RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION: Policy Item: Yes ___ No X

Authorize Chairman to sign letter of support for the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS).

YARTS is at a crucial stage of operations. To continue transit service at existing levels beyond this fiscal year, YARTS will need an additional $400,000 per year for operations. Like all public transit systems, YARTS depends on public subsidy to fund a portion of its service costs. The proposed letter of support urges Congressman Radanovich to help YARTS secure long-term funding from sources such as the National Park Service.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors are founding members of the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System and have taken action on many items related to YARTS service.

LIST ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

1. Direct staff to make changes to Draft letter of support.
2. Do not authorize letter of support.

COSTS: (X) Not Applicable
A. Budgeted Current FY $
B. Total anticipated Costs $
C. Required additional funding $
D. Internal transfers $

COSTS: ( ) 4/5th Vote Required
A. Unanticipated revenues $
B. Reserve for Contingencies $
C. Source Description $
Balance in Reserve Contingencies, If Approved: $

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS
List the attachments and number the pages consecutively:
Attachment #1: Proposed Letter of Support
Attachment #2:
Attachment #3:
Attachment #4:

CLERK’S USE ONLY
Res. No.: 02-449
Vote - Ayes: 5
Absent: 
Noes: 
Approved 
Abstained: 
Denied 
No Action Necessary 
Minute Order Attached 
The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.
Date: 
ATTEST:
MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER’S RECOMMENDATION:
This item on agenda as:
Recommended 
Not Recommended 
For Policy Determination 
Submitted for Comment 
Returned for Further Action
Comment: 

By: 
A.O. Initials: 

Action Form Revised 10/95
December 17, 2002

The Honorable George Radanovich  
United States Congress Member   
313 Cannon House Office Building       
Washington, DC 20515-0518

Dear Congress Member Radanovich:

As a founding member of the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS), the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors strongly supports YARTS in its mission to provide transit service to our residents employed in Yosemite National Park, as well as to visitors in our county traveling to Yosemite. We wish to thank you for your continued support and assistance in securing discretionary federal funding for planning, operations, and capital projects related to YARTS.

Like all public transit systems, YARTS relies on public subsidy to fund a portion of its service costs. Currently YARTS is at a critical stage and in order to continue service at existing levels beyond this fiscal year will need $400,000 per year in federal support. Furthermore, rider trends indicate that additional service is warranted and would be utilized if the funding for expansion of service existed.

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors respectfully requests your leadership in securing long term federal funding for YARTS operations and capital projects. For this to occur, the following two actions are necessary.

The first requires authorization language that would enable the National Park Service to fund transportation services outside of Yosemite National Park boundaries. Such authorization would allow the National Park Service to provide financial support to transit services such as YARTS. Senate Bill 2640 would have provided this authority to the National Park Service, but unfortunately the Congressional session ended without final action on this bill. We request that this legislation be reintroduced and acted upon with the new Congress this January 2003.

Second, the Department of Interior appropriations bill that includes the Federal Fiscal Year 2003 budget for Yosemite National Park must have funding available and dedicated to YARTS. The amount required for this fiscal year is $400,000. The YARTS Short Range Transit Plan and Annual Service Plan would identify future service levels and budget contributions. Both the Short Range Transit Plan and the Annual Service

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Plan have been and will continue to be coordinated with the National Park Service under the provisions of our Agreements.

YARTS will begin its fourth year of transit service in Mariposa County and the Yosemite Region next year. The number of visitor and employee riders continues to increase over previous months. YARTS is in need of a stable and secure source of funding if it is to continue this progress. Yosemite National Park, its mission, and employees are direct beneficiaries of YARTS services. Mariposa County is not in the financial position to carry the burden of funding transit service into Yosemite National Park and therefore appreciates your support in providing the means that will allow the National Park Service to be our financial partner in this already successful endeavor.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and we look forward to hearing from you regarding this request.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

ROBERT C. STEWART
Chairman

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
    Senator Barbara Boxer
    Superintendent Dave Mihalic, Yosemite National Park
    Board of Supervisors

bcc: Margie Williams, Clerk of the Board