



**California Vanpool Authority** –Moving California residents who continue to search for a safe, reliable and affordable means of getting to work.

CalVans (California Vanpool Authority) is celebrating its fifth anniversary this year. It has been 16 years since its predecessor KCAPTA (Kings County Area Public Transit Agency) established its vanpool program in Kings County. It has also been five years since the vanpool program was formally established as CalVans. 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 10.6 million dollar operation, self-funded from its users with a safety record that's being used as a model by other agencies.

**Background:**

The CalVans Joint Powers Agency was formally established in January 2012 as a public transit agency with board members representing each of the following 10 agencies:

- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments
- Fresno Council of Governments
- Imperial Valley Association of Governments
- Kern Council of Governments
- Kings County Association of Governments
- Madera County Transportation Commission
- Merced County Association of Governments
- Riverside County Transportation Commission
- San Joaquin Council of Governments
- Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
- Tulare County Association of Governments
- Ventura County Transportation Commission

From its inception, the vanpool program has had to operate on revenue collected from the passengers or grant funds provided to get the farmworker project up and running. Today, the \$8 million annual cost of the program is collected from those using the vanpools. General vanpool riders pay monthly, while the agricultural vanpools are billed weekly.

**Benefits from the Reporting of CalVans Data:**

As a public agency, CalVans is part of a county's public transit fleet, operating alongside route buses and Dial-A-Ride vehicles. The biggest difference is that the volunteer drivers determine their routes on a daily basis. CalVans staff matches prospective riders with empty seats on vans. Each vanpool is basically a commuter vehicle connecting workers to their place of employment.

The relationship of vanpool trips between counties is why vanpools are such an important tool in an agency's toolbox. Fixed-route buses generally stop at the county line. Vanpools, more often than not, cross these lines in the course of their daily trip to work. Most vanpool riders are traveling to worksites outside the county. Many are state employees traveling to one of the valley's prisons. The path taken by farmworkers varies based on the season and crop.

Passenger data is gathered and reported to generate additional Federal 5307 funds for many of the cities vanpools travel to or from. These funds are used to fund local transit operations and reduce the need to use local LTF funds. The following shows the federal funds generated for FY 16-17 by reporting that occurred in FY 13/14:

Transit Agency	City	Total Contributions	FY 16/17
FAX (Fresno Area Express)	Fresno	11,946,429	2,620,724
VCC (Visalia City Coach)	Visalia	5,592,047	1,537,717
KART (Kings Area Rural Transit)	Hanford	5,136,231	920,905
Porterville Transit	Porterville	1,708,070	368,362
MST (Monterey Salinas Transit)	Salinas	1,312,243	552,543
GET (Golden Empire Transit)	Bakersfield	1,310,024	396,953
Paso Robles (Paso Express)	Paso Robles	938,630	368,362
Imperial Valley Transit	El Centro	936,658	368,362
SMAT (Santa Maria Area Transit)	Santa Maria	747,226	368,362
YCAT (Yuma County Area Transit)	Yuma	747,226	368,362
Delano Area Rapid Transit (DART)	Delano	368,362	368,362
Madera Area Express (MAX)	Madera	368,362	368,362
		31,111,508	8,607,376

The \$8,607,376 indirectly impacts several County agencies. The Federal funds help pay for local transit operations and thereby freeing up Local Transit Funds (LTF) that would have otherwise been used to fund local transit.

The following information is for the regions served by CalVans. It shows the steady growth in the program and corresponding increase in the passenger lane miles traveled. This is the information used to generate additional 5307 funding for a particular area. Funds will continue to grow as larger passenger numbers are reported. The overall system has grown by 214% over the last 6 years.

Year	Passengers	Miles	Pass Lane Miles	% Change
16-17	2,665,582	10,724,056	113,160,824	4%
15-16	2,375,116	10,385,307	108,933,735	16%
14-15	2,154,084	9,351,236	93,729,888	16%
13-14	1,860,306	9,131,057	80,573,515	4%
12-13	1,983,353	9,079,827	77,218,081	18%
11-12	1,678,892	8,020,603	65,545,721	23%
10-11	1,327,580	6,505,492	53,126,044	

The gathering of information for NTD (National Transit Database) purposes also gives the agency the ability to sort and report passenger information by county. This is important, as it gives each member agency the ability report to CARB (California Air Resources Board) in its effort to meet the green house gas reduction mandated by AB32.

CalVans vanpools traveled 10.7 million miles, providing 2.7 million trips, resulting in a VMT (Vehicle Miles Traveled) reduction of 113 million miles. The net Green House Gas (CO<sub>2</sub>e) reduction due to vanpool services in FY 16/17 was 52,531; this is shown broken down by county of origination below:

County	Passengers	Van Miles driven	Passenger Lane Miles	Net GHG Reductions
Fresno	627,919	2,535,512	27,866,437	12,621
Imperial	175,385	714,900	9,010,726	4,168
Kern	164,844	720,018	6,822,704	3,008
Kings	351,194	1,516,935	13,255,349	5,754
Madera	45,079	264,375	3,359,635	1,704
Merced	8,887	39,554	301,892	140
Monterey	432,047	1,454,760	16,838,862	8,431
Riverside	6,723	25,106	212,411	88
San Joaquin	3,132	19,308	239,361	119
San Luis Obispo	34,561	210,970	2,406,954	1,180
Santa Barbara	92,354	221,826	2,545,693	1,249
Stanislaus	4,259	14,346	165,766	80
Tulare	490,469	2,161,996	20,191,011	9,240
Ventura	108,871	444,907	5,482,675	2,626
Yuma	<u>119,858</u>	<u>379,543</u>	<u>4,461,348</u>	<u>2,123</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,665,582</b>	<b>10,724,056</b>	<b>113,160,824</b>	<b>52,531</b>

The reduction in miles traveled has a large indirect impact on the community and those using the program. Riders using the program have greater discretionary income that they can then spend in the communities on things they would not otherwise have purchased. Instead of paying for a vehicle, tires, service, and fuel, they have money to spend on food, clothing, and recreation. The savings for those using CalVans is as shown below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Savings for all Riders*	\$62.2 million,

\*AAA 2015 cost per mile for medium sedan @ 57.1 cents times 108.9 million miles traveled.

### **Agricultural Worker Focus:**

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. Over 1,200 farmworkers now receive vouchers from their employers that pay for all or part of their daily cost. For FY 16/17 this will represent a \$5 million investment by employers and a \$5 million savings by the riders. Growers state they are doing this to ensure they have enough workers, and to ensure workers will remain with them throughout the harvest period. Vouchers are a large benefit for agricultural workers. A worker receiving \$45 per week in vouchers will end up saving close to \$200 a month, or \$2,000 a year. For someone who makes \$30,000 a year, this results in a substantial tax free savings.

The program has always provided farmworkers the ability to travel to where the work is. Over the past four 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 San Joaquin or Salinas Valley. Approximately 170 vanpool groups now move between Salinas Valley and the Yuma/Imperial area on a yearly basis, with employers providing vouchers that cover the riders' weekly cost of using the vanpool.

### **Promotion of the Public Vanpool Model:**

CalVans faces the challenge of being one of the few public transit agencies advocating for the use of public vanpools as a means of getting people to work. Inquiries frequently come from in and outside of California on how the program might be enlarged or duplicated to ensure individuals in other areas of receiving the same benefits of a safe and insured ride. Unlike private vanpool operators, CalVans simply requires a valid drivers license and a clean driving record to start a vanpool. Credit and/or background checks are not required. Vanpool drivers are also not required to give a 30-day 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 laws or statutes, as well as private companies that argue the program is in unfair competition with their vanpool program. In all cases, staff has been able to address issues such as these, but they still continue.

### **Ensuring a Quality Program:**

All drivers must meet the following requirements:

- Class C license
- Class B Physical
- Have 2 or less points on their driving record
- Be at least 25 years of age.

Once enrolled in the program they are added to the California DMV Pull Notice program which monitors the drivers driving record, alerting CalVans if anything changes on the driver's record. Drivers are required to log in to the vehicle before starting it. They are then tracked using the agencies GPS system that monitors where and how fast the driver is driving. Drivers are dropped from the program if their driving record no longer meets the above criteria or they are recorded traveling in an unsafe manner.

All routine servicing of vehicles is done at the workplace or at the driver's home. Vehicles are only brought in if they need repair such as tire or brake replacement. CalVans has employees on call 24/7 to respond to vehicle issues in the field, providing a replacement vehicle if necessary.

CalVans also provides a 10 million dollar insurance policy through Philadelphia Insurance Companies.

### **Managing Program:**

CalVans manages the program out of its Hanford office, with satellite offices in El Centro, Ventura, and Greenfield in Salinas Valley. Staff uses 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.

For additional information or questions, contact:

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