

# Western Nevada County

## ADA Paratransit Plan Update

In Association With:  
Community Action Partners



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# 1. Introduction

On January 21, 1992 the Nevada County Board of Supervisors adopted a “Complementary Paratransit Implementation Plan” as part of its obligation to implement components of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The purpose of the ADA Paratransit Plan Update is to revise the 1992 Complementary Paratransit Implementation Plan to reflect 2010 conditions.

The basic requirement of ADA Complementary Paratransit service is defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part F, commencing with 37.121. (hereinafter referred to as ADA complementary paratransit regulations).

“...each public entity operating a fixed route system shall provide Paratransit or other special service to individuals with disabilities that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system.”

The ADA complementary paratransit regulations guide the content of this plan, commencing with CFR 37.139. The organization of the plan fulfills these requirements and continues with the following sections:

2. Overview of Telecare, Gold Country Stage and other existing services
3. Consumer input that includes the necessary outreach and consultation with persons with disabilities
4. Compliance review that analyzes the compliance with ADA complementary paratransit regulations
5. Recommended ADA Complementary Paratransit Plan

This is a draft plan and will be made available for review and comment before the plan is finalized. A public hearing will be held with adequate notice in order to provide the opportunity for comment on the draft plan.

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## 2. Profile of Existing Services

### Telecare Paratransit Operating Characteristics

Telecare provides ADA-eligible demand responsive paratransit services to Western Nevada County under contract to Nevada County. Telecare provides a maximum of 16,200 annual revenue hours currently. Reservations must be made a day in advance. Service is provided within 3/4 mile from existing GCS routes as per Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, as well as one mile outside of the corridor. Fares are based upon location, ranging from \$2 for trips within the ADA corridor, to \$4 for trips outside of the corridor. Service is provided as far south as Lime Kiln Road. Telecare operates from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday, with a special service for seniors above the age of 60 on Sundays from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

FY 2009/10 annual vehicle hours are estimated at 18,779, a 22% drop from FY 2008/09. Total annual boardings on Telecare were estimated at 40,482 in FY 2009/10 with 2.2 passengers per hour. There were no denials of service. Late cancellations were down from the previous fiscal year, to 3,778 from 4,578, a 14% decrease. 'No show' statistics also improved with 1,587 in FY 2009/10 down from 1,895 in FY 2008/09.

Exhibit 1 below shows Telecare performance trends over the last three fiscal years.

Exhibit 1 Telecare Performance Between FY 06/07 and FY 09/10

Telecare PARATRANSIT	FY 2007/08 Actual	FY 2008/09 Actual	FY 2009/10 Projected*
<b>Base Statistics</b>			
Passengers	48,259	45,243	40,482
Vehicle Service Hours	24,966	24,092	18,779
Vehicle Service Miles	333,169	312,004	251,938
Operating cost	\$ 1,022,370	\$ 1,018,367	\$812,764
Fare Revenues	\$ 109,893	\$ 105,746	\$92,605
<b>System Performance Indicators</b>			
Operating cost/revenue service hr.	\$ 40.95	\$ 42.27	\$ 43.28
Operating cost/passenger	\$ 21.19	\$ 22.51	\$ 20.08
Operating cost/mile	\$ 3.07	\$ 3.26	\$ 3.23
Passengers/ service vehicle hour	1.9	1.9	2.2
Passengers/ service mile	0.14	0.15	0.16
Farebox recovery ratio	10.7%	10.4%	11.4%

\*June 2010 interpolated

In FY 2009/10 Telecare hours had been reduced by 5,300 vehicle service hours, resulting in a reduction of about \$200,000 a year in operating costs. Farebox revenue increased 1% since the previous fiscal year. Passengers per revenue

hour have moderately increased from 1.9 in FY 2007/08 and FY 2008/09 to 2.2 in FY 2009/10.

In FY 2010/11, the budget for the Telecare contract is \$734,196 and includes 16,200 vehicle service hours.

Exhibit 2 is the map of the Telecare service area that was officially adopted in 2007 by the Transit Services Commission. The adopted map shows the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile buffer around the 2007 route network. It also shows the official Telecare Service Area with a buffer of approximately 1 mile around the 2007 Gold Country Stage route network. The Telecare service area is much broader than required under the Americans with Disabilities Act., Gold Country Stage route changes in May 2009 and May 2010 reduced the required area to be served by ADA complementary paratransit service. The map of the ADA complementary paratransit service area has not been officially updated by the Transit Services Commission since 2007.

### **Non-ADA Complementary Paratransit Services Provided by Telecare**

Telecare does offer several other services beyond the required ADA complementary paratransit service for seniors and disabled individuals. These are good examples of mobility management strategies for filling mobility gaps in western Nevada County.

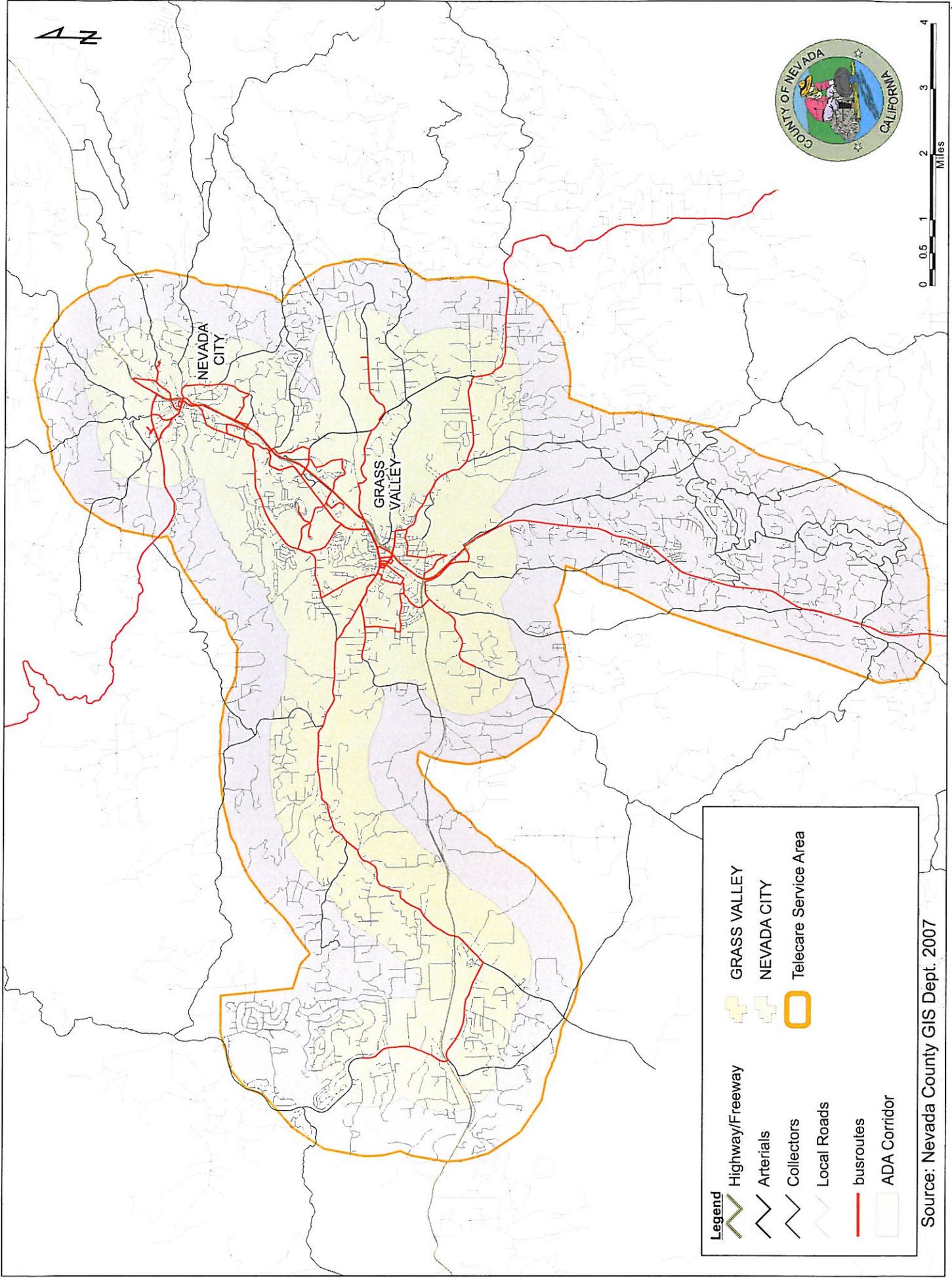
#### Provision of Sunday Telecare services to seniors<sup>1</sup>

The Program is a subsidy program funded by the Area 4 Agency on Aging to provide seniors (60 and over) in western Nevada County with transportation on Sundays. Rides are available to all Sunday activities within Telecare's western Nevada County service area. Destinations can include church, special events, social activities, shopping, restaurants and much more. Passengers can make reservations up to 14 days in advance. All western Nevada County residents age 60 or over are eligible to use Sunday service. There is a suggested donation of \$2.00 for each one-way trip.

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<sup>1</sup> Source of Telecare mobility management strategies: Telecare website.

# Exhibit 2 Telecare Service Area





### Transportation for Health and Enrichment Van Program (T.H.E. Van Program)

T.H.E. Van Program (Transportation for Health and Enrichment) provides low-cost transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities to specific, pre-scheduled healthcare related services in western Nevada County. Low-cost transportation is provided to specific, qualified health related services that require multiple visits weekly or monthly (i.e.: cardiac-rehab, outpatient treatments, physical therapy, etc.). T.H.E Van Program is funded by United Way and The PASCO Foundation and private donations to Gold Country Telecare. Service is available to Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital Outpatient Services, Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital Cancer Center, Cardiac Rehabilitation at Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital, Bowman-Solinsky Therapeutic Pool, and many more medical-related facilities. The cost is the same for Telecare's regular rides: \$2 within the ADA Corridor and \$4 outside of the ADA Corridor.

### Telecare Volunteer Driver Program

Rides are available for ambulatory riders 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, anywhere riders would like to go, as long as Telecare can match people up with a volunteer driver. Rides can be arranged by calling the Telecare Volunteer Coordinator 48 hours in advance of the requested ride time. The Volunteer Coordinator matches ride requests with a volunteer driver who is the closest in proximity to the pick-up location. Passengers are charged 65 cents per mile as a mileage reimbursement for the volunteer driver.

Gold Country Telecare has expanded and renamed the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Volunteer Driver program to the Telecare Volunteer Driver Program. This door-to-door, arm-through-arm service provides transportation to the elderly and individuals with disabilities seeking to maintain their independence, dignity and connection to their community.

The expansion of service includes nine drivers located in the Lake of the Pines area of southern Nevada County who were previously part of a program started by Gladys Pulhemus. Gladys began her out-of-home program, Happy Taxi, due to her own need as a senior disabled woman who wanted to maintain her autonomy without having to depend on family and friends for transportation. This service has provided South County elders and persons with disabilities transportation services through volunteer drivers for the past two years.

## Gold Country Stage Services

### Gold Country Stage Operating Characteristics

The GCS is a fixed-route transit service that connects population, commercial, and employment centers throughout Western Nevada County. GCS is operated by the Transit Services Department (TSD), which reports to the Transit Services Commission. GCS is funded and managed under a Joint Powers Agreement between Nevada County and the cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City.

GCS operates 7 routes that serve the Nevada City/Grass Valley area, unincorporated western Nevada County, and along the SR 49 corridor between Auburn and Nevada City, as shown on Exhibit 3. Service is provided on weekdays from 5:50 am to 6:50 pm. The routes total about 65 daily vehicle service hours pre-May 24, 2010 and about 44 daily vehicle service hours after.

### Route by Route Descriptions

#### **Route 1: Nevada City**

This route originates in downtown Grass Valley at the Church and Neal Street transfer center and terminates at the County Government Center in Nevada City. Major stops include the Hills Flat area, Fowler Center, Seven Hills Business District, Nevada City transfer point, downtown Nevada City and the Eric Rood Government Center. One bus operates throughout the day, providing service every 60 minutes from 6:25 am to 6:25 pm.

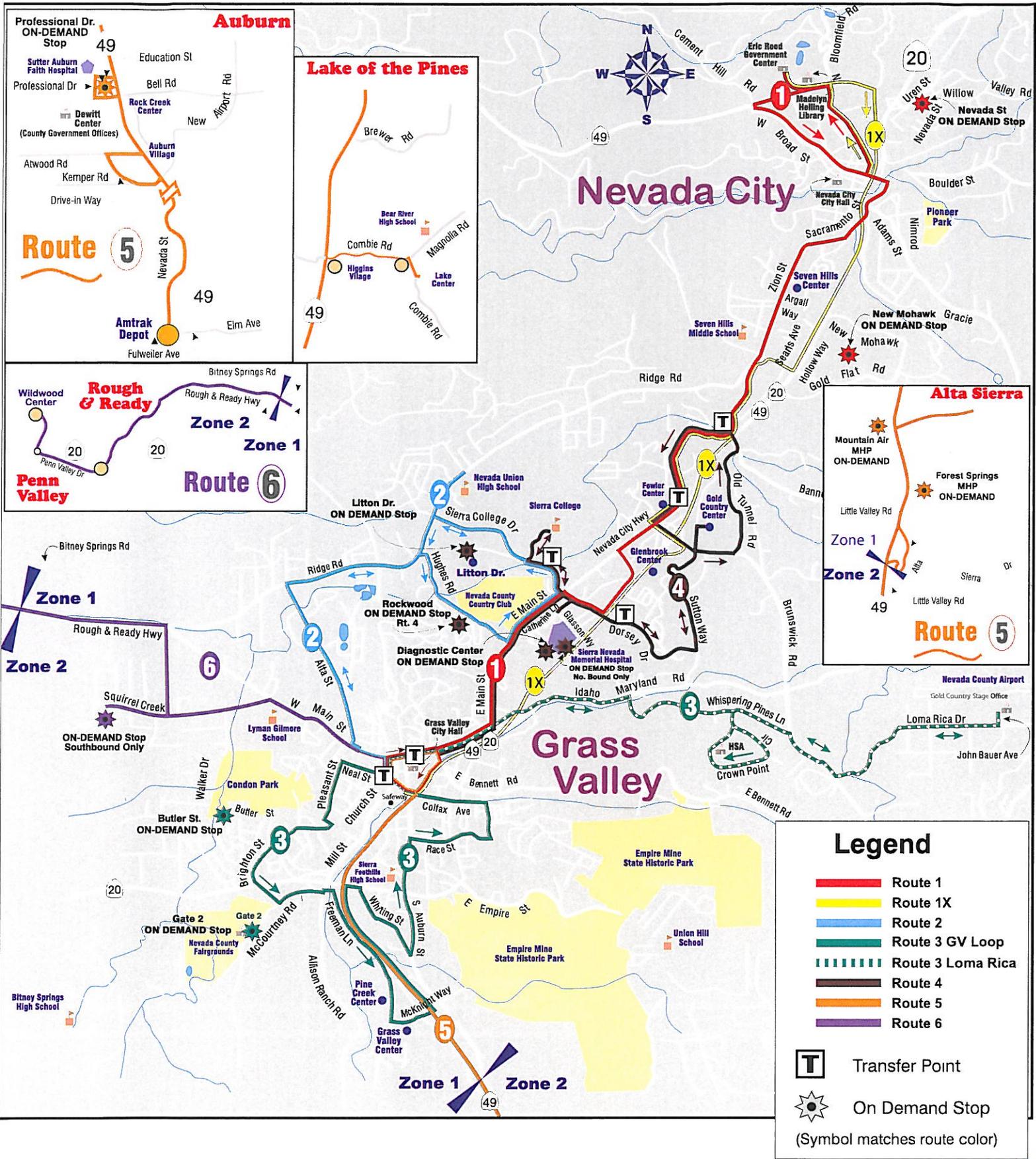
Route 1 has the most service hours of any GCS route with 12.5 hours. It ties for second in productivity with 13.2 passengers per service hour. It ranks first for the average daily number of passengers carried with 302 between July 2009 and June 2010.

#### **Route 1X: Nevada City Express**

Route 1X is a new route implemented in May 2010. The route starts at Safeway on Neal St in Grass Valley and runs along Highway 49 for the bulk of the route, with a short deviation to the Fowler Center. The route eventually terminates at the Eric Rood Government Center in Nevada City. Three trips are provided weekdays at 9:24 am, 1:24 pm, and 5:24 pm.

The route serves stops in Grass Valley in the northbound direction towards Nevada City, and then has non-stop service when returning southbound to Grass Valley. The route does not have performance data available at this time.

# Exhibit 3 Gold Country Stage Fixed Route Map, May 2010



- ### Legend
- Route 1
  - Route 1X
  - Route 2
  - Route 3 GV Loop
  - ⋯ Route 3 Loma Rica
  - Route 4
  - Route 5
  - Route 6

- T Transfer Point
- ★ On Demand Stop  
(Symbol matches route color)



## **Route 2: Ridge Road**

Route 2 operates service between Grass Valley and Nevada City via Ridge Road with service originating at the Church and Neal Streets transfer center and the Sierra College transfer point. Hourly service is provided Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4:55 pm. Major stops along this route include downtown Grass Valley, Sierra College, and Nevada Union High School. The route continues on as Route 3 when reaching the Church and Neal transfer point.

The route was previously combined with routes 2, 6, and 8 and the data indicates this combination of routes has about 9.6 passengers per service hour. The combination of routes also carried about 87 passengers on average.

## **Route 3: Grass Valley Loop, Loma Rica**

Route 3 commences and terminates at the Church and Neal Street transfer point in Grass Valley. This route serves the lower Grass Valley area every 60 minutes from 7:00 am to 5:23 pm. Additionally, four trips at 8:25 am, 10:25 am, 12:25 pm and 3:25 pm on Route 3 continue from Church and Neal to serve Whispering Pines Lane and Loma Rica Drive, which was previously served by the now discontinued Route 8. Major stops include downtown Grass Valley, Condon Park, Nevada County Fairgrounds, Gold Country Senior Center, Bitney Springs High School, Pine Creek Shopping Center, Sierra Foothills High School, Memorial Park, and Safeway. The four Loma Rica Drive trips serve stops including PRIDE, Crown Point Circle, Nevada County Airport, and the Gold Country Stage offices.

Route 3 runs 6.35 revenue hours a day including the Loma Rica runs that were previously route 8. Route 3 ranks second in passengers carried with 166 and first in performance with 16.5 passengers per revenue hour. These ridership numbers are sure to change now that service was roughly cut in half on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

## **Route 4: Brunswick Basin**

This route operates service between Grass Valley and Brunswick Basin, with service originating at the Church Street and Neal Street transfer point going to the Fowler Center in Nevada City. Hourly service is provided at these points from 6:30 am to 4:30 pm. Along this route major stops include downtown Grass Valley, Safeway, Sierra College, Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital, Glenbrook Shopping Center, Gold Country Shopping Center, and the Fowler Center.

Route 4 was the only route that kept service hours intact after the May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010 service cuts. The route currently runs about 11 revenue hours a day. It ranks third by passengers carried with 150 on average, and ties for second in performance with 13.2 passengers per service hour.

### **Route 5: Auburn**

Route 5 provides intercity service between Grass Valley and Auburn via SR 49. Route 5 makes five trips per day, two in the morning and three in the afternoon. Route 5's operating hours are from 5:50 am to 6:50 pm. Major stops along this route include downtown Grass Valley, Alta Sierra, Lake of the Pines, Higgins Village, Lake Center, Rock Creek Center, Auburn Village, and the Amtrak Depot.

Route 5 currently runs 9.3 revenue hours after two runs were cut from the May 2009 schedule. The route carries about 86 average daily passengers, and ranks last in performance with only about 8 passengers per revenue hour.

### **Route 6: Penn Valley**

Route 6 originates from the Church and Neal Streets transfer point in Grass Valley and serves the Rough and Ready and Penn Valley communities towards the west via the Rough and Ready Highway. The route ends at Wildwood Center in Penn Valley and returns to Grass Valley. Service is provided from 6:55 am to 6:45 pm. There are five trips in the eastbound direction and four trips in the westbound direction. The last eastbound trip from the Wildwood Center runs express to Church and Neal in Grass Valley. Major stops along this route include the Lyman Gilmore School, Rough and Ready, and the Wildwood Center.

The route runs about four service hours a day. See route 2 for combined performance indicators as no individual data is available for route 6.

Gold Country Stage has a total of 13 buses in its fleet. All Gold Country Stage buses are wheelchair accessible and meet ADA requirements.

## **Other Paratransit Services Provided in Western Nevada County <sup>2</sup>**

### Sierra Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

A non-profit organization located in Nevada City, Sierra Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired provides medical and non-medical transportation for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and their families. In addition to providing local transportation on demand, Sierra Services sometimes travels as far as Sacramento. It is funded by donations and a Community Service Block Grant.

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<sup>2</sup> This section is taken verbatim from the *Nevada County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*, Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates, October 2008.

### Platinum Care Transportation

Residents living outside the Telecare paratransit service area in western Nevada County requesting wheelchair-accessible service are referred by Telecare to Platinum Care Transportation, located in Yuba City (Yuba County). Platinum Care provides door-to-door non-emergency medical transportation, as well as other non-medical trips. It operates in the Nevada City/Grass Valley area on an almost daily basis. Some trips it provides are MediCal sponsored non-emergency medical trips (NEMT).

### Hospice of the Foothills

Hospice of the Foothills provides day-to-day support for individuals and their families who have been diagnosed with a terminal illness and have a prognosis of one year or less. This support sometimes includes transportation services.

## **Population and Demographics<sup>3</sup>**

The population of Western Nevada County in 2000 was 77,868, while Countywide the population was 92,033. Not surprisingly, the highest population densities are found in the Nevada City and Grass Valley areas. The average density in Western Nevada County is 85.1 persons per square mile, which is significantly higher than in Eastern Nevada County (41.1). A total of 31,626 households were recorded in the 2000 U.S. Census. The population of Nevada County is expected to grow steadily through 2030, according to California Department of Finance population projections. As in other parts of the nation, the senior population of the county is growing at an even faster rate. While in 2000 approximately 17.5% of the county population was over 65 years of age, by 2030 this proportion is expected to increase to over 30%.<sup>4</sup>

There are an estimated 19,509 persons aged 60 or over residing in Western Nevada County, comprising 25.1 percent of the total population. This proportion is significantly higher than either the statewide average (14.0 percent) or that of Eastern Nevada County (8.4 percent). Indeed, only 3 of the 62 block groups in Western Nevada County have a lower proportion of seniors to the total population than the statewide average. The percentage of elderly persons is distributed relatively evenly throughout Western Nevada County, although larger concentrations are found in the Penn Valley, Lake of the Pines, and Grass Valley areas. While in 2000 approximately 17.5% of the county population was over 65 years of age, by 2030 this proportion is expected to increase to over 30%.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise noted, this section is taken verbatim from the Western Nevada County Transit Development Plan Update, LSC Transportation Consultants, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates, op cit.

<sup>5</sup> Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates, op cit.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines “mobility impaired” as persons having a health condition, lasting more than six months, that makes it difficult to go outside alone. Currently, it is estimated there are 2,157 mobility-impaired persons in Western Nevada County, which comprises 2.8 percent of the study area population. The northeastern portion of the study area (Block Group 9.002) has the greatest concentration of mobility-limited persons within the study area in terms of absolute numbers (107), although the greatest proportion (6.8 percent) within a single block group is found in the eastern portion of Grass Valley (Block Group 5.022).

### 3. Consumer Input

The survey of users of Telecare, the ADA complementary paratransit service provider, was undertaken to receive direct consumer input on compliance with ADA complementary paratransit regulations. The survey was launched on April 1st, 2010, and was sent via United States mail. The survey was sent to 350 Telecare passengers who had used Telecare services within the past three months. The last response was received on May 4, 2010. The survey was designed to be completed in 5-10 minutes in a very clear and easily understood format. 172 surveys were completed. See Appendix A for the complete survey results. The survey included 17 questions, made up of five sub-sections:

- Application Process
- Service Area
- Service Times
- Experience of Arranging Trips/Trip Refusals
- Overall Service Satisfaction

#### ADA Application Process

There was overwhelming response that the paratransit eligibility application process was easy to use. 126 of 142 respondents to this question answered that the application process for ADA eligibility was very easy to complete. Almost all respondents said that they had applied without help and have very few problems with the process and very little time delay in hearing whether they were eligible for the service. In fact 92% indicated that they were informed quickly that their application had been approved.

#### ADA Service Area

From survey results received, it appears that most passengers have a good understanding of where the service area limits are and therefore don't expect to be picked up or dropped off outside the area. 96% of respondents indicated that Telecare could pick them up or drop them off at all the places they needed to go, and only 5% of respondents were told that Telecare could not provide the trip they requested at the time.

156 of 164 (95%) respondents indicated that they had not been refused because they wanted to be picked up or dropped off outside the Telecare service area. As a practical matter, Telecare will pick up and drop off within a 1-mile radius of the fixed route of a Gold Country Stage route, and this includes a very broad area in the Grass Valley and Nevada City area.

## Hours and Days of Operation

The majority of respondents found it easy to arrange Telecare trips, with nobody saying that it “wasn’t at all easy” while ninety-six people (61%) said they’d been put on hold at some time. In the general section of the survey, respondents were asked how satisfied they were with Telecare, and asked to comment about or make suggestions for improvements of service. 86% of respondents indicated they were ‘very satisfied’.

The majority of Telecare passengers understood the problems of booking for trips on Mondays and understood that they had to make arrangements for Monday trips well in advance. (See list of answers about how people made reservations for Mondays in the full report, Appendix A). Most people stated that they could always arrange rides at the times they needed them and the vast majority of people responded that they got to their destination in time. The majority said that they did not want to travel before 6:00 a.m. or as late as 6:00 p.m. although in general comments in the open-ended section, some people did mention that a later service would enable them to go to more community events. Virtually nobody had been bumped from a trip because an ADA eligible trip was given priority, although it is hard to know whether they would have been told this at the time of booking. It should be noted that recent budget cuts in 2010 have forced Telecare to provide ADA eligible trips almost exclusively.

## Capacity Constraints/Trip Refusals

Two-thirds of all respondents said that trips were “very easy” to arrange on Telecare. No respondents indicated it “wasn’t at all easy.”

61% of respondents indicated that they had put on hold at some time. The length of time people said they were put on hold varied from “usually no more than a minute” to “a day” which may have been an overstatement.

95% of respondents said that they have never been refused a trip. Discussions with Telecare staff have indicated that these individuals who were refused a trip were not ADA eligible or lived outside the ¾ mile boundary.

There were a variety of answers to the secondary question “What was the reason Telecare gave for refusing your trip?”

- No time for me
- No time on van available
- Discontinued Saturday service
- Because of price
- Provided I call at least 3 days earlier than needed

- Either doctors or hospital called for appointments too late and Telecare was booked or Emergency room--impossible for booking or Can't afford or not able to maneuver due to handicap
- I make as many trips as I am physically able during the hours of operation

Another means for judging whether or not there were capacity constraints was the question, "Can you take as many trips a month as you need to?" 96% said they were able to take as many trips a month as they need to. Again, Telecare staff indicated that 100% of respondents who are ADA eligible and live within  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of a Gold Country Stage routes are able to take as many trips as they need to. The survey results are consistent with this practice.

### **Overall Satisfaction with Telecare Services**

Telecare users were asked the question, "On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being most satisfied, how satisfied are you with Telecare's services?" 139 respondents (83%) gave a "5" rating or were highly satisfied, with another 23 respondents (14%) giving a "4" rating. No respondents gave a "1" or "2" that would have indicated they were not satisfied with Telecare Services.

At the end of the survey, an open-ended question was asked, "Do you have any other comments or suggestions." A verbatim listing of the responses is included in Appendix A. The comments were dominated by praise for Telecare drivers and overall services. A large majority of the comments expressed sincere appreciation for the mobility that Telecare offers seniors and disabled individuals in Western Nevada County.

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## 4. ADA Compliance Review

Chapter 2 included an overview of the Telecare service provided in relationship to Gold Country Stage. This chapter provides an analysis of compliance with ADA complementary paratransit regulations. The actual regulations are quoted from the regulations commencing with Subpart F, Paratransit as Complement to Fixed Route Service, starting at CFR 37.121.

The compliance review is broken into three sections:

- ADA Complementary Paratransit Eligibility Process
- ADA Service Criteria
- Other compliance issues

### ADA Complementary Paratransit Eligibility Process

#### ADA Complementary Paratransit Eligibility Standards

There are three categories for ADA eligibility:

“(1) Any individual with a disability who is unable, as the result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities.

(2) Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device and is able, with such assistance, to board, ride and disembark from any vehicle which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. If the individual wants to travel on a route on the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time, or within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route.

(3) Any individual with a disability who has a specific impairment-related conditions which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on such system.”

As a practical matter, eligibility criteria #2 is not applicable, as all Gold Country Stage routes are accessible based on ADA criteria.

While ADA complementary paratransit regulations allows for conditional eligibility based on one of the three categories above, Nevada County does not provide conditional eligibility.

ADA complementary paratransit regulations do allow for either permanent or

temporary disabilities. According to the Transit Services Manager that administers the ADA eligibility process, temporary certifications do occur but are rare.

The application for ADA certification was reviewed and found to be compliant with determining ADA eligibility. Different transit agencies utilize different approaches for determining eligibility. Some more urbanized agencies utilize actual functional testing by a health care professional. Nevada County relies on the questions on the certification application with verification as necessary by a health care professional.

Nevada County is in compliance with standards utilized for determining ADA complementary paratransit eligibility.

#### ADA Complementary Paratransit Eligibility Process

ADA complementary paratransit regulations require that the “eligibility process strictly limit” ADA eligibility to those who are eligible under the standards described above. Nevada County is in full compliance with this requirement. If an individual wants the application process in accessible formats, it needs to be provided. Accessible formats are available upon request from Telecare.

ADA complementary paratransit regulations require that an eligibility determination be made within 21 days of the application submittal. As a matter of practice, according to the Transit Service Manager, applications are normally reviewed and a determination of eligibility made within a few days. This is validated with the survey results with 92% of respondents indicating that their application was approved quickly.

ADA complementary paratransit regulations require an appeals process if an application is denied. Nevada County has an established appeals process and is in full compliance with this regulation. The ADA Advisory Council consisting of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council hears appeals of ADA eligibility denials. A decision is made within 30 days which is also in compliance with ADA complementary paratransit regulations.

ADA complementary paratransit regulations allow Nevada County to “establish an administrative process to suspend, for a reasonable period of time, the provision of complementary paratransit to ADA eligible individuals who establish a pattern or practice of missing scheduled trips.” A policy has been established by the Transit Services Commission (TSC) for suspending service for repeated no-shows or late cancellations. For the first incident, the passenger is notified of the policy. For the second incident, a warning is given. For the third and subsequent incident, service is suspended for 7 days, with 7 days added for additional incidents.

ADA complementary paratransit regulations require that ADA Paratransit eligible visitors be provided ADA complementary paratransit service for up to 21 days during any 365-day period. In interviews with Telecare staff, this requirement is being fully adhered to. However, no days of visitor eligibility is tracked and is currently made available “as long as the service is needed,” according to Telecare staff. According to the Transit Services Manager, abuse by visitors has not been a problem in the past, and there has not been a need to impose an official restriction on visitor use.

The ADA complementary paratransit eligibility process is in full compliance with ADA paratransit regulations.

## **ADA Complementary Paratransit Service Criteria**

ADA complementary paratransit regulations have specific service criteria for the provision of ADA complementary paratransit services. The regulations are cited below and analyzed for compliance.

### Telecare Complementary Paratransit Service Area

ADA complementary paratransit service regulations require Nevada County to “provide complementary paratransit service to origins and destinations within corridors with a width of three-fourths of a mile on each of side of each fixed route.”

The service area provision for ADA service is limited to  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of fixed route service. Exhibit 4 is the map of the ADA complementary paratransit service area required with the existing Gold Country Stage route structure. Other supplementary paratransit service beyond the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile service area and Sunday service is provided through Telecare’s mobility management efforts.

It should be noted that Route 5 between Grass Valley and Auburn is not included in the ADA corridor. The Transit Service Commission has designated Route 5 as a commuter route, which is exempt from ADA complementary paratransit regulations. The basis for this exemption is the following: “Commuter bus service may also include other service, characterized by a limited route structure, limited stops and a coordinated relationship to another mode of transportation.”

The Nevada County Transit Services Department provides an annual vehicle service hour budget to Telecare to operate the ADA Paratransit service. The number of vehicle service hours is 16,200 in FY 2010/11. Per the contract with Nevada County, Telecare has served the areas outside the  $\frac{3}{4}$  area as their vehicle service hours if their budget allows<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> The provision “ as service hours are available” was recently included in the August 2010 amendment to the Telecare contract.

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Nevada County is in compliance with ADA regulations for the ADA complementary paratransit service area. However, the 2007 adopted map is outdated and needs to be updated to reflect the actual service area to be served, including the ADA complementary paratransit corridor based on the May 2010 Gold Country Stage route changes. The ADA complementary paratransit service area has been reduced since the ADA complementary paratransit map was adopted in 2007. Individuals in portions of the 2007 map area where fixed route service is no longer being operated are being denied ADA complementary paratransit service. This is occurring mostly in the Cedar Ridge area.

The Transit Services Commission (TSC) should adopt a revised ADA complementary Paratransit service map that corresponds to the ADA Paratransit Service area in Exhibit 4. The TSC can adopt a broader service area at its discretion, but the vehicle service hours provided need to correspond to the expectations of providing service to any service area beyond that required by ADA complementary paratransit regulations.

Telecare at its discretion as a private entity can serve clients with other funding sources at its sole discretion outside of its contract with Nevada County to provide ADA complementary paratransit service.

#### Telecare Fares in Comparison to Gold Country Stage Fares

ADA complementary paratransit service regulations requires that the "fare for a trip charged to an ADA Paratransit eligible user of the complementary Paratransit service shall not exceed twice the fare charged to an individual paying full fare (ie without regard to discounts) for a trip of similar length, at a similar time of day, on the entity's fixed route system."

The current full fare of Gold Country Stage is \$1.50 for 1 zone and \$3.00 for two zones. Telecare fares are \$2.00 for a one-way ride within the ADA corridor and \$4.00 if one trip end is outside the ADA corridor. Telecare fare for ADA complementary paratransit service could be as high at \$3.00. Since Telecare fares are \$2.00 and could be up to \$3.00, Nevada County is in full compliance with ADA regulations for fare service criteria.

Telecare may charge \$4.00 for one trip end that is in the ¾ mile ADA corridor with the other trip end outside the ADA ¾ mile corridor or for trips with both ends outside the ADA corridor. In general, any paratransit services that a transit operator provides above and beyond its regulatory obligations, including service to individuals who do not fall under one of the three categories of eligibility established under the ADA, are not subject to the service criteria for ADA complementary paratransit (i.e., service area, response time, fares, trip purpose, hours and days, and capacity constraints). Nevada County may therefore elect to establish "premium charges" for service outside the ADA corridor.

### Hours and Days of Service

ADA complementary paratransit regulations require that “the complementary paratransit service shall be available throughout the same hours and days as the entity’s fixed route service.”

Telecare ADA complementary paratransit service hours are currently 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Telecare does provide service on Sundays under a separate funding agreement and this service is not part of the ADA complementary paratransit service. Gold Country Stage hours are currently from 6:30 am to 6:45 pm (excluding Route 5), Monday through Friday.

Nevada County is not in compliance with ADA regulations regarding hours of service. A Telecare ADA complementary paratransit service needs to have posted hours that match the Gold Country Stage hours.

### Response Time

ADA complementary paratransit regulations require “ the entity shall schedule and provide paratransit service to any ADA paratransit eligible person at any requested time on a particular day in response to a request for service made the previous day.” The regulations specifically require that a reservation service be made available during business hours, but also “as well as during times, comparable to normal business hours, on a day when the entity’s offices are not open before a service day.” Other response time provisions include:

- “...may negotiate pickup times with the individual, but the entity shall not require an ADA paratransit eligible individual to schedule a trip to begin more than one hour before or after the individuals departure time.”
- “..may permit advance reservations up to 14 days in advance...”

Telecare business office hours are between 8 am and 5 pm. No automated reservation system is available on Sundays for Monday trips. The question was asked in the survey of Telecare users: “Telecare doesn’t take reservations on Sundays. How do you make reservations for trips you need to make on Mondays? Responses are included in Appendix A.

On the Telecare website, it states that reservations need to be made “24 hours in advance.” ADA complementary paratransit regulations requires that reservations need to be taken on a next day basis. For example, an ADA eligible person can call at 4:45 pm on a Tuesday and ask for a 9 am trip on a Wednesday. Telecare is required to provide a trip pick-up between 8 am and 10 am.

### Trip Purpose Restrictions

ADA paratransit regulations require that Nevada County “shall not impose restrictions or priorities based on trip purpose.” According to Telecare staff administration and dispatchers no such restrictions are imposed. This was validated with the survey results. 95% of respondents replied “no” to the statement, “Have you ever been refused a trip because of the sort of trip you were taking or the sort of place you were going to?”

### Capacity Constraints

ADA paratransit regulations state that Nevada County “shall not limit the availability of complementary paratransit service to ADA paratransit eligible individuals by any of the following:

- 1) restrictions on the number of trips an individual will be provided.
- 2) waiting lists for access to the service.
- 3) any operation pattern or practice that significantly limits the availability of service to ADA paratransit eligible persons.”

Interviews with Telecare staff, the Transit Services Manager, and the survey of Telecare passengers indicate that Telecare does not have capacity constraints for ADA eligible individuals. According to Telecare records, there were no trip denials in both FY 2009/10 and FY 2008/09. ADA eligible individuals have priority for trips inside the ADA corridor over trips to be served outside the ADA corridor. 96% of Telecare respondents indicated that they could take as many trips a month as they needed to, which validates the Telecare staff claims that there are no capacity constraints.

## **Other ADA Complementary Paratransit Requirements**

### Subscription Service

Subscription service is regularly scheduled service by a passenger. For example, an ADA eligible individual who need dialysis every Tuesday can have a standing reservation for the time slot they need for dialysis. ADA complementary paratransit regulations require that “Subscription service may not absorb more than fifty percent of the number of trips available at a given time of day, unless there is non-subscription capacity.”

Discussions with Telecare management and review of monthly reports indicates that Telecare is in full compliance with this regulation. In FY 2009/10, subscriptions trips were 43% % of the total trips.

Changes in reservation system are subject to public participation requirements.

A public hearing is required, for changes to the paratransit reservations system. Any changes to the reservation system must comply with the public participation requirements of ADA Paratransit requirement. These require that public participation include: outreach, consultation with individuals with disabilities, opportunity for public comment, a public hearing and the creation of a mechanism for continued participation of persons with disabilities in the development and assessment of services to persons with disabilities.

## 5. ADA Paratransit Plan

The chapter begins with an analysis of ADA complementary paratransit demand based on a methodology developed for the Transit Cooperative Research Program. Recommended modifications to the current ADA complementary paratransit service is then made to both meet ADA compliance issues and future demand. A recommended timetable for implementation is provided in each recommendation. Finally, an operating capital budget is provided over the next five years.

### ADA Complementary Paratransit Demand

Based on a nationwide research study that developed a spreadsheet tool to estimate ADA complementary paratransit demand, the current ADA complementary paratransit demand within the  $\frac{3}{4}$  area surrounding the Gold Country Stage fixed route service is approximately 43,341.

The demand estimation methodology is based on the *Handbook for Estimating ADA Paratransit Demand*, based on TCRP report 119. The tool utilized is based on a statistical model that was estimated using data from 28 “representative systems” across the United States. The demand estimation model tool takes into account six key variables that impact ridership. The six factors that affect demand in the model include:

Population: This is estimated from Census block groups based on the ADA complementary paratransit service area in Exhibit 4. The population in the ADA service area was estimated at 30,484 based on 2000 data. Assuming the population has increased proportionally in Nevada County, the population in the ADA complementary paratransit service area increased to 33,990 in 2010.

Base Fare: The \$2.00 base fare was utilized. Demand is highly sensitive to fares.

Conditionally Eligibility: Systems that have higher percentages of applicants that are found conditionally eligible have lower demand. Nevada County does not have conditional eligibility.

Conditional Trip Determination: ADA complementary paratransit demand is much lower for systems that conduct trip-by-trip determination. Nevada County does not utilize trip-by-trip determination.

Poverty Level: High levels of poverty in a service area significantly depress demand. Countywide, the Census Bureau had a 2009 poverty rate of 9.2%. Census block data from 2000 shows that the poverty level is higher in the ADA service area than countywide. A figure of 11.0% was utilized in the model.

Effective Window: Demand is highly sensitive to standards for on-time pick-ups. The survey conducted for the ADA Paratransit Plan update shows high customer satisfaction with Telecare service and their on-time pick-ups.

It is interesting to note that national research on ADA demand found that a number of factors that are commonly believed to influence demand for ADA complementary paratransit are not in the demand estimation model, because they were not statistically significant:

- Population in older age groups: The research found that the percentage of population that is above the age of 65 and 75 did not significantly affect paratransit demand at the representative systems. In general, younger people with disabilities ride more frequently than older people.
- Incidence of disability: Census data indicate that the percentage of the population with a disability varies greatly among metropolitan areas. However, the research found no statistically significant relationship between ADA complementary paratransit demand and Census measure of the population with a disability. This may be the result of the fact that none of the questions about disability in the Census measures ability to use public transportation.
- Availability of and quality of accessible fixed-route transit: It is widely assumed that high levels of accessible transit service or high levels of transit service in general will reduce the demand for ADA complementary paratransit. However, the research did not find a statistically significant relationship between accessible or high quality transit and ADA complementary paratransit demand.

The ADA complementary paratransit demand model result of 43,341 annual complementary paratransit trips is slightly above the estimate of 40,482 for actual Telecare ridership FY 2009/10 reported in the draft of the *Western Nevada County Transit Development Plan Update*, August 2010. Telecare service hours were reduced to 16,200 vehicle service hours for FY 2010/11. This does suggest that all available resources allocated to Telecare will need to be utilized within the ADA paratransit corridor,  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile around the May 2010 Gold Country Stage route network.

The growth in ADA complementary paratransit demand will be highly sensitive to the overall population growth and the poverty level in the ADA service area. The demand estimation model predicts 1.28 ADA complementary paratransit trips per capita. The growth in demand will increase with overall population growth. It is not known how the recent economic difficulties have affected the percentage of residents below the poverty level in the ADA complementary

service area. The trend appears to be an increasing percentage below the poverty level which would have a dampening affect on demand.

## **Recommended Modifications To ADA Complementary Paratransit Service**

1. *Update the ADA complementary paratransit map to reflect the May 2010 Gold Country Stage route network and the ¾ mile boundary. Exhibit 4 presented previously is the recommended map. The Transit Services Commission has the discretion of adopting a broader map to have a larger service area than ADA-required ¾ mile. However, services to be provided with one trip end outside the ¾ mile boundary are increasingly likely to be provided through Telecare's mobility management efforts, including its Volunteer Driver Program and T.H.E. Van program. Recommended Implementation Timetable: FY 2010/11*
2. *Telecare needs to adjust its hours such that service is available at the same hours that Gold Country Stage is available. At present, the Gold Country Stage timetable indicates that service is available Monday to Friday from 6:20 am to 6:45 pm. Telecare currently limits its ride availability between 7:30 am to 5:30 pm. Recommended Implementation Timetable: FY 2010/11*
3. *Telecare needs to implement a reservation system on Sundays so that an ADA eligible passenger can make a reservation on Sunday for a Monday trip. This can be as simple as installing an answering machine that enables a passenger to leave a message with information required for a reservation. Confirmation of the trip can be made first thing Monday morning, preferable one hour prior to the requested passenger pick-up time. Recommended Implementation Timetable: FY 2010/11*
4. *Telecare should modify its advance reservation policy from 24-hour advance reservations to next day reservations. ADA regulations require that next service be provided, such that an ADA eligible person can call in during the end of regular business the previous day and request service for first thing the next day. Recommended Implementation Timetable: FY 2010/11*
5. *Telecare should regularly update its brochure and website to both reflect the above recommendations but also to provide ADA eligible individuals important information on ADA complementary paratransit service. Information on the website was recently updated, but when the above recommendations are implemented it should be updated again. A brochure with all of the pertinent ADA complementary paratransit eligibility information and service information incorporating the above information should be regularly updated. Recommended Implementation Timetable: Annually*
6. *The Transit Service Manager should regularly monitor Telecare operations to ensure that capacity constraints have not been created with the reduction in the*

*Telecare vehicle service hours budget.* The ADA complementary paratransit demand estimate presented above is a forecast based on a model, but it does indicate that the current hours allocation may not be sufficient to keep up the ADA complementary paratransit demand with the ADA paratransit corridor. This has not been a problem to date, but should be carefully monitored over the next several years. Recommended Implementation Timetable: Annually

The August 2010 draft of the Transit Development Plan Update has several recommendations that are relevant to ADA complementary paratransit service currently provided by Telecare.

## **ADA Complementary Paratransit Operating and Capital Budget**

### Operating Budget

Exhibit 5 shows an operating budget for ADA Complementary Paratransit services over the next five years. The two scenarios presented are consistent with budget scenarios presented in the Transit Development Plan Update. The base case scenario assumes that the route structure implemented on May 24, 2010 remains in place. In this scenario, the current economic environment does not improve and transit revenue challenges persist.

The core services are maintained at the existing span of service Monday to Friday and frequencies remain the same. The base case scenario assumes that the hours allocated to Telecare remain at 16,200 over the five-year planning horizon.

Under this scenario, the ADA complementary paratransit service's operating budget would increase just slightly from \$1.08 million in FY 2010/11 to \$1.18 million in FY 2014/15.

**Exhibit 5  
 ADA Complementary Paratransit Budget**

	FY 2010/11 Budget	FY 2011/12 Forecast	FY 2012/13 Forecast	FY 2013/14 Forecast	FY 2014/15 Forecast
<b>Base Case Scenario</b>					
Vehicle Service Hours (VSH)					
Telecare	16,200	16,200	16,200	16,200	16,200
Marginal Cost / VSH					
Telecare	\$ 45.32	\$ 46.68	\$ 48.08	\$ 49.52	\$ 51.01
Administrative Fixed Costs*	\$ 348,847	\$ 358,839	\$ 358,839	\$ 358,839	\$ 358,839
Telecare Contract Costs	\$ 734,196	\$ 756,222	\$ 778,909	\$ 802,276	\$ 826,344
Base Case Scenario Budget	\$ 1,083,043	\$ 1,115,061	\$ 1,137,748	\$ 1,161,115	\$ 1,185,184
<b>Partial Recovery Scenario</b>					
Vehicle Service Hours (VSH)					
Telecare	16,940	16,754	17,957	17,917	17,808
Marginal Cost / VSH					
Telecare	\$ 45.32	\$ 46.68	\$ 48.08	\$ 49.52	\$ 51.01
Administrative Fixed Costs*	\$ 355,606	\$ 337,444	\$ 368,751	\$ 336,655	\$ 335,657
Telecare Contract Costs	\$ 767,733	\$ 782,086	\$ 863,364	\$ 887,283	\$ 908,345
Mobility Mangement Support Services	\$ -	\$ 50,221	\$ 83,076	\$ 79,448	\$ 69,574
Partial Recovery Scenario Budget	\$ 1,123,339	\$ 1,169,751	\$ 1,315,191	\$ 1,303,385	\$ 1,313,576

\* The Transit Services Division fixed costs for Gold Country Stage and Telecare are allocated based on vehicle service hours.

The partial recovery scenario assumes that a mobility management plan consensus process is successful. The partial recovery scenario also assumes that the economy improves over the next five years, with a partial recovery generating 90% of the sales tax revenues (Local Transportation Funds) generated in Fiscal Year 2007/08. In the partial recovery scenario, Telecare vehicle service hours would increase from 16,940 in FY 2010/11 to 17,808 vehicle service hours in FY 2014/15. In the partial recovery scenario, the ADA complementary paratransit service budget would increase from \$1.23 million in FY 2010/11 to \$1.31 in FY 2014/15, an increase of approximately \$800,000 over a five-year period.

### Capital Budget

Exhibit 6 is the fleet replacement requirements of the Telecare fleet. It would cost approximately \$949,153 over a five-year period for the 15 cutaway buses that would need to be replaced. The Western Nevada County Transit Development Plan recommended that Nevada County procure and own the Telecare buses. Most of the funding would come from the Proposition 1B, PTMISEA fund, supplemented by FTA 5310 funding and some State Transit Assistance monies in the Partial Recovery Scenario.

**Exhibit 6  
 Telecare Fleet Replacement Plan**

<b>Vehicle(s)</b>	<b>Grant Order Year</b>	<b>Delivery &amp; Plan Year</b>	<b>Model Year</b>	<b>Replacement Vehicle Make</b>	<b>Replacement Vehicle Model</b>
<b>Telecare Buses</b>					
2,3	FY 2010-11	FY 2010-11	2001	Ford	Caltrans Type 1B
14	FY 2010-11	FY 2011-12	2003	Ford	Caltrans Type 7-29
15	FY 2010-11	FY 2011-12	2002	Ford	Caltrans Type 2
17-20	FY 2011-12	FY 2012-13	2003	Ford	Caltrans Type 5
22	FY 2011-12	FY 2012-13	2005	Ford	Caltrans Type 5
23	FY 2011-12	FY 2012-3	2006	Ford	Caltrans Type 5
24,25	FY 2012-13	FY 2013-14	2006	Ford	Caltrans Type 3
26,27	FY 2013-14	FY 2014-15	2007	Ford	Type 7-29

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## APPENDIX A TELECARE SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND KEY FINDINGS

### *Survey Design*

The survey was designed and written by the TRC team based on specific criteria that needed to be monitored for ADA compliance. Areas of inquiry included:

- The eligibility certification process
- The Appeals process
- Visitor access
- Reservation/telephone system to access trip reservations
- Adherence to ADA service criteria equivalency

The Survey was designed to be completed in 5-10 minutes in a very clear and easily understood format. To ensure that the completion time was under the targeted 10 minutes and that the questions were clear, TRC ran this survey with a small test audience prior to deployment.

The Survey included 17 questions, made up of five sub sections that matched the ADA Paratransit equivalency criteria as follows:

- Application Process
- Service Area
- Service Times
- Experience of Arranging Trips
- General

### *Deployment*

The survey was launched on April 1st, 2010, and was sent via United States mail. The last response was received on May 4, 2010.

### *Survey Audience*

The Survey was sent to 350 Telecare passengers who had used Telecare services within the past three months. Even though these were recent passengers 30 letters were returned as undeliverable, meaning that a total of 320 surveys were actually delivered to Telecare users. All returned surveys were sent to the Telecare office for updating.

### *Response Rate*

Out of 320 delivered surveys, 172 were completed—a high response rate of 53%.

## DETAILED FINDINGS

### *Section 1: Application Process*

This section contained the following questions:

1. On a scale of 1-5 how easy did you find the Telecare application process?
2. Did you need help understanding the application form?
3. Did you have any problems with the application process itself? If yes, what were the problems?
4. Were you informed quickly that your application had been approved? If no, how long was the delay?

There was overwhelming response that the Telecare application process was easy to use. A few people wrote on their surveys that they weren't aware of applying and therefore didn't answer the question. Almost all respondents said that they had applied without help and have very few problems with the process and very little time delay in hearing whether they were eligible for the service.

The tables and charts below show responses to questions 1-4 of the survey:

<b>1. On a scale of 1-5, how easy did you find the Telecare application process?</b>		
Not easy at all	2	1%
	0	0%
	6	4%
	33	18%
Very easy	126	77%
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>2. Did you need help understanding the application form?</b>		
Yes	4	2%
No	159	98%
<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>3. Did you have any problems with the application process itself? (e.g. were there delays?)</b>		
Yes	6	4%
No	157	96%
<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>4. Were you informed quickly that your application had been approved?</b>		
Yes	135	92%
No	12	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>100%</b>

There were six comments to Question 3 which asked whether people had problems with the application process as follows:

- It took too long in the application process to tell me I was outside your normal territory.
- Busy staff
- Had to get doctor's recommendation – rightfully
- I was rejected for a ride twice so I called Transit Services to ask if this was standard policy. I was told "I'll check on it" and then received a call saying we will give you permission one time. It went well with a very nice and efficient driver. The third time I called I was told "we can't promise anything" because I couldn't get an exact time until 24 hours before appt. I can understand this and received the card in the mail.
- Sent in my application but did not get an answer for a month
- Telecare makes everything as easy as possible

There were nine comments to Question 4 which asked whether respondents were informed quickly that their application had been approved and if not how long was the delay:

- Wasn't informed. Just received card in the mail.
- 5 day delay
- Paperwork got lost in the mail but was replaced quickly upon my follow up. Once I was mailed other people's monthly passes but a rep came and picked them up immediately after I phoned. It amounted to quite a bit of money!
- Did not receive as yet
- 2+ months
- 2 months
- Never got a form. I don't understand.
- About a month
- Don't remember

### ***Section 2: Service Area***

This section of the survey contained the following questions:

5. Do you get picked up and dropped off at all the places you need to get to?
6. Have you ever been refused service because you wanted to be picked up or dropped off outside the Telecare service area?

From comments received, it appears that most passengers have a good understanding of where the service area limits are and therefore don't expect to be picked up or dropped off outside the area.

The tables and charts below show responses to questions 5-6 of the survey:

5. Do you get picked up and dropped off at all the places you need to get to?		
Yes	160	96%
No	6	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>

6. Have you ever been refused service because you wanted to be picked up or dropped off outside the Telecare service area?		
Yes	8	5%
No	156	95%
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100%</b>

There were four comments to the question of which places people couldn't get picked up and dropped off:

- I do not understand the limits of Telecare's borders. A map showing coverage area would be helpful.
- GV Post Office
- Hospital and doctor's office
- I want to go to the mall!

The following were mentioned as places where Telecare refused service:

- Lake Wildwood even though the bus picks up on each side of me
- Banner
- Lake of the Pines Wolf Road
- Rocker Road in Rough and Ready
- Rocker Road, Rough and Ready

And two additional comments:

- I think they might have said it would cost more and more than my budget can handle.
- I check before asking

**Section 3: Service Times**

The five questions in this section aimed at finding out whether the service times, both in scheduling and making Telecare trips, were satisfactory.

- 7 Telecare doesn't take reservations on Sundays. How do you make reservations for trips you need to take on Mondays?
- 8 Can you always arrange Telecare rides at times you need them? If No or Sometimes, how long was the time difference between the time you wanted to be picked up or dropped off and the time Telecare actually picked you up or dropped you off?
- 9 Do you get to your destination in a reasonable amount of time considering the actual length of your trip? If no, how much longer do you think your trip takes than it should?
- 10 Have you ever wanted to travel as early as 6:00 a.m. or as late as 6:00 p.m. and not been able to?

11 Have you had a trip scheduled and been bumped from the scheduled trip because an ADA eligible trip was given priority?

The majority of Telecare passengers understood the problems of booking for trips on Mondays and understood that they had to make arrangements for Monday trips well in advance. (See list of answers about how people made reservations for Mondays in Attachment A-1). Most people stated that they could always arrange rides at the times they needed them and the vast majority of people responded that they got to their destination in time. The majority said that they did not want to travel before 6:00 a.m. or as late as 6:00 p.m. although in general comments some people did mention that a later service would enable them to go to more community events (See AppendixD for general comments). Virtually nobody had been bumped from a trip because an ADA eligible trip was given priority, although it is hard to know whether they would have been told this at the time of booking.

The tables and charts below show responses to questions 8-11 of the survey (question 7 was an open-ended question about making bookings for Mondays. The comments about this can be read in Attachment A-1)

<b>8. Can you always arrange Telecare rides at times you need them?</b>		
Yes	122	75%
No	14	9%
Sometimes	27	17%

<b>9. Do you get to your destination in a reasonable amount of time considering the actual length of your trip?</b>		
Yes	158	98%
No	3	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>10. Have you ever wanted to travel as early as 6:00 a.m. or as late as 6:00 p.m. and not been able to?</b>		
Yes	23	15%
No	135	85%
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>11. Have you ever had a trip scheduled and been bumped from the scheduled trip because an ADA eligible trip was given priority?</b>		
Yes	4	3%
No	154	97%
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100%</b>

There were thirty answers to the secondary question “How long was the time difference between the time you wanted to be picked up or dropped off and the time Telecare actually picked you up or dropped you off” varied between “never longer than five minutes” to “one to two hours”. For a full list of answers see Attachment A-2.

There were three answers to the secondary question “How much longer do you think your trip takes than it should:

- They most always come too early arriving at the Doctor's office before it is open!
- 10 minutes
- Depends on number to be picked up, their abilities and where they're going.

**Section 4: Experience of Arranging Trips**

The four questions in this section aimed at discovering how easy it was for Telecare passenger to arrange their trips and whether they could use Telecare as often as the needed.

12. How easy is it for you to arrange Telecare trips?
13. Are you ever put on hold? If yes, for how long?
14. Can you take as many trips a month as you need to? If no, what was the reason Telecare gave for refusing your trip?
15. Have you ever been refused a trip because of the sort of trip you were taking or the sort of place you were going to? If yes, what was the reason Telecare gave for refusing your trip?

The majority of respondents found it easy to arrange Telecare trips, with nobody saying that it “wasn’t at all easy” while ninety-six people said they’d been put on hold at some time. The length of time people said they were put on hold varied from “usually no more than a minute” to “a day” which may have been an overstatement. A full list of responses can be found in Attachment A-3.

There were a variety of answers to the secondary question “What was the reason Telecare gave for refusing your trip?”

- No time for me
- No time on van available
- Discontinued Saturday service
- Because of price
- Provided I call at least 3 days earlier than needed
- Either doctors or hospital called for appointments too late and Telecare was booked or Emergency room- impossible for booking or Can't afford or not able to maneuver due to handicap
- I make as many trips as I am physically able during the hours of operation

The tables and charts below show responses to questions 12-15 of the survey.

12. How easy is it for you to arrange Telecare trips?		
Not easy at all	0	0%
	3	2%
	10	6%
	39	25%
Very easy	105	67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100%</b>

13. Are you ever put on hold?		
Yes	98	61%
No	62	39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100%</b>

14. Can you take as many trips a month as you need to?		
Yes	152	96%
No	7	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100%</b>

15. Have you ever been refused a trip because of the sort of trip you were taking or the sort of place you were going to?		
Yes	8	5%
No	158	95%
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Section 5: General**

This section asked how satisfied respondents felt with the service they receive from Telecare and whether they had any comments or suggestions. There were 97 comments and suggestions with the overwhelming majority making compliments about the service they receive. All comments and suggestions can be read in Attachment A-4.

16. How satisfied are you with Telecare's service?

16. On a scale of 1-5 how satisfied are you with Telecare's service?		
Not satisfied at all	0	0%
	0	0%
	6	4%
	23	14%
Very satisfied	139	83%
<b>Total</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Attachment A-1

## How do you make Reservations for Mondays?

Call on Friday  
Call on Friday  
Call Friday  
Call on Friday  
I would call on Friday, or earlier.  
Call on Friday  
Call on Friday silly!  
Call Friday or before  
I look in my crystal ball on Friday mornings or earlier. It's a problem.  
Make appt a week before on Friday  
Usually by Friday before  
Call ahead--like Friday.  
Call on Friday  
Make reservation on Friday  
Call on Friday  
Call Friday  
Call Friday  
Call on Friday  
I would call Friday  
We call on a Friday but basically we have the same times and places every week.  
Call on Thursday or Friday  
I call on Friday  
Call on previous Thursday or Friday  
I make sure to make them on Fridays  
Call Fridays  
Try to remember to call before Friday - Sunday answering machine too late for sign up.  
Call Thursday or Friday before the appt.  
I call on Friday before  
Call on Friday or Saturday  
Make them on Thursday or Friday  
Friday am at the latest  
Call on the appropriate Friday  
Make reservations on Thursday  
Springhill Hospital makes arrangements weeks ahead, so far.  
Call on previous Thursday  
Call on Thursday or Friday  
Call on previous Thursday  
Call ahead of time  
Make reservations 2 weeks ahead  
Call ahead of time  
Prior to Sunday  
I book 1-2 weeks in advance

Western Nevada County  
ADA Complementary Paratransit Plan Update

Appendix A  
Final December 2010

Make reservations well in advance of service needed on Mondays  
Call ahead  
Make the reservations before Monday if possible  
Call ahead  
Phone five days ahead  
Call ahead  
I try to schedule them ahead.  
Book ahead  
I call as far ahead as I can.  
One week in advance if possible.  
Call a few days early  
Make reservations in advance of service needed on Mondays  
Call a few days in advance  
Make reservations several days ahead  
Call 1-2 weeks before M-F  
Days before  
Call ahead of weekends  
Make reservations ahead of time  
Work it out before  
Plan ahead  
I make reservations by phone 1 to 2 weeks in advance  
Call ahead  
I try to call 12 to 15 days ahead of time  
Call early.  
Call during the week before  
Call the week before  
I call earlier in the week.  
Call a week early  
Call the week before  
I call a week before  
I phone the preceding week!  
Call the week before  
Call week before  
Call early in the week  
Call on week days  
Reserve the week before  
Reserve the week before  
call the week before  
usually call 5 days before date needed  
Call the week before  
I make reservations the week before.  
Call the week before.  
Call the week before or sooner if I know soon enough  
Call week before  
Call a week before

Make reservations in advance a week or so  
Call the previous week or 2 weeks before needed  
Call during the week to make appt. for the next week.  
Call a week before  
I make reservations a week ahead  
Call the week before  
Call 1 week earlier  
Call the week before. For emergencies make other arrangements.  
I call a week ahead of time.  
Call early in the week before  
Call one week ahead  
Just call on Fridays  
Call the week before, Tues/Weds if possible  
I call during the week before Sunday  
Call one week ahead.  
Make the week before  
Call the week before  
I call at least a week ahead--if possible.  
I make them weeks before  
Week before  
Early in the prior week  
Call during the previous week  
Depend on family  
Get other trip with friends  
Call 10 days in advance  
Haven't needed this  
I've been informed 2 weeks in advance is the proper way to make reservations. Sometimes we don't have that kind of time  
On a permanent schedule  
Standing reservations  
Telephone Audrey  
By telephone  
Take bus

### Attachment A-2

## What was the time difference between the time you wanted to be picked up and dropped off and the time Telecare actually picked you up and dropped you off?

Half an hour

Half an hour

Only a problem when they are very busy, so I arrange another time.

Today 1 hour

Couldn't get a ride to or from where I needed to go.

15 minutes

1/2 hour difference but it worked out for me anyway.

15 minutes to 1/2 hour.

I was forgotten once and another time the driver had an accident.

Half an hour

My rare problem has been no buses available if I call 1-2 weeks before needed.

AN hour at most. Fitting around MD appts -- especially return trips -- is the most awkward thing to estimate.

half an hour

A few months ago you were so swamped you never had time to explain. I canceled my appointment. It wasn't an emergency.

Must call to schedule a ride well ahead of time and Mondays are especially busy. Once scheduled, 15 minutes.

Never more than 5 minutes

1/2 hour

This is not the issue. Due to cutbacks you have to call well ahead to get a ride. A next day ride can be tough to get.

Calling for emergency never more than 15 minutes. Have come within 10 minutes.

15 minutes

Have been put on standby sometimes

I'd like Saturday service

Only once, over a year ago. That driver is no longer there. Picked up 40 minutes late.

I can't arrange for rides on Saturdays

Was not able to ride one time because all slots were already full

15 minutes

Sometimes not that day

1-2 hours

Waited 1.5 hours in a doctor's office for a ride home

Rarely more than 30-40 minutes

**Attachment A-3**  
**How long are you kept on hold?**

Very short time

A couple of seconds

Reasonable length of time

Not sure of time

5 minutes at the longest

10 to 20 seconds

5 minutes

Not very long. But that's because they are already on the phone with someone else so that's understandable

Reasonable time.

Briefly

Few minutes

1-2 minutes

Short time

Few minutes

3 or 4 minutes

One minute

Not long, perhaps a couple of minutes

One minute

5 minutes maybe

One minute

from 2-3 minutes

One minute

20 minutes

5 days

A few minutes

5 minutes only--never long

Not long

15 secs

5-10 minutes, but doesn't happen often

3-4 minutes

Up to 5 minutes

5 minutes

Up to about 3 minutes

A short time--3 minutes

2-3 minutes

Short time

Couple of minutes

Few minutes

Maybe 3 minutes. No problem.

3-5 minutes

A few minutes--not long

1 minute or less, otherwise told to call back.

2 minutes  
Sometimes 2-3 days  
Very short time  
A few minutes  
Short time  
Less than one minute  
Was told to call back  
A few minutes - no problem  
Not long  
A day  
2 minutes  
Reasonable time  
10 minutes  
10 minutes as most  
Just seconds  
1-2 minutes  
Short time  
Called one day and had to call back the next day  
1/2 hour  
Occasionally, 3-5 minutes  
5 minutes  
Not long  
No longer than 5 minutes  
For several days  
5 minutes  
A few days  
Rarely--1 minute at most  
A few minutes  
Never more than a few minutes  
Just a few minutes  
Maybe a minute--max.  
5-10 minutes  
A few minutes  
Not long  
One day  
Seconds  
Not long  
5 minutes  
5 minutes  
Very short time  
2-5 minutes  
It's never been very long.  
Two or three minutes  
5-10 minutes  
One minute

Usually no more than a minute

5 minutes

2-3 minutes

Usually no more than a minute

5 minutes

Briefly, a minute or less

2-5 minutes

1-2 minutes

Up to a few minutes

### AttachmentA-4

## Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Service is outstanding in all regards. Telecare workers are a special breed.

It is a wonderful service, you should be very proud. The gentlemen who drive have always been polite and helpful. For a person who can no longer drive it is a godsend!

Service is outstanding in all regards. Telecare workers are a special breed.

Feliz and I are both very satisfied with all the wonderful services Telecare provides and all the wonderful people we have contacted.

All of the drivers are very pleasant and helpful. I really appreciate having this service as I don't drive.

Telecare provides indispensable service. Telecare takes me to the grocery store, to medical appointments and to church on Sunday. I appreciate how helpful the drivers are. I don't know what I would do without Telecare.

Your staff is remarkable in the service they extend and the courtesy with which they carry out their duties. Keep it up and thank you!

Thank you for your excellent service

Telecare is very nice and respectful. I pray to God at night that God send his angels of protection on every Telecare driver. Plus that in no means the government cut our best service into his town. That's why I would never move out of here. Because if I ever lose my car or way of transportation I can depend on Telecare. Keep up the good work.

I think the drivers are very nice. I'm thankful we have Telecare. I don't know what in heaven's name I would do without it. All the drivers I've ridden with are very courteous, thoughtful and caring. We are so Blessed. I hope everyone appreciates them as much as I do.

I don't know what I would do without Telecare. I am 93 years old and have many appts. They are very helpful. Bless them all who take care of me.

Excellent, excellent service -- thank goodness for this convenient service!

It is a wonderful service. Every driver you have is the best.

The drivers are very helpful every time I use Telecare.

Wonderful Service!! Great drivers!!

I thank you for providing this service. I would be lost without you.

Telecare is always very prompt. Very helpful and friendly drivers--appreciate them very much.

Your staff is excellent--they always find a way to fit me in. Wish you received more funding, for example Saturdays and after 5pm. Also, maybe telephone answering machine for last-minute trips for nights and weekends.

Telecare has been very good to me. I live outside the city and have never been refused a bus.

Telecare keeps me in my home. I cannot walk and use a wheelchair. The drivers and office help are so helpful and kind. What would I do without Telecare?

I love Telecare

Your drivers deserve a medal for the care and concern and help to the riders. Most of us appreciate this! I live close to your office and the Telecare bus' Cedar Ridge 'Y', and my fare was doubled. That seems unfair when they go many miles to Penn Valley and Nevada City at lower cost.

I am very satisfied

Very nice and caring drivers. Appreciate the service!!!

This is a great service for us. Every driver is helpful and courteous. We appreciate everything.

Telecare has been prompt and very satisfactory to me.

Find service very good

I am truly grateful for Telecare Service!

Everyone I have dealt with at Telecare has been polite and helpful. They've made my loss of independence a little less painful, and I extend my gratitude to all Telecare providers!

I hope you will be able to continue. Most of my rides are to doctors at Kaiser, either Eureka Road, Roseville or Sacramento.

I'm moving out of the area. I will miss the whole bunch of you. Have a good future and thank you for many great years! I couldn't have managed without you.

I'm very satisfied, but can't write well enough to tell you.

Thank you for being there.

I think you have great people working for you. They are polite, clean-looking and helpful. Good Company!

This is a vital service in the community and it is important to keep it going. The only complaint I have is the need for smaller, less gas consuming vehicles as vans often run empty except for one passenger.

I'm happy to have this service.

I really appreciate this company's service!

I have found the employees to be courteous, kind, and most helpful. And a blessing to us all. Thank you!

I don't know how I would get around town without your service. I thank you very much.

I am very thankful for the service you provide

There are issues, but they are minor in comparison to what a godsend Telecare is to me. I am not well enough to get to public transportation or to carry groceries or laundry from the bus stop. I have no car and no dependable friends to help out. I don't know what I would ever do without Telecare. Your staff is amazing. Eric is very kind and helpful and all of your drivers are really super people. Patient, kind, considerate. All in all, bravo Telecare for doing a great job and providing such a valuable service.

Very happy with Telecare

Drivers are always courteous and helpful. Scheduling staff very friendly and accommodating.

Thank you. I work and you save me many trips so I have no lost time at work. Good job. You are most helpful always. Bless you all.

Please keep up the good work. I think it is a very good service.

Telecare is the very Best organization in our county.

I mostly have to book several days ahead. Everyone is very polite and I am so thankful for Telecare.

Very grateful for this service

I'm very thankful we have Telecare service. Since I don't drive it is very helpful. All the staff are great.

Keep it up! I'd be lost without Telecare!

The office manager arranged Telecare for Yoshi. She has only tried it 1 time, but hopes to try again. She was impressed how kind and helpful the driver was--following her to the door. Thank you!

This service is the best. All drivers are pleasantly polite and lots of fun to visit with during the trips. Way to go Telecare! Thanks for the service.

I get very good service including church service on Sunday, sometimes.

I really feel extremely satisfied with the service, the drivers are always courteous and friendly and informative, and go out of their way to help when needed. Thank you so very much for your service

A wonderful service for those of us without a car, for doctor and other important appointments. Very grateful for this service. Am making donations.

I have been given excellent service!! I find the drivers to be efficient, courteous, kind and helpful. Congratulations to Telecare and thank you.

Very satisfied, particularly in dealing with Audrey (Office) and Lloyd (driver to 'Helpful Hands")  
Telecare is a credit to the community!

The drivers have always been very helpful and cheerful!!

Telecare has been a lifesaver for me since vision problems caused me to quit driving. Drivers and dispatchers are always courteous and knowledgeable--so very helpful. Thank you

Wonderful helpful drivers Great person setting up the trips

Love you all!

A great service. Thank you

You are doing a great job. I couldn't stay in my own house if you were to cease this fine service.

I am very satisfied with Telecare.

I have found the staff (office and drivers) to be wonderful. The office has worked hard to fulfill my scheduling needs, and 90% of the time has been able to get me to my appointments. The drivers help everyone on and off the bus and entertain us during the rides. It is a wonderful service.

I think it is a privilege to have this service.

It's very nice. Drivers always helpful.

I have been very satisfied with Telecare. I try to stay within the guidelines that were given to me four years ago when I first started Telecare. The personnel, both in scheduling and taking the bus have been great. No complaints

Your team is awesome

There are times I would be lost without it. I use TC primarily for Dr appts and would be lost without it as I have frequent appts.

I applaud the office staff and drivers. They try very hard to meet my needs and they continue in spite of cut backs. In 4 years of patronage, I was late for an appointment by 5 minutes. That's remarkable. I depend wholly on Telecare for my transportation. God bless 'em.

At times treated as a nuisance when calling to schedule a ride

Please inform your drivers 15 minutes early for pick-up is not good. Arriving for appts an hour early is hard on those with ailments. Thank you!

Used to be able to call 24 hours in advance. Now have to call 1 week in advance. This is the only problem I have with Telecare.

The woman on the phone needs to get another job. She's rude to us sick and elderly. Telecare wouldn't let me go to Raleys to pick up my meds but they did pick up a lady having her nails done. Monday morning pickup driver didn't even help me off the bus. They are not consistent so I can't depend on them when I have to. Diane is one of the best drivers I've had.

I'm sorry there have been cutbacks

We need Sat and Sunday service even if the proce is \$3 eachway.

On one trip the driver was evidently new or didn't know the area because he really took me "around Robin Hood's barn" and wasted a lot of gasoline!

I talked to William Derick who was manager at that time. I was having a problem getting rides then. I told him I'd been paying taxes here since 1951 and should be able to get rides. He sent me letter to give to Telecare to tell them I was eligible always for rides. If I had any problem he said I should call him. there are a lot of people moving in and haven't paid taxes like I have and I think that people that lived here longer should come first. I am 90 years old, have a heart problem, emphysema and macular degeneration.

I miss Saturday service. I'm not able to attend many community activities that happen at the weekends. I'm in an electric wheelchair.

Sometimes wish I could do short notice or one way trips. Please send out a notification refresher of trip rules plus a map of coverage area. Would like to book on shorter notice (my illnesses have flare-ups) Would like one way trip option, so if health permits, I could use regular bus or come back from different locale after a short walk. This might make life cheaper/easier for Telecare too. Thank you for offering Telecare services that are so appreciated. Also rarely meet a "grumpy" driver" - So important!

When the phone person says after looking a while "call me back tomorrow" or "later"- it seems they should call you back with "You're scheduled for" or "we can't do it". Your drivers are terrific!

Please look at #s on service times. I need to understand more about my card.

The drivers need to look at their paperwork so they don't assume facts which are not true anymore; and the dispatchers need to write down each passenger that is going on the bus that day.

Would it save money to run a few taxi-type vehicles for people who don't need wheelchairs. The buses are mostly empty or only have 2 passengers.

The only reason I asked for rides is medical people will not allow me to drive home after a procedure and I have no-one left in this area to give me a ride. I'm willing to pay more within reason for assistance. The cab I had to use when I was rejected by Telecare was \$50-\$60 each trip which is pretty steep for an old retired guy. I even tried hitch hiking in nice clothes, arm in sling and a \$10 bill in hand. No takers.

Drivers have been very helpful. Background noise in your office makes it hard to hear your dispatcher.

Cutting services is not the answer, even due to lack of funding.

Can a same day emergency be handled?

I would like to suggest: The people at Eskaton and Quail Ridge have their own buses, yet many use Telecare to go to lunch, get hair done, etc. Just wondering... Most of us do not even have a bus stop close enough when you are disabled, or handicapped, or walking. Thank you guys. You are all GREAT and I am THANKFUL TO HAVE YOU.

No driver should decide whether a person can walk to destination

The drivers need to pay attention to their paperwork so they don't get the destinations messed up.

Please communicate with your riders a little more, e.g. when there is a delay arranging a ride.

It would be great if Telecare resumed Saturday service.

Later hours would help seniors get to community events which don't usually happen until 7:00 pm or so.

When calling to arrange a ride, there is one female who answers the phone who is rather unfriendly and curt. I hate it when she answers! Don't want to use names but maybe you can check it out.

