

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	April 27, 2021
SUBJECT:	Approve 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan
AGENDA ITEM:	9
STAFF CONTACT:	Daniel Wayne, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY

The 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan has been completed. Once approved by the SRTA Board of Directors, the plan will help guide future efforts to provide more effective and efficient transit in the region.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors approve the 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan.

DISCUSSION:

A 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan has been completed to guide the delivery of future public transportation services in the Shasta Region. The plan includes potential short-, medium-, and long-term strategies for increasing service effectiveness and efficiency. The recommended timing of specific strategies is based on how closely the region's future aligns with one of three potential future scenarios – i.e., 'Current Trend', 'The Next Step', or 'A Giant Leap'. For example, if new funding becomes available, transit-oriented development occurs at an accelerated pace, and the public begins to demand new and expanded mobility services, this would represent the latter scenario and strategies may be deployed sooner.

Each strategy is presented in detail within the attached report. Strategies have been grouped into the following categories for consideration: 1) multi-modal accessibility strategies; 2) fixed-route service and infrastructure strategies; 3) policy improvement strategies; and 4) alternative mobility strategies. An at-a-glance overview of the strategies, scenarios, and phases of implementation is provided on Page 5-1 of the report.

Over the next two years, staff intends to pursue the following specific action in close coordination with the region's transit providers. Much of this will be sorted out through the short-range transit plan process, which is currently being led by the Redding Area Bus Authority.

- Improve multimodal accessibility to transit, including enhanced active transportation infrastructure (see page 4-2) and first- and last-mile connectivity enhancements (see page 4-5);
- Adjust fixed-route transit network to better align with real-world travel patterns and recent and upcoming new development (see page 4-8);

- Revise transit fare structure for low-income riders, including fare-capping, free fares, and/or other strategies as determined (see page 4-18);
- Expand on-demand transit to meet unmet transit needs at times and in areas where conventional fixed-route transit service is not viable (see page 4-28);
- Add rural transit mobility options relevant to local needs, ranging from vanpools to transportation vouchers (see page 4-32);
- Present the region's existing and planned mobility services as a singular public-facing system with common digital information and fare payment application (page 4-34 and 4-36); and
- Consolidate services provided by the region's various human transportation service organizations and agencies to minimize duplication of activities and costs (see page 4-29).

These and other strategies from the report are critical for the following reasons:

- Transit performance has been trending downward for several years. All services are now performing below regionally-adopted targets and Transportation Development Act (TDA) minimums. Having tried and failed to improve transit performance through low-hanging strategies (such as increased marketing and minor route adjustments), new and more ambitious strategies are now warranted.
- Reoccurring unmet transit needs, including public requests for more frequent service, extended service hours, and extended service areas, have repeatedly failed SRTA's reasonable-to-meet threshold when conventional service delivery models are assumed. Recent efforts to address these needs have been limited to grant-funded, short-term pilot projects. ShastaConnect On-Demand transit and other projects that successfully meet unmet transit needs where conventional fixed-route service is not viable, may need to be transitioned from pilot projects to become an integral part of the region's transit service strategy.
- The state-assigned target for reducing vehicle miles traveled and associated greenhouse gas emissions in the Shasta Region are substantially more ambitious for the 2022 update of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). The state is also looking more closely at regional actions (i.e., *actual* investments in services and projects versus *planned* activities) when reviewing and accepting the region's SCS. Without increased transit service and ridership, the region will not be able to meet its new target. Failing to have a state-accepted SCS would put SRTA and local agencies at a disadvantage when competing for state funds for regionally-significant infrastructure improvements.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may defer approval to request additional information.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

SRTA's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), including RABA (Redding Area Bus Authority), local agency partners, Dignity Health Connected Living, and the Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee were consulted during the planning process and reviewed the draft plan. *///The TAC recommends that the 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan be approved.///*

FISCAL IMPACT:

The 2040 Long-Range Transit Plan has no direct fiscal impact to the agency. Fiscal impacts associated with implementation will be provided when future actions are presented to the board of directors', typically as part of the annual unmet transit needs process and budget.

Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

Attachment:

2040 Long-Range Transit Plan:

<https://www.srta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5386/2040-Long-Range-Transit-Plan-Final-Report>