

Transit Integration in Sonoma County

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Transit Recovery
April 26, 2021



SONOMA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Transit Integration in Sonoma County



**Transit Integration
and Efficiency
Study**



**Pandemic causes
transit uncertainty**



**A unified brand to
help grow
ridership**

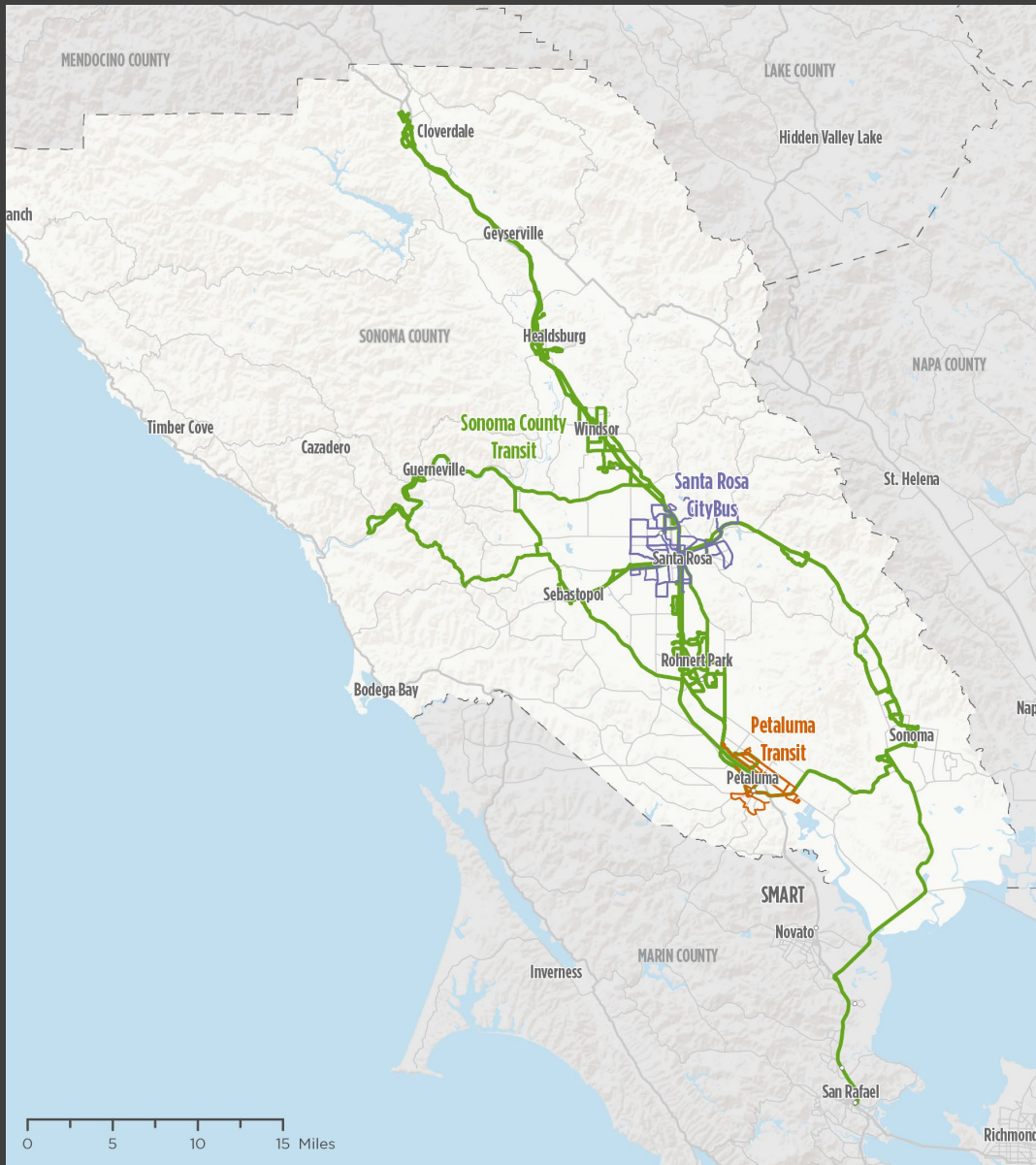


What's next?

Transit Integration and Efficiency Study

01

In fall 2019, the SCTA Board of Directors adopted the Transit Integration and Efficiency Study (TIES) developing a phased approach to improved transit through agency collaboration



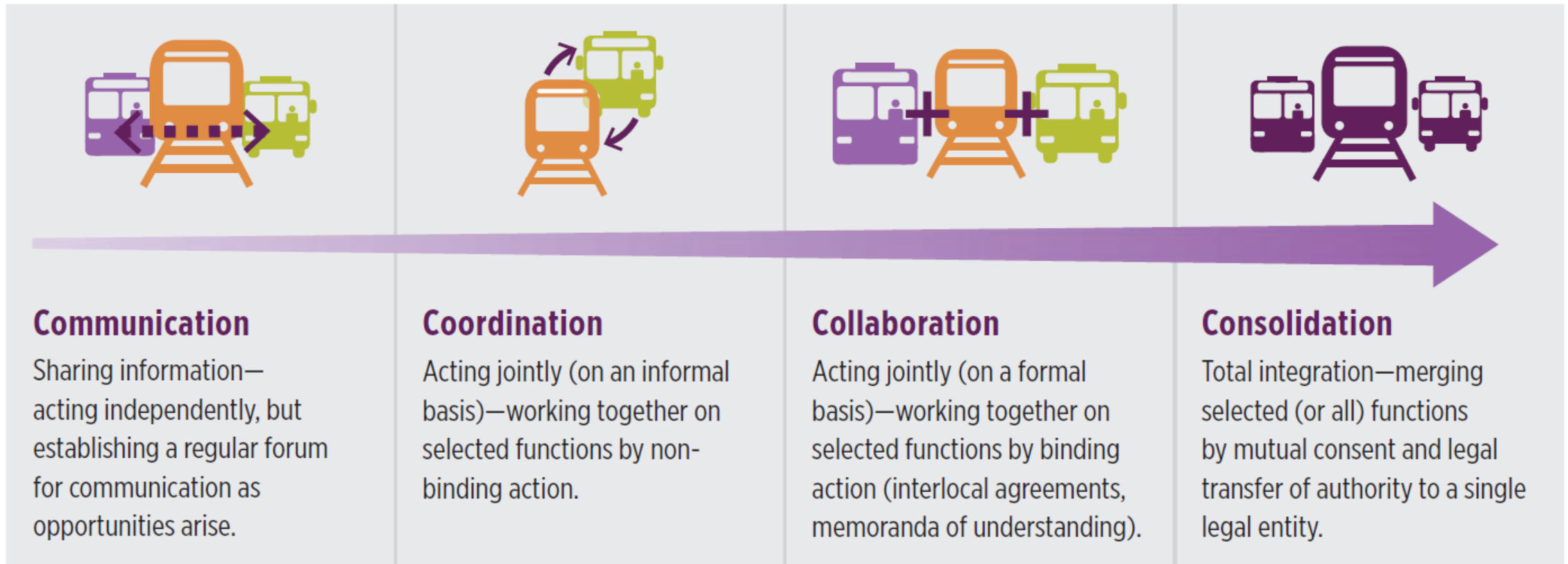
TIES Project Overview

- How can the three local bus transit agencies improve the quality of service through coordination or integration?
- What opportunities for increased integration are feasible and meet the desired outcomes?

Santa Rosa
CityBus

Petaluma
Transit





Adapted and modified from North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), KFH Group, Inc. 2012. Statewide Regionalization Study Final Report. As requested in Session Law

TIES Goals

- Improve the rider experience
- Increase efficiency of delivering quality transit service
- Reduce operating and capital costs to enable improved service

Pandemic causes transit uncertainty

02

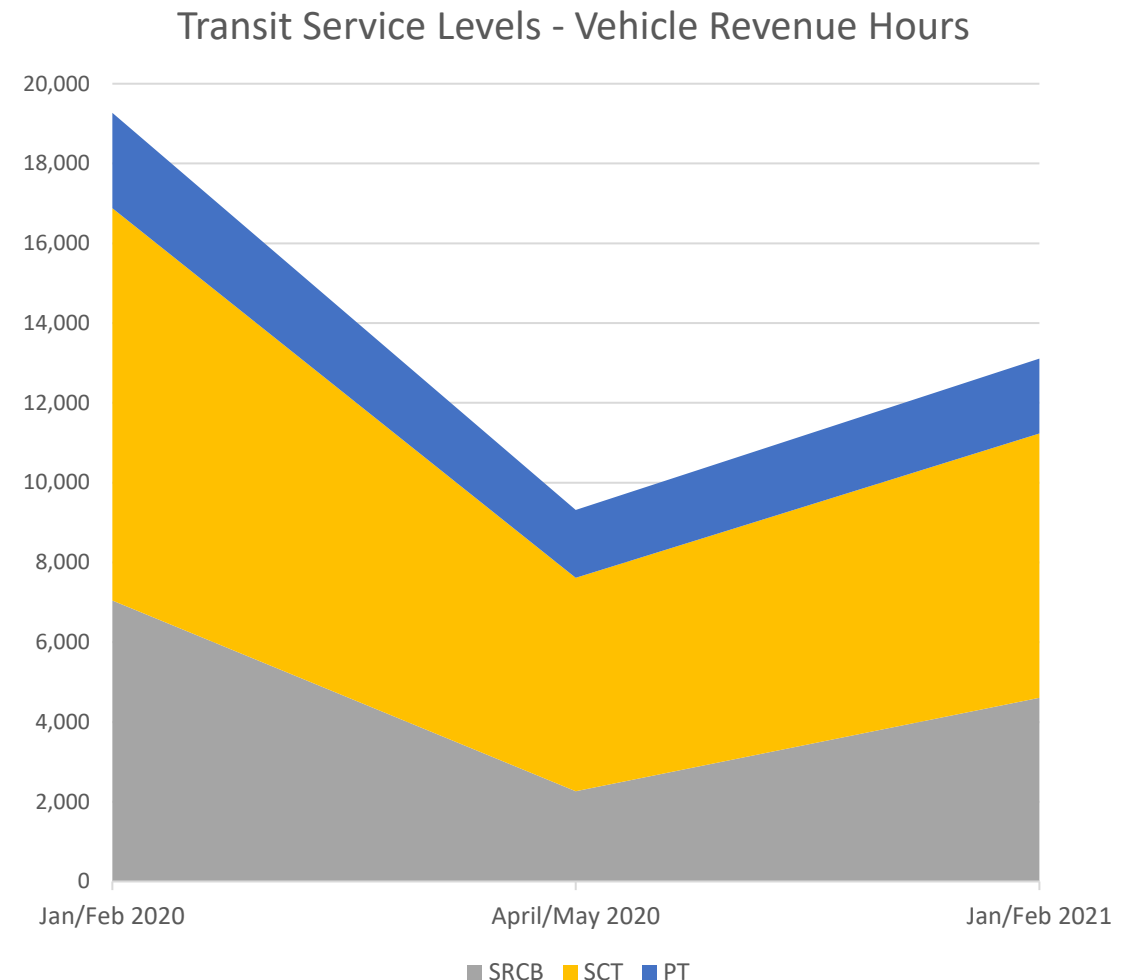
Pandemic causes transit uncertainty

- Funding Impacts
- Reduced ridership
- Safety concerns
- Changed travel patterns



Transit service recovery

- Transit service levels dipped to 48% of pre-pandemic levels around April/May 2020
- By January/February 2021, service levels were restored to 68% the levels during the same period in 2020; and this continues to rise
- Ridership relatively strong, at 40-45% of pre-pandemic level
 - High proportion low-income, essential workers, frequent riders
 - Businesses and school re-openings



SCTA Future of Transit Ad Hoc Committee

- Ad Hoc Tasks
 - Prioritize recommendations in TIES given changed circumstances
 - Coordination on Bay Area Public Transit Transformation Action Plan
- Ad Hoc Goals
 - Increase transit ridership as a mechanism to reduce GHG emissions, improve access to low-cost transportation, and reduce congestion
 - Simplify and enhance the transit customer experience, while maximizing resources available to transit and improving operational efficiency and service quality (reliability, frequency, and span of service)
- Meet these outcomes through unified brand for local transit

Vision for the Future of Transit

- Shared service planning
- Integrated fare policy
- Technology solutions for trip planning
- Simplified access to customer service
- Unified public information and marketing



A unified brand to help grow ridership

03

Local effort that aligns with regional discussions about wayfinding and mapping

Unified Brand Scope of Work

PHASE 1: 6 Month Timeframe, Implement with Existing Staff & Funding

Focus Area	Strategy	Recommendation
Service Planning	Develop and adopt shared planning model	Standardize processes for policies and information sharing
	Standardize data	Identify & standardize benchmarks based on shared definitions of performance data points
	Integration Planning	Formalize paratransit one-seat ride process and practice
Fares	Harmonize fares	Chart path on strategy for fare policy and structure
Technology	Single point app	Promote access for real-time (i.e. The Transit App), standardize 511 info
		Trip planning
Customer Service	Consolidate Customer service	Customer service staff cross-training
		Santa Rosa Transit Mall kiosk staff integration
		Transit Service Representatives support all providers
Public Information & Marketing	Communication with Riders	Press Release/ rider communication/ route changes
		Create consistent Website design layout

Phase 1 Successes to Date



Operators established a new phone system that allows customer service to transfer calls directly to other operators



Paratransit one-seat rides piloted to reduce transfers between agencies



Fare coordination, joint marketing and press releases

Fare reinstatement

Clipper START

Free rides to vaccination appointments

Unified Brand Scope of Work

PHASE 2: 18-Month Timeframe, Estimated Need \$750k

Focus Area	Strategy	Recommendation
Fares	Harmonize fares	Implement Fare policy, media, structures, and universal transit passes
		Mobile Ticketing/Clipper integration
Customer Service	Simplified Access to Customer Service	Single phone line for customer service
	Signage and wayfinding	Liaison with MTC Mapping/Wayfinding on bus stops signage, Transit Mall signage
		Countywide real-time info at stops
Public Information & Marketing	Communication with Riders	Single website (agency website integration)
		Shared format for public information/print collateral
		Liaison with MTC Mapping/Wayfinding on printed map laid out and displayed in consistent format
		Liaison with MTC Mapping/Wayfinding on creation of a unified brand

Unified Brand Scope of Work

PHASE 2 Continued: 18 Month Timeframe, Estimated Need \$750K

Focus Area	Strategy	Recommendation
Service Planning	Develop and adopt shared planning model	Integrate overlapping service areas
		Integrate timed transfers and connections
	Standardize data	Automated passenger count data and rider surveys
	Integration Planning	Standardize paratransit eligibility process
		Service Planning consultant/contractor (e.g., line by line analysis, data harmonization)
Implementation Support	Staffing	Project Manager hired by Sonoma County Transportation Authority
		MTC Mapping/Wayfinding Liaison
		Hire survey consultant
	Stakeholder involvement	Map and strategize on public and further stakeholder engagement

Unified Brand Scope of Work

PHASE 3 : 18 Month Timeframe, Estimated Cost TBD

Focus Area	Strategy	Recommendation
Unified Branding	Implement Branding Strategies	Liaison with MTC Mapping/Wayfinding on implementation of pilot branding project, including bus wraps, signs, maps, schedules, website, etc.
Build Integration Framework	Organizational commitment	Agencies sign MOU
Fares	Harmonize Fares	Incentives for Clipper
Service Planning	Integration Planning	Joint paratransit program (Scheduling and notification)
Emergency Response	Formalize current practices	Address in the MOU
		Share resources and provide mutual aid during events

Metrics for Success

- Ridership
 - Retain existing riders
 - Attract new riders
 - Attract choice riders
- Ease of use
 - Community recognition of unified brand
 - Enhanced customer service
 - Enhanced customer information
 - More seamless transfers and planning across systems
- Administration
 - Formalized agreements about customer service, web presence, branding and marketing
 - Collaborative approach to procurement and operations

What's next?

04

Phase 1 Highlights



Fare harmonization



Customer service staff cross training



Consistent website design layout



Steps toward integrated service planning

Summary of approach for a unified brand

Phase 1

- 6-month timeframe – Underway with existing staff and funding
 - Identify strategies and establish processes
 - Formalize current integrated practices

Phase 2

- 18-month timeframe - Estimated need \$720k
 - Unified Brand project manager
 - Public engagement
 - Implement functional steps needed to integrate systems on back end

Phase 3

- 18-month timeframe - Cost TBD
 - Integrate with MTC Regional Transit Mapping and Wayfinding Project
 - Implement shared branding, technology, bus wraps, signage, mapping, wayfinding, etc.

Partnership with Region

1

Operators invested \$300k on Phase 1

2

\$750k needed for Phase 2

3

MTC Mapping and Wayfinding

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

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