STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE:	**April 30, 2025**
SUBJECT:	**Receive Update on ShastaConnect Transit Services for Fiscal Year 2024/25**
AGENDA ITEM:	**7-7**
STAFF CONTACT:	**Jennifer Pollom, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner**

SUMMARY:

A ShastaConnect service performance summary for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024/25 and service updates are presented for review. This is an information item only and no action will be taken.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors receive ShastaConnect service updates for FY 2024/25.

DISCUSSION:

Background – In FY 2024/25, SRTA contracted with Dignity Health Connected Living (DHCL) for specialized on-demand ridesharing transit service in Shasta County branded as ShastaConnect, including two distinct weekday (Monday through Friday) Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) services in rural Shasta County. The two services are within:

1. The Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) service area where services are not currently provided and for those who are ineligible for RABA's complimentary paratransit services and are unable to ride fixed route service; and
2. The Intermountain Area communities of Burney, Cassel, Fall River Mills, and McArthur.

A summary of service performance is available through the attached table and chart. The CTSA service decreased by 213 trips compared to the same eight months of FY 2023/24. The ridership drop is primarily due to RABA taking on the Knighton Road area regional transit services and reintroduction of fares. The most recent month – February 2025 – showed a 15.7 percent increase in ridership over February 2024.

Regional Transit Consolidation – SRTA, DHCL, and RABA staff are coordinating on regional transit consolidation based on recommendations in SRTA's 2024 Shasta Coordinated Transportation Plan and 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan. Staff are working on the transit consolidation efforts systematically and bringing items before the SRTA Board of Directors, the RABA Board of Directors, and DHCL's executive committee for consideration and approval. Consolidation of regional transit services should improve costs and provide better service to riders over time.

Consolidation efforts that are complete include:

- RABA's service area now covers all of Shasta County allowing RABA to directly operate Burney Express (299X) and removed Shasta County Public Works as a transit operator;
- Fare coordination so that fares are more consistent between RABA and ShastaConnect services;

- RABA continues to be the sole applicant for Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funds and while working with DHCL on CTSA-related service needs;
- RABA included ShastaConnect services in their contract with Via, so SRTA no longer has to maintain a contract with the software company for on-demand ride-sharing. Additionally, there is now one mobile app for riders in the region to request transit rides;
- Sunday transit services transitioned from ShastaConnect to RABA on September 1, 2024;
- A memorandum of understanding for transit coordination between RABA and DHCL, including shared use of vehicles, was completed;
- SRTA transferred ownership of all State of Good Repair funded vehicles to RABA;
- SRTA transferred four ShastaConnect State of Good Repair (SGR) Projects to make RABA the implementing agency, totaling $356,827.48 with accrued interest **(new)**; and
- SRTA amended the CTSA contract for ShastaConnect services to facilitate a potential contract transfer to RABA **(new)**.

On-going efforts to consolidate regional transit include:

- Recommending RABA be designated as the CTSA for the region as part of the Transit Needs Assessment (see Agenda Item 11). If accepted by RABA's board and approved by the SRTA board, SRTA would notify DHCL and then assign the DHCL contract for ShastaConnect CTSA services to RABA, resulting in RABA being the designated CTSA in FY 2025/26, starting July 1, 2025, with DHCL continuing CTSA operations under the existing contract;
- Working with Caltrans, Shasta County Public Works, and RABA to transfer Federal Transit Administration (FTA) rural transit grants to RABA;
- Working with Caltrans, DHCL, and RABA to transfer approved grant-funded projects, including LCTOP, State of Good Repair (SGR), Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), and Senate Bill 125 Transit Program funds to RABA for implementation; and
- Reviewing and potentially simplifying SRTA's Transportation Development Act (TDA) policies and procedures to provide all estimated transit-only eligible funding to RABA for administration of transit operations upfront as part of the annual TDA budgeting process in FY 2025/26.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

SRTA discusses and coordinates services with DHCL and RABA as needed to meet rider needs and to make all systems more cost effective.

FISCAL IMPACT:

SRTA staff time to administer CTSA and other transit programs is budgeted in the FY 2024/25 Overall Work Program.

Weekday On-Demand Rideshare Service – Weekday transit services are funded through SRTA's annual five percent set-aside from the Local Transportation Fund (LTF) for CTSA services and State of Good Repair (SGR) funds. Operational costs for FY 2024/25 from July 1, 2024, to February 28, 2025, totaled $553,680.43. FY 2024/25 CTSA costs are currently over budget compared to estimates provided by DHCL primarily due to costly vehicle repairs, rising fuel costs, and increased personnel costs due to required increases in minimum wage and other employee benefits. However, existing grant funds, including the CTSA Reserve account, which is a balance of unused CTSA funds for prior years to cover operational and capital needs, are sufficient to cover the estimated expenses in excess of the initial Fiscal Year 2024/25 budget. Staff continues to monitor and discuss ways to reduce costs with DHCL staff to prepare for limited CTSA Reserve in coming FYs and other funding sources needed to be explored to cover CTSA operating costs in conjunction with potential service modifications. RABA's federal rural transit funds will be able to offset some costs in FY 2025/26.

Sunday On-Demand Transit Service – SRTA currently reimburses RABA for Sunday service using LCTOP grant funds dedicated for this service with approximately $93,365 remaining. Once LCTOP funds are fully expended, RABA intends to use TDA State Transit Assistance, FTA, and Senate Bill (SB) 125 funds to pay for ongoing Sunday transit service as long as it meets RABA performance standards for microtransit services in the Short-Range Transit Plan.

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Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Executive Director

Attachment: ShastaConnect Service Performance Metrics

ShastaConnect Service Performance Metrics – Fiscal Year 2024/25

Table 1: Weekday On-Demand Rideshare Service Trips

Month	Total Passenger Trips	Operating Days in Month	Avg. Daily Passenger Trips	Ridesharing Trip %	Avg. Trip Length (miles)	Avg. Ride Time (minutes)
July 2024	697	26	26.8	39.3%	10.8	23.4
Aug. 2024	860	27	31.9	42.8%	10.7	23.4
Sept. 2024	853	24	35.5	43.0%	11.2	23.4
Oct. 2024	914	27	33.9	48.8%	12.3	25.7
Nov. 2024	756	25	30.2	48.0%	12.4	25.9
Dec. 2024	875	21	41.7	47.3%	11.4	24.2
Jan. 2025	828	21	39.4	42.4%	11.6	24.5
Feb. 2025	843	19	44.4	43.2%	11.1	23.7
Mar. 2025						
Apr. 2025						
May 2025						
June 2025						
Total/Average	6,626	190	34.9	44.4%	11.4	24.3
2023/24 Total	6,839					
Change	-3.2%					

Chart 1: Three Year Historic CTSA Ridership