



FCRTA Fresno County
Rural Transit Agency

California Transportation Commission Transportation Policy Forum: Panel 2 “Evolving Challenges to Transit in California”

July 29th, 2019

Fresno County Rural Transit Agency

Moses Stites

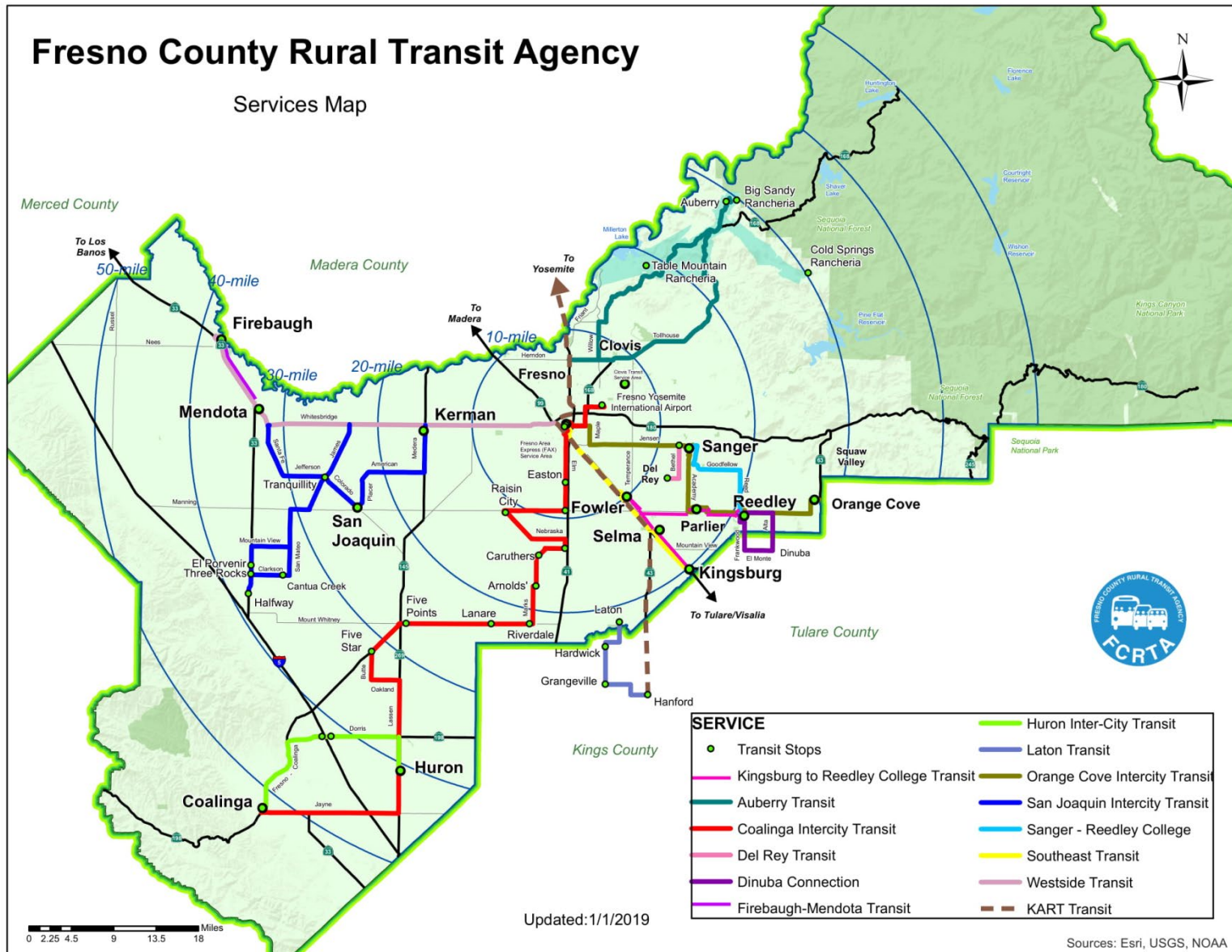
General Manager



FCRTA Service Area

Fresno County Rural Transit Agency

Services Map



FCRTA Services

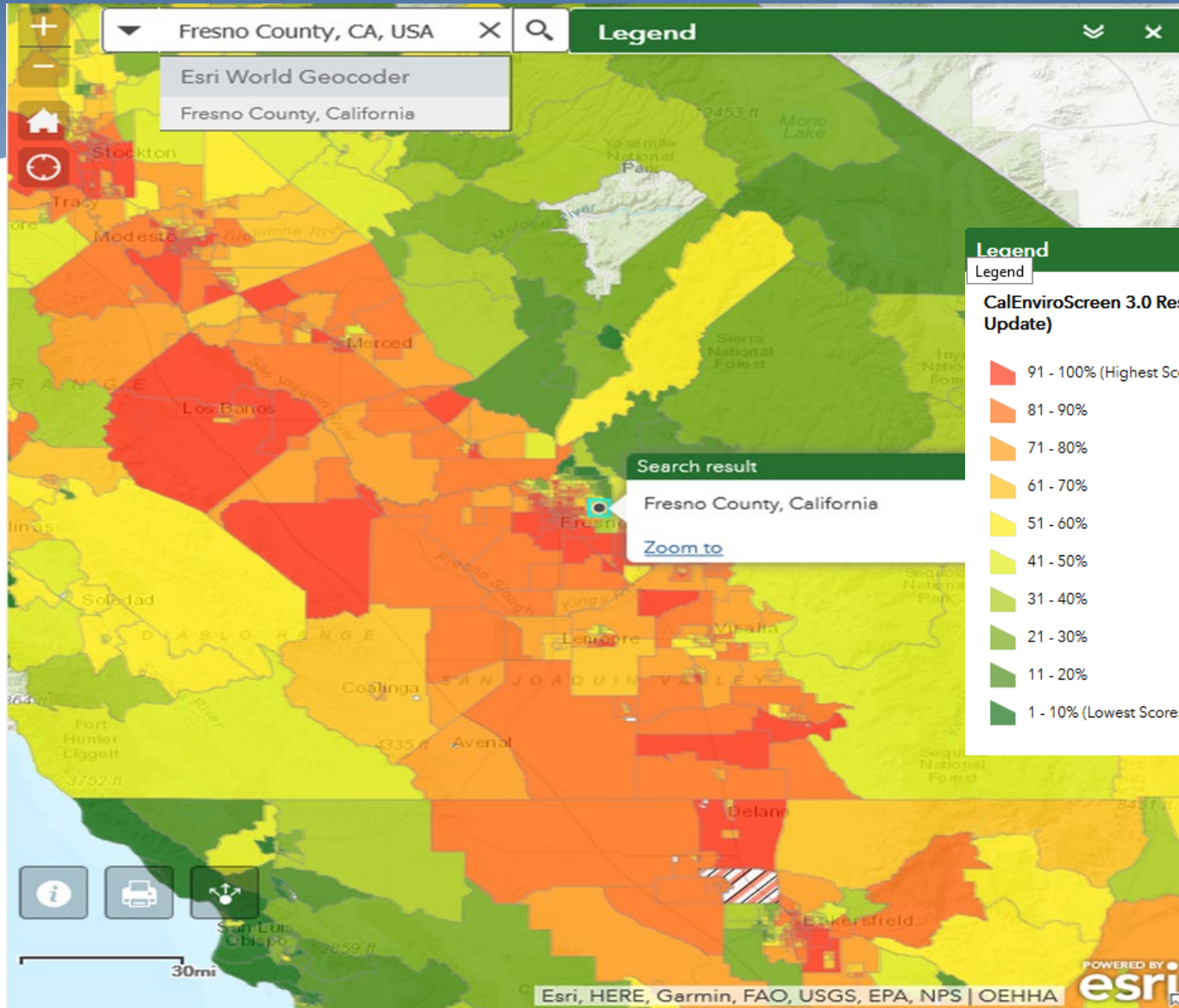
- * FCRTA drives great distances to service Fresno County's rural communities (Fresno to Coalinga is approximately 62 miles one way)
- * Serving 13 incorporated and 29 unincorporated communities in Fresno County
- * Fixed route (inter-city) service & demand response (intra-city) service
- * Rural Transit and Shuttle Transit (24 hr advance reservation providing lifeline services) for residents outside the SOI of each incorporated City
- * Also (2) inter-county routes with City of Dinuba and KART
- * FCRTA services have remained very personal- addressing the transit needs of the disadvantaged

FCRTA FY 2018

- * 949,866 total miles
- * 377,397 total passengers
- * Cost: \$4,933,077
- * 12.01% Farebox recovery (10% mandated)
- * Ridership is declining overall (Statewide & Nationally)



CalEnviroScreen 3.0



Rural Disadvantaged Communities

- * All FCRTA's service areas are located in a DAC
- * Rural disadvantaged communities lack shared mobility and TNC options (due to limited availability and costs)
- * Many of these areas do not have adequate or ample medical facilities, courts and other life line services that require inter-city travel by transit dependent individuals into the larger urban cities for these much needed services.
- * **Public and private partnerships need to be encouraged with incentives to be cost effective and efficient with demonstration projects deployed to foster replication statewide**

FCRTA Current Fleet

- * Vehicle fleet of one hundred and ten (110) vehicles
- * Forty-four (44) are powered by CNG
- * Twenty-three (23) are powered by electric batteries
- * FCRTA does not operate any diesel powered vehicles
- * Goal of 2025 to have 100% EV fleet



CNG



CNG



EV



EV

Operating A Zero Emission Bus

- * An FCRTA transit route is specifically selected to be used with a ZEV (due to the high mileage of rural transit routes)
- * Drivers are required to take an EV training course before operating vehicles- FCRTA developed a how to guide to drive an EV
- * Infrastructure must be in place to allow charging in other cities where the vehicles are stored



FCRTA Solar EV Charging Stations



Charging Infrastructure & Installation

- * FCRTA placed EV Envision ARCs at all 13 rural incorporated cities throughout Fresno County
- * Two (2) EV Solar Trees will be installed in the Cities of Orange Cove and Coalinga (2 express routes will be starting at each City with service to Fresno)
- * Level 2 & 3 chargers were installed at temporary maintenance site to charge EV fleet
- * Installation for chargers was costly and time consuming
- * Infrastructure analysis will establish grid conditions for future EV deployment



Grid Analysis Planning Project

- * FCRTA was awarded \$515,800 from the Caltrans Sustainable Communities Planning Grant for a project that will analyze the current grid system in rural Fresno County
- * This study will tell us the current capacity of the grid system, upgrades that are needed to support electric vehicle infrastructure and identify possible funding options available
- * This grid analysis study will prepare us for what will be needed based on current deficiencies in the grid systems in each county
- * **Cost of electricity for a 100% EV fleet is unknown and working with utilities will be needed to offer waivers and/or exemption to peak rates for public transit operators**

Alternative Rural Transit Services Project

- * FCRTA was awarded \$160,000 through FCOG (local MPO) Sustainable Planning Grant for a study to create alternative rural transit services using electric vehicles to increase ridership and accommodate transit needs of the rural disadvantaged communities
- * Project will help address mobility gaps in rural disadvantaged communities
- * **Allowing transit operators to receive additional funding/resources similar to population formulas that are based on county square miles would allow additional funds and offset operating costs for alternative mobility projects**



Chevy Bolt

Challenges to Transit

- * Costs to implement, operate and maintain EV's are unknown at this time and are more critical for small to medium size operators due to limited resources.
- * No uniform platform on addressing EV's into mainstream fleets. This goes for pre-planning and post operational implementation on lessons learned and pertinent take aways from the experience whether positive or negative.
- * Lack of uniformity due to proprietary control by each vendor on key components of EV's and chargers to make your equipment compatible with competitors in the transit industry. This could contribute to higher costs versus being more efficient and cost effective?
- * Costs to provide actual route services due to poverty rates, socio economic factors, increase in fuel prices and the higher unemployment rates due to seasonal farm labor and or non-livable wages for transit dependent riders.

Transit Decline in Ridership

- * Overall drop in seniors by 7.15%, disabled by 5.28% and general public by 2.14%.
- * Increasing costs passed on to transit dependent riders (No choice riders in rural areas).
- * Health care providers doing their own clinic transportation due to increasing insurance costs and or limited reimbursement rates.
- * Transit providers are unable to build the transit system/routes to meet the needs of rural riders-so they find alternative ways to get to their destination.
- * The long distances which equals long trip times in rural areas take a toll on the elderly and disabled.

Promote Transit Ridership While Balancing Economic & Environmental Goals

- * The right partnerships with colleges, clinics and social service agencies, collaboration with agencies to provide discounted monthly passes.
- * Conduct an inventory of services available in your respective service area.
- * Review federal and state (TDA & STA) regulations as to how they impact your service levels if applicable.
- * Implement non-traditional mobility on demand transit services to improve the lives of all transit riders.

3 Policy Recommendations:

- 1.) Encourage non-traditional mobility modes in rural areas due to the lack of available private providers due to the socioeconomic conditions in the majority of counties that have the most DAC's (Disadvantaged Communities). Many counties do not have adequate or ample medical facilities, courts and other life line services that require inter-city travel by transit dependent individuals into the larger urban cities for these much needed services. Private Public partnerships need to be encouraged with incentives to be cost effective and efficient with demonstration projects deployed to foster replication statewide. An exemption to the 10% farebox requirement for "transit on demand" modes in rural areas.
- 2.) Promote investment in large scale infra structure analysis of existing conditions and needed mitigation measures for future EV (electric vehicle) capital projects as mandated by CARB. This analysis will prepare for what will be needed based on current deficiencies in the grid systems within each county. Additionally, work with the CPUC and PG&E (or applicable utility provider) to actively offer waivers during peak charging times for public transit operators in DAC's.
- 3.) Modify and or amend state statute to allow rural transit operators to receive additional resources similar to population based formulas for urbanized areas (cities) that are based on county square miles, road miles and or annual route miles. This would allow for funds being allocated to rural transit agencies within each county to offset unknown increasing operating costs associated with VMT (vehicle miles traveled) for EV transit vehicles and significant infra structure improvements.

Thank you



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