



## NAPA VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

### Citizen Advisory Committee Agenda Letter

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**TO:** Citizen Advisory Committee  
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**SUBJECT:** Vine Transit Update

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#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Information only. This report will provide an update on the operational performance for Vine Transit services covering the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21. The report will also provide an update on operational and service changes related to the pandemic.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report summarizes the Vine's operational performance during the fourth quarter for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21, covering the period of April 1 to June 30, 2021, and provides an update on service changes in response to growing ridership trends. The board memo compares the fourth quarter of FY 2021 (April – June) to both the fourth quarter of FY 2020 and to the previous quarter (Jan - Mar) to highlight the differences between the same time period last year and to recent months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a fiscal impact? No

#### **BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION**

##### *Summary of Pandemic-related Operational Changes*

In March 2020, NVRTA made a number of service changes in response to reduced ridership demand associated with the coronavirus pandemic and public health orders issued by the State and County of Napa. Specifically, service hours were reduced, fare payment was suspended, seat spacing was introduced, and buses began using rear door only boarding whenever feasible to ensure the safety of riders and drivers.

In mid-March, weekday service hours on Routes 10 and 11 were reduced to a Saturday schedule. Routes 10X and 11X were suspended – after already showing mixed ridership performance in the months preceding the pandemic. On April 27<sup>th</sup> 2020, local fixed route services in the City of Napa (A-H) were suspended and transitioned to Stop to Stop On-Demand service for local trips. On May 13<sup>th</sup> 2020, following the County of Napa's revised Shelter at Home order, NVRTA posted notices requiring the use of face coverings by passengers and staff. All of these service changes remained in effect during Q4 of FY21.

Napa On-Demand riders pay the same local \$1.60 full fare, \$1.10 student fare, and \$0.80 reduced fare for elderly and disabled riders that were previously established for local routes; 20-ride, and 31-day fare passes are also accepted. The Clipper fare card is encouraged and NVRTA, in partnership with MTC and other transit operators, rolled out a full Clipper marketing campaign to introduce the new Clipper-START program, which launched in January 2021 and provides subsidized fares for eligible low-income adults. Staff continues to coordinate with MTC on the next generation of Clipper (Clipper 2.0) and as a first step on the long road to Clipper 2.0, a new Clipper Mobile app was released in April 2021.

Throughout Q4 FY 2020-21, NVRTA continued to support auxiliary Emergency Operation Center (EOC) functions that include meal delivery to residents in isolation and quarantine sites, food bank distribution while centers are closed to the public, and related transportation. These operations will cease in August of 2021 as NVRTA returns to higher level of service and Napa County EOC operations slow down.

On April 7, 2021, the State of California moved Napa County from Substantial Risk Level (Red Tier) to the less restrictive Orange Tier. Then on June 15, 2021, the State of California reopened and nearly all of the restrictions were lifted. As a result of reopening of the California economy and increased ridership in the fourth quarter of FY 2020-21, NVRTA added additional service on May 9, 2021 and on August 15, 2021.

On May 9, 2021, the Vine returned to a weekday schedule on the Routes 10 and 11 (had been running on Saturday schedules since March 2020); implement a fixed-route/on-demand hybrid which introduced two new fixed routes (Routes N and S) and maintained the existing on-demand service in the City of Napa; and extended hours on Friday and Saturday nights in Yountville and Calistoga by two additional hours.

Finally, on August 15<sup>th</sup> the Vine reintroduced the Route 11X in response to the Vallejo Ferry new service in July; added the Routes E and Route W in the City of Napa; added a second shuttle in Calistoga and American Canyon and reinstituted the fixed route school tripper in St Helena and American Canyon. Operational data on the August changes are not yet available.

### *Vine Transit Performance*

The first four tables compare ridership across different services in the fourth quarter of FY 2020-21 (April to June) to the same period in the prior fiscal year. Table 1 shows a 5.9% decrease in ridership from 18,740 to 17,628 in the City of Napa during the fourth quarter of FY 2019-20 to the current fiscal year.

*Table 1: City of Napa – Comparing Q4 of FY20 & FY21*

	<b>FY 19/20</b>	<b>FY 20/21</b>	<b>% Difference</b>	<b>Numerical Difference</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,740</b>	<b>17,628</b>	<b>-5.9%</b>	<b>-1,112</b>

Table 2 indicates an increase in ridership on the regional and express routes (10, 11, 21 and 29) in contrast to the local routes. The increase in the fourth quarter between fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21 was 18.75% percent. Routes 10 showed the largest percentage increase in ridership (37.92%) of all of the regional and express routes.

*Table 2: Routes 10, 11, 21 and 29 Ridership – Comparing Q4 of FY20 & FY21*

	<b>FY 19/20</b>	<b>FY 20/21</b>	<b>% Difference</b>	<b>Numerical Difference</b>
<b>Route 10</b>	20,432	28,180	37.92%	7,748
<b>Route 11</b>	22,525	24,040	6.73%	1,515
<b>Route 21</b>	4,189	4,845	15.66%	656
<b>Route 29</b>	7,718	8,087	4.78%	369
<b>Total</b>	<b>54,864</b>	<b>65,152</b>	<b>18.75%</b>	<b>10,288</b>

Part of the reason for the decrease in the City of Napa ridership compared to the significant increase in Regional ridership is that the number of revenue hours across these four regional routes returned to pre-COVID levels in the middle of Q4 on May 9, 2021. Meanwhile, the revenue hours on the local routes remained well below pre pandemic levels and will only return to comparable levels on August 15, 2021.

Table 3 shows the ridership patterns on the four community shuttles. The combined ridership is up 112% compared to the same quarter in the prior fiscal year. Ridership increased across all the community shuttles in the fourth quarter of the current fiscal year.

*Table 3: Community Shuttles– Comparing Q4 of FY20 & FY21*

	<b>FY 19/20</b>	<b>FY 20/21</b>	<b>% Difference</b>	<b>Numerical Difference</b>
<b>Calistoga Shuttle</b>	1,308	2,923	123%	1,615
<b>St. Helena Shuttle</b>	665	1,121	69%	456
<b>Yountville Trolley</b>	290	1,553	436%	1,263

<b>American Canyon Transit</b>	1,292	1,932	50%	640
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,555</b>	<b>7,529</b>	<b>112%</b>	<b>3,974</b>

VineGo ridership is also starting to rebound (42.88%) compared to the same time last year as shown in Table 4. NVTa still has a reduced number of vehicles serving VineGo as ridership remains well below pre-COVID. Many of the customers who use VineGo travel for programs that remain suspended during the pandemic such as Collabria Day Program, Napa Senior Center events, and Clinic Olé classes.

*Table 4: VineGo Ridership – Comparing Q4 of FY20 & FY21*

	<b>FY 19/20</b>	<b>FY 20/21</b>	<b>% Difference</b>	<b>Numerical Difference</b>
<b>VineGo</b>	723	1,033	42.88%	310

Tables 5, 6 and 7, compare the third quarter of FY 2020-21 to the fourth quarter of FY 2020-21 to provide additional context on ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic. Table 5 shows a solid increase in ridership in the City of Napa between the last two quarters. This is most likely caused by the movement of Napa County from the Substantial Risk Level (Red Tier) to the Moderate Risk Level (Orange Tier) on April 7, 2021, along with the overall reopening of the State of California on June 15, 2021. The less restrictive Orange Tier meant that most activities reopened in the County with various modifications, resulting in an overall increase in ridership.

*Table 5 City of Napa Ridership – Comparing Q3 of FY21 & Q4 of FY21*

	<b>Q3 FY 21</b>	<b>Q4 FY 21</b>	<b>% Difference</b>	<b>Numerical Difference</b>
<b>Napa Local On-Demand</b>	13,361	13,294	-0.50%	-67
<b>Route N (started May 9th)</b>	N/A	2,995	N/A	N/A
<b>Route S (started May 9th)</b>	N/A	1,339	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,361</b>	<b>17,628</b>	<b>31.9%</b>	<b>4,267</b>

Ridership increased over the prior quarter on the regional routes by 27.64% as seen in Table 6. This is most likely caused by Napa moving into the Orange Tier and then fully reopening causing some commuters to return to the office.

*Table 6: Routes 10, 11, 21 & 29 Ridership – Comparing Q3 of FY21 & Q4 of FY21*

	<b>Q3 FY 21</b>	<b>Q4 FY 21</b>	<b>% Difference</b>	<b>Numerical Difference</b>
<b>Route 10</b>	20,225	28,180	39.33%	7,955
<b>Route 11</b>	19,876	24,040	20.95%	4,164
<b>Route 21</b>	4,014	4,845	20.69%	831

<b>Route 29</b>	6,928	8,087	16.73%	1,159
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,044</b>	<b>65,152</b>	<b>27.64%</b>	<b>14,108</b>

For the community shuttles, ridership increased on all services compared to the third quarter of the current fiscal year as seen in Table 7 as tourists began to return to Napa Valley and locals began to take more trips.

*Table 7: Community Shuttles– Comparing Q3 of FY21 & Q4 of FY21*

	<b>Q3 FY 21</b>	<b>Q4 FY 21</b>	<b>% Difference</b>	<b>Numerical Difference</b>
<b>Calistoga Shuttle</b>	1,541	2,923	89.68%	1,382
<b>St. Helena Shuttle</b>	1,060	1,121	5.75%	61
<b>Yountville Trolley</b>	1,154	1,553	34.58%	399
<b>American Canyon Transit</b>	1,679	1,932	15.07%	253
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,434</b>	<b>7,529</b>	<b>38.55%</b>	<b>2,095</b>

VineGo ridership increased by 328 passengers when compared to the third quarter of the current fiscal year as seen in Table 8. NVRTA has also seen an uptick in VineGo applications and renewals so VineGo ridership should continue to rise and more people become eligible.

*Table 8: VineGo Ridership – Comparing Q3 of FY21 & Q4 of FY21*

	<b>Q3 FY 21</b>	<b>Q4 FY 21</b>	<b>% Difference</b>	<b>Numerical Difference</b>
<b>VineGo</b>	705	1,033	46.52%	328

The final table (Table 9) shows the on-time performance for the six fixed route services that NVRTA is currently operating. The N and S Routes in the City of Napa are showing an acceptable level of on-time performance at 87.90%, but the Route 21 remains a problem. Changes were made to Route 21 schedule on May 9, 2021 to trying an improve on-time performance, but it barely changed. This is something that will be a top priority with the installation of the new CAD/AVL system in the second quarter of FY 2021-22. The new CAD/AVL system will be increasingly accurate and allow NVRTA and dispatchers to pinpoint specific trips and driver actions that may cause the poor on-time performance

*Table 9: On-Time Performance for June 2021*

	<b>On-Time</b>	<b>Late</b>	<b>Early</b>
<b>Route N</b>	88.00%	8.60%	3.40%
<b>Route S</b>	87.80%	9.60%	2.60%
<b>Route 10 N</b>	57.20%	18.60%	24.20%

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<b>Route 10 S</b>	66.70%	24.30%	9.10%
<b>Route 11 N</b>	51.90%	26.50%	21.60%
<b>Route 11 S</b>	58.90%	16.50%	24.70%
<b>Route 21 N</b>	42.60%	10.90%	46.50%
<b>Route 21 S</b>	60.20%	18.40%	21.40%
<b>Route 29 N</b>	79.40%	20.60%	0.00%
<b>Route S</b>	61.40%	23.10%	15.50%
<b>Average</b>	73.84%	14.48%	11.69%

*August Service Changes to Accommodate Anticipated Ridership Increases*

In response to increased ridership and the start of the school year, the Napa Valley Transportation Authority (NVTA) will implement two new fixed-route services in the City of Napa, expand local service hours and provide express service for commuters to the Vallejo Ferry Terminal beginning on August 15, 2021.

NVTA will operate longer hours on the Routes N, S, and Vine on-demand service. In addition, two new City of Napa routes, Route E and Route W, will serve the Shurtleff and Westwood neighborhoods. The new local routes offer a convenient option for riders in the high-demand areas and allow Vine Transit to continue to offer on-demand service in areas with lower demand.

NVTA continues to follow recommended health and sanitation requirements. As mandated by the Transportation Security Administration, face masks are required on Vine vehicles, at bus stops, and all facilities.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

None