

# Introduction

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## City of Folsom Short-Range Transit Plan Update

This transit planning document has been prepared for the City of Folsom to meet State and Federal planning requirements, to provide a management tool and a policy guideline for on-going development of the City's transit system. Typically, short-range transit plans are updated about every five to seven years. The last short-range transit plan for the City of Folsom was prepared in August 1999 for fiscal years 1998-1999 through 2004-2005. This plan has been prepared to cover FY 2005/06 through FY 2009/10. This report is divided into nine chapters that are briefly described below.

**Chapter 1 (Study Area)** presents a detailed overview of the study area that includes the geographic location, community characteristics, demographic characteristics and transportation access.

**Chapter 2 (Transportation Services)** provides an overview of the City of Folsom's current transit services operated with city staff as Folsom Stage Line. Folsom Stage Line operates local fixed route and dial-a-ride service, as well as express bus service for commuters who work in downtown Sacramento. Folsom Stage Line also operates an all-day express bus service that connects with the Sacramento Regional Transit District (RT) light rail system at the Butterfield light rail station in Sacramento. An analysis of the ridership trends on each of the transit services is also included in this section. In addition, an overview of other transportation services provided in Folsom, including the school bus transportation service provided by the Folsom-Cordova Unified School District as well as airport shuttle, limousine and taxi services, is covered in this chapter.

**Chapter 3 (Transit Demand Analysis)** presents an analysis of the potential demand for transit services based on the mobility needs of the following population segments: workers (e.g. commuters), youth under the age of 16, elderly persons and persons with disabilities, low-income households and households with zero vehicles, and college students. It also includes information about the annual TDA Unmet Transit Needs Hearing Process required by the Transit Development Act statute, summary of results from on-board and on-line surveys, comments received at public workshops and input during interviews with city staff and stakeholders.

**Chapter 4 (Goals and Standards)** provides an overview of the City of Folsom Vision, Mission and Core Values followed by the goals and performance measures identified in the City of Folsom Strategic Plan that was developed in 2003, and included in the "Transportation and Traffic" category. Specific transit goals and standards by service type as well as standards and performance measures applicable to all Folsom Stage Line services, and the performance indicators, findings, and recommendations from the City of Folsom's Triennial Performance Audit that was completed in May 2004 are also included in this chapter.

**Chapter 5 (Transit Service Alternatives)** presents the various service alternatives that were considered and evaluated in terms of their feasibility of implementation during the five-year planning period, given the financial and operating constraints of the City's Transit Division. Four potential local route alignments were designed and are described in this chapter. Demand-Response (Dial-A-Ride) service options, commute service alternatives, and potential park-and-ride facility locations are also included in this section.

**Chapter 6 (Capital Alternatives)** provides a detailed description of the various fuel and fleet vehicle alternatives as well as other capital improvement options such as bus stop passenger amenities, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and transfer center design elements and potential transfer center locations. Also included in this chapter is an overview of the advanced transit system technologies that have been developed such as automatic vehicle location (AVL) systems, demand responsive dispatching (DRD) capabilities, and automated transit information (ATI).

**Chapter 7 (Institutional and Management Alternatives)** presents the institutional changes and coordination opportunities such as integrated fare transfer policy with RT and other connecting transit providers, tax-free transit subsidies for employees, rideshare matching services, and vanpool incentive program. Also included in this chapter are coordination opportunities with other providers, particularly with the Sacramento Regional Transit District (RT), the operator of the region's light rail system, as well as major employers and transportation management associations. There is also an overview of the current organization, management structure and staffing of the City's Transit Division. The management alternatives presented in this chapter includes the need for additional staff to handle dial-a-ride dispatching as well as marketing and outreach. Also included are detailed descriptions of fare handling procedures, recordkeeping and data collection, and performance monitoring to improve the overall management of the City's transit operations

**Chapter 8 (Transit Funding Sources)** provides an overview of the federal, state and local funding sources available for transit capital and operations.

**Chapter 9 (Transit Service, Capital and Financial Plan)** presents the recommended service changes for implementation in October 2005 when the RT light rail service to Folsom begins, and other service options for future consideration over the next five years. Also included in this chapter is a capital plan for replacement of the transit fleet and a detailed financial plan for the City's transit division for fiscal years 2005/06 through 2010/11 that includes recommended modifications to the Folsom Stage Line fare structure.

**Appendices** are included at the end of this report and contain supporting information that is listed in the Table of Contents.

# Executive Summary

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## City of Folsom Short-Range Transit Plan Update

This transit planning document has been prepared for the City of Folsom to meet State and Federal planning requirements, to provide a management tool and a policy guideline for on-going development of the City's transit system. Typically, short-range transit plans are updated about every five to seven years. The last short-range transit plan (SRTP) for the City of Folsom was prepared in 1999 for fiscal years 1999-2000 through FY2004/05. This plan has been prepared to cover FY 2005/06 through FY 2009/10.

The planning process for this SRTP update began about 12 months ago with an initial meeting of SACOG and Folsom Stage Line staff. Background research was conducted that included identifying the study area in terms of geography, community and demographic characteristics (*Chapter 1*). The existing Folsom transit services were analyzed and ridership trends were identified (*Chapter 2*). An analysis of transit demand based on the mobility needs of target population segments was performed (*Chapter 3*).

An on-board passenger survey was conducted on Folsom Stage Line downtown commuter routes, Butterfield light rail connector route, local fixed route (Route 10) and Dial-A-Ride service (*Chapter 3*). Two on-line surveys were also conducted, one with Intel, the largest employer located in Folsom, and the other with Franchise Tax Board employees who live in Folsom and work at FTB located adjacent to the Butterfield light rail station in Sacramento. The survey results were helpful in the development of a restructured local fixed-route bus system to provide connections with the RT light rail system at the three new Folsom light rail stations.

In the spring of 2005, public workshops were held to provide Folsom residents with opportunities to comment on the potential service alternatives. The public comments received were taken into consideration in refining the service options presented in *Chapter 5*.

Following is a summary of the service changes recommended for implementation in October 2005 when the RT light rail extension to Folsom begins revenue service operations (*Chapter 9*).

## Service Recommendations for Implementation in October 2005

- 1) Restructure the local fixed service (Folsom Stage Line Route 10) into a local feeder route that provides service to the Iron Point and Historic Folsom light rail stations, maintaining the connection to RT route 24 at Main/Madison in Orangevale. The route is described in Chapter 5 as Alternative Route A and shown as the blue route on the map on *Figure 25* on page 131 in Chapter 9.
  - a) New local service would be provided on Iron Point Road between East Bidwell Street and Folsom Boulevard, and would continue to serve Folsom Lake Community College.
  - b) Recommended local fixed service on Route A to be provided on weekdays only with 30-minute peak service from 6:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and hourly midday service from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

- c) Since RT's Route 24 operates hourly service, it is recommended that hourly service be provided all day on the segment of Route A between the Historic Folsom Station and the RT bus stop at Main/Madison in Orangevale.
  - d) One trip in the morning (before 8:00 a.m.) and one trip in the afternoon (around 5:00 p.m.) on the local fixed route (Alternative Route A) would be supplemented with an extra bus that would serve as an overflow shuttle bus between the Iron Point Station and the Intel campus. This service is described in Alternative 1 in Chapter 5.
  - e) One trip in the morning (before 8:00 a.m.) and one trip in the afternoon (after 3:00 p.m. on Monday through Thursday, and after 1:30 p.m. on Fridays) would deviate on the local fixed route (Alternative Route A) to continue to provide supplemental service to/from Folsom High School for students who live in either the American River Canyon or Lexington Hills neighborhoods, which are outside the FCUSD's service area boundaries.
- 2) Add a new flexible fixed local route (Route B) would be added that provides feeder service between the Glenn Station and the Folsom Civic Center with optional route deviation service offered within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of the fixed route. The route alignment is described in Chapter 5 as Alternative Route B and shown as the green route on *Figure 25* on page 131 in Chapter 9.
    - a) Recommend service to be provided on weekdays only with 30-minute peak service from 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and hourly midday service from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
    - b) During the morning and afternoon peak periods, this route could deviate from the Glenn Station to the Lake Forest Technical Center and could also possibly deviate to the Folsom State Prison, depending on ridership demand.
  - 3) Current Folsom Stage Line commuter bus service to downtown Sacramento, the feeder bus service to the Butterfield light rail station, and the tripper transfer service would be discontinued primarily because this service would duplicate the light rail service alignment and/or the restructured local fixed-route service.
  - 4) Expand weekday Dial-A-Ride service hours (for seniors age 55 and older and disabled Folsom residents) from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. so service span would be 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays. Also, offer subscription or "standing order" Dial-A-Ride trip requests as long as the subscription trips are not more than 50 percent of the available trips (per the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines).
  - 5) Replace weekday evening fixed-route service with Dial-A-Ride service that is open to the general public from 6:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Promote this service particularly to Folsom Lake College to attract ridership by students attending evening classes. Closely monitor the ridership, during the first three to six months. If ridership is less than three passengers per hour, consider a taxi subsidy program as described in Chapter 5 as Alternative 3-b.

In summary, this service plan element would have the following attributes in FY 2005/06:

- **Peak Bus Requirements:** a) four Bluebirds on Route A, b) two cutaway vehicles on Route B, c) three or four cutaways on the Dial-A-Ride service.
  - **Service Days:** Monday through Friday
  - **Span of Service:** Route A – 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Route B – 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Dial-A-Ride – 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., General Public Dial-A-Ride – 6:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
  - **Service Frequency:** 30-minute peak, Hourly midday
  - **Annualized Revenue Service Hours:** 22,181
  - **Annualized Operating Costs:** \$2,107,281
- 6) Through the RT service agreement, Paratransit, Inc. would provide the complementary paratransit service on weekdays from 4:45 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., on Saturdays from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and on Sundays from 9:45 a.m. to 7:15 p.m.

This plan recommends closely monitoring the Folsom bus service and RT light rail ridership, and allows for flexibility to make service changes that improve the City's transit system performance. Other service options for future consideration if and when transit funding and operating resources become available, and if the potential ridership and demand would support the required fare box recovery are included in Chapter 9. This plan also recommends replacement of the 40-foot Bluebird commuter coaches with new, smaller low-floor buses to be used to operate the local fixed-route service. A detailed financial plan, that includes recommended modifications to the Folsom Stage Line fare structure, is included in Chapter 9.

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