

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FORM

Report Title: "Yellow School Bus for Traffic Congestion Relief"

Report Date: June 8, 2018

Response by: Marin County Board of Supervisors

FINDINGS

- We agree with the findings numbered: **F1-F2**, and **F4-F8**.
- We disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: **F3**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations **R1** and **R8** have not been implemented, but will be in the future.
- Recommendation numbered **R5** will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.
- Recommendations **R4** and **R10** require further analysis.

Date: August 21, 2018

Signed: _____


President, Board of Supervisors

Marin County Board of Supervisors

Response to Findings and Recommendations from Grand Jury Report
"Yellow School Bus for Traffic Congestion Relief"

FINDINGS:

Statement regarding findings, the Marin County Board of Supervisors, provides the following information:

- F1. Traffic congestion is consistently cited as the number one problem in the county and school-related traffic is a significant contributor.**

Response: Agree.

- F2. School buses have been shown to reduce traffic congestion.**

Response: Agree.

- F3. There are school districts with no bus service and others with varying levels of service. The lack of coordination results in inefficiencies.**

Response: Partially disagree.

We agree there are school districts with no bus service and others with varying levels of service. However, some school districts may operate efficiently and effectively absent countywide coordination.

- F4. Current school bus funding includes bus pass sales and various municipality and county contributions. The municipal and county contributions are temporary and inconsistent.**

Response: Agree.

- F5. There is demand to establish and/or expand YSB programs in the County.**

Response: Agree.

- F6. Securing dedicated YSB bus parking and maintenance facility is essential for expansion of a countywide YSB program.**

Response: Agree.

- F7. The YSB programs in Marin face many challenges, including dependable funding sources, bus drivers and coordinated school bell times.**

Response: Agree.

In November 2018, voters will consider a Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) Measure A half cent transportation sales tax renewal and extension. If approved by voters, the measure would dedicate 5 percent or \$1.3 million for Marin Transit-operated school-related services.

- F8. Marin Transit is the appropriate entity to efficiently manage a coordinated YSB program.**

Response: Agree.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2017-2018 Marin County Civil Grand Jury recommends that:

- R1. The Marin County Board of Supervisors should work with Marin Transit to secure ample locations for bus parking and a location for bus maintenance by the end of 2018.**

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be in the future.

While Marin Transit has obtained funding and is actively searching for a light industrial property of at least five acres, Marin Transit has not yet identified an appropriate site. The County could play a convening role to ensure efforts continue, but the County does not have land use oversight in incorporated areas. Given the number of procedural requirements, it is unlikely that Marin Transit can achieve this project by the end of 2018.

- R4. Marin Transit should facilitate negotiations for a financial arrangement across the full group of participants that would distribute any tax revenue lost by a municipality or the County for providing a parking and maintenance facility.**

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis.

While it may be feasible for Marin Transit to facilitate such discussions, it would not be typical of another governmental agency to address lost tax revenues as part of a property purchase.

- R5. The Marin County Board of Supervisors should direct Marin Transit to establish a new standing YSB committee by September 2018.**

Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.

The Marin Transit Agency is directed by a seven-member Transit District policy board, which includes elected representatives from the County Board of Supervisors, two city representatives, and an alternate city representative. The Marin County Board of Supervisors may provide policy guidance toward this end but does not have direct authority over the Marin Transit District.

- R8. The YSB committee should work toward the establishment of a coordinated YSB for K-8 program for the urbanized areas of Marin with the goal of beginning the coordinated program by the 2019-2020 school year.**

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be in the future if reliable, ongoing funding for a coordinated yellow bus program is secured.

If the voters approve the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) half cent sales tax renewal and extension, Marin Transit will increase support to \$1.3 million annually to school bus services. This measure will increase support but will be far less than what would be needed for a countywide coordinated program.

A YSB Committee will further develop incremental improvements until an ongoing revenue source for a countywide coordinated yellow school bus program is established. Given that a reliable ongoing source for a countywide program has not yet been identified, it is unlikely that a countywide coordinated program will be in place by 2019-2020.

- R10. The County and municipalities of the urbanized corridor should make financial support of all YSB programs a part of each year's budgeting process.**

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis.

Given the multitude of transit and transportation-related funding priorities in Marin, ongoing support of YSB programs will need to be viewed among a number of critical community priorities as part of the County, city/town, school and transportation/transit agency annual budget processes.