

Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services
Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement Joint Committee
April 15, 2024 - 5:30 PM
Fairfax Women’s Club - 46 Park Road, Fairfax, CA 94930

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

JEPA Board members:

Town of San Anselmo: Steve Burdo, Dave Donery
Town of Fairfax: Stephanie Hellman, Heather Abrams
County of Marin: Katie Rice
Ross Valley School District: Chris Landles-Cobb, Marci Trahan

II. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Persons wishing to address the Joint Exercise of Powers (JEPA) Joint Committee on subjects not on the agenda may do so at this time. Please note, however, that the JEPA is not able to undertake extended discussion or action on items not on the agenda. Matters requiring action will be referred to the joint committee or staff or placed on a future JEPA meeting agenda. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.

III. JEPA BUSINESS MEETING ITEMS

	<u>Presenter</u>	<u>Action</u>
A. Accept meeting minutes from Nov 11, 2023, Jan 18, 2024, and Mar 18, 2024	Chairperson	Approve
B. 2023/2024 Operations Update	Marin Transit	Information
C. 2024/2025 Survey Results & Service Update Information	Marin Transit	
D. 2024/2025 Pass Price & Budget	Marin Transit	Approve
E. Set date, time, location, and agenda for next meeting	Chairperson	Information

IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

V. ADJOURNMENT - to the next regular meeting



Ross Valley Bus Transportation JEPA



Meeting Minutes

**AGENDA ITEM III.A - ACCEPT MEETING MINUTES FROM:
NOVEMBER 11, 2023
JANUARY 18, 2024
MARCH 18, 2024**

Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services

Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement

Joint Committee

November 7, 2023

6:00 PM

San Anselmo Town Hall

525 San Anselmo Ave, San Anselmo, CA 94960

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL 6:00 PM

JEPA Board members:

Town of San Anselmo: Steve Burdo, Dave Donery

Town of Fairfax: Stephanie Hellman, Heather Abrams (absent)

County of Marin: Katie Rice, Nancy Vernon

Ross Valley School District: Chris Landles-Cobb (absent), Marci Trahan

Marin Transit: Christopher Whitlock, Nancy Whelan, Kyle French

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III. JEPA BUSINESS MEETING

Item	Presenter	Action
A. Accept April 17, 2023, Meeting Minutes	Chairperson	Approve

M/S Dave Donery, Steve Burdo to accept the April 17, 2023, minutes. Unanimous approval.

B. 2023/24 Operations Update	Marin Transit Information
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Marin Transit Operations Analyst Chris Whitlock reported on current operations and service level and one-way pass sales year to date – FY23/24 Total 640 up from 573 FY22/23. Total reflects White Hill, Hidden Valley, and Ross Valley Charter. Ridership is up by 4% over FY22/23 with 8 routes with 50+ students vs. 3 routes. Bus program estimated to remove 270 AM vehicles and 215 PM vehicles from the road to alleviate traffic congestion.

August start up service for Bauer's did see several issues including late departures caused by traffic, vehicle mechanical issue and scheduling error. From early September to mid-October, 87% of 448 trips operated within on time parameters (defined as 10 minutes).

Service issues recorded on August 24, September 26, October 4, and October 6. In event of cancellations, Marin Transit staff works closely with schools' personnel to develop a plan that guarantees all students are provided with alternative transportation options.

To accommodate San Anselmo construction project at Memorial Park, Marin Transit staff deployed a plan to move all students to the public bus stops on Sir Francis Drake (SFD/SF Blvd and SFD/Sunny Hills Dr). The original stop at Memorial Park will be reopened after receiving confirmation from San Anselmo that the project is completed.

Dave Donery, San Anselmo town manager, reported that completion is expected in early December.

Parent registration is now open for Ridepal, a mobile app that provides real-time location of busses. The app will allow alerts and cancelation messages to be sent to registered parents/guardians. Before Ridepal was offered, Marin Transit sent out alerts. Some texting was initially blocked by providers, but Marin Transit has now remedied by using 800 number vs. local.

Marin Transit is experiencing an increase in customer service duties: YTD 32 prorated refunds processed (up from 10 in same period FY22/23), 65 pass reprints and approximately 3,000 email exchanges with schools and families.

Considerations for FY2024/25 include streamlining the pass distribution and lottery process, bell time coordination, simplification or enhancement of other program customizations.

Ross Valley School District Superintendent stated that it would be difficult to make bell changes in the next school year but open to discussions.

San Anselmo Mayor Steve Burdo asked if Bauer's is a union shop, if a compliance target in Bauer's contract and about potential refunds. Marin Transit replied that Bauer's is a union shop, there's no compliance target goal at this point since no GPS tracking and currently there's a no refund policy but prorating is offered for passes surrendered. Mayor Burdo suggested testing texting capabilities with providers to determine issues of blocking before launching.

Fairfax Council member Stephanie Hellman asked about putting into place a multi-channel communication strategy moving forward to ensure that parents and students are notified when necessary.

Members of the public spoke about their experience with the service:

- Great need for reliable bus service
- Hidden Valley students disproportionately affected by unreliable service.
- Families and caregivers greatly impacted by late busses (e.g., late to work, stress/anxiety of leaving child with others)
- No reliable communication
- Would prefer to have Michaels back as bus provider – what was impetus for change?

Marin Transit Director Nancy Whelan responded that Marin Transit went through RFP process as government requirement. Bauer's was selected for the Ride Pal app along with other qualifications.

Bauer's President Mike Stubin apologized for the unreliable service and reported changes in progress to improve service:

- All buses will now come from parking lot as Los Gatos (vs. San Francisco)
- Bus supply has now improved – four new busses will be rolling out into the system and older busses will be traded out.
- Five bus drivers are in training and one fully trained ready to go into the system; can act as back up drivers when needed.
- RidePal app will provide reliable communication and does provide push notifications.

Mr. Stubin noted that he will be looking at metrics in the future.

Supervisor Katie Rice commented the need for smoothing out the bumps in the system given the impacts to families and the amount of work unreliable service caused for Marin Transit. She asked Marin Transit to track hours to make sure they are paid for their work.

C. Set date/time/location/agenda topics for next meeting Information

Next JEPa meeting will be held in San Anselmo chambers (pending any scheduling conflicts) on January 18th at 5:30pm in person.

IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

v. ADJOURNMENT - to the next regular meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Vernon
County of Marin

Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services

Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement

Joint Committee

November 7, 2023

6:00 PM

San Anselmo Town Hall

525 San Anselmo Ave, San Anselmo, CA 94960

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v. ADJOURNMENT - to the next regular meeting

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Nancy Vernon
County of Marin

**Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services
Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement
Joint Committee
March 18, 2024
5:30 PM
Fairfax Women's Club – 46 Park Road, Fairfax, CA 94930**

Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL 5:32 PM

JEPA Board members:

Town of San Anselmo: Brian Colbert (alt), Steve Burdo (absent), Dave Donery

Town of Fairfax: Stephanie Hellman, Heather Abrams

County of Marin: Katie Rice

Ross Valley School District: Chris Landles-Cobb, Marci Trahan

Marin Transit staff: Nancy Whelan, Kyle French, Robert Betts

Chair Rice asked for public comment on subjects not on the agenda.

Members of the public commented:

- In January Branson ended its contract with Bauer's due to the RidePal app not functioning.
- Personnel changes at Bauer's effected RidePal app performance at Branson this school year.
- The RidePal app was supposed to provide information about where buses were, but it has not functioned for Ross Valley schools since the beginning of the year.
- JEPA should look for other service providers.

II. CLOSED SESSION

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to California Government Code Section 54956.9(b)(1): Number of potential case(s) one.

The JEPA Board convened in closed session. At 6:51 pm Chair Rice re-convened the meeting in open session and reported that direction was given to staff.

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Members of the public spoke about their experience with the service:

- Service was missed on Tuesday, March 12 without any notification to parents.
- Missed service caused students to get rides from other parents, creating safety concerns.
- WH 13 and 14 buses are dropping off students in the middle of the road, creating a safety issue.

Chair Rice asked Marin Transit staff to describe the circumstances of the missed service and lack of parent notification. Chair Rice also requested staff to investigate whether the new bike lane on Butterfield might be causing the bus to not stop at the curb.

Nancy Whelan and Kyle French described that a breakdown occurred on a bus effecting two morning routes. A second bus was sent to aid the bus. Text messages were sent to parents and the school about the delays on the two routes served by the first bus. The second bus was then delayed beyond 20 minutes and no text messages were sent about the two routes impacted by the second bus delays.

IV. JEPA BUSINESS MEETING:

A. Election of Officers

B. Accept November 7, 2023 and January 18, 2024 meeting minutes.

Chair Rice requested that this item be tabled until the JEPA's next meeting to allow all members to participate.

C. 2023/24 Operations Update

Kyle French reviewed the Spring operations and Performance Tracking. [Slide presentation included with posted agenda.] He noted that the RidePal bus tracking mobile app had been disabled for all Ross Valley bus routes, that an alternative text messaging system was put in place on February 1st, and multiple email messages were sent to passholders notifying them of the change from RidePal to the text messaging system. Two incidents occurred since the last JEPA meeting. On February 29th a yellow bus was not available, smaller vans were deployed, and parents were notified of the change. On March 12th a breakdown caused delays to two routes and delays of more than 20 minutes, considered missed service, on two

routes. Parents were notified via text message of the delayed service but were **not** notified of the missed service. On time performance for December, January, and February was reviewed. All routes were between 95% and 98% on-time, defined as within 5 minutes of scheduled AM arrival time at school and within 5 minutes of scheduled PM departure time from school.

Chair Rice asked staff to clarify what "removal of Ross Valley routes" from RidePal (slide 4) means, whether Marin Transit staff have visibility on text messages sent by Bauer's, and whether Marin Transit has visibility to track the buses.

Staff responded that the removal of Ross Valley routes from RidePal means that the RidePal app is not in service while Bauer's re-builds the app. Text messages (the interim alternative to RidePal) can be tracked and are received by Marin Transit. Marin Transit can also track the buses, but staff are not in a position to fully understand operational issues without direct input from Bauer's.

Chair Rice asked how often text messages didn't get sent when service was late or delayed. Staff responded that since February 1st when text messaging was initiated, messages were not sent for the two routes for which service was missed on March 12th. Messages were sent for the other delays and for a change in equipment.

Members of the public commented:

- Text messaging is inconsistent.
- RidePal tracking was for the wrong buses.

Chair Rice asked about the expectations of the RidePal app. Staff replied that the app should provide information for the correct route and the correct bus. Staff plan to test the app before its re-release.

D. 2024/25 Pass Sales & Service Options

Robert Betts described pass sales history, the buses used in service, and how buses are used twice in the AM and twice in the PM. Because all White Hill students are released at the same time, the demand for the first bus departures after school (PM) exceeds the capacity resulting in many students waitlisted for the earlier departing buses. 85% of PM bus pass sales are concentrated among Butterfield, San Anselmo Hub/Red Hill, and Memorial Park bus stops.

Robert reviewed four options considered for service and pass sales next year. The recommended option is to restructure White Hill routing to meet targeted demand. This option removes the need for a lottery process for pass sales thereby reducing administrative

staff time. Brief descriptions of the options and comparisons are included in the slide presentation included with posted agenda.

Board member Marci Trahan explained why the PM bell times can't be staggered (Option 4). Board member Landles-Cobb asked if a Fairfax stop could be added to the recommended option. Because Ross Valley Charter would no longer be served under Option 1, Board member Hellman asked if RVC students have an alternative bus.

Robert Betts stated that a Fairfax stop cannot be added to Option 1 and still achieve the benefits of balancing demand with available supply. There is no other yellow bus or public transit bus available to serve RVC students.

Members of the public commented:

- Bauer's cost is high.
- Could costs be reduced by eliminating underutilized PM buses?

In response to public comment, Robert Betts stated that buses are contracted for 5 hours per day and removing PM buses from the schedule would not reduce costs.

E. 2024/25 Draft Budget & Pass Pricing

Kyle French presented a summary comparison of the 2023/24 budgeted pass sales with the actual pass sales to date and the resulting budget surplus. 639 one-way passes were sold compared to 600 estimated in the budget. Most of the increase in pass sales is attributed to higher than estimated purchases of reduced-price passes. Staff costs have exceeded budgeted amounts due to lottery management, contractor turnover, and customer service. Marin Transit plans to absorb the cost overruns in 2023/24.

Kyle reviewed the draft 2024/25 budget assumptions. [Slide presentation included with posted agenda.] The draft budget is based on the service design and pass sales process outlined in Option 1. Assuming 550 one-way passes are sold, the full price one-way pass would be \$675 and the reduced-price pass would be \$75. The current full price pass is \$575 and the reduced-price pass is \$75. The draft budget includes increased staff costs, more accurately reflecting the time it takes to administer the program. The draft budget does not include the costs of managing a lottery for pass sales because the lottery is eliminated in Option 1. Bus parking costs may rise slightly from the amount shown in the draft budget. Using the current assumptions, the 2024/25 draft budget shows a \$10,727 surplus.

Kyle presented a schedule for starting pass sales by May 20th, before school recesses for summer.

Board member Hellman asked for clarification on staff costs. Chair Rice noted that Marin Transit staff had been asked to more carefully record the time spent on Ross Valley yellow bus program management.

Staff explained that in the current year staff costs are estimated to be \$150,000. Of that amount \$60,000 is attributed to lottery management and \$20,000 is attributed to contractor turnover (additional monitoring, incident management, customer service). The remaining \$70,000 is the estimated cost for staffing all other aspects of the program. Without the lottery and without the additional costs incurred due to contractor turnover, staff estimates that staff costs for next year will be \$70,000.

In response to Board member Landles-Cobb's question about whether the expected surplus would cover the potential rise in bus parking costs, staff indicated that it would.

Members of the public commented:

- Has staff or the JEPA discussed a possible credit to Marin Transit?
- What is the difference between the number of reduced-price passes sold this year and the number estimated for next year?
- Customer service costs for next year won't include the problems with Bauer's.
- Has Marin Transit conducted a survey of White Hill parents to get feedback on Option 1?

Chair Rice indicated that a survey of parents is needed and asked staff to respond to questions posed by members of the public. Staff stated that a possible credit to Marin Transit has not been discussed. The sale of reduced-price passes is expected to increase from 96 in 2023/24 to 100 in 2024/25 under Option 1.

Chair Rice asked if a service scenario that is the same as this year had been considered. Robert Betts indicated that the second column on slide 14 shows the result of retaining the lottery with the same service plan. One way bus passes would be \$850 in this scenario.

F. Date/Time of next meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2024, at 5:30 pm at the Fairfax Women's Club, 46 Park Road, Fairfax, CA 94930.

V. MEMBER REPORTS

There were no member reports.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rice adjourned the meeting at 8:14 pm.



Operations Update

**AGENDA ITEM III.B
2023/24 OPERATIONS UPDATE**



Spring Operations and Performance Tracking

- Operation Updates
- On Time Performance:

Bus	Routes	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Bus 1	WH-1 & HV-1 AM	98%	99%	99%	97%
Bus 2	WH-2 & WH-7	95%	98%	96%	95%
Bus 3	WH-5 & WH-8	96%	96%	97%	95%
Bus 4	WH-6 & WH-18	98%	97%	98%	97%

Bus	Routes	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Bus 1	HV-1 PM & WH-14	98%	99%	99%	97%
Bus 2	WH-12 & WH-13	95%	98%	96%	95%
Bus 3	WH-9 & WH-15	96%	96%	97%	95%
Bus 4	WH-10 & WH-16	98%	97%	98%	97%

*AM routes – **PM routes***

Routes are considered On Time when within 5m of schedule.





2024/2025 Survey Results and Service Update

AGENDA ITEM III.C

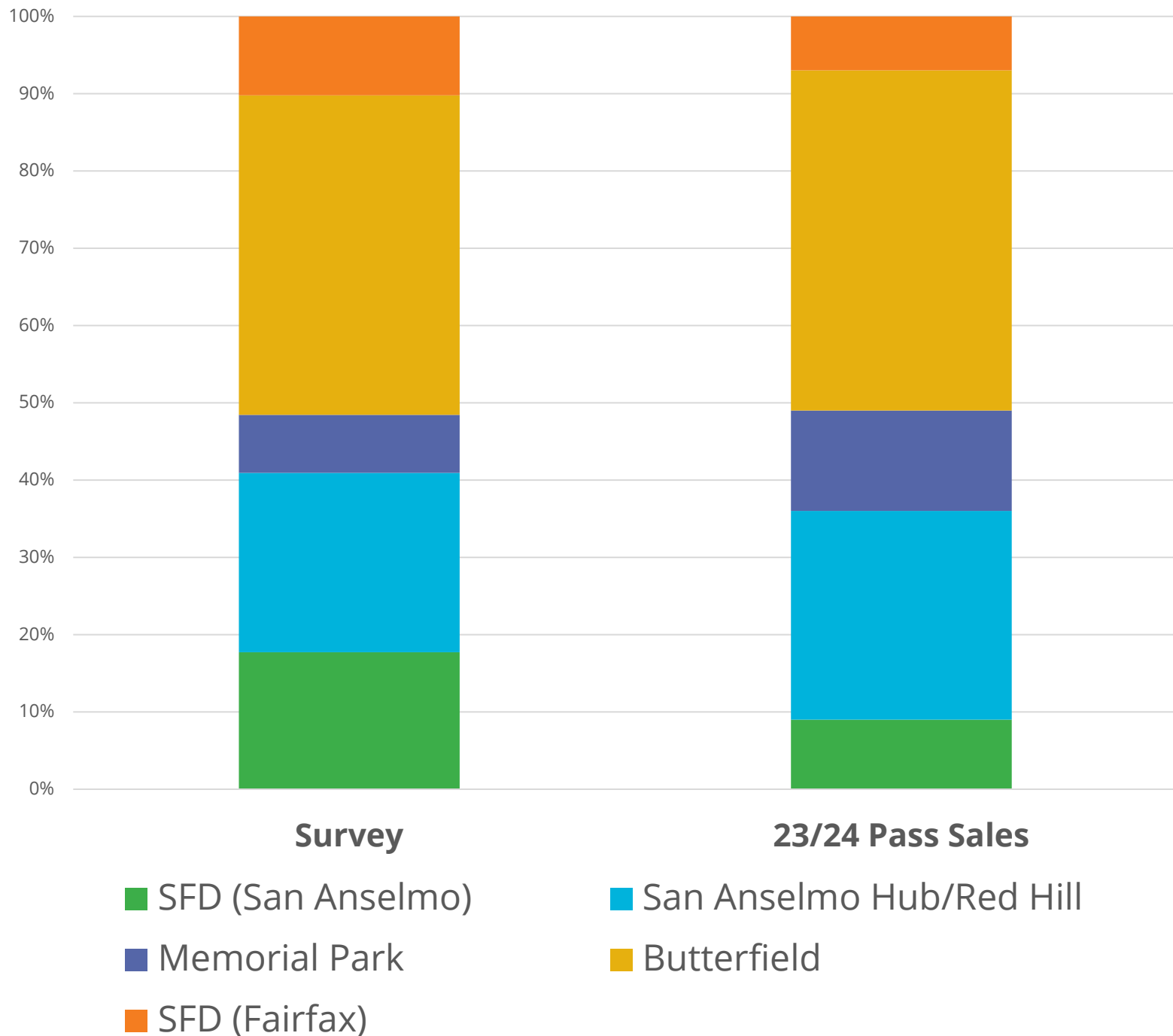
2024/25 SERVICE UPDATE



Survey Purpose & Summary

- Gauge level of interest with \$675 bus pass for next year
- Evaluate AM vs PM service demand, by geography

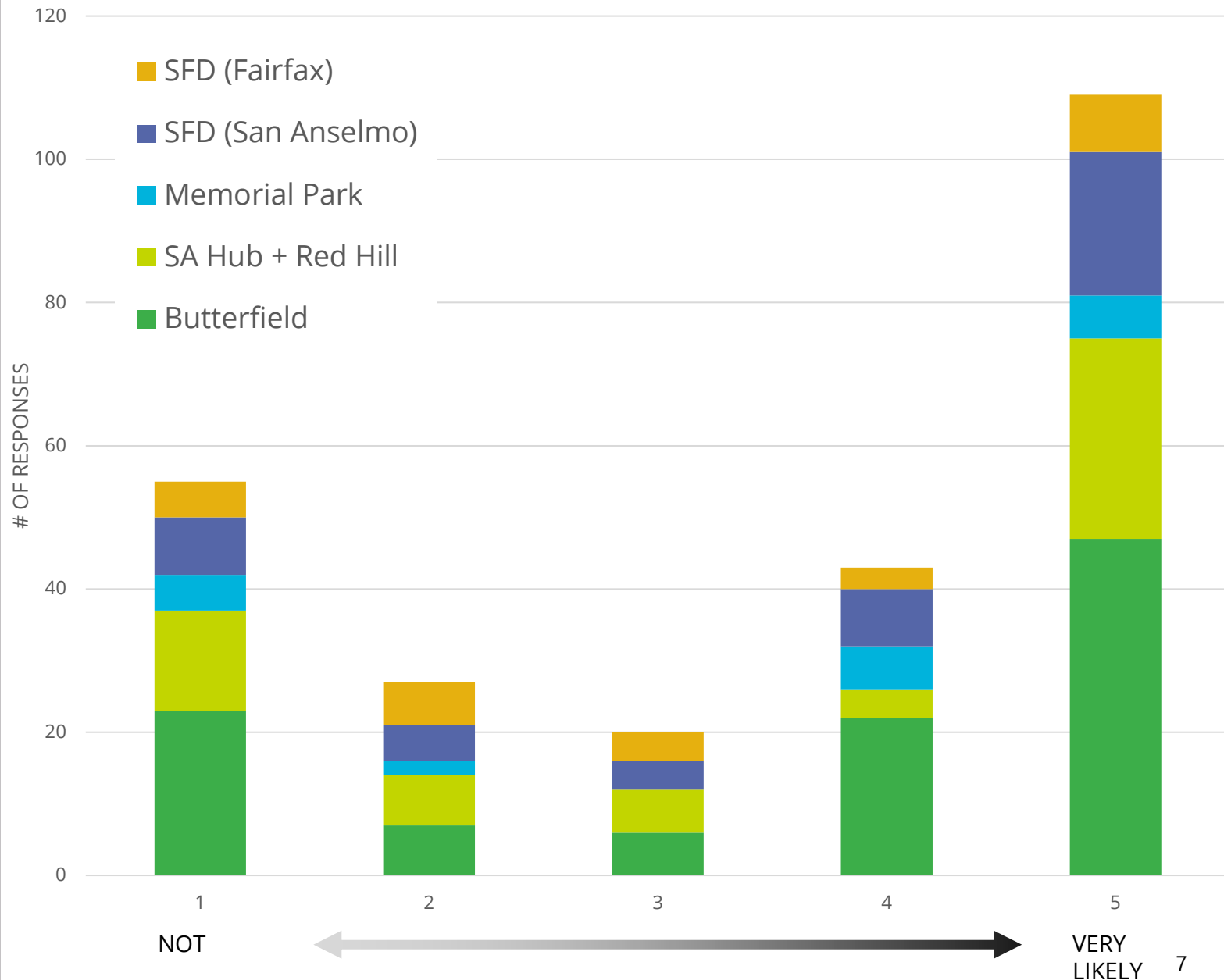
219 responses
representing **254** Students



How Likely to Purchase AM Pass?*

- 60% indicated a high desire (4 or 5) to purchase, 32% low (1 or 2)
- Highest = Butterfield (65%)
- Lowest = SFD –Fairfax (42%)

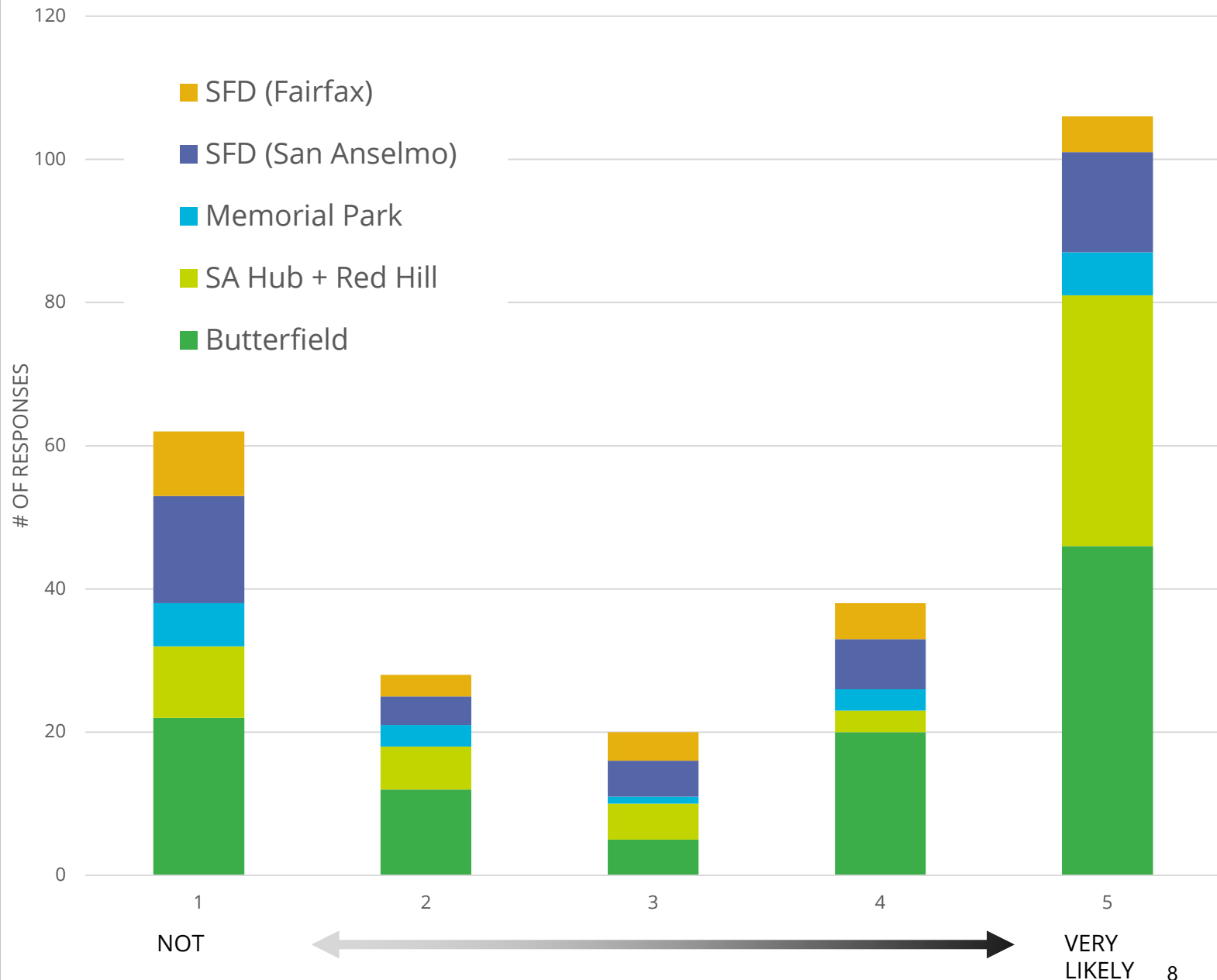
**Respondents were given \$675 as expected one-way pass price*



How Likely to Purchase PM Pass?*

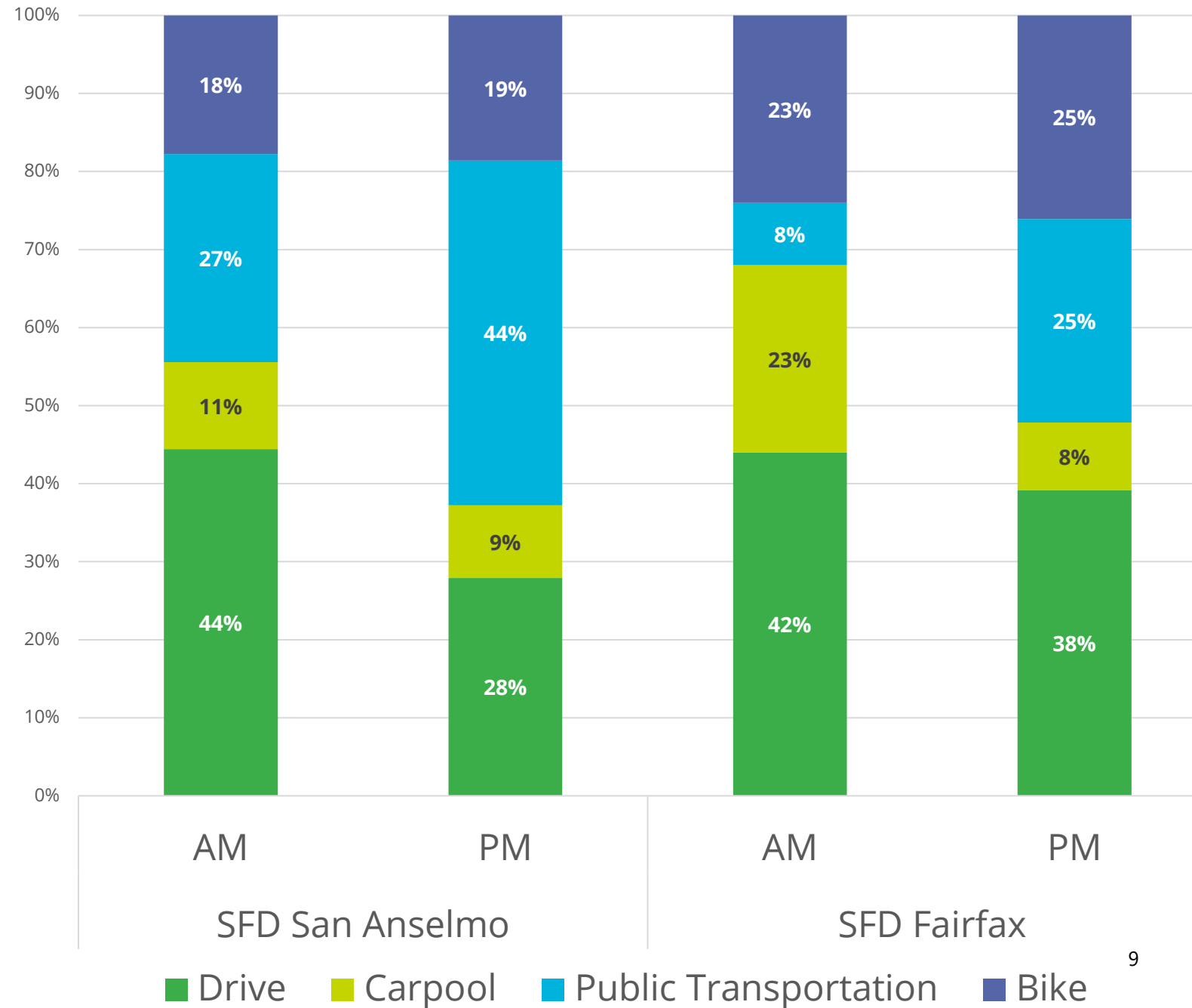
- 57% indicated a high (4 or 5) desire to purchase, 35% low (1 or 2)
- Highest = SA Hub + Red Hill (64%)
- Lowest = SFD –Fairfax (38%)

*Respondents were given \$675 as expected one-way pass price



If Yellow Bus Wasn't Available, How Would Your Student Get to School?

- AM Alternative = Drive (44%), Transit (20%)
- PM Alternative = Transit (37%), Drive (31%)



Key Takeaways

- **Slightly higher interest in AM service than PM service**
 - Butterfield and easternmost areas of San Anselmo show highest overall demand
 - Downtown Fairfax shows lowest overall demand
- **If Yellow Bus wasn't offered to stops along Sir Francis Drake,**
 - AM: 44% would drive, 20% would take transit
 - PM: 31% would drive, 31% would take transit
- **Focus on AM yellow bus service for all, offer transit as PM alternative for stops not served**

Original Recommendation

Option 1: Restructure White Hill Service

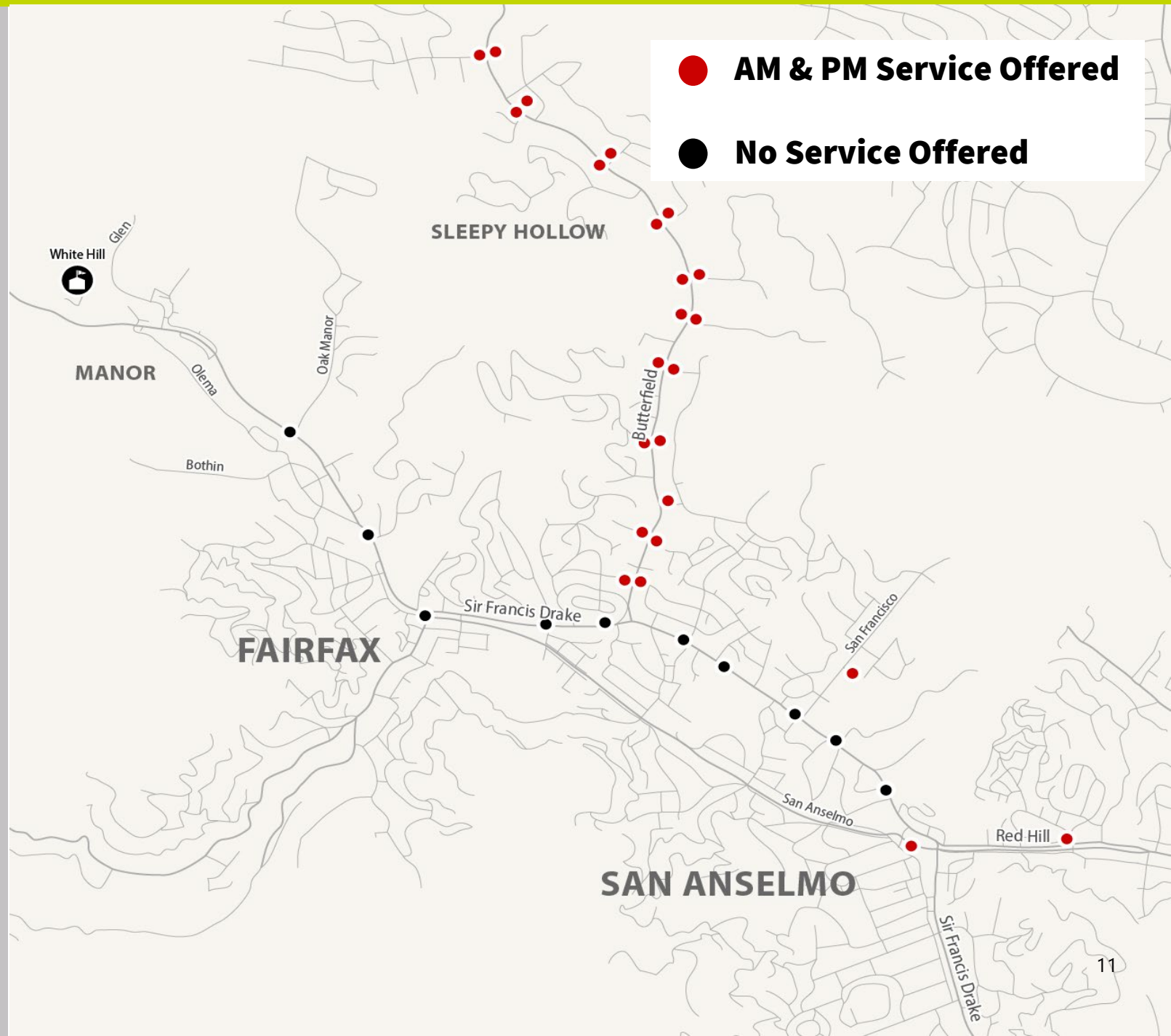
Limit yellow bus service to
select stops*:

- Butterfield
- Memorial Park
- San Anselmo Hub
- Red Hill

Remove service to RVC

No change for Hidden Valley

** A variation of this option would be to offer AM service to all stops and limit only the PM stops*



Updated Recommendation

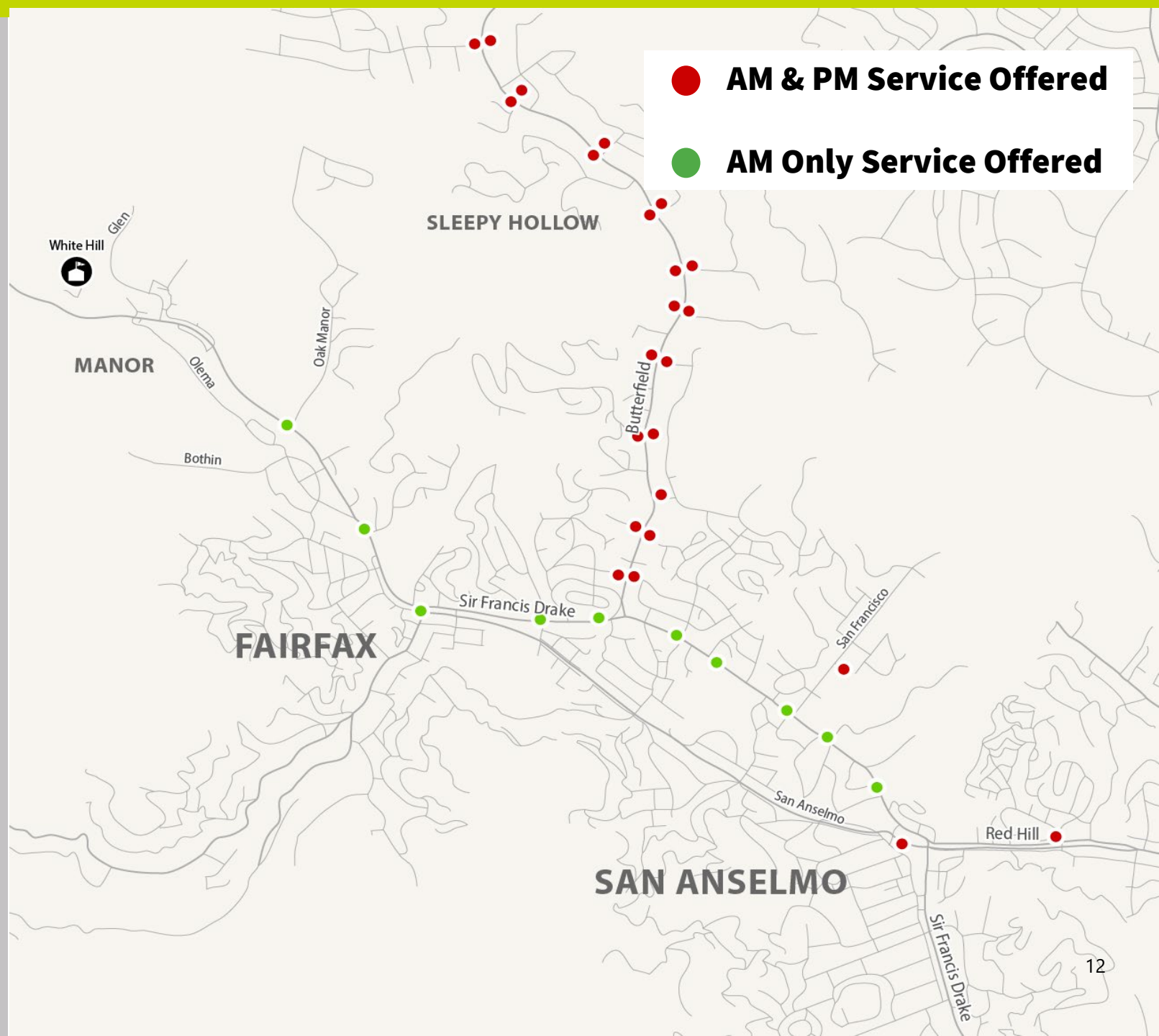
Option 1a: Restructure White Hill PM Service

Limit yellow bus service to
select stops in PM only:

- Butterfield
- Memorial Park
- San Anselmo Hub
- Red Hill

Remove service to RVC

No change for Hidden Valley



Pass Option Comparisons

			2024/25 Options			
			1a	2	3	4
			Restructure White Hill Routes & Stops	Prioritize Passes for Younger Riders	Increase Number of Buses	Adjust PM Bell Times
Description	2023/24 Est Actual	2024/25 Est	Only offer service to select stops* during AM & PM	Offer yellow bus service to only select grades (e.g. 6 & 7 graders)	Keep 4 AM buses, increase PM buses to 6	Stagger PM release times (at least 20-30 minutes) at White Hill to shift ~ 100 students earlier or later
# Buses	4	4	4	4	6	4
Total Passes Sold (est)	640	640	550	525	700	700
Total Program Cost (est)	\$818,000	\$962,000	\$895,000	\$895,000	\$1,315,000	\$895,000
One Way Pass Price (est)	\$575	\$850	\$675	\$700	\$1,200	\$550



2024/2025 Pass Price and Budget

AGENDA ITEM III.D

2024/25 BUDGET



FY 24-25 Budget Assumptions

- Option 1a service restructuring implemented
- One -way pass price increases to \$675; reduced pass price remains at \$75
- Pass payment options are the same (single payment or two payments)
- Enrollment is stable
- Ratio of full price and reduced price passes sold remains constant
- County and Towns' contributions increase 4% to meet required Measure AA match
- Measure AA allocation increases by about 5%
- Contract rate increases 4.9%
- Staff costs stabilize at \$70,000

Pass Sales Assumptions

Option 1a

Budget Assumptions	Pass Sales		
	Full Price		Full
		<i>Charter one way passes</i>	0
		<i>White Hill one way passes</i>	425
		<i>Hidden Valley one way passes</i>	70
		Total # of one way Passes Sold - Full Price	495
	Reduced 50% - Income Qualified		Reduced
		<i>Charter one way passes</i>	0
		<i>White Hill one way passes</i>	25
		<i>Hidden Valley one way passes</i>	30
		Total # of one way Passes Sold - Reduced 50%	55
		Total of All Passes Sold	550
Bus Pass Prices			Total
	<i>Full price one-way pass price</i>	\$ 675.00	\$ 334,125.00
	<i>Reduced price pass</i>	\$ 75.00	\$ 4,125.00

Estimated Revenue and Expenses

Option 1a

Revenue	
<i>Pass Sale Carry Forward</i>	\$ 58,862.00
<i>Bus Pass Revenue</i>	\$ 338,250.00
<i>Two Payment Processing Fee - \$11.50 x 2 x passes sold</i>	\$ 6,831.00
<i>Refund/Cancellations</i>	\$ (1,500.00)
<i>Replacement pass sales</i>	\$ -
<i>Single use pass sales</i>	\$ -
<i>Total Measure AA Formula Funds Carry Forward AA</i>	\$ 325,000.00
<i>County of Marin</i>	\$ 104,000.00
<i>Town of San Anselmo</i>	\$ 36,920.00
<i>Town of Fairfax</i>	\$ 36,920.00
<i>Ross Valley School District</i>	\$ -
<i>Ross Valley Charter</i>	\$ -
<i>Grant Funding</i>	\$ -
Total Revenue	\$ 905,283.00

Expenses	
<i>Daily Rate/Bus</i>	\$ 1,099
<i>Contractor Expense (RVSD)</i>	\$ 791,280.00
<i>Contractor Surcharge Contingency (RVSD)</i>	\$ -
<i>Consulting</i>	\$ 5,000.00
<i>Fare Processing Charges</i>	\$ 13,803.24
<i>Marketing</i>	\$ 500.00
<i>Fuel Contingency</i>	\$ -
<i>Bus Parking in Marin County</i>	\$ 13,971.95
<i>Marin Transit Operations Oversight and Customer Service</i>	\$ 70,000.00
<i>Bus Driver Incentive</i>	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 894,555.19
Surplus/Deficit	\$ 10,727.81

FY 24-25 Pass Sales Release Plan and Schedule

Activity	Dates
JEPA Meeting to finalize budget and pass price	April 15
Update website and on-line store	April 15 – May 6
Update parents on FY 24-25 program <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Routes and stops- Pass prices- Pass sales start date	May 6 - 19
Pass sales begin	Week of May 20
Pass processing and distribution	Summer

Requests of JEPA

- Confirm Service Option 1a, including AM only service on SFD
- Feedback and input on dates and timing of pass sales the week of May 20th
- Recommend adoption of FY 24-25 Ross Valley Yellow Bus Program Budget
- Recommend approval of \$675 one-way pass price and \$75 one-way pass price for income eligible families for FY 24-25

Thank you

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GENERAL PUBLIC INFORMATION

ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact Zach Koblick de Leon, at zach.koblickdeleon@marincounty.org. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Joint Committee to make reasonable accommodation to help insure accessibility to this meeting.

AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the JEPA joint committee regarding any item on this agenda after the distribution of the original packet will be made available for public inspection at the public counter at San Anselmo Town Hall located at 525 San Anselmo Avenue.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearings provide the general public and interested parties an opportunity to provide testimony on these items. If you challenge any proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the Public Hearing(s) described later in this agenda, or in written correspondence delivered to the Joint Powers Agency at, or prior to, the Public Hearing(s)

TIMING OF ITEMS ON AGENDA

While the JEPA attempts to hear all items in order as stated on the agenda, it reserves the right to take items out of order. No set times are assigned to items appearing on the JEPA agenda.