



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: Thursday, November 14, 2024

TIME: 1:00 pm

PLACE: Lake Transit Authority
9240 Highway 53
Lakeport, California

Zoom Login

Dial-in number: **1-669-900-6833** / Meeting ID: **890 2594 3967** Passcode: **120226**

*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 29, 2024 SSTAC Meeting Minutes
 4. Update on Wildfire Evacuation and Preparedness Plan (*Speka*)
 5. FY 2025/26 Unmet Transit Needs Process 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 December 11, 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: 11/8/24

List of Attachments:

Agenda Item #3: April 29, 2024 Draft meeting minutes
Agenda Item #5: Staff Report: 2025/26 Unmet Transit Needs Process
Adopted Definitions
24/25 Adopted Unmet Needs List & Findings



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

Monday, April 29, 2024
2:00 p.m.

Location
People Services, Inc.
4195 Lakeshore Blvd
Lakeport, CA

Present: Laurie Fisher; Karen Dakari, Theresa Showen (for Melinda Lahr), Holly Goetz (2:09 p.m.)

Absent: Rev. Shannon Kimbell-Auth

Non-SSTAC Attendees: Blake Batten (Caltrans), Annie Barnes

Staff Present: James Sookne, Lisa Davey-Bates, John Speka

1. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 2:04 p.m. Introductions were made.

2. Public Input

None.

3. Approval of Draft January 22, 2024 SSTAC Meeting Minutes

Karen motioned, Laurie seconded, to approve the January 22, 2024, minutes as presented. Approved unanimously.

4. FY 2024/25 Unmet Transit Needs Process and Proposed Approval

The group reviewed Lake Transit Authority's responses to the FY 24/25 Unmet Transit Needs list. James mentioned that he and Lisa had discussions about whether Unmet Transit Needs #3 and #4 (below) could be removed from the list since some service has been established through Medi-Links, the Pay-Your-Pal Program, and the up-and-coming volunteer driver program. He clarified that it doesn't mean that work to improve those services won't continue, but that there is at least some service that is available to meet these needs.

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.

James stated that the next step would be to take this list to the APC Board for adoption. Laurie made a motion to take the list, as modified with the removal of the two NEMT unmet needs, to the Board for approval. Holly seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

5. SSTAC Membership Roster Update and Proposed Approval

James stated that since Karen is now on the Lake Links Board, she can fill the vacant role for the representative from the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency. There is an employee, Damian Lopez, from People Services who is interested in filling Karen's previous role as Transportation Provider for people with disabilities. Annie Barnes is contemplating joining the SSTAC as a potential transit user who is 60 years or older. Annie discussed her background in public transportation and community service.

James mentioned that he has a meeting with clients from Redwood Coast Regional Center and was going to see if they know of anyone who may be interested in filling the role of a potential transit user who has a disability.

James stated he would take the proposed list, which shifts Karen's role and adds Damian Lopez and Annie Barnes, to the APC Board for review and approval.

6. Update on Lake Links

Laurie stated that Pay-Your-Pal mileage reimbursement program ridership is doing really well. Previously, Lake Links had enrolled about 6 people per month. Over the last few months, they've been averaging about 12 people per month. Lake Links did a soft launch of Ride Links, their new volunteer driver program, back in September. There are currently six drivers onboard and they continue to promote their programs and recruit new drivers.

7. Update on Lake Transit Projects and Grants

James reported that the transit center is still in the design phase and currently has a proposal to review for construction management. The other grant that LTA has is a 5310 grant for NEMT services. LTA has three new buses on the road and expects to have four more in service shortly.

Annie asked what LTA does with their old buses that have been removed from the fleet. James stated that they're disposed of using LTA's disposal policy. If they're still in running condition, they'll be offered to other public or non-profit agencies. The buses that will be disposed of soon need major mechanical work and will be auctioned off.

8. Update on Lake Transit Authority (LTA) Meetings

a. May 15, 2024 meeting

James stated that a draft FY 24/25 Budget will be presented at the next LTA Board meeting.

Karen asked when the transit center project began. James stated that the need was identified in the Transit Development Plan in 2015, and a feasibility study was done in 2017 to determine the location. LTA applied for the current grant in 2020. Environmental was completed in 2022 and LTA is currently in the design phase. LTA is hoping to break ground in 2025.

9. Update on Human Services Transportation Programs

a. People Services

Karen reported that People Services have hired several people but they're still looking for drivers. Client participation has also increased.

b. Other programs and plans

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

Theresa stated that the Lake County Employment Services building on SR 53 will be consolidated with the rest of the Lake County Social Services Department just up the road on Anderson Ranch Parkway. The existing building will be the new home of Behavioral Health and Probation.

Laurie asked Theresa how they determine who receives free bus passes from Employment Services. Theresa stated that if they're on cash aid and Welfare to Work, then they're eligible for a bus pass or mileage reimbursement.

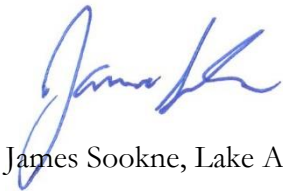
11. Discuss next meeting Date: James stated that the next meeting will be in August if there is a need for it.

12. Announcements/Good of the Order

Blake stated that District 1 will be hiring a new transit planner, who should be onboard in the next few weeks. They'll be the point person for transit related matters.

13. Adjourn SSTAC Meeting - Meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



James Sookne, Lake APC Administration



SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TITLE: 2025/26 Unmet Transit Needs Process

DATE PREPARED: 11/8/24

MEETING DATE: 11/14/24

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 2025/26 list of needs will be 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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April 19, 2024

Lisa Davey-Bates
Executive Director
Lake Area Planning Council
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Lake Transit Authority Response to Potential Unmet Transit Needs & Recommended Findings for the APC FY 2024/25

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

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the list of FY 2024/25 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 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. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

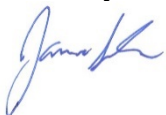
6. Earlier service to Ukiah for medical appointments, criminal justice appointments, and courses at Mendocino College. The existing fixed route service to Ukiah doesn’t allow riders to attend early morning medical or criminal justice appointments or early classes at Mendocino College.

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 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 could be 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