

COVID-19 INFORMATION AND UPDATE:

The Merced County Department of Public Health is closely following the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and California Department of Public Health on the novel (new) virus that is causing an outbreak of pneumonia illness. Coronavirus is a type of virus that causes diseases of varying severities, ranging from the common cold to more serious respiratory disease. For more information, including the latest updates please visit: www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus

THE BUS WELCOMES FIRST TRANSIT AS NEW OPERATOR FOR COUNTYWIDE TRANSIT

On May 1, 2020, First Transit, Inc. (First Transit) became the new operations and maintenance provider for The Bus as part of a 5-year, \$51 million contract with the Transit Joint Powers Authority for Merced County (TJPA). Through this contract, First Transit will maintain TJPA's fleet of 76 vehicles and will employ the drivers and staff necessary to provide paratransit, demand response, and fixed route transit services for The Bus.

Fares, routes, and the buses themselves will not change, although passengers may notice bus drivers wearing new uniforms as well as new 'First Transit' stickers affixed to buses. Passengers will still be able to utilize the same phone numbers, website, and social media sites for information regarding bus service and how to purchase passes. "This change should not be felt by passengers in any immediate way, but we look forward to systemwide improvements that will come with the high quality customer service and employee training that First Transit is bringing to the Merced County region," said Christine Chavez, Transit Manager for the Merced County Association of Governments, the agency responsible for the administration of TJPA.

"We are excited about this new partnership with First Transit," said Stacie Guzman, Executive Director of Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) and TJPA. "We are an agency that places passenger safety and service reliability at a premium and First Transit is a company that has demonstrated the ability to deliver both."

(First Transit continued)

First Transit provides nearly six decades of experience and professional skills to put to work for transit operations and maintenance. They have operated fixed route systems in cities across North America and around the world. Their goal is to provide the safest, most efficient passenger transportation service possible, so bus patrons enjoy a safe, comfortable ride with an operator who is courteous and understanding of their needs.

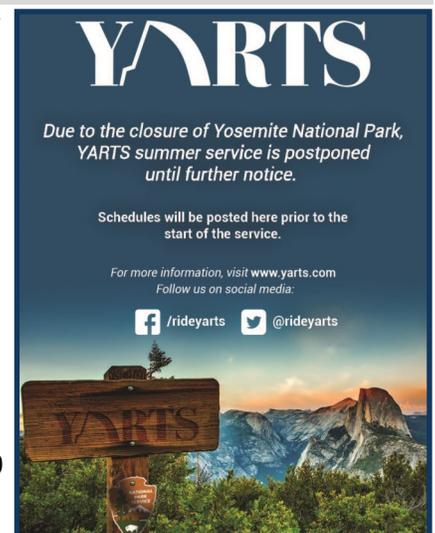
TJPA's contract with First Transit represents 100 jobs in Merced County and provides the opportunity to work with a proven industry leader in the electrification of bus fleets in the industry just as The Bus embarks on the process of shifting its own fleet to zero-emission vehicles.

All bus schedules and hours of operation can be found at www.mercedthebus.com or by calling (209) 723-3100. Real-time information regarding bus locations, services and arrival times can be found at www.thebuslive.com or by downloading 'The Bus Live' app on your smart phone for free. All fares are currently suspended due to the COVID-19 emergency.

SUMMER SERVICE FOR YARTS POSTPONED

Due to the closure of Yosemite National Park, the summer service routes for YARTS have been postponed until further notice. This includes the Fresno Hwy 41, Sonora Hwy 120 and Mammoth Lakes Hwy 395/120 routes.

The Merced Hwy 140 route is the only service being operated on limited service at this time. It is running on a modified schedule and only traveling as far as El Portal. That schedule can be found on the YARTS website at www.yarts.com



MCAG JUNE MEETINGS

- 06/05** CAC Meeting, 8:30 am
06/10 Technical Review Board meeting, 12:00 pm
06/18 Governing Board meeting, 3:00 pm

Please note: All MCAG meetings will be held via video/audio conference until further notice. The call-in number and passcode will be located on the cover of each agenda. To access the agendas for the meetings listed, please visit:

www.mcagov.org/agendacenter

For more information about these meetings, please contact Eva Garibay at: eva.garibay@mcagov.org

RWA UPDATES GUIDELINES FOR LANDFILL CUSTOMERS

Customers visiting the landfills in Merced and Los Banos have noticed some changes when they arrive to dispose of their items. To date both sites have remained open to the public six days a week, Monday through Saturday, from 7:00am

to 3:30pm, but procedures at the gates have changed slightly due to the COVID-19 emergency.



For safety, customers are asked to stay in their vehicles until they arrive at the scale house to weigh in. When approaching the scale house window, customers must comply with social distancing requirements while waiting to pay their fee and are advised to wear a mask in accordance with state and local guidance. And while cash is still accepted, customers are asked to use credit or debit cards for payment to reduce risk to employees.

“Since the beginning of the stay-at-home order we’ve seen a 27 percent increase in the number of residents using the various services at both landfills,” said Eric Zetz, Director of the Regional Waste Management Authority. “While we are eager to assist customers in the proper disposal of their items, we are asking people to be patient while they wait to enter and exit the site and to check our Facebook page for current disposal and recycling information, as well as updates on wait times.”

The Highway 59 landfill near Merced will be undergoing scale house lane improvements this summer which will reduce wait times for customers entering the site. Scale house lane improvements at the Billy Wright landfill in Los Banos will happen later this fall.

Both landfill sites in Merced and Los Banos allow for disposal of a range of items at no cost and have recycling and diversion programs for things such as mattresses, carpet, e-waste, household hazardous waste and more. Disposal fees apply to most material brought to the landfill, but some recycling programs accept specific items for free or a reduced rate. For more information, visit www.mcrwma.org or follow us on Facebook at MCRWMA.



HIGHWAY 59 LANDFILL

7040 N. Highway 59
Merced, CA 95348

Phone: 209-723-4481

Monday - Saturday
7:00 am - 3:30 pm

BILLY WRIGHT LANDFILL

17173 S Billy Wright Road
Los Banos, CA 95348

Phone: 209-826-1163

Monday - Saturday:
7:00 am - 3:30 pm

For more information about Regional Waste Authority please visit: www.mcrwma.org

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MeasureV

JUNE 2020—UPDATE

Measure V, Merced County's ½ cent transportation sales tax, was passed by Merced County voters with 71% approval in November 2016. In an effort to keep the community informed about this transformative measure, MCAg will feature monthly updates in this newsletter. You can also visit www.mcagov.org/measureV for the latest!

Over the past three years, local jurisdictions have made steady progress on Measure V projects around the County. The City of Livingston recently completed several road improvement projects to extend the longevity of streets and roads. One of these projects was transverse crack and sunken valve repair on Maple Court. Some common causes of pavement deterioration and degradation are overloading, seepage, improper or poor road surface drainage, adverse climatic conditions and other factors. These improvements will extend the life of the asphalt for many years.

The City is also set to break ground on the Highway 99 Winton Parkway On-Ramp widening project later this year.

**HAVE YOU SPOTTED
MEASURE V AT WORK
IN MERCED COUNTY?**

Snap a picture and send it to measurev@mcagov.org
or tag us on Facebook, Instagram
and Twitter

@mcag_merced
or use the hashtag
#MeasureV_mcag



Maple Court Project

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