



# YUMA COUNTY'S TRANSIT SYSTEM: AN IMPORTANT INVESTMENT



## Yuma County's Population has a Big Need for Better Transit Service!

Of the estimated 209,323 Yuma County population in 2013:

- 26% of families with children live below the poverty level
- 16% are over age 65
- 12% are unemployed

These are families and individuals who will have difficulties affording and driving a car. Seniors, the disabled and low income people are defined as "transit dependent". Taking the bus, for many people in Yuma County, may be the only way they can to get to work, to school, to doctor appointments or to the grocery store.

## Current YCAT Service

YCAT operates eleven fixed routes, vanpool, demand responsive service throughout the southwestern quadrant of Yuma County and eastern Imperial County. YCAT operates Monday-Friday from 5:50 am to approximately 7:30 pm, with limited service continuing until 11:00 pm. Most routes operate on a once per hour frequency. On Saturday, service operates from 9:30 am to 6:30 pm with headways every 60 minutes. There is no service on Sundays or major holidays at this time.

## On Board Survey Reveals Most-Wanted Transit Improvements

An on-board survey of 491 YCAT riders was conducted in April of 2011 by consultants. In the survey riders were asked what they thought were the most important improvements needed to the YCAT system. Here is what the riders said they wanted:

- |                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| 1. More frequent service | 33% |
| 2. Later service         | 29% |

- |                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| 3. Earlier service   | 4%  |
| 4. More destinations | 7%  |
| 5. Fewer transfers   | 5%  |
| 6. Buses on time     | 7%  |
| 7. Other             | 11% |

Thirty-three percent of write-in responses to the "Other Improvements Needed" question requested the addition of Sunday service.

## How is Yuma County's Transit Service doing?

One way to assess the adequacy of transit service is to compare one agency's service hours, miles and operating budget per capita with other transit agencies who operate in a similar sized community. When we compared YCAT service with that of Napa County, Redding and Butte County, California we found:

- YCAT provides only one quarter to one third of the per capita transit service of three comparable small transit operators.
- YCAT's operating budget is just one quarter to one half the size per capita compared to three transit agencies' budgets with similar size populations and service areas.

***In order to provide a level of transit service that is comparable to other small transit agencies, YCIPTA needs two to four times their current funding level.***

Per Capita Comparison of Comparable Transit Agencies				
	Napa County Vine	Redding Area Bus Authority	Butte County B-Line	Yuma County YCAT
Revenue Miles per Capita	8.07	4.91	4.94	2.78
Revenue Hours per Capita	0.59	0.35	0.32	0.12
Operating Budget per Capita	\$41.41	\$30.74	\$23.39	\$10.23

Sources: 2010 Census population data and 2013 NTD Transit Database

**Note:** there are no Arizona transit systems directly comparable to Yuma County.

## Transit serves basic travel needs of Yuma residents ...

The 2011 on-board survey asked riders “Where are you going?” The answers showed people ride the bus for the most basic travel needs:

- 36% home
- 9% to work
- 13% social/recreation
- 14% to school
- 13% shopping
- 5% medical/dental appointments

The busiest destinations were the Downtown Yuma Transit Center, Arizona Western College/ NAU/UA, West Yuma transit center near Walmart, and downtown San Luis near the border.

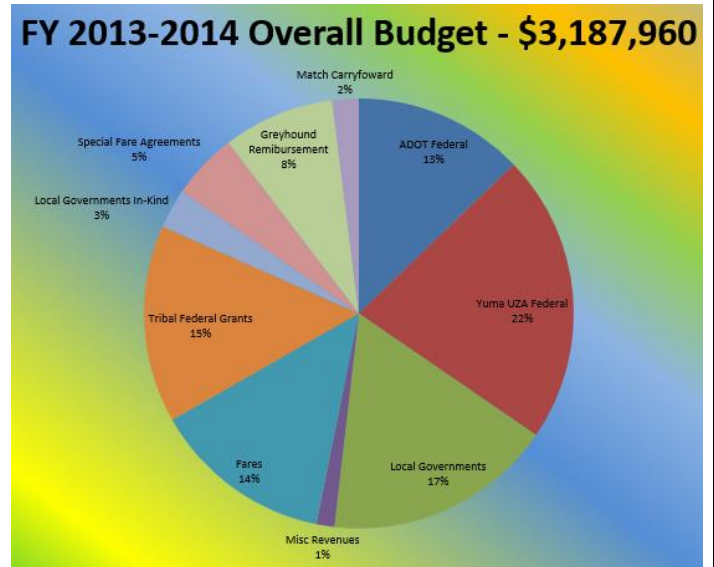
However, with buses coming only once per hour, it can be a long wait in the hot sun for the next bus, particularly if you just missed a bus. Evidence from other cities shows that as transit service frequencies are increased, they begin to attract riders of choice. More people will ride when the buses start coming more frequently.

## YCIPTA’s Funding Picture

The Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (YCIPTA) is an Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority formed under Arizona Revised Statutes 28-9101. The member agencies include the cities of Yuma, Somerton and San Luis, the Town of Wellton, Yuma

County, Arizona Western College, Northern Arizona University, Quechan Indian Tribe and Cocopah Indian Tribe. The nine member Board of Directors consists of the City, Town and County Administrators, chief executives at the local college/university and planning directors from the Indian Tribes.

YCIPTA receives approximately \$3.2 million dollars of its transit funding from various local and federal funding sources\* as defined below:



YCIPTA’s Local match contributions from others:

City of Yuma	\$200,000	32.19%
Yuma County	\$154,960	24.94%
Arizona Western College	\$100,000	16.09%
City of San Luis	\$70,573	11.36%
Cocopah Indian Tribe*	\$38,898	6.26%
City of Somerton	\$29,919	4.81%
Town of Wellton	\$14,499	2.33%
Northern Arizona University	\$6,800	1.09%
Quechan Indian Tribe*	\$5,757	0.93%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$621,406</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

\*YCIPTA receives no funding from the State of Arizona.

YCIPTA receives approximately \$2.1 million in Federal funding for the Yuma Urbanized Area which

consists of the City of Yuma, Winterhaven, and Fortuna Foothills. YCIPTA as an operation is heavily dependent on Federal funding and local government match contributions to operate its transit system. Overall, the subsidy for the year to run 38,000 revenue hours for 381,042 passenger trips (1,436 per day) is approximately \$4.12 per passenger riding. This is very efficient for a small urban transit system.

## Yuma County's Transit Funding Options Explored

Several funding options were identified and studied to expand transit services and transit capital improvements in Yuma County. The 2012 *Yuma Regional Transit Study*<sup>1</sup>, identified three funding levels to support needed transit service improvements. A County-wide tax dedicated to transit was found to be the most viable solution. Similar to the way that jails and public health services are funded, a small increase in the privilege tax would

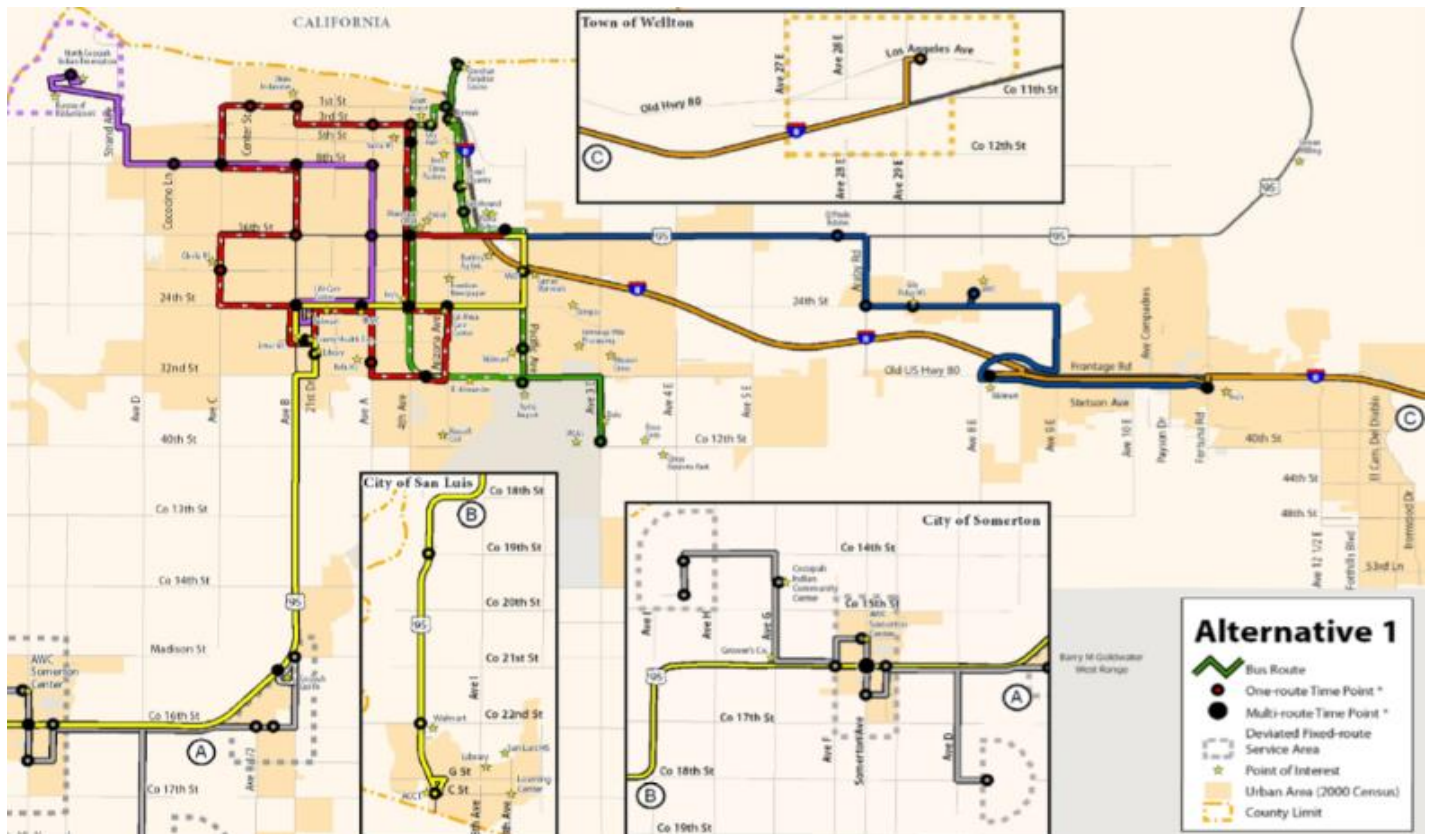
make a big difference in the quality of the County's public transportation services.

### Breakdown of Yuma County's Privilege Tax

State of Arizona	5.6%	.056 cents
County General Fund	.5%	.005 cents
Jail District	.5%	.005 cents
Health Services District	.012%	.0012 cents
<b>Total Tax:</b>	<b>6.72%</b>	<b>.672 cents</b>

The proposed transit tax would add between .001 to .002 cents to each transaction, amounting to about \$1.00 to \$2.00 dollars per resident per month.

The transit tax to be put before Yuma County voters in 2015 or 2016 would last for 20 years and then expire. It would need to go back to the voters to approve an extension after that time.



<sup>1</sup> The 2012 Yuma Regional Study was conducted by Parsons Brinckerhoff under contract to ADOT.

## YCIPTA responds to customer needs with a \$23.2m 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan

YCIPTA has prepared a 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan that identifies \$23.2m in urgent investment needs to raise service levels, replace aging buses and add new transit shelters and benches. This plan meets customer requests for more frequent service that runs earlier, later and on the weekends.

Three tax rates have been identified that result in three different revenue scenarios to fund different levels of transit service expansion and capital improvements:

### Alternative 1: Basic Level

A .01% increase in the privilege tax raises about \$2.5m per year.

### Alternative 2: Better Level

A .015% increase in the privilege tax raises about \$3.8m per year.

### Alternative 3: Best Level

A .02% increase in the privilege tax raises about \$5m per year.

## What would these amounts of funding pay for?

All three funding scenarios propose to modernize YCIPTA operations with new furniture, computers,



staff and security equipment. Each scenario allows increasing levels of increased bus service by purchasing new buses. Remaining funds are then invested in new bus shelters and benches, sidewalk and ADA access, park and ride lots and bus maintenance facilities.

## Basic Funding Level at .01%

Generates about \$2.5m per year, equal to about \$1.00 per resident per month. This amount of funding would increase bus service operating hours on existing routes by 45% (Half of the bus service goes to 30 minute frequency, the rest stay at 60 minute frequency)

### Adds new routes

- Expands YCAT On-Call to serve seniors age 65 years old and older and persons with disabilities, seven days a week.
- Funds YCAT Vanpool for up to 100 vans @ \$300.00 per month, per van.
- Creates a new circulator route.

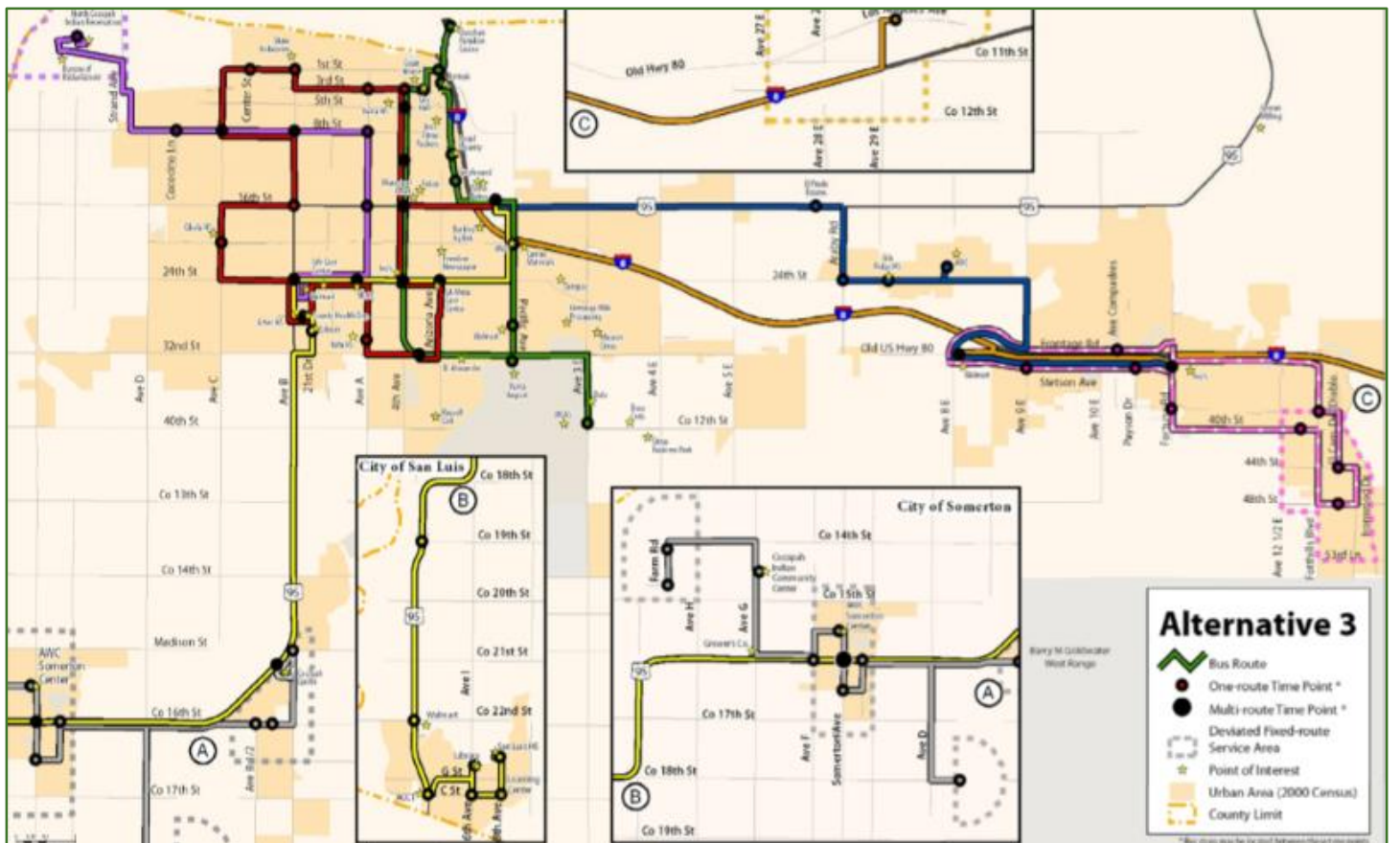
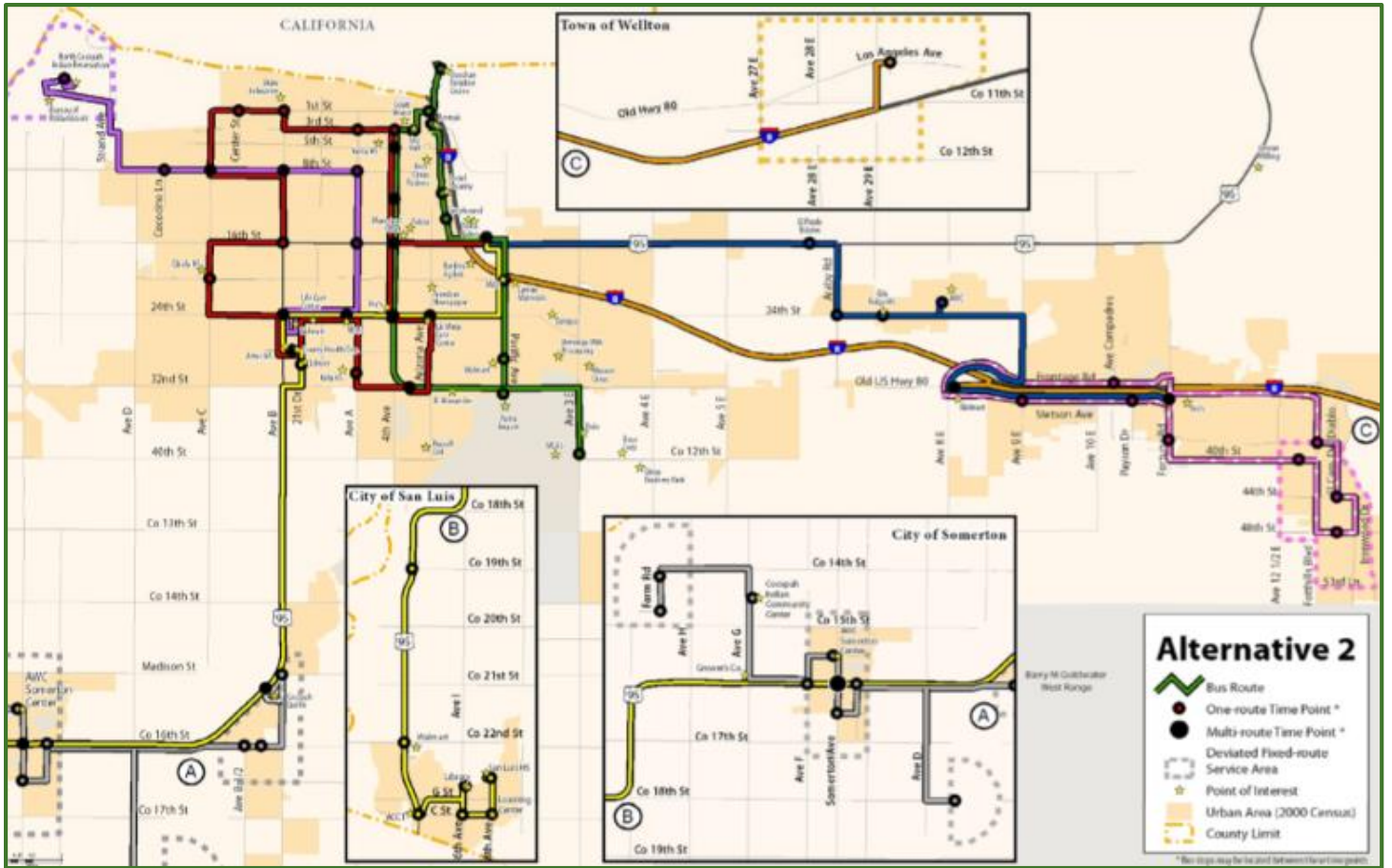
### Increase service frequencies on existing routes

- Adds evening service on at least four YCAT routes until 10 pm, Monday through Friday.
- Adds additional Saturday service on at least four YCAT routes until 8 pm on Saturday.
- Adds new Sunday service on at least four YCAT routes from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.

### Adds Basic Level of capital improvements

- Every year, YCIPTA could add a few small projects like adding new transit shelters, bus bays, ADA ramps and bus pads.







See the complete list of projects on YCIPTA's 10-Year Capital Plan at <http://www.ycipta.org/document-library.html>

This brochure is provided as a public service by:

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**Board Members**

Robert L. Pickels, Chairman - Yuma County  
 Greg Wilkinson, Vice Chairman - City of Yuma  
 Dr. Larry Gould - Northern Arizona University  
 Dr. Glenn Mayle – Arizona Western College  
 Paul Soto – Cocopah Tribe  
 Ralph Velez - City of San Luis  
 Richard Watenpaugh – Town of Wellton  
 Bill Lee – City of Somerton  
 Paul Soto – Cocopah Indian Tribe  
 Brian Golding, Sr – Quechan Indian Tribe

**Staff**

John Andoh, Transit Director  
 Shelly Kreger, Financial Services Operations Manager  
 Carol Perez, Administrative Assistant  
 Francisco Navarro, Intern  
 David Rossman Robinson, Intern

**Better Funding Level at .015%**

Generates about \$3.8m per year, equal to about \$1.56 per resident per month. This amount of funding would provide a 68% increase in service hours, allowing the highest demand bus routes to go to half hour service.

Adds more new bus routes and further expands service in high demand areas.

- Most of the system goes to 30 minute service frequencies.

Adds Better Level of capital improvements, including:

- System-wide addition of new transit shelters, benches and bus bays.
- Can build two new Park & Ride Lots or one larger project like an intermodal transit center or a bus maintenance facility.

**Best Funding Level at .02%**

Generates about \$5m per year, equal to about \$2.00 per resident per month. This amount of funding would double the current amount of bus service, with buses coming every half hour system-wide.

Completely funds YCIPTA's Capital Plan list of projects, including:

- New transit shelters and benches system-wide.
- Constructs 2 new park and ride lots.
- Builds a needed bus maintenance facility.
- Constructs 2 new Intermodal Transit Centers in Yuma and San Luis.



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