

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	April 25, 2024
SUBJECT:	Approve Federal Transit Administration Section 5311 Projects for Rural Transit Needs for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024
AGENDA ITEM:	7-9
STAFF CONTACT:	Jennifer Pollom, AICP, 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 \$539,052 for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024. Project applications are due May 30, 2024, to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). For regional applicants 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 then provide the necessary Program of Projects and certifications to Caltrans that the projects are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan and Federal Transportation Improvement Program.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Approve the FFY 2024 FTA Section 5311 program of projects for rural transit operations provided by the Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) totaling \$539,052; and
2. 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 the County of Shasta's fixed route public transit services in unincorporated portions of the RABA service area. The Shasta Region has been apportioned \$539,052 for FFY 2024.

Caltrans issued a call for projects on April 9, 2024, and project applications are due to Caltrans on May 30, 2024, to fund the ongoing operations of public transit in the rural areas of the Shasta Region. Staff recommends allocating the full FTA 5311 apportionment for FFY 2024 to RABA for transit operating assistance in areas outside of the urban area (map attached). If approved, SRTA will work with RABA to submit their application for operating assistance for the non-urban portions of the RABA service area using state toll credits as match – if approved by Caltrans – or using State Transit Assistance (STA) funds apportioned to the County of Shasta in the Transportation Development Act (TDA) budget for the required local match (44.47 percent). It is estimated that this will cover all anticipated fixed-route and complimentary paratransit operating

expenses in the non-urban portions of the RABA service area for the performance period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026.

Table 1 Summary of Proposed 5311 Program of Projects for the Shasta Region

FTA 5311	FFY 2024
Estimated apportionment	\$539,052
Staff Recommendation	
Redding Area Bus Authority (non-urban portion of RABA service area)	\$539,052

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 public transit in the rural areas of Shasta County while waiting for Caltrans to review 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, RABA, and Dignity Health Connected Living to address the operating assistance needs of rural transit services in the region. RABA will coordinate with SRTA to administer the funds received through this program. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) were informed of the call for projects on April 11, 2024. RABA submitted their project request to SRTA on April 15, 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The grant application requests one year of rural transit operating assistance for RABA for a funding request of \$539,052 in FTA 5311 funds for the performance period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026. If state toll credits are not approved by Caltrans, RABA would use Shasta County's STA funds as the local match. Use of state toll credits frees up STA funds for demonstration transit projects or other identified transit needs and Transportation Development Act (TDA) Local Transportation Funds (LTF) for streets and roads needs as long as there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet.



Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Executive Director

Attachment: RABA Service Area – Shasta County Urban Region (i.e., rural areas are non-urban)

**RABA Service Area
Shasta County Urban Region**

