

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	April 27, 2021
SUBJECT:	Receive Update on ShastaConnect Transit Services
AGENDA ITEM:	5-6
STAFF CONTACT:	Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY

The Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) contracts with Dignity Health Connected Living to provide specialized transportation services in the Shasta Region under the ShastaConnect brand. This includes weekday operations of the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) and rural public transit service, and Sunday On-Demand Transit Service in the cities of Anderson, Redding, and Shasta Lake. An update and key performance metrics for each service for FY 2020/21 are summarized below.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors receive an update on ShastaConnect transit services.

DISCUSSION:

Sunday On-Demand Transit Service Update – On November 1, 2020, the Sunday service relaunched with an expanded service area that now includes the cities of Anderson and Shasta Lake. While still in its pilot phase, this service is currently focused on providing essential transportation for our community during this pandemic while following recommended health guidelines. Greater emphasis on outreach to increase ridership and ridesharing will commence as pandemic conditions ease and the region moves into lower COVID tiers.

As of April 1, 2021, there are 336 registered riders. Currently, registered riders are 48 percent of the 700 registered riders we had at the end of March 2020, when service was suspended due to COVID-19. Key performance metrics for the Sunday On-Demand Transit Service from November 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 are summarized in Table 1. Overall, passenger trips are down 40 percent when comparing the period from November to March between Fiscal Year (FY) 2019/20 and FY 2020/21.

Table 1: ShastaConnect Sunday On-Demand Transit Trips

Month	Total Passenger Trips	Total Reverse Trips	Avg. Daily Passenger Trips	Ridesharing Trip %	Avg. Trip Length	Avg. Ride Time
Nov. 2020	148	0	29	20%	5.2 miles	12.2 min
Dec. 2020	130	112	32	15%	4.9 miles	12.0 min
Jan. 2021	166	73	33	11%	5.2 miles	13.1 min
Feb. 2021	177	78	44	5%	5.2 miles	12.5 min
Mar. 2021	224	20	56	13.4%	5.9 miles	14.0 min

The new dispatching software has resulted in better efficiency and cost management, despite having lower ridership and a larger service area. The current average operating cost on Sundays is \$80.12 per hour for the period from November 2020 to February 2021. This contrasts with an average pre-pandemic operating cost of \$71.84 per hour for the same period of November 2019 to February 2020.

Monday–Friday Rural Public Service Update – Since April 2020, reverse transit trips—which allow riders to order, pay, and then have essential groceries or medicines delivered to them—accounts for 56% of all weekday CTSA and rural transit trip requests. This has helped minimize public interaction during the pandemic, and the fulfillment of reverse transit trips has been optimized during days of the week when ridership is lower so that it does not conflict with serving riders requesting trips. These requests are anticipated to drop as health requirements ease. Table 2 summarizes key ShastaConnect weekday service data available for FY 2020/21.

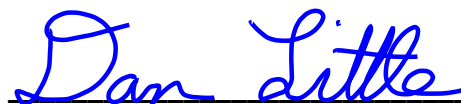
Table 2: ShastaConnect Weekday Trips

Month	Passenger Trips	Reverse Trips	Total Trips
July 2020	905	1,398	2,303
Aug. 2020	894	1,042	1,936
Sept. 2020	966	888	1,854
Oct. 2020	435	770	1,205
Nov. 2020	337	640	977
Dec. 2020	479	633	1,112
Jan. 2021	433	588	1,021
Feb. 2021	515	434	949
Mar. 2021	501	656	1,157

Comparing current ridership to pre-pandemic levels, ShastaConnect weekday service bucks the statewide trend: ShastaConnect weekday CTSA and rural public transit service is up 2.2% when comparing July to March in FY 2020/21 (12,514 trips) to FY 2019/20 (12,244 trips). Across California, transit agencies continue to see an estimated 60% average loss of ridership.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

SRTA contracts with Dignity Health Connected Living to operate ShastaConnect services.



Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director