

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE: 4/28/15
SUBJECT: FY 2015/16 Annual Unmet Needs Hearing
AGENDA ITEM: 8
STAFF CONTACT: Keith Williams, Assistant Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

Each year SRTA assesses and makes recommendations regarding identifiable transit needs in the Shasta region. The Transit Needs Assessment for fiscal year (FY) 2015/16 has been posted and the public comment period will end on May 4, 2015. Requests for additional transit services will be evaluated against the agency's definition of 'unmet transit need' and 'reasonable to meet'. Final unmet transit needs recommendations will be presented at the June board of directors meeting for review and to consider for approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Hold a public hearing to receive public comment on unmet transit needs in Shasta County; and
2. Direct staff to prepare responses to all public comments as part of the Unmet Transit Needs findings that will be presented to the board of directors for consideration at the June meeting.

DISCUSSION:

As a recipient of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds, SRTA is required to administer the annual Unmet Transit Needs Process. The purpose of the Unmet Transit Needs Process is to:

1. Identify potential unmet transit needs within each jurisdiction that may have come up since the last comprehensive transit planning cycle; and
2. Certify that all reasonable to meet transit needs have been met for each jurisdiction prior to allocating TDA funds for eligible non-transit purposes.

SRTA's Unmet Transit Needs Process is proceeding as follows:

Gather Initial Input	✓ Administer 'Shasta Transit Brainstorm' public outreach ✓ Review current transit plans for previously identified unmet transit needs ✓ Develop and administer community survey of transit service priorities	Jan – Feb
Transit Needs Assessment	✓ Consult with Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) ✓ Perform technical analysis of the location and size of transit dependent populations and the adequacy of existing transit services to meet their needs ✓ Publish Transit Needs Assessment, including preliminary recommendations for potential new or expanded services □ Hold public hearing to receive comment	Feb – April
Unmet Transit Needs Findings & Allocation of TDA Funds	□ Work with appropriate transit provider to develop possible service alternatives and test against adopted reasonable to meet definition □ Present unmet transit needs findings, SSTAC recommendations, and proposed allocation of TDA funds for transit and non-transit uses to the board of directors for consideration	May – June

Consistent with the above schedule, the Transit Needs Assessment has been completed and made available for public review and comment. Reoccurring requests include the addition of Sunday transit service, more frequent bus service, and extended services hours. SRTA recognizes these transit services as long term unmet transit needs and is working with RABA and other service providers to meet these needs as part of a coordinated long-range strategy. For the 2015 Unmet Transit Needs cycle, preliminary recommendations for potential new or expanded services include the following:

- Explore transit alternatives to serve the WE-CARE-A-LOT Foundation in order to meet the mobility needs of clients with developmental disabilities and employees. The nearest fixed-route bus stop is approximately one mile away.
- Explore transit alternatives to serve the community of Cottonwood, where an identifiable population of transportation disadvantaged is located. The need for Cottonwood service is documented in RABA's Short Range Transit Plan and SRTA is pursuing Low-Carbon Transit Operations Program funds for this purpose.
- Explore additional transit service along Airport Road to include the new Redding Electric Utility facility, needed for customer access.
- Explore the addition of a mid-day Burney Express run from Redding to Burney.

A public hearing is required by TDA and is recommended at the April meeting. Comments may also be submitted in writing to the agency during the public comment period ending May 4, 2015. SRTA staff will work with RABA or the appropriate transit service provider to develop feasible service alternatives addressing qualifying unmet transit needs. These alternatives will then be tested against the agency's adopted definition of reasonable to meet. Unmet transit needs findings and recommendations regarding the allocation of TDA funds for transit and non-transit purposes will be presented at the June meeting.

SRTA will continue to monitor the performance of Shasta Senior Nutrition Programs as a Consolidated Transportation Services Agency using newly agreed upon goals and will provide a report on its annual performance in the next Transit Needs Assessment.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may extend the public comment period beyond May 4, 2015.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The unmet transit needs process is developed in consultation with the county, cities, SSTAC, Shasta Senior Nutrition Program, and RABA. Documentation of the Unmet Transit Needs process is submitted to Caltrans District 2 for approval in June. The Technical Advisory Committee concurs with the staff recommendation.

FINANCING:

There is no direct fiscal impact to the agency. In a typical year, where transit needs have been identified and funded, approximately \$3,011,000 of TDA funds are used for transit and \$4,550,000 are used for non-transit purposes, i.e. streets and roads.

Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

Attachments:

2015/16 Transit Needs Assessment available at www.srta.ca.gov/267/201516-Unmet-Transit-Needs-Process
Resolution Number 00-21, Definition of Unmet Transit Needs and Reasonable to Meet

RESOLUTION NO. 00-21

DEFINITION OF UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS
AND REASONABLE TO MEET

WHEREAS, the Transportation Development Act (TDA) requires each transportation planning agency to find, prior to any allocation of Local Transportation Fund (LTF) monies for streets and roads; (1) that there are no unmet transit needs, or (2) that there are no unmet transit needs which can reasonably be met, or (3) if there are unmet transit needs, including some such needs that are reasonable to meet, that those needs determined reasonable to meet have been funded (California Public Utilities Code (PUC) Section 99401.5); and

WHEREAS, the TDA further permits the agency to define the terms "unmet transit needs" and "reasonable to meet" as it determines appropriate, consistent with PUC Section 99401.5(c); and

WHEREAS, Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency staff, having consulted with claimant jurisdiction representatives and the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee and have concluded that minor technical changes consistent with the TDA and prior RTPA practice are appropriate, and have therefore recommended the following revised definitions:

Unmet Transit Needs. An "unmet transit need" under the Transportation Development Act shall be found to exist only under the following conditions:

1. A population group in the proposed transit service area has been defined and located which has no reliable, affordable, or accessible transportation for necessary trips. The size and location of the group must be such that a service to meet their needs is feasible within the definition of "reasonable to meet" as set forth below.
2. Necessary trips are defined as those trips which are required for the maintenance of life, education, access to social service programs, health, and physical and mental well-being, including trips which serve employment purposes.
3. Unmet transit needs specifically include:
 - (a) Transit or specialized transportation needs identified in the transit system's Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit Plan or short-range Transit Plan which are not yet implemented or funded.
 - (b) Transit or specialized transportation needs identified by the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and confirmed by the RTPA through testimony or reports which are not yet implemented or funded.

4. Unmet transit needs specifically exclude:
- (a) Minor operational improvements or changes, involving issues such as bus stops, schedules and minor route changes.
 - (b) Improvements funded or scheduled for implementation in the following fiscal year.
 - (c) Trips for any purpose outside of Shasta County, in accordance with PUC Section 99220(b).
 - (d) Primary and secondary school transportation.

Reasonable to Meet. An identified unmet transit need shall be found "reasonable to meet" only under the following conditions:

1. It has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Agency that transit service adequate to meet the unmet need can be operated with a subsidy not to exceed 80% of operating cost in urbanized areas and 90% in nonurbanized areas. It must also have been demonstrated that the unsubsidized portion of operating costs can be recovered by fare revenues as defined in the State Controller's Uniform System of Accounts and Records. The "Cost Allocation Method" as shown in Exhibit (A) is the method to be used for determining fare box ratio.
 - (a) Transit service subsidy maximums may be determined on an individual route or service area, or an individual proposed route or service area, basis.
2. The proposed expenditure of Transportation Development Act funds required to support the transit service does not exceed the authorized allocation of the claimant, consistent with Public Utilities Code Sections 99230-99231.2 and TDA Regulations Sections 6649 and 6655.

The fact that an identified need cannot fully be met based on available resources, however, shall not be the sole reason for finding that a transit need is not Reasonable to Meet.
3. The proposed expenditure shall not be used to support or establish a service in direct competition with an existing private service, nor to provide 24-hour service.
4. Where transit service is to be jointly funded by two or more of the local claimant jurisdictions, it shall be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Commission that the resulting inter-agency cost sharing is equitable. In determining if the required funding equity has been achieved the Commission may consider, but is not limited to

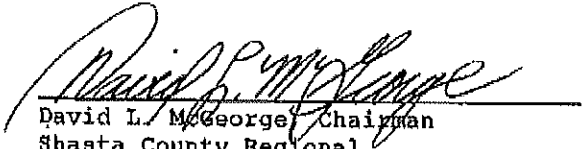
considering whether or not the proposed cost sharing formula is acceptable to the affected claimants.

5. Transit services designed or intended to address an unmet transit need shall in all cases make coordinated efforts with transit services currently provided, either publicly or privately.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the definitions set forth above shall govern the RTPA's determinations of unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet pursuant to applicable TDA statutes and regulations, and the resulting allocation of TDA funds by this Commission;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Resolution 10-97 of the Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency dated December 16, 1997, is hereby rescinded and superseded.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 12th day of December, 2000, by the Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency.


David L. McGeorge, Chairman
Shasta County Regional
Transportation Planning Agency