

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	April 27, 2023
SUBJECT:	Approve Fiscal Year 2023/24 Annual Transit Needs Assessment, Transportation Development Act (TDA) Budget, and Unmet Transit Needs Recommendations
AGENDA ITEM:	11
STAFF CONTACT:	Jennifer Pollom, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner Jessica Carlson, Chief Fiscal Officer

SUMMARY:

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2023/24 Transit Needs Assessment is complete, and the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) reviewed the findings and provided their recommendation (Attachment A). The final report is available on SRTA's website (see hyperlink in Attachment B). It is recommended that all existing TDA- and grant-funded services be maintained at current levels.

In recent years, funding exclusively for public transportation has been greater than what is needed for current services in all parts of the Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) service area except the city of Redding (see Chart 4 in Discussion). Despite this trend, no new Transportation Development Act (TDA)-funded services are recommended at this time given the: 1) continued slow recovery in transit performance in the region for FY 2021/22 and over the prior three years; and 2) farebox recovery of RABA services being below the absolute minimum TDA requirement of 15% farebox recovery over multiple consecutive years. SRTA will continue to explore strategies, in partnership with regional transit providers, from the [2040 Long-Range Transit Plan](#) and [RABA's short-range transit plan](#) (2023 update in development) to address the region's transit performance.

As regional administrator for TDA funds, SRTA determines the appropriate use of funds in accordance with statutorily defined priorities. Funding is apportioned to each jurisdiction via the annual claims process. The FY 2023/24 TDA budget excluding state and federal transit grants is \$12,328,512; of which \$3,268,236 is apportioned to RABA, \$475,384 to Dignity Health Connected Living (DHCL) for Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA) services, and \$5,834,668 is available for streets and roads (see Table 1 in Discussion).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Consider the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council's (SSTAC) FY 2023/24 Unmet Transit Needs recommendations (Attachment A);
2. Approve the FY 2023/24 Transit Needs Assessment and Unmet Transit Needs recommendations;
3. Authorize the Chair to sign Resolution **23-##**, finding that all current TDA-funded services and all grant-funded services, including Sunday On-Demand Transit service and the Whiskeytown Beach Bus, are reasonable to meet (Attachment C);

4. Approve the FY 2023/24 TDA Budget of Apportionments and Transit Obligations (Attachment D);
5. Approve payment instructions to the Shasta County Auditor-Controller (Attachment E); and
6. Authorize the executive director to make minor administrative amendments to the TDA Budget and payment instructions as appropriate.

BACKGROUND:

TDA provides two major sources of funding for public transportation: State Transit Assistance (STA) and Local Transportation Funds (LTF). Funding may be utilized for the following statutorily defined priorities:

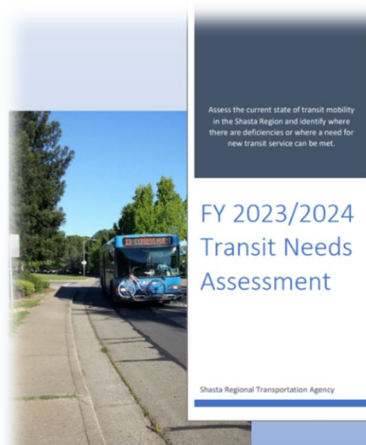
1. SRTA expenses to manage TDA and perform other regional transportation agency mandates;
2. Two percent of the remaining LTF balance for pedestrian and bicycle facilities;
3. Five percent of the remaining LTF balance for transit services provided by the CTSA (Dignity Health Connected Living);
4. Public transit services managed by the city of Redding and Shasta County for administration of RABA and Burney Express;
5. Other eligible transportation uses of LTF not required for public transportation, including improvements to local streets; and
6. Excess transit-only funds are held in an STA reserve and may be used for future transit needs or to create additional funds for support of non-motorized projects.

As the designated recipient and administrator of Local Transportation Funds (LTF) for the Shasta Region, SRTA is responsible for carrying out the annual transit needs assessment process and certifying that all reasonable-to-meet needs have been met before allocating remaining funds to other eligible uses, such as streets and roads. (See Attachment B, Appendix 1 for the region's adopted "reasonable to meet" definition).

DISCUSSION:

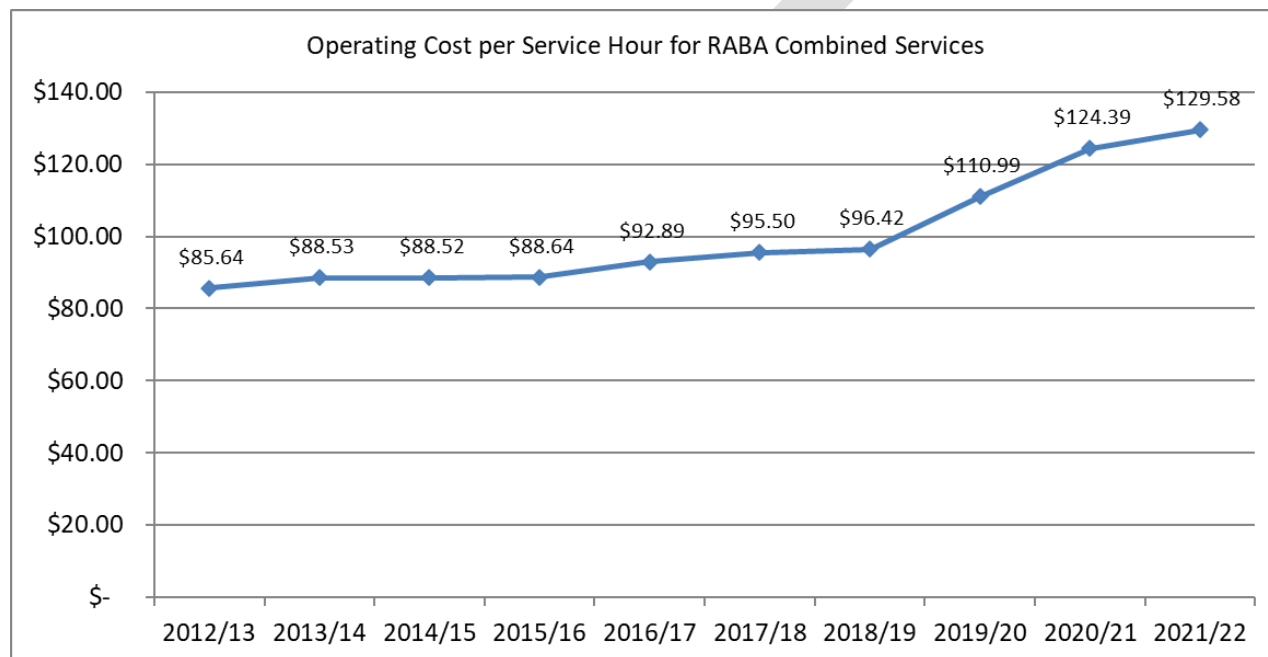
This agenda item serves two purposes. First, it brings the annual transit needs assessment to a close with approval of the final report and unmet transit needs recommendations. Second, the TDA budget for the upcoming fiscal year, consistent with the transit needs assessment and unmet transit needs findings, is presented for approval. A summary of both is provided below. Complete details are provided by attachment.

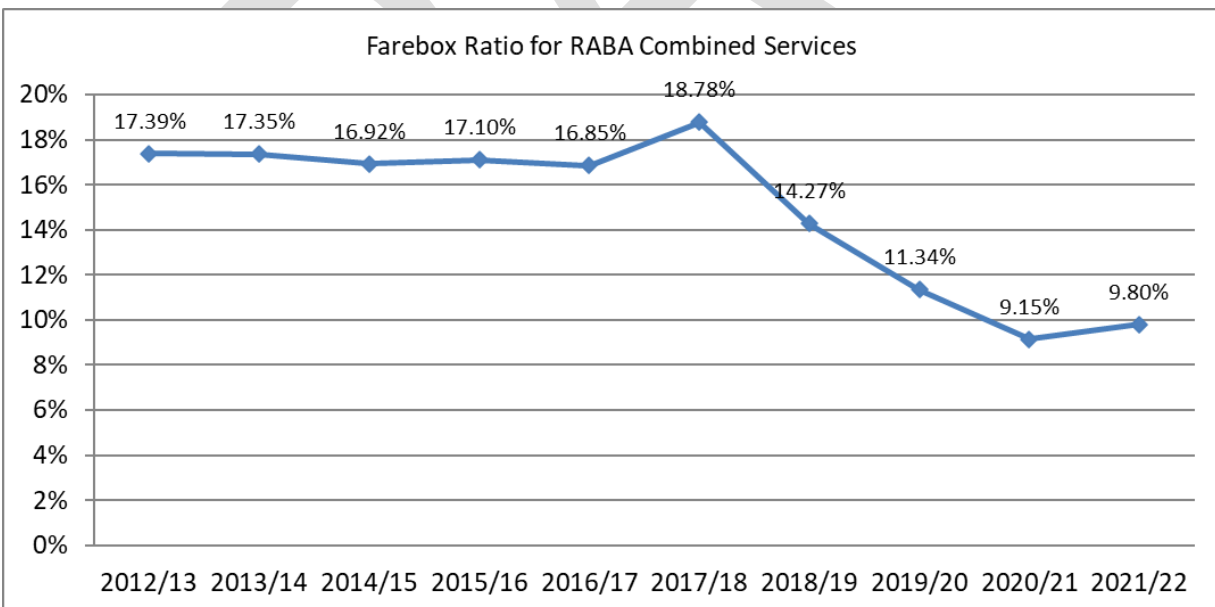
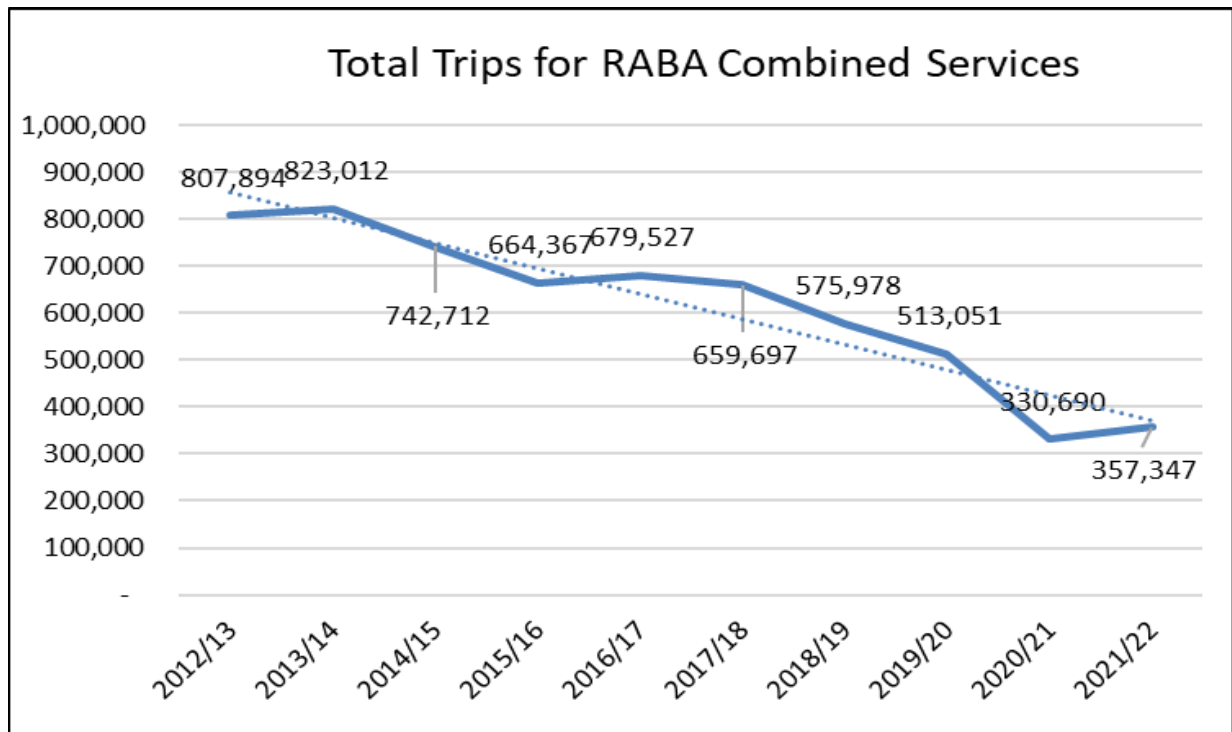
FY 2023/24 Transit Needs Assessment and Unmet Transit Needs Recommendations – The Draft FY 2023/24 Transit Needs Assessment and preliminary unmet transit needs findings were made available for public comment February 17 through March 17, 2023. A public hearing was held on February 14, 2023. No additional comments were provided at or after the public hearing (See



Attachment B, Appendix 8 for public comments and responses). In accordance with TDA law, the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) has reviewed the findings and provided an independent recommendation (Attachment A).

In recent years, funding exclusively for public transportation has been greater than what is needed for current services in all areas of the Shasta Region except the city of Redding. At the same time there is a consistent downward trend in RABA performance indicators – prior to and during the pandemic – with service costs per hour going up, and the amount of operating costs covered by passenger contributions (farebox ratio) and ridership going down or slowly recovering, as shown in the charts below.





Analysis recommendations – In summary, the staff make the following recommendations. In the coming year, SRTA will explore strategies from the 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan and RABA’s short-range transit plan (anticipated complete by December 2023) to address the region’s transit performance. SRTA will explore with partners efficient and cost-effective options that have the highest likelihood to boost ridership and increase the farebox ratio, including:

- Continue funding Sunday On-Demand Service through 2024 with grant funds, evaluating administration and operations in the subsequent year (2024/25).
- Continue expanded CTSA, including considering options for Saturday services (carryover).
- Explore on-demand service as an alternative to fixed route Saturday service and/or low performing routes and times in coordination with RABA and DHCL (carryover).
- Consider incorporating summer ‘Beach Bus’ service permanence as part of the RABA service, as a special, seasonal rural route.
- Find efficiencies and reduce overlap between RABA demand response service (complementary paratransit) and ShastaConnect.
- Explore options to implement the Long-Range Transit Plan’s low-income strategy (i.e., reduced or free fares) in the near-term.
- Consider a city of Shasta Lake commuter service that includes Buckeye residents.

In addition to staff recommendations, the SSTAC asked that staff prepare a study to explore transit services to the area of Knighton Road and Redding Regional Airport.

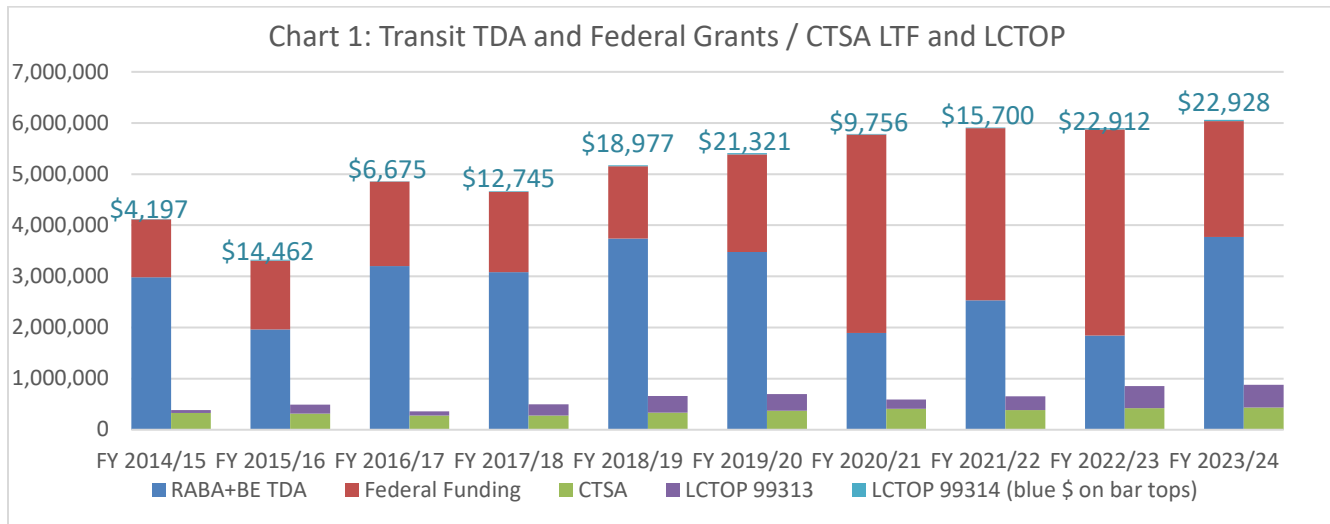
New or expanded services – No new TDA-funded services are recommended due to: 1) continued slow recovery in transit performance; and 2) RABA’s farebox recovery for services being below the TDA-required minimum farebox recovery of 15% over multiple consecutive years. The ShastaConnect service area could be expanded to include other areas using grant funds. Over the year, ShastaConnect On-Demand Transit services could expand where conventional fixed-route service is not sustainable based on results from Analysis Recommendations listed above, using grant funds, CTSA reserve funds, or STA reserve funds.

Short-term recommendations – It is recommended that all current TDA-funded services be maintained, as well as all grant-funded services, including ShastaConnect On-Demand Transit services and Whiskeytown Beach Bus service.



Long-term recommendations – As part of RABA’s Short Range Transit Plan process, it is recommended that strategies from the 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan be prepared for implementation that the Board of Directors will consider for future implementation. Examples of transit improvement strategies include enhancing multi-modal access to transit; realigning fixed-route service to reflect changing travel patterns; establishing an income-based fare structure or free fares for all; and expanding ShastaConnect On-Demand Transit services or providing similar services where conventional fixed-route service is not sustainable.

RABA's reduced transit revenues and rising operating costs are bolstered by formula federal transit funds and TDA funds; however, DHCL is not similarly compensated for similar impacts. DHCL's services are relatively low cost when compared with the fixed-route system (Chart 1). TDA reserves could be considered to fund the efficiencies and service improvements in the Analysis Recommendations bulleted list above.



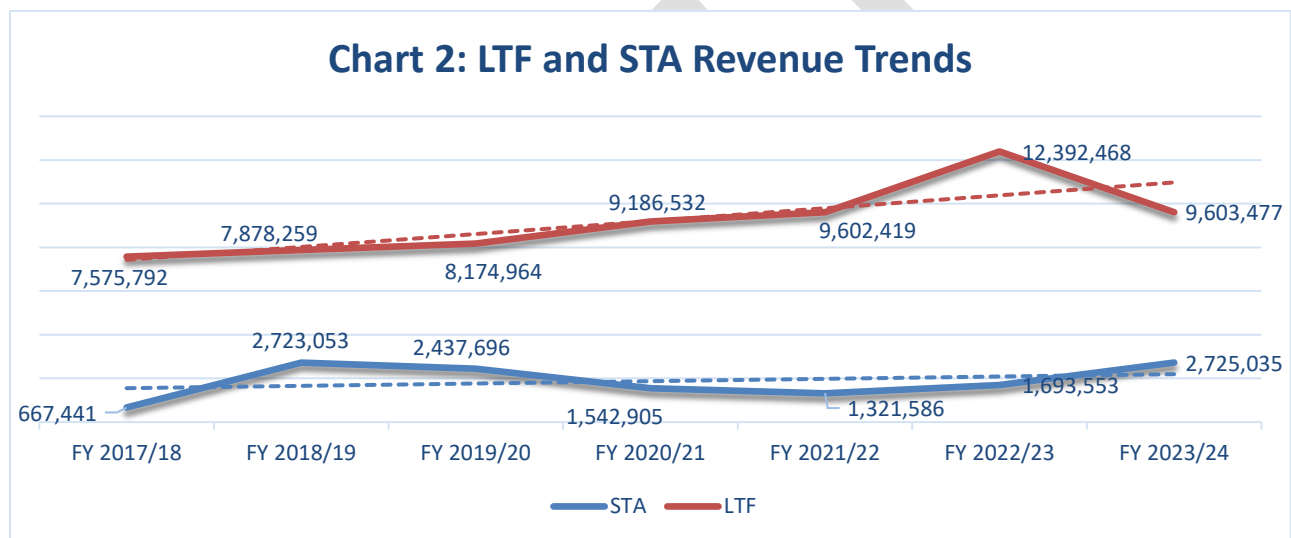
FY 2023/24 TDA Budget – The FY 2023/24 TDA budget (Attachment D) includes transit claims from each jurisdiction based on the '80/20' transit service hour and population distribution formula. The remaining balance is allocated to local streets and roads or other eligible uses. Table 1 below provides recommended TDA funding apportionments for FY 2023/24. Note that this table includes TDA funds and excludes state and federal transit grants. The full TDA Budget of Apportionments and Transit Obligations report is detailed in Attachment D.

Table 1: FY 2023/24 Distribution of TDA Funds

TDA Claimant	SRTA	Non-Motorized	Regional Reserves	CTSA (DHCL)	Anderson	Redding	Shasta Lake	County	Regional Total
SRTA Admin	\$974,563								\$974,563
5% CTSA				\$475,384					\$475,384
Non-Motorized		\$536,796							\$536,796
Public Transit (RABA)					\$158,108	\$2,965,006	\$145,122	\$0	\$3,268,236
RABA Admin						\$828,905			\$828,905
STA Reserve			\$409,960						\$409,960
Local Streets & Roads					\$431,107	\$2,145,191	\$275,618	\$2,982,751	\$5,834,668
TOTAL	\$974,563	\$536,796	\$409,960	\$475,384	\$589,215	\$5,939,102	\$420,739	\$2,982,752	\$12,328,512

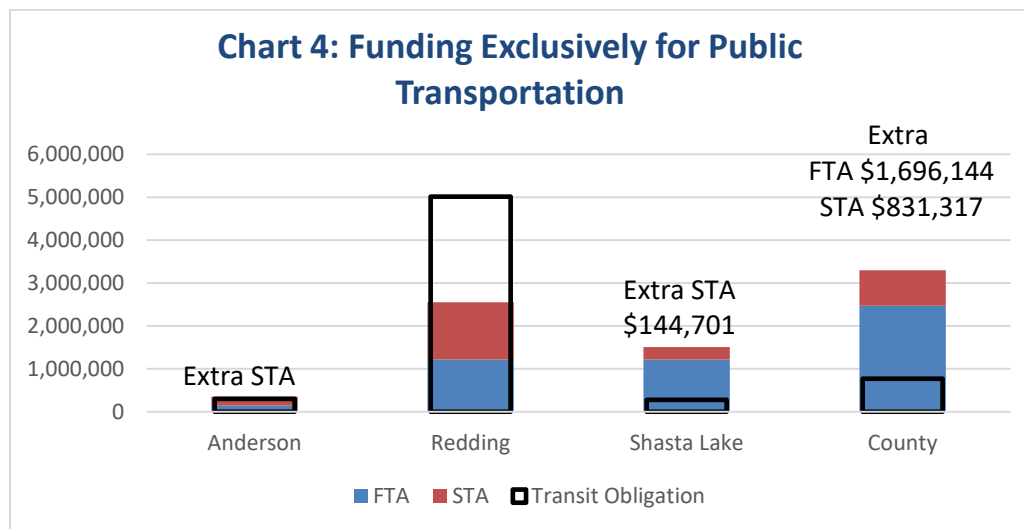
Key considerations and takeaways for the FY 2023/24 TDA budget include the following:

- This budget cycle includes the budget-to-actual true up of fiscal year 2021/22. These true-up amounts were deducted from the respective jurisdictions' FY 2023/24 transit obligations to credit the unused federal allocation from the 2021/22 fiscal year.
- The FY 2021/22 estimates were conservative in anticipation of the economic effects from the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, the impact on the tax revenue to the region was much less than expected. Therefore, the true-up of these budgets reconcile the misalignment with the TDA payments actually received in the fiscal year, resulting in a 23% decrease in LTF allocations for the 2023/24 fiscal year. However, STA allocations increased 61% in FY 2023/24, further highlighting the need to identify future public transportation projects that will use available transit-specific funds and reserves (See Chart 2 for historical trends of these two funding sources, including the true-ups).

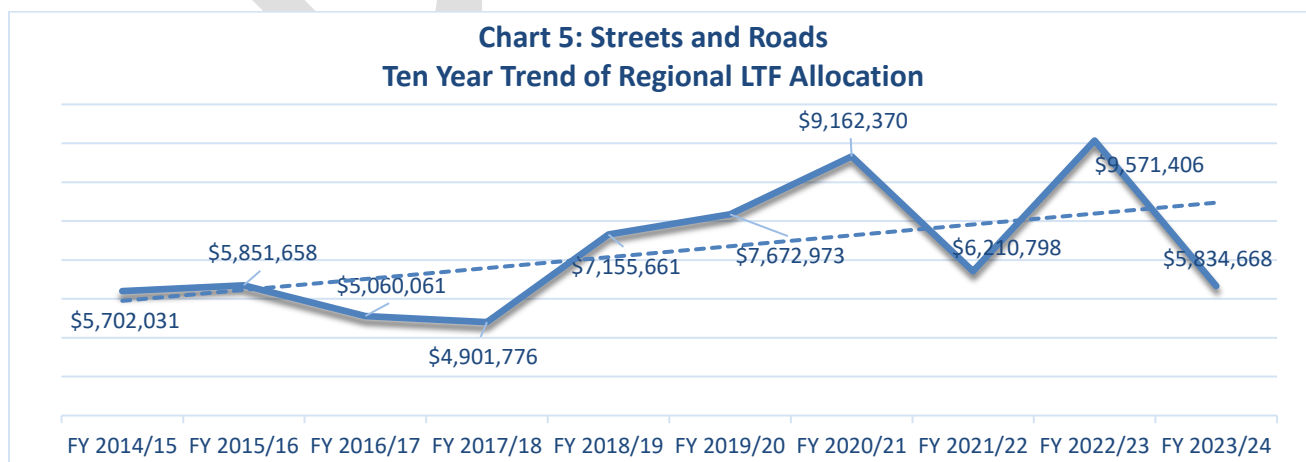


- The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Program no longer allows carryover funds. Each Standard Agreement contract has a performance period. If the contract is not amended, and the contract period ends, then the funds get unencumbered. Funds had previously been allowed to “carryover” for future FTA 5311 projects, but that is no longer permitted. The funds will go back to the state, be deobligated from the County, and lost to the region. FTA 5311 funds have been deobligated in previous fiscal years, including FY 15/16, FY 16/17, and FY 17/18.
- In addition to regularly formulated and competitive FTA 5311 funding, Shasta County has also been obligated three one-time grants for the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSSA) and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for transit-only projects in rural areas of the region. These grants have a combined budget of \$1,698,803 in rural area operating funds through June 30, 2028. With the average annual operating costs of \$311,337 for Shasta County transit obligations (e.g., Burney Express), strategic planning discussions on how best to use these funds for current or requested public transportation services in rural areas of the region will need to take place.
- In all jurisdictions except the city of Redding, there continues to be excess annual TDA funding that can only be used for public transportation services, totalling \$350,409 in this 2023/24 budget. These funds are accumulating in a STA reserve account. They will stay in the reserve to offset the impacts

to the DHCL services and the Beach Bus, as well as any other anticipated transit needs that SRTA identifies (see Chart 4).



- In previous years, the TDA budget, through board direction, has assigned STA Reserve account funds to pay for Beach Bus services. In order to ensure no loss of rural federal transit funds, the FY 2023/24 budget proposes these costs to be funded from Shasta County's rural transit funds that are not obligated to any project and expire December 2023. Additionally, due to lessons learned from operational and outreach deadlines experienced the last two years, expenses for the entire Beach Bus 2024 service (May – August 2024) are proposed for board approval now. A completed season costs approximately \$25,000-\$30,000, depending on the outreach efforts, advertisements, permits, and operational expenses. This strategy helps the service be fully funded in consideration of timing of permits with the Whiskeytown National Park Service, timing of when outreach materials must be out before service, coordination schedules with RABA for operations, etc.
- In this FY 2023/24 budget cycle, and historically, the city of Redding has been the only jurisdiction with remaining transit obligation after STA funds are applied. Their LTF allocation first covers these remaining obligations, prior to being released for other uses.
- Total available TDA money for streets and roads (\$5,834,668) decreased 39% in FY 2023/24 over the 2022/23 budget (\$9,571,406) as well as decreased 14% over a ten-year average of streets and roads allocations (\$6,815,962). This is primarily due to one-time COVID federal funds being expended that offset amounts RABA would have normally requested the last couple of years to cover transit needs.



- TDA Administration costs for SRTA decreased 6% to \$974,564 from FY 2022/23. SRTA continues to receive grant awards for planning projects that need matching local funds. OWP planning budgets have decreased 16% from fiscal year 2022/23. Additionally, SRTA has deferred payments to its reserve funds in previous fiscal years, including the TDA planning and building reserves, to soften the corresponding impact of the pandemic and emergency building improvements. Those payments have been increased to true-up these deferred payments and are included in this budget cycle.

Next steps – In accordance with TDA law, the FY 2023/24 TDA budget funds all reasonable-to-meet transit services, as identified through the FY 2023/24 Unmet Transit Needs Findings. It is recommended that the board of directors certify by resolution (Attachment C) that all existing transit services are reasonable to meet and direct the Shasta County Auditor-Controller to disburse funds in accordance with FY 2023/24 Payment Instructions (Attachment E).

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may choose to fund other unmet transit needs and direct staff to include these services in the TDA budget.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The unmet transit needs process is developed in consultation with the SSTAC, county of Shasta, the cities of Anderson, Shasta Lake, and Redding, DHCL, and RABA. The SSTAC provides an independent recommendation (Attachment A). Documentation of the unmet transit needs process is approved by Caltrans. *///The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) concurs with the staff recommendations.///*

FISCAL IMPACT:

By approval of the FY 2023/24 TDA Apportionments and Transit Obligations, the Shasta County Auditor-Controller is authorized to distribute \$12,328,512 in TDA funds to SRTA, DHCL, RABA, the cities of Anderson, Redding, and Shasta Lake, and Shasta County, as provided by Attachment E. All expenditures are consistent with anticipated revenues.

Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Executive Director

Attachments:

A: Social Services Transportation Advisory Council Recommendation

B: FY 2023/24 Transit Needs Assessment Final Report: <https://srta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6172/FY-2023-24-Transit-Needs-Assessment-and-Unmet-Transit-Needs-Findings-PDF>

C: Resolution 23-##, FY 2023/24 Unmet Transit Needs Findings (not available for Fiscal Committee)

D: FY 2023/24 TDA Budget of Apportionments and Transit Obligations

E: FY 2023/24 Shasta County Auditor-Controller Payment Instructions

Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)
-an advisory body to the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA)
1255 East Street, Suite 202
Redding, CA 96001

March 30, 2023

Mark Mezzano, Chair
Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA)
1255 East Street, Suite 202
Redding, CA 96001

Dear Chair Mezzano:

The Shasta Region's Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) meets at least twice per year to review transit needs in the Shasta Region. The SSTAC is responsible for preparing an unmet needs recommendation to the SRTA Board of Directors as part of the annual unmet transit needs process. SSTAC met on September 21, 2022, for a general meeting and on March 15, 2023, to review and discuss the 2023/24 unmet transit needs. As a result of an in depth discussion at the March 15, 2023, meeting, the SSTAC unmet transit needs recommendation was continued to a March 29 meeting. The SSTAC developed an additional recommendation to the SRTA Board of Directors about service to the VA Clinic and Veteran's Home on Knighton Road and to the Redding Regional Airport. SSTAC understands that the primary public transportation provider in the region is the Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA). Dignity Health Connect Living (DHCL) contracted to SRTA performs additional public transit services under the ShastaConnect brand.

The SSTAC reviewed and concurred with the following SRTA staff recommendations:

1. Continue Sunday On-Demand Service through 2023/24, evaluating administration and operations in the subsequent year (2024/25).
2. Continue expanded CTSA, including options for Saturday services (carryover).
3. Explore on-demand service as an alternative to fixed route Saturday service and/or low performing routes and times in coordination with RABA and DHCL (carryover).
4. Consider incorporating summer 'Beach Bus' service permanence as part of the RABA service, as a special, seasonal route.
5. Find efficiencies and reduce overlap between RABA demand response service (complimentary paratransit) and ShastaConnect.
6. Explore options to implement the Long-Range Transit Plan's low-income strategy (i.e., reduced or free fares) in the near-term.

7. Consider a city of Shasta Lake commuter service traveling through Buckeye for more direct service like the Anderson commuter.

The SSTAC makes the following additional recommendation to prepare a study to explore transit services to the area of Knighton Road and Redding Regional Airport.

Sincerely,



Patrick Geagan, Chair, SSTAC

SSTAC Membership

Patrick Geagan (Chair)	- Resident, Disabled Transit User
Hallie Fonseca (Vice Chair)	- Local Social Service Provider for Seniors (Transp)
Vacant	- Transit User 60 Years of Age or Older
Vacant	- Local Social Service Provider for Seniors (Non-Transp)
Cathy Tillman	- Local Social Service Provider for the Disabled (Transp)
Jackie Rose	- Local Social Service Provider for the Disabled (Non-Transp)
Kary Tuers	- Social Service Provider for Persons of Limited Means
Staci Wadley	- Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (Administrator)
Jami Brinson	- Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (Operator)
Christina Prosperi	- Resident, Additional Member
Sherry Epley	- Additional Member
Carolyn Nava	- Additional Member
Tamy Quigley	- Additional Member
Kristen Schreder	- Additional Member

Attachment D

SHASTA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY - 2023/24 TDA APPORTIONMENTS AND TRANSIT OBLIGATIONS									
		Anderson	Redding	Shasta Lake	County	SRTA	STA Reserve	CTSA	Non-motorized
Local Transportation Fund (LTF)	Totals	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
LTF Allocation FY 2023/24	9,638,405								
LTF 6/30/22 True-ups	(102,537)	(63,767)	116,278	(181,275)	26,226	(1)		42,192	25,418
LTF for Off the Top Distributions	(1,581,033)					974,564		433,192	173,277
LTF from Cities in Exchange for County Spillover (50%)	(338,101)		(338,101)						338,101
Total LTF Available for Jurisdictions	7,616,734	431,107	3,927,257	275,618	2,982,751				
State Transit Assistance (STA)	Totals	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
STA Allocation FY 2023/24 (Population Formula)	2,154,121	132,304	1,109,247	122,149	790,421				
STA Revenue Basis (Section 99314)	111,454	6,845	57,392	6,320	40,896				
STA True Up through 6/30/22	459,460	69,551	169,004	161,354	0		59,551		
STA Spillover to STA Reserve and to Redding		0	676,201	0	(831,317)		155,115		
Uncommitted Secondary STA Spillover from City of Shasta Lake and City of Anderson		(50,592)	0	(144,701)	0		195,293		
Total STA Available	2,725,035	158,108	2,011,845	145,122	0				
Federal Transit Administration Formula Funds	Totals	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
FTA 5307 Operating Allocation (Cities only)	1,500,000	145,527	1,220,115	134,358	0				
FTA 5311 - Operating Apportionment	488,955				488,955				
FTA 5311(f) - Operating Apportionment	280,000				280,000				
CRRSSA Operating Apportionment (County only)	2,689				2,689				
Total FTA Available	2,271,644	145,527	1,220,115	134,358	771,644				
Total Revenue Available	14,600,156	734,743	7,159,217	555,097	3,754,396	974,563	409,960	475,384	536,796
(SRTA Policy)									
		Anderson	Redding	Shasta Lake	County	SRTA	STA Reserve	CTSA	Non-Motorized
Transit Funding Requirements	Totals	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
Redding Area Bus Authority-Operating	5,209,980								
Redding Area Bus Authority-Administration	828,905								
Required FY 2023/24 RABA Funding Requirement (1313.2)	6,038,885	303,635	5,014,026	279,480	441,744				
From Cities for Non-Motorized									
Other Transit Obligations:									
County TDA Administration	20,000				20,000				
Burney Express for Operating	274,900				274,900				
Beach Bus	35,000				35,000				
Total Transit Obligations Filed Under Article 4 and 8	6,368,785	303,635	5,014,026	279,480	771,644				
		Anderson	Redding	Shasta Lake	County	SRTA Admin	STA Reserve	CTSA	Non-Motorized
Total for SRTA & STA Reserve, 5% CTSA, 2% Bike & Ped, Non-motorized	2,396,703					974,563	409,960	475,384	536,796
Total STA to Transit Operations	2,315,075	158,108	2,011,845	145,122	0				
Total LTF to Transit Operations	1,782,066	-	(1,782,066)	-	-				
Total Available for Other Uses (i.e., Streets & Roads)	5,834,668	431,107	2,145,191	275,618	2,982,751				
Total Distributions	12,328,512	589,215	2,374,970	420,739	2,982,752	974,563	409,960	475,384	536,796

Attachment E
Shasta Regional Transportation Agency
2023/24 TDA Payment Instructions

LTF	July	August	Sept	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Totals
City of Anderson - RABA JPA-Article 4													
City of Redding - RABA JPA-Article 4	198,007	198,007	198,007	198,007	198,007	198,007	198,007	198,007	198,007				1,782,066
City of Shasta Lake - RABA JPA-Article 4													
County of Shasta - RABA JPA - Article 4													
SRTA for CTSA	52,820	52,820	52,820	52,820	52,820	52,820	52,820	52,820	52,820				475,384
SRTA Administration	108,285	108,285	108,285	108,285	108,285	108,285	108,285	108,285	108,285				974,563
SRTA- Non-motorized	134,199	134,199	134,199	134,199									536,796
Anderson- Article 8	29,938	29,938	29,938	29,938	29,938	29,938	29,938	29,938	29,938	53,888	53,888	53,888	431,107
Redding- Article 8	148,972	148,972	148,972	148,972	148,972	148,972	148,972	148,972	148,972	268,149	268,149	268,149	2,145,191
Shasta Lake- Article 8	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140	34,452	34,452	34,452	275,618
County of Shasta- Article 8	207,136	207,136	207,136	207,136	207,136	207,136	207,136	207,136	207,136	372,844	372,844	372,844	2,982,751
Total LTF Distribution	898,497	898,497	898,497	898,497	764,298	764,298	764,298	764,298	764,298	729,333	729,333	729,333	9,603,477

STA	July	August	Sept	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Totals
City of Anderson - RABA JPA - TO RABA			39,527			39,527			39,527			39,527	158,108
City of Redding - RABA JPA - TO RABA			502,961			502,961			502,961			502,961	2,011,845
City of Shasta Lake - RABA JPA - TO RABA			36,280			36,280			36,280			36,280	145,122
County of Shasta - RABA JPA - TO RABA			0			0			0			0	0
SRTA Regional Transit Reserve			102,490			102,490			102,490			102,490	409,960
Total STA Distribution	0	0	681,259	0	0	681,259	0	0	681,259	0	0	681,259	2,725,035