



■ 260 North San Antonio Road., Suite B ■ Santa Barbara, CA ■ 93110
■ Phone: 805/961-8900 ■ Fax: 805/961-8901 ■ www.sbcag.org

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Transit Needs Assessment

MEETING DATE: February 19, 2004

AGENDA ITEM: 9

RECOMMENDATION:

Conduct public hearing on unmet public transportation (transit) needs.

SUMMARY:

The annual Transit Needs Assessment process, as required by the state Transportation Development Act (TDA), requires the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) to hold at least one public hearing each year to receive public comments regarding unmet transit needs. Prior to allocating TDA funds for non-transit purposes, SBCAG must evaluate and make findings regarding the existence of these needs. The Transit Needs Assessment process schedule is shown in Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION:

As you recall from our presentation last month, every year SBCAG holds two public hearings to solicit input on transit needs from transit users, focusing on transit dependent and transit disadvantaged persons. The hearings are held at locations in the North County and South Coast to facilitate public input from the two county sub-regions. At both hearings, individuals and groups can offer testimony on local, regional, and/or countywide transit needs. Last month your Board held a hearing in Santa Maria to receive testimony from people in North County.

Transportation Development Act (TDA) statutes require that SBCAG, as the RTPA, hold at least one public hearing on the existence of unmet transit needs if local agencies plan to allocate TDA funds for purposes other than transit or bicycle/ pedestrian facilities (i.e., streets and roads). Under the statutes, the highest priority for use of TDA funds is for transit, unless it is found that there are no unmet transit needs or those unmet needs are not reasonable to meet. The purpose of the public hearing is to enable persons to present testimony on any existing unmet transit needs. SBCAG will use the information presented at the hearings to assist in making findings regarding the existence of any unmet transit needs.

A notice of this public hearing was published 30 days prior to this hearing (Attachment 2) in the Lompoc Record, Santa Barbara News Press, Santa Maria Times (January 18, 2004), and Santa

Ynez Valley News (January 22, 2004). Flyers on the Unmet Transit Needs public hearing, were published in both English and Spanish, and were distributed to public, transit and social service agencies to post and distribute to their clients and users (Attachment 3).

Based on input from the South Coast Transit Advisory Committee, a survey of transit users and potential transit users was not conducted in the South Coast, as many of the issues raised over the past few years are recurring and tend to be operational in nature. Instead, a survey was distributed to transit and social service agencies soliciting their input on unmet transit needs (Attachment 4).

Following this public hearing, staff will consult with NCTAC and SCTAC, who will review all survey data and public hearing testimony and make recommendations. SBCTAC, which consists of representatives from NCTAC and SCTAC, will meet to consider the findings of NCTAC and SCTAC and provide a recommendation regarding the Transit Needs Assessment to the SBCAG Board.

At the January public hearing, the Board received testimony from representatives of farm workers in the Santa Maria Valley requesting transportation assistance to work. SBCAG staff met with representatives of the United Mixtec Farm Workers Organization, staff from the city of Santa Maria and Santa Maria Area Transit, non-profit social service groups, and COAST to discuss the transportation needs of farm workers. A variety of options are being considered at this time, including vanpooling and specialized transit services. It should be noted however, that federal (Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act) and state (Department of Labor, Motor Vehicle Safety and Vehicle Codes) regulations regarding farm worker transportation limit transportation opportunities being considered. Staff is also working with the largest farms in the Santa Maria area in consideration of public/private partnership opportunities. It should be noted, that comments regarding farm worker transportation service being provided in the Central Valley, refers to a pilot project ending June 30, 2004, which was funded through Federal Job Access/Reverse Commute and State Public Transportation Account grants (\$ 8 million). A full report will be made to the Board as part of the overall Unmet Transit Needs findings and recommendations in April.

Staff has received two items of correspondence (to date) regarding transit needs (Attachment #5).

COMMITTEE REVIEW:

Pursuant to PUC Section 99238, SBCTAC met on February 3, 2004 to consider testimony from the January 15, 2004 public hearing and to be updated on the Transit Needs Assessment process to date and will provide a recommendation regarding the Transit Needs Assessment findings and resolution that will be presented to the SBCAG Board in April. In addition, NCTAC and SCTAC, as regional committees of the SBCTAC, have been and will continue to be involved throughout the process. The Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) will be involved in the review and comment on the draft Transit Needs Assessment.

STAFF CONTACT: Michael Powers, Ruth Garcia

Attachments:

Attachment 1	Transit Needs Assessment Schedule	
Attachment 2	Public Hearing Notice	South Coast
Attachment 3	Public Outreach Flyer & Distribution List	South Coast
Attachment 4	Transit Needs Survey & Distribution List	South Coast
Attachment 5	Correspondence	

ATTACHMENT 1

Transit Needs Assessment 2004 Schedule

Action	Benchmark
Consultation with NCTAC and SCTAC (COAST and SBCAN were invited to participate in consultation process)	November/December 2003
Public outreach for North County Public Hearing English/Spanish language flyer distribution to North County social service agencies, public & transit agencies, transit advocates and business community participating through Traffic Solutions	December 2003 January 2004
Notice of Public Hearing – North County (media distribution) (12/16/03 Santa Ynez Valley News) (12/14/03 Santa Barbara News Press, Santa Maria Times, Lompoc Record)	12/16/03 12/14/03
Posting of notice of Public Hearing on SBCAG web site	December 2003
English/Spanish languages transit survey distribution to North County social service agencies, public & transit agencies and business community participating through Traffic Solutions (Approximately 2,000 surveys distributed)	January 2004
Public outreach for South Coast Public Hearing English/Spanish language flyer distribution to South Coast social service agencies, public & transit agencies and transit advocates.	January 2004
Transit survey distribution to limited South Coast social service, public and transit agencies (30 surveys distributed for agency response only)	January 2004
Notice of Public Hearing – South Coast (media distribution) (1/22/04 Santa Ynez Valley News) (1/18/04 Santa Barbara News Press, Santa Maria Times, Lompoc Record)	January 2004
Notice of Public Hearing on SBCAG web site	January 2004
Public Hearing – North County (Santa Maria)	1/15/04
Survey data review and consultation with SBCTAC	February 2004
Public Hearing – South Coast SBCTAC presentation of findings to SBCAG Board	2/19/04
NCTAC review of North County Public Hearing testimony and initial draft TNA SCTAC review of South Coast Public Hearing testimony and initial draft TNA	March 2004
Draft Transit Needs Assessment	March 2004
Review and comment period for the draft Transit Needs Assessment (including presentation to SBCTAC and TTAC)	April 2004
Presentation of Transit Needs Assessment Board adoption of findings and resolution (Santa Barbara)	4/15/04

ATTACHMENT 2

Notice of Public Hearing



santa barbara county association of governments

Notice of Public Hearing

Unmet Transit Needs

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) is holding the second of two hearings to receive public comments on unmet transit needs in Santa Barbara County, as required under Section 99401.5 of the California Public Utilities Code. The public hearing will be held:

Date: Thursday, February 19, 2004
Time: 10 a.m. (time certain)
Location: Board of Supervisors Hearing Room
105 E. Anapamu St., 4th Floor
Santa Barbara

*Remote testimony available at Board of Supervisors
Hearing Room, 511 East Lakeside Parkway, Santa Maria*

Written comments may be sent to SBCAG at 260 N. San Antonio Road, Ste. B, Santa Barbara, CA 93110 by February 19, 2004.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations to participate in the meeting, or those needing a Spanish-language interpreter, should contact SBCAG at least three working days prior to the meeting at (805) 961-8900.

Favor de contactarse con SBCAG al 961-8919 tres días antes de la reunión si usted necesita traducción en español.

ATTACHMENT 3

**Public Outreach Flyer and Distribution List
South Coast**

How can the bus better serve your needs?

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments will be holding a public hearing to learn about the transit needs of the residents of the South Coast. Please plan to attend and present your comments or concerns about transit service on the South Coast.

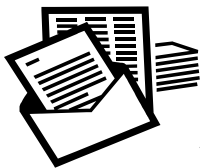
When: Thursday, February 19, 2004 @ 10:00 AM

Where: Board of Supervisors Hearing Room
123 East Anapamu, 4th Floor
Santa Barbara, California



It's Easy!

Simply come to the public hearing on February 19, 2004 by 10:00 AM. Fill out a "comment card" located on the table in the back of the Supervisors Hearing Room. Staff will forward your card to Chair Schwartz, who will call your name for you to come to the podium and express your views.



You may also send your comments in writing by Feb. 19, 2004 to:

**Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
260 N. San Antonio Rd., Suite B
Santa Barbara, CA 93110**



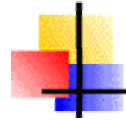
Favor de contactarse con SBCAG al 961-8919 tres días antes de la reunión si usted necesita traducción en español.

¿Como puede servirle mejor el autobús?

El Santa Barbara County Association of Governments tendrá una audiencia publica para aprender cuales son las necesidades de transito que los residentes del sur del condado tienen. Por favor asista y presente sus comentarios o preocupaciones acerca del servicio de transito en norte del condado.

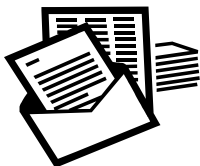
Cuando: Jueves, 19, de Febrero del 2004 @ 10:00 AM

Donde: Salon Board of Supervisors Hearing Room
123 East Anapamu, 4to piso
Santa Barbara, California



¡Es Fácil!

Simplemente llegue a la audiencia pública a las 10:00 AM el 19 de Febrero del 2004. Llene la tarjeta de comentarios que esta en la mesa atrás del salón. El personal entregara su tarjeta a la Supervisora Schwartz, quien llamara su nombre para que vaya al podio y exprese su punto de vista.



También puede mandar sus comentarios por escrito antes del 19 de Febrero 2004 a:

**Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
260 N. San Antonio Rd., Suite B
Santa Barbara, CA 93110**



Favor de contactarse con SBCAG al 961-8919 tres días antes de la reunión si usted necesita traducción en español.

Public Outreach Distribution List – South Coast

American Indian Health Service Seh Welch Santa Barbara, CA	Multiple Sclerosis Society Donna Waggoner Santa Barbara, CA
Carpentaria Senior Center Toni Perez Carpinteria, CA	New Directions Goleta, CA
Catholic Charities Santa Barbara, CA	Pilgrim Terrace Tanya Bailey Santa Barbara, CA
Catholic Charities Santa Barbara, CA	Peoples Self Help Housing Santa Barbara, CA
Catholic Charities Reny Romero Carpinteria, CA	RSVP Roger Hand Santa Barbara, CA
COAST Jessica Scheeter Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara City College Ann Fryslie – Dir. Student Activities Santa Barbara, CA
Cornerstone House Carpinteria, CA	Santa Barbara County - Dept. of Social Services Brad Parks Santa Barbara, CA
Counsel on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara (County) Housing Authority Finance and Development Santa Barbara, CA
Counsel on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara (City) Housing Authority Margie Trejo Santa Barbara, CA
Easy Lift Transportation Sue Verhasselt Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District Rachel Grossman Santa Barbara, CA
Environmental Defense Center Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara Pro Youth Coalition Santa Barbara, CA
Family Service Agency Grace MacIntosh Santa Barbara, CA	SBCAN David Forston Santa Barbara, CA
Goleta Valley Senior Center Amy Mellatt Goleta, CA	South Coast Livable Communities Santa Barbara, CA
HELP of Carpentaria Judy Goodbody Carpinteria, CA	UCSB- Transportation & Parking Services Jaime Wagner Santa Barbara, CA
Hillside House Curtis Lauber Santa Barbara, CA	United Cerebral Palsy Wendy Odom Goleta, CA
Housing Authority, City of Santa Barbara Margie Trejo Santa Barbara, CA	Westside Senior Center Rick Herrera Santa Barbara, CA

Independent Living Resource Center
Petra Lowen
Santa Barbara, CA

La Casa de la Raza
Tayde Wilbur
Isla Vista, CA

Work, Inc.
Santa Barbara, CA

Working Training Program, Inc.
Goleta, CA

Zona Seca
Frank Banales
Santa Barbara, CA

ATTACHMENT 4

**Transit Needs Survey and Distribution List
South Coast**

South Coast Transit Advisory Committee



December 18, 2003

Dear Community Member:

The South Coast Transit Advisory Committee (SCTAC), working with the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, is reviewing transit services in the South Coast in conjunction with the annual unmet transit needs assessment process. This process is in relation to the Transportation Development Act (TDA) and funding that is available for transit service. Because all TDA funds designated for the South Coast are currently dedicated to transit, the SBCAG Board does not determine a finding of need, rather SCTAC and SBCAG uses this opportunity to identify transit service issues on the South Coast and works with the local public and transit agencies to remedy these issues.

Over the past several years, SCTAC and SBCAG have surveyed transit and potential transit users to determine possible transit service issues in the South Coast. The following issues have been identified as issues for consideration:

1. Develop pedestrian friendly and ADA accessible routes to all transit stops.
2. Provide benches and/or shelters at all transit stops
3. Provide a service schedule to UCSB that corresponds to scheduled class times.
4. Provide adequate bicycle racks on all buses, particularly those on routes serving UCSB.
5. Provide a transit stop at the Westside Community Center - 423 W. Victoria St.
6. Provide quasi-demand response transportation service to the senior centers.
7. Provide greater service frequency system-wide.

Your input regarding these and other transit service issues in the South Coast is important. Please take a few minutes to fill out the attached survey and return it in the enclosed envelope no later than January 30, 2004. In addition, a bulletin announcing the 2004 Unmet Needs Public Hearing to be held on Thursday, February 19, 2004 is enclosed. Please post the flyer and make copies available to your clients and/or the public. Upon request, additional copies of the bulletin can be sent to you. If you have any questions or would like to discuss South Coast transit service needs in person, please feel free to contact Ruth Garcia at (805) 961-8913 or at ruthgarcia@sbcag.org.

Thank you for your assistance in identifying South Coast transit issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Petra Löwen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Petra Löwen
Chair, SCTAC

■ 260 North San Antonio Road., Suite B ■ Santa Barbara, CA ■ 93110
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2004 Transit Needs Survey

Please check those items that are a concern to your organization or clients

_____ Develop pedestrian friendly and ADA accessible routes to all transit stops
(Identify specific locations of concern)

_____ Provide benches and/or shelters at all transit stops
(Identify specific locations of concern)

_____ Provide service to UCSB that corresponds to scheduled class times
(List times not currently being served)

_____ Provide adequate bicycle racks on all buses, particularly on UCSB routes

_____ Provide a transit stop at the Westside Community Center (423 W. Victoria St.)
(List times for service)

_____ Provide demand response transportation service to the senior centers
(List senior centers and times for service)

_____ Provide greater service frequency system-wide
(List route/location and frequency [how often] for service)

____ OTHER: Please comment on any other issue(s) of transit service needs
(Please be specific and limit comments to only high priority issues)

Please return surveys by January 30, 2004 to:

Ruth Garcia
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
260 N. San Antonio Road, Suite B
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

Survey Distribution List – South Coast

American Indian Health Service Seh Welch Santa Barbara, CA	Multiple Sclerosis Society Donna Waggoner Santa Barbara, CA
Carpentaria Senior Center Toni Perez Carpinteria, CA	New Directions Goleta, CA
Catholic Charities Santa Barbara, CA	Pilgrim Terrace Tanya Bailey Santa Barbara, CA
Catholic Charities Santa Barbara, CA	Peoples Self Help Housing Santa Barbara, CA
Catholic Charities Reny Romero Carpinteria, CA	RSVP Roger Hand Santa Barbara, CA
COAST Jessica Scheeter Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara City College Ann Fryslie – Dir. Student Activities Santa Barbara, CA
Cornerstone House Carpinteria, CA	Santa Barbara County - Dept. of Social Services Brad Parks Santa Barbara, CA
Counsel on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara (County) Housing Authority Finance and Development Santa Barbara, CA
Counsel on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara (City) Housing Authority Margie Trejo Santa Barbara, CA
Easy Lift Transportation Sue Verhasselt Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District Rachel Grossman Santa Barbara, CA
Environmental Defense Center Santa Barbara, CA	Santa Barbara Pro Youth Coalition Santa Barbara, CA
Family Service Agency Grace MacIntosh Santa Barbara, CA	SBCAN David Forston Santa Barbara, CA
Goleta Valley Senior Center Amy Mellatt Goleta, CA	South Coast Livable Communities Santa Barbara, CA
HELP of Carpentaria Judy Goodbody Carpinteria, CA	UCSB- Transportation & Parking Services Jaime Wagner Santa Barbara, CA
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Housing Authority, City of Santa Barbara Margie Trejo	Westside Senior Center Rick Herrera

Santa Barbara, CA

Independent Living Resource Center
Petra Lowen
Santa Barbara, CA

La Casa de la Raza
Tayde Wilbur
Isla Vista, CA

Santa Barbara, CA

Work, Inc.
Santa Barbara, CA

Working Training Program, Inc.
Goleta, CA

Zona Seca
Frank Banales
Santa Barbara, CA

ATTACHMENT 5

Correspondence

January 27, 2004

To: Ruth Garcia
From: Christine and Dennis Beebe
Re: Our Comments to Include in the 2004 Transit Needs Assessment

Dear Ms. Garcia:

We are long-time residents of the Santa Ynez Valley who are writing to express our strong support for improved public transit options from our Valley to Santa Barbara and Santa Maria. Many other people who live in our area are desperate for this service as well.

The need may be greatest for those who are disabled or elderly and therefore unable to drive, but there are others as well who do not own a car or are too young to drive, and those who would rather not drive for a variety of other reasons.

Our 20-year old daughter has Asperger's Syndrome, and badly needs a way to commute to Santa Barbara and Santa Maria on her own. She is very bright but because of her disability, may never be able to drive. Currently she is enrolled in classes at Allan Hancock and even though she could learn to take public transportation and become more independent, no such transportation is currently available and we must drive her there, wait for her while she's in class, then bring her home. She has doctor appointments in Santa Barbara and we're looking into a volunteer job for her there at the SB Natural History Museum, but again there is no way for her to independently do these things without us driving her. What will happen to her when we aren't around any more?

We desperately need public transportation that serves all the communities in the North County at regular intervals. We would be most appreciative of your help in making this a reality in the near future.

Many thanks,


Christine and Dennis Beebe
Solvang, CA

January 25, 2004

United Mixtec Farm workers Organization
Of Santa Maria CA 93458
P.O. box 7929

The president of the organization and the members would like to make a formal petition on how to obtain free transportation for farm workers in our community. This would really help us workers, get to our jobs with out having any problems. This would definitely benefit our community since it would insure the workers transportation to work and we would not have to worry of an unlicensed driver any more. We would like that this transportation would exist as long as it's there for our people.

El Presidente de la Organizacion campesina mixteca y los miembros del grupo al igual que los comitees acemos un peticion formal para como conseguir transporte para los trabajadores agricolas del valle, gratiutamente sin ningun costo alguno. Nosotros como trabajadores nos gustaria que ubiera este transporte, porque alludaria mucho a nuestro trabajadores ir y venir de los campos. No nos impida quien proponga este medio de transportacion ya sea por medio del gobierno o las companias de agricultures, lo importate es que exista este medio de transporte gratis para los trabajadores.


Pedro Lopez
Sincerely,



Guadalupe Ramirez
Comite

Junior Pedro Lopez
Secretario

Miguel Bautista
Cordinador