

ShastaConnect

Sunday On-Demand Transit Service Demonstration Project Business Plan

Submitted to:



SHASTA
Regional Transportation Agency

Shasta Regional
Transportation Agency
1255 East Street, Suite 202
Redding, CA 96001



February 9, 2019

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Submitted to:

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1. Introduction

Background

On June 19, 2018, the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) Board of Directors provided guidance to the Mobility Planners team to develop a Business Plan for an On-Demand Transit Service Sunday Demonstration Project. This brief history of events provides the context and brief background leading up to the decision to prepare a Business Plan.

The Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) currently provides fixed route and paratransit services Monday through Saturday. There are no public transit services currently available on Sundays in the Shasta region. There was strong interest among current RABA riders for Sunday service in both a 2015 Short Range Transit Plan and 2017 passenger survey, as well as SRTA's Unmet Transit Needs process over the last few years. This suggests that there may be enough demand in the region to support regular transit services on Sundays.

The primary purpose of the Project is to “develop an implementation plan for SRTA for an on-demand transit service demonstration that will run on Sundays.” As was pointed out in the June 2018 consultant presentation to the SRTA Board of Directors, a transportation revolution is upon us. There is significant experimentation with apps to improve transit services through features that allow users to book a trip, track the vehicle and pay for the trip. There is very little real-world experience with many of the new mobility options and many are still in the process of development. Therefore, there is a high degree of uncertainty in assumed ridership and productivity. It is not known how an on-demand service with an app will work in Redding.

If fixed route service were implemented, based on experience in other communities with Sunday transit service, it would not meet farebox recovery requirements. There is a need to have a different service paradigm for Sunday service transit operations in the Redding area. The proposed project provides the opportunity for the region to gain valuable experience in learning from the implementation of new on-demand technologies.

In June 2018, the SRTA Board considered the findings and recommendations contained in the Sketch Planning of Service Options, Working Paper #2, for the Sunday Transit Demonstration Project. The focus of this working paper was to provide the preliminary analysis of four service delivery options for Sunday service in the Redding area. Sketch planning provides order of magnitude estimates of demand and costs for alternatives being considered. It provided the general strengths and weaknesses of each and provided preliminary estimates on how each alternative performed against the nine specific criteria.

The conclusion of the analysis was that the introduction of a general public demand response service with a smartphone app for Sunday service would be fairly easy for RABA passengers and other potential riders to understand and utilize. The addition of a smartphone app to access and use the service could help to improve overall productivity, although there is uncertainty on how much. The pilot

demonstration area was proposed to be limited to RABA's Zone 2 service area which is essentially the Redding core area. This has subsequently been reduced to a smaller potential service area as shown in a map in Chapter 2 on page 2-7. Eligible trips will only be those that have an origin and destination within the service area. However, if the demonstration project is successful, and ridership demand is high enough, the project could be expanded to serve other areas of the region.

The SRTA Board accepted the recommendation that the demand response service with a smartphone app proceed to the development of a Business Plan.

Recent Developments

As work began on the Business Plan, SRTA management made several key decisions that are very relevant to the content of the On-Demand Sunday Demonstration Project.

1. As part of the marketing plan development that is provided in Chapter 3, the on-demand project has been branded ShastaConnect. Hereinafter in the remainder of the business plan, the Sunday demonstration project is referred to as ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project.
2. One of the requirements of LCTOP funding is that the service needs to be free fare vouchers, meaning that the service would be free to all users. There is no known free on-demand public transportation services, so the ridership and demand levels are very uncertain.
3. SRTA has partnered with Dignity Health Connected Living (DHCL) who will be the service provider for the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project. DHCL is currently contracted to SRTA to provide demand response service for the Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA), and the contract with SRTA enables DHCL to provide supplementary services such as the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project.
4. Anticipating the need for on-demand software, SRTA conducted a software procurement for on-demand software and selected Routematch as the software vendor.
5. Funding for the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project would primarily be limited to Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) Funding. These funds support new or expanded projects if they reduce GHG emissions. In consultation with SRTA staff, there is sufficient funding, including start-up costs, for a 24-month ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project.

Overview of Business Plan

Chapter 2 provides the operating plan for the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project. It provides service design parameters and policies, trip request parameters and rider performance monitoring requirements. It provides guidance on modifying trip reservation policies and processes based on actual trip demand during the demonstration project. It also recommends performance measures and target performance standards.

Chapter 3 is the Marketing Plan for the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project. It includes marketing objectives, target markets, branding, campaign themes, key messages, specific marketing

strategies, gatekeeper communication recommendations, publicity strategies, promotional advertising, marketing implementation schedule and a marketing budget.

Chapter 4 provides the start-up costs and operating costs for a 24-month ShastaConnect Demonstration Project. The revenue sources are further explained in Chapter 4.

2. ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project Operations Plan

This section addresses the operational aspects of implementing and operating the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project.

It is important to note that the design parameters and policies are a starting point for the 24-month Demonstration Project. It is very likely that after actual operating experience during the demonstration period, there could be changes to specific design features and policies.

Management and Operations

SRTA has determined that the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project can be managed and operated by Dignity Health Connected Living (DHCL) under an amendment to the existing contract between the two organizations. Based on a review of that existing agreement, it is expected that an amendment will be needed between SRTA and DHCL detailing, among other things, the responsibilities of the parties, the levels of service to be provided, service standards and the compensation for services provided.

Service Design Parameters and Policies

The ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project can be summarized as a general public demand responsive service involving a smart phone app to facilitate trip requests and other support applications.

Exhibit 2-1 presents and recommends basic operating service parameters and policies for the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project and highlights the System Requirements that spring from the service design and policies.

Registration of Eligible Riders

As noted in the Service Design, riders will be required to register before using this service. Riders may register by creating an account online (via website), through download of service mobile app, or with a reservation agent. The registration process will facilitate monitoring of usage, service performance and rider response. It is recommended that this registration elicit only basic identifying information from each rider, principally for the purposes of monitoring trip demand patterns and conducting user surveys during the pilot. The following identifying basic information is recommended to be collected:

- Rider name
- Residence address

- Email address
- Mobile phone number (if none, then other phone)

Service Implementation

Timing: It is presently intended that the Sunday Demonstration will initiate service on July 1, 2019 and last for 24 months. The Marketing Plan in Chapter 3 includes information and promotional activities that will need to be completed in advance of the service initiation date.

Vehicles In Service: It is expected that the maximum number of vehicles able to be placed into will be five. DHCL has five existing vehicles available for use and has been approved for three (3) new vehicles through the FTA 5310 program, with receipt of those vehicles projected as soon as March 2019 or delayed to sometime after July 1. SRTA and DHCL are working towards the procurement of two additional vehicles. These five additional vehicles could allow DHCL to place up to an additional five vehicles into service for a total of ten if merited by high service demand and within the project budget. The actual number of vehicles in service at any one time will be determined based on actual ridership demand.

On a daily basis, it is expected that one or two vehicles will be placed into service during the first hour or two of the day and then increase hourly based on the level of trip demand to a maximum of possibly ten buses during the peak hour(s), then decrease with demand until only one or two vehicles would be operating in the final hour of service. This vehicle profile corresponds with the typical service pattern seen in other demand responsive services.

Management will, however, need to be monitoring both advance reservations and the levels of same-day demand to try to avoid having either too many drivers and vehicles during the day or too few. During the first month or two, it is recommended that somewhat more vehicles be available for service to avoid being unable to serve all trip requests so as to avoid turning off new riders with long wait times, excessive ride times, or outright service denials.

Staffing: Dignity Health will need to take appropriate staffing actions to manage and operate these services every Sunday on a continuing basis. This would include arranging for weekend supervision, dispatch and reservation staff, and vehicle operator staff to operate a varying number of vehicles ranging from one or two up to a maximum of ten buses at peak time. While supervision, administration and driving for this service could possibly be done for a short period by existing DHCL transportation staff, doing so for any extended period would risk the service reliability of both services should staff be maxed out for work schedules, or be absent for vacations, health issues, or due to terminations or resignations.

If possible, DHCL is encouraged to seek part-time drivers to staff the Sunday Demonstration to facilitate the adjustment of number of in-service vehicles, particularly during the early phases of implementation.

Exhibit 2-1 SRTA Sunday Demonstration Service Design Summary

Service Design Factor	Description/Detail	System Requirements
Service Area	Service area for the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project is provided in Exhibit 2-2. Passengers must have both origin and destination in the service area.	Scheduling system must accept and recognize digitized service area boundaries
Service Hours	Service will be available from 6:30 am to 7:15 pm on Sundays with the last scheduled pick-up recommended to be no later than 6:45 pm. <u>Online Reservations</u> may be made online at any time (See Advance Reservations, below). <u>Telephone Reservations</u> are recommended to be available beginning at 6:00 am on Sundays.	DHCL will need to schedule reservations staff to be available for trip requests by telephone beginning at 6:00 am on Sundays for individuals not using a smart phone. Reservations staff will also need to be available on weekdays during normal business hours for advance trip requests for individuals not using a smart phone.
Eligible Riders	Service will be available to the general public so long as they are requesting an eligible trip, regardless of where they live. Riders will be required to register before using this service either online, through the mobile app or with reservation agent to facilitate monitoring of usage, service performance and rider response.	Scheduling system must support a simple rider registration process.

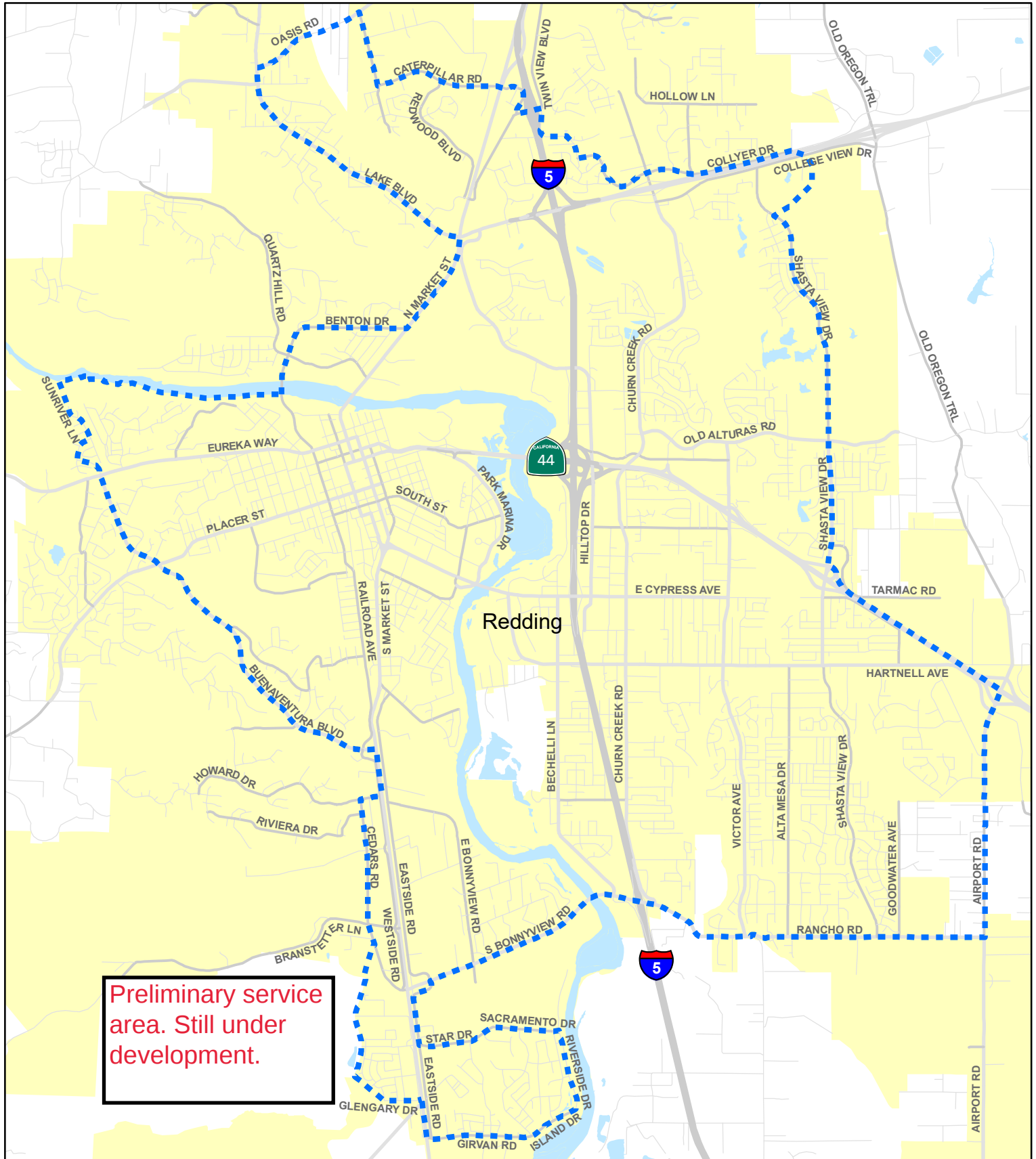
Service Design Factor	Description/Detail	System Requirements
Eligible Trips	Any trip request between locations within the defined service area shall be an eligible request.	Scheduling system must determine whether requested trip O/D locations are within defined service area boundaries and reject trip requests outside those boundaries.
Trip Request Parameters 1) Immediate Same Day Trip Requests 2) Advance Trip Reservations 3) Subscription Requests	1) Immediate Same Day Trip Requests may be made online or by phone beginning 60 minutes prior to the start of service and up to 60 minutes prior to the end of the service day 2) Advance Reservations will be accepted at least one day and no more than three days prior to the desired day of service. Advance Reservations will be limited to no more than 40 percent of the projected available trip capacity during any hour. 3) Subscription Requests -- that is, requests for standing order trips that are to be provided to and from the same locations at the same time each Sunday – will not be provided during the first 6-12 months of the pilot phase to ensure equity in service availability. If/when allowed, subscription trips shall be limited to a specified percentage of trip capacity during any specific hour to ensure equity in the availability of service.	1) Scheduling system shall allow the establishment of an “opening time” for immediate same day trip requests to distinguish them from advance reservations. 2) a) Scheduling system must accept advance reservations from one to three days in advance. b) Scheduling system must be able to limit advance reservations to specified trip total. 3) Scheduling system will eventually be required to accept and maintain subscription trip requests within limitations to be defined at a future date, should continue beyond the pilot.
Daily Trip Limitations by Rider	To ensure equity of service availability during the pilot, no more than six (6) one-way trips will be provided to an individual on a particular day.	Scheduling system will be required to maintain a record of trips requested by any individual for a specific day and to restrict the number of trip granted to individuals

Service Design Factor	Description/Detail	System Requirements
Advanced Tour Capability	Scheduling staff will have the capability to create vehicle tours prior to receiving specific rider trip requests to facilitate shared riding between high-volume trip origins and destinations based on previous trip demand patterns.	Scheduling system will allow the creation of vehicle tours in anticipation of trip demand to facilitate high productivity shared-riding.
Passenger assistance	Service will be curb to curb with rider boarding/deboarding assistance provided upon request to ensure rider safety.	Scheduling system must allow option of providing rider assistance when indicated.
Group trips	Up to 6 people (the rider plus 5 guests) will be allowed to travel on a normal reservation when indicated during the reservation process. Trip requests for more than two will require special trip request by phone.	Scheduling system will allow the rider to indicate that they will be accompanied by up to 5 guests when making their trip request. Requests for more than 6 will be referred to the scheduling staff.

Rider Performance Monitoring 1) No Shows 2) Late Cancellations	1) Riders may be subject to suspension of request privileges at the option of SRTA for no-showing requested trip pick ups in excess of a standard to be defined. 2) Riders may be subject to suspension of request privileges at the option of SRTA for late canceling requested trips in excess of a standard to be defined.	1) Scheduling system must be capable of recording trip no shows by rider and of administering a no show penalty system if established by SRTA. 2) Scheduling system must be capable of recording late trip cancellations by rider and of administering a late cancellation penalty system if established by SRTA.
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Service Design Factor	Description/Detail	System Requirements
Service Quality Parameters 1) On Time Performance 2) Maximum Wait Time 3) Maximum Ride Time 4) Missed Trips	1) The measure of on-time performance will be the percentage of vehicle pick up arrivals that arrive within a 20 minute window measured from 10 minutes prior to the promised pick up time to 10 minutes after the promised pick up time. 2) Immediate same day trip requests will not be scheduled if the projected wait time from completion of the online or telephone request to passenger pick up will exceed the maximum wait time standard of 45 minutes. 3) Trip requests will not be scheduled if the projected ride time from passenger pick up to drop off will exceed the maximum ride time standard of 45 minutes. 4) Missed Trips are defined as a vehicle arrival at a scheduled pick up location more than 30 minutes after the scheduled time or not at all.	1) Scheduling system must be capable of recording the actual vehicle arrival time at pick ups and computing the system's on time performance on a daily and monthly basis. 2) Scheduling system must allow the establishment of a maximum wait time for online and telephone immediate same day trip requests and not allow trip requests exceeding that time. 3) Scheduling system must allow the establishment of a maximum ride time from passenger pick up to drop off and not allow trip requests exceeding that time. 4) Scheduling system must be capable of recording the actual vehicle arrival time at each pick up location and computing the system's missed trip performance on a daily and monthly basis.

Sunday General Public Demand Response Service Area



■ ■ Proposed Sunday General Public Demand Response Service Area

Source: City of Redding and Shasta County
November 2018

Exhibit 2-2

0 0.5 1 2
Miles



Bus Operator Certification Requirements for Demand Response with an App

The proposed service is being operated similar a Dial-a-Ride service with booking and confirming trips by phone, the internet or a smartphone app. Section 336 of the California Vehicle Code provides the parameters for when a bus is being operated as a transit bus and when such a service is being operated as general public paratransit vehicle. The latter requires additional driver training and certification. The text is shown below.

336. *General public paratransit vehicle means any motor vehicle designed for carrying no more than 24 persons and the driver, that provides local transportation to the general public, including transportation of pupils at or below the 12th-grade level to or from a public or private school or school activity, under the exclusive jurisdiction of a publicly owned and operated transit system through one of the following modes: dial-a-ride, subscription service, or route-deviated bus service. Vehicles used in the exclusive transportation of disabled persons as defined in Section 99206.5 of the Public Utilities Code, or of persons 55 years of age or older, including any persons necessary to provide assistance to these passengers, are not general public paratransit vehicles.*

However, transportation of attendants, companions, or both traveling together with those individuals with disabilities who are determined to be eligible for complementary paratransit services in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336) and federal regulations adopted pursuant thereto, shall not be sufficient to qualify a vehicle as a general public paratransit vehicle.

A vehicle that provides local transportation for the general public through one of the following modes: dial-a-ride, subscription service, or route-deviated bus service, but does not provide transportation of pupils at or below the 12th-grade level to or from a public or private school or school activity, is a transit bus, as defined by Section 642, and is not a general public paratransit vehicle.

(Amended by Stats. 1993, Ch. 844, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 1994.)

DHCL has preliminarily concluded that their drivers are not subject to the general public paratransit requirements because the Sunday service is not being provided to or from a public or private school or school activity and therefore is a transit bus. However, since the Sunday transit bus service may possibly provide trips to and from private religious schools, it is recommended that DHCL receive written confirmation from the California Highway Patrol and its legal counsel that their drivers are not subject to the general public paratransit vehicle requirements.

Modifying Trip Reservation Policies and Processes Based on Trip Demand

The trip reservation policies specified in Exhibit 2-1 are designed to enable the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project to accommodate unknown and developing levels of trip demand during the

initial period of implementation without over-committing the service or allowing any rider segment to monopolize the service to the exclusion of the general public. With trip experience after six to eight weeks (or longer) of implementation, however, trip reservation policies and procedures may be changed to establish prescheduled group trips, subscription trips and to otherwise better meet demand for Sunday travel. Among the trip reservation changes that might be considered are these:

- 1) Establish Advanced Tours Within any demand responsive service area, there are high volume destinations such as shopping centers, key employment locations and, in this case, churches that can be expected to be requested trips on any particular Sunday. To meet the highest number of trip requests, a best practice in demand responsive services is to establish “pre-scheduled tours” to and from such high-volume destinations at times that will, based on prior experience, satisfy a high proportion of trip requests. This practice allows the scheduling system and reservation agents to book trips into those tours, thus achieving high levels of productivity and meeting as many requests as possible.

The use of pre-scheduled tours should be initiated once sufficient trip demand has been gained during the first few months to identify the high-volume destinations. Care should be taken, however, to ensure that trip capacity is maintained to still accommodate trip requests to other destinations during any hour and to monitor the equity of service delivery to rider groups and geographic areas when considered overall.

- 2) Advance Trip Reservations The proposed policy in Exhibit 2- 1 allows trip reservations to be made at least one day and no more than three days prior to the desired day of service up to no more than 40 percent of the projected available trip capacity during any hour. The limitation on the amount of capacity which may be scheduled in advance is intended to ensure that the system has available capacity to accept and provide same-day and immediate demand trips during any hour rather than being fully-committed in advance. Based on trip experience, the percentage of trip capacity – which depends, by the way, on the number of vehicles which are operated in any hour – may be increased or decreased to make the best use of available service capacity.
- 3) Subscription Trips These are trips which are set up for an individual between the same origin and destination locations at the same time each Sunday and continued for a period of weeks to be defined, often set at a minimum period of six weeks. In demand response systems, subscription trips are quite attractive to the regular rider, but can result in full commitment of the system during certain periods and no capacity for individual trip requests.

It is recommended that no subscription trips be established until the Sunday Demonstration has gained at least six to twelve months of trip experience (or longer) so as to begin identifying demand patterns during the service day both by hour and geography. Once there is sufficient understanding of trip demand to anticipate when capacity will be heavily committed and when

capacity may be available, then a limited number of subscription trips could be made available during certain hours. As requests for subscription trips are received, each request must be assessed for its “fit” within previous commitments (pre-scheduled trips and previously-granted subscriptions, for example) and granted or denied on that basis. Subscription trips should only be granted with the understanding that they are not permanent, but will be reviewed periodically to ensure that service equity is achieved.

- 4) Daily Trip Limitations The recommended policies would limit an individual no more than six (6) one-way trips on a particular day. This limitation is intended to ensure equity of service availability during the demonstration period while allowing an individual to make two round-trips during the day. Based on demand experience, this trip limitation could be adjusted to allow for more trip making during low-demand periods while maintaining the limit for peak travel hours.

Performance Measures and Recommended Standards

The following are proposed as performance criteria and goals for the Sunday Demonstration:

Measure	Target Standard
a. Passengers Per Hour	4.5
b. Cost Per Vehicle Revenue Hour	\$42.58
c. Average Annual Subsidy Per Trip	\$11.43
d. Passengers Per Revenue Mile	0.20
e. Denied Trips	0
f. Number of Valid Complaints	0
g. Number of Missed Trips	0
h. On Time Performance	90%
i. Trips Exceeding Maximum Wait Time	Less than 5%
j. Trips Exceeding Maximum Ride Time	Less than 5%
k. Seat Utilization	25%

3. Marketing Recommendations for ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project

Objectives

The objectives for the marketing of the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project are fairly ambitious. Within a short period of time, the communications effort must accomplish several things:

- Create awareness for a **new “brand” of public transit** service that is different from any existing services.
- Let potential users know that they now have a **public transit option for Sunday** – when no prior transit service was available.
- Educate potential riders about **how the new service works** – where it goes, how a reservation is made, the specifics of use and the fact that it is free for a limited time.
- Encourage potential users to **download the ShastaConnect app**.
- Generate **trial and repeat ridership** among a diverse population during the demonstration period.

Target Markets

To accomplish the objectives, SRTA and DHCL will need to communicate with a variety of target groups in advance of and during the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project:

- Existing RABA riders who will now have a Sunday transit option.
- CTSA riders who use demand response service during the week, and will now have Sunday service.
- Gatekeepers, such as social service agencies, churches, colleges and employers, who can provide access to potential target customers with a need for Sunday transportation.
- Redding area news media that can provide visibility for the new Sunday service among the Redding/Shasta County population.
- Social media users of SRTA, RABA and DHCL social media platforms.
- Individuals who own a car and have a drivers license and who would like to utilize a convenient transit service.

As ShastaConnect expands to include additional services, the promotional efforts will likely broaden to include direct marketing to other target groups and the general population. During this demonstration period, however, it is recommended that the focus be on those groups with the greatest potential for Sunday transit use.

Brand/Creative

The new Sunday service will be marketed under the brand **ShastaConnect**, which, in time, will incorporate other demand response services. The Sunday service will be delivered by DHCL, using vehicles that are used for senior-oriented services during the week. Both of these factors somewhat complicate the branding effort.

Vehicles

For any public transit service, vehicles are the most visible element and are seen by thousands of people each day they are on the street. This makes them the most cost effective marketing tool for building awareness. For the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project, the vehicles will need to communicate one message for weekdays and another for Sundays. Hence, the vehicles will need to be wrapped or have graphics with a dual identity – possibly through the use of a two-toned paint scheme that divides the bus vertically or horizontally.



At present, the buses have minimal identity – simply two red stripes and a small Dignity Health logo. In order to avoid the look that a second logo was simply pasted onto an existing vehicle, it is recommended that the vehicle design be created from scratch to include the two identities. While funding may not be available to rewrap all of the vehicles, it is recommended that the core vehicles receive this treatment.

In addition to simple branding, the vehicle graphics have the potential to convey significant information. They might include:

ShastaConnect (logo)

Slogan

Sunday 6:30 AM to 7:00 PM

www.shastaconnect.org

Connected Living (logo)

Transportation with a Heart

Monday thru Friday

(530) 226-3075

<http://connectedlivingnorthstate.org/transportation/>

Campaign Theme

There are two possible approaches to establishing a theme for the ShastaConnect service. One is to focus entirely on the Sunday service, creating a specific theme or tagline for use during the demonstration project. The other is to establish a theme that will be used longer term as ShastaConnect expands to provide other services. If the expansion of service is imminent, then the second approach is recommended to avoid establishing the brand as "Sunday only."

Sunday Specific

Your Sunday Connection

Your Sunday Ride

A Sunday Ride....when you need it

General

Transit when you need it

On-Demand Transit

A ride when you need it

Transit at your fingertips

The above are suggested tag lines and will need final approval by SRTA and DHCL. An important message to be communicated in the theme is the “on-demand” nature of the service. This is what distinguishes ShastaConnect (overall) from existing transit service. Hence, it is the focus of the “general” taglines.

Key Messages

Repetition is the key to creating awareness. Every communication made regarding the ShastaConnect Sunday service should include these key message points:

- New Sunday Transit Service
- On Demand Transit – by app, website or phone call
- Sunday Only - 6:30 am to 7:00 pm
- No advance reservation required, but reservation can be made three days in advance
- Limited service area within City of Redding
- Available to everyone
- FREE for a limited time

SRTA and its partners should also provide consistent messaging that this is a 24-month demonstration project.

Strategies

The marketing strategies recommended for the ShastaConnect Sunday Service are grouped into four focuses:

- Passenger Information – to educate potential users about how to use this new type of service.
- Communications with existing transit riders – to let people already relying on public transit know that they now have a Sunday transit option.
- Gatekeeper Communications – to engage social service agencies, churches, colleges and employers in letting their constituents know about the new service.
- Publicity and promotion – to build broad awareness for the new service throughout the community.

Priorities have been assigned to the strategies described hereafter based on available funding. Priority one ① are efforts essential to the successful implementation of the project. Priority two ② are efforts highly recommended to reach key target groups. Priority three ③ are efforts which would further enhance visibility and ridership.

Passenger information

Easy to understand, widely available passenger information is the core element of any transit marketing effort. It is the “directions” for using the product. The ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project’s challenge is to educate potential users about how to use a transit service which fills a gap in existing service but is unlike what they are familiar with.

① Create and distribute a printed passenger guide & display

The printed passenger guide needs to be both informative and promotional. It should include:

- Clear service parameters:
 - On Demand Service
 - Sunday Only
 - 6:30 am to 7:15 pm
 - City of Redding – limited service area
 - Free for Everyone
- Easy to read map, clearly showing the service area boundaries and highlighting key “Sunday” destinations within those boundaries (downtown, mall, colleges, churches)
- Simple instructions for how to register for the service and download the app
- Instructions for requesting a trip by app, on the website or by phone
- Specifics of service (e.g. limit of four rides per day per person, response time, etc.)

To facilitate distribution of the guide as a promotional tool, small tabletop or wall mounted displays should be created for key gatekeeper locations such as RABA buses, social service offices, hotels, the colleges, employee break rooms or even church entrances. These can be created using a simple 8 ½ X 11 flyer that includes the key messages, and a prefabricated plastic holder with brochure pocket. For some locations that simply have bulletin board space, a laminated copy of the flyer may be sufficient.



Source: <https://www.beemak-idl.com/store/pc/Combination-Sign-Holders-c27.htm>

① Establish a user-focused website at www.ShastaConnect.org

SRTA should establish a dedicated website for ShastaConnect with an immediate focus on the Sunday demonstration project. The website should include the same content as the passenger guide but in a more interactive manner. In addition to the basic service parameters, the homepage should include:

- Link to Download the ShastaConnect App
- Register Here Link – for First Time Users
- Reservation Form

- Interactive Map – that allows user to see if their origin and destination are within the service area
- How to Ride – link to instructions and service specifics

As additional ShastaConnect services are added, the website content can be modified to include pages for each specific service. The Sunday and CTSA services will be added during the project start-up.

① Registration Process

Whether completed within the app, on-line or by phone, the one-time registration process should be quick and easy – something that can be completed in advance or immediately prior to requesting a first trip. Instructions in the passenger guide, on the website and in the app should walk the customer through the process that will allow ShastaConnect to collect:

- Name
- E-mail Address
- Home Address
- Mobile Phone Number (or landline)

Communications with existing transit riders

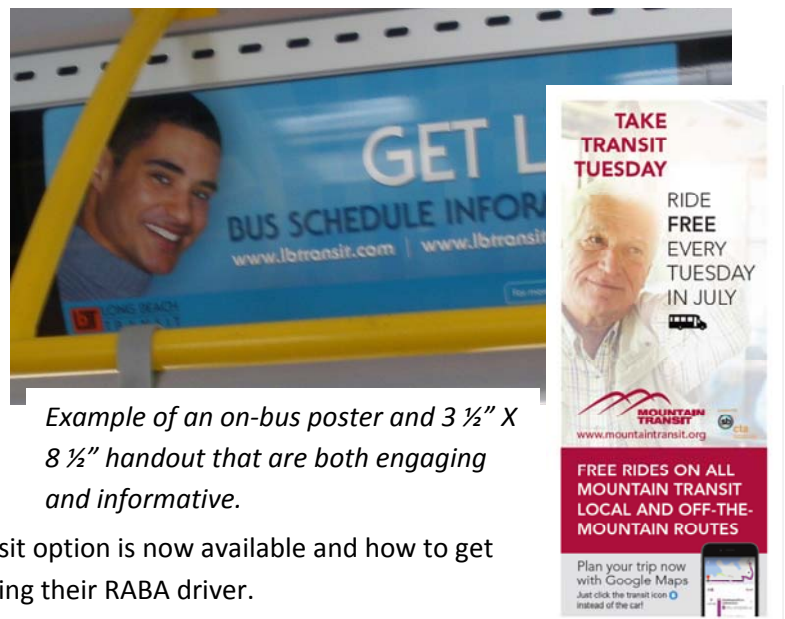
Current users of RABA and DHCL transportation services are the highest potential target market for the new Sunday service. These individuals currently rely on public or specialized transit for mobility during the week and many have been asking for Sunday service. The most direct and cost effective channels for reaching these individuals is to work through their current transit providers.

Establishing a strong marketing alliance with RABA will be critical to the success of the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration project. Since DHCL will be operating the Sunday service, they are already “on-board” as a marketing partner for the ShastaConnect.

① Create a poster and handout campaign for on-board RABA buses

Most RABA buses include overhead space where posters can be placed. A series of posters for the new Sunday service should be created for posting on all buses. The posters should be bright and engaging – designed as informational advertisements not as “notices.”

To maximize exposure, it is recommended that four posters be placed on each bus (front and back on each side). The bold, easy to read posters should let riders know that a Sunday transit option is now available and how to get more information at ShastaConnect.org or by asking their RABA driver.



Example of an on-bus poster and 3 ½" X 8 ½" handout that are both engaging and informative.

A small handout (either a rack or wallet card) with details about how the service works should also be provided to RABA for distribution on the buses.

① RABA to include information on their website and in their passenger guide

RABA should include information about the Sunday service on their website with a link to ShastaConnect.org. This can be accomplished through a news item about the service in their news feed on the home page, plus a listing on the “Services” page which currently includes Bus, Paratransit and Burney Express. The addition of a link for Sunday Service from ShastaConnect would let transit users see that they have a Sunday option.

When RABA reprints their passenger guide, they should also include a notice about the availability of Sunday transit service through ShastaConnect with a reference to the website and phone number.



② On-hold message for RABA and DHCL phone centers

For transit users who continue to rely on the phone as a communications tool, adding information about the new Sunday service to RABA’s and DHCL’s hold message would be an effective communications tool. In addition, RABA’s information agents should be provided with detailed information about the service so that they can refer customers seeking Sunday transportation to ShastaConnect.

① DHCL Communications

Similar efforts should be undertaken to make DHCL clients aware of the Sunday service. This is a smaller ridership base, but equally high potential.

- Posters on DHCL vehicles and in their facilities
- Handouts distributed to DHCL clients by drivers and facilities staff
- Information and a link from the DHCL website

Gatekeeper Communications

Gatekeeper organizations can play a critical role in educating their constituents about the availability of the new Sunday service. Organizations with the potential to reach the customers most likely to use a Sunday transit service include:

- **Social Service Agencies** – organizations that provide services to seniors, low income residents, and persons disabilities.
 - HHS
 - CalWorks
 - Shascade
 - DHCL

- Veteran's Services
- Far North Regional Center
- **Churches** – which represent a key Sunday destination that has previously been unserved.
- **Employers** (retailers, hotels, restaurants) – with service workers who may commute by public transit during the week, but have challenges getting to work on Sunday.
- **Shasta College, Bethel College and IASCO** – each representing students who may rely on transit during the week and be grateful for a Sunday travel option.
- **Medical facilities**- including hospitals, urgent care, and walk-in clinic.

Following are strategies for enlisting the support of these organizations in marketing the new Sunday service to their constituencies.

② Initial Contact and Outreach Presentations

The first step is to establish one or more contacts at each organization and inform them about the plan for implementation of the ShastaConnect Sunday service. Seek to communicate with individuals who can facilitate communications with front line staff and constituents (clients, students, employees etc.).

- Social Service Agencies – Department and/or case managers
- Churches – Minister and church secretary
- Employers – Store or HR Manager
- Colleges – Student Services
- SRTA's SSTAC
- Medical facilities
- Senior living apartments
- Mobile home parks

For larger organizations, ask if there is an opportunity to speak with front line staff (such as social service case workers) to provide them with an overview of the new service and how it might benefit their constituents.

② E-mail Updates

Establish a database of organizations with e-mails for gatekeeper contacts. This can be used to issue updates and reminders about the Sunday service, and later about additional ShastaConnect services as appropriate.

② Marketing Tools

Provide the gatekeepers with ready-to-use marketing tools which will aid them in promoting the Sunday service. Inexpensive tools can include:

- 8 ½ X 11 Bulletin Board Posters – for placement in social service offices, employee break rooms, Church entrances and college campus bulletin boards.
- Small Handouts (either 3.5" X 8.5" rack cards or small fold over wallet cards) - for distribution to potential riders.

- Information Displays – such as those described previously – to provide a permanent presence in high traffic locations such as social service and employment offices.

Publicity

2 Social Media

Many of the gatekeeper organization discussed above use social media (particularly Facebook) to communicate with their constituents. Creating a Facebook page for the ShastaConnect, asking these gatekeepers to like it and providing them with informative/promotional posts to repost on their own social media accounts will expand the reach of ShastaConnect's message.

For example, RABA's Facebook page has about 1400 followers. Providing RABA with posts about the new Sunday service, would offer another channel for reaching existing transit riders.

Other gatekeepers with active social media programs include Shasta College, Bethel Church and IASCO.

1 News Releases

News releases about the Sunday Demonstration service should be issued to all local news media at several points during the demonstration project. Distribution should include the Record Searchlight, local TV network affiliates and local radio stations.

- **Preview** – in advance of the introduction of the service, once all plans are in place, the website is live for registrations and a firm start date has been established.
- **Start Date** – at the time that service is initiated to announce the start up and encourage trial ridership.
- **Post Start Up** – After the service is in place, periodic news releases should be issued to report ridership, profile who is using the service and tell how riders are benefiting from the service. These releases should remind people that Sunday transit is available for free during the demonstration and profile some of the riders who are taking advantage of it – using quotes and even photos.

Promotional Advertising

The marketing strategies outlined to this point rely on earned or free communications channels available through community partners. If funding is available for paid advertising, two primary channels are recommended.

3 Bus Shelters

Outdoor advertising is highly effective at creating visibility and building broad awareness within the community. Specifically, bus shelter advertising would be ideal for this effort as it has the potential to simultaneously communicate with both existing transit riders and the broader driving public. If RABA and/or its advertising contractor will allow SRTA to use some bus shelter space on a free or reduced rate basis, this might be an affordable option for promoting the new service.

3 Direct Mail

Every Door Direct Mail is a product of the US Postal Service that allows advertisers to mail an oversized post card to all households within a geographically defined area. As a communications channel, EDDM has several advantages:

- Because the postcards can be large and very visual, they communicate quickly before they end up in the recycle bin.
- The postage rate is only \$.17 per household. Combined with printing and design, per household cost can be as low as \$.35.
- The geographic targeting allows the mailers to be sent only to those who live within a defined area which will be served by the demand response service.
- The postcard format allows for the inclusion of a high level of information including a service area map.



Suggested Marketing Plan Schedule

January 2019	Finalize Details of Service Plan Begin discussion with RABA about marketing alliance
February 2019	Create Logo & Vehicle Graphics
March 2019	Initiate website development
April 2019	Create marketing tools
May 2019	Initiate contacts with gatekeepers Initiate Facebook page
June 2019	Preview news release Launch website Print Passenger Guides, Bus Posters Distribute marketing tools to gatekeepers Install bus posters on RABA buses Add graphics to vehicles Startup news Release
July 2019	INITIATE SERVICE Optional: Launch Bus Shelter and/or Direct Mail advertising campaign
August 2019	Follow-up News Release E-mail Update to Gatekeepers
On-going	Regular E-mail updates to gatekeepers Maintain distribution of posters, guides and handouts Social Media Posts (featuring riders)

Budget

Start-Up Costs		
50% of Ten Vehicle Wraps (Total \$50,000)	\$25,000	
Website Development	\$15,000	
Logo Development/Branding	\$7,000	
Total Start-Up Costs		\$47,000
24-Month Promotion		
Passenger Guide Design, Promotion & Printing	\$2,500	
Small Handout-Design & Printing	\$1,500	
8.5 X 11 Poster for Gatekeepers	\$750	
Table Top Displays for Gatekeepers (25)	\$250	
News Releases	Staff	
Social Media	Staff	
Core Promotional Costs		\$5,000
Optional Paid Advertising		
Bus Shelter posters Design & Printing (10)	\$2,500	
Production Cost Only. Space cost would		
need to be negotiated with RABA		
Every Door Direct Mail (20K Households	\$8,000	
Optional Paid Advertising Costs		\$10,500

4. Financial Plan

This chapter provides the financial plan for the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project. The chapter is broken into the following sections:

1. Available Revenues
2. Start-up Costs
3. Service Supply
4. Estimated Operating Costs
5. Contingency Revenues
6. Summary of Revenues and Costs

Available Revenues

SRTA received \$231,865 in FY 2017/18 Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funding. While the numbers have not been finalized, SRTA is expected to receive a higher LCTOP allocation for FY 2018/19 and an additional allocation for FY 2019/20.

LCTOP is one of several programs that are part of the Transit, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Communities Program established by the California Legislature in 2014 by Senate Bill 862. Administered by Caltrans, in coordination with the Air Resources Board and the State Controller's Office, LCTOP was created to provide operating and capital assistance for transit agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged and low-income communities. SRTA submitted an application to Caltrans for a "Sunday Transit Service Demonstration Project." Caltrans approved the project with the funding summary stating "The project will provide funding for free-fares for riders and development of an app to run the service during the demonstration project..."

There is sufficient LCTOP funding available for a 24-month ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project.

Start-Up Costs

There are a number of start-up costs for the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project, which are described below.

Routematch Software Costs

The purchase of the on-demand Routematch software (Mobility On-Demand) totals \$49,920, which includes start-up costs, app development, staff training, and software licensing for the first year (\$47,420) and software licensing and maintenance for the second year (\$2,500). As described earlier the software will enable a user to put in an origin and destination on an app within the defined service area,

determine if the trip is eligible, and confirm a trip with the app or on the internet. The software will also be utilized to assign vehicles for reservations made by phone to a dispatcher.

Website Design and Installation

A new website for the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project will be developed and implemented prior to the July 1, 2019 implementation. SRTA will procure a vendor to assist with development of the website. The \$15,000 in start-up costs for website design and installation is only an estimate based on the consulting team's experience for similar website design projects.

Logo Development and Branding

SRTA will hire a logo designer to develop a logo and branding scheme for the project. This is estimated at \$7,000 for the logo and branding development effort.

Vehicle Wraps

The financial plan anticipates implementing ten vehicle wraps on the vehicles. The wrap graphics will be shared with DHCL who utilizes the vehicles for CTSA services Monday to Friday. The financial plan anticipates sharing 50% of the estimated \$50,000 for graphic design, wrap production, and installation; with the ShastaConnect Demonstration Project funding \$25,000 of the costs.

DHCL Staff Coordination, Training and Implementation Costs

Details on DHCL's start-up costs have been provided by DHCL staff and reviewed by the consulting team. They include hiring and training of new drivers and dispatchers, coordination and training for the new Routematch software, testing and implementing tablet software on all vehicles, and implementation meetings with Routematch, the consulting team and SRTA. The staff hiring, training and coordination costs are estimated at \$12,166.

Computer, Tablets and Software

It's possible that the existing tablets on DHCL vehicles may not support the Routematch software. Routematch staff have purchased a tablet matching the one's DHCL has and will be testing the software to check for compatibility. If new equipment is needed, the costs for ten new tablets, software installation, and testing is estimated at \$7,880. DHCL also included \$1,000 to purchase a new desktop computer for the project.

The total start-up costs for SRTA and DHCL through June 30, 2019 is estimated at \$115,466.

Vehicle Supply, Service and Operating Hours

Vehicle service supply will be dependent on the number of advanced reservations and on-demand service requests. In the early morning, when service is first launched, the service may start with two vehicles at 6:30 am and then build up to five vehicles by 8:30 am. It is very likely that between seven to ten vehicles will be required during peak periods during the demonstration project. Since the service will have free fares, it is very possible that demand may quickly ramp up to the potential need of seven to ten vehicles in peak service within six months after the service is launched, but this is not known. We are therefore being conservative in estimating that during the first year of the demonstration project that five vehicles will operate an average of 12 revenue hours per day and that an additional three vehicles will operate an average of five revenue hours per day. This service estimate is significantly higher than what you would expect if normal fares were being charged and is based on our experience with other free transit systems that experience very high ridership.

Therefore, we estimate an average of 75 vehicle revenue hours per Sunday for the first year. Normal supply for a dial-a-ride service with fares would have service supply of about 35-40 vehicle revenue hours per day. With 51 Sundays anticipated during a first year of the demonstration project, this totals 3,825 vehicle revenue hours during the first year of the demonstration period.

In the second year of the project, it is assumed that demand continues to increase with the peak number of vehicles in operation totaling eight; with six of the vehicles operating 12 hours per day and two vehicles averaging five hours per day. For the second year, the average daily vehicle revenue hours total 82, resulting in 4,182 vehicle revenue hours operated.

Operating Costs

There are several types of operating costs, including:

- SRTA Administration Costs
- DHCL Operations and Maintenance Costs
- Marketing Costs

SRTA Administration Costs

SRTA administration costs are the staff costs for managing the ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project. This includes the management time necessary to coordinate, implement and manage the contracts with Routematch, DHCL, a website vendor, and marketing staff costs as detailed in Chapter 3. It is estimated that this will entail about 10% of the direct operating costs for the project. SRTA administration costs are estimated at \$44,177 for the 24-month demonstration program.

DHCL Operations and Maintenance Costs

DHCL operations and maintenance costs include the costs of dispatching, drivers, fuel, vehicle maintenance and supervision. DHCL's operating and maintenance costs for operating its CTSA services for the first three months of FY 2018/19 was \$52.74 per vehicle revenue hour. A 3% increase to \$54.32 is anticipated for FY 2019/20, and accounts for potential increases in gas prices and wages. During the first year, the DHCL operations and maintenance costs are estimated at \$207,782 based on the estimated service supply of 3,825 vehicle revenue hours.

For the second full year of operations in FY 2020/21, costs again are assumed to increase by 3% a year to \$55.95. For the assumed 4,182 vehicle revenue hours of service, the FY 2020/21 operations and maintenance costs for the DHCL contract is estimated at \$233,991.

For the 24-month ShastaConnect Sunday Demonstration Project, the estimated DHCL operations and maintenance costs are \$441,773.

Marketing Costs

The estimated marketing costs were detailed at the end of the Chapter 3. The start-up costs for the \$25,000 in vehicle wraps and \$15,000 in website design and implementation were discussed above in the start-up costs section of Chapter 4. The \$5,000 in promotion costs are proportionally allocated between the first and second year. The optional \$2,500 for design and printing of 10 bus shelters posters is included as a first-year expense. The \$8,000 optional costs for sending a postcard describing the Sunday service via Every Door Direct Mail to 20,000 households in the service area is not included in the project costs in Exhibit 4-1. If service demand is lagging after six months, it could be a strategy SRTA may want to consider implementing.

Total Operating Costs

The total two-year operating costs, including SRTA administration, DHCL operation and maintenance, and marketing costs is estimated at \$495,950.

Summary of Revenues and Costs

Exhibit 4-1 on the next page provides a summary of the revenues and costs described above. In summary, the project start-up costs and two years of operation is estimated at \$611,416. LCTOP revenues of \$611,416 are assumed to be the revenue source to pay for the total project costs.

Exhibit 4-1 Summary of Revenues and Costs

Revenues

LCTOP Revenues	\$ 611,416
<i>Total Revenues</i>	\$ 611,416

Costs

Start-up Costs October 2018 to June 30, 2019

Routematch Software	\$ 47,420
50% of vehicle wraps: ten @ \$5000 each	\$ 25,000
Website Development	\$ 15,000
Logo Development and Branding	\$ 7,000
DHCL Staff and Training	\$ 12,166
DHCL Computer, Tablets, Software	\$ 8,880
Total	\$ 115,466

Ongoing Operating Costs: July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021

Year One: July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020	
SRTA Administration	\$ 20,778
DHCL Operations and Maintenance	\$ 207,782
Marketing	\$ 5,000
Total Year One	\$ 233,561
Year Two: July 1 2020 to June 30 2021	
SRTA Administration	\$ 23,399
Routematch Licensing Fee	\$ 2,500
DHCL Operations and Maintenance	\$ 233,991
Marketing and Public Information	\$ 2,500
Total Year Two	\$ 262,390
<i>Total Operating Costs 24 months</i>	\$ 495,950
<i>Total Demonstration Project Costs</i>	\$ 611,416