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# UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS PROCESS

TEHAMA COUNTY TRANSIT AGENCY BOARD



# PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

- Fares bring in only 10-20% of operating expenses for public transit
- Money for operations and capital is primarily derived from  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the 1% of fuel sales tax
  - **Local Transportation Funds (LTF) & State Transit Assistance (STA)**
- FTA Grant programs, such as Section **5310** (Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities) – Paratransit Services, and **5311**- Rural Transit, also provide funding to transit operators
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides emergency assistance and health care response for individuals, families and businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff will utilize this funding for operations, hazard pay and fare free service.

# FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

- As the the advisory board to the Board of Supervisors, TCTAB staff manages transit funding dollars
- Distribution of funds is based on the population of the eligible claimant jurisdiction, i.e., the cities and the unincorporated areas of the county
- Urbanized areas, as defined by the latest Bureau of Census report, are used to determine required farebox recovery ratios
  - TCTAB is within a rural county and has adopted alternative measures, as we are allowed by code. Due to CARES Act funding, effective September 1, 2020, TRAX and ParaTRAX became fare free for the duration of the funding.

- The unmet transit needs process is an **annual review of transit needs of individuals or groups** within the region
- Public hearings are held on an annual basis to determine unmet needs and receive comments from the public
- Unmet transit need comments are also received and analyzed throughout the year
  - We collect surveys, emails, comments and recommendations throughout the year, which we keep on file to include in this process

## OVERVIEW

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- Requests for transit service must meet the adopted definition of an unmet need
  - An unmet need exists if an individual of any age or physical condition is unable to transport himself or herself because of deficiencies in the existing transportation system

## DEFINITION

## EXCLUSIONS TO THE DEFINITION OF AN UNMET NEED

- Exclusions from the definition of an unmet need:
  - Those requests for *minor* operational improvements such as stops and minor route changes
  - Primary and Secondary educational transportation
  - Those improvements funded and *scheduled* for implementation in the following fiscal year

# DETERMINING IF AN UNMET NEED IS REASONABLE TO MEET

- A transit need must pass the “reasonable to meet” definition
- Reasonable to meet is defined as:
  - **Operational Feasibility:**
    - The requested improvement **must be safe to operate** and there must be *adequate roadways for transit vehicles*
  - **Duplication of Service:**
    - The proposed service **shall not duplicate** other existing transit services
  - **Timing:**
    - The proposed service shall be in response to an **existing need, rather than future needs**

- Service must meet the legally required farebox ratio with fares close to fares of similar service
- A farebox recovery ratio of 10% for social service systems, 10% for rural systems, and 20% for urban systems. However, TCTAB has established alternative measures that better fit Tehama County.
  - Due to CARES Act funding, effective September 1, 2020, TRAX and ParaTRAX are **fare free** for the duration of the funding. The fare box revenue has been replaced with the federal funding.
- A detailed report shall be filed within 90 days after the end of the first fiscal year in which any extension of service is implemented and the associated costs are subject to exclusion from farebox ratio recovery requirements.

DETERMINING IF AN UNMET NEED IS REASONABLE TO MEET



## CHALLENGES OF FUNDING NEW TRANSIT SERVICE

- **Safety** of passengers, drivers, and vehicles is very important
- There is often no transportation sales tax **money** for new transit services
- **Ridership** on a new service could be insufficient to recover the mandated 10% farebox expense ratio or alternative
  - TCTAB has alternative measures, but they still need to be met

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- Each fiscal year TCTAB must adopt one of the following findings:
    - There are no unmet transit needs
    - There are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet
    - There are unmet transit needs, including those that are reasonable to meet

UNMET NEEDS PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS

## UNMET NEEDS PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS

- Prior to the annual Unmet Needs hearing, each transit operator/claimant advertises and conducts a **public hearing**.
  - Today is the official public hearing
- The SSTAC submits an annual finding to the governing body after the public hearing and compiling public comment
- Following the hearings and **SSTAC recommendation**, TCTAB **adopts an unmet transit needs finding** by Resolution
- TCTAB staff is then tasked with carrying out findings (if any are identified)



# QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!

