

Yuba-Sutter Transit Newsletter

August 2008

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YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT COMPLETES ANOTHER RECORD SETTING YEAR

The fiscal year ending June 30, 2008 set still another record as systemwide ridership increased by 13.8 percent over FY 2007 to 942,611 passenger trips just one year after breaking the 800,000 passenger mark for the first time. This extends a phenomenal growth string of ridership increases to five straight years – seventeen of the last eighteen years!

During the year, same-month historical ridership records were set every month ending with a one-quarter record for any quarter of 260,708 passenger trips – up 19 percent over the same quarter in 2007. Despite a 5.5 percent increase in the number of vehicle service hours operated, the jump in ridership resulted in a new systemwide productivity mark breaking the old record that was set just last year.

Numerically, most of the systemwide growth occurred on the local fixed route system. Fixed route ridership exploded again in FY 2008 by an amazing 14.8 percent over FY 2007 to 741,989 passenger trips following a 13.0 percent increase in FY 2007 and an 8.2 percent increase in FY 2006. Service hours have increased by 13 percent in the last three years, but fixed route ridership has increased by 31 percent in response to new services and program initiatives; population growth; and, soaring fuel prices. These include the introduction of Route 6 and half-hour Saturday service on Routes 1 and 3; improved service to the Harter Parkway area of Yuba City; and, the still maturing discount monthly youth pass program.

After an 11.0 percent increase in FY 2007, Sacramento Commuter and Midday ridership jumped by 20.8 percent in FY 2008 extending the recent string of same month historic ridership records for the Sacramento services to over three years. Sky-rocketing fuel prices combined with the September 2007 addition of two new commuter schedules (morning and afternoon) are the major contributing factors since population growth slowed in the last year.

In the first six months of 2008, when fuel prices seemed to increase daily, Sacramento ridership was up 31 percent over the same period in 2007. Even more astounding, average daily ridership on the 18 peak hour schedules in June was up 43 percent over June 2007. Even with the increase in schedules from 15 to 21 in the last two years, seating capacity is again an issue on most peak-hour schedules and supplemental buses are now being operated every day for additional capacity.

On the revenue side, with record ridership, the un-audited systemwide farebox revenue figure for FY 2008 was up 19.4 percent over FY 2007. Fare revenue is one of the few revenue variables and higher than budgeted fare receipts help to protect against potential cost overruns (such as for soaring fuel prices) or revenue shortfalls elsewhere in the budget while also forming an excellent foundation for the next budget. The fare revenue increase resulted in a boost in the estimated farebox recovery ratio from last year to an un-audited estimate of 25.0 percent (which would be the highest figure since FY 2002) despite increased operating cost and increased service hours.

Looking forward, ridership and revenue records are almost certain to be set again in FY 2009. Even modest growth by recent standards should push ridership over 1 million passenger trips for the first time. This expectation is based on the long-term historic growth trend in fixed route ridership; the planned implementation of half-hour weekday service on Route 2 in January; the introduction of twelve new low-floor fixed route buses this fall; continued high fuel prices; and, the anticipated extension of the discount monthly youth pass program which is now set to expire on December 31st.

Thanks for making FY 2008 the best year ever!

BUSES RETURN TO PLUMAS STREET FOR LAST PHASE OF STREETSCAPE PROJECT

With the Plumas Streetscape Project nearing completion, Yuba-Sutter Transit has made the last anticipated stop and route adjustments before full service between Bridge Street and Colusa Highway returns to Plumas Street this fall.

Temporary Route 1 and 2 stops are now on Teegarden Avenue at Rockholt Way and permanent Route 2 stops are now in service on Plumas Street north of Bridge Street. With this change, the temporary stops for Route 1 on Olive Street and Route 2 on Shasta Street have been removed and Route 1 service is again provided from all Forbes Avenue stops.

Call 742-BUSS for more information.

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY NOTICE

In observance of Labor Day, Yuba-Sutter Transit will not be in operation on Monday, September 1st. Regular service will resume on Tuesday, September 2nd.

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McGOWAN PARK & RIDE NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION

SPECIAL NIGHT MEETING AUGUST 7TH ON DRAFT PLAN TO INTEGRATE THE NEW STOP INTO THE EXISTING SACRAMENTO SERVICE

The McGowan Parkway Park & Ride Lot between Powerline Road and Highway 70 in Olivehurst is beginning to take shape! Construction on this Yuba County owned and operated facility began on Monday, July 28th and it is now expected to be open around October 1st.

A draft service plan to integrate the new park & ride lot into the existing Highway 70 and Midday Express Sacramento schedules is now being circulated for public comment. That plan will be the subject of a special night meeting and public hearing on Thursday, August 7, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Yuba County Government Center at 915 8th Street in Marysville. The hearing notice and draft plan are posted at www.yubasuttertransit.com for review or call (530) 634-6880 to receive a copy by mail.

As proposed, the McGowan Park & Ride Lot would replace the existing North Beale Road Transit Center stop in Linda on all existing Sacramento Commuter and Midday Express schedules. Minor time changes would also be made to those Sacramento schedules that now serve the North Beale Road stop to reflect anticipated changes in travel times.

Any changes that may result from this process, including other possible minor schedule changes to reflect current conditions, are now expected to become effective on Wednesday, October 1, 2008 or shortly thereafter depending on the construction schedule.

Testimony regarding the proposed changes may be submitted either verbally or in writing, before or at the public hearing. Written testimony can be provided by mail to Yuba-Sutter Transit at 2100 B Street, Marysville, CA 95901; by telephone at (530) 634-6880; by FAX at (530) 634-6888; or, by e-mail to keith_martin@sbcglobal.net. All communication must be received either at or prior to the hearing to be considered.

Call (530) 634-6880 for information.

CARRY-ON POLICY FOR SHOPPING BAGS, CARTS, LUGGAGE, STROLLERS, ETC.

It is time again to remind everyone (both passengers and staff) of our long-standing policy regarding the transport of the wide assortment of carry-on items that people need or want to bring with them on the bus. Because our passengers use the bus for all of the trips that life requires including shopping, check-ups for the baby and visits to grandma's house; carry-on items are allowed on all services with the following restrictions.

- Passengers must be able to personally lift and carry all items on board the bus in one trip.
- Items must remain firmly within the control of the passenger at all times.
- Items cannot block any aisle, doorway or area reserved for persons in wheelchairs or who use mobility aids.
- Children must be removed from strollers and the stroller must be folded and stored so as not to block any area listed above.
- Utility carts must be similarly folded and stored or otherwise secured.
- Other than leashed guide, service or signal animals specially trained to assist persons with disabilities; all animals must be in completely enclosed cages subject to the above size and storage conditions.
- Bicycles are not allowed inside the bus at any time.

This policy is designed to improve safety and timeliness for all passengers. A large number of grocery bags may block the aisle or take up seating space; loose items can become tripping hazards or dangerous projectiles in an accident; and, large or heavy items require additional time to load and unload causing schedule delays and missed transfers.

If you have a question about any item, please call 742-BUSS before you ride to avoid the possibility of service denial.

BUS PASSES & TICKET BOOKS

Yuba-Sutter Transit's monthly passes and discount ticket books are sold at the following locations. Some outlets do not carry all media and monthly passes are available from the 24th of the month until the 7th of the following month.

1. Bel Air Market Customer Service Counter – **Yuba City**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes / Sacramento Commuter Passes & Punch Cards
2. Yuba Sutter Mall Service Counter – **Yuba City**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes / Sacramento Commuter Passes & Punch Cards
3. Wal-Mart Customer Service Counter – **Linda**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes / Sacramento Commuter Passes & Punch Cards
4. J & J Liquor – **1545 North Beale Road, Linda**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes
Sacramento Commuter Passes & Punch Cards
5. Yuba College Cashier's Office – **Linda**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes
6. Yuba-Sutter Transit Office – **Marysville**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes / Sacramento Commuter Passes & Punch Cards / Single Ride Tickets for All Services

All passes and tickets are also available by mail. Call Rose Menefee at (530) 634-6880 for more information.

Yuba-Sutter Transit
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