



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: August 5, 2021

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Youth Ride Free with Increased Route Frequency on CityBus

CityBus restores additional route services, prepares for start of school year

Santa Rosa, CA –Santa Rosa CityBus is continuing the restoration of service frequency to transit routes that were reduced during the pandemic due to significantly low ridership. This service restoration, beginning August 8, 2021, coincides with students preparing to return to in-person learning as school campuses start to reopen. The service level increases, in combination with the Unlimited Rides (UR Free) youth program launched July 1, 2021, provides students with reliable, comfortable, and fare-free transportation to school, work, or on any CityBus routes throughout Santa Rosa.

As students are preparing to start a new school year with in-person learning, Santa Rosa CityBus is working to make the transition for students and families as convenient, affordable, and easy as possible.

On August 8, CityBus will restore service levels to 85 percent of pre-pandemic levels including full restoration of weekend service, continued increase of weekday frequencies, and shifting schedules to better align with new bell times at city schools. Of CityBus’ 14 fixed routes, eight will have fully-restored service, four will continue to have reduced weekday frequencies, and two (Routes 7 and 19) will continue to be suspended with riders having ongoing access to the “Call-ahead” Service for any travel needs that cannot be served by other bus routes.

As of August 8, service levels by route compared to pre-pandemic levels will be as follows:

Route	Route Name	Service Level
1	Mendocino Ave./Coddington	Full
2/2B	Sebastopol Rd.	Full
3	Santa Rosa Ave.	Reduced weekday frequency
4/4B	Rincon Valley	Full
5	Petaluma Hill Rd.	Reduced weekday frequency
6	Fulton Rd.	Full
7	Montgomery Village/Coddington	Call-ahead Service
8	Bennett Valley	Full
9/9E	West Ninth St.	Reduced weekday frequency
10	Coddington Mall	Reduced weekday frequency
12	Roseland	Full

15	Stony Point Rd.	Full
16	Oakmont (deviated fixed-route)	Full
18	East Circulator	Reduced weekday span of service
19	North Circulator	Call-ahead Service

Service restoration continues to be guided by a framework responsive to ridership patterns, geographic equity, access to schools and other key destinations, and rider input. While the new schedules will not meet all riders’ needs, it is the City’s hope that the service increase will be a significant improvement. The City aims to be able to implement a second service increase in December 2021.

CityBus Unlimited Rides (UR Free) youth program, launched on July 1, 2021, provides fare-free transit to the approximately 30,000 school age youth through grade 12, including those who are home-schooled or are homeless. Fare-free transit helps remove a key financial barrier for families and youth traveling to school, working at a job or internship, or participating in an enriching extracurricular opportunity.

“I am happy and excited to support this program. As principal of Santa Rosa High School, I view the CityBus Youth UR Free program as a tremendous support for our students and their families, providing free and reliable transportation that will help improve our student's attendance and academic performance,” said Kimberly Johnson-Clissold, Ph.D., Santa Rosa High School Principal.

There is no application process for youth to ride free on CityBus. Students and youth in grades 9 through 12 can simply show a student ID or special pass when boarding the bus to take advantage of the UR Free program. Students and youth who need a replacement card or who do not have a student ID can visit the CityBus Transit Mall kiosk located on Second Street with proof of age to be issued a temporary pass until school starts. A student ID is not required for youth through grade 8 – they may simply climb onboard and ride. CityBus will be working directly with local schools and programs serving youth to ensure that all youth have access to the Unlimited Rides program. Youth who are experiencing homelessness are also eligible to participate in the program, regardless of current residence or school address.

Students currently account for twelve percent of all trips on CityBus. The Unlimited Rides (UR Free) Youth program is modeled after the Sacramento Regional Transit agencies effort where youth were provided fare-free transit and ridership increased 106% within one-year of implementation. CityBus looks forward to welcoming back past riders and introducing new riders to the convenience and reliability of CityBus.

The Unlimited Rides (UR Free) Youth program is a triple bottom line sustainability program as it is a significant step forward in the City’s carbon reduction efforts, reduces financial costs for working families and improves access to education. With a grant source, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District’s Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) grant program, restricted to programs and projects that improve air quality in the Bay Area, this program fulfils a significant strategy detailed with in the City’s Climate Action Plans as well as meeting critical local components of the State of California Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities, Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program, Downtown Station Area Specific Plan, and SB 743 aimed at mitigating vehicle miles traveled (VMT). CityBus’s Unlimited Rides Program is aimed at improving affordability, greenhouse gas reduction, and supporting housing development in Santa Rosa.

For more information about CityBus UR Free programs, visit srcity.org/CityBus

To view CityBus service schedule and map, visit <https://srcity.org/1661/Maps-and-Timetables>

About Santa Rosa City Bus

Santa Rosa CityBus has been operating free-fare programs for years and currently provides fare-free access for SRJC students, paratransit registrants, Veterans, City employees and children age four and under. Prior to the pandemic these programs provided approximately 30,000 rides monthly, with a rate of growth greatly exceeding that of the system as a whole, a 19 percent increase in ridership between 2018 and 2019.

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