



Memorandum

Date: October 27, 2025

To: Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation Services Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JEPA) Board Members

From: Marin Transit Student Transportation Team

Subject: Ross Valley Yellow Bus Transportation – Fall 2025 Update

Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JEPA) Update

Summary

Yellow School Bus Service in Ross Valley is directly contracted and managed by Marin Transit, with oversight provided by the Joint Exercise of Power Agreement Board, made up of members from the Towns of San Anselmo and Fairfax, the County of Marin, and the Ross Valley School District. The service is provided by a private contractor, Bauer's Intelligent Transportation, who successfully won a competitive bid for the service prior to the start of the 2023/24 school year.

This year, one-way passes were sold at \$675 each way (\$1350 for a round trip), staying the same price as the previous year. A parent must purchase a morning and afternoon pass to provide a "round trip" ride for their student. To ensure cost is not a barrier to acquiring a pass, income qualified families can purchase a pass at the reduced rate of \$75 each way.

Routes were restructured last school year to focus afternoon buses on areas of Ross Valley not served by public transportation (Butterfield, Memorial Park, and Downtown San Anselmo). This allowed the District to control demand for bus passes and remove the "lottery" process used in recent years to manage pass sales. This process resulted in a significant reduction in administrative time invested in the program and was kept in the 2025/26 school year.

All route maps and schedule information are available on rossvalleyschoolbus.com.

Operations Update

Marin Transit continues to coordinate and provide school bus transportation to families in Ross Valley through the RVSD Yellow Bus Program, serving two schools in the district, Hidden Valley Elementary School and White Hill Middle School.

The RVSD Yellow Bus Program operates at the same level of service as it did in FY2024/2025 – four buses serving 15 trips daily. As of September 2025, over 600 passes have sold, with several sold-out routes demonstrating the high demand and usage of the program across the district.

2025/26 Changes - Morning Routes Restructure

Pass sales for the 2025/26 year began on May 28th. Due to high demand of WH-11 (AM route, serving Butterfield, arriving at White Hill for 1st Period) which sold out all passes within one day, sales for White Hill were temporarily paused so Marin Transit staff could restructure the AM White Hill routes to better meet the needs of Ross Valley families.

This year was the first year the program sold out an AM route, largely due to shifts in zero period versus first period class participation at White Hill (rather than school enrollment overall). The restructuring effort opened approximately 20 additional AM seats for families along Butterfield Road. With these additional seats and new routes, staff were able to better meet the AM demand for White Hill service and currently there are still available seats on all routes serving Butterfield Road.

2025/26 Operations and Performance Tracking

All drivers were retained from the previous school year; however, due to route adjustments, drivers had a ramp up period to learn the new routes in August. Service in September showed to be more consistent and reliable; however, Marin Transit staff have brought concerns about bus maintenance to Bauers' due to breakdowns on vehicles serving Routes HV-2 and WH-8.

Vehicles are assigned 'route pairs' – that is, each vehicle will complete one route before traveling to the starting point of another route. The assigned route pairs per vehicle, and their on-time performance by month, is shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: On Time Performance through September 2025

Bus	AM Routes	Aug	Sept	PM Routes	Aug	Sept
Bus 1	HV-1 & WH-25	100%	100%	HV-2 & WH-8	100%	86%
Bus 2	WH-3 & WH-9	100%	86%	WH-6 & WH-12	100%	93%
Bus 3	WH-21 & WH-23	86%	100%	WH-4 & WH-10	100%	100%
Bus 4	WH-1 & WH-13	78%	100%	WH-2	100%	100%

Notes:

- Routes are considered 'On Time' when within 5 minutes of schedule
- Alerts are sent out for routes once they are 10 minutes or more behind schedule

2025/26 Pass Sales Update

Yellow Bus Program Budget – JEPA Adopted April 2025

Table 2 below shows the 2025/26 Yellow Bus Program budget, adopted by the JEPA on April 28th, 2025. The adopted budget was passed under the assumption that the program would sell 585 passes, for a total pass revenue of \$368,625.

Table 2: Yellow Bus FY2025/2026 Approved Program Budget

Revenue		Expenses	
<i>Carry Forward</i>	\$ 20,960.80	<i>Contractor Expense</i>	\$ 830,880.00
<i>Bus Pass Revenue</i>	\$ 368,625.00	<i>Consulting</i>	\$ 5,000.00
<i>Two Payment Processing Fee</i>	\$ 2,875.00	<i>Fare Processing Charges</i>	\$ 11,145.00
<i>Refund/Cancellations</i>	\$ (6,750.00)	<i>Marketing</i>	\$ 500.00
<i>Total Measure AA Formula Funds</i>	\$ 390,521.00	<i>Bus Parking</i>	\$ 14,750.00
<i>County of Marin</i>	\$ 108,200.00	<i>Marin Transit Oversight</i>	\$ 80,000.00
<i>Town of San Anselmo</i>	\$ 38,400.00	Total Expenses	\$ 942,275.00
<i>Town of Fairfax</i>	\$ 38,400.00	Surplus/Deficit	\$ 18,956.80
Total Revenue	\$ 961,231.80	Local Match -	20%

Notes:

- Measure AA guidelines require a minimum 20% of total operational costs for any home-to-school Yellow Bus transportation program receiving Measure AA funding be funded by local contributions.

Assumed vs Actual Pass Sales

Currently, as of 9/19, the program has sold 619 passes, surpassing last year's total of 610. Information on the total pass sales, by type, can be found in **Table 3** below.

The 2025/26 school year is the second year the program has implemented a first come/first serve system for pass sales. The elimination of the lottery and waitlist has greatly reduced administrative time and costs for the RVSD Yellow Bus program. Additionally, the reduction in administrative costs and steady pass sales allowed the program to maintain a pass price of \$675 for a second year, rather than increase the pass price as was necessary in prior years.

Table 3: FY2025/26 Actuals Yellow Bus Pass Sales, as of September 19, 2025

Budget Assumptions	Pass Sales	
	Full Price	Full
	<i>White Hill one way passes</i>	474
	<i>Hidden Valley one way passes</i>	68
	Total # of one way Passes Sold - Full Price	542
	Reduced 50% - Income Qualified	Reduced
	<i>White Hill one way passes</i>	56
	<i>Hidden Valley one way passes</i>	21
	Total # of one way Passes Sold - Reduced 50%	77



Total of All Passes Sold		619	
Bus Pass Type		Price	Total
Full price one-way pass price		\$ 675.00	\$ 365,850.00
Reduced price pass		\$ 75.00	\$ 5,775.00

Pass Sales Summary

A total of 619 one-way passes have been sold, composed of 346 AM passes and 271 PM passes. The full-price pass remained at \$675, while the reduced pass price remained at \$75. As of September 19, 77 Reduced Price passes have been purchased, or roughly 12% of the total number of passes sold.

All White Hill dismissal bell PM routes are sold out. WH-3 was the second AM route to sell out, and WH-11 sold out before restructuring, after which about 20 seats were opened to families along Butterfield.

Total Stop Use

Butterfield shows the highest ridership overall, with 124 students using it in the morning and 125 in the afternoon. Memorial Park serves 72 students in the morning and 65 in the afternoon, with usage split evenly between Hidden Valley (66 students) and White Hill (71 students).

The San Anselmo Hub is heavily used by White Hill students, with 83 riders in the morning and 72 in the afternoon, totaling 155 riders from White Hill. Butterfield's ridership is almost exclusively White Hill students, accounting for 249 of its users compared to just 1 from Hidden Valley.

Table 4: Yellow Bus Stop Ridership by Geographic Area

Stop Use by Time			Stop Use by School		
Area	AM	PM	Area	H. V.	W. H.
Butterfield	124	125	Butterfield	1	249
Memorial Park	72	65	Memorial Park	66	71
San Anselmo Hub	83	72	San Anselmo Hub	N/A	155
SFD & San Francisco	21	N/A	SFD & San Francisco	3	18

Pass Sales Compared to 24/25 School Year

As of September 2025, total pass sales were higher than in 2024/25, with three fewer passes purchased for Hidden Valley and twelve more purchased for White Hill. This year also shows increased demand for morning service for White Hill overall, with more passes sold overall and an AM route selling out for the first time in program history.

WH-3 became the second morning route to sell out after WH-11, which filled on the first day of pass sales; restructuring of WH-11 created about 20 additional seats to serve the Butterfield neighborhood. Parent feedback continues to highlight unmet needs, including requests for expanded afternoon service to Butterfield, the return of afternoon service to Downtown Fairfax (which had been

discontinued prior to the 24/25 school year due to the availability of public transportation options), and additional morning service to the San Anselmo Hub.

Key Takeaways and Future Considerations

Overall, Ross Valley yellow bus service has operated smoothly through September 2025, closing out the last of the three-year base agreement with Bauer's Intelligent Transportation. The JEPA Board will have the option of exercising two separate one-year contract option years, starting with the 2026-2027 school year.

Pass sales remained strong this year, slightly surpassing forecasts. On-time performance has been acceptable, and staff and the contractor continue to monitor performance and take steps to improve it. As in past years, parents continue to request additional bus service. Specific requests this year are for expanded afternoon service to Butterfield, the return of afternoon service to Downtown Fairfax, and additional morning service to the San Anselmo Hub.

Staff will present several items for the JEPA Board to consider at meetings in the early spring. These items will focus on what has been learned this year that should be considered for next year's program, such as:

- Potential to restructure stops across the PM routes along Butterfield
- Cost and funding for additional bus service
 - New funding sources or increases in existing pass prices and local contributions
- Pass pricing and structure

The Ross Valley yellow bus program continues to provide a vital service to families with students attending White Hill Middle School and Hidden Valley Elementary School. It is major source of traffic congestion relief on the Sir Francis Drake corridor, benefiting residents and drivers alike. We expect the program to continue to experience strong ridership through the future.