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Los Rios Students Say “Yes” to Public Transit

SACRAMENTO, CA - Los Rios Community College District students have overwhelmingly passed Universal Transit Pass Measure A, with 96% of voting students saying “Yes!” to affordable public transit access.

“This vote is a great victory for Los Rios students, access to public transit, and the environment of our region,” said Los Rios Chancellor Brian King. “So many of our students rely upon public transit every day and this vote clearly shows how critical that access is to them.”

Los Rios students – those attending American River, Cosumnes River, Folsom Lake, or Sacramento City colleges – voted online Sept. 22-23 for the transit measure. 3,747 students voted, with 3,611 supporting access to public transit. Now that the students have approved the measure, the item will be brought to the Los Rios District’s Board of Trustees for ratification at the October 21st meeting.

Eligible students (who are enrolled in more than 3 units in any one of the Los Rios Colleges) will be able to save hundreds of dollars a year off a Sacramento Regional Transit pass. The Los Rios-RT Universal Transit Pass will give eligible students access to all of RT’s light rail and bus lines 24 hours a day, seven days a week, during the fall and spring semesters.

Eligible students will be assessed a non-refundable fee of \$2.10 per unit at each college where a student is carrying more than three units. Fees will be capped at 15 units, regardless of actual course load. For example, a student enrolled in 3.01 to four units will pay \$8.40 a semester, a student enrolled in 12 units will pay \$25.20 a semester, and a student enrolled in 15 or more units will pay the maximum fee of \$31.50 per semester. For comparison, an equivalent, five-month RT pass for the general public costs \$500. The fee rates shall increase with the annual cost of living.

In addition, Los Rios students who carry three or fewer units and, so, not eligible for the Universal Transit Pass, will be eligible for a 50% discount on RT’s regular monthly pass (\$50 instead of \$100).

All Los Rios students will be eligible to purchase a Universal Transit Pass for each summer session for only \$10 – a benefit that students specifically requested.

The Universal Transit Pass will provide access to mass transit lines where RT has transfer agreements with other regional transit agencies, including Folsom Transit, Yolo County Transit, Sacramento Airport Transit and Roseville Transit. That means Los Rios students should be able to use their RT transit passes in Davis, Folsom, Roseville, throughout Sacramento County, Sacramento International Airport, West Sacramento and Woodland. However, those transfer agreements are subject to change, and RT will reserve the right to cancel them and exclude transit partners if RT's future fee reimbursement and cost needs are not met.

The agreement will begin with the spring 2016 semester and continue for five years, expiring in December 2021.

Convenient, affordable mass transit is crucial to Los Rios students. About 4 of every 10 Los Rios students – nearly 30,000 students – ride RT buses and light rail to get to and from class. In 2014, those students accounted for 4.4 million rides on RT. Student use of mass transit means thousands of fewer cars driving fewer miles and blowing less exhaust and pollution into the air we all breathe.

And, if current trends continue, mass transit will become even more important to Los Rios students. That's because a growing number are attending more than one of the four Los Rios Colleges. Consider that in fall 2014, 5,800 students attended more than one Los Rios college, and that was up nearly 7 percent from the 5,500 students only the year before. In mid-October, Los Rios will open Folsom Lake College's new Rancho Cordova Center — only a short walk from RT's Mather Field/Mills Station. That will mean that for the first time three Los Rios Colleges will be connected by light rail. Add bus service, and all four of our colleges are already connected by mass transit. Looking ahead, it's clear that more students will need a fast, convenient and affordable way to get from campus to campus, as they strive for academic success.

ABOUT LOS RIOS

The Los Rios Community College District is one of the nation's most respected learning institutions and the second-largest community college district in California, serving the greater Sacramento region. Los Rios includes: American River, Cosumnes River, Folsom Lake and Sacramento City colleges; six major education and outreach centers; and specialized workforce and economic development programs, for regional businesses, governments and organizations. Los Rios colleges offer AA/AS degrees, certificates and transfer-education opportunities in more than 70 career fields. The District's 2,400 square-mile service area includes all of Sacramento County, most of El Dorado County and parts of Yolo, Placer and Solano counties. About 77,000 students are enrolled in the four Los Rios colleges. For more information, go to www.losrios.edu.