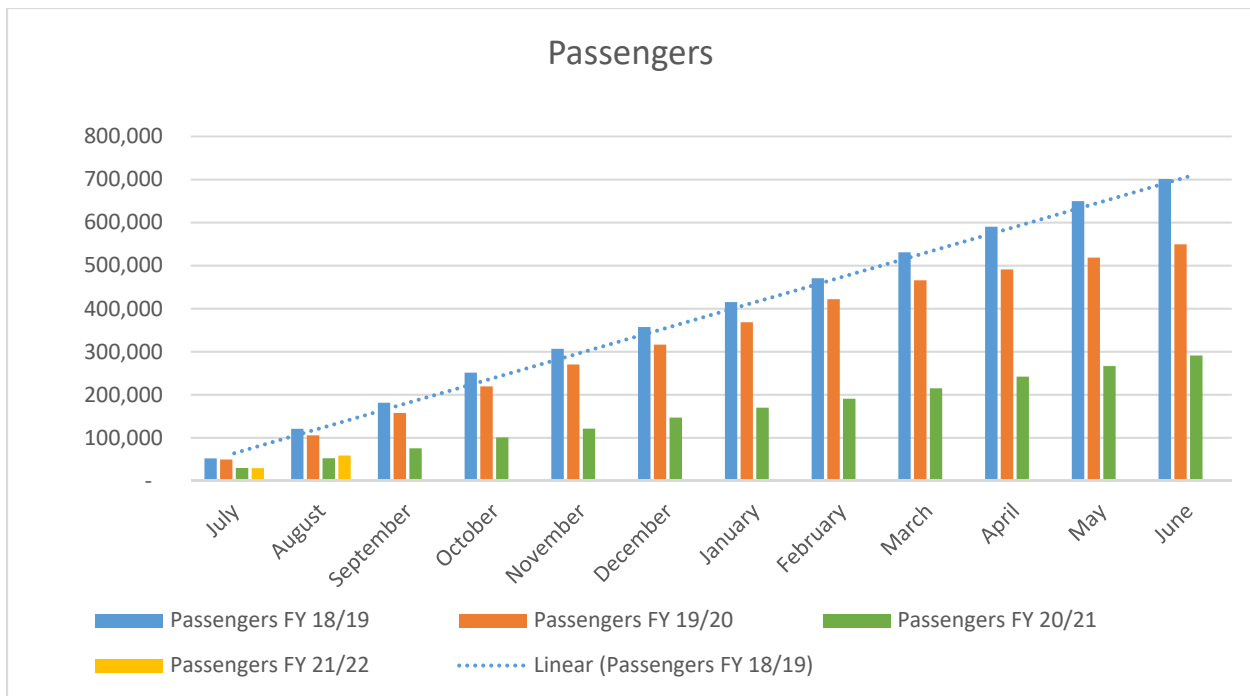
6. REIMAGINE TRANSIT: (Angie Dow)

As stated above, the COVID 19 Pandemic has reduced our ridership by 58%. Based on forecasts that suggest the economy will not reach pre-pandemic employment levels again until 2025, public transit ridership will be slow to recover. The federal government has included transit in the stimulus bills to provide additional funding to ensure the transportation systems keep running. The State has also waived the farebox ratio requirement to allow transit agencies across California to focus on ridership recovery.

Based on the lessons learned during the 2008 economic crisis, which resulted in reduced funding and transit systems having to reduce service. Ridership is not likely to fully recover to the pre-pandemic levels. Before the budget crisis, KCAPTA annual ridership was 949,000. During the economic crisis, KCAPTA reduced service to stay within our funding limits. The reduction resulted in a 22% decrease in ridership. Ridership only recovered approximately 6% of the loss riders.



KCAPTA has taken steps to build back ridership loss due to the COVID 19 pandemic by offering discounted fares and increasing route frequency. These changes have increased ridership. Year-to-date ridership is approximately 12% higher than this time last year and has recovered approximately 7% of the Pre-Pandemic ridership.



However, in long term, the service is not sustainable at the current ridership levels. All transit agencies across the nation are looking at how to build back better public transit systems to maximize ridership. This has led to the industry going through a transformation driven by new technologies and mobility options and changing needs and expectations. The public transit systems of the future are more consistent, flexible, innovative, and reliable.

For KCAPTA to build a transit system that will meet the needs of the future, we will need to reimagine the KART Transit System. The reimagining of the KART Transit system will maximize ridership, enhance the customer experience, ensure system sustainability, expand public transit to include more mobility options, and coordinate with community initiatives.

This reimagining of the KART Transit system will build upon steps KCAPTA has already taken, such as: (1) building a new Multi-Modal Transit Center that can accommodate other mobility options and enhance the customer experience; (2) Redesigning our Fixed Route system; (3) Reevaluate our on-demand transit system, Flex Route, to serve a larger population and attract new riders.

Redesign of the Fixed Route System

The Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG) awarded a contract to TMD to conduct a Fixed Route Study. The study will focus on evaluating routes and frequency. Staff will be working with TMD to evaluate the current fixed-route system and redesign a comprehensive network of frequent transit, a simplified system that is easy to understand and use, and an improved customer experience that maximizes effectiveness and efficiency while minimizing the impact on current customers. Recommended changes within the KART system will focus on growing ridership and productivity through faster, more direct service, with shorter wait times and increased frequency and connectivity.

Reevaluate On-Demand Transit System

In 2019 KCAPTA introduced a new on-demand transit option, Flex Route. This system offered a solution to low-density areas, areas with historically low ridership, and new areas with transit needs that could not otherwise be accommodated. This service was customized to feed into the Fixed Route System. Although KCAPTA tried introducing a couple of apps for individuals to book and track their trips, technology had not developed to allow for a customizable system.

KCAPTA envisioned the system to work similarly to an UBER system. Many transit systems implemented similar systems, and technology has been improving. UBER now offers its app to transit agencies that riders can use to book and pay for the trip.

Staff has been researching various solutions to improve our on-demand transit system and attract new riders. Our research noted the City of Porterville's success in partnering with UBER for their on-demand transit system. In our discussion with

Porterville and UBER, we determined that we will need to revamp our on-demand system to be successful and attract new riders. This would include working with UBER to evaluate our current system and launch a new, more robust system. An implementation plan to launch the new improved system will be developed and will include expected outcomes from various operational scenarios.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board authorize the Executive Director to issue a purchase order in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 to UBER to utilize their Simulation Model to determine the appropriate number of buses, service area, and operational hour our on-demand system which would growing ridership and operate at maximum efficiency.

7. APPROVE OUT OF STATE TRAVEL FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: (Angie Dow)

Public transit agencies plan and manage public transportation operations in silos, often unable to consider the network holistically to optimize the journey rather than the mode. However, public transportation is in the early stages of a massive transformation. This transformation will require network planning, routing, and dispatching operations to become increasingly connected, centralized, and optimized across modes of transportation. Network designs will become more frequent and leverage the latest analytical approaches to overlay new modes on top of the existing public transportation network. Agencies will have real-time visibility across the entire public transportation system. Rider will plan, book, pay for, and access their trips across any mode, both public and private.

The number of modes that form the fabric of public transportation will continue to increase. Bus and rail will continue to the core of public transportation. These modes will be complemented by the addition of micro-transit, ridesharing, and bike-sharing.

Public transportation systems will become increasingly integrated and connected with new modes in the mix. Many public transportation agencies will see their roles expanding well beyond just running traditional services. Agencies will view themselves not just as transport operators but as mobility managers. The role of mobility managers is to orchestrate the overall mobility network to deliver a set of desired outcomes. As mobility managers, agencies pick and choose the optimal mix of modes, technologies, and providers. Managing mobility requires new analytics, data science, technology integration, procurement, vendor management, and stakeholder engagement skills.

Community Transportation Association of America has an annual training and network event. This event will focus on many topics, including Mobility Management and applying human-centered design techniques to transportation designs. This year's event will be held in Richmond, Virginia, from November 8th – November 11th.

Staff is seeking authorization for Angie Dow, Executive Director, to attend the Community Transportation Association of America Annual Training and networking event. Travel and registration cost is estimated at \$2,300 including conference registration lodging and airfare.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board authorize out-of-state travel for the Executive Director to attend the Community Transportation Association of America Annual Training and networking event.

8. UPDATE ON SEASONAL PASSES: (Heather Corder)

As was requested at the August Board meeting, this is an overview of the Seasonal passes concerning the routes. As of August 31, KCAPTA has sold the Spring pass for April, May, and June 2021 and the Summer pass for July, August, and September 2021. KART riders used the Spring pass 21,093 times overall routes. The pass was used primarily on Hanford routes, followed by Lemoore, the Flex route, and Avenal. A chart is included below with the breakdown by month.

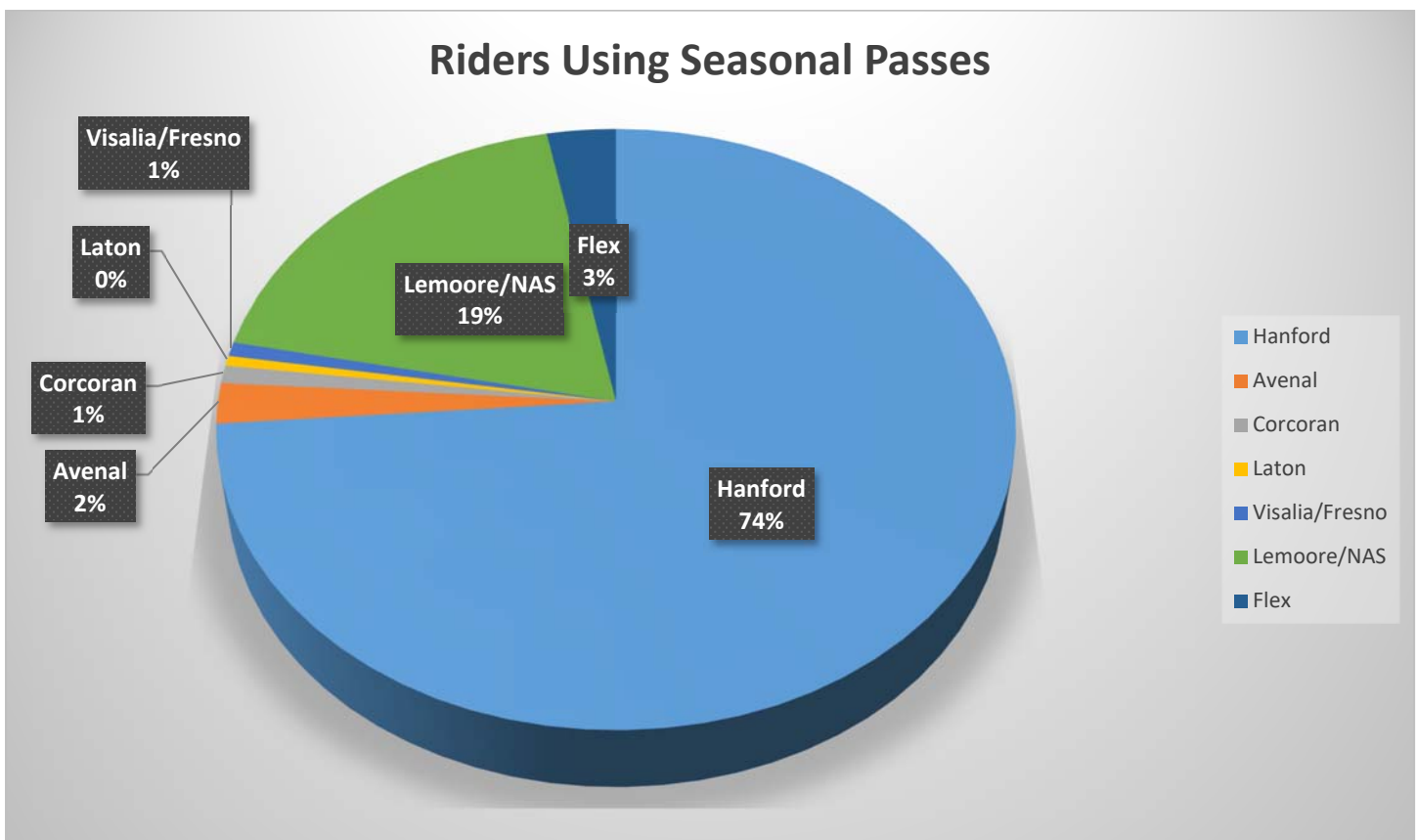
The summer pass has been used a total of 16,831 times for July and August. The usage breakdown is similar to the breakdown for the Spring Pass.

Monthly Pass Usage by Route

	<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>July</i>	<i>August</i>
Hanford	4,843	5,405	5,318	5,631	6,761
Avenal	172	209	162	127	153
Corcoran	39	48	82	105	85
Laton	53	57	61	16	17
Visalia	27	13	18	28	43
Fresno	48	18	20	30	40
Lemoore	1,109	1,189	1,176	1,366	1,993
NAS	47	108	100	-	-
Flex	197	276	268	191	225
Totals:	6,535	7,323	7,205	7,494	9,317

Shown below is a chart showing the breakdown of the total pass usage for April through August. The passes were used 74% of the time in Hanford, 19% in Lemoore/NAS, and 2% in Avenal.

Staff has contacted Avenal City staff, and beginning in October, KART seasonal passes will be sold at the City of Avenal. Staff will keep the Board updated on the usage and sales of the passes from the different locations.



Recommendation

Information Only

9. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS FROM STAFF: