

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	December 13, 2016
SUBJECT:	Authorize Request for Proposals for Physical Design of a Sunday Transit Service Demonstration Project and On-Demand Transit Feasibility Study
AGENDA ITEM:	12
STAFF CONTACT:	Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

The SRTA Board of Directors authorized a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant application to implement "on-demand" Sunday transit service. The project was not awarded funding; however, SRTA continues to support efforts to explore Sunday transit service for the region. The city of Shasta Lake expressed an interest in partnering on their on-demand transit project, which was approved by the board of directors last April. A request for proposals (RFP) that implements the design phase of the Sunday transit service demonstration project and the city of Shasta Lake's on-demand transit feasibility study is proposed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors authorize the executive director to issue a request for proposals (RFP) for the Phase 1 design of a Sunday transit service demonstration project and the city of Shasta Lake's on-demand transit feasibility study.

DISCUSSION:

Background – Sunday transit service has been a long-standing public request and is an identified need in the Redding Area Bus Authority's (RABA) short-range transit plan and SRTA's fiscal year 2016/17 Unmet Transit Needs findings. In response to this need, the SRTA Board of Directors approved an application for a FTA competitive grant program to provide "on-demand" Sunday transit service in June 2016. SRTA was not awarded grant funding. The goal of the project was to explore the emerging practice of "on-demand" transit, which utilizes smart phone applications, GPS vehicle tracking, and advanced dispatch software to provide rider-responsive mobility when and where it's needed.

Sunday Transit Service Demonstration Project – Staff recommends moving forward with the Sunday transit service demonstration project using SRTA planning funds. The timing of this project is appropriate given concurrent efforts in the region including the city of Shasta Lake and Shasta Senior Nutrition Program's interest in providing more on-demand transit services. In addition, the demonstration project is a relatively inexpensive way to gauge Sunday demand compared to utilizing the RABA fixed-route system for the entire service area. It is proposed that SRTA pursue the project in two phases, as described below:

In Phase 1, SRTA will design the demonstration project. The project timeline is twelve months with an estimated cost of \$75,000 for staff and consultant time. The scope of work (see attachment) includes: evaluating existing resources; service area planning; public outreach; identification of a marketing strategy; and budgeting for implementation. Phase 1 results will be presented to the board of directors for review and consideration of Phase 2 implementation.

Phase 2 would include technology procurement, contracting with a service provider, marketing, data collection and customer feedback to track the performance of the routes and gauge effectiveness. The demonstration project should last at least one year. The service area for the Sunday transit service project would be a portion of the RABA service area, focused on the highest demand areas. Project results would be presented to the SRTA and RABA Board of Directors to determine future actions.

Costs for Phase 2 would be scalable depending on the size of the service area. For example, \$198,000 may finance six roving vehicles every Sunday for one year over a twenty square-mile area. If the demonstration project is successful, it can be replicated to serve other needs.

City of Shasta Lake's On-Demand Transit Feasibility Study – In April 2016, the board of directors approved funding for the city of Shasta Lake to study whether on-demand transit services may compliment or replace existing fixed-route transit services in Shasta Lake. The scope of work provided in the fiscal year 2016/17 Overall Work Program is attached. Results of the study will be presented to the city of Shasta Lake City Council for consideration.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may: 1) request modifications to the scope of work; 2) defer this item to the February meeting and request more information; or 3) decline to issue an RFP at this time. Declining to issue an RFP will require the city of Shasta Lake to undertake their own procurement process.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

SRTA is working with the city of Shasta Lake on a scope of work for the RFP. RABA staff was consulted for input and is invited to advise, observe and participate as their staff time and resources allow. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) concurs with the staff recommendation.

FINANCING:

Total costs for consultant services through the RFP are estimated at \$102,500, including \$60,000 for SRTA and \$42,500 for the city of Shasta Lake. Additional SRTA staff time is estimated at \$15,000. FHWA carryover planning funds will be used for both projects. Funds for Shasta Lake were approved in SRTA's fiscal year 2016/17 budget in April 2016. Additional funds for SRTA's Sunday transit service project are shown in Amendment #2 to SRTA's fiscal year 2016/17 budget (see agenda item #14).

Phase 2 requires subsequent board of director's approval based on Phase 1 findings. Fund sources could include fare revenues, Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funds, FTA grant or formula funds, or Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) funds.



Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

Attachments: Sunday Transit Service Demonstration Project Scope of Work (DRAFT)
Shasta Lake's Micro-transit Project (WE 902.02) from FY 2016/17 Overall Work Program

Sunday Transit Service Demonstration Project

Scope of Work

PHASE 1

The purpose of Phase 1 is to develop an implementation plan for an “on-demand” Sunday transit service demonstration project. The project will focus on a portion of area within the Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) service area. The transit service will connect residents to key employment, social and cultural destination areas.

Task A: Service Area Planning

1. Existing Conditions

1.1. Work with SRTA to identify key:

- Employment, social and cultural destination centers; and
- Residential areas, including transit dependent populations.

1.2. Assist in identifying available transit capital assets (i.e. vehicles, drivers, dispatchers, etc.).

1.3. Identify potential organizations or businesses willing to help market the service.

2. Service Area Planning

2.1. Develop a draft service area based on existing conditions and available resources.

2.2. Include details on transit schedule, hours of service, fare structure, location of routes or stops (if applicable), and strategies to maximize coverage of service area and use/availability of vehicles, etc.

2.3. Provide opportunity for public input on draft service area (example: a website map where potential users can add ‘pins’ to service destinations) and refine the service area.

3. Budgeting

3.1. Determine a budget for implementation of the service, including but not limited to:

- Technology;
- Capital startup;
- Operational and maintenance;
- Insurance;
- Driver training; and
- Other relevant categories.

4. Transit Service Provider Analysis

4.1. Assist SRTA in determining transit provider requirements for purposes of service contracting. Resources should consist of, but is not limited to, the following: vehicles, drivers, dispatchers, maintenance personnel, insurance, etc.

4.2. Determine performance standards and potential incentives for meeting performance

Deliverables:

1. Existing conditions memo
2. Service area plan, including geographic boundaries
3. Fare structure and budget for the service
4. Memo on transit provider requirements

Task B: Software and Hardware Needs

1. Existing Conditions

1.1. Review Information Technology capabilities of existing transit provider(s), including:

- Computer systems;
- Phone system capabilities to handle dispatching software; and

- Transit vehicle capabilities.
2. Software Provider Analysis
 - 2.1. Assist SRTA in determining the most appropriate “on-demand” software solution for implementing the service. Potential needs include:
 - Dispatching;
 - App or website ride requests;
 - Ability for advanced ride scheduling; and
 - Allowing for various payment options including (app, online account with credit/debit card, on-site credit/debit card, and/or cash).
 - 2.2. Identify any hardware (i.e. phones, computers, servers, etc.) necessary to conduct dispatching and coordinating of rides with the identified software.

Deliverables:

1. Existing software/hardware conditions memo
2. Identification of available “on-demand” software that fits project needs
3. Draft scope of work for procurement of software and hardware.

Task C: Branding, Marketing and Public Outreach

1. Assist in identifying potential “branding” for the service, including:
 - 1.1. A name for the service;
 - 1.2. Slogan that helps describe the purpose of the service; and
 - 1.3. Appropriate logo and marketing graphics.
2. Develop a marketing strategy for making the public aware of the new service before and during the project. Strategies should consider a variety of medium including, but not limited to: posters, decals, flyers, a website, social media, newspaper ads, and/or commercials.
3. Identify materials and potential incentives for businesses and social organizations to share with employees.
4. Determine marketing costs and develop an appropriate budget based on available resources.

Deliverables:

1. Marketing strategy plan and associated budget
2. Marketing schedule
3. Branding concepts

City of Shasta Lake On-Demand Transit Feasibility Study

[Scope of work under development with city staff]

WORK ELEMENT 902.02**Micro-transit Analysis & Recommendations**

Agency: Shasta Lake

Total Budget: \$ 42,500

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE AND ANTICIPATED REVENUE: FY 2016/17

EXPENDITURES			Revenue by Fund Source (\$)			
Staff Allocations and Funding Requirements						
				11.47%		
City of Shasta Lake	Direct	Indirect	FHWA PL CO	Toll Credits		
	\$ 42,500		\$ 42,500	\$ 4,875		
TOTAL	\$ 42,500	\$ -	\$ 42,500	\$ 4,875		

In-kind match to be provided by City of Shasta Lake in the amount of \$7,500 (Cash: \$2500, In Kind: \$5,000). Total project cost: \$50,000.00

Previous Accomplishments

This is a new Work Element, however, SRTA has identified micro-transit as a new public transportation service strategy with the potential to enhance the responsiveness and performance of public transportation in certain environments. For the purpose of this work element, micro-transit is defined as technology-enabled (i.e. smart phone applications, GPS vehicle tracking, and advanced dispatch software) demand response transit service that is open to the general public.

Objective

Develop alternative options for transit services for residents and businesses in Shasta Lake using micro transit or public transit including costs associated with system initialization, potential integration with RABA and long-term operational costs. Options will include use of electric vans or buses.

Discussion

Residents and businesses of Shasta Lake need an alternative to traditional transit service. Existing service provides one (1) hour headways within the City with longer transit commutes for Shasta Lake citizens traveling to areas/destinations outside of the city. The project will address the potential for micro-transit services as well as costs associated for system initialization and long-term operations. Project outcomes include a report summarizing resident/business commuter needs, data collection and analysis, and costs of proposed alternative micro transit including operations and administration of the system. Should micro-transit be a viable option, it is the intent of the City to use an electric vehicle (van) where possible.

The project would help meet several of the region's goals as outline in the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), including: Goal #3: Provide an integrated, context-appropriate range of practical transportation choices; Goal #6: Promote public access, awareness, and action in planning and decision-making processes; and Goal #7: Practice and promote environmental and natural resource stewardship. The project will also help meet a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) goal of expanding plug-in electric vehicle charging infrastructure, including fast charging stations needed to accelerate the market penetration of zero-emission electric vehicles. *Note: SRTA staff support, technical assistance and coordination is budgeted under WE 706.02.*

Product 1: Procurement: RFP and Consultant Selection

Task/Activity	Resp. Agency	Schedule
1.1 Develop and distribute RFP for professional services to prepare assessment. Coordinate procurement with SRTA as applicable.	COSL/SRTA	Jul
1.2 Consultant consideration and selection; signed PSA by consultant and City Manager.		Jul - Sept

Product 2: Summary of data collection (needs/resources/options)

Task/Activity	Resp. Agency	Schedule
2.1 Assemble existing applicable transit ridership data, including data from the most recent Short Range Transit Plan, Unmet Transit Needs, and other applicable resources so as not to repeat previous efforts. Identify data gaps and develop plan for filling essential gaps.	COSL/ Consultant	Sept - Nov
2.2 Evaluate existing models and best practices of micro-transit service delivery and apply to the local context of the city of Shasta Lake.		
2.3 Develop service options based on graduated budget assumptions, costs and resources available.		
2.4 Select preferred option in consultation with community, RABA, SRTA, and other community partners/stakeholders. Provide detail outline of capital, operation, and other costs required to fund the project through existing revenues and prospective grant opportunities. Provide all data/metadata files and technical memo.		

Product 3: Public Engagement and Survey Results			
Task/ Activity:		Resp. Agency	Schedule
3.1	Distribute potential user survey through utility bill insert or other media. Provide results in table format and spatially via GIS map. Survey to be completed by the City in coordination with the consultant. Results and GIS map provided by Consultant.	COSL/ Consultant	Sept - Oct
3.2	Hold workshop to include survey takers and the general public regarding possible micro transit service options. Consultant to provide workshop in collaboration for logistics with the City.		Oct - Nov
Product 4: Report and Recommendations			
Task/Activity		Resp. Agency	Schedule
4.1	Report prepared with analysis (including costs), conclusions and recommendations regarding micro transit service options. Provide draft report to SRTA for review and comment.	COSL/ Consultant	Sept - Dec
4.2	Presentation to the Shasta Lake City Council.	COSL	Dec
4.3	Presentation to the SRTA Board of Directors		Feb