

SOCIAL SERVICES TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

AGENDA

DATE: Wednesday, June 28, 2017

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 of Unmet Transit Needs for 2017/2018 to Transportation Commission based on four public hearings

(4) New Business

A. None

(5) Adjournment

GLENN COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES TECHNICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

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AGENDA ITEM

MEETING OF JUNE 28, 2017

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
- Definition of Needs That Are Reasonable To Meet
- 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.

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, comments were received:

- A request for shelters and bus stops to protect patrons from weather and provide comfort for older a patrons.
- A request for fixed route service to the West Haven assisted living facility in Orland.
- Universal bus fare/pass between Glenn Ride and B-Line service in Butte County.
- Discounted fares for students, in particular, those assisted by Social Services.

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

1. Shelters and other improvements have been made part of the annual budget for Glenn Ride. An attempt was made to receive permission from Caltrans for stops along State Route 32 (Walker St.) in Orland. Additional work is needed by professional engineering staff to satisfy Caltrans requirements. With available staff, work should be completed in November or December to meet Caltrans submittal requirements. This request is specifically excluded from the definition of an unmet need (See Unmet Transit Needs, Section 3, Paragraph D); however, it is a project that is already planned in the 2017/2018 Fiscal Year budget.
2. The West Haven assisted living facility is located at the southernmost point of the Orland City Limits along Fairview Street. As such, it presents a geographical challenge to locate a bus stop which will allow for quick and efficient travel to the Chico area on the Glenn Ride bus service. Trips generated from this facility would likely meet the guidelines in Section 2 of the Unmet Transit Needs definitions; however, the location of a bus stop in this location is not feasible at this time. When operating, the Dial-A-Ride service can provide service to the nearest Glenn Ride bus stop for the residents of West Haven. At this time, there is not sufficient funding to establish a separate senior service to run from the facility to locations within the City of Orland. This service model may become viable with alterations to the current service model. Studies to evaluate service model changes and/or plans for service changes have not been contemplated or funded at this time.
3. Universal bus fares were considered in 2008 by Glenn Transit Service. It was thought that funds from the federal American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) could be used to purchase fare boxes compatible with those in use by B-Line transit service in Butte County. The fare boxes were purchased but have not been fully implemented. An agreement with B-Line would need to be brokered in order to identify fare revenues appropriately to meet fare box return requirements and accounting standards. In larger jurisdictions, universal fares have met with mixed success due to the difficult implementation. Glenn Transit Service continues to adjust schedule times to coalesce with B-Line and Butte College service. To date this is the extent of any interagency cooperation. Glenn Transit Service staff are of the opinion that a study would need to be conducted to determine the viability of a universal fare scheme. This request would be classified as meeting the guidelines prescribed by Section 3 of the Unmet Transit Needs definitions; therefore, it is excluded from the definition of an unmet need.
4. Discounted fares are not offered by any service operated by Glenn Transit Service. Creating a discounted rate for students within Glenn County would be unique and is not common

practice among transit providers in surrounding areas. With the exception of B-Line and the monthly pass for the Tehama County Transit service, surrounding agencies do not offer a discount for students. Increasing labor costs mandated by the State of California will make offering a discount for service more difficult in terms of meeting fare box return. Discounts could be offered specifically to monthly passes, as they are in Tehama County, or through a bulk agency purchase. Glenn Transit Service would need to evaluate how much revenue it could realistically forgo and remain compliant with funding service mandates.

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 shelters and bus stop improvements are specifically excluded from the definition of “Unmet Transit Needs”; however, these improvements are programmed in the Fiscal Year 2017/2018 budget for the Glenn Ride Service.
2. That the request for Glenn Ride service to the West Haven assisted living facility meets the definitions of “Unmet Transit Needs”. The location is not feasible at this time with the current route; however, route deviation requests are available if needed. Funding sources to provide a separate service that would provide transportation from the West Haven facility would need to be coordinated with other needs in the Orland area.
3. That the request for a universal bus fare for the Glenn Ride and B-line service is specifically excluded from the definitions of an “Unmet Transit Need.” Implementation will require studies on the part of both B-Line and Glenn Transit Service.
4. That a discounted fare for students is not common among surrounding transit providers with a few exceptions. Glenn Transit service would need to evaluate the number of students under the age of 18 who use the service within Glenn County to determine revenue loss and the potential for additional revenue with, presumably, increased ridership.

I. UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS 2017-2018

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 2017/2018

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.