

Yuba-Sutter Transit Newsletter

August 2009

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YUBA-SUTTER TRANSIT COMPLETES ANOTHER RECORD SETTING YEAR

Yuba-Sutter Transit has set many records over the years, but a major milestone was reached in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009 when systemwide ridership broke the 1 million passenger barrier for the first time in our 34 year history. The 1,048,692 passenger trips smashed last year's record by more than 106,081 boardings (11.3 percent) to extend Yuba-Sutter Transit's string of annual ridership increases to six and a phenomenal eighteen in the last nineteen years.

During the fiscal year, same-month historical ridership records were set every month ending with a one-quarter record for any quarter of 268,983 passenger trips – extending same quarter historical ridership records to an amazing 22 straight quarters (five and a half years). Despite a 5.6 percent increase in the number of service hours provided, the ridership increase resulted in a new systemwide productivity record measured in passenger trips per hour of service. In the last six years, total ridership has increased by 67 percent while the number of vehicle service hours operated has increased by 22 percent.

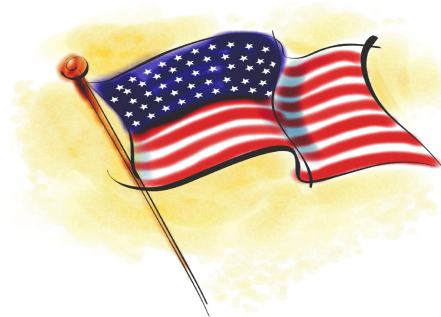
As in past years, the vast majority of the systemwide growth occurred on the local fixed route system. Fixed route ridership exploded again in FY 2009 (up 10.9 percent over FY 2008) to 823,165 passenger trips following a 14.8 percent increase in FY 2008 and a 13.0 percent increase in FY 2007. While fixed route service hours have increased by 10 percent in the last three years, fixed route ridership has increased by 27 percent in response to new service and program initiatives; population growth; and, soaring fuel prices.

Another impressive figure is the 20.7 percent increase in ridership on Yuba-Sutter Transit's Sacramento services. This follows an equally impressive 20.8 percent jump in FY 2008 and an 11.0 percent increase in FY 2007. While the Sacramento service level has increased by 36 percent since FY 2006 due to the addition of three morning and three afternoon schedules, total Sacramento ridership is up 62 percent during the same period. The four year Sacramento ridership growth trend began to slow this spring and actually ended in June (compared to June 2008) in response to falling fuel prices, state employee furloughs and the lack of population growth. Despite these factors, 10 of the 18 peak hour schedules are still operating at or near seated capacity and supplemental buses continue to operate Monday through Thursday on three of these schedules for additional capacity.

On the revenue side, record ridership resulted in a 10.7 percent increase in systemwide fare revenues for FY 2009 – up nearly \$113,000 over FY 2008. Since FY 2005, systemwide fare revenue has increased by \$500,000 (up 75 percent) in response to a 55 percent increase in ridership with just a 22 percent increase in service hours. The only fare increases during this period were to the weekday evening Dial-A-Ride service (July 2005) and to the Sacramento services (July 2007). As a result, while the un-audited estimated farebox recovery ratio went down in FY 2009 for the first time since FY 2005, it is still at 23.1 percent despite increased operating cost and service hours and remains well above the 20 percent systemwide target.

While systemwide ridership and revenue records are expected to be set again in FY 2010, the pace of this growth is almost certain to be much more modest compared to what we have experienced over the last five or six years. With no new service initiatives planned for FY 2010, this projection is based on a full year of half-hour weekday service on Route 2; continuation of the long-term overall historic growth trend in fixed route ridership; and, a continued positive response to the still new low-floor buses. Major unknown factors for FY 2010 include how the growing budget crises at all levels of government will impact ridership both locally and to Sacramento; where fuel prices will go over the course of the year; and, whether the popular discount monthly youth pass program will be extended by the Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD) beyond December 2009.

Thanks for making FY 2009 the best year ever!



LABOR DAY HOLIDAY NOTICE

In observance of Labor Day, Yuba-Sutter Transit will not be in operation on Monday, September 7th. Regular service will resume on Tuesday, September 8th.

Call 530-634-6880 for more information.

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SPECIAL NIGHT MEETING SET ON PLAN TO INTEGRATE NEW PLUMAS LAKE PARK & RIDE

The new Plumas Lake Park and Ride Lot on Feather River Boulevard east of Highway 70 in Plumas Lake is beginning to take shape! Construction on this Yuba County owned and operated facility began in early June with completion now expected in September.

Alternative service plans to integrate the new lot into existing Highway 70 and Midday Express schedules are now being circulated for public comment. Those alternatives will be the subject of a special night meeting and public hearing on Thursday, August 27, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Yuba County Government Center at 915 8th Street in Marysville.

As originally proposed, the new park and ride would replace the existing East Nicolaus stop on all existing Sacramento Commuter and Midday Express schedules as that stop was recently by-passed by Highway 70. In response to early passenger comments, alternative service plans are now also being considered to retain service to East Nicolaus on some or all of the existing schedules. Those options would add five minutes to the affected schedules for those riding from stops north of East Nicolaus.

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 Thursday, October 1, 2009 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.

The hearing notice and draft alternative plans will soon be posted at www.yubasuttertransit.com or call (530) 634-6880 to receive a copy by mail.

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

Monthly passes and discount ticket books are sold at the following locations. Some outlets do not carry all media and monthly passes are available only from the 24th of the month until the 7th of the following month. All passes and tickets are also available by mail.

1. Bel Air Market Customer Service Center – **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. Walmart Register 18 Service Counter – **Linda**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes / Sacramento Commuter Passes & Punch Cards
4. Yuba College Cashier's Office – **Linda**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes
5. Yuba-Sutter Transit Office – **Marysville**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes / Sacramento Commuter Passes & Punch Cards / Single Ride Tickets for All Services

Yuba-Sutter Transit
2100 B Street

Marysville, CA 95901

Administration: (530) 634-6880

FAX: (530) 634-6888

Service Information: (530) 742-2877 / TTY 634-6889

Web Site: www.yubasuttertransit.com