

**DELEGATION TRAVELS TO WASHINGTON, DC WITH ONE VOICE**

Last month, a 16 member delegation from throughout Merced County traveled to Washington, DC to advocate for projects and issues of regional significance as part of the One Voice program. The delegation was comprised of local elected officials from the cities of Gustine, Merced and Livingston, the County Board of Supervisors, MCAG staff and representatives from Merced City School District, UC Merced the Merced Boosters Club and Lyons Investments.

Over the course of two days, the delegation met with Members of Congress and their staff, key federal agencies, and the White House Intergovernmental Affairs Office on topics related to transportation, economic development, water, education, and homelessness.



1st Row L to R: Marjie Kirn, Jessica Kazakos. 2nd Row: Gurpal Samra, Dennis Brazil. 3rd Row: Stacie Dabbs, Congressman Jim Costa, Josh Pedrozo, Adam Cox. 4th Row: Bill Lyons, RoseMary Parga-Duran, Daron McDaniel, Mike North. Back Row: Pat Nagy, Cori Lucero, Alex McCabe, David Melin, Mike Murphy.

“I look forward to traveling to DC for our One Voice trip with my other elected colleagues and business owners” said Supervisor Daron McDaniel. “We are able to sit face to face with federal department heads and give them a true account of what we are about and what we are trying to accomplish.”

The One Voice program provides our community leaders the opportunity to collaborate on issues and projects that will improve the quality of life in Merced County, and then

communicate those needs to the federal government. In a post-earmark era, the program maintains great value in the exchange of information that occurs and the relationships that are built year after year between local leaders and federal officials.

One Voice is an annual program. If you are interested in participating in future efforts please contact Stacie Dabbs at [stacie.dabbs@mcagov.org](mailto:stacie.dabbs@mcagov.org) or (209)723-3153 x 308.

**THE BUS 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!**

The Bus invites the community to save the date for the 20th Anniversary celebration of consolidated transit in Merced County! On Friday, July 1, 2016 The Bus will host an event from 10:00am to 3:00pm at the City of Merced Transportation and Welcome Center (710 W. 16th Street, Merced) that is free and open to the public. The celebratory event will offer public and non-profit agency vendors, free giveaways and fun! The Bus staff will be on hand to talk about new routes and schedules, and of course, you won't want to miss this opportunity take your picture with Buster!



For vendor information, please call The Bus administration office at (209)723-3100.

**THE BUS TO PROVIDE FREE SERVICE DURING THE FAIR**

The Bus encourages members of the community to spare the air and let The Bus take you to the Merced County Fair! From Wednesday, June 8 through Sunday, June 12, 2016 service is FREE on all bus routes throughout the countywide service area. The Bus will also offer a free fair shuttle between the Merced Transportation Center (710 W. 16<sup>th</sup> street) and the fairgrounds every 15-30 minutes. Riders can purchase fair tickets on the shuttle for only \$5 (must have exact amount as drivers do not carry cash and cannot make change). View the free fair shuttle map [here](#).

RED SHUTTLE	GREEN SHUTTLE	BLUE SHUTTLE
Wednesday to Friday 4:45pm – 9:15pm Last bus leaves fair at 9:00pm	Wednesday to Friday 9:15pm – 12:15am Last bus leaves fair at 12:00am	Wednesday to Friday 9:15pm – 12:15am Last bus leaves fair at 12:00am
	Saturday and Sunday 2:45pm – 12:15am Last bus leaves fair at 12:00am	Saturday and Sunday 2:45pm – 12:15am Last bus leaves fair at 12:00am

At the fair, be sure to visit The Bus booth and pledge to “Dump the Pump” and ride the bus on June 16, 2016. While you are there you can also enter to win a FREE bicycle by trying out the bike rack, and learn about changes to the routes and schedules that will be in effect August 1, 2016.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact The Bus at (209)723-3100. Real-time information regarding bus locations, services and arrival times can be found at [www.thebuslive.com](http://www.thebuslive.com). All buses are equipped with bike racks and are wheelchair accessible.

## BOARD ADOPTS PLAN TO MEET GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION TARGETS

Last month, the MCAG Governing Board adopted Amendment 1 to the 2014 Regional Transportation Plan following a year long committee process to develop a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Merced County. The effort began last year when the Governing Board appointed 13 community partners and stakeholders to the Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) Steering Committee. The purpose of the committee was to provide guidance on the process of developing an APS for Merced County and to help shape the development of the next Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). MCAG is required by law to include a strategy in the RTP that shows how the region may reduce greenhouse gas emissions through alternative development patterns, alternative transportation infrastructure, and/or additional transportation measures and policies.

In August 2015, the Steering Committee recommended that MCAG amend the current RTP to include a strategy that achieves the greenhouse gas reduction targets by assuming a more compact future growth pattern and embracing several transportation measures selected by the committee, such as increased investment in transit, ridesharing and vanpooling, passenger rail and bike and pedestrian projects. The draft RTP amendment completed the public review process at the end of 2015 and was adopted by the MCAG Governing Board last month. An amended RTP that meets the targets supplants the need to develop an APS.

For more information about the work of the [APS Committee](#) or the development process for the next RTP, contact Matt Fell at [matt.fell@mcagov.org](mailto:matt.fell@mcagov.org) or (209)723-3153 x 320.

## DUMP THE PUMP: JUNE 16, 2016 RIDE THE BUS FOR FREE

June 16th is Dump the Pump day which means anyone can ditch their cars and ride public transit for FREE throughout Merced County. By riding public transit, you can contribute to reducing congestion, minimize your carbon footprint, save money and go everyone you need to go for FREE!

The Bus provides access to all of the fun, exciting locations around town and throughout the county. If you have never tried The Bus, June 16th is the day to try it for FREE!

For more information, call The Bus administration office at (209)723-3100.



Members of the community board the YARTS bus as part of the free express service to Yosemite to celebrate Earth Day—April 23, 2016.

## YARTS OFFERS FREE SERVICE ON EARTH DAY

To celebrate Earth Day 2016, Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) offered free express service to Yosemite National Park from both Highways 140 (from Merced/Mariposa) and 41 (from Fresno/Oakhurst). This was a hugely successful program for YARTS in their continued effort to encourage the use of public transit and reduce the number of vehicles that travel into and out of the park everyday.

Reservations for the free Earth Day Express were offered on a first come, first served basis. Reservations were opened April 4th and by noon the next day, the Fresno buses were full. And in less than one week the Merced buses were full. Over 180 local residents took part of the free YARTS Express and participated in a variety of Earth Day activities in the Park.

Due to the success of the program, YARTS is planning to offer another free Express in August to celebrate the Centennial of the National Park Service.



YARTS is a regional public transit service that provides a year round alternative to driving to Yosemite from Merced and Mariposa along Highway 140, and from Fresno and Oakhurst along Highway 41. In addition, routes from Mammoth Lakes along Highways 120 and 395, and from Sonora along Highway 120 are offered during the summer. YARTS began service in 2000 and now provides an alternative to driving to nearly 100,000 riders per year.

For more information, please contact Cindy Kelly at [Cynthia.kelly@yarts.com](mailto:Cynthia.kelly@yarts.com) or (209)723-3153 x 315.

## Upcoming Meetings and Events

- Merced County Fair - Ride The Bus for free! - June 8-12, 2016
- Dump the Pump - Ride The Bus for free! - June 16, 2016
- MCAG Governing Board Meeting - June 30, 2016
- The Bus' 20th Anniversary Celebration - July 1, 2016