

DEPARTMENT: Public Works

By: Larry Pollard

PHONE: 966-5356

RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Adopt resolution supporting improved regional transit and authorize expenditure of \$ 25,000 and advertisement for consultant to perform Task 1--Information Review and Analysis--of a regional transit study.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

The Board authorized formation of a task force in December 1990 to pursue the feasibility of improved transit in the Yosemite region. In a series of recent meetings, staff and policy makers from other counties, Yosemite National Park, and groups such as the Wilderness Society have indicated much interest in the concept of regional transit.

LIST ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Depending on votes by their governing boards, a portion of the cost of Task 1 and the remainder of the study could be paid by other counties. Mariposa County will also be requesting that staff and policy personnel from other agencies assist in the work. If the study can begin soon, tourists can be surveyed this summer. If Mariposa County does not take the lead, improved transit for tourists and residents may not occur.

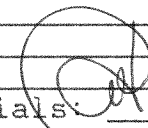
COSTS: ( ) Not Applicable		SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
A.	Budgeted current FY \$	List the attachments and number
B.	Total anticipated costs \$25,000	the pages consecutively:
C.	Required Add'l funding \$	1. Resolution supporting
	Source: Community Development Fund	regional transit and
SOURCE: ( ) 4/5ths Vote Required		authorizing expenditures
A.	Internal Transfers \$	for Task 1 of a regional
B.	Unanticipated revenues \$	transit study
C.	Reserve for contingency \$	2. Exhibit A--scope of work
D.	Description:	for regional transit study
Balance in Reserve for Contingencies,		
if approved _____		

CLERK'S USE ONLY:  
 Res. No.: 91-310  
 Ord. No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Vote - Ayes: 4 Noes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Absent: ~~1~~ Abstained: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Approved ( ) Denied  
 ( ) Minute Order Attached

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

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ATTEST: MARGIE WILLIAMS  
 Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
 County of Mariposa, State of CA  
 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Deputy

Comment: Advertising Fund  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 A.O. Initials: 

MARIPOSA COUNTY  
RESOLUTION 91- 310

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CONCEPT OF IMPROVED TRANSIT IN THE YOSEMITE REGION, AND AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS AND ADVERTISEMENT FOR CONSULTANT TO PERFORM TASK 1 OF A REGIONAL TRANSIT STUDY.

WHEREAS, Yosemite National Park is experiencing increased traffic congestion; and,

WHEREAS, single family vehicle use continues to exacerbate air quality concerns within the Park and region; and,

WHEREAS, location within the region of a University of California campus may increase transit needs; and,

WHEREAS, growth in the communities outside of Yosemite and reduction of tourist services within Yosemite creates an increased demand for transportation to the Park; and,

WHEREAS, re-negotiation of the Yosemite concessionaire contract presents an opportunity for improved development and coordination of transit services to and within the Park; and,

WHEREAS, improved availability and coordination of transit services within the region could alleviate these concerns.

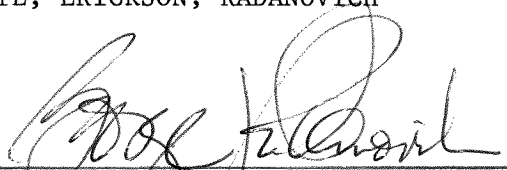
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Mariposa supports improved transit services within the Yosemite region.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that up to \$ 25,000 be expended to retain a consultant for performance of TASK 1 of a regional transit study, as delineated in attached EXHIBIT A.

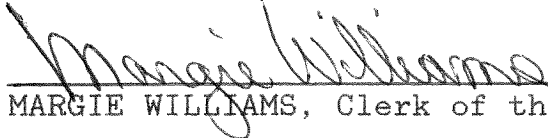
RESOLUTION NO. 91-310

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors this 25th day of June, 1991, by the following vote:

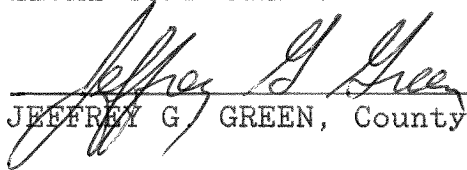
AYES:	BAGGETT, PUNTE, ERICKSON, RADANOVICH
NOES:	NONE
ABSENT:	TABER
ABSTAINED:	NONE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
George P. Radanovich, Chairman  
Mariposa County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND  
LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JEFFREY G. GREEN, County Counsel

**DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PLAN  
for implementing  
YOSEMITE AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEM  
(YARTS?)**

**INTRODUCTION/OBJECTIVES**

Increasing emphasis is being placed on finding transportation alternatives for providing access to, in, and about, Yosemite National Park. These alternatives are needed for the almost 1,000 permanent Park employees as well as the millions of visitors that come to Yosemite each year. A very large percentage of these Yosemite-related trips pass through, and/or are totally within, Mariposa County. Many of these are made by overnight guests at lodgings near the park boundary and in the perimeter cities of Yosemite.

*Mariposa County, with cooperative planning and decision-making by the neighboring counties of Merced, Madera, Tuolumne, Mono, and the National Park Service, intends to adopt a short term action plan to increase the viability of public transit options. The transit service would be scheduled to begin operation as soon as possible (possibly within 12 to 18 months after the action plan is developed and adopted for implementation) and, as envisioned, might use alternative fueled state of the art transit vehicles. Service might be available seven days a week and scheduled frequently enough to make the service attractive to many potential users. It would be intended for residents of the region who work in Yosemite, as well as regional visitors who may be staying outside the park, but could use transit to visit on day trips.*

It is expected that any service established would provide alternative travel mode opportunities for local area residents for work and other trip purposes in the corridors between the major population centers of the county.

**NEED FOR STUDY AND ACTION**

Yosemite Valley has been designated an air quality non-attainment area by the Air Resources Board for PM-10 (particulates). Therefore, a significant decrease in auto emissions must begin to occur. The concept of offering a substantially higher level of advanced transit service to potentially address at least part of this needed decrease in auto travel might prove quite successful.

Even though much of the transportation improvement actions recommended in the 1980 Yosemite General Management Plan have not been implemented, new attempts are being made to develop an updated set of feasible alternatives. This is occurring within the Park Service planning structure as well as by outside interested agencies, such as the Wilderness Society.

Recently published discussion papers and present attempts to address the "automobile problem," present the theme of encouraging as many individuals and groups as possible to travel by some type of mass transit system to and from Yosemite Valley. Often this includes employees, day visitors and overnight travelers. This approach by Mariposa County to develop a "fast track" action plan whose final product is actual implementation of a prototype transit service, specifically addresses this top priority issue.

The possibility of the new park concessionaire contract prohibiting most park employees from driving into the Valley also provides an excellent opportunity for establishing an attractive state of the art transit service.

## **PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK TO CARRY CONCEPT THROUGH TO SERVICE START UP**

*Task 1 below will be completed prior to work starting on the remaining tasks. The results from Task 1 will be used to guide the scope and direction of the other tasks.*

### **Task 1: INFORMATION REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

#### **Part A:**

Review available information on regional travel in the area to ensure that local area trips (within county and between counties) are considered in the design and structuring of the regional transit system.

Gather and review existing travel data on Park employees and visitors. Much of the information on park employee travel patterns and characteristics will be available from recent housing relocation studies completed by the Park Service.

Some current data on visitor travel characteristics will be available from the just completed Yosemite visitor surveys conducted under contract to the Park Service. Randomly selected park visitors leaving the park by auto or tour bus were interviewed, or in some cases, asked to fill out a mail back survey. Some initial results are already available, with more to come.

It is expected that additional information will need to be collected from guests staying at lodging establishments on the Yosemite Park boundary (El Portel, Fish Camp, etc.) and in surrounding communities, i.e., Mariposa, Oakhurst, etc. The intent will be to obtain information about length of stay, Park areas visited, mode of transport, time of typical excursions to and from the Park, etc. The primary method to be employed should be self-administered survey forms, but some face-to-face interviews could be used to supplement and verify the information.

It could also be helpful to conduct similar interviews with other visitors and tourists in the area for such activities as rafting trips, visits to local museums and parks, etc. Data collection (through some form of market research) should also be obtained from local area residents to assist in determining the extent of possible transit service needs and potential use in the local community. This could relate to trips being made for school/college, shopping, medical purposes, etc.

#### **Part B:**

Review similar types of transit-based operations (parks, tourist attractions, etc.) in other U.S. (and possibly foreign) settings that may have some applicability to the Yosemite area. Develop a summary of how the operations work, approximate annual and capital costs, acceptability and use by visitors, impact on traffic reduction and parking needs, etc. Provide a pros and cons discussion of each viable applicable example.

#### **Part C:**

Identify all possible funding sources for capital and operating needs of the eventual system. These sources would include federal, state, regional, local, and private sector contributions. Private grants from trusts and other sources should also be identified. In particular, local tourist industry/motel owners should be included in the discussion as well as private and public operators of existing transportation service in and around the Yosemite area.

Evaluate potential overall economies of scale and system efficiencies if the new regional system can coordinate maintenance (and possibly capital equipment needs) with the present county school bus operation.

Part D:

Develop a simple, yet workable approach for identifying a political and technical framework for managing and guiding the remainder of the study. This may or may not be the same structure that eventually manages the transit operation. Tentative recommendations on this entity should also be provided.

As part of this sub-task, and based in part on the information developed in the previous efforts, identify (roughly) the eventual contribution -- both in ridership demand and in transit system funding -- from each political entity in the region. This should potentially reflect the "equitable" contribution that each entity should make to fund the remainder of the transit planning effort.

Summary of Task Importance:

As a result of the above effort to more clearly define travel behavior and characteristics of Yosemite area visitors and employees, the consultant will be asked to recommend to the study steering committee several important elements that will be used to fully develop the scope of the next several tasks. These include:

- 1) Geographic area to be included in the regional transit system planning effort, with possible recommendations for phasing in at a later date, more distant areas into the operation.
- 2) Potential for successfully adapting an already working model transit-based operation to the Yosemite area
- 3) The type of project steering committee (both political and technical, and possibly, citizen and interest group-oriented) to be established to guide the remainder of the transit planning effort, and potentially the implementation.
- 4) Overall guidance on the direction and emphasis areas on the remainder of the transit planning effort.

Products:

The overall product of this task will be a series of concise working papers that document the results of the efforts undertaken, and the recommendations. A series of meetings as required during the life of the project to discuss the issues and provide further direction to the consultant. At the most monthly meetings are envisioned. Over the estimated 4 to 6 month study timeframe, a maximum of 6 meetings are expected.

Estimated Cost:

The cost to carry out these activities, including necessary meetings and development of working papers, is \$25,000.

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*The following proposed tasks 2, 3 and 4, are provided to show the direction that the study will likely go, dependent on recommendations developed in Task One.*

**Task 2: DEVELOP SYSTEM OPERATING PARAMETERS OF PROTOTYPE TRANSIT SERVICE**

Several important work elements would be included in this task, including identification of possible routes, schedules, and fare structure for a transit service that would to address the needs identified in the prior task as the primary goals of the initial phases of the regional

service. Emphasis will likely be on employee travel to and from Yosemite, but also will address travel needs by others within the count(ies). Transit service from resorts and lodging facilities on the park's perimeters should be included in the operational planning. Estimates will be developed of the potential for shifting some present school bus ridership demand to new regional system, and the impact (cost savings) to the school district.

A phase of the work will be to review "state of the art" equipment that may be appropriate for use in the Yosemite Area Regional Transit System, as the service might be called. Cost estimates, availability, and experience elsewhere will be documented.

Estimates of ridership, annual operating costs, including maintenance, will be identified. Possible staging areas (park and ride lots?) for employees (and possibly visitors) will also be located. (By the nature of the "fast track" approach being taken, any sites located will probably be in reasonable condition to use, with only minor improvements needed).

### **Task 3: DEVELOP OPERATING AND CAPITAL PLAN**

This work will include development of a detailed operating and capital needs plan to provide the initial operating service parameters developed in the prior task. The plan may cover only a short term horizon, three to five years, or a much longer time frame, out 20 years, depending on other planning underway addressing similar problems. (For example, the Park Service may be identifying a longer term action plan than could supersede the actions developed here).

Funding resources will be specifically identified, including recommendations as necessary for increasing certain fees and other charges to cover part or all of the plan's financial budget. (These could include entrance fees imposed by the APCD, TOT resources, etc.) Capital equipment needs will be noted, including lease versus buy options.

Part of the work will be to develop recommendations for the most appropriate form of organization or agency to manage the service, first to initiate it, and then, after it is place. A transit authority, a district, county operation, or possibly NPS management will be evaluated.

### **Task 4: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND PROGRAM**

This task envelops many of the critical elements needed to successfully establish an operating prototype transit service that will begin to address the "automobile problem" in and around the Yosemite region. Based on previously documented information and direction provided by the project "policy steering committee," a detailed implementation plan will be developed that documents specific actions, a timeframe, and the responsible agency for carrying out the action. It is assumed that a time period of between 12 and 24 months following the adoption of the program will be needed to make the system fully operational. It may be possible that a portion of the service would be operating much sooner.

Part of the plan will be a recommended marketing program to promote the service among the local residents, the lodging industry, and regional and local employers. As appropriate, marketing recommendations could include plans to target Central Valley and Bay Area cities and communities, if the service is planned to initially have sufficient capacity to handle this demand.