

Shasta Coordinated Transportation Plan

Technical Memorandum 2 - 2017 Coordinated Plan Progress Report



Prepared for the
Shasta Regional Transportation Agency



September 13, 2023

Shasta Coordinated Transportation Plan

Technical Memorandum 2 *2017 Coordinated Plan Progress Report*

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of the *Shasta Coordinated Transportation Plan* (Coordinated Plan) is to improve mobility within the Shasta County region by enhancing coordination among public, non-profit, and for-profit transportation providers. In particular, the Coordinated Plan improves transportation access for senior adults, persons with disabilities, and people with low incomes.¹

The first technical memorandum (Tech Memo 1) reviewed existing conditions in the Shasta region, including demographics, the local economy, and transportation providers operating in the region. In this second tech memo, the goals and strategies from the previous 2017 Coordinated Plan are reviewed, and progress towards implementation is summarized. Initial public outreach input is also analyzed for key trends regarding coordination opportunities and perceived transportation gaps. Tech Memo 3 will assess transportation service needs in the Shasta County region, identify duplicative services, and recommend potential coordination strategies. All tech memos developed during the planning process will later be compiled to forge the *Shasta Coordinated Transportation Plan*.

¹ Federal Transit Administration (FTA). (2022). *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans*. USDOT. <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/coordinated-public-transit-human-services-transportation-plans>

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2017 COORDINATED PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This current study is updating the 2017 Coordinated Plan. This chapter briefly reviews the findings of that previous plan before discussing the current implementation status of the plan's goals and strategies. Recommendations outline whether to include previous strategies in this updated coordinated plan or not.

FINDINGS

Coordination Challenges

The 2017 Coordinated Plan identified multiple challenges preventing organizations/agencies from expanding transportation services or improving coordination with other providers. These challenges included:

- Funding limitations:
 - Low funding levels constrain staff sizes and limit the amount of funds available for providing transportation services or related capital expenditures, such as vehicles.
- Regulatory constraints:
 - State and federal regulations can make it difficult to provide transportation services by limiting how much providers can coordinate and share resources. Many state and federal regulations also require significant reporting time, further limiting staff capacity.
- Technology limitations:
 - Inconsistent access to cell phones and internet, as well as inconsistent cell service coverage across the Shasta region, make it difficult to communicate with residents. Limited cell phone access also makes it difficult for some residents to utilize new mobility solutions that require a phone for scheduling, such as microtransit.



Transportation Gaps

Based on previous public and stakeholder outreach conducted during the 2017 Coordinated Plan, the following gaps in service were identified:

- A lack of Sunday transportation options.
- Limited areas with access to transportation services. The Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) only serves a small portion of Shasta County region, and while some communities outside of the RABA service area are served by other transportation agencies, most of these services are offered on a limited basis.

- Infrequent service, specifically regarding RABA, which operates most of its fixed routes only hourly.
- The limited hours of operation of existing transportation services.
- Challenges with Shasta regional demand response services:
 - Requirements for advance scheduling.
 - Limited hours of operation.
 - Expensive fares.
 - Restrictive eligibility requirements.
 - The limited RABA demand response service area.
- A lack of knowledge of existing transportation services.
- A lack of bus options to Sacramento, particularly express services.

REVIEW OF STRATEGIES

Status of Previous Strategies

Table 1 summarizes the eight priority strategies included in the 2017 Coordinated Plan. The strategies are listed in order of priority, as presented in the previous plan. Details on the eight strategies and their current implementation status are provided on the following pages.

1. ***Evaluate, strengthen, and maintain existing transportation services/projects***— Support existing services through additional operating funds and the procurement of capital equipment, new or replacement vehicles, mobile radio equipment, and other technology. Vehicle procurement should prioritize alternative-fueled vehicles. Install passenger amenities to improve access to the existing fixed route system, such as benches, shelters, signs, and lighting.
 - a. ***Status***— Continuous. This strategy calls for ongoing investments to ensure current transportation services are maintained. In the years since the adoption of the 2017 Coordinated Plan, specific projects that have been completed advancing this strategy include the purchase of new vehicles by most of the transportation providers in the Shasta region, including the first battery-electric bus for RABA, as well as the development of both the RABA and Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Rollout Plans (discussed in Appendix B). ShastaConnect also enhanced operations by procuring Via technology for ride scheduling. All grants received since 2017 to fund Shasta region transportation services can advanced this strategy.
2. ***Marketing and education of services***— Increase awareness of existing transportation services by developing consolidated/coordinated marketing materials, such as brochures, social media accounts, and websites. Develop a “travel training” program for students, seniors, and people with disabilities to teach them how to use RABA.
 - a. ***Status***— Continuous. Since 2017, SRTA updated its brochure summarizing existing transportation resources in the Shasta Region (the Need-a-Ride brochure). The Need-a-Ride brochure is currently being updated again. United Way maintains a database of

Table 1: Status of 2017 Coordinated Plan Strategies

	Strategy	Status	Details	Recommendation for 2024 ¹
1	Evaluate, Strengthen, and Maintain Existing Transportation Services/Projects	<i>Continuous</i>	Grants for transportation services (Section 5310, etc.). New vehicle acquisitions. RABA acquired first battery-electric bus. Development of RABA and SRTA ZEB Rollout Plans. Incorporated new technology to improve CTSA service (Via).	Update
2	Marketing and Education of Services	<i>Continuous</i>	Need-a-Ride Brochure. ShastaConnect Brand. On-call Marketing Consultant for ShastaConnect. Database of regional providers maintained by United Way (211 NorCal).	Update
3	Mobility Management	<i>Not Implemented</i>	No Mobility Manager position established. No organization officially designated as responsible for Mobility Management.	Update
4	Multi-Organizational Approach to Solutions/Overall Coordination	<i>Continuous</i>	Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) meetings. Coordination among agencies to promote public outreach efforts. SRTA and RABA planning shared hydrogen fueling station.	Update
5	Driver Recruitment, Development, Screening, and Training Program	<i>Not Implemented</i>	No driver training program established.	Update
6	New or Expanded Services/Projects to Meet Identified Gaps and Needs	<i>Continuous</i>	Initiation of ShastaConnect On Demand Sunday service. Initiation of new transit services to VA Clinic (RABA Route 15). Beach Bus service to Whiskeytown Lake.	Update
7	Infrastructure Projects	<i>Continuous</i>	Adoption of 2018 RTP. Adoption of 2018 GoShasta Regional ATP. Adoption of 2018 City of Redding ATP. Installation of new amenities at existing bus stops. Regional partners secured \$45 million for pedestrian and bike projects.	Update
8	Shared Used of Agency Vehicles	<i>Not Implemented</i>	No significant increase in vehicle sharing. No study on vehicle sharing conducted. No vehicle sharing program established.	Update
Note 1: All strategies included from the 2017 Plan in the updated Coordinated Plan will be modified and reprioritized to accurately reflect community needs during the current planning process.				
Source: 2017 Shasta Coordinated Transportation Plan				

regional transportation services through the 211 NorCal website. SRTA has developed the ShastaConnect brand and retained an on-call marketing consultant for the service. Most of the other recommendations included under this strategy have not yet been implemented, such as the establishment of a travel training program or a coordinated website.

3. ***Mobility management*** – Establish a mobility manager position to improve coordination of transportation services in the Shasta region. Responsibilities of the mobility manager would include, but not be limited to, maintaining updated information regarding existing services, encourage participation in transportation planning efforts, conduct outreach on behalf of the various transportation providers through social media, the internet, over phone, and at in-person events, and help coordinate volunteer driver programs.
 - a. ***Status*** – Not implemented. No mobility manager position has been established for the Shasta region since the adoption of the 2017 Coordinated Plan. Also, no organization has officially assumed responsibility for mobility management.
4. ***Multi-organizational approach to solutions/overall coordination*** – Increase coordination among transportation providers in the Shasta region by regularly engaging with stakeholders from transportation organizations/agencies. This engagement could be conducted by extending regularly held Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) meetings to focus on coordination efforts. Implementing a multiorganizational approach to solutions would allow for different types of projects to advance, including but not limited to the centralized maintenance of vehicles, sharing vehicles, coordinated fuel purchases, a transportation stakeholder email listserv, and centralized administration of social service transportation programs.
 - a. ***Status*** – Continuous. Outside of routine communication and coordination at SSTAC meetings, no concerted efforts have yielded solutions to larger, more fundamental coordination issues since the adoption of the 2017 Coordinated Plan. SRTA continuously works to ensure the SSTAC is representative of the greater Shasta region and includes individuals with different interests. In addition to SSTAC meetings, regional providers and stakeholders have continuously coordinated to promote public outreach efforts being conducted to advance regional mobility. SRTA and RABA have initiated discussions to coordinate planning a shared, hydrogen fueling station for transit vehicles.
5. ***Driver recruitment, development, screening, and training program*** – Develop hiring guidelines, requirements, and standards for commercial drivers throughout the Shasta region. Adopt a consistent training program for all commercial drivers, including instruction on how to best assist passengers with disabilities.
 - a. ***Status*** – Not implemented. No driver training program or driving training guidelines have been established for the Shasta region since the adoption of the 2017 Coordinated Plan.
6. ***New or expanded services/projects to meet identified gaps and needs*** – Assess the feasibility of new or expanded services to address the unmet transit needs identified in the 2017 Coordinated Plan. Once it is determined whether a service would be reasonable to meet, implement said service improvement. Example service improvements or programs that would fill transportation

gaps within the Shasta region include, but are not limited to, Sunday service, demand response services in non-urban areas, travel training program, and the implementation of on-demand pilot programs.

- a. **Status**— Continuous. Most of the projects suggested under this strategy require extensive coordination and resources, making them difficult to implement quickly. Despite these challenges, significant progress has been made towards implementing this strategy, such as the initiation of the ShastaConnect Sunday on-demand service, resuming the Beach Bus service, and initiation of RABA service to the Veterans Affairs Clinic starting in the Fall of 2023.
7. **Infrastructure projects**— Improve first/last mile connectivity to existing bus services through infrastructure projects such as installing additional shelters and benches at bus stops, constructing new sidewalks and paths, and implementing transit-oriented development practices.
 - a. **Status**— Continuous. Most of the projects suggested under this strategy require extensive resources, planning, and coordination, making them difficult to implement quickly. The 2018 Shasta Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the 2018 GoShasta Regional Active Transportation Plan (ATP), and the 2018 City of Redding ATP included multiple project recommendations to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the Shasta region, which in turn would improve access to the transit system. Regional partners have secured \$45 million to advance pedestrian/bicycle projects since these plans were adopted. In addition to these active transportation projects, other, more comprehensive grants have also been secured in the past few years, such as the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities grant awarded to the City of Shasta Lake and the Redding Rancheria for a bus stop, bike and pedestrian improvements, and affordable housing in the city of Shasta Lake. RABA has also continued to maintain existing passenger amenities at its bus stops, as well as install new benches and signs. Currently, RABA is working on moving amenities from stops no longer served by RABA, to stops within the network to improve the passenger experience.
8. **Shared use of agency vehicles**— Share underutilized vehicles among agencies to maximize available resources. If needed, conduct a study on how to best design a vehicle-sharing program, including potential funding requirements or policy restrictions that may limit such coordination.
 - a. **Status**— Not implemented. No such program has been established for the Shasta region since the adoption of the 2017 Coordinated Plan. No study has been conducted to advance this strategy. However, regional providers have expressed significant interest.

Recommendations for 2024 Coordinated Plan

It is recommended that all of the priority strategies included in the previous plan be included in some format in the 2024 Coordinated Plan. Tech Memo 3 will evaluate and prioritize the strategies being carried over from the previous plan based on the greatest transportation gaps and coordination challenges impacting the Shasta region today. Proposed modifications to each of the strategies will also be clearly described.

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STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

INTRODUCTION

Coordinated plans require public participation, specifically with seniors, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, human services agencies, and transportation providers. So far during the development of this updated coordinated plan, LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. (LSC) has conducted a stakeholder workshop and a survey of local transportation providers. Future public outreach will comprise two additional workshops, each catered to stakeholders and the general public, and stakeholder interviews. This chapter summarizes input received in the development of the Coordinated Plan to date.

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

The first workshop for the Coordinated Plan was held as a part of a special SSTAC meeting on July 25th, 2023. The workshop introduced the SSTAC to the coordinated planning process and solicited feedback on regional transportation issues. LSC kicked off the workshop with a presentation discussing the purpose of the Coordinated Plan, findings from the existing conditions analysis, and findings from the previous 2017 Coordinated Plan. SRTA and LSC then led a discussion about perceived transit gaps and needs, duplications in service, and transportation barriers in the Shasta region. The meeting discussion focused on the following needs:

- Better coordination between RABA demand response and the SRTA Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA) and Sunday on-demand services.
- Vehicle sharing between agencies.
- Coordinating program eligibility requirements.
- New travel training programs.
- Widespread and inclusive marketing.
- More door-to-door or door-through-door services.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICE AGENCY SURVEY

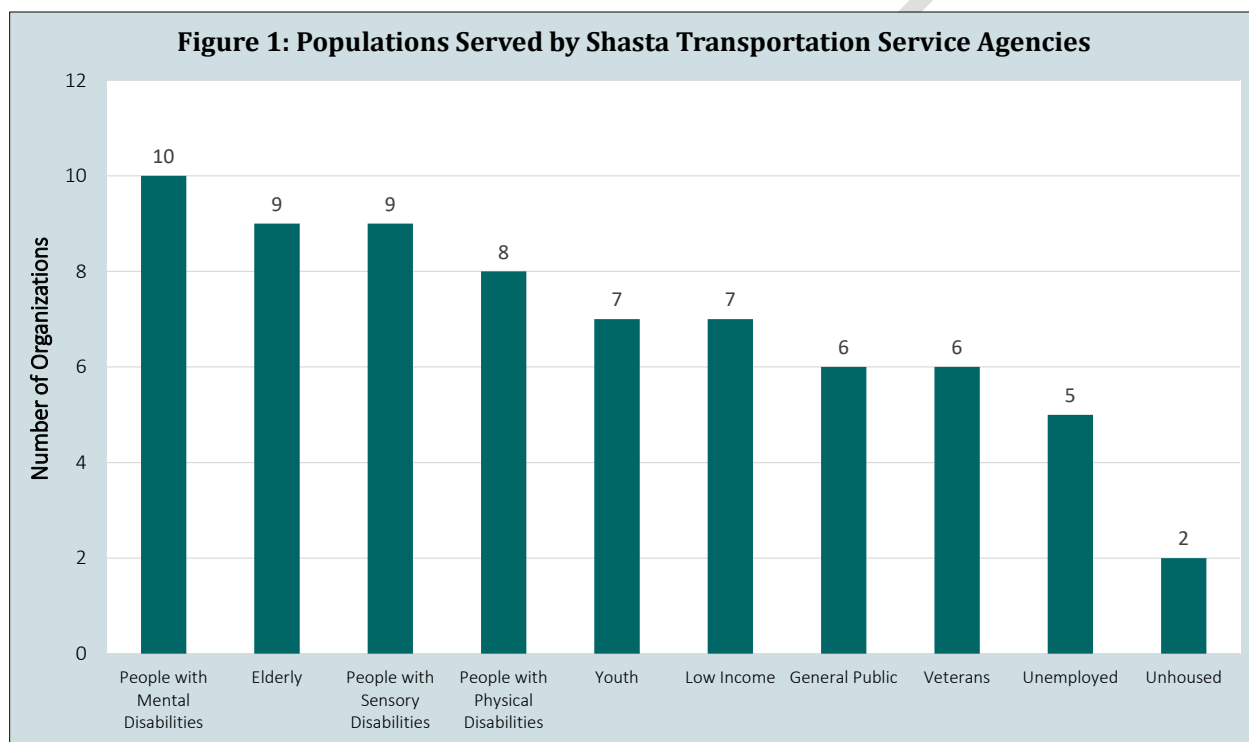
The Transportation Service Agency Survey (TSA Survey) was designed to gather more information about existing services available within the Shasta region. The TSA Survey was distributed to the agencies and organizations identified in Chapter 4 of Tech Memo 1 (“Existing Transportation Services”) and consisted of multiple choice, open-ended, and fill-in-the-blank questions. Respondents were asked about their respective programs’ operations, as well as unmet transportation needs and coordination challenges.

The TSA Survey was distributed to the transportation agencies by email and was available for agency representatives to complete from August 8th to September 15th, 2023. Each organization received three to four reminders to participate during that period. LSC and SRTA staff reached out to additional stakeholders directly the week of August 28th, to ask them to participate in the TSA Survey. At the time of writing, nineteen stakeholders had completed the TSA Survey. The initial TSA Survey findings are

summarized briefly in this chapter. Full results will be contained in Appendix C of the updated Coordinated Plan, after all stakeholders have had the chance to respond.

Program Information

The TSA Survey respondents comprised public, nonprofit, and private transportation agencies. Many of the organizations/agencies already serve the key demographic groups that are the focus of the Coordinated Plan (seniors, disabled, and low income), as seen in Figure 1. Based on the data shown, there are slightly more organizations catering to disabled and elderly individuals in the Shasta region, than organizations catering to low-income or unhoused individuals. A few of the organizations that completed the TSA Survey are specifically *unable* to meet the needs of people with severe ambulatory limitations due to the extra equipment and staff training required to help passengers board and alight safely.

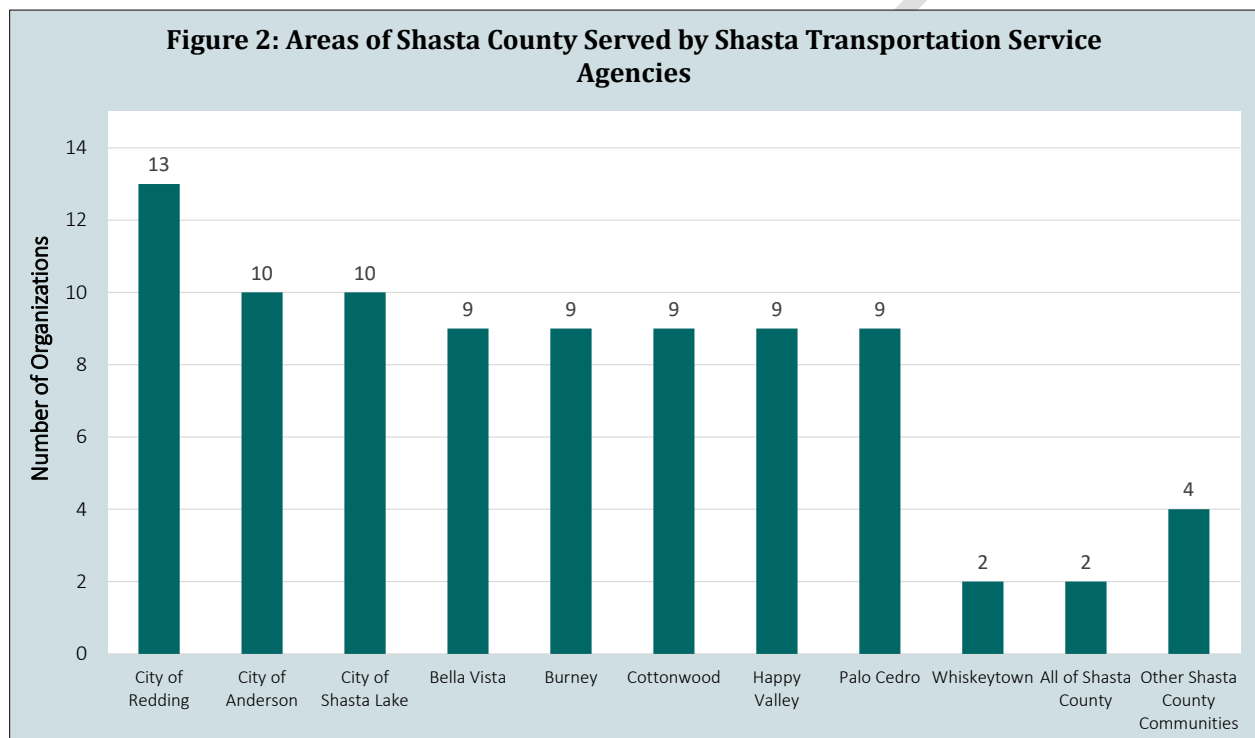


Almost all the organizations surveyed offer transportation within the City of Redding, which is not surprising given it has the largest population and commercial center in Shasta County and is also where many of the providers are physically located (Figure 2). Most of the organizations also provide transportation in the City of Anderson, the City of Shasta Lake, Bella Vista, Burney, Cottonwood, Happy Valley, and Palo Cedro. Six of the surveyed agencies reported they also provide transportation to areas outside of Shasta County, however, only one (the Veterans Administration) provides transportation to Sacramento or beyond.

Transportation Gaps and Current Coordination Efforts

The TSA Survey asked each organization/agency what they perceive to be unmet transportation gaps in the Shasta region. The largest gaps identified were as follows:

- Limited organizational capacity to meet existing demand.
- Limited access to existing transit services for residents living in remote areas of the Shasta region.
- Limited paratransit coverage throughout unincorporated Shasta County.
- Lack of affordable transportation programs with specialized assistance for senior adults.
- Lack of awareness of existing transportation services, specifically non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) options covered by medical insurance.
- Lack of affordable transportation for low-income people not eligible for Medi-Cal.
- Limited Sunday transportation options.
- Limited transportation options at night.
- Infrequent fixed route service in the Redding urban area.



Agency staff reported they are currently unable to meet all the trip requests/needs they receive from their clients, such as door-through-door services, Sunday service, and for transportation to areas outside of the RABA service area.

Most of the respondents indicated their respective organizations coordinate to some degree with other regional agencies. For instance, ShastaConnect’s weekday CTSA service has been designed to not replicate RABA demand response. Local assisted living centers, such as Marquis Care at Shasta, contract with NEMT providers such as Precious Cargo and California Accessible Transportation to help their residents get to medical appointments. The Far Northern Regional Center also contracts with several local transportation vendors for its clients. No respondent reported sharing staff or vehicles.

Suggestions to Improve Coordination and Mobility

The agencies who participated in the TSA Survey have the following suggestions to increase coordination among transportation providers in the Shasta County region:

- Share underutilized vehicles.
- Share vehicle maintenance facilities and equipment.
- Establish a unified, shared driver training program.
- Potentially consider new CTSA service, using the same providers.
- Establish mobility management programs.

The following recommendations were made for strategies and solutions that would likely improve mobility in the Shasta region:

- Subsidy programs for taxis, Lyft, and Uber.
- Volunteer transportation programs/mileage reimbursement programs.
- Improved information on existing services.
- More on-demand service options.
- Expand existing programs' service areas.
- More affordable fares.