

AGENDA ITEM IV–F STAFF REPORT

NEXTGEN TRANSIT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

RECOMMENDATION: Direct staff as to preferred alternatives for potential implementation of remaining NextGen Transit Plan service and fare recommendations.

Background

The Yuba-Sutter NextGen Transit Plan (Plan) adopted in May 2023 includes operational and financial recommendations to address short-term transit needs in the post-pandemic environment. While the Plan was intended to serve as the local blueprint for transit development and operations through the upcoming Fiscal Year 2027, each recommendation is individually evaluated and approved as appropriate prior to implementation.

To date, several initiatives in Phases 0-3 of the Plan have been undertaken as originally recommended, or with slight modifications. These include the following:

- Recruitment of a new in-house Transit Technology Manager. With Board direction, staff conducted a competitive procurement resulting in a professional services agreement with a local private IT contractor to provide the additional support needed. Status: Completed
- Recruitment of a new, in-house Community Relations Manager. As an alternative, and with Board direction, staff took a two-pronged approach to addressing the increased community relations needs by 1) executing a professional services agreement with a qualified marketing and public outreach consultant under the terms of an existing State contract, and 2) recruited and hired an additional staff person under the existing Program Analyst I/II classification with a focus on public outreach. Status: Completed
- Permanent reduction from 30 to 60-minute frequency of local fixed Route 2 in Yuba City. This change was made effective as proposed in September 2023. Status: Completed
- Procurement of the technology necessary to schedule and dispatch demand-response services. The Authority contracted with a leading industry software provider in January 2025 and is currently using the software for microtransit and Dial-A-Ride services. Status: Ongoing
- Introduction of later weekday evening fixed route service and elimination of the weekday evening Dial-A-Ride service. Status: Completed
- New fare structure adopting the same local route one-way fares for the new on-demand service, maintaining the discount monthly pass program, and increasing the daily cap on local one-way fares. Status: Completed
- Launch of the first on-demand (microtransit) zone in Olivehurst and Linda. The service was launched in May 2025 as a complement (i.e., feeder service) to the existing fixed routes. This strategy left the fixed routes in place to better leverage constrained resources while maximizing the benefits of on-demand service to enhance the responsiveness and reach of the local system. Status: Completed
- Deployment of various marketing strategies to build awareness and support including a branding refresh and sub-branding of new services; updated logo, passenger materials, and bus stop signage; website redesign and development; and a 50th anniversary marketing campaign and open house event. Status: Completed

- Support for volunteer driver programs in Challenge and Dobbins. With the support of a Mobility Zones project grant from SACOG, and consultant support, staff is scheduled to kick off a volunteer program planning effort in July to study and address key implementation issues. Status: Ongoing

Discussion

Due to recent ridership trends and current operational constraints, staff now requests Board direction concerning alternatives to certain remaining and/or deferred elements of the Plan. Specifically, staff will be seeking Board input on the following topics at the meeting:

- Launch of flexible intercity service to Lincoln/Roseville and the applicable fare structure.
- Increases to the commuter single ride and monthly fare rates, and elimination of discounts on the midday commuter service for youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities. Considered a small change, it is intended to simplify the fare structure.
- Elimination of local Routes 2 and 5 in Yuba City and/or streamlining of the crosstown Route 1 from west Yuba City to Yuba College in Linda.
- Expansion of microtransit services to additional service zones
- Increase to local fares and/or elimination of monthly passes and introduction of monthly fare capping, coinciding with upgrades of the contactless payment system.

Staff will be prepared at the meeting to discuss the implementation alternatives and next steps in detail.

Fiscal Impact

None.