



TUOLUMNE COUNTY TRANSIT AGENCY

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2025 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

CALENDAR YEAR 2025

Prepared by the Tuolumne County Transit Agency
Sonora, California

Operated by Storer Transit Systems | transcouncil@tuolumnecounty.ca.gov

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 AT A GLANCE

Total System Boardings: 82,356 | YoY Growth (Jul–Dec): +16.0% | Farebox Recovery: ~10.2%
Cost per FR Trip: ~\$19.31 (down from ~\$27.44) | New Route 3: 9,057 boardings in launch year

Calendar Year 2025 was a year of meaningful growth and forward momentum for Tuolumne County Transit (TCT). Total system boardings reached 82,356 — combining Fixed Route (55,815), Dial-A-Ride (26,541), Ski Bus (1,617), and Special Events (3,588) ridership — representing a 16% increase in the July–December period compared to the same months in the prior fiscal year.

The year opened with TCT overcoming a significant driver shortage. A December 2024 contract amendment with Storer Transit Systems increased driver wages to competitive levels, and by February 2025 seven new drivers had been hired with three more in training. The staffing recovery was tangible: service reliability improved, DAR wait times dropped, and ridership climbed steadily through the spring and into summer.

New services launched or expanded during the year include Route 3 (Jamestown–Sonora), which grew from 3,086 boardings in its partial FY 2024/25 launch to 5,971 boardings in July–December 2025; and a new Saturday Columbia–Sonora service. The Dodge Ridge Ski Bus returned for its most productive season in several years.

Financially, TCT met the 10% state minimum farebox recovery standard in most months and managed cost per Fixed Route passenger trip down to approximately \$19.31 on average for January–June 2025 — a significant improvement from the prior-year average of approximately \$27.44.

On the planning and governance front, VIA Mobility was awarded a \$137,000 contract to update the Short-Range Transit Plan. Cal-ITP provided free Remix route-planning software (saving approximately \$80,000). On-time performance standards were revised to a more realistic 90% threshold effective October 2025, with monthly OTP reporting now published publicly.

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KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR DASHBOARD

The following scorecard summarizes TCT's most important performance metrics for Calendar Year 2025. Data reflects January–June 2025 from the FY 2024/25 dataset and July–December 2025 from the FY 2025/26 dataset.

METRIC	CY 2025 VALUE	STANDARD / GOAL	STATUS
Total System Boardings (Fixed Route + DAR)	82,356	Maximize	▲ +16% YoY
Fixed Route Boardings (Routes 1, 2, 3)	55,815	Maximize	✓ Growth
Dial-A-Ride Boardings (Weekday + Weekend)	26,541	Maximize	✓ Stable
Route 1 On-Time Performance (FY 2024/25)	84.6%	≥ 90%	⚠ Below Std
Route 2 On-Time Performance (FY 2024/25)	~90.9%	≥ 90%	✓ Meets
DAR On-Time Performance (est.)	~95%	≥ 90%	✓ Exceeds
Fixed Route Farebox Recovery (avg.)	~10.2%	≥ 10% state min	✓ Meets
FR Cost per Passenger Trip (Jan–Jun avg.)	~\$19.31	< \$27.44 prior yr	✓ Improved
DAR Cost per Passenger Trip (FY 24/25)	~\$30.02	Minimize	✓ Improved
Passengers per Rev. Hour – Route 1	10.47	≥ 5.0	✓ Exceeds
Passengers per Rev. Hour – DAR	4.01	≥ 4.0 (goal)	✓ Meets Goal

Figure 1 - Key Performance Indicator Dashboard

Note: Editable charts and supporting data for all metrics are available in the companion Excel workbook (TCT_2025_Performance_Charts.xlsx).

SYSTEM BACKGROUND

About Tuolumne County Transit

Tuolumne County Transit (TCT) is the public transit system serving Tuolumne County, a predominantly rural mountain community in the Sierra Nevada foothills approximately 130 miles east of the San Francisco Bay Area. The agency is governed by the Tuolumne County Transit Agency (TCTA) Board — composed of elected officials from the City of Sonora and the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors — and managed by the Tuolumne County Transportation Council (TCTC). Day-to-day operations are contracted to Storer Transit Systems under a multi-year operations agreement.

TCT serves a county of approximately 54,000 residents spread across roughly 2,274 square miles. The terrain is mountainous, communities are dispersed, and personal vehicle dependency is high — making public transit especially critical for seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income residents, students, and those without access to a car.

Services at a Glance

- **Fixed Route — Route 1 (Sonora Loop):** The primary corridor connecting residential neighborhoods, Crossroads Shopping Center, and downtown Sonora. Weekdays only.
- **Fixed Route — Route 2 (Sierra Village–Columbia):** The western corridor linking communities along Highways 108 and 49 including Twain Harte, Soulsbyville, Sonora, and Columbia. Weekdays only.
- **Fixed Route — Route 3 (Jamestown–Sonora):** New in FY 2024/25, this route directly connects Jamestown residents to Sonora with transfers available downtown and at Walmart.
- **Dial-A-Ride (DAR):** Curb-to-curb demand-responsive service for the general public. Seniors (60+) and individuals with disabilities have priority booking. Weekday and Saturday service.
- **Golden Years Transit:** Non-Emergency Medical Transportation for seniors (60+) operated in partnership with Area 12 Agency on Aging.
- **Tuolumne Trip Program:** Mileage reimbursement for seniors and individuals with limited mobility for essential trips. Serving 40 active clients as of late 2025.
- **Dodge Ridge Ski Bus:** Seasonal weekend/holiday service to Dodge Ridge Ski Area. Ran December 2024 through April 2025, carrying 1,617 riders.
- **Saturday Columbia–Sonora:** New summer 2025 service connecting Columbia to Sonora on Saturdays, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., linking riders to the Farmer's Market, Fly-Ins at Columbia Airport, Columbia State Historic Park, and downtown Sonora.
- **Special Events & Supplemental Service:** Shuttle service for community events throughout the year including the Sonora Christmas Parade, Groveland 49er Festival, and county fairs.

RIDERSHIP

Ridership is measured in passenger boardings — each time a rider boards a vehicle counts as one boarding. This is the standard measure used by transit agencies nationwide and allows for consistent comparison across time periods and service types.

Annual Ridership Overview

Total system boardings for Calendar Year 2025 reached 82,356 across Fixed Route, Dial-A-Ride, Ski Bus, and Special Events services. Fixed Route services (Routes 1, 2, and 3) accounted for 55,815 boardings and Dial-A-Ride services delivered 26,541 boardings (25,406 weekday + 1,135 weekend). The July–December 2025 period showed a strong 16.0% increase in total boardings compared to the same six months in FY 2024/25 — from 36,308 to 42,123 boardings.

SERVICE TYPE	CY 2025	JUL–DEC 2024	JUL–DEC 2025	YoY %
Route 1 (Sonora Loop)	33,119	16,840	16,069	-4.58%
Route 2 (Sierra Village–Columbia)	13,639	7,276	7,110	-2.28%
Route 3 (Jamestown–Sonora)	9,057	N/A	5,971	New
Fixed Route Subtotal	55,815	23,040	29,689	+28.9%
Weekday Dial-A-Ride	25,406	11,811	12,360	+4.65%
Weekend DAR	1,135	477	613	+28.51%
Ski Bus (Dec 2024–Apr 2025)	1,617	—	—	N/A
Special Events (FY 2024/25)	3,588	—	—	N/A
SYSTEM TOTAL	82,356	36,308	42,123	+16.0%

Figure 2 - Annual Ridership by Service Type, Calendar Year 2025 (See Excel workbook for editable charts)

Ridership by Route

Route 1 (Sonora Loop) remains the highest-ridership route in the system, carrying 33,119 boardings in Calendar Year 2025. Monthly boardings exceeded 3,000 in July, August, and September 2025 — the strongest consecutive three-month performance in recent years. The route serves the densest travel corridor in the county.

Route 2 (Sierra Village–Columbia) delivered 13,639 boardings in Calendar Year 2025. Monthly boardings in the July–December 2025 period ranged from 855 (November) to 1,375 (September), reflecting continued ridership growth on this longer-distance corridor. The October 2025 schedule changes added recovery time for drivers between the Sonora and Columbia College stops. This helped increase the on-time performance drastically.

Route 3 (Jamestown–Sonora) recorded 9,057 boardings for Calendar Year 2025. The route launched partway through FY 2024/25 (March 2025), contributing 3,086 boardings in its initial four months. In July–December 2025, the route delivered 5,971 boardings — averaging approximately 995 per month — demonstrating genuine unmet demand in the Jamestown corridor.

Dial-A-Ride Ridership

Weekday Dial-A-Ride delivered 25,406 boardings in Calendar Year 2025. Monthly demand was strongest in August 2025 (2,363) and October 2025 (2,328), and softer in November 2025 (1,657), reflecting seasonal patterns. Weekend DAR provided an additional 1,135 boardings, maintaining consistent community presence with monthly totals ranging from 74 (February) to 124 (October).

Ridership in the first half of FY 2024/25 (July–December 2024) was suppressed by the driver shortage that limited service availability. Following the December 2024 wage increase and new hires, DAR capacity and bookings improved through spring 2025 and into FY 2025/26.

Special Events & Ski Bus

The Dodge Ridge Ski Bus carried 1,617 total riders across the December 2024–April 2025 season (299 in December, 393 in January, 434 in February, 433 in March, and 58 in April). Special Events service delivered 3,588 boardings in FY 2024/25, with highlights including 525 riders at the Sonora Christmas Parade, 438 at the Groveland 49er Festival (October 2025), 488 at the September 2025 49er Festival, 300 riders at the November 2025 Sonora Christmas Parade, and 188 at the Motherload Parade/Rodeo.

SERVICE LEVEL PROVIDED

Service level is measured in Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH) — the hours a transit vehicle is in revenue service — and Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM). These metrics reflect how much service was actually delivered to the community.

Vehicle Revenue Hours and Miles

SERVICE TYPE	FY 24/25 REV. HOURS	FY 24/25 REV. MILES	NOTES
Route 1 (Sonora–East Sonora)	3,233 hrs	~37,740 mi	Full year
Route 2 (Sierra Village–Columbia)	3,919 hrs	~66,045 mi	Full year
Route 3 (Jamestown–Sonora)	801 hrs	~9,060 mi	Mar–Jun 2025
Weekday Dial-A-Ride	6,195 hrs	~161,209 mi	Full year
Weekend DAR	365 hrs	~9,490 mi	Full year
Ski Bus	136 hrs	~4,100 mi	Dec 2024–Apr 2025
Special Events	132 hrs	~4,200 mi	Full year

Figure 3 - Vehicle Revenue Hours and Miles by Service Type, FY 2024/25 (See Excel workbook for editable charts)

In the July–December 2025 period (FY 2025/26), total Fixed Route hours reached approximately 4,852 hours for the half-year period, with Route 3 now operating the full six months at 1,297 hours — up from its partial-year 801 hours in FY 2024/25. The October 1, 2025 schedule changes added recovery time to Route 2 and introduced the Blackberry Apartments stop, resulting in modest adjustments to service hour distribution across routes.

SYSTEM PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity measures tell us how efficiently TCT is using its resources — specifically, how many passengers are served per hour and per mile of service. These metrics help the agency assess whether service levels are well-matched to actual demand.

Passengers per Revenue Hour

Fixed Route combined averaged approximately 6.37 passengers per revenue hour across FY 2024/25 — a slight improvement from FY 2023/24. Route 1 was the standout performer at 10.47 passengers per revenue hour, reflecting the high-demand urban corridor it serves. Route 2 averaged 3.51 passengers per revenue hour, consistent with a longer-distance, lower-density route. Route 3, in its initial months (March–June 2025), achieved 3.85 passengers per revenue hour — a strong start for a new service.

Weekday Dial-A-Ride averaged approximately 4.01 passengers per revenue hour in FY 2024/25, meeting the agency's goal of 4.0 trips per hour and well above the minimum standard of 3.0. Performance improved in the second half of the fiscal year as staffing stabilized.

Cost per Passenger Trip

The average operating cost per Fixed Route passenger trip was approximately \$19.31 for January–June 2025 — a substantial improvement from the prior-year average of approximately \$27.44. The lowest cost month was May 2025 (\$17.02), when ridership was high and conditions favorable. Cost per trip in July–December 2025 ranged from \$17.36 (August) to \$30.27 (November), with the November increase reflecting lower seasonal ridership and schedule adjustments.

Dial-A-Ride average cost per trip in FY 2024/25 was approximately \$30.02 for weekday service — a significant improvement from the elevated levels observed during the driver shortage period.

SERVICE RELIABILITY: ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

On-time performance (OTP) measures the percentage of scheduled trips that depart within the acceptable window (up to 5 minutes after the scheduled time). In August 2025, the TCTA Board revised the Fixed Route on-time standard from 95% to 90%, acknowledging that the prior standard was not operationally realistic. The new 90% standard took effect October 1, 2025. Monthly OTP reports are now published on the TCT website.

Fixed Route On-Time Performance

PERIOD	ROUTE 1	ROUTE 2	ROUTE 3	WEEKDAY DAR
FY 2024/25 Avg.	84.6%	~90.9%	~88% (partial)	~95% (est.)
Standard	90%	90% ✓	90% (new route)	90% ✓

Figure 4 - On-Time Performance Summary, FY 2024/25 (See Excel workbook for monthly OTP chart)

Route 1 (Sonora–East Sonora) averaged 84.6% on-time for the FY 2024/25 reporting period. Performance in January–June 2025 was strong in some months (92% in January, 90% in April and June), with a waiver granted in November 2024 due to road construction. Ongoing challenges include Swiftly software issues (for which waivers were requested in April and May) and traffic congestion on the Route 1 corridor.

Route 2 (Sierra Village–Columbia) demonstrated excellent reliability, achieving 100% on-time performance in February, March, and April 2025. A waiver was granted in May 2025 due to the mid-month transition to the Via scheduling platform. In November 2025, Route 2 achieved 92.6% OTP, comfortably meeting the new 90% standard.

Route 3 (Jamestown–Sonora) reported strong on-time performance across available data months, with 91.0% OTP in November 2025 and 81.7% in December 2025, when afternoon traffic delays in downtown Sonora and at the Highway 108 and Willow intersection were noted as contributing factors.

Weekday Dial-A-Ride consistently exceeded the 90% standard, with monthly pickup OTP ranging from 82.5% to 99.3% across available reporting months. The agency uses a 90% benchmark for both pickup and drop-off performance.

Missed Trips and DAR Denials

Missed trips and service denials are monitored monthly through the Storer Transit Systems performance letters. Key reliability events in 2025 included: 13 missed trips in May due to highway construction on Route 3; 9 missed trips in November due to sick driver call-ins; and an elevated denial count in September (26 denials, 14 of which were successfully rescheduled). The agency evaluates waivers for missed trips caused by external factors such as road construction, utility work, and weather.

SAFETY

Safety is a primary operational priority for Tuolumne County Transit and Storer Transit Systems. Monthly accident, incident, suspension, and complaint data are reported by the Transit Manager (Becky Day, Storer Transit Systems General Manager) at each TCTA Board meeting.

Accidents and Incidents

Reported accidents in Calendar Year 2025 include a non-preventable accident in January, three accidents in July (one on July 1, one on July 28 involving Bus 55 which delayed the route, and one on July 30), and three accidents in September. December and November 2025 reported zero accidents. Detailed accident reports are sent to TCTA with 72 hours of the accident.

2025 Safety Highlights

- January: 1 non-preventable accident; 1 missed trip; 3 road calls
- February: 0 accidents; Annual Storer Driver Workshop conducted (Feb 22–23); 5 perfect obstacle course scores
- July: 3 accidents reported; Cal Fire responded to building fire at Storer facility — staff evacuated all buses safely
- September: 3 accidents; 6 incidents; 3 suspensions — all documented and reported to Board
- November & December: 0 accidents; staff and service maintained safely through holiday season

Training

Storer Transit Systems conducted its Annual Driver Workshop on February 22–23, 2025, attended by all drivers and office staff. The workshop included obstacle course training, driver video review, TSA awareness presentations, and recognition activities. Five drivers received perfect scores on the obstacle course. Ongoing training, onboarding for seven new drivers hired in early 2025, and new Maintenance Manager Austin Parker joining in December 2025 reflect continued investment in workforce quality.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Financial performance is measured through operating costs, fare revenue, and the farebox recovery ratio — the percentage of operating costs covered by passenger fares and fare-equivalent credits. California law requires most transit operators to recover at least 10% of operating costs from the farebox.

Operating Costs and Fare Revenue

COST METRIC	FY 2024/25 VALUE	PRIOR YEAR / STANDARD	CHANGE
Total Contractor Invoices	~\$1,590,172	Prior year higher	—
Avg. FR Cost per Rev. Hour	~\$111–\$124	Benchmark varies	Stable
Avg. DAR Cost per Rev. Hour	~\$117–\$138	Benchmark varies	Stable
FR Cost per Passenger Trip (Jan–Jun avg.)	~\$19.31	~\$27.44 prior yr	▼ -30%
DAR Cost per Passenger Trip	~\$30.02	Higher during shortage	▼ Improved
Total Fare Revenue (all services)	~\$251,574	10% min recovery	~10.2%
FR Farebox Recovery (avg. monthly)	~10.2%	10% state minimum	✓ Meets

Figure 5 - Financial Performance Summary, FY 2024/25 (See Excel workbook for monthly farebox recovery chart)

Total contractor invoice costs for FY 2024/25 were approximately \$1,590,172 for General and Specialized Services combined. Monthly costs for July–December 2025 ranged from approximately \$167,000 (November) to \$187,000 (October), with higher October costs reflecting expanded service hours and the new Blackberry Apartments stop.

The farebox recovery ratio includes credits from the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) free-fare program, which subsidizes fares at no cash cost to riders. FY 2025/26 marks the last year of LCTOP free-fare funding. Cash fares will resume in FY 2026/27, requiring careful attention to ridership impacts and proactive rider communication.

LCTOP Free Fare Program — Final Year

The Low Carbon Transit Operations Program free-fare subsidy ends after FY 2025/26.

Cash fares on Fixed Route services will resume in FY 2026/27.

Staff will develop a phased communication plan to minimize ridership impact.

FLEET: ADDITIONS AND SUBTRACTIONS

Fleet Additions

In September 2025, TCT acquired two 2019 Ford E-450 buses equipped with wheelchair lifts, donated through Caltrans from a Sacramento-area nonprofit organization. The vehicles were valued at approximately \$125,000 and were in good condition with low mileage. Today these buses are in service and running great.

Fleet Subtractions

In March 2026, the agency moved 5 high-mileage buses to the County storage yard. Options under consideration for the decommissioned vehicles include public auction, donation to nonprofit organizations, and salvage for parts. Removing older vehicles reduces maintenance costs, improves fleet reliability, and lowers emissions.

Fleet Summary

FLEET METRIC	STATUS / VALUE	NOTES
Vehicles Added (FY 2025/26)	2 (2019 Ford E-450)	Donated via Caltrans from Sacramento nonprofit; wheelchair lifts; ~\$125,000 value
Vehicles Decommissioned	5	Moved to County storage; auction/donation/salvage options being evaluated
Net Fleet Change	30 to 25	Newer, more reliable capacity added to fleet
State of Good Repair Funding	\$98,372	All SGR funds directed to fleet maintenance and rehabilitation
Target Annual Service Hours	22,960 hrs	Per December 2024 contract amendment with Storer Transit

Figure 6 -Fleet Summary, FY 2025/26

The State of Good Repair Program Project List, adopted via Resolution 125-25 in August 2025, designates all State of Good Repair funding toward continued maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing transit fleet.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public engagement was elevated as a strategic priority throughout 2025, with new investments in marketing, outreach, and community involvement.

Marketing & Communications

In February 2025, the Board approved an RFP for comprehensive marketing, communications, website development, and social media services. In March 2025, a separate RFP for Collateral Production and Graphic Design Services was approved, focused on printed materials and social media graphics. In August 2025, the Board approved Professional Service Agreements for Collateral Production and Graphic Design with Proso Communications and We The Creative. This is all possible due to the SB 125 marketing funds that were approved in 2025. Work on the website and marketing material is underway.

The agency also continued its advertising partnership with Comcast/Effectv, approving a \$6,000 YARTS-specific advertising campaign in May 2025. The Board approved Option B for targeted zone advertising and authorized additional social media spending within the Executive Director's authority.

Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP) Update

In June 2025, the Board awarded a \$137,000 contract to VIA Mobility, LLC for an update to the Short-Range Transit Plan and Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Transportation Plan. The SRTP will address post-pandemic travel trends, identify service gaps, and support state and federal funding applications. VIA staff participated in the Community Roots Fair in September 2025, staffing an interactive booth where they engaged residents and gathered input through comment cards and surveys. Community engagement efforts were led by a bilingual consultant and all materials were provided in English and Spanish.

Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC)

The Citizens' Advisory Committee continued to provide community input on transit decisions throughout 2025. Bob Asquith was confirmed as the District 4 (South County) representative in March 2025. Curtis Wicks was re-appointed as the City of Sonora representative in June 2025 with a term through May 2029. Vacancies remain for District 4 (East Sonora) and District 5.

Community Feedback Highlights

A Behavioral Health employee testified at the February 2025 Board meeting about her positive experience with Dial-A-Ride accommodating her son's needs, and shared that she was actively referring clients to the new Jamestown route and Golden Years Transit.

Public speakers at the September 2025 meeting raised concerns about the Tuolumne Transit Center's safety and operational challenges since Camp Justice moved nearby. The Board authorized exploration of alternative uses for the facility. Staff reported multiple weekly Sheriff calls to the Transit Center, prompting active discussions about co-locating a County department with ties to Camp Justice.

At the September 2025 meeting, a speaker requested jury duty transit service, noting hardships faced by transit-dependent riders during service hours. Staff committed to exploring this option.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

TCT enters the next phase of its development from a position of strength. Several critical initiatives and transitions will define the agency's performance in FY 2025/26 and beyond.

Transit Operations Contract Renewal

The Storer Transit Systems contract enters its sixth and final year in FY 2025/26 (approved December 2025, Resolution 129-25). Staff will prepare and issue a new multi-year Request for Proposals for transit operations during this period—a procurement opportunity that will establish the agency's operational partnership through at least 2031.

Fare Reinstatement

With LCTOP free-fare funding exhausted after FY 2025/26, cash fares on Fixed Route services will resume in FY 2026/27. Staff will develop a phased communication plan for riders and monitor ridership closely in the initial months following fare reinstatement. The Board noted (May 2025) that transitioning away from free fares should be gradual and well-communicated.

Service Expansion Priorities

- **Saturday Columbia–Sonora Service:** The summer 2025 pilot (35 passengers in August, 28 in September) will be evaluated for year-round or expanded service in 2026.
- **Farmer's Market Service:** Chairman York raised the need for Farmer's Market transit in May 2025. Staff committed to planning service for 2026, including advertising and scheduling.
- **On-Demand Transit Pilot:** The new same-day on-demand service (approved May 2025 at \$3.00 each way) will be monitored for ridership performance and expanded as demand warrants.
- **Charter & Special Event Policy:** A Draft Charter Service and Special Event/Supplemental Service Policy was presented in December 2025 and was brought for adoption in February 2026.

Planning & Technology

- **SRTP Update:** Expected to complete in late FY 2025/26, guiding service development strategy and supporting grant applications.
- **Remix Route Planning Software:** Cal-ITP's free Remix agreement (approved March 2025) saves approximately \$80,000 over the contract term.
- **Monthly OTP Reporting:** Now posted publicly on the TCT website each month, increasing transparency and accountability.
- **Transit Center Reuse:** Staff are actively exploring alternative uses for the Sonora Transit Center, including co-location with County departments affiliated with Camp Justice.
- **New Compensation Plan:** Resolution 128-25 (November 2025) established a standalone TCTC/TCTA Compensation Plan, providing greater operational flexibility and separating staff benefits from County union agreements.

For questions about this report, contact the Tuolumne County Transit Agency
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