



LAKE COUNTY/CITY AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

Lisa Davey-Bates, Executive Director
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525 South Main Street, Suite G
Ukiah, CA 95482

SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (SSTAC) AGENDA

DATE: Monday, January 22, 2024

TIME: 2:00 pm

PLACE: Lake Links
14420 Lakeshore Drive
Clearlake, CA

Zoom Login

Dial-in number: **1-669-900-6833** / Meeting ID: **881 7036 2176** Passcode: **840643**

*Zoom link provided to the public by request

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1. Call to Order and Introductions
 2. Public Input
 3. Approval of Draft April 27, 2023 SSTAC Meeting Minutes
 4. FY 2024/25 Unmet Transit Needs Process and Proposed Approval (*Sookne*)
 5. SSTAC Membership Roster Update and Proposed Approval (*Sookne*)
 6. Update on Lake Links
 7. Update on Lake Transit Projects and Grants
 8. Update on Lake Transit Authority (LTA) meetings
 - a. Next meeting date February 14, 2024
 9. Update on Human Services Transportation Programs
 - a. People Services (*Dakari*)
 - b. Other programs and plans
 10. Discussion of issues and/or concerns of the members of the SSTAC
 11. Discuss next meeting Date: TBD
 12. Announcements/Good of the Order
 13. Adjourn SSTAC meeting

PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Any member of the public may speak on any agenda item when recognized by the Chair for a time period, not to exceed 3 minutes per person and not more than 10 minutes per subject, prior to the Public Agency taking action on that agenda item.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) REQUESTS

To request disability-related modifications or accommodations for accessible locations or meeting materials in alternative formats (as allowed under Section 12132 of the ADA) please contact the APC office at (707) 234-3314, at least 72 hours before the meeting.

Date posted: 1/17/24

List of Attachments:

- Agenda Item #3: April 27, 2023 Draft meeting minutes*
- Agenda Item #4: Staff Report: 2024/25 Unmet Transit Needs Process
Adopted Definitions
23/24 Adopted Unmet Needs List & Findings*
- Agenda Item #5: SSTAC Roster*



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SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (SSTAC) MEETING Draft Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 27, 2023
1:30 p.m.

Location
Lake Transit Authority
9240 Highway 53
Lower Lake, CA

Present: Paul Branson – Chair, Laurie Fisher; Karen Dakari, Holly Goetz (1:47PM)

Absent: Melinda Lahr

Non-SSTAC Attendees: Blake Batten (Caltrans), Shannon Kimbell-Auth (American Red Cross)

Staff Present: James Sookne, John Speka (1:40PM)

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 1:33 p.m. Introductions were made.

2. Public Input

Shannon Kimbell-Auth spoke about the Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD). The Lake County COAD is in the process of reforming and there are members of from state, local, and tribal governments. There are work committees that focus on preparedness, recovery, food, shelter, and health needs as well as community organizations that are active during disasters. These three types of organizations meet once a month and discuss the unmet needs of the county regarding disaster preparedness. One of the conversations that comes up often is transportation needs. There isn't a committee specifically focused on transportation and Shannon was wondering if there was someone from the SSTAC who could come to the monthly COAD meetings. Alternatively, she could rejoin the SSTAC and bring information from the COAD to the SSTAC.

Laurie stated that she has attended these meetings in the past and could continue to do so. Paul said that there is a member of the Advisory Council on Aging that also attends these meetings. He feels that since transportation is such an important piece of disaster planning, there should be reports from the COAD to the SSTAC.

3. Approval of Draft January 23, 2023 SSTAC Meeting Minutes

Laurie motioned, Karen seconded, to approve the January 23, 2023, minutes as presented. Approved unanimously.

4. FY 2023/24 Unmet Transit Needs Process and Proposed Approval

The 23/24 Unmet Transit Needs Process started in November 2022 where the group reviewed the list from the previous year. The SSTAC met again in January and developed the 23/24 list. That list went before the Lake APC Board in March where they determined that at least one of the needs on

that list met the adopted definition of an unmet transit need. James reviewed LTA's response to each item on the list.

1. **Eastbound service to Spring Valley.** Analysis that was completed during the update to the Transit Development Plan suggested that lifeline service to Spring Valley by reservation is an option. However, at this time, service to Spring Valley is an unmet need that is unreasonable to meet due to a lack of resources.
2. **Eastbound service, allowing people to connect with service to the Sacramento area.** LTA is looking at how to close this gap and connect to Shasta's service along the I-5 corridor LTA has also looked at connecting to transit service in Marysville. However, at this time, service to the Sacramento area is an unmet need that is unreasonable to meet due to a lack of resources.
3. **Non-Emergency Medical Transportation in outlying areas.** Under LTA's most recent 5310 grant, LTA began offering in-county NEMT service, therefore it is reasonable to meet.
4. **Non-Emergency Medical Transportation to out-of-county locations.** NEMT service to out-of-county locations is reasonable to meet and was implemented in 2019. The service currently provides trips to Calistoga, Santa Rosa, and Ukiah and funding is available to provide trips as far as the San Francisco Bay Area and the Sacramento area.
5. **Fixed route service on Sundays.** Analysis that was completed during the update to the Transit Development Plan found that this is a need, but they were unable to determine the level of demand. The recommendation from the plan is to do a pilot project in Clearlake using micro transit. If it is successful, the model can be expanded to other areas such as Lakeport and Kelseyville. However, currently, this need is unreasonable to meet due to a lack of resources.
6. **Expanded transit service and mobility training to accommodate job placement for the developmentally disabled.** LTA can provide service during their normal hours of operation. Redwood Coast Regional Center can also help with this since many people with developmental disabilities are their clients. This is not an unmet need at this time.
7. **NEMT after normal business hours.** This is an unmet need; however, at this time it is unknown if it is reasonable to meet.
8. **Individualized, flexible transportation to meet the transportation needs of seniors, persons with disabilities, or low-income persons who are unable to utilize the existing public transportation system.** At this time, an "on-demand" type service to meet this need is unreasonable to meet due to a lack of resources.
9. **Earlier service to Ukiah for medical appointments, criminal justice appointments, and courses at Mendocino College.** Following analysis in the Transit Development Plan, a recommendation was made to eliminate the last Route 7 to Ukiah and replace it with an earlier one. Ridership on the last run of Route 7 is very low so eliminating it would have minimal impact. Therefore, this need is reasonable to meet with some planning and adjustments to the schedule.

Karen made a motion to accept the list of FY 23/24 Unmet Transit Needs as presented. Holly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. **SSTAC Membership Roster Update and Proposed Approval**

The following four spots are currently open on the SSTAC roster:

1. Potential Transit User 60 Years or Older

2. Potential Transit User Disabled
3. Social Services Provider to Seniors
4. Social Services Provider to the Disabled

The position for a social service provider to seniors was previously filled by Dena Eddings-Green, but she resigned. Based on her current position at the American Red Cross, Shannon Kimbell-Auth could fill the role of social services provider to seniors or the disabled. Paul suggested that for now, she fill the role of social service provider to seniors and if things need to be adjusted in the future, she can be. She was amenable to that. Karen made a motion for Shannon to fill that position. Laurie seconded and it passed unanimously.

6. Update on Lake Links

Laurie stated that Pay-Your-Pal program is doing really well and they're reimbursing close to 15,000 miles a month. The program is bringing in 6 to 10 new people to the program each month. Lake Links mailed out surveys to their clients at the end of the year and received about half of them back. The survey looked at barriers to transportation prior to using Lake Links as well as how the program has impacted their lives.

The final hurdle to getting Ride Links, the volunteer driver program, up and running is finding insurance. Lake Links believes they have something lined up and is awaiting an answer on a quote. Once they have insurance, they'll be able to recruit drivers and get the program off the ground. One of the main issues with attaining insurance has been confusion caused by the information that has been on the Lake Links website. Insurance companies have had the impression that Lake Links has been providing transportation services in conjunction with LTA, not just brokering the trips. The Lake Links website is undergoing an overhaul where it will be clear that they're just the broker and not the actual transportation provider.

7. Update on Lake Transit Projects and Grants

James reported that the transit center is still in the design phase and that LTA is working with Caltrans to move forward. The contactless payment system on the fixed route service is up and running. Marketing has been minimal so that any issues that arise can be addressed. The update to the Transit Development Plan is nearly complete.

Paul asked if there is a timeline for the new transit center. James stated that they're hoping to begin it in 2024.

8. Update on Lake Transit Authority (LTA) Meetings

a. May 10, 2023 meeting

The draft FY 23/24 Budget and an update to the Title VI plan will go before the Board. The Title VI plan outlines the process for ensuring LTA doesn't discriminate against people who aren't proficient in the English language. James will also discuss the most recent allocation of funds through the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP), which will be for two electric paratransit vans. Additionally, he's going to submit a purchase order for 5 new buses.

James also discussed the Innovative Clean Transit Rollout Plan, which will detail LTA's transition to zero emission vehicles. This plan is based on the assumption that there will be hydrogen fuel cell cutaway buses available for purchase by 2029.

9. Update on Human Services Transportation Programs

a. People Services

Karen reported that things are finally starting to back to “normal.” They’re now looking to hire people to fill positions that were vacated during the pandemic.

b. Other programs and plans

10. Discussion of issues and/or concerns of the members of the SSTAC

Holly asked if Lake Links would take on a client who didn’t meet the qualifications for the Pay Your Pal Program. Laurie told her to have them just call because they look can at things on a case-by-case basis. Holly said that she knows of people who need rides and are willing to pay for them but do not have anyone that can provide them.

Holly suggested that since Veteran’s Affairs also provides transportation to senior and disabled veterans, someone from there may be an option to sit on the SSTAC.

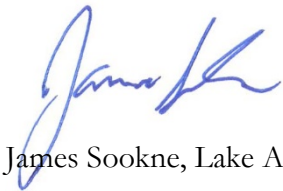
11. Discuss next meeting Date: James stated that the next meeting will probably be in August.

12. Announcements/Good of the Order

None

13. Adjourn SSTAC Meeting - Meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



James Sookne, Lake APC Administration



SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TITLE: 2024/25 Unmet Transit Needs Process

DATE PREPARED: 1/15/24

MEETING DATE: 1/22/24

SUBMITTED BY: James Sookne, Program Manager

BACKGROUND: Lake APC has been conducting formal Unmet Transit Needs processes since 2014. The process is a requirement of the Transit Development Act (TDA) prior to a region using any Local Transportation Funds (LTF) for streets and roads purposes. Although the APC does not allocate any LTF funds for streets and roads purposes, the process is still considered useful as a means of identifying potential transit needs in the region as well as analyzing opportunities for Lake Transit Authority (LTA) to meet those needs if feasible. It assists the APC and LTA in determining how to best use the limited transit funding available to the region. The Unmet Transit Needs process also meets TDA requirements calling for annual public input opportunities for transit dependent or transit disadvantaged persons before the SSTAC.

The first step in this annual process is for the SSTAC to develop a list of potential Unmet Transit Needs. These needs may be identified by SSTAC members, agency staff, or the public. For your reference, I have attached the list of Unmet Transit Needs that was approved by the APC during the last Unmet Transit Needs process.

Once developed, the 2024/25 list of needs be will presented to the APC Board at a public hearing in March to determine whether any of the needs qualify as an “unmet transit need” consistent with the approved definitions (attached). The Unmet Transit Needs will then be directed to APC and LTA staff members for analysis and further review by the SSTAC. Following this analysis, a recommendation will go to the APC Board determining whether or not any of the needs are considered “reasonable to meet.” If needs are found reasonable to meet, those needs will then become part of the budgeting process.

ACTION REQUIRED: Develop a list of Unmet Transit Needs in Lake County that will be presented to the Lake APC at a public hearing. If desired, advise the APC on any other major transit issues per TDA mandated SSTAC duties.

ALTERNATIVES: None

RECOMMENDATION: None

**Adopted Definitions for the
Unmet Transit Needs Process
Approved by the APC 12/10/14**

Unmet Transit Need: Whenever a need by a significant number of people to be transported by moderate or low cost transportation to specific destinations for necessary purposes is not being satisfied through existing public or private resources.

Reasonable to Meet: It is reasonable to meet a transit need if all of the following conditions prevail:

- Funds are available, or there is a reasonable expectation that funds will become available. This criterion alone will not be used to determine reasonableness.
- Benefits of services, in terms of number of passengers served and severity of need, justify costs
- With the added service, the transit system as a whole will be capable of meeting the Transportation Development Act fare revenue/operating cost requirements
- Transit services designed or intended to address an unmet transit need shall not duplicate transit services currently provided either publicly or privately
- The claimant that is expected to provide the service shall review, evaluate and indicate that the service is operationally feasible, and vehicles shall be currently available in the marketplace



Lake Transit Authority

Lisa Davey-Bates, Executive Director

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Operations
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April 19, 2023

Lisa Davey-Bates
Executive Director
Lake Area Planning Council
525 S. Main Street, Suite G
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Lake Transit Authority Response to Potential Unmet Transit Needs & Recommended Findings for the APC FY 2023/24

Dear SSTAC Members, Technical Advisory Committee Members, and APC:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the list of FY 2023/24 Potential Unmet Needs. Lake Transit Authority (LTA) takes these very seriously. It is unfortunate that all available TDA dollars are already expended making our response to new potential needs difficult. In most cases, responding to an unmet need will mean that LTA and/ or the APC must either find a new funding source, such as a federal or state grant, or weigh the importance of the unmet against cutting an existing service.

1. Eastbound service to Spring Valley. Currently, there is no service east of SR 53.

Response: Transit service for residents of Spring Valley is an unmet need. The Live Oak Transportation Project, an FTA Section 5317 funded program that was sponsored by the Area Agency on Aging and operated by Live Oak Senior Center, attempted to serve Spring Valley residents while that project was active for several years beginning in 2009; however, there was very little demand for service. The recommendation from the FY 22/23 Unmet Transit Needs Process was to further study this issue during the current update to the Transit Development Plan for Lake County. The Draft 2023 Transit Development Plan recommends operating a lifeline service from Clearlake/Lower Lake to Spring Valley two times a day, one day a week. This service would be by advance reservation only and would cost approximately \$11,000 per year.

Recommended Finding: At this time, service to Spring Valley is an unmet need that is unreasonable to meet due to a lack of resources.

2. Eastbound service, allowing people to connect with service to the Sacramento area. Currently, the closest connection is at the Cache Creek Casino.

Response: Intercity bus service connecting to Sacramento is an unmet need that may be reasonable to meet. Lake Transit Authority was included in a coordinated joint Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) grant application submitted by the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) that would provide capital funding for a zero-emission bus project for Phase II of the North State Express. Unfortunately, SRTA's TIRCP application that included this service was not successful. LTA is currently working with SRTA and other rural northern California transit agencies on interagency connectivity, which would include a connection from Lake County to I-5. At this time, these plans are purely conceptual and due to a lack of funding, it is unknown when implementation will occur. Therefore, this unmet need is not reasonable to meet.

Recommended Finding: The unmet need for service connecting to the Sacramento region is unreasonable to meet at this time due to a lack of funding.

3. Non-Emergency Medical Transportation in outlying areas. This would serve areas beyond one mile from fixed routes, and vehicles need to include wheelchair lifts.

Response: LTA applied for a 5310 grant in 2022 to modify and expand the existing out-of-county NEMT service. The new model would incorporate a pool of volunteer drivers that would use their own vehicles for all ambulatory clients. This will be in addition to the existing service provided by LTA and will allow Medi-Links to continue to grow into the future. Additionally, this grant will now cover all NEMT trips, whether in or out of county.

Recommended Finding: Under LTA's most recent 5310 grant, in-county NEMT service is now reasonable to meet.

4. Non-Emergency Medical Transportation to out of county locations. This is needed for both adults and children. There is a particular need for transport to Santa Rosa and San Francisco.

Response: LTA was awarded an FTA 5310 grant in 2017 to provide Out-of-County NEMT services and senior center transportation programs for three years. The grant application helped to address NEMT needs for trips to Ukiah and Santa Rosa. There is potential to modify the program to include trips to San Francisco, or to work together with Bay Area transportation providers to transfer passengers to SF at Santa Rosa. In partnership with Lake Links, Medi-Links was created in 2019 to provide NEMT services to out-of-county locations. To date, the program currently takes clients to Calistoga, Santa Rosa, and Ukiah; however, as the program expands, additional destinations will be included. LTA for another 5310 grant in 2022 to modify and expand the existing NEMT service. The new model would incorporate a pool of volunteer drivers that would use their own vehicles for all ambulatory clients. This will be in addition to the existing service provided by LTA and will allow Medi-Links to continue to grow into the future. Additionally, this grant will now cover all NEMT trips, whether in or out of county.

Recommended Finding: NEMT service to out-of-county locations is reasonable to meet and was implemented in 2019. The service currently provides trips to Calistoga, Santa Rosa, and Ukiah. As the program expands, trips will be available to additional destinations.

5. Fixed route service on Sundays. Another frequently noted need subject to funding availability.

Response: There is a need for service on Sundays throughout Lake County, as noted during the public survey process during the 2023 update to the Transit Development Plan (TDP). Based on transit industry statistical evidence, transit service attracts fewer riders on Saturday than weekdays, and even fewer on Sunday than on Saturday. LTA Saturday ridership supports the industry evidence as there are 35 to 40 percent fewer Lake Transit riders on Saturdays than on weekdays. Sundays would likely generate even fewer riders. A recommendation from the 2023 TDP is to do a pilot project within the City of Clearlake that would offer on-demand microtransit service on Sundays from 9:00AM to 3:00PM, for an approximate annual cost of \$31,300. This pilot project would gauge whether this type of service could be implemented in other major community centers throughout the County.

Recommended Finding: There is an unmet need for transit service on Sundays. The need is not reasonable to meet at this time due to a lack of funding.

6. Expanded transit service and Mobility Training to accommodate job placement for developmentally disabled. New enhanced requirements for competitive integrated job placement have been implemented, necessitating transportation to and from jobs, potentially outside of normal transit operating hours.

Response: To the extent that the need is within Lake Transit operating hours, this need will be accommodated by Lake Transit routes or paratransit services provided that the origin and destination are within one mile of fixed routes. If the need is outside of normal operating hours, Lake Transit is not required to provide service under the ADA. It is unknown at this time if there is an unmet need. If there is an unmet need, the Redwood Coast Regional Center is responsible to fund transportation needs of developmentally disabled persons. Existing service providers, including LTA are available to extend service programs if funding is available.

Recommended Finding: Expanded transit service and mobility training to accommodate job placement for developmentally disabled persons in Lake County is not an unmet need at this time.

7. NEMT after normal business hours. Instances in which a need for non-emergency transport arises outside of normal service hours.

Response: During LTA business hours, many NEMT needs are met by LTA transit and paratransit services. When LTA is closed, the only resources are typically taxi and emergency medical transportation provided by fire districts. Utilizing EMT services for NEMT needs is costly and problematic. One idea to address this situation is to extend LTA paratransit hours, or provide an alternative NEMT service through Lake Links, and work with the fire districts to dispatch the most appropriate and cost-effective service. If the patient is ambulatory, the Lake Links' Pay-Your-Pal or Volunteer Driver Program could be an option. The extent of the need for afterhours NEMT is not well documented, and the feasibility of providing afterhours NEMT is therefore unknown.

Recommended Finding: NEMT after Lake Transit operating hours is an unmet need. At this time, it is unknown if it is reasonable to meet. This requires additional study by LTA, Lake Links, and/or the APC.

8. Individualized, flexible transportation to meet the transportation needs of seniors, persons with disabilities, or low-income persons who are unable to utilize the existing public transportation system.

Response: Although most of the focus as of late has been on non-emergency medical transport (NEMT) services, there is also a need for other “on-demand” types of services for non-medical trips. A previous survey for the Pay-Your-Pal (PYP) program revealed that 90% of the respondents were in favor of this type of service. The recommendation from the FY 22/23 Unmet Transit Needs Process was to further study this issue during the current update to the Transit Development Plan (TDP) for Lake County. Based on current ridership data and survey results from the TDP, microtransit could be implemented in some parts of the county, specifically in Lakeport and the Rivas, which would provide a partial solution to this unmet need. However, without additional funding dedicated to this “on-demand” service, implementation of this service at this time could only be done by reducing existing fixed-route service. Another potential solution to help meet this need could be Lake Links’ Pay-Your-Pal or Volunteer Driver Program. While these programs aren’t necessarily “on-demand”, both could help to meet this need.

Recommended Finding: At this time, implementation of an “on-demand” type service to meet the transportation needs of seniors, persons with disabilities, or low-income persons who are unable to utilize the existing public transportation system is an unmet need that is unreasonable to meet due to a lack of funding.

9. Earlier service to Ukiah for medical appointments, criminal justice appointments, and courses at Mendocino College. The existing fixed route service to Ukiah doesn’t allow riders to attend early morning medical or criminal justice appointments or early classes at Mendocino College.

Response: Over the years, LTA has received the occasional comment that there should be earlier service to Ukiah so riders could get to their early appointments; however, the exact demand for this service hasn’t been known. The recommendation from the FY 22/23 Unmet Transit Needs Process was to further study this issue during the current update to the Transit Development Plan for Lake County. The Draft 2023 Transit Development Plan recommends eliminating the last Route 7 run, which currently leaves Lakeport at 5:00PM and returns to Lakeport at 8:28PM, and adding an earlier run that would leave Lakeport at 6:30AM and arrive in Ukiah at 8:00AM. This would allow riders to attend their early morning medical or criminal justice appointments or early classes at Mendocino College.

Recommended Finding: With some planning and adjustments to the existing schedule, earlier service to Ukiah for medical appointments, criminal just appointments, and courses at Mendocino College is an unmet need that is reasonable to meet.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to unmet needs testimony. The partnership between LTA and the Area Planning Council to identify unmet needs, and plan appropriate responses has continued to provide many useful and important transportation improvements.

Sincerely,



James Sookne
Program Manager

**SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (SSTAC)
MEMBERSHIP ROSTER - 2022**

| | | <u>TERM</u> |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Potential Transit User 60 Years or Older | Vacant | Nov. 2021 – Oct. 2024 |
| 2. Potential Transit User Disabled | Vacant | Nov. 2020 – Oct. 2023 |
| 3. Social Services Provider Seniors | Shannon Kimbell-Auth Phone: 707-349-2324 E-mail: shannon.kimbellauth@redcross.org | Nov. 2022 – Oct. 2025 |
| 4. Transportation Provider | Holly Goetz, MSW, ASW Sutter Lakeside Hospital 5176 Hill Rd. E. Lakeport, CA 95453 E-mail: GoetzHR@sutterhealth.org | Nov. 2021 – Oct. 2024 |
| 5. Social Services Provider Disabled | Vacant | Nov. 2021 – Oct. 2024 |
| 6. Transportation Provider Disabled | Karen Dakari People Services 4195 Lakeshore Boulevard Lakeport, CA 95453 Phone: 263-3810 / E-mail: karendakari@yahoo.com | Nov. 2022 – Oct. 2025 |
| 7. Social Services Provider Limited Means | Melinda Lahr Lake County Department of Social Services P.O. Box 9000 Lower Lake, CA 95457 Phone: 707-995-4395 / E-mail: melinda.lahr@lakecountyca.gov | Nov. 2023 – Oct. 2026 |
| 8. Consolidated Transportation Services Agency | Vacant | Nov. 2023 – Oct. 2026 |
| 9. Consolidated Transportation Services Agency | Laurie Fisher Lake Links 14420 Lakeshore Drive Clearlake, CA 95422 Phone: 707-995-3330 / E-mail: laurie.fisher@lakelinks.org | Nov. 2022 – Oct. 2025 |