

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Unmet Transit Needs

MEETING DATE: December 21, 2006

AGENDA ITEM: 9

STAFF CONTACT: Michael G. Powers, Sarkes Khachek

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Receive summary of Unmet Transit Needs outreach process for 2007 and set public hearing on unmet transit needs for January 18, 2007 10:00 AM time certain in Santa Maria.
- B. Hold public hearing and consider approval of changes to unmet transit needs Reasonable to Meet criteria as recommended by the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee.

SUMMARY:

SBCAG is required to conduct the annual Transit Needs Assessment for Santa Barbara County prior to allocating state Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds for non-transit purposes. SBCAG, the County of Santa Barbara and the cities of Lompoc and Santa Maria agreed at their discretion to make revisions to the unmet transit needs process beginning in FY 07-08 annual cycle. These revisions are outlined in an agreement settling a lawsuit filed by petitioners over the unmet transit needs finding from a prior year. With the expanded level of public outreach by local agencies in north county and additional outreach by SBMTD in the south coast and the fact that in recent years all the small cities in North County have been using their TDA funds exclusively for transit, it is recommended that SBCAG hold only one formal public hearing to receive input on unmet transit needs, consistent with SBCAG's statutory obligation. SBCTAC concurred with this approach at its October meeting. Staff is recommending that the board schedule the hearing for January 18, 2007 in Santa Maria.

As part of SBCTAC's recommendation for approval of the 2006 Transit Needs Assessment they requested that the definitions of 'unmet transit need' and 'reasonable to meet' be re-examined prior to the commencement of the 2007 assessment. This was accomplished during SBCTAC meetings in September and October. SBCTAC recommended simplification of the Reasonable to Meet aspect of the Unmet Transit Needs definition and, with one exception, staff agrees with their approach. These definitions of unmet need and reasonable to meet are used to assess the reasonableness unmet transit needs expressed by the public. The public has a number of opportunities to express these unmet needs, including the annual public hearing by SBCAG in Santa Maria on January 18, 2007. Other venues include calling, writing, or e-mailing SBCAG directly.

DISCUSSION:

Background

Per the Transportation Development Act (TDA), the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) is required to administer and conduct the annual Transit Needs Assessment for Santa Barbara County. The process is required to determine the transit needs of Santa Barbara County residents prior to the distribution of TDA funding to jurisdictions for transit or non-transit purposes such as streets and roads projects.

If it is determined that an unmet transit need is reasonable to meet within a jurisdiction, then that jurisdiction must set aside TDA funding to rectify that need through new or expanded transit service prior to using TDA funding for non transit purposes. If it is determined that there are not any unmet transit needs within a jurisdiction that are reasonable to meet, then that jurisdiction can use TDA funding for non-transit purposes.

The assessment begins with an extensive public outreach process that provides the opportunity for residents to submit requests for new or expanded transit service. These requests for service are analyzed per the definitions of 'unmet transit need' and 'reasonable to meet.' (See Attachment 1)

If a request is determined to be an unmet transit need then it is analyzed per the 'reasonable to meet' definition which includes six criteria. The need must meet all six criteria to be deemed 'reasonable to meet.'

All requests for new or expanded service are reviewed by the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC). Once the assessment has been reviewed by SBCTAC, a recommendation is made to the SBCAG Board regarding the assessment conducted for that year.

Public Outreach and Hearing Process

For the upcoming 2007 Unmet Transit Needs Cycle SBCAG's public outreach process will change focus from prior years. Based on a settlement agreement with those persons that sued SBCAG and local agencies over the unmet transit needs findings from a prior year, SBCAG and local agencies agreed to specific actions on unmet transit needs outreach. In summary the cities of Lompoc and Santa Maria agreed to hold a public workshop this fall in the evening or on a weekend in their respective communities to discuss schedules, routes and desired changes to public transit services. A representative from the County of Santa Barbara will be on hand at these workshops. It is recognized that new routes and expanded services may have budgetary impacts and would be considered in the context of available resources and competing transportation needs. These workshops were held by these agencies the week of November 13.

As a follow up to these workshops, representatives from the cities of Lompoc and Santa Maria and the County of Santa Barbara will meet with the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC) in January and February to discuss both the input received from the public regarding expanding transit service and the proposed method for paying for the new service if appropriate. The local agencies will ask SBCTAC to provide a recommendation to it regarding any proposed changes to transit services suggested during the public workshops. These meetings will be publicly noticed, the public invited to attend and participate, and, one or

both meetings are to be held in the evening. Thereafter, SBCTAC will prepare a written report incorporating that public input information and any recommendation it wishes to make regarding proposed changes to public transit services. This report will be sent to SBCAG and each of its member jurisdictions.

The SBCAG board will continue to have its annual unmet transit needs public hearing in North County as mandated by state law.

Based on the outreach by SBCAG for the North County Transit Plan and this new process staff does not recommend any new outreach activities in North County beyond what is discussed above. SBCTAC concurred with this approach at its October meeting.

Staff believes that the annual extensive public outreach program on schedule changes to transit services by SBMTD has developed to the point that it is sufficient to identify most if not all unmet transit needs in the south coast and additional outreach by SBCTAC is unnecessary. The SBMTD staff member appointed to SBCTAC will report on the input received at these workshops during the January or February SBCTAC meeting so SBCTAC could provide SBCAG and hence SBMTD with its recommendations on service changes. This would avoid the need for duplicative outreach efforts by SBMTD and SBCTAC.

As the case with every year, it will be most important for SBCTAC members to help publicize and participate in the Transit Needs Assessment public outreach efforts at the local and regional level.

With this level of outreach by SBMTD and local agencies, the fact that in recent years all the small cities in North County have been using their TDA funds for transit, it is recommended that SBCAG hold only one formal public hearing to receive input on unmet transit needs, consistent with SBCAG's statutory obligation. SBCTAC concurred with this approach at its October meeting. Therefore staff recommends that the board set the annual, and only, unmet transit needs public hearing for January 18, 2007 in Santa Maria. Of course our public hearing notice will be widely advertised countywide 30 days in advance of the hearing, and remote testimony will be available in Santa Barbara.

Challenges encountered in applying the definitions of 'unmet transit need' and 'reasonable to meet'

During the 2006 transit needs assessment, staff identified some challenges relating to analysis used in criteria to determine if a need was reasonable to meet. The current definitions which were adopted in January 2006 by your board are included in Attachment 1. These challenges related to projecting ridership and operating cost data as well determining the most appropriate comparisons for measuring a new services farebox recovery ratio as is required per the 'reasonable to meet' definition.

SBCTAC acknowledged these challenges and as part of their recommendation for approval of the 2006 Transit Needs Assessment included the recommendation to revisit the definitions of 'unmet transit need' and 'reasonable to meet' prior to the commencement of the 2007 assessment. The recommendation by SBCTAC was as follows:

- Discuss and consider new approaches to projecting operating costs and new ridership estimates that are used to assess the objective of reasonable to meet for new services.

- Revisiting the definition of Reasonable to Meet, more specifically relating to the criteria included in the definition in determining reasonableness. For example, in determining the viability of new services in an urban area should the overall threshold for fare box recovery be the existing system wide fare box or the target for fare box recovery which is 20% for urban areas.

SBCTAC undertook a review of these definitions at its October and November 2006 meetings.

During these discussions, the transit operators also requested that SBCTAC review the definitions associated with language in the TDA statute (Section 99268.8) not requiring new extension of services to meet any farebox recovery ratio requirements for a minimum of two years from start of service. The narrative included in the statute is as follows:

Section 99268.8 – Exemption for Extension of Services

‘The required ratios of fare revenues to operating cost prescribed by this article shall not apply to an extension of public transportation services until two years after the end of the fiscal year in which the extension of services was put into operation. As used in this section, “extension of public transportation services” includes additions of geographical areas or route miles, or improvements in service frequency or hours of service greater than 25 percent of the route total, or the addition of new days of service, and for transit service claimants also includes the addition of a new type of service, such as a van, taxi, or bus.’

Section 99268.8 has an impact on evaluating the “extension” of services by a provider such as adding substantial new service via adding a new day of service or introducing a new community or neighborhood to a service area within a system that already exists. According to the section, these types of improvements are exempt from being assessed within the whole farebox of a system. Some examples of prior year’s requests that could be included within this category are as follows:

- Sunday Service on Santa Maria Area Transit
- New Service from Garey/Sisquoc to Santa Maria operated by the County
- Reverse Commute service on the Clean Air Express
- Expanded Breeze service to Santa Ynez Valley
- Expanded Santa Ynez Valley Transit service east of Highway 154

This statute enables transit operators to exclude the cost of these new service extensions in their calculation of farebox recovery and removes a potential impediment to receiving the maximum amount of TDA funds due to an operator.

Staff indicated that this provision does not mean SBCAG should adopt this exclusion in its reasonable to meet criteria as it might force an operator to provide a new service extension that has expected low ridership and farebox recovery.

SBCTAC review and proposed changes to definitions

SBCTAC discussed the definitions of unmet transit need and reasonable to meet. SBCTAC also considered the letters by Alex Pujo of Coast and Marc Chytilo which are provided in Attachments 4 and 5. The bulk of the discussion at SBCTAC centered around what is the appropriate standard for fare box recovery in evaluating new service requests, is it the existing

system wide FBR, or legislative mandate for the type of area, e.g. 20% for urban areas, or the FBR for a similar route.

After a lengthy discussion SBCTAC recommended changes to the definitions which are highlighted in Attachment 2. As emphasized by SBCTAC members, the intent of SBCTAC is to encourage the formation of new transit services in relation to the success of the existing system, i.e. fare box recovery standard, vs. a statewide objective standard. Staff's position is that SBCAG needs to be careful about compelling a local agency to provide a potentially marginal service that might in the end require more (non TDA) local revenues to meet the state mandated fare box recovery threshold. As the Board recalls, this does not mean that the local agency is prohibited from adding new under performing services, the local agency may choose to add services as it pleases but it does so with the recognition that the expected fare box recovery of the new service may be marginal and will require additional local revenues.

The vote was nearly unanimous in favor of all the proposed changes, except the SBMTD representative who expressed his concern about deleting 3b. Staff concurs with this objection to the proposed change. Having worked the new methodology for this last year your staff are in agreement with all these changes except the deletion of 3B because ridership is a key element to the success of the service. The other transit operators indicated they accept these changes by SBCTAC.

Attachment 3 presents the SBCAG staff recommendation. The only difference between the SBCAG and SBCTAC recommendation is that the staff recommendation retains the ridership criteria in 3b.

Review of Comment Letters

Attachments 4 and 5 are letters of comment provided to SBCTAC by Alex Pujo of COAST and Marc Chytilo. SBCTAC reviewed and considered the comments by both individuals at their meeting on November 13 before they took action on the proposals to change the definitions. The section below outlines the staff response to the issues raised in the letters.

Letter from Marc Chytilo

Comment 1 A: Include operational improvements, such as bus stops, in assessment of unmet transit needs.

Response: Bus stops are eligible for TDA funding but adding a request for bus stops as an unmet need involves an unnecessary intrusion by SBCAG into local bus operations. These requests are forwarded to the bus operator for their consideration. However, if there is a request for a new route or extension of an existing route, these requests are regional in nature and under the purview of SBCAG.

Comment 1 B: Recognize public transportation, not just transit

Response: The TDA statute is clear in emphasizing unmet transit needs as the focus of the examination by SBCAG. Clearly local agencies have the ability to explore other issues as is the case with the County and City of Santa Maria in examining farmworker transportation.

Comment 2: Eliminate Criteria 4

Response: See proposal by SBCTAC and staff response

Comment 3: Use 15% ridership target for urban-rural service

Response: See proposal by SBCTAC and staff response

Comment 4: Add other funds in considering reasonableness of fare box recovery targets

Response: The statute obligates SBCAG to concentrate on TDA funding. Most local agencies already contribute local funds to meet TDA statute Fare Box Recovery mandates. SBCAG should not compel agencies to examine other sources of funding when making the statutory findings for unmet transit needs, although the local agencies may choose to do this if they desire.

Letter from Alex Pujo

Comment: Concerns about inadequate public outreach process

Response: Public outreach process was amended with recent settlement agreement. SBCAG appreciates the outreach efforts by COAST and others. Of note, North County Transit Plan outreach program used a variety of outreach methods and received relatively limited participation.

Comment 1 A: Include operational improvements in assessment of unmet transit needs.

Response: Bus related amenities are eligible for TDA funding but adding bus stops, shelters, etc., as an unmet need is an unnecessary intrusion by SBCAG into local bus operations. These requests are forwarded to the bus operator for their consideration. However, if there is a request for a new route or extension of an existing route, these requests are regional in nature and under the purview of SBCAG.

Comment: Eliminate Criteria 4

Response: See proposal by SBCTAC and staff response

Comment: Eliminate Criteria 5

Response: The statute obligates SBCAG to concentrate on TDA funding. Local agencies already contribute local funds to meet TDA statute Fare Box Recovery mandates. SBCAG should not compel agencies to examine other sources of funding when making the statutory findings for unmet transit needs, although the local agencies may choose to do this if they desire.

Comment: Use 15% ridership target for urban-rural service

Response: See proposal by SBCTAC and staff response

COMMITTEE REVIEW

The SBCTAC proposal and review was described in the staff report.

TTAC also met to review the changes proposed by SBCTAC and concurs with the SBCAG staff recommended changes, i.e. retention of criteria no. 3 b.

Attachments

Attachment 1 Existing SBCAG Unmet Transit Needs Definitions

Attachment 2 SBCTAC Proposed Changes to Definitions

Attachment 3 SBCAG Staff Recommended Changes to Definitions

Attachment 4 Letter from Alex Pujo representing Coast

Attachment 5 Letter from Marc Chytilo

Attachment 6 Public Display Ad for Change to Unmet Transit Needs Definition

Attachment 7 Public Display Ad for Unmet Transit Needs January 2007 Public Hearing in Santa Maria

Attachment 1

EXISTING SBCAG UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS DEFINITION

An unmet transit need is the expressed or identified need of the community for additional public transportation services to meet existing basic mobility needs which are not currently being met through the existing system of public transit services or private transportation services. Included, at a minimum, are those public transportation or specialized services which are identified in the Regional Transportation Plan, short-range transit plan, and/or transit development plan that have not been implemented or funded.

If an expressed or identified need is determined by SBCAG to be an “operational issue”, it shall not be considered to be an unmet transit need. Requests that do not require an identifiable additional increment of service will generally be considered operational. Issues such as, but not limited to, the adequacy of location of bus stops, minor route improvements, marketing, and service reliability will generally be considered operational.

The identified needs must be for the system of general public transit services. All eligible users of a given service should have equivalent access or opportunity to use the service.

REASONABLE TO MEET CRITERIA

An identified unmet transit need shall be determined to be “reasonable to meet” if SBCAG determines that the transit service will be in general compliance with the following criteria:

1. Can be implemented consistent with the transportation improvement priorities, policies and performance standards contained in the Regional Transportation Plan, the transit development plan, or the short-range transit plan for the area.
2. Can be implemented safely and in accordance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
3. Excluding the first three years of operation, the additional transit service shall not cause the system of which it is a part to fail to meet systemwide performance standards including:
 - a. the operator’s ability to maintain the required fare to operating cost ratio;
 - b. the estimated number of passengers carried per service hour for proposed service shall be in the range of other similar services provided; and
 - c. the estimated subsidy per passenger shall be equivalent to other parts of the transit system.
4. When the additional transit service is considered separately, both the fare to operating cost ratio and the estimated subsidy per passenger shall not vary by more than 20% from the average for the type of service provided by the operator.
5. The proposed service would not cause claimant to incur expenses in excess of the maximum allocation of TDA funds.
6. The proposed service is projected to reach a 20% fare box recovery within 3 years, 10% in non-urbanized areas providing rural services, and projected to show continuous progress toward meeting the fare box recovery ratio within 3 years.

Attachment 2
SBCTAC Proposed Changes to Definitions

Unmet Transit Needs: No changes

Reasonable to meet: See strikeouts and additions

REASONABLE TO MEET CRITERIA

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3. Excluding the first three years of operation, the additional transit service shall not cause the system of which it is a part to fail to meet systemwide performance standards including:
 - a. the operator’s ability to maintain the required fare to operating cost ratio;
 - ~~b. the estimated number of passengers carried per service hour for proposed service shall be in the range of other similar services provided; and~~
 - ~~c. the estimated subsidy per passenger shall be equivalent to other parts of the transit system.~~
- ~~4. When the additional transit service is considered separately, both the fare to operating cost ratio and the estimated subsidy per passenger shall not vary by more than 20% from the average for the type of service provided by the operator.~~
5. The proposed service would not cause claimant to incur expenses in excess of the maximum allocation of TDA funds.
6. The proposed service is projected to reach a 20% fare box recovery within 3 years, 10% in non-urbanized areas providing rural services, **10% in non urbanized areas serving urban areas**, and projected to show continuous progress toward meeting the fare box recovery ratio within 3 years.

Attachment 3
SBCAG Staff Proposed Changes to Definitions

Unmet Transit Needs: No changes

Reasonable to meet: See strikeouts and additions

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2. Can be implemented safely and in accordance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
3. Excluding the first three years of operation, the additional transit service shall not cause the system of which it is a part to fail to meet systemwide performance standards including:
 - d. the operator’s ability to maintain the required fare to operating cost ratio;
 - e. the estimated number of passengers carried per service hour for proposed service shall be in the range of other similar services provided; and
 - f. ~~the estimated subsidy per passenger shall be equivalent to other parts of the transit system.~~
4. ~~When the additional transit service is considered separately, both the fare to operating cost ratio and the estimated subsidy per passenger shall not vary by more than 20% from the average for the type of service provided by the operator.~~
5. The proposed service would not cause claimant to incur expenses in excess of the maximum allocation of TDA funds.
6. The proposed service is projected to reach a 20% fare box recovery within 3 years, 10% in non-urbanized areas providing rural services, **10% in non urbanized areas serving urban areas**, and projected to show continuous progress toward meeting the fare box recovery ratio within 3 years.



Coalition for Sustainable Transportation (COAST)

P.O. BOX 2495, SANTA BARBARA, CA 93120 www.coast-santabarbara.org

November 13, 2006

Chair Petra Lowen
Santa Barbara County Transportation Advisory Committee (SBCTAC)
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG)
260 N. San Antonio Road, Suite B
Santa Barbara, California 93110

By Email

Re: Unmet Transit Needs (UTN) definitions, agenda item #4

Chair Lowen and members of SBCTAC:

The Santa Barbara County Coalition for Sustainable Transportation (COAST) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the development and promotion of transportation systems and policies that are environmentally sound and accessible to everyone. Our organization has followed the development of Unmet Transit Needs findings for Northern Santa Barbara County over the past ten years and we have repeatedly expressed our concerns about the fairness of this process to your committee (SBCTAC) and the overseeing agency, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG).

While SBCAG claims to assess transit needs on the basis of "an extensive public outreach process" we fail to see how current and potential users of North County transit are encouraged to participate in this process. By default, this task has fallen on the shoulders of organizations like ours that are not altogether suited to mount the type of public outreach campaign necessary to address such an extraordinary task. Thus, transit needs not expressed are routinely misinterpreted as not existing, and when such needs are finally exposed they are then classified as not meeting the definitions of "unmet transit need" or "reasonable to meet".

Statistical data in Transit Needs Assessments prepared by SBCAG indicate the existence of large transit-dependent populations in Northern Santa Barbara County: high percentages of households with one or no automobiles; high percentages of Latino families; high percentages of households living below the poverty level; high percentages of individuals without driving licenses. Having fulfilled this cursory description of statistical need, the makers of these reports and those who approve them proceed to deny the very existence of these communities and their needs.

The purpose of this letter is to encourage your Committee to demand a more robust public outreach program from SBCAG during the 2007 Transit Needs Assessment cycle which is about

to begin, and to address deficiencies in SBCAG's UTN definitions outlined earlier this year. Prevalent among those is the **exclusion of "operational issues"**, a clause that removes a good source of funding for capital improvements. There is no valid reason to forbid the funding of amenities that make a transportation system more accessible.

Reasonable to meet criteria #4: Fare box recovery standards are addressed by Criteria #3, thus making this criterion redundant, confusing and unnecessary.

Reasonable to meet criteria #5: The Breeze service is currently funded with sources outside the Transportation Development Act (TDA) program. A need exists independently of whether there are funds available to pay for it, but agencies are not required by law to use TDA funds once they have exhausted them. This makes Criteria #5 unnecessary.

Reasonable to meet criteria #6: The 15% target for urban-rural areas seems fair.

The purpose of reviewing these criteria is to remove barriers that have been used in the past to restrict funding for transit services for transit-dependent communities. In closing, we would like to thank you and the members of your Committee for your efforts to address these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H Alexander Pujo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

H Alexander Pujo, Secretary
Coalition for Sustainable Transportation

LAW OFFICE OF MARC CHYTILO

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

November 13, 2006

Chairman Petra Lowen
Santa Barbara County Transportation Advisory Committee
c/o Santa Barbara County Association of Governments
260 N. San Antonio Road, Suite B
Santa Barbara, California 93110

By Email

RE: Unmet Transit Need Definitions, Item 1

Chair Lowen and members of SBCTAC:

Thank you for your invitation to participate in this issue. I am unable to attend the SBCTAC meeting, but offer my thoughts on the TDA definitions by this letter. Thanks to all the Committee members for their diligent work and service on these important transportation issues.

As a veteran of many unmet transit needs processes, I believe the SBCAG reasonable to meet criteria need further refinement to ensure legitimate public transportation needs are recognized and addressed in this process.

I. DEFINITION OF UNMET TRANSIT NEED

A. Operational Improvements

There are some operational improvements that could and should be funded by TDA funds. Bus stop improvements making public transportation more accessible to more people are one example of capital improvements to meet a need that exists but has not been fully realized due to the lack of a basic place to sit and rest under shelter while waiting for public transportation. Without basic shelter and amenities, the transportation need is unmet.

B. Recognize Public Transportation, not just Transit

SBCAG staff have taken a narrow interpretation of the Transportation Development Act and limited TDA funding and unmet transit needs to only those needs met by public transit. The Transportation Development Act utilizes the term public transportation, and specifically provides that "public transportation systems provide an essential public service." Public transportation system is defined in the Transportation Development Act broadly as "any system of an operator which provides transportation services to the general public by any vehicle." Public Utilities Code § 99211. The unmet transit need definition improperly substitutes the word "transit" instead of "transportation system" and should be amended.

MARC CHYTILO
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2. REASONABLE TO MEET DEFINITION, CRITERIA #4

We agree that this criteria is ambiguous and believe it should be modified to reduce the opportunity for “gaming” of the unmet transit needs process. The criteria should not penalize successful services that enjoy a much higher farebox recovery ratio than projected new services.

Additionally, this criteria can prevent a marginal public transportation service from adding any new service. Any public transportation service must provide a reasonable level of comprehensiveness for a “critical mass,” otherwise it does not respond to community needs and will experience low ridership. This has been, and may still be the condition of some north county public transportation services. Criteria # 4 has been used to improperly prevent the development of big enough public transportation services to meet community needs.

We believe this criteria is unnecessary and not relevant to the unmet transit need finding and should be deleted.

3. REASONABLE TO MEET DEFINITION, CRITERIA #6

We support the proposed 15% ridership target for mixed rural-urban public transportation services.

4. REASONABLE TO MEET DEFINITION, CRITERIA #5

This criteria should be expanded to read as follows: “The proposed service would not cause the claimant to incur expenses in excess of the maximum allocation of TDA funds, unless other funds are reasonably available.” (Proposed new text in underline.) Alternatively, this criteria should be deleted in its entirety.

As currently drafted, this criteria imposes an unreasonable and illogical restriction on definitions of reasonable to meet. Modern transportation funding is highly complex, and dozens of different funding streams, including federal, state and local sources, may be available to fund a new transit service in whole or in part. Virtually any significant new public transit service can involve tapping funding sources beyond just the TDA, and a finding of reasonable to meet should allow (if not require) consideration of other funding sources for a new service. This restrictive criteria unfairly subjects transportation services that are necessary to meet the needs of economically disadvantaged populations to a higher standard than that imposed upon a new transit service that is demanded by a politically enfranchised, affluent community.

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In the past, SBCAG and its sister jurisdictions have utilized other sources of funding to address legitimate unmet transit needs. The Breeze Bus Service was primarily funded by diverting CMAQ funds. Criteria # 5 is inappropriate, promotes discriminatory treatment of disadvantaged transit dependant communities, and must be modified or stricken.

Thank you for your consideration of our views and concerns in this matter.

Sincerely,

Marc Chytilo

CC: Michael Powers, SBCAG, by email: mpowers@sbcag.org



Public Hearing Notice Unmet Transit Needs

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) is holding a hearing to receive public comments on unmet transit needs in Santa Barbara County, as required under Section 99401.5 of the Public Utilities Code.

The public hearing will be held:

Date: Thursday, January 18, 2007
Time: 10:00 AM (Time certain)
Where: Board of Supervisors Hearing Room
511 East Lakeside Parkway
Santa Maria, CA

Remote testimony available at Board of Supervisors Hearing Room, 105 E. Anapamu Street, 4th Floor, Santa Barbara, CA.

Written comments must be received by February 13, 2007. Mail comments to SBCAG at 260 North San Antonio Road, Suite B, Santa Barbara, CA 93110. Comments may also be emailed to comments@sbcag.org. An Unmet Transit Needs on-line comment form is available at www.sbcag.org.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations to participate in the meeting should contact SBCAG at least three working days prior to the meeting at (805) 961-8900. A Spanish translator will be available at the hearing.

For more information, call SBCAG at 961-8900. Favor de llamar a SBCAG al 961-8918, para más información del reunión.



Public Hearing on Changes to Unmet Transit Needs Definition

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) is holding a public hearing to receive public comments on recommended changes to the Unmet Transit Need, Reasonable to Meet definitions. These definitions are used in the annual assessment of new transit service requests presented by the public to SBCAG. SBCAG conducts this assessment before allocation of Transportation Development Act funding to local agencies for transit or non-transit purposes, such as streets and roads projects. The recommended changes can be found online at www.sbcag.org or by calling (805) 961-8900.

The public hearing will be held:

When: Thursday, December 21, 2006 at 8:30 A.M.

Where: Board of Supervisors Hearing Room
105 E. Anapamu St., 4th Floor
Santa Barbara, CA

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

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 (805) 961-8919 tres días ante de la reunión si usted necesita traducción en español.