

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
WEST SAN LEANDRO SHUTTLE  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022-23**



## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WEST SAN LEANDRO SHUTTLE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

### **Executive Summary & Recommendation**

The Annual Report includes a brief history of the LINKS shuttle and the West San Leandro Shuttle Business Improvement District (BID), ridership statistics; current and planned operations, the LINKS budget and the proposed BID assessment for 2023.

#### **Organization**

The West San Leandro Shuttle Business Improvement District was formed in 2000 to provide management and funding for the LINKS Shuttle Program. In 2015, the BID was reauthorized for a period of 15 years and the service area was expanded. In addition to the BID, LINKS is funded by grants, advertising revenue and contribution from City of San Leandro.

The LINKS Shuttle service is administered by the San Leandro Transportation Management Organization (SLTMO), a 501(C) 4 non-profit corporation.

Oversight of the BID is conducted by the West San Leandro Business Improvement District Advisory Board (Advisory Board). The five to seven member Advisory Board includes two City staff designees and three to five business representatives. The Advisory Board's duties include annual review of the LINKS performance for submission to the City Council and annual BID rate recommendation.

#### **LINKS Shuttle Service**

The free shuttle provides critical first-last mile transportation from the San Leandro BART station to the industrial area west of I-880 and Marina Blvd. LINKS operates Monday – Friday during peak commute hours (5:45 – 9:45 am and 3:00 – 7:00 pm). With 20 years of service to the community, LINKS has provided over 3 million rides.

#### **FY 2021-22 Activities**

Over the last year, the SLTMO provided reliable transportation to LINKS riders during the Covid-19 pandemic. Although operations and ridership were impacted, the service continued to operate without reductions or changes to its normal schedule. While large transit providers like AC Transit or BART serve more riders, LINKS ridership rebounded much more quickly during 2020 and 2021. LINKS provides approximately 500 rides per day.

In 2021, the SLTMO identified a projected budget shortfall beginning in FY 2022-23 resulting from funding decreases and cost increases. The Alameda County Transportation Commission increased the matching requirement for shuttle operations to 75%, effectively reducing the grant allocation by 50%. Additionally, the SLTMO projected increased transportation costs in FY 2022-23.

In response, the SLTMO contracted with a transit consulting firm to review the LINKS service and develop service options that would maximize service levels while reducing service costs.

The consultant team recommended a Dual Interlaced Loop service using two buses with 30-minute headways. This alternative provides the most service under projected funding levels, reduces cost by approximately 50% with only a 10-minute decrease in frequency. Most important, there is no change to stops, service area or operating hours.

The contract was successfully renegotiated with the LINKS transportation provider. The Dual Loop service was implemented July 1, 2022 and has been operating successfully with little impact to riders and few rider complaints.

### **FY 2022-23 Planned Activities**

Following is a summary of planned activities for FY 2022-23:

Rider Safety – Continue to provide much needed transportation following current Covid-19 safety protocols.

Dual Interlaced Loop – Continue to monitor and modify the service as needed to meet rider needs.

Outreach – Increase outreach to employers and employees to promote LINKS ridership now that riders are coming back to public transportation.

Grants - Aggressively seek grant and other funding opportunities. The Board will continue to work with the City of San Leandro and Alameda County Transportation Commission to secure critical funding.

Revenue Diversification – Continue to diversify revenue sources by maintaining current contract with Marina Square (advertising) and seek other revenue generating opportunities.

### **West San Leandro Business Improvement District (BID)**

The enabling BID Ordinance requires that the Advisory Board annually review the performance of LINKS service and recommended BID rate adjustment for submission to the City Council. The Ordinance provides that the City Council may increase the annual assessment in an amount not to exceed the increase of the Consumer Price Index (San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose), as part of its review of the annual report.

**BID Advisory Board - Rate Recommendation**

Increase the BID per employee assessment rate equal to the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as provided for in Ordinance No. 2009-002. For 2023 the applicable CPI factor is 6.8 percent. This would result in the BID per employee rate increasing from \$25.87 to \$27.63. Businesses with three or fewer owner/employees, landlords, and non-profits will continue to be exempt from the BID assessment. The CPI adjustment will raise approximately \$26,000.

## **Annual Report**

### **Background**

In 2000, the City of San Leandro evaluated the feasibility of implementing a commuter shuttle service connecting west San Leandro employment sites with the San Leandro BART station. Based on the results of that study, the San Leandro Transportation Management Organization (SLTMO) and a Business Improvement District (BID) were formed to provide management and funding for the LINKS Shuttle program.

The SLTMO is a 501(C) 4 non-profit corporation governed by a Board of Directors that includes representation from businesses included in the BID and the City of San Leandro. The SLTMO administers the LINKS Shuttle program.

Oversight of the BID is conducted by the West San Leandro Shuttle Business Improvement District Advisory Board (Advisory Board). The five to seven member Advisory Board includes two City staff designees and three to five business representatives. The Advisory Board's duties include annual review of the LINKS performance for submission to the City Council. The Ordinance authorizing the BID also provides that the City Council may increase the annual BID assessment in an amount not to exceed the increase of the Consumer Price Index as part of its review of the annual report.

### **LINKS Shuttle Service**

The LINKS Shuttle provides free transportation from the San Leandro BART station to the industrial area west of I-880 and Marina Blvd., a major employment center of the City and the region. LINKS operates Monday – Friday during peak commute hours (5:45 – 9:45 am and 3:00 – 7:00 pm). In July 2022, the service was modified to a Dual Interlaced Loop configuration operating two buses, both of which travel on a North and South Loop. Historically, Links provides 200,000 rides per year with an average of 700 rides per day. Like all public transportation services, the number of rides dropped since Covid. Ridership is gradually increasing and was over 500 rides per day by the end of FY 21-22.

LINKS provides critical “first and last mile” connection between transit and employers in West San Leandro, serving major employers including Amazon, Walmart and Costco, as well as small employers. There are over 800 businesses and almost 15,000 employees in the LINKS service area. LINKS also provides transportation to commercial nodes including Marina Square Shopping Center and community services such as Davis Street Family Resource Center which serves 10,000 low-income people each year.

Participation in the LINKS BID service area helps businesses comply with the BAAQMD Commuter Benefit requirements. In 2014, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) implemented the Commuter Benefits Program that requires all employers with 50 or more full-time employees to provide commuter benefits to their employees. To comply with the Program, employers must select one (or more) of four commuter benefit options and register

with BAAQMD. Participation in the LINKS BID satisfies Option 3 (“Employer Provided Transit”) under the requirements, allowing businesses to save time and money.

### **BID Renewal**

In 2015, the Business Improvement District was re-authorized for 15-years. When the BID was renewed, the service area was expanded providing more frequent service, shorter round-trip rides and connections to businesses that previously could not access LINKS. BID fees are collected through the City’s business license process.

### **Summary of Annual Activities**

FY 2015-16 – The SLTMO focused on getting the expanded service up and running smoothly and updating the LINKS branding with new signage, brochure and website. Bus benches and new signs were installed.

FY 2016-17 – The SLTMO focused on stabilizing LINKS funding by applying for grants and renewing service contracts with Kaiser Permanente and Marina Square Shopping Center. LINKS received a five year Measure BB grant which helped to stabilize funding for the next several years.

FY 2017-18 – The SLTMO focused on further enhancing the service through the installation of Nextbus technology. Using a mobile app, Nextbus allows riders to find real time arrival predictions for nearby stops instantly, find stops and vehicles on a map, get walking directions and set alerts for favorite stops and times. Nextbus also provides useful administrative reports including on-time performance and passenger count information. Google translate and transportation resources were also added to the website further increasing accessibility to riders.

FY 2018-19 – The SLTMO continued its focus on improved performance and rider experience, replacing the LINKS fleet with four new buses. The exterior bus branding was updated, signage on the bus exterior was improved and information racks added to the bus interior. Each bus was fitted with a drive cam which can record the interior and exterior of the bus in the event of an incident.

FY 2019-20 - The SLTMO focused on continuing service reliability, securing grants and responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. The SLTMO implemented a variety of safety protocols allowing the shuttle to continue to operate on its normal schedule during the uncertainty of the pandemic.

FY 2020-21 – The SLTMO continued to focus on providing reliable transportation to LINKS riders during the Covid-19 pandemic. Although ridership dropped, LINKS ridership rebounded much more quickly than larger transportation providers. As part of the reconfiguration of the San Leandro BART Station, the LINKS shuttle stops were permanently moved to a convenient location on San Leandro Blvd with access to cross walk and benches.

### **2021-22 Activities**

Over the last year, the SLTMO provided reliable transportation to LINKS riders during the Covid-19 pandemic. Although operations and ridership were impacted by Covid-19, the service continued to operate without reductions or changes to its normal schedule providing first and last mile connections to facilitate transit use to access employment and commercial centers.

Average daily ridership dropped from 771 in February 2020 to a low of 200 in April. Since then, ridership steadily increased with average daily ridership in June 2022 of 518 rides or 71% of pre-Covid levels. LINKS ridership rebounded much more quickly during 2020 and 2021 than large transit operators such as AC Transit and BART. LINKS ridership during Covid demonstrated that the LINKS Shuttle provides essential transportation to San Leandro businesses, employees and the community.

In 2021, AT&T discontinued 3G service impacting the Nextbus app used by LINKS riders. The Nextbus app allows riders to monitor real time bus arrivals on a mobile device. The change required an equipment upgrade to 4G. It was challenging to get the equipment during Covid, but the system was updated with only a short disruption in service to riders.

The SLTMO identified a projected budget shortfall beginning in FY 2022-23 resulting from funding decreases and cost increases. The Alameda County Transportation Commission increased the matching requirement for shuttle operations to 75%, effectively reducing the grant allocation by 50%. Additionally, the SLTMO projected increased transportation costs when the transportation contract expired in FY 2022-23.

In response, the San Leandro Transportation Management Organization contracted with a transit consulting firm to review the LINKS service and develop service options that would maximize service levels while reducing service costs.

The consultant team recommended a Dual Interlaced Loop service reducing the number of buses from four to two. The Dual Loop configuration maintains the existing North and South loops with the central stop at BART where both routes meet. The configuration allows for a one-seat ride for customers without having to transfer between routes. Headway time is saved by reducing the dwell time between loops. With the Dual Loop services, buses run every 30 minutes rather than every 20 minutes. This alternative provides the most service under projected funding levels, reduces operational costs by approximately 50% with only a 10-minute decrease in shuttle frequency and allows for expansion in service if new funding is identified. There is no change to shuttle stops, service area or operating hours.

The contract was successfully renegotiated with the LINKS transportation provider. The Dual Loop service was implemented July 1, 2022 and has been operating successfully with little impact to riders and few rider complaints.

### **LINKS Budget**

Funding for LINKS comes from the BID, grants, the City of San Leandro and advertising Marina Square Shopping Center purchases advertising on the LINKS buses.

2022 Alameda CTC CIP Grant (Measure BB & TFCA) - \$1,180,088

The SLTMO received a 2022 Alameda CTC CIP grant for the period is FY 2021-22 through FY 2025-26 in the amount of \$1,180,088. Although the full grant request was allocated, the matching requirement for this grant cycle went from 50% to 75% reducing the allowable request and significantly impacting the LINKS budget for the next five years.

#### 2024 Alameda CTC CIP Grant (Measure BB & TFCA) - \$331,000

The SLTMO applied for FY 2026-27 and 2027-28 CIP grant funds (Measure BB & TFCA) in the amount of \$331,000. The application is pending.

#### Business Improvement District Revenue

BID revenue declined significantly year over year in 2020 but 2021 & 2022 revenue has increased back to pre-Covid levels of approximately \$400,000.

#### Projected Budget Deficit

The SLTMO projected a budget deficit beginning in FY 2022-23 as a result of:

- New Alameda CTC matching requirements that limit the allowable grant request.
- Unpredictable drop in BID revenue.
- Projected transportation cost increases.

#### Budget Reduction – Service Modification

Implementation of the Dual Loop configuration provides the most service under projected funding levels and reduces operational costs by approximately 50% with the goal of stabilizing LINKS funding for the next five years.

#### 2022-23 Planned Activities

Rider Safety – Continue to provide much needed transportation following current Covid-19 safety protocols.

Dual Interlaced Loop – Continue to monitor and modify the service as needed to meet rider needs.

Outreach – Increased outreach to employers and employees to promote LINKS ridership now that riders are coming back to public transportation.

Grants - Aggressively seek grant and other funding opportunities. The Board will continue to work with the City of San Leandro and Alameda County Transportation Commission to secure critical funding.

Revenue Diversification – Continue to diversify revenue sources by maintaining current contract with Marina Square (advertising) and seek other revenue generating opportunities.

#### Business Improvement District Authorization

The BID is a levied benefit assessment on businesses within the BID Area, the proceeds of which shall be used for the public purpose benefit of the businesses in the BID, pursuant to the Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1989 Section 36500 et seq. of Division 18 of



the California Streets and Highways Code. All of the assessments imposed by the BID Ordinance shall be reviewed by the City Council annually based upon the annual report prepared by the advisory board appointed pursuant to Sections 36530 and 36533 of the California Streets and Highways Code. Pursuant to Section 36533(c), the City Council may approve the report as filed by the advisory board or may modify any particular contained in the report and approve it as modified.

The ordinance defines the boundaries of the BID, the amount of the annual assessment, the approved use of the assessment funds, and the effective period of the assessment. The Ordinance requires that an Advisory Board annually review the performance of LINKS for submission to the City Council. In addition, the Ordinance provides that the City Council may increase the annual assessment in an amount not to exceed the increase of the Consumer Price Index (San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose), as part of its review of the annual report.

### **Annual BID Rate Recommendation – 2022 Business Improvement District Assessment**

In order to ensure that funding for LINKS stays current with operating costs, it is recommended that the 2023 BID rate be adjusted by the applicable Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Per the approved Ordinance, the BID per employee rate may be increased annually by the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). For 2023 the applicable CPI factor is 6.8 percent. This would result in the BID per employee rate increasing from \$25.87 to \$27.63. Businesses with three or fewer owner/employees, landlords, and non-profits will continue to be exempt from the BID assessment. The CPI adjustment will raise approximately \$26,000.

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EXHIBIT A – Ridership Statistics

EXHIBIT B – LINKS Shuttle Map

EXHIBIT C – Budget

# LINKS Ridership in Fiscal Years

Years of Service: 20  
 Total # of Rides Provided: 3,294,306

Fiscal Year	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total	To Date Avg/Mo	To Date Avg/Day
FY 16	16,080	14,646	16,037	18,015	14,685	15,005	15,107	17,309	18,717	17,548	18,144	18,383	199,676	16,640	777
FY 17	16,272	18,573	19,117	18,169	16,455	15,329	15,585	15,389	18,292	16,667	17,815	16,354	204,017	17,001	791
FY 18	16,582	18,746	17,134	18,642	16,732	14,136	15,381	14,519	15,491	15,046	15,777	15,681	193,967	16,156	757
FY 19	15,733	17,565	15,506	18,931	15,963	14,787	17,779	15,329	16,188	17,420	17,327	15,532	198,080	16,507	771
FY 20	16,811	17,344	16,817	19,463	14,465	14,501	15,593	14,633	9,918	4,506	4,888	5,575	154,514	12,876	647
FY 21	6,113	6,374	6,778	7,660	7,129	7,833	6,261	6,531	7,880	7,875	7,252	8,089	85,775	7,148	332
FY 22	7,983	8,537	8,682	8,626	8,651	8,425	8,282	9,131	10,454	10,634	11,838	11,645	112,888	9,407	439

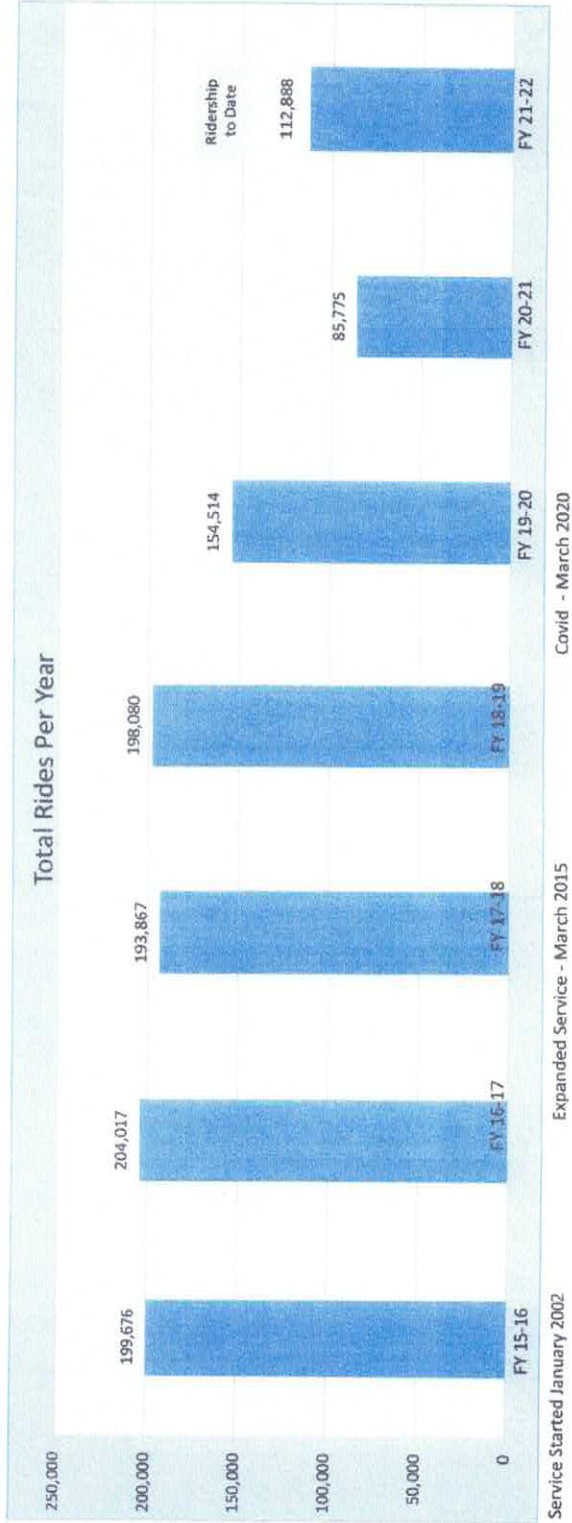
\*Shelter in Place Order - March 16, 2020

## COVID 19 Impact - Avg Ridership Per Day

Feb '20-Jun '21	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Avg Rides/Day	732	451	205	233	253	278	303	308	347	339	346	313	327	343	328	329	332
% Drop Since Feb '20		-38%	-72%	-68%	-65%	-62%	-59%	-58%	-53%	-54%	-53%	-57%	-55%	-53%	-55%	-55%	-55%

FY 21-22	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Avg Rides/Day/Mo	732	380	388	410	412	398	377	457	455	494	525	518
% Drop Since Feb '20		-48%	-47%	-44%	-44%	-46%	-48%	-38%	-38%	-33%	-28%	-29%
% of Pre-Covid Ridership		52%	53%	56%	56%	54%	52%	62%	62%	67%	72%	71%



Service Started January 2002      Expanded Service - March 2015      Covid - March 2020



# SHUTTLE ROUTE MAP

## SHUTTLE STOPS

### NORTH LOOP

EVERY 20 MINUTES

- FIRST STOP - BART**
- 1 MARINA @ ALVARADO
  - 2 MARINA @ TEAGARDEN
  - 3 MERCED @ MARINA
  - 4 WILLIAMS @ WESTGATE
  - 5 WILLIAMS @ 21<sup>ST</sup> AMENMENT BREWERY
  - 6 DOOLITTLE @ DOOLITTLE
  - 7 DOOLITTLE @ POLVOROSA
  - 8 DAVIS @ DOOLITTLE
  - 9 DAVIS @ TIMOTHY (WESTGATE)
  - 10 DAVIS @ PIERCE
  - 11 DAVIS @ ORCHARD (HEAVENS PARK)

### SOUTH LOOP

EVERY 20 MINUTES

- FIRST STOP - BART**
- 1 ALVARADO @ MARINA
  - 2 ALVARADO @ MONTAGUE
  - 3 ALVARADO @ TEAGARDEN
  - 4 TEAGARDEN BEFORE ALADDIN
  - 5 FAIRWAY @ MILLER (PARSON)
  - 6 MERCED @ FAIRWAY
  - 7 WICKS @ BURROUGHS
  - 8 WICKS @ PIKE
  - 9 WICKS @ FARALLON
  - 10 FARALLON BEFORE GRIFFITH
  - 11 FARALLON @ CATALINA
  - 12 DOOLITTLE @ BERMUDA
  - 13 DOOLITTLE @ FAIRWAY
  - 14 DOOLITTLE @ MARINA
  - 15 MARINA @ VERNA COURT
  - 16 MARINA @ TEAGARDEN (HEAVENS PARK)
  - 17 ALVARADO @ MARINA



NORTH LOOP

SOUTH LOOP

SHARED ROUTE

NEXTBUS APP



<b>EXHIBIT C - LINKS BUDGET</b>																					
<b>FY 2022-23 &amp; 2023-24</b>																					
	FY 2014-15		FY 2015-16		FY 2016-17		FY 2017-18		FY 2018-19		FY 2019-20		FY 2020-21		FY 2021-22		FY 2022-23		FY 2023-24		
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	
<b>Income:</b>																					
TFCA Grant	45,000	7,500	37,500	12,500	0	65,000	0	65,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
Lifeline Grant Cycle 3 Supplemental				181,409																	
Lifeline Grant Cycle 3 (\$185,000/yr)		332,250	38,750																		
Measure BB Grant FY 2019-20					0	297,859	250,000														
Measure BB Grant FY's 20-21						132,000															
2022 CIP Grant (MBB, TFCA)							317,604										99,906	104,126			
Business Improvement District	334,259	326,475	367,921	400,381	409,338	355,607	407,501	404,182	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
Kaiser Shuttle & TDM Mgmt.	434,831	444,549	545,249	482,133	131,108																
Other - Shuttle Services, Advertising	8,121	4,375	3,000	5,500	8,137	7,045	7,500	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Interest	468	1,293	914	1,809	6,552	4,588	2,656	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914	1,914
RDA/City Contribution	50,000	95,000	75,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>872,679</b>	<b>1,211,442</b>	<b>1,068,334</b>	<b>1,133,732</b>	<b>605,135</b>	<b>780,099</b>	<b>849,657</b>	<b>779,700</b>	<b>555,906</b>	<b>560,126</b>											
<b>Expenses:</b>																					
LINKS Shuttle - Transportation	330,677	430,221	536,927	599,102	590,644	672,978	773,147	746,221	393,622	410,503											
Kaiser Shuttle - Transportation	348,602	314,756	443,230	493,048																	
Executive Director	40,000																				
Galvan/Transit Strategies	73,269																				
Consulting Services - SLTMO Admin		95,048	83,960	60,880	65,121	59,760	69,720	59,880	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Consulting (Audit and Rider Survey)	6,861		5,000	0	0																
Marketing, Advertising, and Misc.	15,105	2,624	1,256	0	8,934	3,673	7,192	2,408	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Insurance, Tax Return, Bank Charges, Non-Profit Fees	1,337	3,687	3,069	4,089	5,270	3,343	3,561	2,786	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Improvements/Technology (Nextbus)			48,406	5,736	22,583	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>815,851</b>	<b>846,336</b>	<b>1,073,442</b>	<b>1,205,525</b>	<b>675,705</b>	<b>762,336</b>	<b>859,889</b>	<b>859,889</b>	<b>479,622</b>	<b>496,503</b>											
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>56,828</b>	<b>365,106</b>	<b>-5,108</b>	<b>-71,793</b>	<b>-70,570</b>	<b>17,763</b>	<b>-9,962</b>	<b>-80,189</b>	<b>76,284</b>	<b>63,623</b>											
<b>BUDGET NOTES:</b>																					
2015-16 - Net Income: Appears high because 90% of the two-year Lifeline Cycle 3 grant was drawn in 2015-16 making the rev. for that year appear high.																					
2017-18 - Deficit: Reflects Kaiser payments not received and 13 months of transportation costs for Links and Kaiser Shuttle.																					
2018-19 - Deficit: Reflects FY 18-19 TFCA & Measure BB Grants which will be received in FY 19-20																					
2019-20 - Expenses: Transportation costs increase due to full year at new rate, Improvements Tech includes Nextbus equip for new buses																					
2019-20 - Measure BB reimbursement (\$250,000) will be posted in 2020-21 when received																					
2020-21 - Expenses Include: 13 months transportation, 14 months SLTMO Admin																					
2021-22 - 2022 CIP Grant combined TFCA & MBB into one grant - Total Grant FY 21-22 = \$323,470 (TFCA \$64,000, Carryover \$59,470, MBB \$200,000)																					
2021-22 - Deficit result of increased transportation costs, transit study and Nextbus upgrade to 4G																					
2022-23 - Modified service to Dual Interlaced Loop and went from 4 buses to 2 buses reducing transportation costs.																					
2022-23 - 2022 CIP revenue based on projected reimbursement not full grant allocation.																					