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NEWS RELEASE

March 27, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Youth Ride FREE on SolTrans

Solano County, CA - Effective Monday, April 1, 2024, Solano County Transit (SolTrans) is excited to announce a groundbreaking initiative aimed at fostering greater accessibility to public transit for the youth in our community. As part of a pilot program, youth ages 6-18 will now have the opportunity to ride all local routes and express lines entirely FREE of charge. This initiative represents a significant step forward in SolTrans' commitment to providing equitable transportation options for all members of our community.

The pilot program is slated to run from April 2024 through June 2025 during which time SolTrans will closely monitor its impact on ridership and community engagement. In the spring of 2025, SolTrans staff will present findings and recommendations to their Board of Directors. The Board will, at that time decide whether to fully adopt the Youth Free Fare program.

"We are thrilled to launch this pilot program. It aligns with our mission to enhance mobility and accessibility for all residents of Solano County," said SolTrans Executive Director, Beth Kranda. "By offering free transit rides to youth, we aim to remove barriers to transportation, promote environmental sustainability and encourage the next generation to embrace public transit as a viable means of getting around."

The goals of the pilot program are threefold:

Promote access to public transit by eliminating fare barriers for youth. SolTrans hopes to introduce a new generation to the benefits of public transportation, fostering lifelong ridership habits and reducing reliance on personal vehicles.

Increase attendance at local school districts. Access to reliable transportation is crucial for ensuring that students can attend school regularly and participate in extracurricular activities. By offering free transit rides, SolTrans aims to support students in accessing educational opportunities and reduce absenteeism.

Grow ridership. Through this initiative, SolTrans aims to attract new riders and increase overall ridership on local routes and express lines, contributing to a more sustainable and efficient transportation system for the entire community.

SolTrans invites members of the community to participate in the pilot program and provide feedback on their experiences. By engaging with riders and stakeholders, SolTrans can better understand the impact of this initiative and make informed decisions about its future implementation.

For more information about the Youth Free Fare pilot program visit [SolTrans.org](https://www.soltrans.org).

Solano County Transit (SolTrans) has been the public transportation provider for south Solano County since July 2011. SolTrans provides local and express fixed routes and complementary paratransit. The agency is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) governed by a six-member Board of Directors, composed of two representatives from the cities of Benicia and Vallejo, Solano County's representative on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), and a representative from the Solano Transportation Authority.

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