



California Vanpool Authority – The progress and impact in moving California residents who continue to search for a safe and affordable means of getting to work.

CalVans (California Vanpool Authority) is celebrating second anniversaries this year. It has been 11 years since its predecessor KCAPTA (Kings County Area Public Transit Agency) established its vanpool program in Kings County. It has also been two years since CalVans was formally established, taking over the vanpool program from KCAPTA. There have been many challenges and changes over the years as Staff has worked to craft and expand a program that was challenged by both public and private agencies. Today CalVans is a 7.7 million dollar operation that is self funded from it's users with a safety record that's being used as a model.

The CalVans Joint Powers Agency was formally established in January 2012 as a public transit agency with Board Members representing each of the following 11 agencies:

- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
- Fresno Council of Governments
- Kern Council of Governments
- Kings County Association of Governments
- Madera County Transportation Commission
- Merced County Association of Governments
- Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments
- Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
- Tulare County Association of Governments
- Ventura County Transportation Commission

The program had its inception in 2001 when Mrs. Lois Buhn, a Corcoran State Prison employee, asked the KCAPTA Board if it would help her retain the Caltrans vanpool that Caltrans was set to take back, as it was no longer going to provide vanpools to employees. The Board agreed to provide a vanpool for Mrs. Buhn as long as her group paid 100% of the cost related to providing the vanpool. With this van, KCAPTA vanpool program was launched. Additional vanpools were approved, growing the program over the years.

KCAPTA expanded its program to include vanpools for agricultural workers in 2001. This expansion was driven by two incidents. The first was a letter from the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement informing KCAPTA that any effort to provide farmworkers with vanpools would be in violation of the Labor Code and result in legal action being taken against the Transit Agency. The second was a tragic accident in 1999 that resulted in the death of 13 farmworkers near the Community of Five Points.

The 1999 accident caused the Governor to look at ways that farmworker transportation safety might be improved. A series of public hearings were conducted by Caltrans in various locations throughout the San Joaquin Valley seeking input from those providing transportation and those being transported. It was noted that most transportation was done on an informal basis, in violation of either State or Federal law governing the transportation of farmworkers. KCAPTA Staff attended many of these, proposing that vanpools be considered as one option, assuming work could be done addressing the Department of Labor's concern.

Caltrans Staff considered KCAPTA's proposal as the only viable option coming out of the meetings. Follow-up meetings were held to determine how a pilot program might be established and funded. It was determined that Caltrans would apply for Federal and State funding to finance a pilot project serving Farmworkers in Kings County. This project, called the AITS (Agricultural Industries Transportation Services) project was later expanded to include farmworkers in Tulare and Fresno Counties as well.

KCAPTA Staff attempted to work with Federal and State Department of Labor Representatives in setting up the pilot program to insure its success. Both agencies stated that they would review KCAPTA's proposal and get back with ideas, neither agency did until several years later. Staff did have success working closely with the California Highway Patrol SAFE unit located in Fresno. They provided suggestions and worked closely with Staff in setting up the initial program.

In 2002 farmworkers were added to those who could secure a vanpool from KCAPTA. Because of the separate funding, and concern with the various State and Federal Labor transportation laws, KCAPTA Staff developed additional monitoring requirements of farmworker vanpools to minimize risk. This monitoring continues today as CalVans seeks to insure the safety of those being transported and the continued success of the program.

In 2001, KCAPTA submitted several letters to the Federal Department of Labor asking for input and clarification on its vanpool program in light of MSPA (Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act), which governs many aspects of farmworker transportation. Receiving no reply, KCAPTA submitted a second request which was answered in January 2007. CalVans now works closely with Federal Department Staff in educating farmworkers that CalVans vanpools can provide a safe and insured form of transportation to the worksite.

The Division of Labor Standards Enforcement or State Department of Labor never did respond to KCAPTA's inquiry concerning transportation of farmworkers. However, in 2004 they did cite one of KCAPTA's vanpool drivers for transporting without the proper certifications. It was indicated that the driver might be liable for up to three years in jail and a \$10,000 fine if found guilty. At the hearing the prosecution and the Judge decided to continue the matter for further clarification as they were unsure if and what laws were violated. A follow-up opinion by Anne Hipshman, Assistant Chief Counsel determined that the driver was not in violation of the labor laws. This was because the driver was not collecting fees for transporting farmworkers to the fields, but operating a public transit vehicle in which the fares were determined by the transit agency not the driver. The case against the driver was dismissed.

In 2006 the State established and funded the AWTP (Agricultural Workers Transportation Program) in an effort to duplicate and or expand the vanpool program being operated by KCAPTA. The program funded project ranging from Napa County to the north to Ventura to the south. A total of 17 projects were funded, ranging from planning studies to project implementation. Presently two programs remain in operation, KCAPTA as CalVans and San Luis Obispo's Ride-On. Projects by other agencies either never moved forward or they asked that KCAPTA fold them into its operation. This was done through various agreements between the agencies and KCAPTA.

In 2010 KCAPTA Staff proposed establishing a new transit agency to assume operation of the vanpool project. This was done due to its size and the desire to have representation from the areas being served. It also allowed a more stable footing for the agency. Individual members could either join or leave the agency without impacting those agencies that might want to continue the program.

From its inception the vanpool program was to operate on revenue collected from the passengers or grant funds provided to get the farmworker project up and running. Under KCAPTA all funds were separated by transit (conventional buses), general vanpools and agricultural vanpools. This was to assure the KCAPTA Board that no transit funds were being used to support the program and to insure the State that none of the grant fund targeted towards the agricultural vanpools was being used to support the general vanpools.

In addition to operating on revenue from its passengers, CalVans has been able to generate additional Federal 5307 funds for many of the cities its vanpool travel to or from. This is possible because, as a public transit agency, CalVans is able to report all transportation data into the National Transit Database system. Information in this system is used to apportion Federal funds to cities with public transit systems providing service to the public. Transit services being reported include the number of passengers, how far they traveled and how long they spent traveling. This information is reported for all transit modes, including vanpools provided by a public transit agency. CalVans presently reports this information for 27 cities that its vanpools travel to or from.

The following shows the growth in Federal funds generated over the past three year:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>FY 12-13</u>	<u>FY 11-12</u>	<u>FY 10-11</u>
Fresno Area Express	\$903,637	\$557,000	0
Visalia City Coach	407,604	0	0
Bakersfield GET	80,138	0	0
Kings Area Rural Transit	868,560	593,046	604,000
Madera Transit	347,424	0	0
Porterville Transit	<u>173,712</u>	<u>395,364</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	\$2,781,075	\$1,545,410	\$604,000

This year's apportionment came close to doubling last year's apportionment which doubled the portion before. This growth in funds will continue as the number of vans and cities eligible for vanpool revenue increase.

The gathering of information for NTD purposes also gives the agency the ability to sort and report passenger information by County. This is important, as it give each the county data that it

can then report to CARB (California Air Resources Board) in its effort to meet the green house gas reduction mandated by AB32. The following show what was reported for FY 11/12 for several counties:

County	Passengers	Miles	Pass Lane Miles
Fresno	475,371	2,350,598	19,995,972
Tulare	435,893	2,071,857	15,797,548
Kings	307,185	1,643,521	10,854,598
Kern	106,711	487,683	4,773,692
Monterey	117,033	389,749	3,982,283

CalVans vanpools traveled 7.7 million miles providing, 1.6 million trips, resulting in a VMT (Vehicle Miles Traveled) reduction of 63 million miles. Put into Green House Gas equivalents, that is an annual reduction of 27 thousand tons of GHG.

All grant funding targeted at the farmworker vanpool ended in June of 2011. Since that time all operational costs have become the responsibility of those using the vanpools. With its first full year of operation behind it, CalVans has been successful in meeting its 7.5 million dollar budget from revenue collected from those that use the vanpools. This ability insures the long-term viability of the program.

What started out as funding from individual farmworkers has evolved as the project has grown and become accepted by growers whose workers use the system. Because each vanpool is a public transit vehicle Growers are able to provide their workers with vouchers that cover the workers cost of riding in the vanpool. Presently over 900 farmworkers receive vouchers from their employers that pay for all or part of their daily cost. Growers state they are doing this to insure they have enough workers and to insure workers will remain with them through out the harvest period. A number of growers have taken advantage of the program to move their operation from the Salinas Valley to the Yuma and Imperial areas for the winter season, insuring the workers can make the move as well and that new workers can be secured.

What started with one vanpool for a State employee has grown to one providing over 450 vanpools serving State and federal workers as well as teachers, students and farm workers. Those using the vanpools determine when and where they go each day, for farmworkers this may change as the seasons and crops change. As a public transit agency, CalVans insures that over 5,000 workers get to and from work each day in a safe and affordable way.

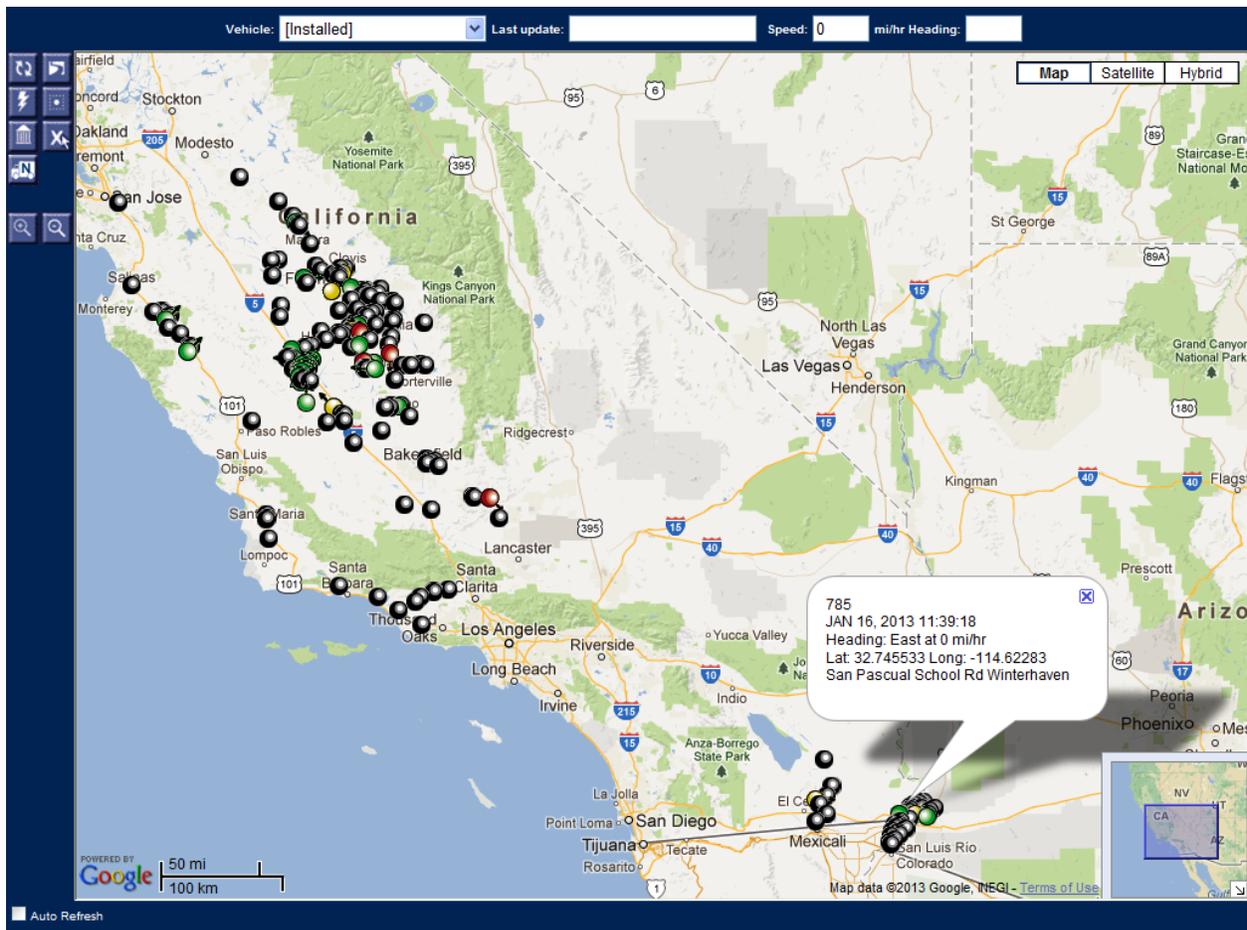
The program has always provided farmworkers to travel where they wanted to seek work. Over the past two years this ability has been expanded, providing residents and employers the ability to move their entire operation from the Salinas Valley to the Yuma/Imperial area for the winter months when crops are not grown in the Salinas valley. Presently 76 vanpool groups are working in the Yuma/Imperial area, with employers providing vouchers that cover the riders weekly cost of using the vanpool.

CalVans faces the challenge of being one of the few public transit agencies advocating for the use of public vanpools as means of getting people to work. Inquires frequently come from in and outside of California on how the program might be enlarged or duplicated to insure individuals

in other areas to receive the same benefits of a safe and insured ride. Unlike private vanpool operators, CalVans simply requires a valid license and a clean driving record to start a vanpool. Credit and/or Background checks are not required. Vanpool drivers are also not required give a 30 notice before turning in their vanpool; billing is stopped when the van is no longer being used.

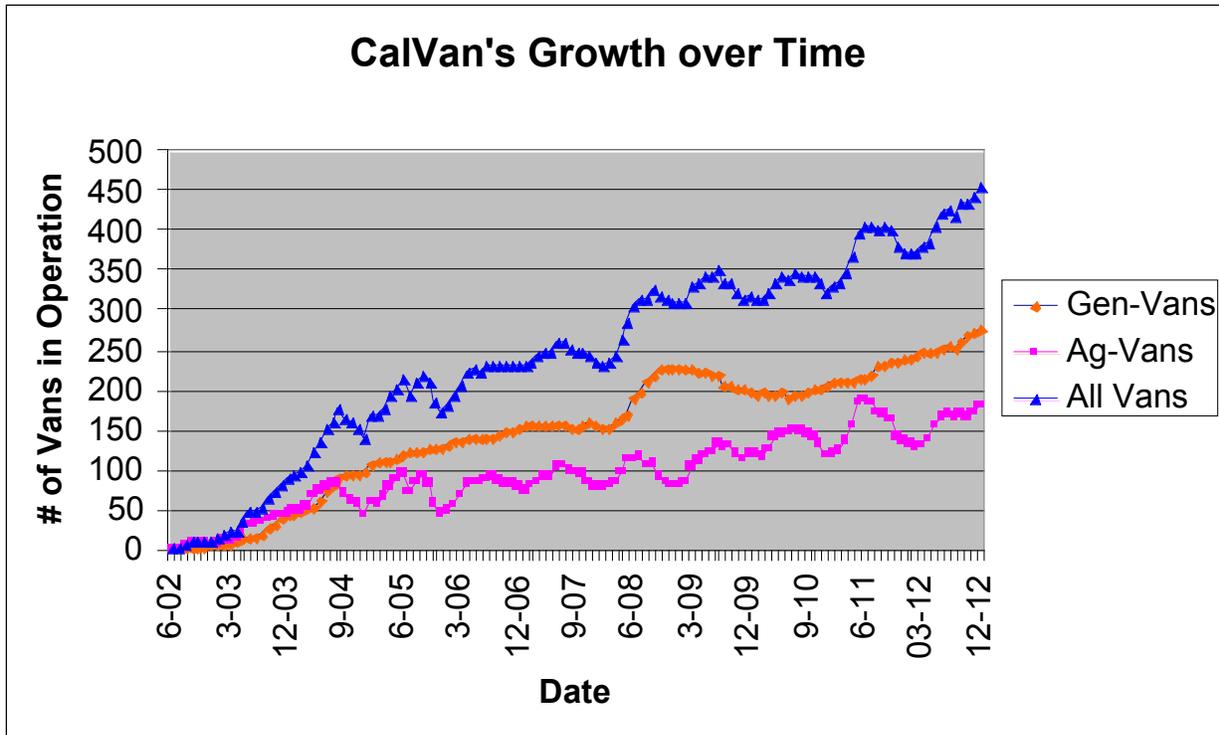
CalVans Staff works closely with each of its member agencies to address local issues. This includes working with Caltrans, CHP, and the Federal Department of Labor. Besides promoting the program, Staff works to address issues raised by other agencies or organizations that might threaten the program. The threats come from agencies that do not understand how the program works and argue that it violates some law or statute, as well as private companies that argue the program is in unfair competition with the vanpool program. In all cases Staff has been able to address issues such as these, but they still continue.

CalVans Staff have established a cloud based system for tracking drivers and vans. This system allows full time monitoring of who is driving a vehicle and where. It also allows for real-time reporting that supports maintenance of the vans as well as providing the ability to send bills to each driver using the on-board GPS system. The system also incorporated phone and messaging capabilities for communicating with or between each vanpool. The following shows the vehicle location for January 16, 2013:



The CalVans program provides support to its 10 members representing 17 counties. Beyond these boundaries there is a need for similar service for farmworkers of other counties. CalVans is a resource but is limited by the fact that its revenue come from those who presently use the program. Using these funds for activities outside the area would be a disservice to those who use the program as it would result in them paying more than they need to for the service they receive. CalVans continually seeks to coordinate with others in its outreach effort so as not to impact those that rely on its service.

The following graph illustrated the growth of the overall program over the past 10 years.



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