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August 15, 2016

Honorable Board of Directors
Marin County Transit District
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

SUBJECT: East San Rafael Transportation Study Results

board of directors

Dear Board Members:

kathrin sears
president
supervisor district 3

katie rice
vice president
supervisor district 2

stephanie moulton-peters
2nd vice president
city of mill valley

judy arnold
director
supervisor district 5

maribeth bushey
director
city of san rafael

damon connolly
director
supervisor district 1

steve kinsey
director
supervisor district 4

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion only.

BACKGROUND: In July 2015, your Board adopted a ten-year Short Range Transit Plan (S RTP) that outlined service and financial projections for the Transit District from 2016 through 2025. The plan includes a fiscally constrained transit service expansion package that was largely implemented on June 12, 2016. In addition to a fiscally constrained service expansion, the plan included a summary of unfunded service needs. These were developed based on rider and stakeholder input, previous planning studies, observed changes in transportation market conditions, and changes in Marin County demographics. The unfunded service needs are documented in Appendix C of the plan.

Included in the unfunded needs was consideration of a shuttle expansion project to East San Rafael. For the purposes of this assessment, East San Rafael is loosely defined as the area east of Downtown San Rafael, north of the Canal, and south of Santa Venetia. Attachment A shows these extents. Access to this neighborhood is provided primarily by Point San Pedro Road, which becomes 2nd and 3rd Streets closer to Downtown. The closest fixed route transit stop is located across from the Montecito Shopping Center, adjacent to Whole Foods, with Routes 233 and 257 operating every 30 minutes.

This area of the county includes some of the most developed residential areas that do not have convenient access to public transit services. The stop adjacent to Whole Foods is nearly four miles away from residents living on the easternmost areas of Point San Pedro Road.

While bus routes served this area in the past, these were cancelled over ten years ago due to low ridership. Prior to that time, Golden

Gate Transit operated Routes 31, 32, and 132. Route 31 was a ferry feeder route that connected Peacock Gap to the Larkspur Landing ferry services that was discontinued in March 2003. At the point of cancellation, this route provided three morning and three afternoon trips. Route 32 operated as a commute route to the San Francisco Financial District until November 2003 and was converted to a shuttle route between Peacock Gap and the San Rafael Transit Center (SRTC), until the service was fully discontinued in December 2005. The commute service offered three morning and three afternoon trips and the shuttle to the transit center offered two morning and two afternoon trips. Route 132 was a supplemental route that operated school days only one trip in each direction in the afternoon between Peacock Gap and the SRTC. This service was discontinued after the Spring school semester in 2005.

At the point of discontinuation, performance for these routes was far below ridership and subsidy standards. Route 32 was carrying an average of 1.9 passengers per trip to and from the SRTC. The single highest ridership trips carried only three riders. Route 132 was the lowest ridership route of all supplemental services at the time, with approximately ten passengers per trip.

In addition to the limited availability of fixed route transit service, most of the study area is without mandated paratransit service, required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA paratransit service is a curb-to-curb, shared-ride service that is required by federal law to be provided within three-quarters of a mile of a regular fixed route service, during hours of fixed route operations. Since all the previous fixed route services operated peak periods only or on school-days only and there is no legal requirement to provide complimentary paratransit services to these routes, residents have never been provided reliable ADA transportation. However, Marin Transit currently accommodates paratransit trip requests in the non-mandated area as capacity allows. This creates an arrangement where riders outside the mandated service area can request the service up to seven days in advance, and then be notified the night before if the trip can be accommodated.

Based on data obtained from fiscal year FY 2015/16, there were 172 clients enrolled in Marin Access services that live within the study, with only 31, (18%), actively using service in the last year. Fifty-two percent of these riders were registered for paratransit services only, 33% for Catch-A-Ride, and another 15% for both paratransit and Catch-A-Ride. In total, nearly 1,300 rides were taken by these riders within the fiscal year; 439 on paratransit, 431 on Catch-A-Ride, and another 428 on volunteer driver programs. Another 113 trips, or 20% of all paratransit trips, to riders living in the study area were denied in this non-mandated service area.

It has been over ten years since fixed route service was offered to the residents in the study area. While population has not changed much, residents of the area are aging and many utilize existing transit services provided outside the study area. Although poor historic fixed route ridership resulted in the cancellation of these services, the request for public transit service from residents and employees continues. The District recognizes this need as an unfunded project in the 2016-2025 S RTP. The next step listed in the plan was to solicit community feedback to further define the transit need and what type of service could best fulfill this need.

SUMMARY: As the first step in further assessing emerging transit needs from the East San Rafael community, staff collected and analyzed demographic data from the US Census. The census data was drawn from current (2013) and historic (2000, 2010) data summarizing population, age, employment status, household size, transportation to work, and auto ownership. The results of the assessment included:

- **Approximately 7,340 residents live in the study area.** This population is nearly identical to 2010 and 2000, demonstrating no growth over the 13 year period. Residents in this area of San Rafael represent approximately 12% of the total citywide population.
- **More than one in four residents is over 65 years of age.** While total population has not increased in recent years, the senior population has grown significantly. In East San Rafael 27% of residents are over 65 years of age, up from 19% in 2000 and 24% in 2010. Only 17% of residents citywide are over 65 years of age.
- **Two-thirds of all households have only one or two members.** These smaller households have grown by 6% since 2000.
- **Approximately half of all residents are employed, and 11% of these workers use transit to commute to work.** Approximately 200 residents in the study area commute using Golden Gate Transit ferry, and another 100 use Marin Transit or Golden Gate Transit bus services. Other modes used to get to work include drive alone (66%), carpool (11%), walking or biking (2%), with 11% working from home.
- **Less than 2% of households lack a drivable vehicle.** Nearly every household has access to at least one vehicle. While most have a vehicle, 20% of households have one or fewer vehicles.

In Fall 2015, staff worked with the Point San Pedro Road Coalition to conduct an online survey with residents to find out more about their current transportation patterns and opinions on whether added public transit will benefit their individual conditions. The survey generated 467 responses, and nearly all but two percent responded are residents of East San Rafael. Staff observations from the survey results include:

- **44% of respondents were 65 years of age or older.** A much higher percentage of survey respondents were over 65 years of age compared to the general population of the study area. Of the 44% answering over the age of the 65, over 75% lived in a two person household.
- **64% of respondents indicated some form of employment, with 34% responding that they are retired.** The remaining 2% indicated unemployment or student status. The most common work hours for those employed was 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (18.8%), followed by 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM and 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM (9.4%), and then 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM (6.7%).
- **San Francisco is the most common work destination, and other travel is primarily local.** Of all work-related travel 30.9% was to San Francisco, followed by San Rafael (17.4%) and Southern Marin (13.1%).
- **Over one-third of respondents indicated using public transportation.** Respondents to the survey use transit at a higher rate than the typical resident in this area. Of the 164 respondents that indicated using transit, the majority (61%) use Golden Gate Ferry service only, 32% used some bus service (Golden Gate Transit or Marin Transit), 2% used all bus and ferry services in Marin County, and the remainder did not specify what services they use. Only about one in four transit user respondents indicate they use the service more than four days per week. Nearly two-thirds of all respondents indicate they drive to get to public transit and another 25% get dropped off.
- **When asked why residents do not use public transit, the most common responses were: “Public transit doesn’t go where I need to go” and “Public transit is not convenient”.** Nearly two-thirds of all respondents cited these top reasons for not using public transit.
- **When asked what areas of service improvement would influence their decision to take transit, the most common response was expanded service area and time of**

service. Nearly half of all respondents indicated that these are significant factors in choosing to increase their use of public transit.

Staff also reached out to Point San Pedro School staff to discuss transit needs for students and parents attending this school, which is located in the study area. Survey responses were collected from 62 parents from the school, and all responses were submitted in Spanish. The following observations emerge from the survey results:

- Over half of all respondents do not have access to an automobile;
- 85% of respondents currently use some form of public transportation; and
- All respondents were interested in using a public transit route that would serve the school and most would use the service daily. *The school district currently provides a yellow bus service for students but parents traveling to campus or students needing midday trips home lack transit services.*

Based on analysis of the survey results and demographic data, staff have identified the following potential high needs and markets for a new transit service in the study area. These include:

- **Senior transportation services for residents.** The aging population coupled with the lack of paratransit services suggests a need to explore new services targeting seniors. Unlike regular commute patterns, the survey responses identified senior travel needs focused on shorter trips and connections to the major regional hubs.
- **San Francisco commuter services for residents.** San Francisco is the single highest employment destination observed in the survey. The majority of those currently riding transit in the study area use the ferry. Although historic services failed to meet ridership and subsidy targets, it may be time to reassess the potential for reintroducing these offerings.
- **Transit options for employees and parents.** Point San Pedro School has the highest percentage of students who take the bus (yellow school bus) of any public school in the county. Demand for public transit services for parents of these students is also desired. The lack of any public transit services also presents a need for transportation for those who work in the study area and walk from stops closer to Downtown San Rafael.

The lack of public transit service in the study area and this initial assessment suggests that staff should explore options in partnership with Golden Gate Transit. Service expansion to the study area is identified as an unfunded need in the SRTP, and any new service will first need to have identified and secured operating funds. Staff recommends continued conversations with the community and Golden Gate Transit to identify top priority needs and pursue funding sources.

FISCAL/STAFFING IMPACT: There is no financial impact associated with this item. Before implementation, any future service proposal will be required to have identified and secured funding sources.

Respectfully submitted,

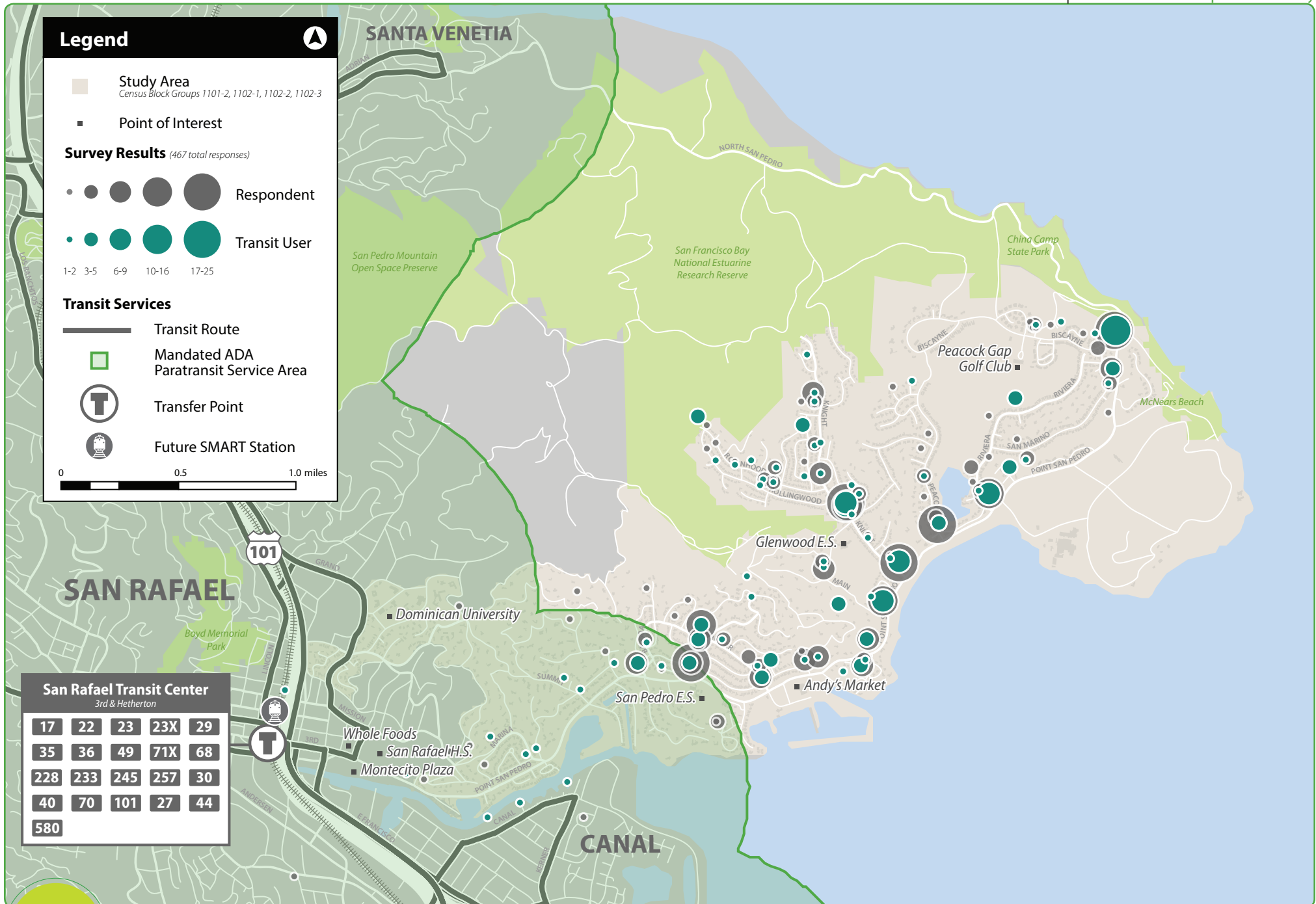


Robert Betts

Director of Planning and Operations

Attachment A: Study Area Map

Attachment B: East San Rafael Transportation Analysis – PowerPoint Presentation





East San Rafael Transportation Analysis

Marin Transit Board of Directors

July 28, 2016

- **Unfunded need- 2015 Short Range Transit Plan**
- **Underserved area- 2016 Marin Transit Internal Mobility Management DRAFT Study**
- **Further understand the need**
 - **Demographics**
 - **Travel patterns**
- **Identify possible options**
- **Discuss next steps**



Fixed Route

- 2003: GGT ferry feeder Route 31 discontinued
- 2003: GGT SF commute / SRTC shuttle Route 32 discontinued
- 2005: Marin Local Route 132 discontinued
- 2015: Unfunded expansion shuttle project identified in Marin Transit Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP)

Marin Access Programs

- Most of study area does not qualify for mandated ADA paratransit service
 - However, non-mandated service is provided if capacity allows
- 2011: Volunteer Driver programs offered
- 2012: Catch-A-Ride (subsidized taxi) offered

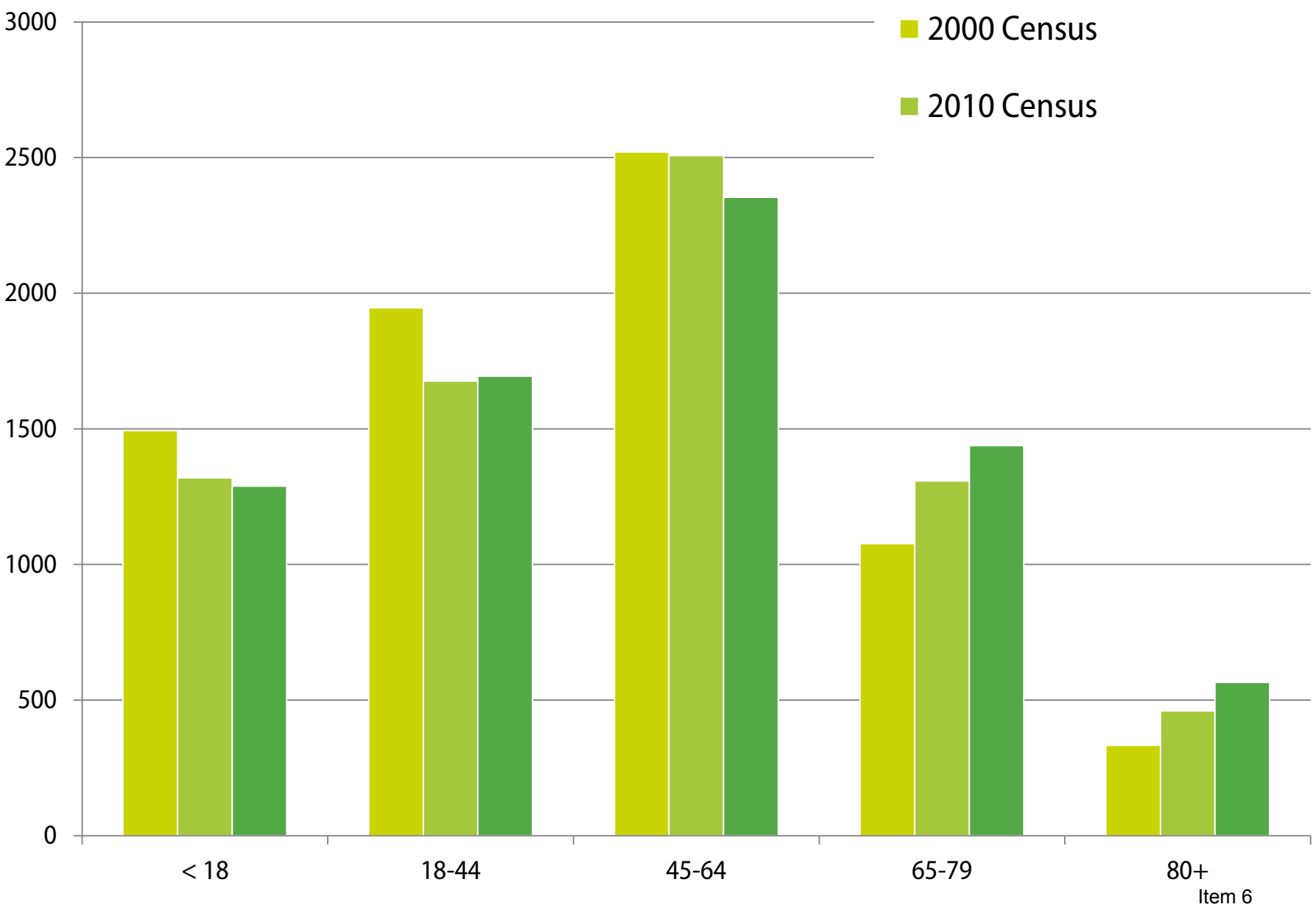
Demographic Highlights



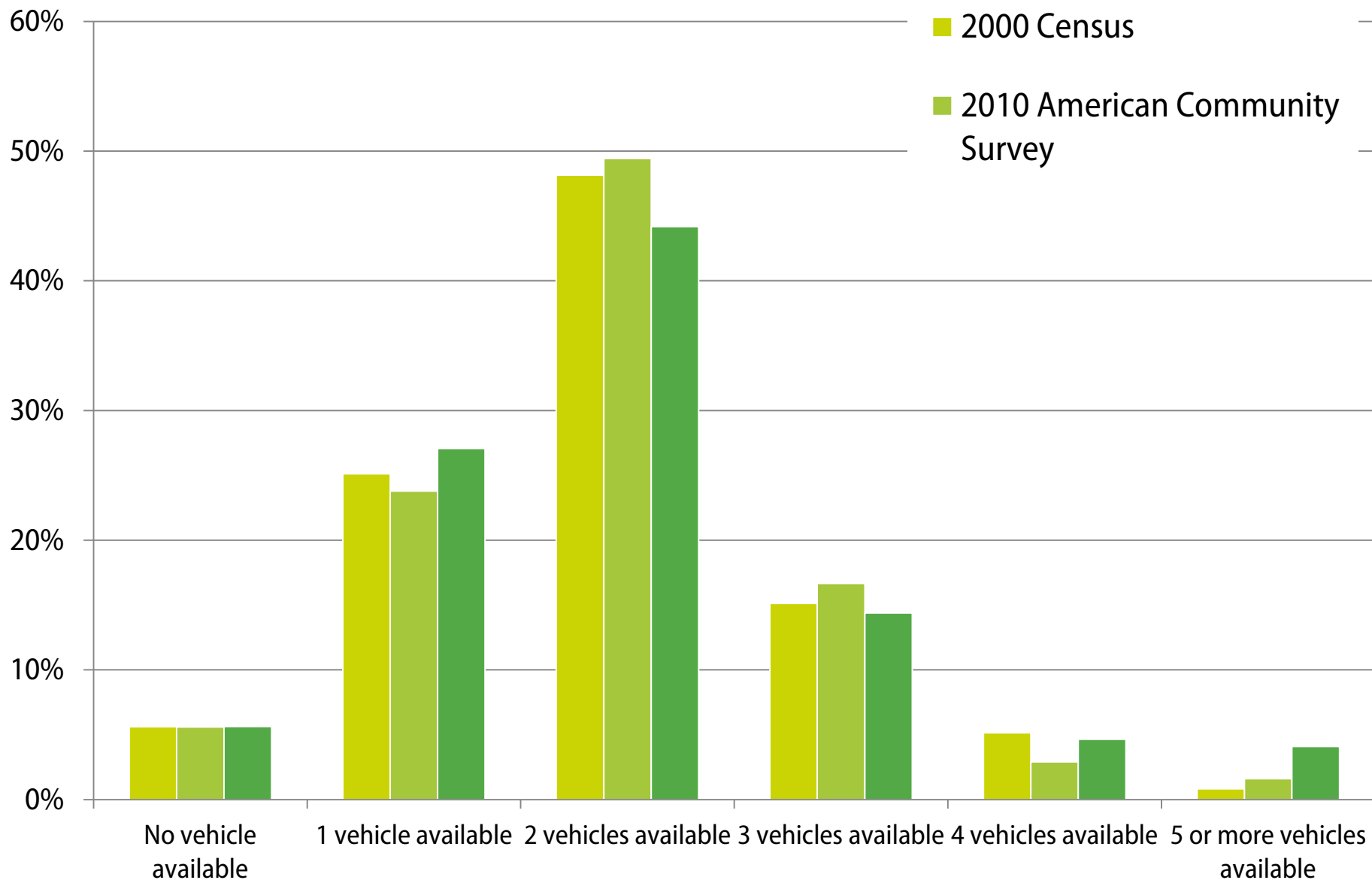
- **Approximately 7,340 residents live in the study area.**
- **More than one in four residents is over 65 years of age**
- **Two-thirds of all households have only one or two members**
- **Approximately half of all residents are employed, and 11% of these workers use transit to commute to work**
- **Less than 2% of households do not have a drivable vehicle**

Source: 2013 American Community Survey, US Census

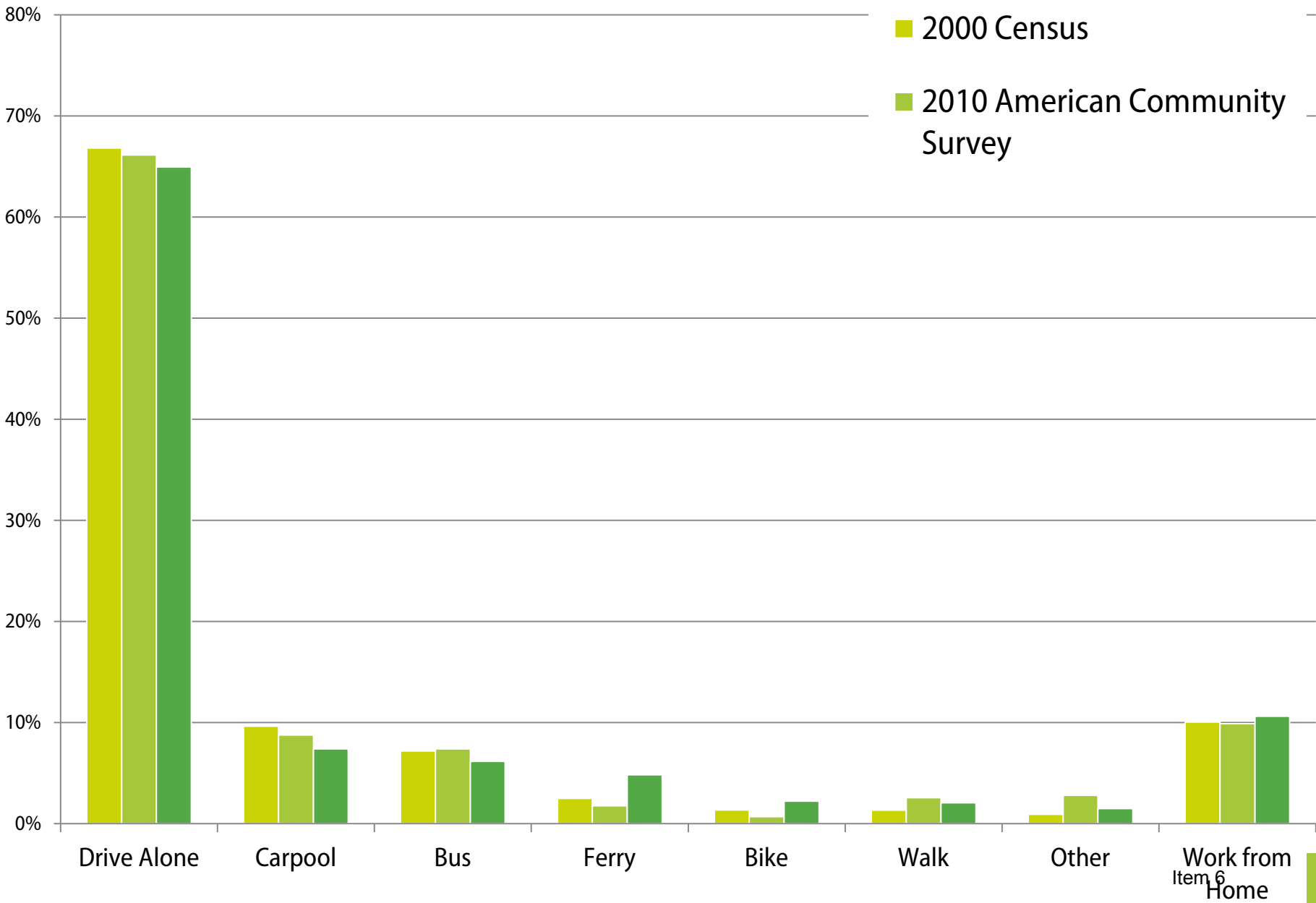
Study Area Demographics: Age



Study Area Demographics: Vehicle Ownership



Study Area Demographics: Commute Patterns



Online Community Survey Findings



- **44% of respondents were 65 years of age or older**
- **64% of respondents indicated some form of employment, with 34% responding retired.**
- **San Francisco is the most common work destination, and other travel is primarily local.**
- **Over one-third of respondents indicated using public transportation.**
- **When asked why residents do not use public transit, the most common responses were: “Public transit doesn’t go where I need to go” and “Public transit is not convenient.”**
- **When asked what areas of service improvement would influence their decision to take transit, the most common response was related expanded service area and time of service.**

Source: Survey Monkey results from Spring 2016 survey. Total responses = 467

Point San Pedro Parent Survey Results



- **Over half of all respondents do not have access to an automobile**
- **85% of respondents currently use some form of public transportation**
- **All respondents were interested in using a public transit route that would serve the school and most would use the service daily¹**

1. The school district currently provides a yellow bus service for students . Parents traveling to campus or students needing midday trips home do not have transit services.

- **Senior transportation services for residents**
- **San Francisco commuter services for residents**
- **Transit options for employees and parents**

Considerations for New Service



- **Service type**- Fixed route versus demand response
- **Stops**- Bus stops or curb to curb service
- **Equipment**- Transit, shuttle, or sedan
- **Span of service**- All day, weekday vs. weekend, peak-only, on-demand
- **Service Provider**- Marin Transit, Golden Gate, Taxi/TNC

- **Refine needs into potential service options**
- **Additional outreach with the community on new service options**
- **Identify pilot project(s)**
- **Pursue funding**

Thank You

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