

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	June 30, 2022
SUBJECT:	Approve Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 Projects for Rural Transit Needs for Fiscal Year 2022/23 and Fiscal Year 2023/24
AGENDA ITEM:	5-7
STAFF CONTACT:	Jennifer Pollom, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides funding for public transportation in the rural areas of Shasta County. The Shasta Region has been apportioned an estimated \$486,126 for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 and \$495,848 for FFY 2023 in the two-year program cycle. Project applications were due April 29, 2022. To receive federal rural transit funding, the SRTA Board of Directors needs to approve the projects and delegate authority to the executive director to complete administrative next steps.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Approve the FFY 2022 FTA Section 5311 program of projects for rural transit operations provided by the county of Shasta (operated by the Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA));
2. Approve the FY 2023 FTA Section 5311 program of projects for rural transit operations provided by the county of Shasta (operated by RABA); and
3. Authorize the executive director to provide certifications, assurances, and other requested information to Caltrans and FTA, and make amendments as needed to receive full regional apportionment.

DISCUSSION:

FTA 5311 funding is provided on a reimbursement basis to recipients that SRTA designates in the region's program of projects. Historically, FTA 5311 grant funds have sustained fixed route public transit services in unincorporated portions of the RABA service area. The Shasta Region has been apportioned \$486,126 for FFY 2022 and \$495,848 for FFY 2023 in the current two-year program cycle.

On April 29, 2022, project applications were due to Caltrans to fund the ongoing operations of public transit in the rural areas of the Shasta Region and required a 44.47 percent local match. SRTA worked with the county of Shasta to submit their application for operating assistance for the unincorporated portions of the RABA service area using State Transit Assistance (STA) funds for the required local match. Later Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transportation (DRMT) determined that the county of Shasta's project could be matched with federal dollars using state toll credits

instead of STA funds. DRMT's decision to allow the use of state toll credits has minor impact to the final Transportation Development Act (TDA) allocation for the 2022/23 fiscal year.

Staff recommends allocating the full FTA 5311 apportionments for FFY 2022 and FFY 2023 to the county of Shasta for rural transit operating assistance. It is estimated that this will cover all anticipated fixed-route and complimentary paratransit operating expenses in the unincorporated portions of the RABA service area for the performance period of July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2024.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may choose to fund alternative public transportation projects in the rural areas of Shasta County. This would result in delays in receiving the funds dedicated to maintaining the operations of rural public transit in the county while waiting for Caltrans review of additional projects.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Caltrans administers the FTA Section 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas program. The staff recommendation was developed in coordination with Shasta County and Dignity Health Connected Living to address the operating assistance needs of rural transit services in the region. Shasta County will coordinate with SRTA to administer the funds received through this program. The Technical Advisory Committee concurs with the staff recommendations.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The grant application requests two years of rural transit operating assistance for Shasta County, for a total funding request of \$981,974 for the performance period of July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2024. Caltrans is allowing Shasta County to use state toll credits as match, meaning that rural transit operations in unincorporated Shasta County will be 100% funded with FTA 5311 program funds and rider fares. This strategy efficiently funds rural transit needs with formula federal funds thereby freeing up STA funds for demonstration transit projects or other identified transit needs and Local Transportation Fund (LTF) funds for streets and roads needs.



Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Executive Director