

AGENDA ITEM V – D
STAFF REPORT

FY 2023 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Attached is the systemwide performance report for the services operated by Yuba-Sutter Transit for all of FY 2023 (July 2022 through June 2023) presented in comparison to all of FY 2022. As with FY 2022, FY 2023 continues to illustrate a modest but steady recovery of ridership from the extended impacts of the pandemic. Of note for this comparison, the Oroville Employee Shuttle service that was operated primarily for Pacific Coast Producers, Inc., was discontinued after the first two months of the previous reporting period (September 2021). Despite the reduced service operated in FY 2023, the ridership has been steadily growing.

Systemwide ridership improved during the fiscal year ending FY 2023, up 15 percent over FY 2022. While this continues an upward trend, the 516,376 passenger trips that were provided in FY 2023 were just 55 percent of the 931,951 trips that were provided in FY 2019 (the last full pre-pandemic fiscal year). This increase in ridership occurred despite a slight decrease in vehicle service hours (VSH) operated systemwide, down 0.8 percent compared to the same period in FY 2022. Given the higher ridership and slightly fewer service hours, most systemwide financial indicators improved compared to FY 2022, except for the farebox recovery ratio which decreased marginally from 10.7 percent to 9.9 percent. This is due in part to a comparative increase of approximately 16 percent in operating cost per vehicle service hour during the reporting period.

To illustrate how much the COVID-19 pandemic impacted ridership, the attached graph has been updated through FY 2023 to compare systemwide ridership by month over the last five fiscal years (FY 2019 through FY 2023). Specifically, the gap between the monthly data points for FY 2022 and FY 2023 is the actual ridership increase for each month of FY 2023 compared to the same month in the previous fiscal year. Over the twelve months of FY 2023, systemwide ridership has increased by an average of 15.4 percent each month ranging from a low of 1.7 percent in July 2022 to a high of 24.9 percent in January 2023.

Looking forward, the recent positive systemwide ridership growth trend is expected to continue, but ridership is likely to remain well below pre-pandemic levels in FY 2024. This assumption is based on a continued shift to remote work, wide availability of telehealth services, and lower in-person school and support program attendance. In response to these persistent post-pandemic trends, the agency adopted the Yuba-Sutter NextGen Transit Plan (Plan) in May 2023. The Plan was developed in close collaboration with the Board of Directors, member jurisdictions, community stakeholders, and the public at large. The Plan will shape the Yuba-Sutter Transit system for the next 5 to 10 years and includes modifications to existing routes, new service areas, alternative service models, and more modern technology-based transportation delivery tools. Initial phases of the Plan's recommendations are already being deployed and when fully implemented, Yuba-Sutter Transit's ridership is projected to increase by 45% and its coverage area increased by 60% at approximately the same operating cost (inflation adjusted).

Staff will be prepared to discuss the performance summary in detail at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Information only.