



PUBLIC WORKS

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CITY COUNCIL INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM

Date: April 17, 2026

To: Cupertino City Council

From: Chad Mosley, Director of Public Works

Re: Silicon Valley Hopper Ridership and Program Costs

Background

SV Hopper is a public, on-demand microtransit program serving Cupertino and southern Santa Clara (with expansion into north Santa Clara scheduled for July 2026). The service is designed to provide reliable first/last-mile mobility, improve access to regional passenger rail, and reduce the need for single-occupancy vehicle travel. Managed by Cupertino in partnership with Santa Clara and operated by Via Transportation (Nomad LLC.), the service uses dynamic routing algorithms to match riders and enable ridesharing.

Program Partnership and Expenses

Cupertino staff are the primary contact for all grant administration and communications with Caltrans, VTA, and Via management. Agency meetings between the City of Cupertino and Santa Clara staff are held weekly to review and discuss operational and programmatic matters. Santa Clara and Cupertino staff also attend weekly meetings with Via staff to discuss program operations, ridership trends, and any other relevant topics. Cupertino and Santa Clara both have access to online data and ticketing platforms where rider data is collected.

The SV Hopper program is funded through a combination of local and grant funding. Initially, an \$8.5M Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) award from the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) was secured which funded 50% of a four-year continuation of the initial pilot program. Subsequently, SV Hopper was awarded \$500,000 in Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) funding for service in

FY25/26 (year 3 of 4) and \$726,979 in 2016 Measure B Innovative Transit funding for FY26/27 (year 4 of 4).

In addition to pursuing traditional competitive grants, since 2022, staff also submits annual requests for Congressional discretionary funding for SV Hopper through the Community Project Funding (CPF) program. In FY 2024/25, Cupertino asked Congressman Ro Khanna to advance a budget proposal that would fully fund the program. After three unsuccessful attempts, staff revised its strategy in FY 2025/26 and requested a \$6M appropriation to fully fund a fifth year of SV Hopper service. Although the full request was not awarded, Cupertino did receive \$1.2M in CPF funding that could support future SV Hopper operations. Staff will work with Congressman Khanna’s office and Caltrans, which administers the federal CPF funds, to determine whether there is flexibility to advance those funds for use in Year 4. A similar \$6M budget request was also submitted to Assemblymember Patrick Ahrens Office in February to extend SV Hopper service for a fifth year.

The non-grant-funded costs of the program are shared between Cupertino and Santa Clara based on the geographic area served within each city during each operating year. For the program's first three years, Cupertino covers 58% of these costs, while Santa Clara covers 42%. This distribution changes in the fourth year of the program with the expansion into northern Santa Clara. Starting in FY 26/27, Cupertino will be responsible for 39% of the non-grant-funded costs, and Santa Clara will cover the remaining 61%, matching the new service area’s geographic distribution.

The program’s long-term viability depends on diversified funding strategies, including grant support and exploration of new local and partnership-based funding mechanisms to sustain service beyond current funding horizons.

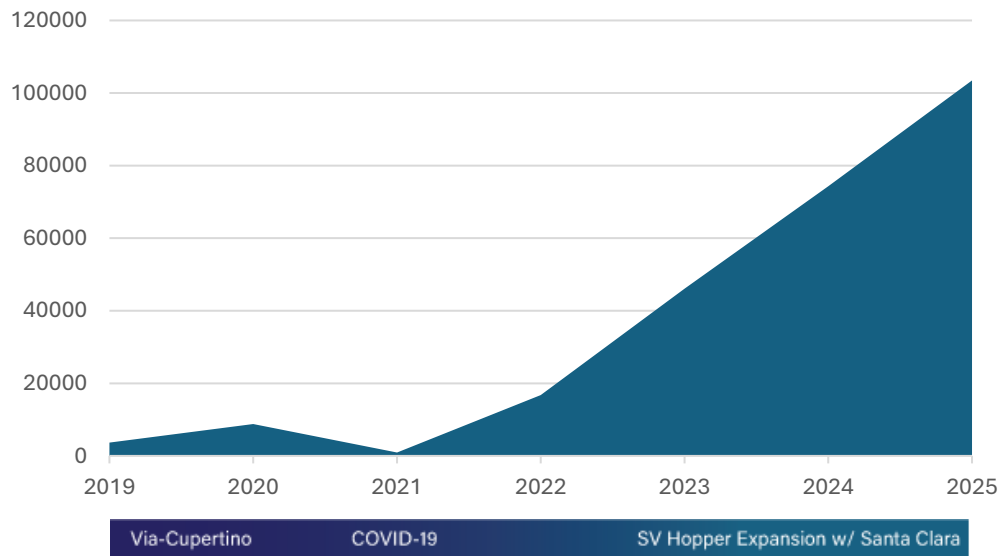
Total Program Costs (Grant and Municipal Funds)									
Phase	Fiscal Year	City of Cupertino % Service Area	City of Cupertino	City of Santa Clara % Service Area	City of Santa Clara	TIRCP	TFCA	Measure B	Total Program Cost
1	FY 23/24	58%	\$2,655,941	42%	\$1,923,267	\$5,561,000	-	-	\$2,764,381
	FY 24/25						-	-	\$3,801,453
	FY 25/26						\$500,000	-	\$4,074,374
2	FY 26/27	39%	\$850,056	61%	\$1,329,575	\$2,904,000		\$726,979	\$5,810,610
Total			\$3,505,997		\$3,252,842	\$8,465,000	\$500,000	\$726,979	\$16,450,819

Ridership and Cost per Passenger

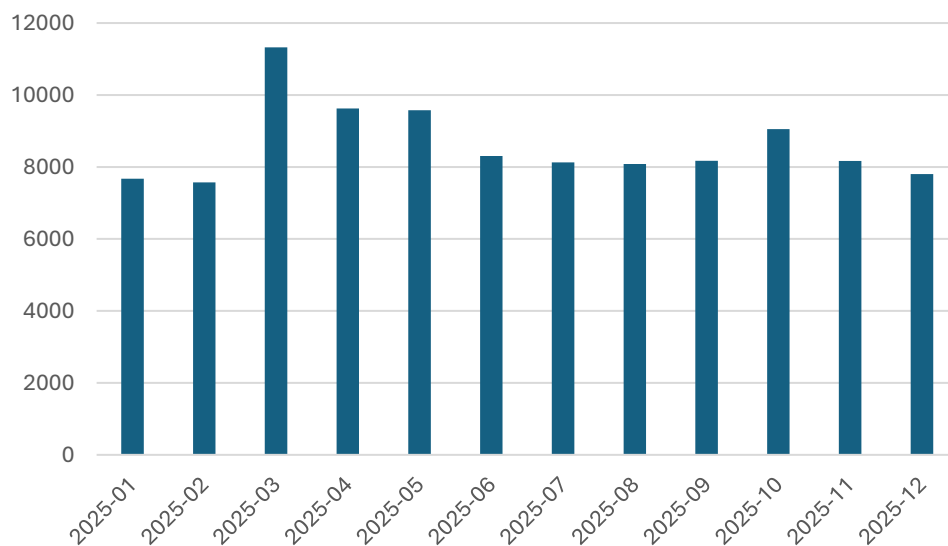
SV Hopper achieved a monthly ridership record of 11,324 riders in March 2025 and averaged 8,622 monthly riders in 2025.

In 2025, SV Hopper's cost per passenger, after accounting for TIRCP funding, was \$15.91. This reflects the fact that TIRCP covers 50% of the contract costs. Based on the geographic cost-sharing arrangement between Cupertino and Santa Clara, Cupertino's per-passenger subsidy was \$9.23.

SV Hopper Lifetime Completed Rides



SV Hopper 2025 Completed Rides



Demographics

SV Hopper is a partnership with the City of Santa Clara, and we do not segment the ridership base by assumed residency. However, staff does conduct semi-regular rider demographic surveys. The most recent being 2025, and the results are shown below.

SV Hopper Service Area		
Gender	SV Hopper (N=457)*	ACS 2023**
Male	43%	52%
Female	57%	48%
Age Category	SV Hopper (N=457)	ACS 2023
18 to 24	18%	12%
25 to 34	12%	24%
35 to 44	13%	19%
45 to 54	19%	15%
55 to 64	13%	14%
65 to 74	15%	9%
75 to 84	8%	4%
85 and older	3%	2%

The SV Hopper numbers reflect the demographics of 457 survey respondents who chose to participate in the rider survey, while the ACS numbers reflect the broader population living within the SV Hopper service area based on the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

Next Steps

Staff continues to pursue funding opportunities as they arise and plans to return to Council in May with a program update and a possible proposal to submit a Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) Cycle 8 application. While the exact scope and program details are still being refined, the limited grant funding programs for microtransit makes TIRCP the strongest opportunity to secure significant, long-term external funding support.

Sustainability Impact

SV Hopper is a zero-emission, on-demand public microtransit program. As a first-mile/last-mile connection to commuter rail, local bus, and regional transit, SV Hopper helps reduce reliance on single-occupant vehicle trips. Because SV Hopper operates with an all-electric fleet, local trips provided by the service generate no tailpipe emissions, creating a positive environmental benefit by both replacing potential gasoline-powered vehicle trips and improving access to transit for longer regional trips.

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impact for receiving this report.

City Work Program (CWP) Item/Description

No

Council Goal:

Transportation, Quality of Life and Environmental Sustainability

California Environmental Quality Act

No California Environmental Quality Act impact.

Prepared by: Matthew Schroeder, Senior Transportation Planner

Reviewed by: Chad Mosley, Public Works Director

Approved for Submission by: Tina Kapoor, City Manager