

REGIONAL TRANSIT ISSUE PAPER

Agenda Item No.	Board Meeting Date	Open/Closed Session	Information/Action Item	Issue Date
17	07/27/15	Open	Information	07/16/15

Subject: Blue Line to Cosumnes River College Light Rail Extension Grand Opening Activities

ISSUE

Promotion and outreach activities supporting the opening of the Blue Line to Cosumnes River College light rail extension.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

None

FISCAL IMPACT

None

DISCUSSION

RT Marketing staff has planned an extensive marketing and outreach campaign to promote the Blue Line to Cosumnes River College (CRC) light rail extension and grand opening activities, and to inform the general public about the long-awaited completion of this much anticipated enhancement to the community. The goals of the campaign are to inform RT's current riders and to attract new riders to the newly expanded light rail system.

Marketing/Outreach Campaign

Staff has developed a marketing campaign aimed at educating current and potential passengers about the new Blue Line to CRC light rail extension. The comprehensive campaign will include a how to ride guide, banners on bridges, direct mail, billboards, ads on buses and e-alerts. Advertising will include print, television, radio, electronic and social media. Media advisories and news releases will continue to be distributed noting project highlights and milestones, such as the start and completion of testing, artwork installation, information fairs and grand opening events.

Staff will continue to work closely with schools, community groups, neighborhood associations, businesses, transportation management associations, employers and employee transportation coordinators to increase public awareness of the Blue Line to CRC light rail extension. Marketing staff has built important relationships with neighborhood and community groups along the alignment and will continue to do so in order to serve as a conduit of information regarding service to the area.

To further promote the new light rail extension to Cosumnes River College, Marketing staff will host and/or participate in a series of information fairs to take place at businesses and employment sites located along the alignment and throughout the Sacramento region.

Approved:

Presented:

Final 07/22/15

General Manager/CEO

Senior Community and Government Affairs Officer

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Since the new Blue Line to CRC light rail extension will provide a convenient transportation option for Elk Grove residents, staff has been collaborating with our partners at the City of Elk Grove to develop targeted ridership programs and events. Similar to other RT partnerships, these activities will provide a great opportunity to help build future ridership and demonstrate the vitality of the region. An update will be provided to the Board once all the details are finalized.

Pre-Opening Community Celebration

A pre-opening community celebration will be held to thank customers, businesses and residents for their patience during construction of the Blue Line to CRC. RT staff will involve local organizations and businesses. The celebration will include live entertainment, kids' activities, food trucks, a farmers' market and community booths, and will take place in Parking Lot F at the Cosumnes River College campus (east entrance at Bruceville Road) from noon until 5 p.m. Attendees will be encouraged to fill out a pledge card to ride light rail and enter the prize drawing to win monthly RT passes or an iPad. During the celebration, light rail trains will operate between the Meadowview Station and the Cosumnes River College Station (making stops at each station in between) from noon until 5 p.m. so that attendees can tour the new stations. RT staff will be at each of the new Blue Line to CRC light rail stations to answer questions and hand out commemorative souvenirs.

Grand Opening Ceremony

A brief ceremony will take place at the Meadowview Station before Congresswoman Doris Matsui and other elected officials and VIPs board the "Celebratory Train" to the new Cosumnes River College Station. Celebratory train passengers will be greeted with steamer cannons and noisemakers upon arrival followed by a news conference with remarks by federal, state and local dignitaries. While these events will take place between 8 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., revenue service will officially start at approximately 5 a.m. in order to provide light rail service to students and commuters wishing to take advantage of the new service.

Customer Assistance Program

RT's customer assistance program will take place at the new stations and the Cosumnes River College Quad for two weeks following the grand opening.

The goals of the customer assistance program are to alleviate confusion for existing and new light rail riders, educate passengers about the extension to Cosumnes River College, and encourage commuters to try transit beyond the grand opening festivities.

In addition, RT Customer Service Representatives will be trained on all of the service changes to prepare them for answering related questions from patrons who call for schedule information and personalized trip planning assistance.