

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	April 27, 2021
SUBJECT:	Consider Participation in the Transportation Network Company (TNC) Access for All Fund Program
AGENDA ITEM:	5-7
STAFF CONTACT:	Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

A new statewide program provides funding to increase access to on-demand transportation services for individuals with disabilities. The California Public Utilities Commission collects \$0.10 per trip from transportation network companies, such as Uber and Lyft, for this new TNC Access for All Program. An estimated \$20,000 to \$30,000 is available in Shasta County for Fiscal Year 2021/22.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Direct the Chair to sign Resolution 21-09, electing SRTA to become the Access Fund Administrator for the TNC Access for All Program for Shasta County;
2. Authorize the executive director to sign and submit all Certifications and Assurances, and application documents to the California Public Utilities Commission, including any amendments that may be necessary; and
3. Authorize the executive director the authority to opt out of SRTA's participation in the TNC Access for All program should certain program concerns remain unresolved.

DISCUSSION:

Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), such as Uber and Lyft, provide on-demand transportation services for groups of 1-5 people. However, TNCs are often unable to accommodate ride requests for individuals with disabilities, including wheelchair users, because they primarily rely on independent operator's personal vehicle. In 2018, the California legislature created the TNC Access for All Program with the intent of increasing access to on-demand transportation services for individuals with disabilities. More information is available online at: <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/tncaccess/>.

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) oversees the TNC Access for All Program and collects a \$0.10 per trip fee, by county, from TNCs. The CPUC began collecting funds in 2019 and will begin distributing funds to Access Fund Administrators in each county on September 30, 2021. Currently, the \$0.10 fee will be collected through December 31, 2025.

Program Administration – SRTA is the only entity eligible to be the Access Fund Administrator in Shasta County and has been conditionally assigned as the designated recipient. SRTA must submit an application, resolution, and various certifications (one time action) to the CPUC by May 3, 2021,

indicating the agency accepts becoming the Access Fund Administrator. Alternatively, SRTA can decline and the CPUC would administer the region's funds under a statewide program. No matter who the Access Fund Administrator is for Shasta County, the funds collected in the region will remain available for use in Shasta County.

SRTA's Access Fund Administrator duties currently include the following:

1. Establish a process for eligible transportation operators to apply for funds towards an on-demand wheelchair accessible service, select recipients, and distribute funds;
2. Submit quarterly reports regarding provider efforts, funds distributed, and any service challenges;
3. Submit an annual certification that the funds were distributed in accordance with CPUC requirements (may be subject to an audit); and
4. Provide information on SRTA's website on how the TNC Access for All Program funds are used.

This process is like many programs that SRTA oversees, and we may use up to 15% of the funds for administrative activities. Staff is participating in working group discussions regarding eligible recipients and administrative requirements. If SRTA determines that administering the program is too burdensome given its limited benefits, the agency may notify and transfer those duties to the CPUC at any time. Once SRTA receives the FY 2021/22 allocation a Request for Proposals will be prepared and issued to solicit applications from eligible providers. An initial contract must be executed by July 1, 2022.

ALTERNATIVES:

The SRTA Board of Directors can elect to not have SRTA administer the TNC Access for All funds for Shasta County. This would result in the CPUC taking over the administrative duties of the funds for Shasta County with little input from the region.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

SRTA participated in statewide discussions with CPUC and MPO/RTPA staff on the program guidelines between August 2020 and April 2021. An update was provided to the Technical Advisory Committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

It is estimated \$20,000 to \$30,000 is available for FY 2021/22. Future annual funds widely vary from \$5,000 to \$40,000 depending on the number of TNC trips completed in the region. SRTA may use up to 15% of the funds for program administration. Funds will be distributed by September 30th of each year and must be fully expended within 12 months of when funds are obligated to eligible providers. Continuation of the program beyond December 31, 2025, requires legislative action.



Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

RESOLUTION



RESOLUTION NUMBER:	21-09
SUBJECT:	Authorize the execution of the certification to serve as the Local Access Funds Administrator (LAFA) for the Access for All Program for the County of Shasta

WHEREAS, the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) is an eligible metropolitan planning organization and may receive state funding from the Access for All Program to administer a funding program for local Access Providers for on-demand wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) transportation projects; and

WHEREAS, the statutes related to state-funded transit projects require a local or regional administering agency to abide by various regulations; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 1376 (2018) designated the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) as the administrative agency for the Access for All Program; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has developed the Access for All Program Overview & Requirements for Access Fund Administrators (AFAs), for the purpose of selecting local AFAs (LAFAs), and administering and distributing Access Funds to eligible local Access Providers of on-demand WAV transportation; and

WHEREAS, the SRTA Board of Directors authorizes the Executive Director to execute required documents and any amendments thereto.

WHEREAS, the SRTA wishes to serve as the LAFA for the county of Shasta.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency that as the Access Fund recipient agrees to comply with all conditions and requirements set forth in the Certification document and applicable statutes, regulations, and Program Requirements for the Access for All Program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Director is authorized to execute all required documents of the Program and any amendments thereto with the Commission, or to opt out of the Program if existing concerns remain unresolved.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency that it hereby authorizes SRTA to serve as the LAFA of the Access for All Program for the county of Shasta.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 27th day of April 2021, by the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency.

Greg Watkins, Chair
Shasta Regional Transportation Agency