

## CHAPTER 6

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

#### I. OVERVIEW

Public transit is arguably one of the most important services any municipality can offer its residents. In an increasingly mobile society, the need for all residents to have access to employment, schools, medical services and recreational activities is necessary to maintain equitable opportunities for all persons.

Rural public transit plays a vital role in providing mobility for those with limited or fixed incomes. Typically, rural areas contain a higher percentage of lower income persons (per capita) living in smaller cities that are separated by long distances. While urban public transit systems, by and large, enjoy a wide cross section of riders, rural transit patrons have predominantly been the elderly and the physically and developmentally disabled who, in most instances, have no other choice of transportation services other than those offered by the local public transit operator. In recent years, these particular transit groups have been a smaller percentage of the total ridership since public transportation has continued to see increasing growth in services and ridership from the general public.

In Kings County, there are many private and public agencies providing transportation services. Among those providers considered in this chapter, the focus will be on the Kings Area Rural Transit (KART) system, the primary public transit operator in Kings County, Corcoran Area Transit, Amtrak *San Joaquins*, high speed rail and commuter rail service. In addition, a section is devoted to ridesharing and to programs designed to reduce single-occupant vehicle commuting within Kings County and the central San Joaquin Valley region.

#### II. ASSUMPTIONS AND INVENTORIES

##### A. TRANSIT DEMANDS

1. Although most county residents can rely upon their own means for transportation, transportation needs will continue to exist, especially among elderly, handicapped, and low-income groups who are unable to afford or to operate motor vehicles. Many households with only one available vehicle also have transportation needs.
2. As a result of transit's growing public familiarity, KART and Corcoran Area Transit ridership will continue to increase. This will result in a higher farebox return, which can help decrease local public costs to operate the system.
3. The population growth of Kings County, combined with the growth in employment opportunities over the next twenty years will increase ridership and transit demands for services in areas beyond the reach of existing KART routes. KART must remain flexible and responsive to the increasing demands.
4. A significant demand for intercity bus and rail services for the San Joaquin Valley will continue.
5. The Hanford Intermodal Station will continue being a major stop on the *San Joaquins* line by drawing riders from Kings and Tulare counties. A much higher percentage of Kings County residents will ride the train than will residents of any other Valley county.

6. Because many Kings County residents commute long distances to work, ridesharing should remain as a viable alternative to single-occupant vehicle commuting.
7. Public transit should be used as a transportation control measure (TCM) for air quality improvement to attain state and federal air quality standards.

**FIGURE 6-1**

**AVAILABLE VEHICLES BY HOUSING UNITS IN KINGS COUNTY  
2000**

NO. OF VEHICLES	HOUSING UNITS	
	Number	%
0	3,200	9.3%
1	12,009	34.9%
2	12,882	37.4%
3+	6,327	18.4%
	<b>34,418</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

**FIGURE 6-2**

**PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY IN KINGS COUNTY\*  
2000**

JURISDICTION	AGE GROUPS			TOTAL	% POPULATION
	5-20	21-64	65+		
Avenal	185	993	193	1,371	25.3%
Corcoran	188	1,335	376	1,899	29.4%
Hanford	1,146	4,445	1,865	7,456	23.6%
Lemoore	473	1,950	518	2,941	21.5%
Unincorporated	312	1,085	330	1,727	23.8%
<b>Total County</b>	<b>2,304</b>	<b>9,808</b>	<b>3,282</b>	<b>15,394</b>	<b>23.9%</b>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

\* Defined as persons having a long lasting condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities.

**FIGURE 6-3**

**TRIP-TO-WORK PRIVATE VEHICLE OCCUPANCY  
FOR KINGS COUNTY  
2000**

OCCUPANCY	AVENAL		CORCORAN		HANFORD		LEMOORE		KINGS COUNTY	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Drive Alone	1,294	55.3%	2,220	86.1%	12,595	84.1%	6,330	83.5%	30,817	81.2%
Carpools:	1,046	44.7%	359	13.9%	2,375	15.9%	1,252	16.5%	7,117	18.8%
2 Persons	363	34.7%	191	53.2%	1,702	71.7%	949	75.8%	4,561	64.1%
3 Persons	144	13.8%	83	23.1%	336	14.1%	118	9.4%	990	13.9%
4-6 Persons	222	21.2%	62	17.3%	273	11.5%	161	12.9%	1,024	14.4%
7 or more Persons	317	30.3%	23	6.4%	64	2.7%	24	1.9%	542	7.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,340</b>		<b>2,579</b>		<b>14,970</b>		<b>7,582</b>		<b>37,934</b>	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

**B. TRANSIT PROVIDERS**

Kings County area transportation providers belong to one of four classes: 1) Public Operators Providing Public Transit; 2) Public Operators Providing Passenger Rail Service; 3) Private Operators Providing Public Transit for Profit; and 4) Nonprofit Operators Providing Special-Use Transit. Kings County prepares an update to its inventory of transportation providers every four years. The "Social Services Transportation Inventory" includes a detailed summary of each agency's services. The various transportation providers are arranged in these four groups in Figure 6-4. Excluded from consideration are public school bus systems, ambulances, and private or nonprofit providers such as churches, private schools, and clubs. Many of the nonprofit, special use providers prefer to maintain their transportation services as they exist now, but are willing to coordinate with other public and private providers as the needs arise.

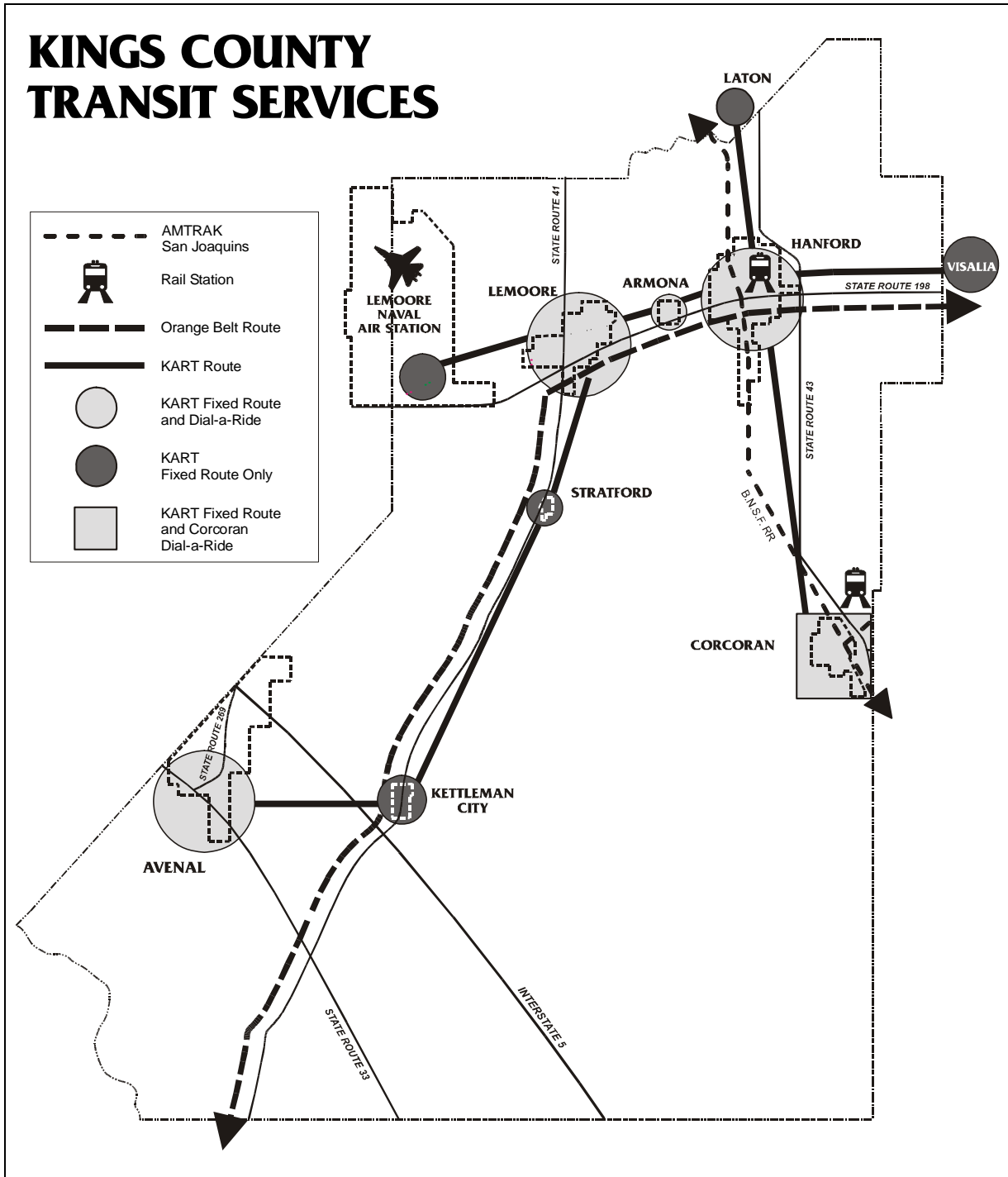
## FIGURE 6-4

### TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS IN KINGS COUNTY

<b>PUBLIC OPERATOR: PUBLIC TRANSIT</b>
Kings Area Rural Transit Corcoran Area Transit
<b>PUBLIC OPERATOR: PASSENGER RAIL</b>
AMTRAK San Joaquins
<b>PRIVATE OPERATOR: FOR PROFIT</b>
Lemoore Taxi Cab Lemoore Kings Cab Hanford Cab Company Orange Belt Stages D & S Taxi Becky's Taxi Marathon Cab Central Valley Cab Kings Medical Transport Employ America Tri-County Medical Transport Community Home Care Kings Convalescent Center Kings Manor
<b>NONPROFIT: SPECIAL USE</b>
Kings Rehabilitation Center Kings View Mental Health Corcoran Family YMCA Kings County YMCA Kings Community Action Org. - Head Start Kings Community Action Org. - Respite Care Kings Community Action Org. - Teen Pregnancy Kings Community Action Org. - Emergency Services Valley Christian Home American Cancer Society American Red Cross Armona Senior Center Best Care Home Health Central Valley Regional Center Kings County Human Services Agency Kings County Job Training Office Kings County Mental Health Kings County Public Health Kings/Tulare Area Agency on Aging Cornerstone Recovery Santa Rosa Rancheria Lemoore Naval Air Station Salvation Army Corcoran State Prison - Bien Venidos Visitor Shuttle Kings County Probation - Victim Witness Program

Source: KCAG

FIGURE 6-5



Source: KCAPTA, KCAG

### III. PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES

The services of the two local public transit operators in Kings County are detailed in the “2003 Kings County Transit Development Plan” and will be summarized in this section. The intercity rail and bus services will also be highlighted in this section.

#### A. KINGS AREA RURAL TRANSIT

The largest single provider of public transportation within Kings County is operated under the auspices of the Kings County Area Public Transit Agency (KCAPTA), a joint powers agency comprised of the County and the cities of Hanford, Lemoore, and Avenal. The City of Corcoran does not participate in the KART system. KCAPTA oversees the operation of the Kings Area Rural Transit (KART) system. A transit manager and a transit assistant within the Kings County Public Works Department is staff to KCAPTA. This organization is shown in Figure 6-6.

KCAPTA establishes the operating policies and defines the services to be provided by KART including service hours and days, fares, and routes, etc. The day-to-day management and actual operation of the system are carried out under contract with a private firm, MV Transit. All KART operating personnel (manager, dispatcher, mechanics, and drivers) are employees of MV Transportation, Inc.

The Transit Manager within the County Public Works Department monitors and interfaces with MV Transportation on a daily basis. Specifically, the Transit Manager designs and organizes marketing programs, counts and deposits the farebox receipts, reviews invoices and service reports, and prepares reports for the KCAPTA Board meetings.

KART began operations in June of 1980 and has seen a steady increase in the number of riders and new services over the past 24 years. Since 2000, KART ridership has increased dramatically as new services have been provided to meet transit needs of the public.

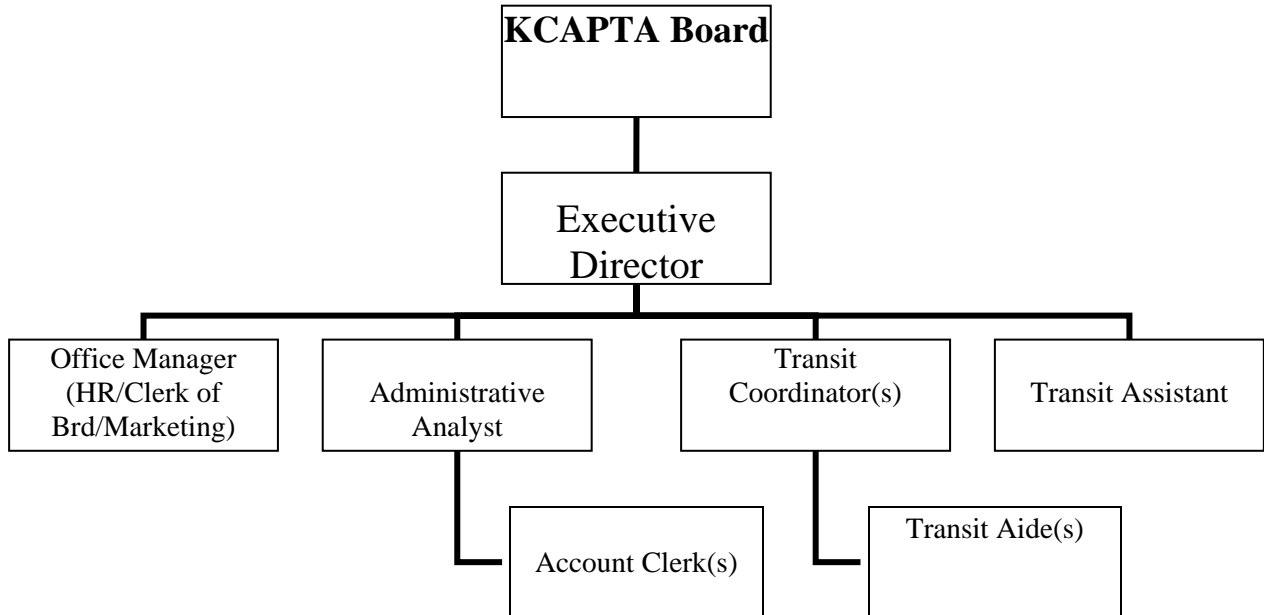
KART presently uses a fleet of vehicles ranging in size from a 9-passenger van to a 33-passenger bus to provide transit services. All public transit vehicles in the KART fleet are equipped with wheelchair lifts and bicycle racks.

Two levels of service are offered: fixed-route and demand response (Dial-a-Ride) service. Demand/response service is available daily in Hanford, Lemoore, Avenal, and Armona. There is daily Hanford-Lemoore, Hanford-Avenal, Hanford-Corcoran, and Hanford-Laton fixed-route service, along with commuter service from Hanford to Visalia and Hanford to Corcoran State Prison, which also includes a fixed route within Corcoran.

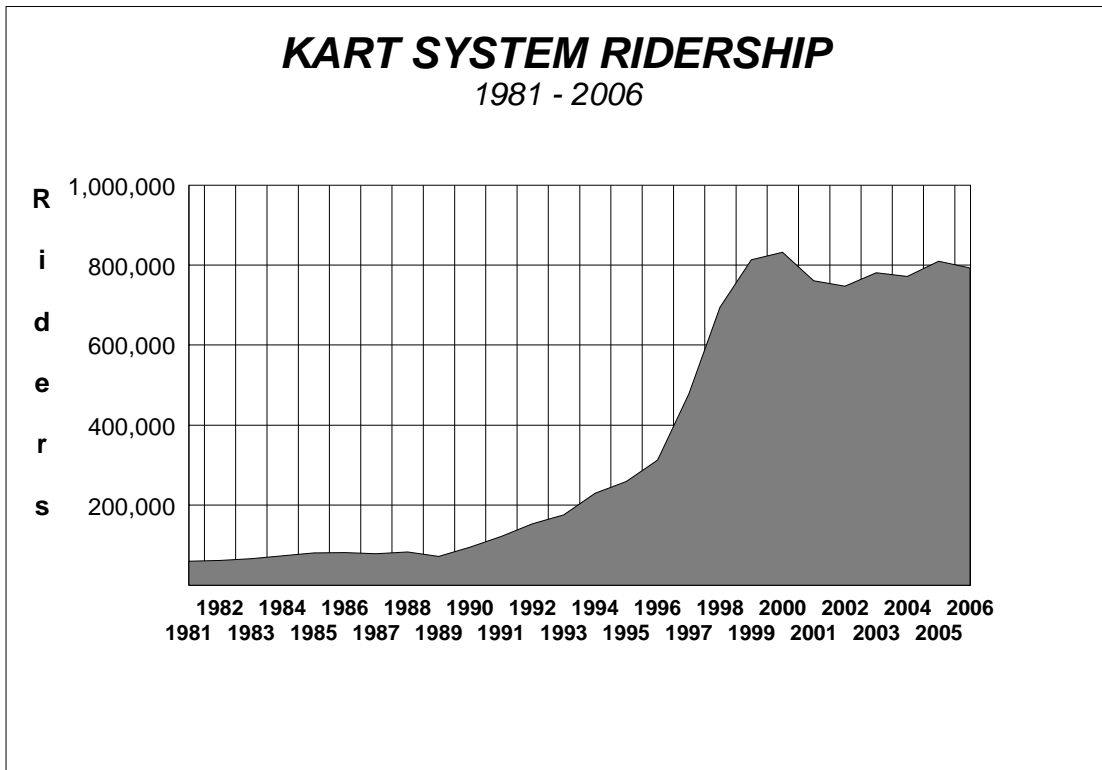
KART offers reasonable fares for all fixed route and demand-response services. In addition to regular fares, there are discount tickets, monthly passes, and senior citizen tokens. The KART system has been, and will continue to be, responsive to its customers needs as stated in its service goal:

*“It is the goal of this agency to provide reliable Public Transportation service that is clean and convenient; focused on that portion of the public which is transit dependent; in a proactive manner, resulting in continued improvements and cost effectiveness.”*

**FIGURE 6-6**  
**Kings County Area Public Transit Agency**  
**Organizational Chart**



**FIGURE 6-7**



Source: KCAPTA

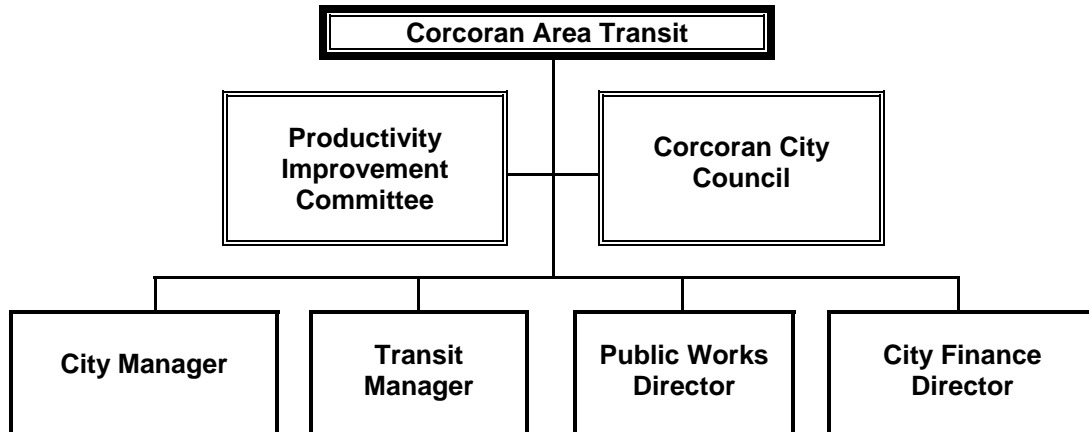
**B. CORCORAN AREA TRANSIT**

The City of Corcoran has provided its own transit service since 1975 for Corcoran residents and for those living in the rural “fringe” area surrounding Corcoran. Initially, the service was only for senior citizens, but in 1989 the service was expanded to include the general public. In addition to Dial-a-Ride, the City of Corcoran made available to low income residents, discounted one-way and round trip Amtrak tickets for intercity travel between Corcoran and Hanford for access to County services.

Corcoran Area Transit is operated by the City of Corcoran. The City Manager acts as the Transit Manager and is responsible for the daily operations and management of the system. A Productivity Improvement Committee is responsible for uncovering and addressing needs of the community which is acted upon by the Corcoran Area Transit administrator and staff. City staff is used as dispatchers since requests for bus service are handled through the new multimodal center and discount AMTRAK tickets can be obtained at the train station as well.

**FIGURE 6-8**

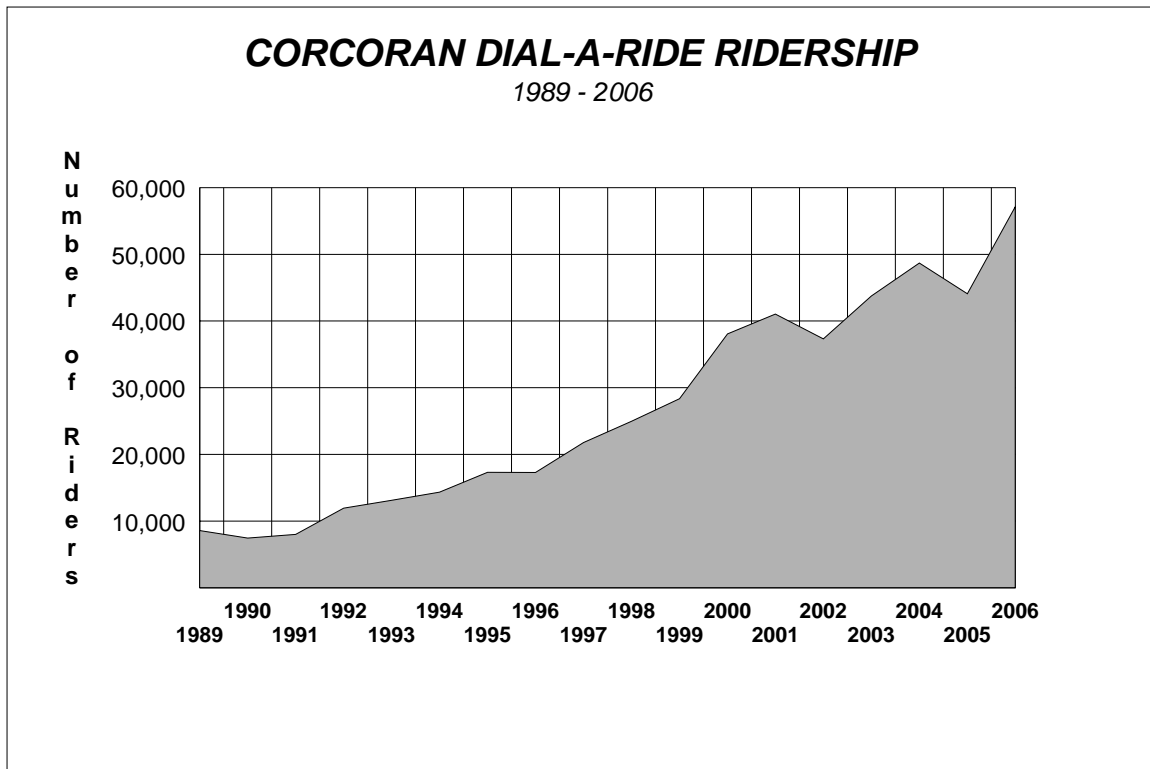
**Corcoran Area Transit  
Organizational Chart**



The Corcoran Area Transit provides two levels of service: fixed-route and dial-a-ride service. Two fixed-routes are provided in Corcoran, one that starts at 7:10a.m. and the other that starts at 2:30p.m. Corcoran Dial-a-Ride service is provided using five buses equipped with a wheelchair lift. The majority of the ridership on Corcoran Dial-a-Ride consists of senior citizens, handicapped, and children six and under who can ride at a reduce rate, with most trips being to the Senior Nutrition Program.

Corcoran Dial-a-Ride has steadily improved its ridership over the years. Because of the high senior citizen ridership who are eligible to ride at a reduced rate, the farebox return ratio had been below the State's required 10%. However, when combined with the fares from the AMTRAK ticket program, the citywide transit service has always met the minimum required farebox ratio. In 2005, the Dial-a-Ride system by itself attained the 10% farebox goal.

FIGURE 6-9



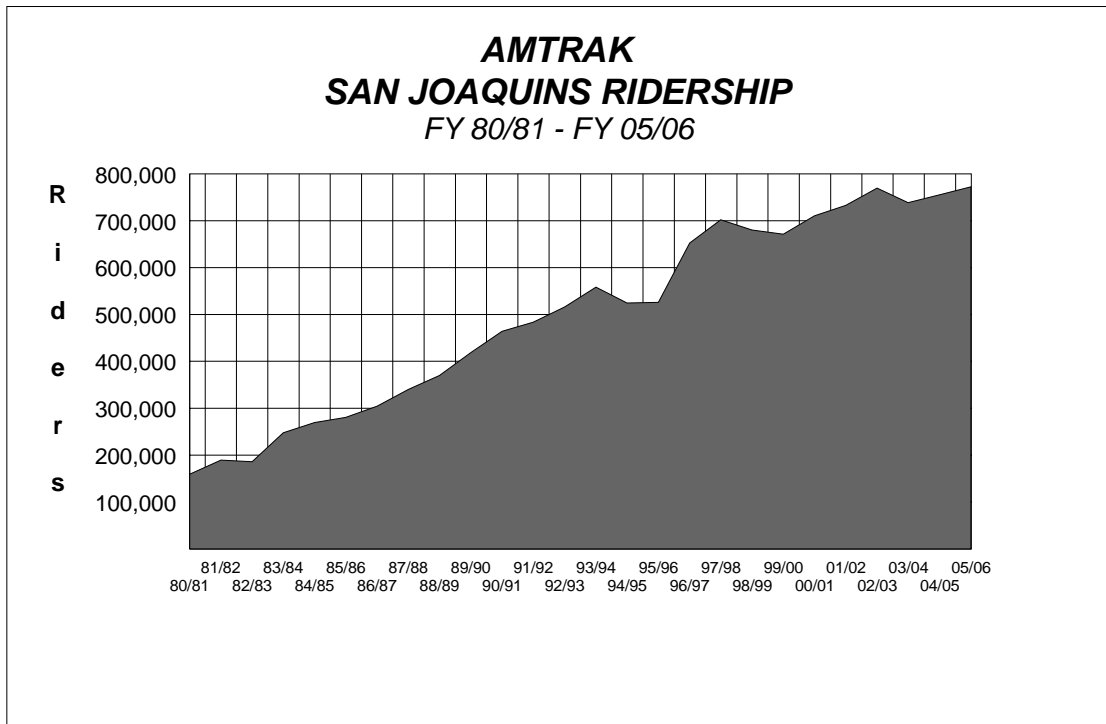
Source: City of Corcoran, KCAG

### C. AMTRAK

The Amtrak *San Joaquins* provide regularly scheduled intercity passenger rail service to Kings County. Stops are made daily at the Hanford and Corcoran stations for each northbound and southbound train. Stops along the *San Joaquins* line include Bakersfield, Wasco, Fresno, Madera, Merced, Turlock, Modesto, Stockton, Antioch, Martinez, Richmond, Emeryville and Oakland with connecting bus service to Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Francisco, and many other points in Northern and Southern California. The trains are handicapped accessible and provide on-board bicycle racks, checked baggage and food services.

Because Amtrak is a national enterprise, coordination with connecting transit service at the Amtrak stations must be done by the local transit operators. Kings Area Rural Transit (KART), Corcoran City Transit, and Orange Belt Stages all coordinate their bus service with the *San Joaquins* train schedules. Amtrak passengers can board feeder bus service provided by Orange Belt Stages as a part of their regular route at Hanford for Santa Maria and other central coast destinations. Hanford averaged 434 passengers per day, while Corcoran had 64 passengers per day in FFY 2005-06. Hanford has always been one of the most important stops on the *San Joaquins* route, consistently ranking among the top four or five stations in ridership.

**FIGURE 6-10**



Caltrans, San Joaquin Route FFY 2005-06 Business Plan

**FIGURE 6-11****SAN JOAQUINS RIDERSHIP BY STATION  
FFY 2004-05**

Rank	Station	Total Boardings And Alightings
1	Sacramento	1,072,278
2	Bakersfield	681,034
3	Stockton	277,769
4	Fresno	260,657
5	Emeryville	691,523
6	Oakland	331,488
7	Richmond	223,029
<b>8</b>	<b>Hanford</b>	<b>158,359</b>
9	Martinez	89,234
10	Merced	88,930
11	Modesto	71,986
<b>12</b>	<b>Corcoran</b>	<b>23,469</b>
13	Antioch/Pittsburgh	21,204
14	Turlock/Denair	15,083
15	Wasco	13,963
16	Madera	12,121
	TOTAL	4,032,127
<b>Total Ridership</b>		<b>2,016,064*</b>

Source: Caltrans, Division of Rail

\* Since each trip contains two endpoints, total ridership is equal to half of total boardings and alightings.

**D. ORANGE BELT STAGE LINES**

Orange Belt Stages is the only transportation provider that fills the gap between Kings County and connections to Tulare County and the Central Coast via Paso Robles. This nationwide charter service, which has been in business since 1916, has regional fixed routes in Kings County that stop in Hanford, Lemoore, Stratford and Kettleman City on its western route to Santa Maria. Service is also provided to Visalia. Orange Belt also connects with Greyhound bus service provided in the San Joaquin Valley.

Increasing operations costs and low ridership figures are problems which Orange Belt must contend with. Efforts to coordinate services with other providers in the future are favorable, and the City of Corcoran is interested in obtaining intercity bus service at the new Corcoran Intermodal Facility. Currently, Orange Belt coordinates with Amtrak for bus connections out of the Hanford Intermodal Station.

IV. ISSUES

A. PUBLIC TRANSIT

1. Kings Area Rural Transit

- a. Both KCAG and the Kings County Area Public Transit Agency (KCAPTA) must continue to seek out and define transportation needs. It is vital that the KART system remain proactive to transit patrons' needs, allowing both input and feedback for future transit route adjustments. KART management and the KCAPTA Board must remain accessible to those who need transit service in the community. They must ask themselves and the community: Who in Kings County needs transit services? Where are the needs located? What level of service will reasonably meet those needs? The annual "unmet transit needs" public hearing process conducted by the KCAG Transportation Policy Committee to allocate Local Transportation Fund (LTF) revenues to support KART will assist in determining these questions. Fortunately, there have been sufficient LTF revenues in the past to fund any transit needs identified through this process. However, decreases in other funding sources have occurred.
- b. KART's cost-sharing formula is based on 50% service hours and 50% population of each member. KCAPTA will continue to review the formula to provide an equitable apportioning of transit costs among the member agencies.
- c. Due to Kings County's rural nature, County residents have to rely more on their own means for transportation than those living in the more densely populated areas of the state. Public transit services are well patronized by a small segment of the population--primarily by the elderly--yet public transit is generally considered a low-priority public expenditure.

Although KART's ridership and fare revenues have dramatically increased, it still requires the public to subsidize about 80 percent of its costs. While the intent of the Transportation Development Act is to ensure that all persons have access to transportation for both drivers and non-drivers, some may view the expense to increase limited transit ridership as an inefficient use of public funds.

- d. Over the years, the KART system has steadily improved its farebox return ratio to exceed the State's required 10 percent. However, as a result of added cost to implement state and federal requirements such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Welfare-to-Work, the farebox ratio has not been able to increase as steadily as it had in the past. Even though the overall goal for KART is a 30 percent return, many officials believe a higher return should be required. KCAPTA will need to continue working to increase community ridership and adjusting routes to better serve the greatest numbers of people. Care should be taken to ensure that such adjustments while appearing to be more economical, don't reduce service to the low-mobility groups KART is designed to serve.

- e. Due to budget cuts, some social service agencies are requesting KART to supplement their clients' transportation needs. Because transit needs of the elderly and handicapped are high priorities of KART, it will require additional services at an increased cost. The coordination of transportation services among KART and social service providers should be implemented where feasible.
- f. An inter-county transit needs study conducted by the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) found that enough demand for service existed to justify operating a fixed route service between Hanford and Visalia with a total of 3 round trips per day. KCAPTA began providing service to Visalia for educational and employment needs, but Tulare County has not proposed providing complimentary service to Hanford. KCAPTA is continuing to work with TCAG to develop, fund and operate a commuter service that will meet service needs and performance criteria.
- g. Federal welfare reform law requires local transit providers to consider giving priority to enhancing services for welfare-to-work purposes. KCAPTA must work with public and private agencies to develop and equitably fund new routes and services that offer welfare recipients the ability to obtain employment and training opportunities.
- h. KART's bus fleet has grown significantly enough to warrant changes to the current transfer station located at the Hanford Amtrak station. KCAPTA and the City of Hanford must work together to locate and develop a convenient site to allow for continued coordination of transit services. KART currently utilizes the AMTRAK parking lot west of the railroad tracks which functions as the transfer area. The construction of a permanent structure has been programmed in the STIP and will be finished with construction by Spring 2007.
- i. Projected ridership will necessitate the addition of buses and frequency of routes. Currently used funding programs available to operators in rural counties may be insufficient to meet these needs. KCAPTA will need to investigate all new resources of funding and submit grant applications to obtain the required funds.

2. Corcoran Area Transit

- a. Corcoran's Dial-a-Ride service has provided residents with a stable and efficient transit system. The new prison and related facilities in Corcoran, along with the development of the new Corcoran Intermodal Facility will, without question, increase transit demand. The ability of Corcoran City Transit to meet this demand will require changes in transit routes, equipment, and the need for additional funding.
- b. The operation of the Corcoran Intermodal Facility by the city and the addition of a new fixed route bus has created the need for funding that exceeds what is available to the City of Corcoran from traditional transit funding sources. Corcoran will need to seek new funding sources to meet its total transit budget, including a review of the fare system.

3. AMTRAK

Kings County is fortunate in that it is linked with other areas of the state by Amtrak *San Joaquins* trains. Ensuring the continuation of this service is a matter of considerable regional significance.

- a. State costs to support intercity rail operations have increased significantly due to reductions in Amtrak's federal funding. SB 457 allows for the transfer of responsibility for intercity rail service in a particular corridor to a joint powers agency (JPA) in an effort to reduce the state's administrative and operating costs. To date, no JPA has been established for the *San Joaquins* corridor. It is unknown what potential financial and other liabilities would be associated with the JPA that the local agencies would have to assume. SB 1118 authorized the former "Steering Committee of the Caltrans Rail Task Force" to continue working with Caltrans to assist in the management and promotion of the service. This committee was renamed the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee which represents the counties along the route.
- b. Like virtually all Amtrak trains, the *San Joaquins* operate at a loss. With operating expenses exceeding ticket sales, a deficit remains to be shared by Amtrak and Caltrans under the 403(b) agreement begun in 1979. Continued state support was on the condition that a farebox ratio of 55% would be maintained. This requirement could be waived for three years. However, as additional services were provided and changes were made in Amtrak's cost allocation formula, the previously attained high farebox ratios around 80% were no longer able to be achieved. As a requirement of SB 457, the state has recently developed uniform performance standards for the state-supported rail corridors to control costs and improve efficiency. The performance standards take into account total route ridership, cost efficiency and quality of service and are no longer based only on farebox ratios. The FFY 2004-05 farebox ratio attained by the *San Joaquins* was 44.6%.
- c. Feeder buses connecting the Hanford station with the major cities in Tulare County is available as part of the regular route structure of Orange Belt Stages. An opportunity also exists to provide coordinated feeder bus service by the KART and Corcoran Dial-a-Ride systems. The feeder bus network is a very important element of the *San Joaquins* since more than 60% of all passengers use a feeder bus during their trip.
- d. In November of 1988 the Kings County electorate approved a ballot measure which made the county eligible under Article XIX, Section 4 of the California Constitution, for transit guideway funds for capital improvements to the Amtrak San Joaquins line. Each of the counties eligible for Article XIX funds was to receive a county minimum share of budgeted funds based on a percentage of each county's 1990 Census population to the total eligible county population. The amount of funding available to Kings County's through the Transit Capital Improvement (TCI) Program ranged between \$88,100 and \$225,600. Funds were used for projects to construct the Hanford and Corcoran intermodal facilities and the Cross Valley Rail Feasibility Study.

With the enactment of SB 45 and the elimination of the TCI Program, a minimum of funds is no longer available to Kings County. Intercity rail projects are now programmed through the Interregional Improvement Program (IIP) on a statewide competitive basis. The policy of the CTC for the 1998 IIP was to fund only major rail projects. This policy left Kings County with only the option to acquire scarce local funding sources for these project types, while urbanized areas with more funding opportunities continued to receive State funding.

- e. If high speed rail between Los Angeles and the Bay Area is implemented, there would be a limited number of stations within the San Joaquin Valley. The continuation of the *San Joaquins* must be retained to continue to provide intercity rail service to the Kings County area.

## B. HIGH SPEED RAIL

The California High Speed Rail Authority is in the process of preparing a plan for the construction and operation of a high-speed rail network serving Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, Los Angeles, and San Diego. Regional agencies within the San Joaquin Valley have considered the issues regarding high-speed rail and agree on two basic principles: That the alignment must be within the SR 99 corridor through the San Joaquin Valley rather than the Interstate 5 corridor or coastal alignment; and that high-speed rail must connect the major population centers within the San Joaquin Valley with the Los Angeles Basin and San Francisco Bay Area. In addition to these points, there are other potential impacts associated with a high-speed rail system through the San Joaquin Valley.

### 1. Alignment

For each specific alignment option along the SR 99 corridor, there are low and high cost variations which generally reflect the difference between serving outlying suburban stations versus existing downtown locations. Each option has varying environmental and cost considerations. Although the previous High Speed Rail Commission recommended an alignment to the Bay Area via Altamont Pass, the Authority will again review alternative alignments via Pacheco Pass and Panoche Pass. Alignments to the Los Angeles area include crossing the Tehachapi Mountains to serve the growing Antelope Valley area.

### 2. Station Locations

The key issue is the choice between stations located within the existing downtowns and stations located within suburban or newly developing areas. Most of the local governments support service to existing downtowns. Outlying suburban stations may require substantial local costs to provide connecting transit service to key activity centers downtown and may encourage premature development. While currently a station is planned for Fresno, local officials are lobbying for an additional stop in Visalia to better service Kings and Tulare Counties.

### 3. Financing

Substantial public funds will be required to construct the initial high speed rail system. The alternative statewide funding sources under consideration have varying impacts on the regional economies of the State. Depending on the technology and system extensions to be built, the most realistic funding sources include a 5 to 8 cent increase in the statewide gasoline tax, a 1/4 to 3/8 cent increase in the statewide sales tax, or a 1/2 cent increase in the sales tax of those counties within the rail corridor. A sales tax would be more likely to keep pace with population and income growth. There is uncertainty as to the source of funding for necessary local projects for those communities which will have stations.

4. Freight Capability

If high speed rail were capable of carrying freight, it could provide an additional source of revenues for operating expenses. The ability to carry freight could also reduce truck traffic on highways and have additional air quality benefits. High speed rail freight capability should be focused on high-value, time sensitive products, and package or express mail services that is compatible with high speed rail equipment. Rail car weights would need to be limited and freight should be carried during off-peak passenger travel times.

5. Farmland Impacts

High speed rail has the potential to accelerate the conversion of farmland to urban uses and to inhibit efficient farming practices adjacent to its alignment due to the restriction of cross movement of farm equipment, goods, and people. Additional residential construction could be induced, particularly within the Antelope Valley and San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties, because people will be able to live farther away from their places of employment in Los Angeles and the Bay Area and commute by high speed rail. Improved local government land use policies and planning will be needed to mitigate these impacts.

6. Growth and Economics

High speed rail in the Valley must be designed and operated so that it benefits the Valley economy. Benefits could include jobs generated, enhanced competitiveness and quality of life, improved access to services available in major urban centers, and greater economic output. A station downtown could be used as a catalyst to stimulate a comprehensive urban area revitalization program. The economic benefits must outweigh the impacts of increased population growth.

7. Level of Service

High speed trains which do not stop in the Valley have no benefit to us. The conceptual operating plan for high speed rail proposes different levels of service which include express, suburban express, semi-express, and local. These service levels only provide for half of the trains stopping in two major Valley cities of Fresno and Bakersfield. Even though there is a trade-off between the number of station stops and travel time, attempts should be made to secure the greatest number of trains possible that stop at major Valley cities.

8. Technology

The Authority will be evaluating both Very High Speed (VHS) and Magnetic levitation (Maglev) technologies for the high speed rail system. Valley agencies have overwhelmingly supported VHS rail technology as the preferred choice. Even though Maglev technology can achieve higher speeds, it has never been proven in revenue service, has higher infrastructure costs, and is not capable of moving freight.

9. Public Outreach

The extent to which the public and local governments in the Valley can agree on different aspects of high speed rail, the more influence we will have on the design of the system. A public participation program must be designed to insure that private citizens and local government are included in the high speed rail planning process. A funding plan would more likely be approved by the voters if enough detail is included. However, the level of detail in the plan may not include specific details such as station location, alignments, and levels of service that voters want to see. The public outreach program is essential because the more the public is involved in the planning process, the more detail they will learn.

C. INTERCITY BUS ISSUES

Orange Belt Stages is the intercity long-haul bus operator that serves Kings County. Deregulation of the bus industry could lead to a situation where Hanford, Lemoore, and other communities of the San Joaquin Valley are left without intercity bus service. In Kings County, direct service to coastal areas and Tulare County could be lost, as would connections to major long-haul bus routes.

D. ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

1. In 1986-87, KCAG prepared the "Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Needs Study," which assessed the transportation needs of these two transit-dependent groups. The study determined that the types of trips most needed by these two transit-dependent groups are those related to medical, shopping, social, and personal business purposes. Access to jobs, health programs, and recreational activities are considered to be the largest transportation needs for these groups. Work related trips are needed by handicapped clients of several social service organizations. Trip requests from elderly and handicapped persons in Corcoran are almost exclusively for medical and personal business purposes to Hanford.
2. As required by Section 99238 of the Public Utilities Code, the TPC appointed representatives of social service providers and transit users to serve as the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC). The SSTAC's primary role is to advise the RTPA and to provide input in the identification of transit needs of the elderly, handicapped, and low income citizens. Members of the SSTAC are also used to evaluate and recommend approval of applications for federal transit grants benefiting elderly and handicapped transit users and to provide input in the development of transit plans.
3. As shown in the inventory of transportation providers in Kings County, many agencies provide transportation services for the elderly and handicapped and are primarily funded with federal and state funds. The Lanterman Developmental Services Act requires agencies to make full use of existing services, such as public transit, whenever possible to meet client needs. Due to federal and state budget cutbacks, many of these agencies are having to reduce or discontinue service and are asking public transit agencies to supplement their clients' transportation needs. To meet the transportation needs of the elderly and handicapped which are of high priority, KART will have to add services at an increased cost.
4. Senior ridership represents approximately 4% of the total KART ridership. In the past, the Kings/Tulare Area Agency on Aging (K/T AAA) has provided KART with subsidies for the senior fares to reduce the revenue loss. This program of subsidizing senior passengers has been eliminated, but senior citizens must now purchase tokens from K/T AAA for a nominal fee.

5. Funding for elderly and handicapped transit capital projects is available through the Federal Transit Act (FTA) Section 5310 grant program on a statewide competitive basis. Small agencies that are in need of a bus are not able to compete effectively for funds based on the statewide criteria that are used to score projects. Funds should be allocated on a more equitable funding basis, such as a formula apportionment to each regional transportation planning agency for allocation to area transit providers.
6. As part of SAFETEA-LU, the Federal Transit Act (FTA) Section 5316, Job Access & Reverse Commute (JARC),

E. RIDESHARING ISSUES

By far, the majority of unused transportation capacity in Kings County is in private automobiles. By doubling up on the number of persons in a car or van, many public benefits result. As is shown by Figure 6-3, many Kings County residents already carpool. According to the 2000 Census, about 70 percent of the workforce in Kings County chose to drive alone to work and more people have participated in carpools since 1980. From a consumer's perspective, ridesharing gives a higher level of convenience for daily commuters, saves money otherwise spent on gas, and reduces wear on owners' cars.

From a transportation planning perspective, ridesharing should be promoted as a demand-regulating practice to reduce automobile congestion, fuel consumption, air pollution, and the need for additional road and parking capacity. Few would argue the value of these effects, though some point out that lower gas sales means less tax money to fix deteriorated roads. Lowering the demand for new facilities, however, will mean that more can be spent on upgrading the existing roads and parking areas. The following programs have been implemented in Kings County to promote ridesharing.

1. Vanpool Program

Vanpooling is somewhat different than carpooling, though it is based upon the same principle: reducing single occupant commuting. Vanpooling is defined as 7 to 15 persons who commute together in a van-type vehicle and who share the operating expenses. The riders typically share in the operations cost of the van, however there are variations of cost and ownership by either the riders or a sponsoring employer. Essentially, vanpooling serves the long distance commute market of over 20 miles to an employer site.

KART established a vanpool program for riders to the Corcoran and Avenal State Prisons in 2001 and has purchased additional vans to implement new vanpools. The program has become very successful with 337 vans in service in 2006 and extends in the areas of Tulare, Kings, and Fresno counties. Parts of Kern County will also be joining the vanpool program in early 2007.

The vanpool program is not only to provide safe travel to work but to provide alternative transportation options which would ultimately reduce the amount of vehicles on the road. The cost for a vanpool is estimated by the number of days the vehicle is used, the amount of miles per day, maintenance, fuel, and insurance. The amount of participants per van determines the cost per person.

2. Valley Rideshare Programs

One of the rideshare programs within the Central San Joaquin Valley region is provided by Valley Rides, a coordinated effort between Council of Fresno County Governments (COFCG) and California State University Fresno. A rideshare coordinator is responsible for developing and implementing the rideshare program which includes services to individuals and employers, public awareness activities, and special studies. These services include the Kings County area and a toll free telephone number to receive rideshare matching services has been implemented. Signs posting the toll free number have been placed along major highway corridors in Kings County.

There is also South Valley Rideshare operated by the Kings Area Rural Transit (KART) that provides a free service that matches commuters who live and work near each other so they can form carpools and vanpools. Commuters are able to register online. In addition to these two services, Enterprise Rent-a-Car provides vanpool services.

3. Commuter Bus Services

Public transit systems in rural areas are relatively expensive and, in KART's case, are intentionally limited in scope. KART has two commuter services to provide transportation to employees of the Avenal and Corcoran state prisons who live in Hanford and Lemoore. KART also offers commuter service for agricultural workers to Harris Ranch in Fresno County and Paramount Farms in Kern County. KART began service to Visalia in 2000 for educational and employment purposes. Service to Harris Ranch service begun in early 2000 was discontinued at the end of June, 2001.

Although not considered to be fulfilling an "unmet transit need", as defined later in this chapter, these commuter services provide KART with consistently high ridership and revenue ratio figures. These services also help meet the need to reduce single occupant vehicle trips in an effort to reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality. Other commuter-type services may be implemented in the future by KART following an assessment of need and purpose.

4. Emergency Ride Home Program

In 1994, KCAG staff developed and the Kings County Board of Supervisors adopted an "Emergency Ride Home Program" as a trip reduction measure to encourage employees to rideshare. Many people are unwilling to try ridesharing because they do not want to be "stranded" at their place of work. This program provides transportation to all Kings County employees who regularly rideshare for a return home in case of certain unexpected emergencies. For those employees who are registered for the program, they have the opportunity to receive an emergency ride home by contacting the Program Coordinator and either having the Program Coordinator call another registered employee for a shared ride, obtain a rental car, schedule transit service, or call a taxi. The service chosen is generally dependent upon the distance to be traveled.

5. Park and Ride Lots

Park and Ride lots provide a meeting place where drivers can safely park and join carpools or vanpools or utilize existing public transit. Park and Ride lots are generally located near community entrances near major highways or local arterials where conveniently scheduled transit service is provided. Lots are designed exclusively for commuters or they can consist of an area of parking spaces in complementary land uses such as shopping centers and churches.

Kings County has one official Park and Ride facility with a capacity of about 30 spaces at the northeastern entrance of the City of Hanford at 10th Avenue and Highway 43. The location of the lot is ideal for those commuters who travel the 40 miles from Hanford to Fresno, or the 20 miles to Corcoran, on a daily basis.

Although a Park and Ride lot located at a shopping center in the City of Lemoore at Hanford Armona Road and Lemoore Ave. was discontinued due to change in property ownership and lack of use, another parking area at the corner of Sixth and Redington Streets in Hanford is considered as a unofficial Park and Ride lot as it is presently used by commuters who utilize KART for transit service to the state prison at Corcoran. The parking lot is ideally situated in downtown Hanford off State Highway 198, the major east-west highway in Kings County which connects to other regional and interregional highways such as Highways 43 and 41. Though there are no official park and ride lots in Kings County, local shopping centers are being utilized by KART drivers.

V. ACTION ELEMENT

A. RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP AND SERVICE

1. Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)

As required by the Transportation Development Act (TDA), members of the SSTAC consist of representatives of transit dependent groups in Kings County including seniors, the developmentally disabled, low income persons, and representatives of agencies that serve these groups. The SSTAC acts as the advisory body through which transit needs are assessed and brought forward to KCAG, KCAPTA, and the City of Corcoran.

To evaluate the system, the SSTAC uses the following guidelines adopted by KCAG to help identify areas for improvement. These guidelines are also used to evaluate applications for federal grant funds from all eligible transit operators.

- Dependability - The transit operator must demonstrate that its service is reliable and it regularly meets its schedule. A dependable backup system must be available so that in normal circumstances only minor delays in the operating schedule will occur and service will not be unreasonably disrupted.
- Accessibility - The transit operator must demonstrate that the system is accessible to the elderly and disabled. Each vehicle does not have to be fully accessible, but provisions must be made within the system to provide reasonable service to persons with special needs.
- Affordability - The transit operator must demonstrate that the fare structure of the system provides for ridership by persons of limited income. This does not mean a fare cannot be charged, but that the fare may not be excessive in a manner which restricts the access of the poor.

- Adequacy - The transit operator must demonstrate that it provides a reasonable level of service with sufficient range and capacity to allow any person who cannot provide their own transportation to have access to opportunities which will support an adequate standard of living. The minimum service should provide travel to medical appointments, shopping areas, social service agencies, and home again.
- Economy - The transit operator must demonstrate that it has attempted to provide the most efficient and effective service possible and identify criteria used to establish a service cost limit. When suggested by the Productivity Improvement Committee, the operator should present feasible alternative transit programs with projected costs vs. service levels.
- Convenience - The transit operator must demonstrate that the service proposed will be such that it does not discourage use of the service. While service is not expected to be instantaneous or as convenient as travel by private automobile, reasonable headway time should be incorporated into scheduling and capacity considerations.
- Coordination - The transit operator must demonstrate how its system is coordinated with other systems and travel modes to enhance, rather than detract from the effectiveness of each system.
- Monitoring - The transit operator must have a plan for monitoring its service. Data required from the operator is listed with information on the performance audit.
- Flexibility - The transit operator must demonstrate how the system can adjust its schedule and route to accommodate changes in community needs. When the operator has made an adjustment in its service, it will document the basis for the change and improved service which resulted from the change.
- Responsiveness - The transit operator must implement a Productivity Improvement Program designed to ensure that the system can anticipate demands for new service, expand service, and operate at the most efficient cost.

Requests for adjustments in local transit routes and service levels continue to be made by the SSTAC. The KCAG Technical Advisory Committee also expresses its view on transit service. However, it is the Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) which has the opportunity to become the "voice" of transit dependent groups in the county. The SSTAC, by virtue of its membership who represent the actual transit user, is in the unique position of more accurately accessing transit service and uncovering any unmet transit needs. Both KCAG and transit operators will continue to solicit input from the SSTAC for service adjustments based upon the needs of particular ridership groups. In addition, phone calls and petitions are regularly received by KCAPTA from private individuals and groups such as the American Association of Retired Persons. All previous SSTAC recommendations for KART and Corcoran Area Transit service changes have been implemented.

2. Triennial Performance Audits

A performance audit to evaluate the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of transit operators is required to be completed every three years. Performance audits of KART and Corcoran Area Transit services covering the period of FY 2003-04 through 2005-2006 are to be completed in June of 2007. The audits provide constructive and practical recommendations for transit service improvements. The performance audit will provide new recommendations and evaluate the effectiveness and progress of the previous audits recommendations.

3. Transit Development Plans

The "Kings County Transit Development Plan" prepared by KCAG in 2003 provides a comprehensive view of public transit operations in Kings County and is considered the "blueprint" for transit planning for the two public transit providers in Kings County through the year 2007. The intent of the Plan is to identify the present transit operations in Kings County, provided by both Kings Area Rural Transit and Corcoran Area Transit, and to review the performance of the operators. This review was used to outline the service changes needed to meet identified transit demand and the finances needed to carry them out. The next update will occur in FY 2007-08.

4. KART Marketing Plan

In 1992, a marketing plan was developed for KART in order to improve public transit awareness and encourage the use of KART in Kings County. Surveys and marketing analyses were accomplished which identified primary KART patrons and targeted those groups which are underrepresented in ridership figures. The Plan also identified marketing strategies which included improved graphic and layout design for KART brochures and suggestions for improved media promotions. The largest benefit resulting from the Marketing Plan appeared to be the redesign of KART's published bus schedule. Ridership increased as the schedules were easier to read and provided valuable information concerning KART and connections to other transportation providers.

In 2006, advertising wraps were developed for the side of the buses. Advertisers include local business as well as promoting new services being provided by KART and the South Valley Rideshare Program. Advertising provides revenues around \$70,000 per year.

Other promotions which target specific rider groups, such as youth groups, have been implemented by KART management through the distributions of KART coloring books for school age children, on-site promotions of KART service at both businesses and schools, and by KART's participation in civic events which include free bus rides. In addition, ridership surveys are done annually by KART which include suggestions from riders for improving service and which provide KART a mechanism to develop future marketing and advertising programs.

5. Coordination of Transit Systems

As part of the “Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” (SAFETEA-LU) federal transportation act, RTPAs are now required to further assess the transportation coordination efforts in Kings County. In working with local social service providers and the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council, KCAG will develop a plan to the address where and how service can be improved and identify any possible areas for coordination. This Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan will be in compliance with SAFETEA-LU regulations.

While service overlaps are rare among the local area transit providers, KART and Corcoran Area Transit could be capable of accommodating those transportation needs which are not fully met. KCAG recommends that any provider that would like to explore full or partial consolidation, should contact the appropriate transit operator. A feasibility study can be undertaken and service contracts negotiated. To prevent duplications, KCAG should closely monitor proposals for new transit system funding through its Areawide Clearinghouse review process. The Social Service Transportation Advisory Council is also responsible for advising KCAG on the coordination and consolidation of specialized transportation services. The biennial update of the Action Plan for the coordination of social service transportation prepared by KCAG also reviews services to identify any coordination opportunities.

6. Corcoran Intermodal Facility

The City of Corcoran has experienced an increase in population growth due the opening of a second prison within the city in late 1997. The new prison added 7,000 new inmates and 2,000 new employees. The increase in Corcoran's workforce and the subsequent housing demand, along with the increase in prison visitors, has resulted in an increase in both Amtrak and Corcoran Area Transit ridership.

The new intermodal facility has provided a more convenient and attractive transportation hub for transit patrons and providers. The facility is being used as a transfer point for KART buses, Corcoran Area Transit and the Prison shuttle bus. Construction of the Corcoran Intermodal Facility was completed in 2000. The station is owned and maintained by the City of Corcoran. The station was designed similar to the old Santa Fe station, and includes passenger waiting areas and lobby, restrooms, vending machines for Amtrak tickets, and offices for Corcoran Area Transit. It is hoped that another transit provider such as Orange Belt Stages will lease space at the facility and extend service to Corcoran, providing connecting passenger service from Tulare County. The Corcoran Chamber of Commerce also occupies office space within the intermodal facility.

The Corcoran Intermodal Facility allows the City of Corcoran to operate their services more efficiently from a separate office, have full-time and part-time staff persons at the facility, and dispatching services conducted at the facility. The improved dispatching services allows callers to dial directly to the Corcoran Area Transit office, rather than City Hall where the calls could be handled by any number of persons and could result in slow response times.

7. Fleet Expansion

The expected increase in ridership for Corcoran Area Transit will necessitate the purchase of a replacement bus in the near future and require improved coordination of transit service within the community. Future capital needs through the year 2009 included the purchase of a fourth bus in its fleet, if ridership increases continue beyond capacity.

8. Capital Needs Program

The short term capital program for KART and Corcoran Area Transit is designed to provide adequate equipment to meet the projected service demands. Figure 6-12 shows the capital program for the next three years.

9. Agricultural Industry Transportation Services

KCAPTA is the lead agency in the Agricultural Industry Transportation Services (AITS) pilot project. This \$5 million grant provides funds for a multi-county partnership to assist in the transportation needs of a number of agricultural communities located in Kings, Tulare and Kern Counties. KCAPTA established, operates and monitors a vanpool and bus network for agricultural workers in the communities of Kettleman City and Orosi in Tulare County. In addition, KCAPTA established a training program to train and certify drivers for the vanpool program. There are currently 237 vans placed in service.

**Figure 6-12**

**Capital Needs Program  
(2006/07 through 2008/09)**

<b>Corcoran Area Transit</b>	
2008/09	Replacement Bus/Service Expansion
<b>Kings Area rural Transit</b>	
2006/07	Expand Current Office Facilities
2006/07	Five Paratransit Vehicles for Replacement
2006/07	Five Dial-a-Ride Buses
2007/08	Two Paratransit Vehicles for Replacement
2008/09	Capital Rolling Stock
2009/10	Capital Rolling Stock

C. SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO IMPROVE SAN JOAQUINS RIDERSHIP

1. San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee

Amtrak ridership levels have increased over the years since several improvements were made on the *San Joaquins* that were recommended by the Steering Committee of the Caltrans Rail Task Force, now known as the San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee. These improvements include schedule changes for more convenient departures and arrivals in the San Francisco Bay Area and Bakersfield and additional feeder buses between Bakersfield and Los Angeles; additional feeder bus stops, food and beverage services with dining cars; and checked baggage were implemented. The most recent achievement recommended by this Committee was the addition of a fifth round trip train and a direct rail connection to Sacramento for one of the roundtrip trains.

This Committee continues to meet on a bimonthly basis and serves as an advisory body to Caltrans and Amtrak on issues pertaining to the service of the *San Joaquins*.

2. San Joaquin Corridor Business Plan

Caltrans' Rail Program developed a Business Plan for each intercity rail corridor, including the *San Joaquins*, as a requirement of SB 457. The document identifies specific short term actions designed to increase ridership and improve the financial performance of the San Joaquin Corridor. The following is a table outlining the actions proposed in the FY 2005-2006 Business Plan.

## FIGURE 6-13

### SAN JOAQUINS 2004-2005 BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS

<b>Operating Elements</b>
Continue marketing and advertising based on seasonal themes.
Implement advertising partnerships in 2004-05 and 2005-06 with local organizations such as the Lodi Convention and Visitors Bureau, Castle Air Museum near Merced, the City of Stockton Chamber of Commerce, and similar venues.
Conduct a station dedication event for the reopening of the historic downtown Fresno station later in 2005, and conduct groundbreaking ceremonies for Stockton and Madera stations in 2005-06.
Continue multimedia presentations to service clubs and other interested parties in 2004-05 and 2005-06.
Continue promotion of "Kids 'N Trains" Program, and conduct a survey of program users in 2005-06 to evaluate program structure and identify program refinements.
Develop a multimedia outreach presentation to promote the Senior Travel Program in 2004-05. Evaluate the Program in the end of 2004-05 to determine plans for 2005-06.
Implement a college student travel discount program in the fall of 2005.
<b>Capital Elements</b>
Complete Phase I work on 17.6 miles of double track from Port Chicago to Oakley. Installation of Centralized Traffic Control (CTC) and siding construction is planned for completion by the end of 2005, and engineering, design and environmental work is planned for completion in summer 2006.
Complete construction on double tracking two major track segments totaling 14.3 miles (Calwa to Bowles and Shirley to Hanford) by the fall of 2005.
Continue environmental work, design and engineering for second main track from Shafter to Jastro.
Complete Emeryville station track and platform improvements in the fall of 2006.
Continue development of the new Stockton and Madera stations in 2004-05 and 2005-06.
Complete renovation of the historic Fresno station later in 2005.
Complete installation of Passenger Information Display Systems to provide real-time audio and visual information on train arrivals and departures at all San Joaquin Route stations in the spring of 2005.
Complete mid-life overhaul of the four pilot California Cars in 2004-05 and complete overhaul production of the original 66 California Cars in 2006-07.
Replace outdated destination sign system on California Car fleet with state-of-the-art automated sign system in 2005-06.
Contract for replacement of audio and visual passenger information system in Northern California Fleet in 2004-05 and complete replacement in 2005-06.

Source: Caltrans, San Joaquins Route FFY 2005-06 Business Plan

### 3. Los Angeles - Fresno - Bay Area/Sacramento High Speed Rail Corridor

AB 971 (Chapter 197, Statutes of 1988) created the Los Angeles - Fresno - Bay Area/Sacramento High-Speed Rail Corridor Study Group. The study group identified and evaluated what improvements are necessary to allow rail service between parts of northern and southern California to travel at speeds of 125 MPH or more. It specifically included improvements needed for *San Joaquins* service to operate on Southern Pacific tracks between Fresno and Stockton, to provide direct rail service between Stockton and Sacramento, and to identify an alignment for passenger rail service between Bakersfield and Los Angeles.

4. AMTRAK San Joaquins User Survey

A comprehensive survey of users was conducted on the *San Joaquins* in 1997 to obtain information for use in planning marketing efforts. Results of the survey found that the trip purpose for over half of the passengers was to visit family or friends. Unlike other intercity trains like the *Capitols* and the *San Diegans*, only 8% were traveling strictly for business purposes. A large percentage of trips were one-way trips, probably due to Amtrak's one-way fare program. Over half of all *San Joaquins* passengers were traveling alone.

While it has generally been believed that uniqueness of the train experience is a major factor in deciding to travel by train rather than use alternative modes, it appears that cleanliness, comfort, friendly personnel, and price are more important. Through service to Sacramento and Los Angeles were the most requested improvements, and secondly guaranteed seating. Based on some of the findings, targeted improvements will include improved cleanliness, transportation to and from the station, improved food and beverage service, and safer conditions at station parking facilities. To improve the overall rating, items that were rated high will be maintained and items that were rated low will be improved.

5. Passenger Rail Corridor Upgrade Programs

Through the use of state and federal funds, there are a number of programs which have the intent of upgrading rail facilities in order to increase operational speeds and therefore improve the attractiveness of passenger rail service to potential riders. Ultimately, programs to improve or eliminate grade crossings will improve both ridership figures and safety. Track and signal projects, station projects, maintenance facility projects and rolling stock projects for this corridor are proposed for programming in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

In February of 1999, a rail improvement and maintenance project between Bakersfield and Fresno was completed in a compressed two-week time frame rather than spread over many months. The \$11 million project included replacement of six track miles of steel rail with continuous welded rail; installation of approximately 76,000 wood cross ties; ballast cleaning and undercutting over 70 miles; and 100 track miles of surface work. Passengers will find a smoother, more comfortable ride and improved reliability and on-time performance for the *San Joaquins*.

a. ISTEA Section 1010

Under Section 1010 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, the rail corridors linking San Diego-Los Angeles-San Francisco Bay Area-Sacramento have been designated as a high-speed rail corridors, with operational upgrading required to achieve passenger rail speeds of 90 to 110 miles per hour. At present, maximum speed on the Amtrak *San Joaquins* line is 79 miles per hour. There are 20 private and 94 public at-grade crossings along this segment. According to Caltrans, 96 of the 110 miles of track have potential to be upgraded to provide higher speed service.

The focus of the 1996 Section 1010 Program was the closing of private crossings through the Central Valley. There are 95 public and private grade crossings between Bakersfield and Fresno, many of these have no active warning device in place and most are related to agriculture activities. Caltrans had listed several projects in this rail segment for grade crossing redesign and the replacement of old gate closing equipment.

b. Section 130 Federal Crossing Improvement Program

This federal program currently provides \$10 million per year in federal highway funds for operational improvements at eligible grade crossings. The program funds 90 percent of the cost of upgrading with either the city or county matching 10 percent. These improvements include the reconfiguration of roads at grade crossings and installation of grade crossing equipment such as flashers and gates. Many projects eligible for Section 130 funding are also eligible for Section 1010 funding under ISTEA.

c. Section 190 State Grade Separation Program

The Section 190 Program provides \$15 million annually in state funds. Approved projects come from the priority list that the California Transportation Commission produces annually. Each project can be no more than \$5 million and the state will contribute 80 percent of the funding with 20 percent contributions by others for those projects which will eliminate grade crossing and redesign existing ones. Projects involving the proposed grade separations will be funded at a 50 percent state/local match arrangement.

D. FUTURE PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES

1. Cross Valley Passenger Rail Feasibility Study

KCAG prepared a multi-phased Cross Valley Passenger Rail Feasibility Study, which as its name implies, estimated the feasibility of developing passenger rail service between Huron in western Fresno County, across Kings County, through Visalia in Tulare County, to a southernmost terminus in Porterville. Passenger rail service could connect the most densely populated cities and major employment centers in Kings County including the Lemoore Naval Air Station (LNAS), and the cities of Lemoore, Hanford, Visalia, and Porterville.

Phase I of the study concluded that passenger rail service, given future estimates of potential ridership, was feasible. However, the costs involved with upgrading the existing Coalinga and Exeter Branch lines for passenger service would be cost prohibitive at this time due to the lack of funding available.

Phase II of the feasibility study identified rail corridor protection strategies that could be implemented by local jurisdictions and businesses to preserve the rail corridor for future public transportation use. About \$14 million was spent on improvements completed in 2004 to upgrade the railroad to increase speeds and increase freight use. The Cross Valley Rail Corridor Joint Powers Authority, created to manage the project, hired a consulting firm to complete a new feasibility study of passenger rail service on the corridor now that the rail improvements have been made. The study was completed in 2004. Grants funds were issued, but the project came to an impasse. Alternative options are currently being considered, focusing on right of way issues and possible improvements to existing systems.

The State of California Department of Transportation Rail Program issued its "California State Rail Plan 2005/06 – 2014/15". This Plan is to develop and implement a statewide rail blueprint that will guide future planning and investment decisions in the near and long term. Some highlights of the plan include:

- 2010- 11 Bakersfield – Sacramento, third round-trip to extend from Stockton to Sacramento (seventh round-trip on route).
- Bakersfield – Oakland, fifth round-trip to extend from Stockton to Oakland (eighth round-trip on route)."

## 2. High Speed Rail

In 1997, the Intercity High Speed Rail Commission completed a study to analyze the feasibility of high-speed rail service which would run through the Central Valley, connecting the San Francisco Bay Area with Los Angeles and San Diego. The Commission determined that the Highway 99 rail corridor alignment will be the focus for more in-depth analysis due to its greater revenue generating potential, passing through or near the largest urban areas of the San Joaquin Valley. The recommended alignment linking the Central Valley and the Bay Area included a route through the Altamont Pass.

With the completion of the Commission's work, the California High Speed Rail Authority was created to direct the development and implementation of intercity high-speed rail service that is consistent with the work of the Commission. Among its tasks, the Authority is required to develop a detailed financing plan that would include any necessary taxes, fees, or bonds to pay for the construction of a high-speed rail network.

Although no stations have been decided upon at this time, the location of station stops is vital to the ridership figures the high-speed rail system could generate. At present, the potential station locations in proximity to Kings County would most likely be located in the Fresno metropolitan area, Bakersfield, and possibly on the outskirts of the City of Visalia, near Highway 99. Although the BNSF alignment would bring the high-speed trains directly through the cities of Hanford and Corcoran, there would not be the ridership potential that would make any station stop in Kings County cost-effective. However, the Hanford and Corcoran Amtrak stations would become transfer points, moving Kings County residents to high-speed rail stations via regional public transit operators.

Counties in the San Joaquin Valley, including Kings, could also benefit from a high speed rail system between Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area. Presently, the primary commercial passenger airport in the San Joaquin Valley is the Fresno-Yosemite International (FYI) airport. This airport has limited nonstop air passenger service to cities in the immediate Western regions in the U.S., with most nonstop air passenger service originating at the larger urban airports at San Francisco and Los Angeles. Valley residents must drive to either urban location which increases the Valley's air pollution problem, and creates increased traffic congestion on the regional roadway system. By utilizing high-speed rail for use in connecting with these distant airports, not to mention the use of high-speed rail for high speed intra-Valley travel, Valley residents would improve regional air quality and increase ridership and revenues for the high-speed system. Ultimately, Kings County could be served by three passenger rail systems (Amtrak, Cross Valley, and High-Speed Rail) which would service both intra- and inter-regional passenger rail demand into the 21st century.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROMOTING RIDESHARING

1. Continue working with the South Valley Rideshare to maintain rideshare activities in Kings County.
2. KCAG has regularly participated in the "Rideshare Week" program over the past several years. This annual program provides an opportunity to promote the benefits of ridesharing to employers and their employees. With the elimination of the Air District's Rule 9001 which mandated employer-based trip reduction programs, along with the reduction in state funding for regional rideshare activities, rideshare programs are now voluntary throughout the region.
3. Valley Rides, South Valley Rideshare, and KCAG will continue to develop strategies which further the goals of reduced traffic congestion through development of alternative transportation modes including vanpooling, carpooling, bicycling, and walking, among others.
4. Continue working with Valley Rides and South Valley Rideshare to obtain Outreach Assistance to contact Kings County area employers on a regular basis. Outreach efforts in Kings County have been a minimal effort due to the lack of staff to serve as an outreach assistance. A larger number of employers in Kings County could be contacted and encouraged to assist their employees in participating in rideshare opportunities.
5. Provide assistance to employers to help develop employee ridesharing and vanpool programs. KART has a program for purchasing vans for use by private parties for vanpools. Private parties may lease vans through an agency that offers commuter vanpool programs. The cost of a monthly lease is based on the size of the van and the daily commute mileage. The cost includes insurance, maintenance, vehicle tax, license and registration, emergency road service, back-up vehicles, and support services.

Each year federal legislation is introduced which would reinstate tax-free treatment of employer-provided vanpool transportation.

6. Identify locations for park-and-ride lots and secure owners' agreements for their use. The project planning and permit process could be amended to facilitate the provision of park and ride lots and owners of moderate and large parking areas should be encouraged to allow informal park and ride arrangements.
7. Publicizing the benefits of carpooling and vanpooling could promote ridesharing. Caltrans has installed signs bearing the toll free ridesharing number along state routes in Kings County. Recommendations approved at the COAC meetings will be publicized and future organized events concerning rideshare promotions will be included.

KCAG has been involved with and will continue to support all ridesharing programs put forth by either South Valley Rideshare, Valley Rides, the Commute Options Advisory Committee, or the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD).

VI. FINANCIAL ELEMENT

A. PUBLIC TRANSIT

1. Transportation Development Act

A primary source of revenue for KART and Corcoran Area Transit services originates from the Transportation Development Act (TDA) and is allocated annually by KCAG. TDA funds are generated from California sales tax revenues and are available to KCAPTA and the City of Corcoran under two categories of funding:

a. Local Transportation Fund

The Local Transportation Fund (LTF) is primarily for public transit and secondarily for streets and roads, provided that public transit needs have been met. KCAPTA annually receives LTF money from each member agency. Each member agency's LTF contribution is their individual share of KART's annual budget, based on the formula of 1/2 number of service hours provided to that agency and 1/2 population. The City of Corcoran is allocated an amount needed to meet the city's transit operations and services. LTF provides over half of the transit systems' revenues.

KCAG, as the designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency, monitors the LTF, determines the annual apportionments, notifies the claimants, and approves the apportionments, allocations, and uses of the Fund. This means that KCAG reviews LTF claims by KCAPTA and the City of Corcoran. As required by the Transportation Development Act, KCAG conducts public hearings each spring to hear testimony considering transit needs before determining LTF allocations.

According to the TDA, public transit providers have claim to the LTF. However, that amount of the fund not required for public transit may be used for streets and roads. To do so, the TPC must find that there are:

" . . . no unmet public transportation needs within the jurisdiction of the claimant which can reasonably be met through expansion of existing transportation systems, by establishing new systems, or by contracting for services. . . ." (Emphasis Added).

Section 99401.5(c) of the Public Utilities Code requires that KCAG determine its definitions of two important terms of this Act: ***Unmet transit needs*** and ***Reasonable to meet***.

KCAG has defined these terms in the 2003 Kings County Transit Development Plan and are outlined as follows:

- "Unmet transit need", at a minimum, exists where local residents do not have access to private vehicles or other forms of transportation due to age, income, or handicap, for the purpose of traveling to medical care, shopping, social/ recreational activities, education/training, and employment.

- It is "reasonable to meet" the above needs if the proposed or planned service can be operated while maintaining, on a system wide basis, the adopted service goals for that type of system and meet the following criteria:
  - ✓ New, expanded, or revised transit service, if implemented or funded, would not cause the operator to incur expenditures in excess of the maximum amount of Transportation Development Act funds available to Kings County.
  - ✓ The proposed transit service does not duplicate transit services currently provided by either public or private operators.
  - ✓ The proposed transit service has community support from the general public, community groups, and community leaders.
  - ✓ The new, expanded, or revised transit service, if implemented or funded, would allow the responsible operator to meet the TDA required rural area farebox and revenue ratio of 10% for the overall system.
  - ✓ There is supporting data to indicate sufficient ridership potential for the new, expanded, or revised transit service.
  - ✓ Implementation of the new, expanded, or revised transit service should achieve or be moving toward the goals outlined in the Kings County Transit Development Plan for a comparable type of service. Services not meeting the goals should be evaluated on a yearly basis to determine if modifications or cancellation of service should be implemented.
  - ✓ The proposed transit service shall have a reasonable expectation of future demand and available funding on a long term basis to maintain the service.
  - ✓ Is needed by and would benefit either the general public or the elderly and disabled population as a whole.

**FIGURE 6-14****PERCENT OF TOTAL COUNTY LTF SUPPORTING PUBLIC TRANSIT**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>COUNTYWIDE LTF \$</b>	<b>AMOUNT DEVOTED TO TRANSIT \$</b>	<b>PERCENT DEVOTED TO TRANSIT %</b>
1980-81	968,902	50,911	5.25
1981-82	1,034,769	116,661	11.27
1982-83	982,748	151,003	15.36
1983-84	1,059,422	36,049	3.40
1988-85	1,148,453	58,517	5.10
1985-86	1,127,357	86,636	7.68
1986-87	1,156,787	173,708	15.02
1987-88	1,309,059	156,993	11.99
1988-89	1,345,763	230,117	17.10
1989-90	1,444,125	330,567	22.89
1990-91	1,493,327	320,178	21.44
1991-92	1,500,811	424,892	28.31
1992-93	1,574,502	616,166	39.13
1993-94	1,618,531	722,421	44.63
1994-95	1,746,628	856,135	49.02
1995-96	1,837,163	800,631	43.58
1996-97	1,944,528	964,253	49.59
1997-98	1,873,620	1,105,908	59.03
1998-99	1,814,927	1,007,538	55.51
1999-00	2,068,931	1,075,572	51.99
2000-01	2,341,143	1,604,380	68.53
2001-02	2,384,664	1,981,376	83.09
2002-03	2,615,126	2,002,179	76.56
2003-04	2,508,782	977,935	38.98
2004-05	2,533,340	1,517,653	59.91
2005-06	3,063,297	2,254,436	73.60
2006-07	3,200,000	2,455,470	76.73

Source: KCAG , Kings County Auditor

b. State Transit Assistance

Funds for the State Transit Assistance (STA) program are derived from the statewide sales tax on gasoline and diesel fuel. The funds are apportioned to each regional transportation planning agency by a formula based on population and operator revenues, which then reallocates the funds to transit operators on the same basis. STA funds estimated to be apportioned to Kings County are allocated to KCAPTA and the City of Corcoran for transit operating costs.

With the enactment of Senate Bill 45 (Chapter 622, Statutes of 1997), the formula for apportioning STA funds to regional agencies to support transit operations was modified and has increased the formula amount of funding for the STA program. However, the actual funding amount is still contingent upon incoming revenues.

**FIGURE 6-15****STA APPORTIONMENTS FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>KCAPTA</b>	<b>CORCORAN</b>
1981-82	\$101,588	\$0
1982-83	\$154,032	\$0
1983-84	\$193,256	\$0
1998-85	\$175,855	\$0
1985-86	\$157,735	\$0
1986-87	\$21,550	\$1,088
1987-88	\$3,819	\$346
1988-89	\$16,352	\$1,477
1989-90	\$8,411	\$1,077
1990-91	\$66,380	\$10,524
1991-92	\$86,928	\$14,311
1992-93	\$84,169	\$13,095
1993-94	\$85,306	\$12,851
1994-95	\$98,915	\$14,695
1995-96	\$115,513	\$17,017
1996-97	\$127,670	\$17,606
1997-98	\$140,176	\$19,072
1998-99	\$202,441	\$31,664
1999-00	\$168,215	\$32,000
2000-01	\$169,732	\$32,460
2001-02	\$318,105	\$60,836
2002-03	\$270,357	\$49,367
2003-04	\$177,605	\$32,255
2004-05	\$203,880	\$36,948
2005-06	\$348,284	\$63,338
2006-07	\$301,783	\$203,976

Source: KCAG, Kings County Auditor

Note: Prior to 1991, STA funds could be used for street and road purposes.

2. Federal Grantsa. Federal Transit Act - Technical Planning Assistance Program

Caltrans administers the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Technical Planning Assistance Program which funds projects focusing on public and intermodal transportation planning in nonurbanized areas. KCAG has utilized this program to fund on-board surveys of public and social service transit users, a marketing plan for KART, the Kings County Transit Development Plans, and the Inventory of Social Service Transportation Providers.

b. Federal Transit Act - Section 5311

Section 5311 of the Federal Transit Act provides for federal assistance to rural public transportation providers. Grants are awarded for capital, operating, and administrative purposes to eligible providers. The Section 5311 program is designed to help enhance the access of persons in non-urbanized areas to health care, shopping, education, recreational, public services, and employment. This program provides funds for annual apportionments to counties, state funds programmed on a discretionary basis, and intercity bus projects. Private, non profit agencies can only apply through a sponsoring public agency.

Kings County's FTA Section 5311 apportionments have been awarded by KCAG to the City of Corcoran and to KCAPTA for operating assistance based on a population formula. Since Kings County became an urbanized area with the 2000 Census, the calculation for the annual apportionment only includes the non-urban population. Therefore, beginning in FFY 2002-03, Kings County's apportionment will be reduced from prior years. The apportionment for the FFY 2001-02 was about 34% more than the FFY 2002-03 apportionment. KCAG's formula for allocating the apportionment was revised to include only the non-urban population.

In order to comply with federal guidelines which strongly suggest that Section 5311 funds be distributed to eligible providers in an equitable manner, the TPC has adopted 10 criteria to evaluate Section 5311 fund requests. These are:

- The proposed project is consistent with the adopted Regional Transportation Plan.
- The proposed project involves no duplication of existing services. The funds requested will be used to cover a new transit service or the extension of an existing transit service.
- The proposed project can be expected to exhibit a desirable cost-benefit ratio.
- The project will improve traffic flow and safety. It will accommodate the greatest number of passenger trips for the money spent; it will provide the greatest reduction in accident rates.
- The project will cause minimal disruptive environmental effects. It will decrease concentrations of vehicle emissions; it will produce acceptable noise levels.
- The agency's transit system -- not necessarily a particular vehicle for which funding is being requested -- is accessible to the elderly and to the handicapped.
- The agency's transit system is satisfying special transit needs of the elderly, handicapped, poor, or minorities.
- The fare structure of the agency's transit system permits ridership by persons of limited income.
- The transit service offered by the operator is reliable and regularly meets its schedule.
- Funds available to the agency are being used for the entire area population on a fair and equitable basis.

**FIGURE 6-16****FTA SECTION 5311 APPORTIONMENTS**

<b>FY</b>	<b>KART</b>	<b>Corcoran Area Transit</b>
1981-82	\$32,400	\$0
1982-83	\$46,721	\$0
1983-84	\$35,128	\$0
1984-85	\$36,596	\$0
1985-86	\$31,386	\$0
1986-87	\$38,230	\$0
1987-88	\$32,658	\$0
1988-89	\$33,409	\$0
1989-90	\$33,400	\$0
1990-91	\$34,573	\$0
1991-92	\$33,400	\$60,000
1992-93	\$147,149*	\$5,004
1993-94	\$78,415	\$14,349
1994-95	\$79,764	\$14,276
1995-96	\$66,447	\$11,774
1996-97	\$70,191	\$11,774
1997-98	\$81,938	\$13,598
1998-99	\$106,210	\$20,412
1999-00	\$112,328	\$24,992
2000-01	\$119,981	\$26,856
2001-02	\$130,059	\$27,214
2002-03	\$95,845	\$38,971
2003-04	\$72,480	\$30,841
2004-05	\$68,295	\$34,667
2005-06	\$175,624	\$89,475
2006-07	\$153,904	\$80,930

Source: KCAG, Caltrans

Note: \*Includes discretionary grant of \$72,000

c. Federal Transit Act - Section 5311(f)

Each year the state sets aside at least 15 percent of the state apportionment of FTA Section 5311 funds for projects that develop and support connectivity of intercity bus transportation between non-urbanized areas and urbanized areas. Grants are available to public and private transportation operators for planning, capital, and operating assistance.

d. Federal Transit Act - Section 5310

Section 5310 of the Federal Transit Act provides for capital grants for the purpose of helping public and private nonprofit corporations that provide transportation for elderly and handicapped persons for whom mass transportation services are generally unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate. Section 5310 grants are made for up to 80 percent of the cost of vehicles and related equipment. About \$9 million is made available annually to eligible agencies that compete statewide for the funds.

To evaluate project applications for the Section 5310 program, KCAG is required to score projects based on state and regional evaluation criteria. The criteria considers project need, project effectiveness, ability of the applicant to operationally and financially manage the project, and the extent of the applicants participation in the coordination of transportation services with other agencies.

In 1995, KCAPTA applied for and received a grant which allowed the agency to purchase two buses with wheelchair lift capabilities.

e. Federal Transit Act - Section 5307

This program provides operating assistance and capital funds to operators of small urban-area public transportation services. Funds are apportioned to urbanized areas with a population over 50,000 based on a formula of population and population density. KCAPTA is now eligible to receive an apportionment of these funds since Kings County became an urbanized area after the 2000 Census. Kings County's FFY 02-03 FTA Section 5307 apportionment was \$876,706.

f. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 created the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program to provide funding for areas designated as nonattainment of air quality standards. The Safe, Accountable, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) continued and expanded this program. The funds are to be used to implement projects or programs that will have air quality benefits. These would include programs for expansion of public transit services, park and ride lots, trip reduction programs, and vanpools. Kings County receives an apportionment that is programmed by KCAG in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP).

g. Federal Transit Act- Section 5316

SAFETEA-LU, previously under TEA-21, also created Job Access & Reverse Commute (JARC) discretionary grant program. The program is aimed at developing services to transport former welfare recipients and low-income people to and from jobs. Local governments and nonprofit organizations may apply for funding and requires a local match from other than mass transportation funds, necessitating that project sponsors coordinate with nontransportation partners. Funds are allocated on a competitive basis with race neutral requirements

h. Federal Transit Act- Section 5317

New Freedom, also covered under the SAFETEA-LU program along with JARC, was designed to address the transportation needs beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Funds are allocated based on the population of persons with a disability, with 20% going to non-urbanized areas.

3. Fares

Fares represent about 20 percent of KART's and 17 percent of Corcoran Dial-a-Ride's total revenues. With increasing public familiarity and improved services, ridership increases are expected to boost fare revenues for each of these transit systems.

4. REMOVE II Grants

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) provides annual grants through its REMOVE II program to fund projects that reduce motor vehicle emissions. KCAG has received past grants to develop the "Cross Valley Passenger Rail Feasibility Study" and the "Kings County Short Range Transit Development Plan". Other projects approved for other counties have included transit subsidies, transit bus retrofits, carpool incentives, and park and ride lots. Approximately \$3.0 million is available for programming during each annual funding cycle. The amount varies from year to year based on mandates and priorities of the SJVAPCD.

5. Heavy Duty Vehicle Emission Reduction Incentive Program

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's (SJVAPCD) also allocates funds annually through the "Heavy-Duty Motor Vehicle Emission Reduction Incentive Program". In FY 1997-98, the SJVAPCD allocated \$4,833,343 to eligible projects which reduce oxides of nitrogen (NOx). To be eligible, on-road vehicles must have a gross vehicle weight rating greater than 14,000 pounds. The program provides incentives to purchase new vehicles powered by low-NOx diesel and alternative fuel engines, or to repower or retrofit vehicles with reduced emission diesel technologies.

6. Bicycle Transportation Account

California's Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) provides local agencies a funding source for projects that improve safety and convenience for bicycle commuters. Cities and counties are eligible to apply for funding for projects that are included in a current bicycle plan. The amount of funding made available statewide each year is \$5 million. The new funding level has made this source a viable funding option for more projects. The BTA grant fund covers 90 percent of the project's cost, with a 10 percent local match requirement.

In most instances, the BTA funds are used for the development of bicycle lanes or bicycle paths. For transit operators, BTA funds can be used for the purchase of bicycle racks which can be placed either on the inside or outside of transit vehicles. Promoting bicycle usage in the County is an established goal in the Kings County Regional Transportation Plan and the adopted Kings County Regional Bicycle Plan.

7. Regional Transportation Improvement Program

With the enactment of Senate Bill 45 (Chapter 622, Statutes of 1997), projects that have been funded through previous programs, like the Transit Capital Improvement (TCI) program, are now included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Eligible projects under the old TCI program that could be programmed through the STIP process include the rehabilitation of transit buses, the development of intermodal facilities, and feasibility studies. Projects are proposed for the STIP through the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). The 1998 RTIP for Kings County included funding to complete the Corcoran Intermodal Facility, which is now being used as the base for Corcoran City Transit dispatching services. The 2004 RTIP programmed \$400,000 to construct improvements at the KART transfer station. The project is expected to be completed in early 2008.

8. Regional Surface Transportation Program

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 established the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and provided funds for capital costs of mass transportation projects, roads, and other projects. SAFETEA-LU continued this program. Annual allocations are made to each county and the funds are programmed by KCAG through the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). Nonurbanized counties may exchange these federal funds with State funds for use on eligible projects. Kings County has elected to exchange each of its annual apportionments, but has not used the funds for transit purposes.

B. AMTRAK

1. AB 973 (Chapter 108, Statutes of 1989) authorized the submittal of three \$1 billion bond measures to the voters. The first bond measure, Proposition 108, passed in 1990 provided \$1 billion in general obligation bonds for capital expenditures for intercity rail, commuter rail, and other rail transit programs. The second and third bond measures in 1992 and 1994 failed to pass and all funding from the first bond measure has been programmed.

An initiative also passed on the June 1990 ballot was Proposition 116, the Clean Air and Transportation Improvement Act of 1990, provided an additional \$1.99 billion for intercity and commuter rail services, and other rail transit programs. Included was an allocation of \$100 million to design and acquire new "California Cars" and locomotives which are now in use by the AMTRAK *San Joaquins*. All Proposition 116 funds have been programmed.

2. The Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) may propose projects eligible under the discontinued Transit Capital Improvement (TCI) program. Eligible projects for rail include exclusive public mass transit guideway construction and acquisition of rolling stock, intermodal transfer stations, acquisition of abandoned railroad rights-of-way, shortline railroad rehabilitation, grade separations, and bus rehabilitation. Kings County entities applied for and received several grants from the TCI program to fund rail and transit projects. Regional Improvement Program funds were used to finance the parking lot for the new Corcoran Intermodal Facility.
3. Twenty-five percent of the STIP funds available for new programming is allocated to the Interregional Improvement Program (IIP) for which projects are nominated by Caltrans. A minimum of 2.25% of these funds must be programmed for intercity rail.

4. The Public Transportation Account is a trust fund intended for transportation planning and mass transportation projects. Revenues are provided from sales tax on gasoline and diesel fuel, with 50% appropriated to the state for planning purposes and 50% to Caltrans for transportation purposes, including bus and passenger rail services.

C. RIDESHARING

Proposed state and federal legislative bills seek to institute a number of tax incentives for employer-sponsored ridesharing and vanpool programs. However, the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District's Rule 9001, which mandated employer-based trip reduction programs, was terminated through legislation in 1995. The abolishment of this requirement has removed the urgency for many employers to continue their already-established carpool and vanpool programs. It is hoped that employers who have their programs in place will continue to offer rideshare alternatives for their employees.

KCAG will continue to work cooperatively with the South Valley Rideshare office in developing strategies for the reduction of single-occupant commuting and the benefit of improving the region's air quality.

Funding from programs such as the Regional Improvement Program (RIP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) can be programmed by KCAG for transportation demand management activities.