

## **Transit program at COS called a success**

By Victor Garcia

Visalia Times-Delta and Tulare Advance-Register, Tues., Aug. 2, 2011

The College of the Sequoias Student Transit Pass Program is a success, according to a Tulare County Community College Transit Study.

"It's increased ridership, and transit revenues are up across the county," said Christine Chavez, Tulare County Association of Governments regional planner. "There's a number of students who said they wouldn't be able to get to school if this program wasn't available."

The pass was used 115,199 times in the first semester, according to the report.

About 16 percent of COS students took advantage of the pass, and student transit use is up 53 percent over the previous year, the study shows.

"We are pleased that the student transit program has gone as well as it has," said Brent Calvin, COS interim superintendent/president. "From its inception, we felt the program would benefit students."

Full-time COS students pay \$5 per semester for transit service in Tulare and Kings counties. Part-time students pay \$4. Students voted overwhelmingly for the program the last school year.

The transit study, prepared by TPG Consulting, provided several college transit recommendations, including:

- Continuing existing levels of service to COS Visalia and Hanford campuses
- Extend Route 7 to the Tulare campus
- Construct a Tulare campus transit hub

TCAG is looking at expanding the student transit program to Reedley and Porterville colleges.

Things that could negatively affect the student transit program include:

- An additional parking lot constructed at COS
- Student enrollment shrinking
- Higher tuition rates
- Online courses reducing the need for access to campuses

Calvin expects the need for student transit to continue.

"As our sites in Tulare and Hanford continue to grow and serve more students, the need for an intradistrict transit system between the three campuses will be very important," he said.

TCAG is accepting comments on the study through Sept. 12 via its website, [www.tularecog.org](http://www.tularecog.org).

[Bakersfield Californian editorial, Tues., Aug. 2, 2011:](#)

### **Fuller's bill may protect vulnerable cyclists**

A tip of the bicycle helmet to state Sen. Jean Fuller, R-Bakersfield, whose sponsorship of a cycling-safety bill signed into law almost four years ago, when she was in the Assembly, is bearing some fruit.

The Alameda County city of Pleasanton has become the first city in the nation to implement, on both an experimental and now a widespread basis, a new radar-type device designed to make street crossings safer for cyclists. The city began testing the "Intersector" -- a microwave motion and presence sensor -- in a limited run last year. The device can differentiate between vehicles and bicyclists and can either extend or trigger a traffic signal if it detects the presence of a cyclist.

Test results have been good, so Pleasanton will expand the system to 10 additional intersections. Already at least 20 jurisdictions have called to learn more about the system.

Fuller's bill, AB 1581, called for improved safety and compliance rules for cyclists at traffic lights, requiring new traffic signals or replacing existing ones with devices able to detect bicyclists. The bill also calls for similar traffic safety improvements for motorcycles.

Given [Bakersfield's polluted skies](#), bicycle-friendly weather and busy bike trails, such safety enhancements would seem worthy of exploration here. We urge city officials to look into it.

[Fresno Bee Earth blog, Mon., Aug. 1, 2011:](#)

## **Hoping for days without ozone violations in August**

By Mark Grossi

In August, air quality is best tracked by counting the number of days when there isn't an ozone violation.

If the count gets into double figures -- say, 10 or 12 -- that's about as healthy as you can expect here. Last year, there were nine days without a violation in August. The year before, there were 10.

Will this year be different? The summer seems cooler, and that can affect ozone violations.

But there were daily violations for the last two weeks in July. That includes a violation on Sunday, which occurred even though a thunderstorm seemed to clear the air for a while.

If you're paying attention to the numbers, the Valley's total is not the highest in the nation this summer. Both the greater Los Angeles area and the Antelope Valley/West Mojave Desert have 54 violations through Sunday. The Valley had 46.