

SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

AGENDA

DATE: Wednesday, June 25, 2014

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

PLACE: Glenn County Public Works Conference Room
777 North Colusa Street
Willows, CA 95988

(1) Call Meeting to Order

(2) Introductions

(3) Action Items:

A. Recommendation on 2014/2015 Unmet Transit Needs comments based on four public hearings

(4) New Business

A. None.

(5) Adjournment

GLENN COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES TECHNICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

DI AULABAUGH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PHONE:(530)934-6530 FAX:(530)934-6533

AGENDA ITEM

MEETING OF JUNE 25, 2014

SUBJECT

Review comments received during the annual Unmet Transit Needs process, determine if there are any unmet needs that are reasonable to meet, and make any necessary recommendations to the Glenn County Transportation Commission.

ATTACHMENTS

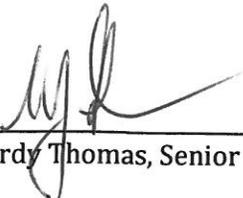
- Definition of Unmet Transit Needs (Blue)
- Definition of Needs That Are Reasonable To Meet (Green)
- Unmet Transit Needs Flow Chart

BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION

In 1971, the California Legislature enacted the Transportation Development Act (TDA) to ensure "the efficient and orderly movement of people and goods in the urban areas of the state." The TDA provides to funding sources: the Local Transportation fund (LTF) a ¼-cent general sales tax collected statewide and the State Transit Assistance fund (STA) which is now derived from an excise tax on gasoline and diesel fuel.

TDA recognizes that rural counties have different transportation needs. Counties with a population under 500,000 as of the 1970 Census may use LTF funding for transit and local streets and roads provided that certain conditions are met first.

Prior to allocating the funds, the transportation planning agency, the Glenn County Transportation Commission (GCTC), is required to hold a minimum of one public hearing to receive comments on unmet transit needs that may exist and that might be reasonable to meet. Four public hearings were held before the City Councils of Orland and Willows, the Glenn County Board of Supervisors, and the Glenn County Transportation Commission.



Mardy Thomas, Senior Planner

3A
Agenda Item#

In March, the GCTC adopted the recommendation of the Social Services Technical Advisory Council defining “Unmet Transit Needs” and “Needs that are Reasonable to Meet” according to local conditions by resolution. These definitions were used to set the context in which discussions were held regarding unmet transit needs in Glenn County.

During the public hearings, the following comments were received:

- A request for service to the Bayliss area
- A request for service to Corning
- A request for a service to allow residents of Eskaton Manor to get groceries

Staff has analyzed these comments and has made the following findings:

1. The request for service to Bayliss was not qualified by providing a reason for the request. As such, staff could not identify a specific need for the trip. Glenn Transit Services endeavors to operate in the most efficient manner possible to extend transit service to the maximum number of persons possible. The routes as presently implemented appear to accomplish this goal. Implementation of service to Bayliss has the potential to negatively impact the overall system’s measures of efficiency and effectiveness. Specifically, the ratio of potential riders against the increase in operational costs would jeopardize the fare box return ration to a level where the service would no longer be eligible for state funding. This would also run contrary to the conclusions reached in the recently completed Short Range Transit Plan which indicated a desire by the majority of current system patrons to reduce headway to and from the Chico area. Consequently staff considers this unmet need unreasonable to meet.
2. The request for service to Corning was explored in the recently completed Short Range Transit Plan. The conclusions were that the connection with the Tehama County TRAX transit system would need to be coordinated and come at no cost to Glenn Transit Service. In this way, the route would be viable given the financial resources available to Glenn Transit Service. Tehama County transit staff has submitted a proposal for funding consideration to Caltrans for a pilot project establishing a route between Corning and Orland. As of this date, there has been no confirmation that the proposal was successful. This unmet need is reasonable to meet; however, it requires action on the part of the Tehama County transit system.
3. The request for transportation to shop for groceries in the Willows area was also evaluated in the Short Range Transit Plan. The plan suggests a shopping shuttle or check point service that would operate one day per week in the City of Willows. The estimated costs would be approximately \$17,400 annually. Staff is of the opinion that this may be a viable service option; however, it would need to be gauged against the need for increased Dial-A-Ride service in Willows. Consequently, staff has concluded that this need is reasonable to meet as it meets the adopted criteria for unmet needs and that further evaluation would be required prior to developing a service plan. Also, contractual considerations would need to be cleared through Caltrans as costs with the operations contract will increase with increased service.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the SSTAC recommend to the Glenn County Transportation Commission that of the comments received from the public that there are unmet transit needs with the following findings:

1. That the request for service to the Bayliss area is unreasonable to meet as it would negatively affect the existing transit services by increasing operational costs, increasing headway on existing routes, and lower fare box return ratios.
2. That the request for service to Corning is an unmet need that is reasonable to meet provided that the Tehama County TRAX trans service initiate the route. Glenn Transit Service is not capable of funding such a route. Efforts are currently underway by Tehama County transit staff to secure funding to establish a route.
3. That the request for transit service to shop for groceries meets the criteria established to identify an unmet need and that further evaluation would be required to ensure that the service can be sustained.

I. UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS 2014-2015

For the purposes of allocating Transportation Development Act funds, an "Unmet Transit Need" is hereby recognized by the Glenn County Transportation Commission (GCTC) if any one or combination of the following criteria is found to exist:

1. Transportation needs identified by the GCTC which are desirable, but have not yet been implemented or addressed.
2. Transportation needs identified by the GCTC which have significant support, but have not yet been implemented or addressed.
3. Transportation needs identified through the public hearing process, whether delivered in writing or public testimony.
4. Those transit needs which, through transit needs studies or other methods approved by the Commission, are included by the Commission in the Regional Transportation Plan for Glenn County and have been designated a high need to be implemented or funded.

The above criteria for determining "Unmet Transit Needs" is further supplemented by the following guidelines:

1. A population group must have been defined and located which, by reason of age, physical or mental impairment, economic disadvantage, or a combination of these, has no reliable or accessible transportation for necessary trips. The size and location of the group must be such that the feasibility of providing service shall meet the criteria as defined as reasonable to meet.
2. Transit needs are to be determined in light of the following definition of "Necessary trips":
 - A. A trip destination that provides a necessity of life, and presence of a physical or financial obstacle between the individual and the necessary designation, which the individual is unable to overcome. Necessary trip purposes may be defined as follows:
 - a) to obtain or maintain employment;
 - b) to obtain non-emergency medical and/or dental care;
 - c) shopping for necessities of life;
 - d) to obtain social services such as health care, government funded nutrition programs, sheltered workshops teaching employable skills, County welfare programs, and education programs for physically and/or mentally handicapped individuals;

- e) to obtain education; and
- f) for the maintenance of life, health, physical and mental well-being.

3. Unmet transit needs specifically exclude:

- A. Trips for social events, recreational, or religious purposes are not considered as necessary. It shall be the policy of the GCTC, however, to serve these desires if they can be served concurrently within the limits of other defined "transit needs".
- B. Individuals requiring the assistance of a medical attendant (in addition to the vehicle driver) are not considered as needing a transportation service and shall be deemed to be more properly served by a medical emergency vehicle.
- C. Trips of less than one mile in length made by individuals who are not elderly or disabled are not considered as "transit needs". An able-bodied person can walk this distance in a reasonable amount of time without undue physical strain. Provisions for the elderly and disabled are made through the existing dial-a-ride/paratransit system.
- D. Minor operational improvements or changes, involving issues such as bus stops, schedules, and minor route changes.
- E. Improvements funded or scheduled for implementation in the following fiscal year.
- F. Future transportation needs.
- G. Trips that would duplicate transportation services to the general public.

II. REASONABLE TO MEET 2014/2015

An "Unmet Transit Need" identified under the above criteria and guidelines, as it pertains to the allocation of Transportation Development Act funds, may be found "Reasonable to Meet" only if the following conditions and standards of performance prevail:

Cost Effectiveness: 1) The new, expanded or revised transit service would not cause the responsible operator or service claimant to incur expenses in excess of the maximum allocation of Transportation Development Act Funds. 2) The new expanded or revised transit service would allow the responsible operator or service claimant to meet minimum state subsidy fare box and revenue ratios.

Community Acceptance: A significant level of support exists for the public subsidy of transit service designed to address the unmet transit need in Glenn County including, but not limited to, support from public groups and community meetings reflecting a public commitment to public transit.

Equity: The new, expanded or revised transit service is needed by, and will benefit, either the general public or the elderly and disabled population as a whole. Transit service cannot be provided for a specific subset of these groups.

Operational Feasibility: The new, expanded, or revised transit service must be safe to operate and there must be adequate roadways and turnouts for transit vehicles.

Financial Feasibility: 1) Supporting data indicates a sufficient ridership potential exists for the new, expanded or revised transit service. 2) Potential providers are available to implement the service.

ADA Conformity: The new, expanded, or revised transit service, conforming to the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act, will not impose an undue financial burden on the transit operator or claimant if complementary paratransit services are subsequently required.

System Impact: The new, expanded, or revised transit service will not result in a negative impact on the overall system's measures of efficiency and effectiveness, such as average passenger load per hour, average cost per passenger per hour, passengers per mile, cost per mile, and cost per hour.

Impact Limits: 1) Transit services designed or intended to address an unmet transit need shall, in all cases, provide coordination efforts with transit services currently provided, either publicly or privately, and transit services shall not duplicate services currently or hereafter provided either publicly or privately. 2) No transit need shall be determined reasonable to meet until it has been reviewed and evaluated to the satisfaction of and obtained subsequent approval from the Glenn County Transportation Commission.

Unmet Transit Needs Public Comment

GCTC receives public comments on unmet transit needs and refers the comments to the SSTAC. The primary purpose of the SSTAC is to review the Unmet Transit Needs comments.



SSTAC Review of Public Comments Received

SSTAC compares public comments to the definitions of "unmet transit need" and needs "reasonable to meet". Due to limited resources, the SSTAC prioritizes needs to serve county residents if they meet the adopted criteria.



SSTAC Recommendation

The SSTAC provides input and makes a recommendation to the GCTC.



GCTC Adoption of Findings

GCTC considers the recommendation of the SSTAC prior to adopting an annual Unmet Transit Needs finding. GCTC adopts one of three findings: 1) There are no unmet transit needs; 2) There are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet; 3) There are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet.



Feasibility Study

If finding #3 is adopted, then a feasibility study is conducted to determine how the need could be reasonably met.