

e-tran and *e-van* Service Reductions Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why were service reductions considered at a time when ridership has increased?

The City of Elk Grove takes pride in our ridership on the *e-tran* and *e-van* systems. We understand the value of the services we offer to each of our passengers' daily activities. Unfortunately, due to economic conditions beyond the City's control, transit funding has been significantly reduced. The FY 09/10 adopted budget noted a reduction in revenue which created an approximately \$1.7 million deficit in the Transit fund prior to the service adjustments. The service adjustments allow for a balanced transit budget.

2. How is the transit service funded in the City of Elk Grove?

Transit service in the City of Elk Grove is funded through external grant resources and passenger fares. The transit services do not utilize General Fund revenues vital to other City programs, such as Police. The largest share of funding received is based on a percentage of sales tax dedicated to transit. In addition, the City receives limited federal funding and historically has received funding from the State of California. Unfortunately, the City (like all other Transit Agencies in California) was greatly impacted by a decision of the State Legislature to eliminate all dedicated State funding for transit service.

3. Who approved the service reductions and when?

Service reductions were approved at the July 22 City Council meeting. A public hearing was held and public comment was taken. The City Council was presented with four options as well as the ability to customize an option. After review of the data, the Council selected the option as posted on the website effective September 1, 2009.

4. Was there any public outreach conducted?

Prior to consideration by the City Council, four public meetings were held. Staff reviewed the four options that were then presented to the City Council on July 22 and gathered passenger feedback. The public meetings were noticed more than 30 days prior on each *e-tran* and *e-van* bus, on the City website, through direct text alerts to passengers, as well as, through coverage in the Sacramento Bee

and Elk Grove Citizen. Additional coordination was conducted with the Elk Grove Senior Center and the Transportation Coordinator for the Franchise Tax Board.

5. What analysis was performed in determining the service reductions?

City Transit staff performed a comprehensive review of all of the services provided. This included the re-evaluation of the route performance on a daily basis from July 2008 thru June 2009. Staff reviewed the daily performance logs to identify patterns in ridership trends by not only route but each time that route operates. In conjunction with the data review, the City worked with our Contractor to perform passenger counts on the routes to confirm the data previously reviewed. City staff road the routes over several weeks to observe the ridership patterns and to further evaluate all transfer options. Once the data was complete, staff examined each individual route, its operational costs, connections to other routes and redundancy in the corridors served. The result of this review was the development of the four options presented to the Council for consideration.

6. With the furlough Fridays, couldn't the City cut routes on those days and save them on others?

One of the options presented to the City Council evaluated the impact of additional furlough Friday reductions. Due to the level of reduction needed, the additional reductions for furlough Friday resulted in an approximate \$15,000 savings. Additionally, the limited number of hours applicable to furlough Fridays did not create enough hours to re-instate any of the Monday-Thursday service reductions to the commuter routes.

7. Why were the commuter routes impacted?

The service reductions approved by the City Council impacted each of the services the City offers, including Commuter service. Ridership on e-tran is approximately 50% commuter passengers/ 50% local fixed route passengers. City staff evaluated all routes, their destinations, daily ridership and the hours required to operate. We realize that our services are well utilized and that buses may be fuller in the future. The reductions adopted do impact Commuters and we realize that this may require an adjustment in your travel time or work schedule. While these reductions are not without impact, greater reductions were taken on the local service where 9 local routes were discontinued and weekend service was eliminated.

8. What's next?

City Transit staff will continue to monitor the performance of the routes to ensure their on-time performance and to observe the ridership patterns on the remaining routes. City staff will be riding the Commuter routes September 1 and 2 to assist with the transition to the new schedule. Additionally, staff will continue to monitor the financial resources available to the Transit program and will be working to develop a Comprehensive Short Range Transit plan. It is our goal to develop this plan now so that when the revenues increase, we have a well developed plan for the future growth of the system.