

Chapter 7: RECOMMENDED ACTION PLAN

In Chapter 5, the full range of service and fare options were reviewed. Chapter 6 reviewed several governance, management and cost sharing options. This chapter provides the specific recommended actions by fiscal year, from the current FY 2010/11 to FY 2015/16. The details of marketing and communications actions are provided in Volume II Marketing Plan of the Short-Range Transit Plan.

The action plan assumes the continued operation of Routes 120 and 140 with no expansion along the Route 41 or Route 120 west corridors.

FY 2010/11

Management/Institutional Actions

- The new Mariposa Park and Ride facility opened in January 2011.
- YARTS will be ordering new buses in FY 2010/11. A total of eight additional buses are needed, but the cost per bus has gone up. The YARTS Transit Manager is meeting with the bus manufacturer in early 2011 to finalize details and the price per bus. There is currently about a 9-month lag time between ordering the bus and delivery.
- The Short Range Transit Plan will be finalized in FY 2010/11.
- YARTS Board will review and comment on proposals to operate bus service in the Highway 41 and Highway 120 west corridors.
- A fare media and implementation plan for electronic fareboxes will be developed.
- New automatic chains will be procured and installed on buses during the Winter/Spring schedule as necessary.
- Advocate with Congressional delegation the eligibility of YARTS to directly receive FTA 5307 funding as part of the reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU. At the same time, continue to advocate for the eligibility of FTA 5320 funds for operating purposes.

Service Plan and Fare Actions

- Increased fares on Route 120 will be implemented to be equivalent to Route 140 fares on a per mile revenue basis. Route 140 full fares were equivalent to 16 cents per revenue mile and Route 120 was 13 cents per revenue mile in summer 2010.

Marketing Plan Actions

- Several marketing and communications items have been undertaken as part of the Short Range Transit Plan process. Items completed include:
 - The YARTS Board adopted a branding design for the vehicles in July 2010. The vehicle graphics clearly identify YARTS as “Public transit to Yosemite,” a descriptor that will be used in all branding and promotional elements.
 - The YARTS Board at its December 2010 meeting adopted the design for bus stop signs. The work to start replacing the signs should start immediately in FY 2010/11, but will likely carry over to FY 2011/12.
- “Reason to Ride Guides” and “Schedule Brochures” have been designed. The final schedule based on the Short Range Transit Plan adoption will be included in the final drafts. The new public information is targeted to be distributed for the 2011 Summer/Fall schedule.
- Initiate implementation of new bus stop signs at all bus stop and new customized information displays at all bus stops and shelters.
- Hire staff or retain volunteers as gatekeeper contacts for ongoing information distribution at key locations for both Highway 140 and 120. Efforts should begin in the summer of 2011.
- Information displays will be enhanced at the Transpo and Merced Amtrak stations.

FY 2011/12

Management/Institutional Actions

- Due to the work volume in FY 2011/12, either hire .5 FTE temporary employee or retain intern or consulting assistance to provide management assistance with implementation. \$50,000 has been added to the MCAG administrative budget for this purpose.
- Conduct commuter pass market research evaluation.
- Apply for a 5311(f) grant to support marketing of connections to Amtrak and Greyhound.
- Initiate the procurement process for the operations and maintenance contractor for operation of YARTS. Incorporate the expected changes in this Action Plan in the bid documents. Rate and analyze bids, and negotiate new contract with successful bidder.
- Initiate a YARTS Board meeting with DNC management with National Park Service management participation. Items on the agenda should include, having YARTS posters on the Yosemite Valley shuttles, increased visibility of YARTS on the yosemitepark.com website, inclusion of YARTS in new employee orientation, the potential operation of the Hiker’s Shuttle by YARTS, the potential for subscription bus service for DNC employees, and extension of Run 6 to Yosemite Valley during Winter/Spring schedule requiring a direct DNC subsidy.

- Conduct a special joint AAC and YARTS Board retreat to fully discuss the governance options presented in Chapter 6.
- Submit a FTA 5320 grant application to fund a study for real time transit information on YARTS buses. Coordinate with NPS on ITS architecture.
- Order new electronic fareboxes based on the fare media and implementation plan developed in FY 2010/11. When new fareboxes are delivered, conduct pilot tests of new fareboxes in Winter/Fall schedule of 2012.

Service Plan and Fare Actions

- Start the Winter/Spring schedule October 1 2011 instead of November 1.
- Eliminate Run 6 on weekends during the Winter/Spring schedule.
- Eliminate Runs 3 and 10 in the Winter/Spring schedule on weekends.
- Shift Run 4 to start at 1:20 pm at the Merced Transpo, departing from the Merced Amtrak station at 1:30 pm during the Winter/Spring schedule, with connections to Greyhound and Amtrak Trains 713 and 714 at the Amtrak station.
- Provide an early outbound Friday bus to serve NPS employees in El Portal.
- Implement a new schedule on Route 120 with buses leaving from Mammoth Lakes at 9:00 am to make a day trip to Tuolumne Meadows convenient to Mono County visitors and residents. The departure time from Yosemite Valley would remain at 5:00 pm.
- Supplemental YARTS service will be added to accommodate peak demand during the Summer/Fall schedule. The YARTS Transit should have the flexibility to marshal resources based on actual demand and in cooperation with the National Park Service on peak visitor days. This will help to avoid passengers left behind with expected additional ridership with improved marketing efforts.

Marketing Actions

- Finalize implementation of new bus stop signs at all bus stop and new customized information displays at all bus stops and shelters.
- Hire a website designer and upgrade the YARTS website based on the recommendations in the Marketing Plan.
- Design a YARTS poster for Yosemite Valley shuttles.
- Pursue adding YARTS to Google Transit in cooperation with Caltrans.
- Implement social media strategies by hiring a summer intern in the Summer 2012. Intern could also be responsible for increasing the frequency and level of contact with gatekeepers.
- Before the Summer/Fall schedule of 2012, develop tourism/travel packages with updated schedule information. Give tourism employees the “YARTS experience” at the beginning of the 2012 Summer/Fall schedule.

FY 2012/13*Management/Institutional Actions*

- If negotiations with DNC and NPS are successful, prepare detailed implementation, funding and marketing plan for YARTS operation of the Hiker's Shuttle at the beginning the Summer 2013 Summer/Fall schedule.
- Evaluate the need for the extra July bus runs in each direction on Route 140 to eliminate passengers left behind. Determine if the extra bus is needed between June 15 and August 15 depending on the success of marketing effort and Yosemite visitation.
- Fully implement new electronic fareboxes with change in fares.
- Conduct real-time transit information study and determine funding sources to implement.
- When new branded YARTS buses arrive, plan celebratory media event.

Service and Fare Actions

- A second bus on Route 120 would be added for the Summer/Fall 2013 schedule, allowing a choice of two trips a day between Mammoth Lakes, Tuolumne Meadows, and Yosemite Valley. Schedule focus will ensure both convenient trips between Yosemite Valley and Tuolumne Meadows and convenient day trips between Mammoth Lakes and Tuolumne Meadows.
- Implement the fare increases recommended in Chapter 5 for route 140. The fare increase would be approximately 15% for both full fares and commuter passes.
- In the Summer/Fall schedule for 2013, start Run 2 from the Merced Transpo at 5:18 am. Operate in Summer/Fall schedules only.

Marketing Actions

- If agreed to by DNC, provide content to upgrade the YARTS information on yosemitepark.com
- Install YARTS posters on Yosemite Valley shuttles, The Bus and ESTA buses.
- Revamp media advertising campaigns to provide targeted and sustained exposure to target markets. Follow recommendations of the Marketing Plan.
- Submit updated information to travel guides.

FY 2013/14

Management/Institutional Actions

- If second bus on Route 120 is successful in inaugural year, begin process for incorporating a 10th bus in the capital plan.
- Initiate bid document for implementation of real time transit information for YARTS. Start installation.

Service and Fare Actions

- Initiate second bus and new schedule on Route 120.
- Implement fare increase recommended in Chapter 5 on Route 120.
- Submit funding application for implementation of real-time information.
- If discussions and negotiations with DNC top management with the YARTS Board are successful, initiate new run to provide subscription service to DNC employees. Initiate Run 6 service to Yosemite Valley in the 2013 Winter/Fall as part of the negotiated package.

Marketing Actions

- Evaluate marketing campaigns for effectiveness in increasing YARTS load factors and overall ridership.
- Sustain and refine marketing efforts implemented in previous fiscal years.
- Develop marketing plan for rollout of real time YARTS schedule information.

FY 2014/15

- Fully implement real-time information for YARTS buses.
- Put 10th YARTS bus in summer 2014 service.
- Sustain marketing efforts implemented in previous fiscal years.
- Order 11th YARTS bus if the additional June 15 to August 15 bus for Run 5 and Run 13 proves to be successful.

FY 2015/16

- Sustain marketing efforts implemented in previous fiscal years.
- Place Bus #11 into Summer 2015 service.