

**San Joaquin Valley
Express Transit Study**

**Service Recommendations
May, 2009**

Nelson | Nygaard
consulting associates

Purpose of study

- To develop recommendations for inter-county commuter-express transportation service within the San Joaquin Valley region, and between the San Joaquin Valley and its neighbors.

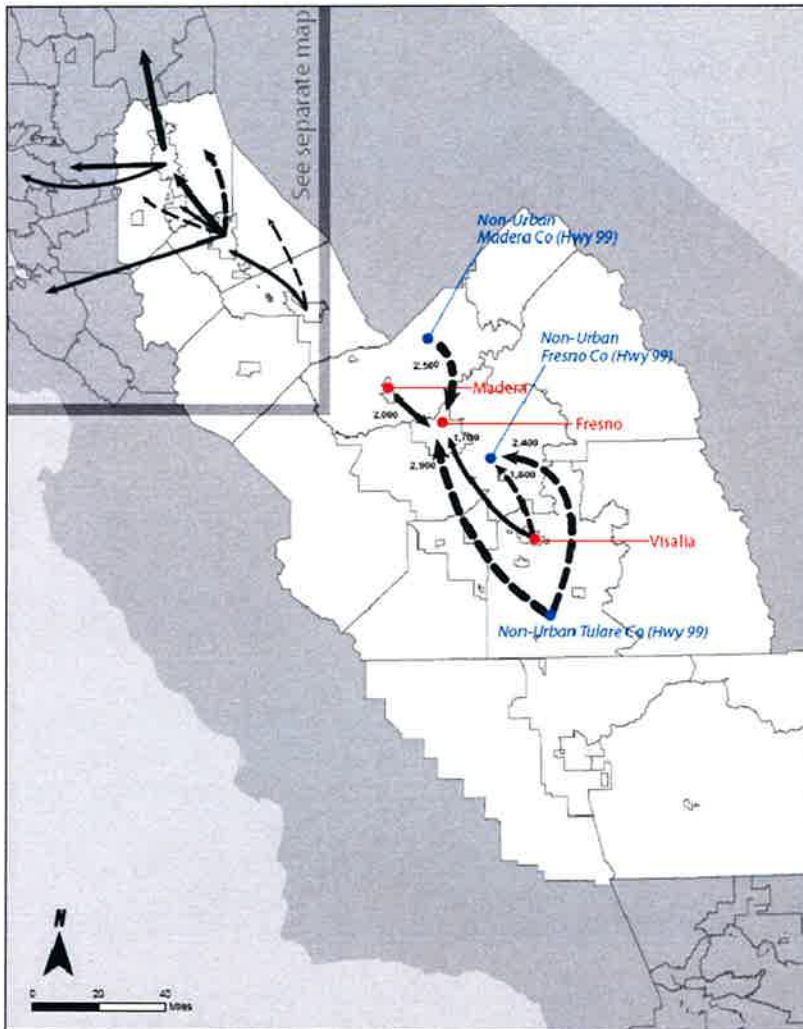


Study parts

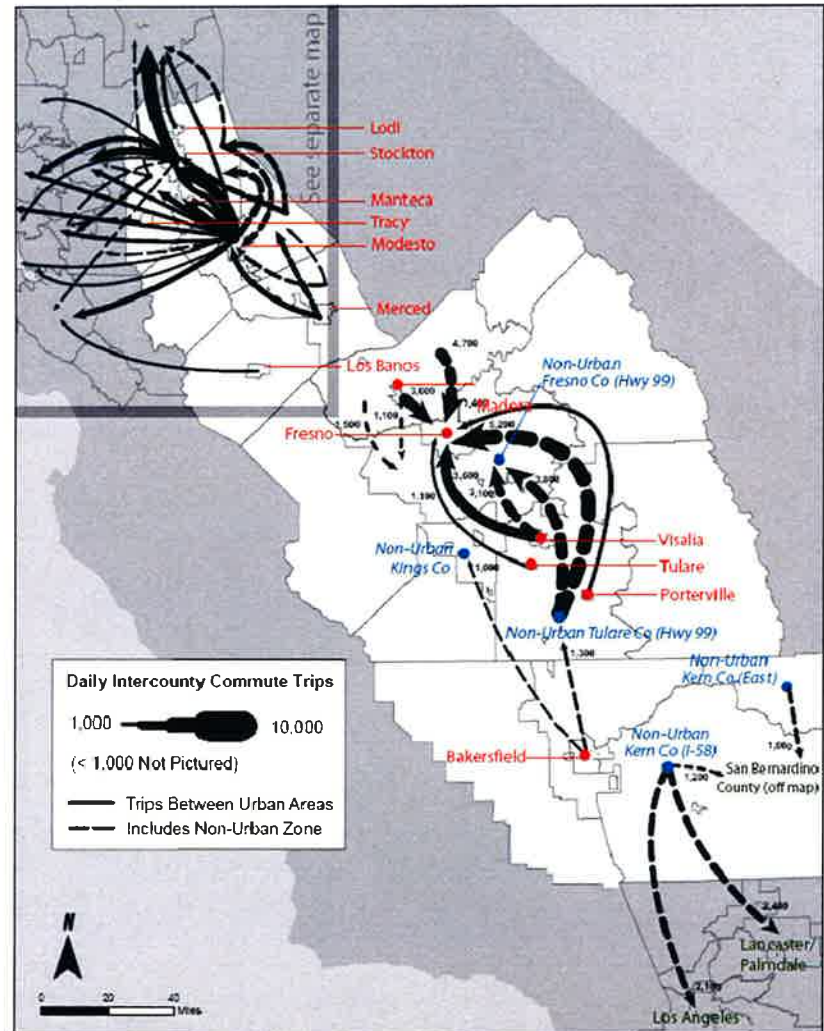
1. Existing Transit Conditions
2. Peer Review
3. Transit Operator / Major Employer Interviews
4. Travel Demand Analysis
5. Develop service and facility strategies and costs
6. Recommend operating and institutional plan

Inter-County Commute Travel Demand

2000 Commute Trips (Location-to-Location)



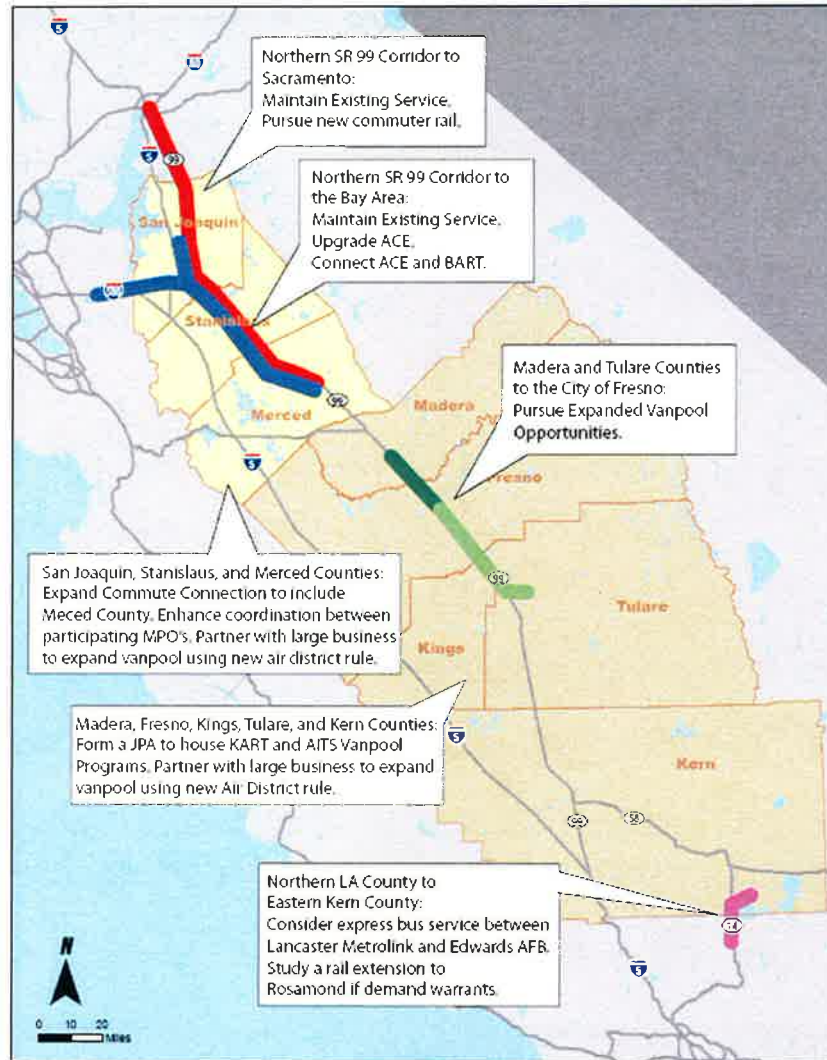
2030 Projected Intercounty Commute Trips (Location-to-Location)



Service Models

Model	Strengths	Limitations
Ridesharing/ Vanpool	High cost recovery ratio; User-operated.	Need numerous riders from same destination; capacity limited.
Subscription Bus	Service scaled to demand.	Provides riders with limited flexibility.
Express Bus	Flexible – very targeted to very robust. Moderate capital investment.	Subject to roadway congestion. First and last mile challenges.
Rail	Very high capacity. Avoids roadway congestion. TOD opportunities.	High capital investment, long planning horizon. First and last mile challenges.

Service Recommendations by Corridor



Service Recommendations: Ridesharing

Continue with plans to form a Joint Powers Authority in the southern portion of the Valley to operate KART and AITS Vanpool.

Partnership between Kings, Madera, Fresno, Tulare and Kern county MPO's.

Share the administrative burden of the program, manage costs, encourage cohesive planning.

Would take on other ridesharing functions, including South Valley Rideshare web site.

Should also administer the Guaranteed Ride Home program described later.



Service Recommendations: Ridesharing

Expand Commute Connection's service area to include Merced County, and enhance coordination between the participating MPO's.

Meet to discuss adjustments to program structure and governance during fiscal year 2009-2010.

Commute Connection should consider a pilot test of lease-purchasing vanpool vehicles.



Service Recommendations: Ridesharing

Prioritize Vanpooling to Fresno

Instead of new fixed-route transit, the region should prioritize the promotion and availability of vanpool opportunities for inter-county commuters traveling to the City of Fresno.

Seek to market the program more aggressively through employers in the City of Fresno.

Seek to make more park-and-ride facilities available in Tulare and Madera Counties.



Service Recommendations: Ridesharing

Provide a single Valley-wide ride-matching and vanpool website.

Employers, counties, and council's of government throughout the Valley could link to this common web site,

We site could be jointly managed by the two regional ridesharing entities.

The region could consider creating a combined ride-matching database.



Service Recommendations: Ridesharing

Invest in more marketing of Vanpool to choice riders

Market directly to employers.

Add signage at park-and-ride facilities.

Add billboard advertising on freeways.

Add signage on vehicles.



Your single source for all your transportation needs throughout
Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and Kern Counties.

SOUTH VALLEY
RIDESHARE.COM
YOUR COMMUTER RESOURCE CENTER

The advertisement features a central image of a white car on a road. To the right, there are three smaller inset images: a driver in a car, a blue and white bus, and a person sitting in a car seat. The text is overlaid on a green and white background.

Service Recommendations: Ridesharing

Expand park-and-ride opportunities

Vanpool programs should work to develop a coordinated strategy to negotiate for expanded rights to park-and-ride access to underutilized business parking lots.

These agreements, if necessary, should use program funds to compensate parking lot owners for facility wear-and-tear.

It may be particularly fruitful to seek shared parking agreements with businesses that have peak parking demand outside of normal commute hours, such as restaurants and movie theatres.



Service Recommendations: Ridesharing

Offer Guaranteed Ride Home throughout the Valley

Expand Commute Connection GRH to include Merced County.

Add GRH as a service of the regional vanpool entity being created in the southern counties of the region.

GRH should be part of the trip reduction program offered to large employers under the Air District's new trip reduction rule.



Service Recommendations: Ridesharing

Seek to influence the development of the new Air District trip reduction rule, so that it can fund and promote ridesharing to large employers.

Work with the Air District to create a robust trip reduction rule that recognizes the role of ridesharing agencies.

Create a regional program to meet trip reduction goals.

Provide large employers with a coherent program of marketing, ride-matching, subsidized vanpools, and other services.

Seek employer contributions to pay for the program.



Service Recommendations: Express bus

Maintain existing inter-county commuter service.

In an extremely challenging funding environment, the primary goal should be to maintain the existing level of inter-county bus service

Seek to maintain present levels of service on Modesto MAX ACE and BART services, East Kern Express, and YARTS.

Enhance San Joaquin Regional Transit District subscription routes to Sacramento and the SF Bay Area as funding becomes available.



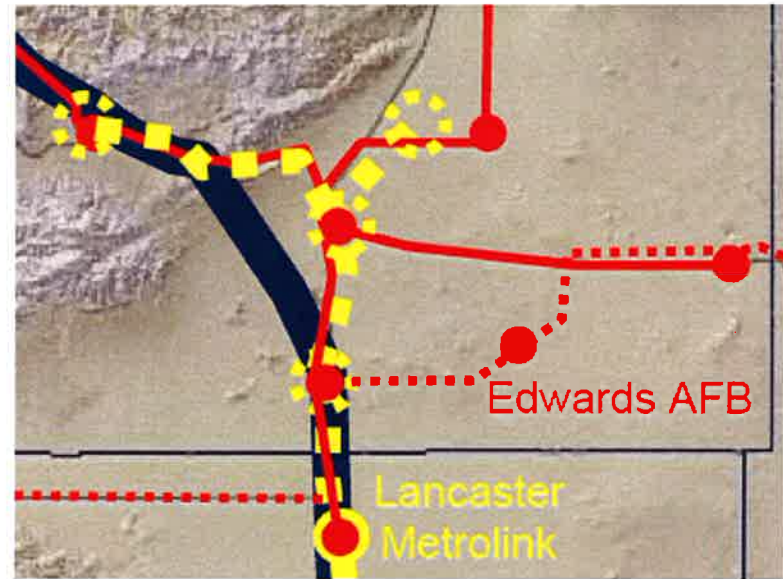
Service Recommendations: Express bus

Study express bus service between Lancaster Metrolink and Edwards Air Force Base.

Study one-way, peak-oriented express bus service from the Lancaster Metrolink Station to Edwards Air Force Base.

Explore a partnership between Kern County, Los Angeles County, and the base.

Should there be a very high level of demand, the operator could then study the feasibility of adding rail service in part of the corridor.



Recommendations: Commuter Rail

Develop a coordinated regional advocacy plan for enhanced state and federal investments in commuter rail.

Work in a coordinated fashion to lobby for funding to carry out rail improvements. Look to replicate the successes of the Altamont Partnership.



Recommendations: Commuter Rail

Work as a unified Valley to upgrade ACE.

In 2008, the Altamont Partnership created a prioritized list of possible capital improvements that could benefit ACE service.

The region should work to ensure that the ACE's capacity increases with demand.



Recommendations: Commuter Rail

Work as a unified Valley for a direct ACE/BART connection.

There is currently a one-mile gap between the terminal BART station in Dublin-Pleasanton and the ACE station in Livermore.

BART is currently undertaking environmental review for an extension to Livermore that would provide a direct ACE/BART transfer point. The San Joaquin Valley should be involved in supporting and influencing this process.



Recommendations: Commuter Rail

Work toward expansion of commuter rail service between Merced and Sacramento.

The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commissions (SJRRRC) is currently studying rail service in this corridor (among others) in the region in its “SJRRRC Service Expansion Analysis”.

Would require significant up-front capital investment. (Perhaps \$75 million between Stockton and Sacramento and could range as high as \$200 million from Merced to Stockton.) Such high capital costs certainly require the participation of state and federal funding.



Recommendations: Commuter Rail

Invest in great station area planning.

San Joaquin Valley communities should invest in comprehensive station area planning to achieve a balance of station access modes

Land-use regulations for the surrounding walk sheds can be tailored to allow moderate residential density and a mix of uses.

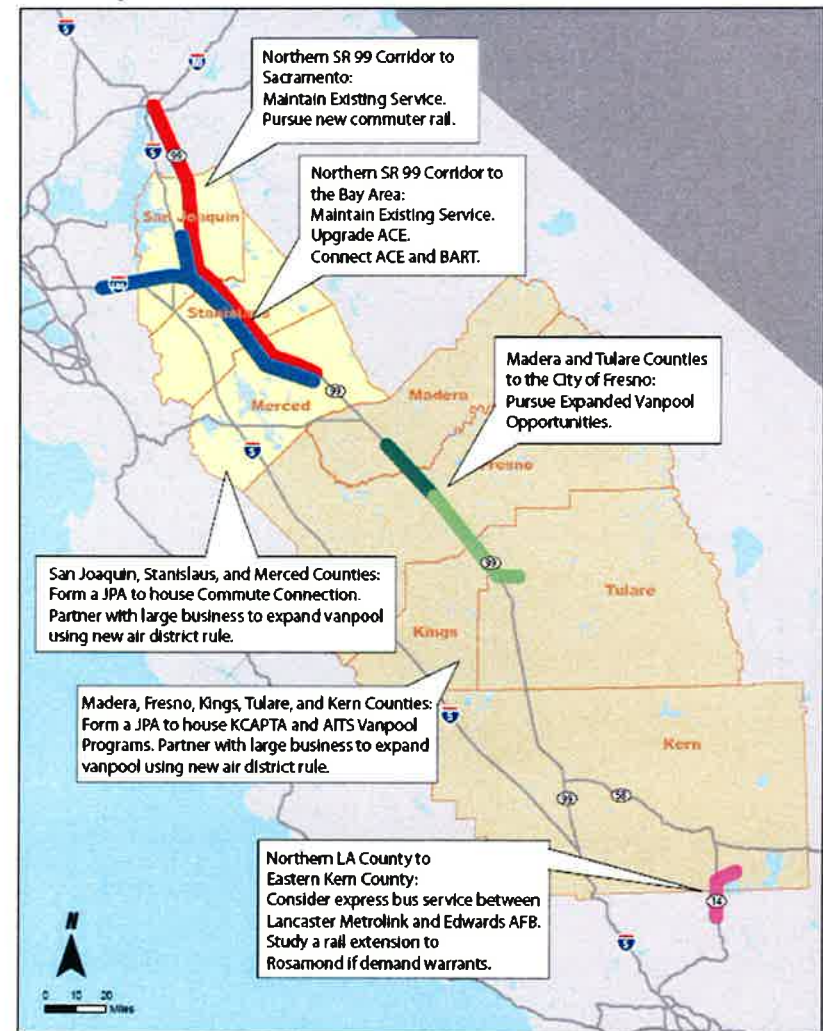
Ensure sufficient feeder transit service connectivity to rail stations.

MPO's should dedicate funds to ensure adequate resources for comprehensive station area plans. Consider investing in station area planning grant program, with minimum residential densities required.



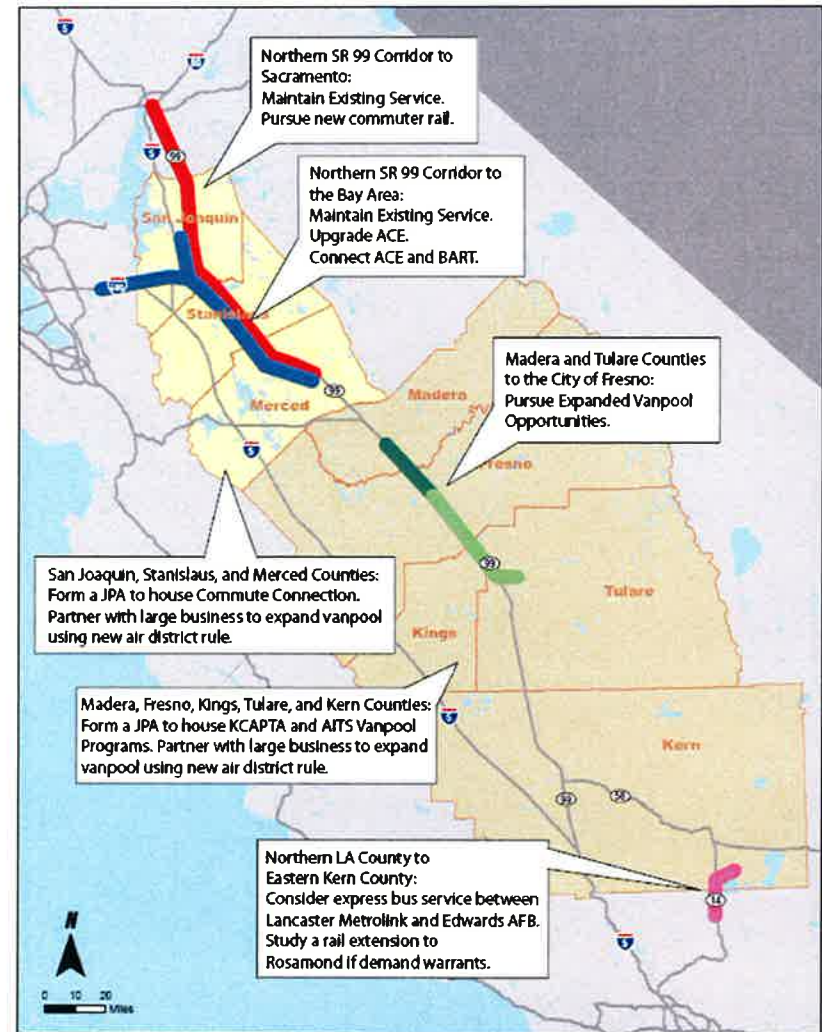
Summary of Recommendations

1. The region's focus should be on expanding vanpool offerings in both the northern and southern parts of the Valley. New Air District rule offers the opportunity for growth.
2. The region's existing inter-regional bus offerings match the highest demand corridors. The priority should be to maintain these services to the extent possible.
3. As funding becomes available, The region should consider expanding subscription bus service from Stockton to Sacramento and the Bay Area.



Summary of Recommendations

4. The region should also consider implementing bus service between Lancaster Metrolink station and Edwards Air Force Base in Eastern Kern County.
5. The region should lobby for state and federal funds to upgrade the speed, capacity, and reliability of ACE, and to add a similar service between Sacramento and Stockton (and perhaps as far south as Merced).
6. To the extent possible, all passenger rail investments should seek to capitalize on California High Speed Rail investments.





San Joaquin Valley Express Transit Study

Bonnie Nelson, President
(415) 284-1544
bnelson@nelsonnygaard.com

Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates

Mobility | Accessibility | Sustainability

Nelson | Nygaard
consulting associates