

Yuba-Sutter Transit Newsletter

February 2010

Volume 21 – Number 1

-- MID-YEAR REPORT -- HISTORIC RIDERSHIP GROWTH TREND CONTINUES IN FY 2010

The first six months of the fiscal year are in the books and the mid-year performance report indicates that yet another ridership record should be set in FY 2010 – the 16th in the last 17 years. While ridership growth has slowed substantially from the double digit pace of the last four years, systemwide ridership (July – December 2009) was still up 14,714 boardings (3 percent) over the same period in 2008 to 537,302 passenger trips.

Significant individual performance comparisons include the continuation of the exceptional long term growth trend in local fixed route ridership; a significant drop in Sacramento ridership compared to the fuel price driven peak during the same period last year; and, still respectable systemwide operating and financial performance indicators despite increased service hours and operating costs.

The local fixed routes saw the most numerical growth through December with 25,079 more riders than last year (an increase of 6 percent). Service improvements over the last year including the January 2009 addition of half-hour weekday service on Route 2 and the introduction of low-floor buses certainly contributed to this growth, but a significant portion is due to the discount monthly youth pass program where area youth can purchase a pass for just \$5 a month. This program has been extended through December 2010 with another grant from the Feather River Air Quality Management District.

After back-to-back annual ridership increases of 21 percent, combined Sacramento Commuter and Midday ridership is down 11 percent through the first half of FY 2010. Much of this drop can be attributed to the three Fridays each month that most state employees are furloughed, but average weekday ridership (Monday – Thursday excluding holiday periods) is down 7 percent in the same period though supplemental buses are still used on some peak-hour schedules for needed seating capacity. Contributing factors to this reduction certainly include lower fuel prices and general economic conditions.

Looking forward, the recent opening of the new Plumas Lake Park and Ride Lot; the extension of the wildly successful \$5 monthly youth pass program through December 2010; and, recent increases in the price of fuel are all expected to keep ridership records falling in FY 2010.

Thanks for riding the bus!

ANNUAL UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS HEARING SET

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) has scheduled an Unmet Transit Needs Hearing for Yuba and Sutter Counties for Thursday, February 24th. After many years with two hearings – one day and one night -- just one hearing will be held this year as a cost savings measure due to consistently poor attendance at past night meetings.

All comments received will be evaluated to determine if there are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet. The hearing results are used to make findings for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2010. The date, time and location for this year's hearing are as follows.

Thursday, February 24, 2010 – 2:00 p.m.
Yuba County Government Center
915 8th Street
Marysville, California

You do not have to attend the hearing to comment, but written or verbal comments must be submitted by February 24th to be considered at the hearing. Comments can be submitted to SACOG by mail to 1415 L Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, California 95814; by phone to (916) 340-6275; by TTY to (916) 321-9550; by FAX to (916) 321-9551; or, by e-mail to transit_needs@sacog.org.

Call SACOG at (916) 321-9000 for more information.

UPCOMING HOLIDAY SERVICE REMINDERS

Yuba-Sutter Transit will not be in service on **Monday, February 15th** in observance of **President's Day**. The administrative office will also be closed on that day.

All service will operate as scheduled and the administrative office will be open on **Friday, February 12th** when many will observe the **Abraham Lincoln's Birthday** holiday.

Talking about holidays, don't forget that **Valentine's Day** is just around the corner on **Sunday, February 14th**. Would a bus pass or ticket book make a great gift for your transit riding friends or loved ones?

Call (530) 634-6880 for more information.

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ALL 2009 PHOTO I.D. CARDS HAVE EXPIRED

If you have a discount photo identification (I.D.) card with an expiration date of **December 31, 2009**, it has expired and must be replaced immediately. After a one month grace period that ended January 31, 2010, these expired cards are no longer accepted as proof of age or disability on Yuba-Sutter Transit buses. Hundreds of expired cards were not renewed so check yours today!

Photo I.D. cards are issued to qualified seniors (age 62 and over) and persons with disabilities for proof of eligibility for Dial-A-Ride service and for discount fares that may be available on Yuba-Sutter Transit's services. These \$5 cards are valid for up to three years and renewals are free when exchanged for an expiring card. This free exchange policy also expired on January 31st for the 2009 cards.

Discount photo I.D. cards are available only at the Yuba-Sutter Transit Administrative Office at 2100 B Street in Marysville. The office is open from 8:00 a.m. to Noon and 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. each weekday.

Call Rose Menefee at (530) 634-6880 for more information.

2010 ANNUAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE ON WEBSITE

Have you ever wondered about the history of Yuba-Sutter Transit? How is it organized and who is in charge? What are the current issues that the organization is facing? Where does the agency see itself going in the future?

The answers to all of these questions and many more can be found in Yuba-Sutter Transit's Annual Board Report which is presented to the Board of Directors each year at their January meeting. The January 2010 version of that report is now posted on our website at www.yubasuttertransit.com with a link right from the home page.

Specific sections of the report are dedicated to organizational history; performance indicators for our current services; administration and finance; major projects; and, current issues. Also included is a ten year fact sheet of major operational and financial data along with a list of major agency milestones over our nearly 35 year history.

The annual report provides an opportunity each year for the transit staff and board to reflect back on where the agency has come from; consider where we are now; and, look forward to where we might possibly go in the future. While this report is used primarily to brief new and continuing board members on agency issues prior to the next annual budget process, it also provides our passengers and other interested parties with valuable organizational information and insight as well.

Check it out today!

-- PASS OUTLET CHANGES -- WALMART OUTLET CLOSES & THE BOOKSTORE BECOMES THE YUBA COLLEGE OUTLET

There have been two major changes in the number and location of outlets for Yuba-Sutter Transit's bus passes and ticket books. The outlet in the Linda Walmart store closed in January leaving the Yuba-Sutter Transit office as the only full-service walk-in outlet in Yuba County.

In December, the location of the Yuba College outlet moved from the Cashier's Office to the bookstore. Local fixed route passes and discount ticket books will be available at the register during all regular business hours to greatly expand availability at this location. Sacramento Commuter monthly passes and punch cards are not available at Yuba College, but all forms of payment including credit and debit cards are accepted at this location.

Call Dawna Dutra at 530-634-6880 for more information.

BUS PASSES & TICKET BOOKS

Monthly passes and discount ticket books are sold at the following locations. Please note that some outlets do not carry all media and that monthly passes are available from the 24th of the month until the 7th of the following month. Passes are also available throughout the month during normal business hours in the Yuba-Sutter Transit office at 2100 B Street in Marysville. All passes and tickets are also available by mail.

Call (530) 634-6880 for more information.

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. Yuba College Bookstore – **Linda**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes
4. Yuba-Sutter Transit Office – **Marysville**
Ticket Books / Monthly Fixed Route Passes / Sacramento Commuter Passes & Punch Cards / Single Ride Tickets for All Services

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