

Measure #: 73

Referendum Title: Student Transportation Fee - Amendment to Measure 24

Ballot Type: Increase to an Existing Fee

Ballot Author: Transportation and Parking Services

Contact: Jean Marie Scott

QUESTION

Shall the undergraduates and graduate students of UCSC increase the current quarterly Transportation Fee of \$111.66 per student by \$10.34 in Fall 2019, an additional \$14.00 in Fall 2020, an additional \$15.00 in Fall 2021, an additional \$12.00 in Fall 2022, an additional \$8.00 in Fall 2023, an additional \$3.00 each Fall Quarter from 2024 through 2027, and an additional \$4.00 in Fall 2028 and Fall 2029 (\$191 quarterly total) which will provide additional funding to sustain transit services provided through Campus Transit Operations and the service contract with Santa Cruz Metro Transit District?

SUMMARY POINTS

- Increases current undergraduate and graduate mandatory fee as detailed in the table below.
- Provides 33% Return-to-Aid on the increase amount only (see table below) to support financial aid for undergraduate and graduate students.
- Fee increases begin Fall Quarter 2019 and will continue as scheduled in the fee table below each Fall Quarter thereafter through Fall Quarter 2029.
- The fee increases will sunset at the end of Summer Quarter 2030, unless a future referendum is held to continue the fee. Otherwise, the fee will revert to its current fee level of \$111.66 per student per quarter in Fall 2030 and transit service levels may be reduced.
- Fees will be assessed to all undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer Quarters.
- The Summer Quarter fees are equivalent to the preceding Spring Quarter fee, with no reduction in cost.
- Fee increases will raise the current Transportation Fee to \$122.00 Fall Quarter 2019, to \$136.00 Fall Quarter 2020, and to \$151.00 Fall Quarter 2021. See table below for full fee schedule.
- The higher initial fees are designed to build reserve capacity which may be used to support the replacement of the aging bus fleet, including transition to electric vehicles and development of infrastructure to support those vehicles.
- The proposed fee increases will generate approximately \$895,856 in 2019-20, \$1,032,400 in 2020- 21, and \$837,372 in 2021-22, inclusive of the 33% Return-to-Aid amounts of approximately \$237,436, \$310,665, and \$296,953 in each of these three years, respectively.¹
- The revenues generated by these fee increases will:
 - Continue the service agreement with the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (SCMTD) providing UCSC students fare-free Metro rides within Santa Cruz County;

¹ Based on projected Fall/Winter/Spring undergraduate and graduate student enrollments of 18,810, 19,340, and 19,500 and estimated Summer Session enrollments of 4,771, 4,908 and 4,950 in 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22, respectively. Includes students enrolled in programs away from campus (i.e. EAP, UCDC, etc.). Source: “Revised worksheet with 33 percent.xlsx”, provided by the Budget and Planning Office via email 1/22/18.

- Continue operation of Campus Transit services, including the Day and Night Shuttles based on ridership/demand;
- Support the expanded use of technology and service delivery methods that enhance efficiency and adjust to ridership trends and utilization;
- Support the delivery of transit services in relation to growth of campus enrollment, campus residential population, and serve UC Santa Cruz sites beyond the main campus in Santa Cruz County.
- Each Winter Quarter, the Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC) will review a) the end-of-year operating budget for the Transit program for the previous fiscal year, b) demonstrated service delivery and ridership demand during the previous Fall quarter, and c) plans for possible transit service adjustments for the next academic year. Based on this annual review, in compliance with campus regulations the SFAC can recommend to the Chancellor a decrease in the fee for a specific interval.
- Should this fee referendum fail, TAPS would need to implement significant transit service reductions which may include:
 - Reductions to or suspension of the service agreement with SCMTD;
 - Reductions to or suspension of Day Shuttle services; and
 - Reductions to or suspension of Night Shuttle services.
- The fee income will go to the office of Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS) less the Return- To-Aid portion that goes to Student Aid.
- Student Fee Advisory Committee Opinion Statement: The Student Fee Advisory Committee supports the TAPS referenda as we believe maintaining current transportation services will better accommodate the increasing student population and is important for student well-being.
- Fee is sponsored for placement on the ballot for undergraduate students by resolution of the Student Union Assembly, and for graduate students by resolution of the Graduate Student Association.

BALLOT STATEMENT:

Background Information

In 1972 the UCSC student body approved the first Student Transit Fee of \$3.50 per student per quarter to fund a service agreement with the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (SCMTD) “Metro” to allow fare-free rides throughout Santa Cruz County for registered students. Since that first election, UCSC students have voted to approve increases to the Student Transit Fee ten times—most recently in Spring 2006, when Measure 24 proposed raising the Fee to \$111.66 by Fall Quarter 2008.

In Spring 2018, the Student Ballot included Measure 69, which proposed increasing the Student Transit Fee by \$146 over twenty years. Despite receiving a 55.5% favorable vote from those who voted, Measure 69 failed due to low voter turnout of 21.78% when 25% or greater was required for approval.

Over the last decade, the costs of Campus Transit operations and the SCMTD service contract have increased while the Student Transit Fee has remained at the 2008 level. Escalation in operational costs were primarily derived from increased staffing costs (wages and benefits), fuel price escalation, increased ridership needs based on enrollment growth, and rising equipment and maintenance expenses. Additionally, SCMTD implemented service reductions county-wide in 2008 and 2016, but allowed UCSC to “buy-back” critical service on select routes serving the campus. Sustaining these services, combined with the general operating cost escalation enumerated previously, resulted in a cumulative deficit of approximately \$3 million. In Fall 2018, the Campus Provost/Executive Vice

Chancellor approved one time funding in the amount of \$3.3 million to eliminate this deficit, and to provide \$200,000 annually to support a portion of the Disability Van Service costs.

During Fall Quarter 2017, SCMTD moved an average of 14,200 UCSC riders each weekday while Campus Transit shuttles moved another 12,200 passengers around the campus. Studies conducted in Spring Quarter 2018 found that Metro buses accommodated more than 26% of all weekday trips made to and from the campus—UCSC’s single-most effective “sustainable transportation” mode.

TAPS budgets—including Transit, Parking and Programs—are managed generally by the Business and Administrative Services (BAS) Division and directly by TAPS with input provided by the Advisory Committee on Campus Transportation and Parking (ACCTP). This Committee is co-chaired by the Vice Chancellors of BAS and Planning & Budget (P&B). ACCTP includes representation by undergraduate and graduate students, as well as multiple staff and faculty members appointed by the Staff Advisory Board and several committees of the Academic Senate.

How will the fee be used?

The overarching goal for the transit fee is to provide the right mix of transit services for students that move on and off the main campus—sometimes throughout Santa Cruz County—and who move throughout the main campus. Achieving this goal directly supports student academic success. Additionally, an efficient and accessible on- and off-campus transit system reduces car trips to the campus which directly benefits the campus sustainability goals.

Specifically, the increased transit fee will be used to sustain current programs and services and to provide financial capacity to address projected operational cost increases for both the SCMTD service contract and the Campus Transit program. While the increased fees will provide improved financial sustainability, TAPS will continue to adjust services and delivery methods to achieve operational efficiencies and cost savings. Efficiencies will be achieved through technology innovations, alternate service delivery models, routing adjustments and potentially utilizing larger capacity vehicles (such as SCMTD’s articulated buses).

Why is the fee needed?

The Transit budget, which includes both the SCMTD service agreement and Campus Transit services, is not able to operate within the revenue that is currently available. The existing fee, last increased in 2008, is insufficient to fund current levels of transit service. Measure 69’s failure on the Spring 2018 Ballot resulted in a 20% reduction to Day & Night Shuttle services in Fall 2018, achieved by reducing both Upper Campus and Night Core service by half and by suspending the Night Owl shuttle service from downtown Santa Cruz to campus. These service reductions are estimated to reduce Campus Transit operating costs by \$475,000 during 2018-19 to achieve a balanced budget during FY 2019.

In addition, demand for transit services has increased as the student population has grown. This trend is forecasted to continue. Without a fee increase, existing service levels (for both SCMTD and Campus Transit) will need to be significantly reduced or eliminated. Additional service cuts would be addressed through the following:

- Reductions to, or outright suspension of, the service agreement with SCMTD;
- Additional reductions to, or outright suspension of, Day Shuttle services; and
- Additional reductions to, or outright suspension of, Night Shuttle services.

Transit services are a vital part of our Campus Sustainability Plan, in that they reduce the number of motor vehicles coming to the main campus. If SCMTD services are cut due to a lack of funding, more students will attempt to bring their cars and park on the main campus. This reverses the success of trip reduction efforts over the past twenty years, and would add pressure to an already-limited number of parking spaces on campus.

How will students benefit?

Students will benefit from continuing to have fare-free access to SCMTD transit services, both from downtown to the main campus, to other UCSC program sites, and throughout Santa Cruz County. The equivalent SCMTD bus pass currently costs \$195 per quarter. Students will also benefit from the continuation of the on-campus shuttle service that operates seven days/week throughout the academic year. Without the fee increase, both Metro service to the campus and the Campus Transit program will be reduced significantly.

Additional benefits allow for student access to off-campus services including shopping, medical, and access to the downtown area. Having a healthy and reliable transit program also enhances student sense of safety when traveling at night and reduces the distance between the main campus and off-campus services, thus increasing the ability of students residing on-campus to feel connected with the greater Santa Cruz community. This, in turn, enhances their overall student experience.

Proposed Transportation Fee Increases:

Total Quarterly Fee with Allocations to TAPS and Return To Aid (RTA), 2018-19 through 2030-31

Academic Year	Current Fee	Proposed Quarterly Fee Increase	Total New Quarterly Fee	Portion to TAPS	Portion to RTA
2018-19	\$111.66			\$101.00	\$10.66
2019-20		\$10.34	\$122.00	\$107.93	\$14.07
2020-21		\$14.00	\$136.00	\$117.31	\$18.69
2021-22		\$15.00	\$151.00	\$127.36	\$23.64
2022-23		\$12.00	\$163.00	\$135.40	\$27.60
2023-24		\$8.00	\$171.00	\$140.76	\$30.24
2024-25		\$3.00	\$174.00	\$142.77	\$31.23
2025-26		\$3.00	\$177.00	\$144.78	\$32.22
2026-27		\$3.00	\$180.00	\$146.79	\$33.21
2027-28		\$3.00	\$183.00	\$148.80	\$34.20
2028-29		\$4.00	\$187.00	\$151.48	\$35.52
2029-30		\$4.00	\$191.00	\$154.16	\$36.84
Proposed Fee Increases sunset after Summer Quarter 2030					
2030-31		-79.34	\$111.66	\$101.00	\$10.66