



# STAFF REPORT

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| MEETING DATE:  | April 30, 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| SUBJECT:       | Conduct Transit Funding Workshop, Hold Fiscal Year 2025/26 Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing, Designate the Redding Area Bus Authority as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency, and Review Draft Transit Needs Assessment. <i>This item will be heard at 9 a.m., or as soon thereafter as possible.</i> |
| AGENDA ITEM:   | 11                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| STAFF CONTACT: | Jennifer Pollom, Senior Transportation Planner                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## SUMMARY:

Transit funding in the Shasta Region comes from federal and state sources. A presentation regarding transit funding will be provided along with the annual transit needs assessment. A public hearing is required to receive comments on unmet transit needs in the region. The Redding Area Bus Authority has requested consideration of being designated the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency starting in fiscal year 2025/26.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the SRTA Board of Directors:

1. Conduct a public transit funding workshop and receive a presentation on the Unmet Transit Needs Process;
2. Hold a public hearing to receive public comments on unmet transit needs;
3. Provide direction to staff regarding preliminary Fiscal Year (FY) 2025/26 Unmet Transit Needs recommendation;
4. Direct staff to prepare responses to any comments provided during the public hearing or additional comments received by May 1, 2025; and
5. Designate the Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) and direct staff to work with RABA to assign SRTA's *Agreement for the Provision of Specialized Public Transportation Services with Dignity Health Connected Living (DHCL)* to RABA starting July 1, 2025, pending RABA's acceptance of being designated the CTSA.

## DISCUSSION:

**Background** – Each year SRTA assesses and makes determinations regarding unmet transit needs in the Shasta Region. The draft Transit Needs Assessment will be presented to the board. A public hearing is required. The final report and unmet transit needs recommendations will be presented at the June 25, 2025, meeting, alongside the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025/26 Transportation Development Act (TDA) budget, for consideration by the board of directors.

Over the last decade, staff at Caltrans and the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) and local transit agencies statewide have been working with the California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT) and California Transit Association (CTA) on changes to the TDA. One significant

change in 2021 was the inclusion of non-State grants in the farebox ratio calculation. This change resulted in RABA meeting:

- The region's farebox goal of 18 percent in 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24; and
- The absolute minimum TDA requirement of 15 percent farebox recovery.

Continuing from prior years, SRTA will explore key strategies from the 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan (weblink in Attachment A), RABA's Short Range Transit Plan (weblink in Attachment B), the Shasta Coordinated Transportation Plan (weblink in Attachment C), and SRTA's FY 2021/22 through 2023/24 Triennial Performance Audit (agenda item #13) recommendations to address the region's transit performance.

As the agency responsible for overseeing the apportionments of Local Transportation Funds (LTF) under TDA law, SRTA is required to administer the annual unmet transit needs process. The purpose of this process is to identify potential unmet transit needs and certify that all reasonable-to-meet transit needs have been met. This certification must be performed prior to allocating any remaining LTF dollars *"not directly related to public transportation services, specialized transportations services, or facilities provided for the exclusive use of pedestrians and bicycles"* (Public Utilities Code (PUC) § 99401.5) to local streets and roads or other eligible uses. Key elements of the transit needs assessment include:

- An assessment of likely transit-dependent populations (i.e., location, distribution, and relative need) and the adequacy of existing transit services in meeting their transit needs;
- Public outreach to determine if there are any unmet transit needs; and
- A preliminary assessment to determine whether the identified needs are consistent with SRTA's adopted reasonable-to-meet definition.

When determining unmet transit needs and their reasonableness to be met, including against available funding, SRTA, as the transportation planning agency, is constrained by the following under PUC § 99401.5(c):

- *"The fact that an identified transit need cannot be fully met based on available resources shall not be the sole reason for finding that a transit need is not reasonable to meet. An agency's determination of needs that are reasonable to meet shall not be made by comparing unmet transit needs with the need for streets and roads."*

The draft FY 2025/26 Transit Needs Assessment will be presented to the board and is in accordance with TDA statutes. The SRTA Board of Directors will hear potential unmet transit needs during the public hearing. ***As of this report, staff does not recommend adding any new transit needs in fiscal year 2025/26*** to allow several transit service changes implemented this year to have time to get established and then evaluated. Recent services changes by RABA have included: RABA Runabout On Demand Microtransit replacing Routes 2, 5 and 6; Route 44X to Shingletown; and Runabout evening service Mondays through Saturdays. Additionally, RABA has developed a revised set of performance metrics for each type of transit service model in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the services provided.

**Next Steps** – Unmet transit needs findings, including the results of any additional technical analyses and recommendations for items to further study, documentation of public input, and recommendations from the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC), will be presented

alongside the proposed FY 2025/26 TDA budget at the June 25, 2025, meeting of the SRTA Board of Directors.

To proceed with the TDA budget development before the June meeting, the board of directors must decide on RABA's request to be designated the CTSA for the region. Staff recommends RABA's designation and assigning the *Agreement for the Provision of Specialized Public Transportation Services with DHCL* to RABA starting July 1, 2025, or as soon thereafter as possible. As part of designating RABA as the CTSA, staff would draft a transfer agreement that would include requirements such as regular CTSA performance reporting.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The board of directors may suggest modifications and other ideas for consideration to the draft FY 2025/26 Transit Needs Assessment, including preliminary unmet transit needs findings and recommendations.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

The unmet transit needs process is developed in consultation with the county of Shasta, the cities of Anderson, Redding, and Shasta Lake, RABA, DHCL, and the SSTAC. Documentation of the unmet transit needs process is approved by Caltrans. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on April 9, 2025, to discuss the annual transit needs assessment process and agree with the staff recommendation to designate RABA as the CTSA starting in FY 2025/26. The RABA board of directors, at their September 23, 2024, meeting, authorized their transit manager to begin negotiations with SRTA to transfer ShastaConnect and the CTSA designation to RABA by FY 2025/26 and to return to a future meeting with the negotiation results for consideration. The SSTAC met on April 16, 2025, and agreed with staff that no new transit should be added in FY 2025/26 to allow time for the recent services changes by RABA to be established.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Unmet transit needs govern the use of LTF for public transportation and subsequent surplus allocations for other eligible non-transit uses (e.g., local streets and roads). The TDA budget, as well as the FY 2025/26 Unmet Transit Needs Recommendation will be provided to the board of directors in June for consideration.



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Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Executive Director

**Attachments:**

- A. 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan can be found at  
(weblink: [www.srta.ca.gov/341/2040-Long-Range-Transit-Plan](http://www.srta.ca.gov/341/2040-Long-Range-Transit-Plan))
- B. RABA Short-Range Transit Plan can be found at (weblink:  
[https://rabaride.com/resources/resources/planning\\_for\\_the\\_future.php](https://rabaride.com/resources/resources/planning_for_the_future.php))
- C. Shasta Coordinated Transportation Plan can be found at (weblink:  
<https://www.srta.ca.gov/276/Shasta-Coordinated-Transportation-Plan>)