County Connection

# Youth Ride Free Pilot Update

**Pranjal Dixit** | Manager of Planning

# Who are we?

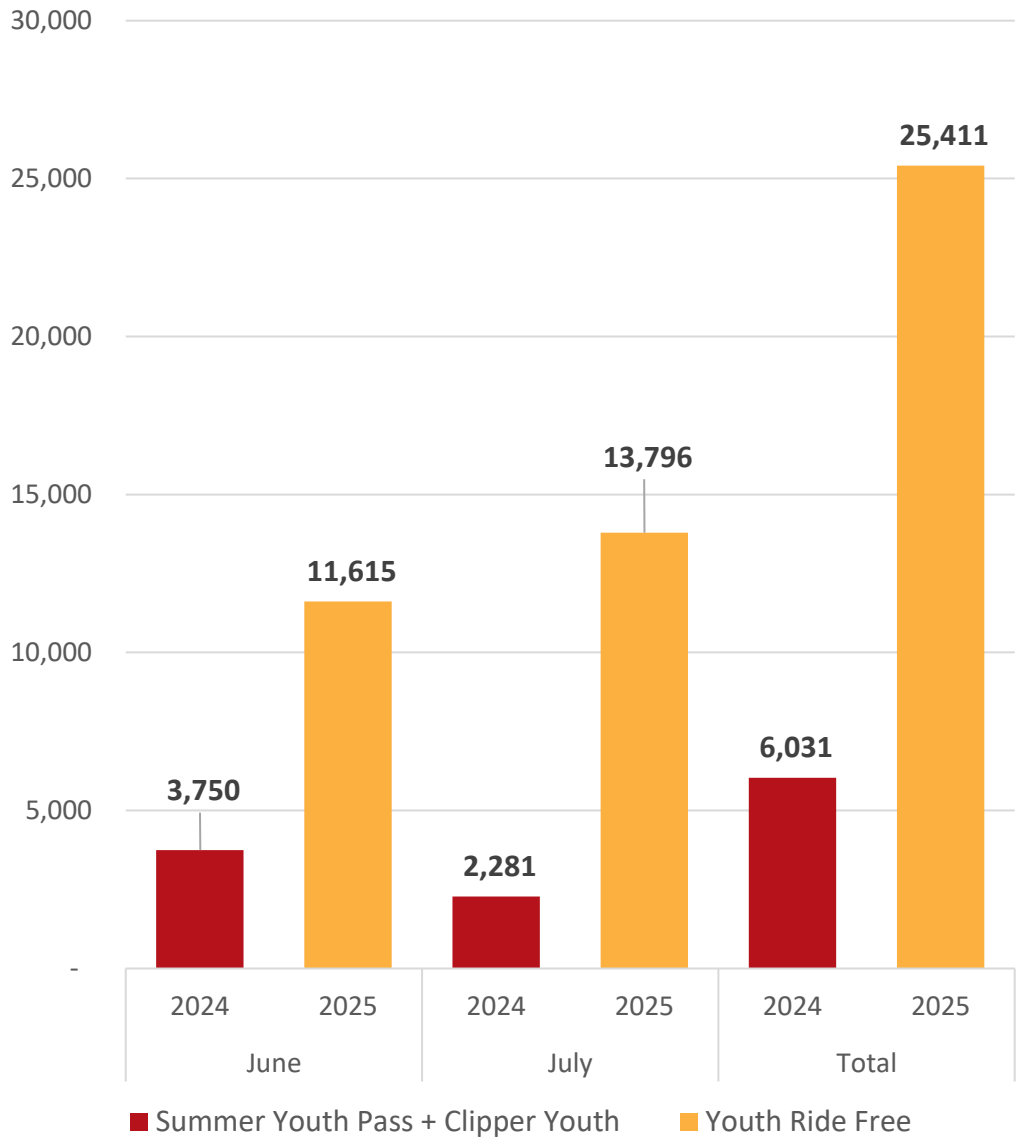
- Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA)
- Joint Powers Authority formed in 1980
  - 10 cities and the County
  - San Ramon Valley, Central County, & Lamorinda
- Bus & paratransit service
  - 42 weekday routes, 11 weekend routes
  - 125 buses, 63 paratransit vehicles
- Ridership (FY 25)
  - Fixed Route: 2.71M
  - Paratransit: 103.9k

# Youth Ride Free Program

- Program created to bridge the gap to incentivize public transit for youth during Summer *(previously provided through Summer Youth Pass)*
- Program highlights:
  - Active between June 1st, 2025 to July 31st, 2025
  - No signup, No Pass or No ID were required for the program
  - In-house marketing effort
  - Collaborated with TriDelta and WestCAT for rolling out similar program
  - End of program survey conducted

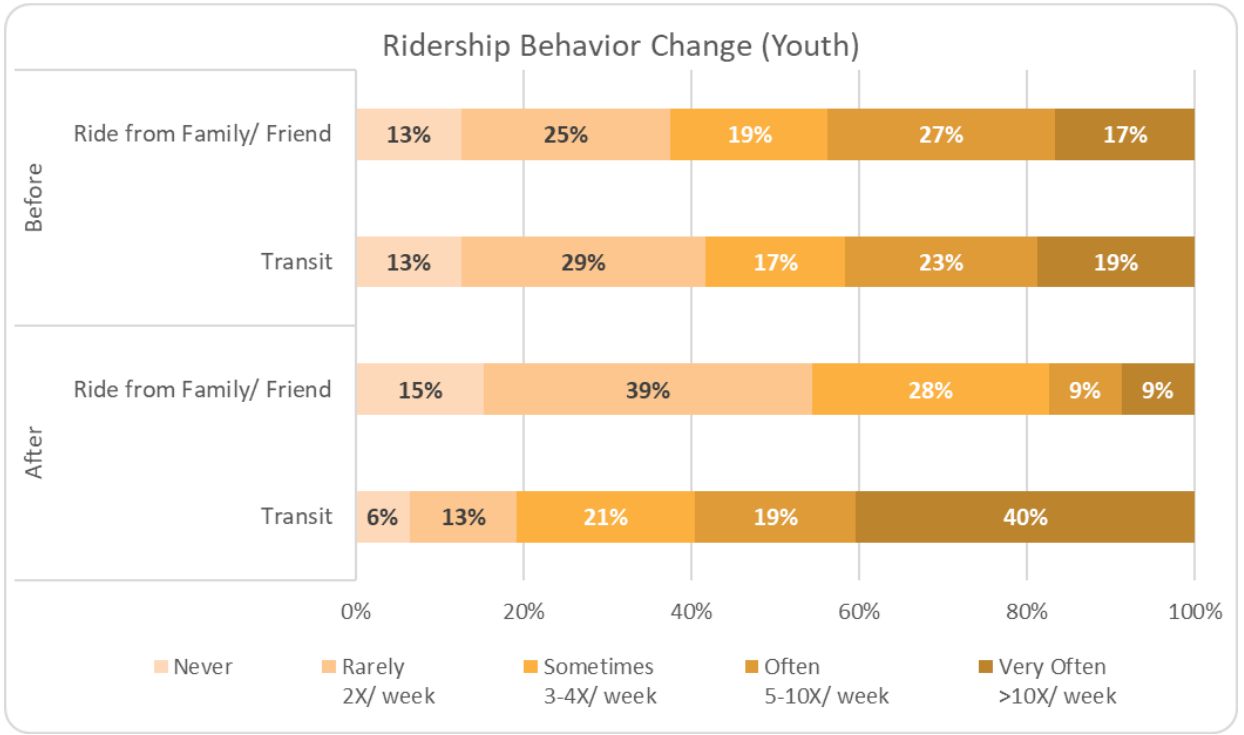
# Ridership Impact

- Youth Ride Free program resulted in a strong ridership growth in youth ridership
  *(The data for 2024 does not include any cash fares paid by youth)*
- Total systemwide ridership grew by 6% year-over-year during June-July 2025
- Indicating higher overall usage



# Ridership Behavior Change

- 94 Usable Surveys: 48 Youth / 46 Adult Responses.
- Separate questions were used for Youth vs. Adults.
- Youth reported higher transit use after the Youth Ride Free (YRF) launch.
- Rides from family/friends (at least 5x/week) decreased from 44% to 18%.
- Trips taken on transit (at least 5x/week) increased from 42% to 59%.



# Youth Survey Highlights

- 39% of youth had not participated in any youth programs previously.
- **Top Benefits:** Youth value the program being Free (91%) and Increased Access (69%).
- **Top Participation Barriers:** Youth identified Cost (59%), Applications (43%), and Complex Programs (34%).
- **Key Priority:** Youth cited More Frequent Service (69%) as the top factor to increase transit use.

# Parent Survey Highlights

- 32% report children riding County Connection > 5 times/week.
- 39% of parents saved > 5 car trips/week due to Youth Ride Free (YRF).
- 59% of parents eliminated > 11 miles/week during YRF.
- **Top Benefits Cited by Parents:**
  - Reduced need to drive (58%)
  - Increased child independence (56%)
  - Cost savings (54%)
- **Top Concerns Cited by Parents:**
  - Safety on the bus (50%)
  - Safety at bus stops (48%)
  - Improved Reliability (48%)

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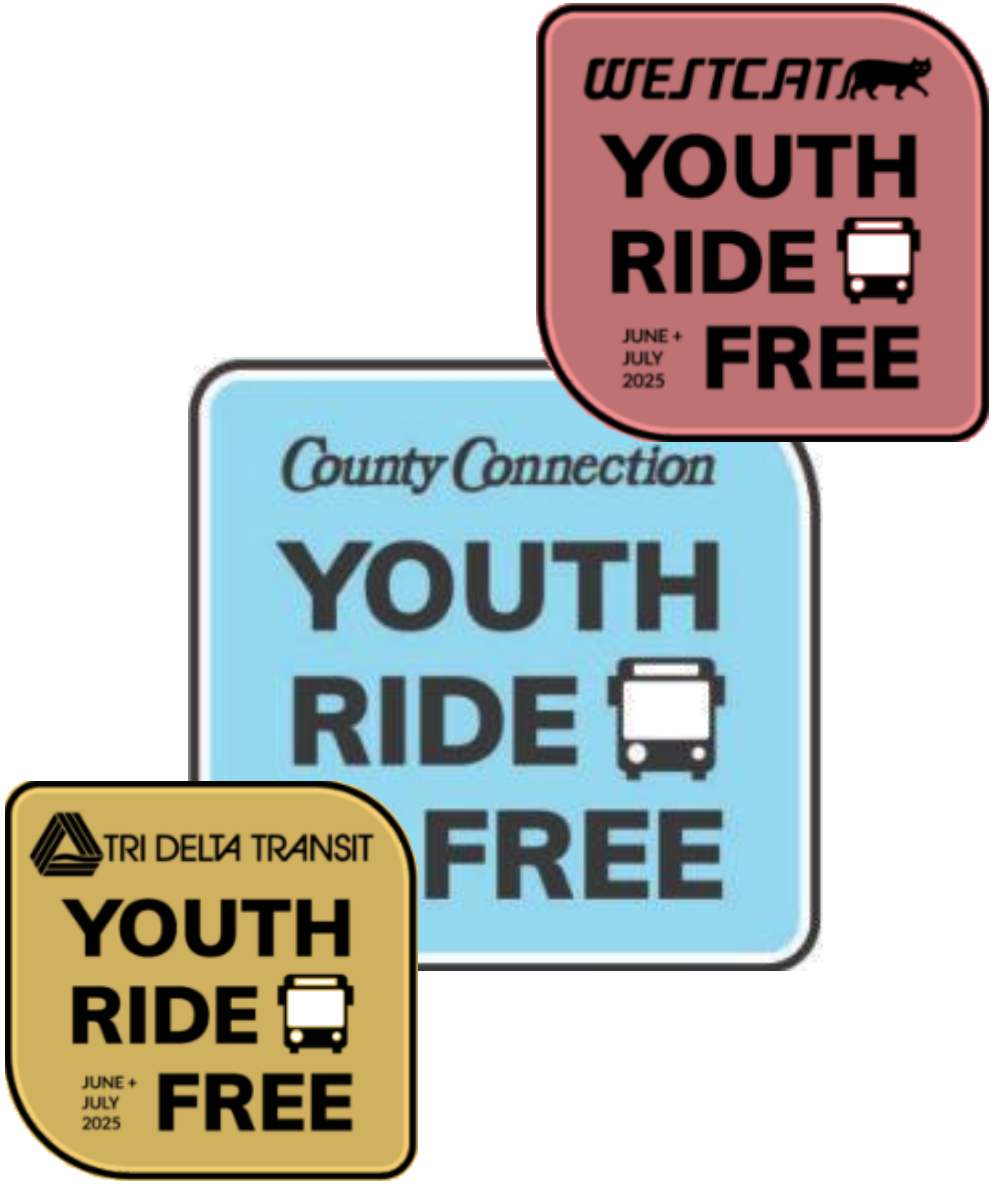
# Lessons Learned

- Eliminating Barriers **=** Increased Ridership
- Strong Brand Identity
- Early marketing is key
- Noticeable behavior change



# Looking Ahead

- CCTA taking a lead on future Youth Transit Program (FY 26)
- County Connection to collaborate with CCTA and RTPCs to identify future funding

# Questions?

**Pranjal Dixit**
Manager of Planning
dixit@cccta.org