

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Unmet Transit Needs

MEETING DATE: May 20, 2010

AGENDA ITEM: 6A

STAFF CONTACT: Aubrey Spilde

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt by resolution the 2010 Transit Needs Assessment and findings of unmet transit need and reasonable to meet.

SUMMARY:

Since two jurisdictions in Santa Barbara County—the City of Lompoc and unincorporated North County—plan to use FY 2010-11 Transportation Development Act (TDA) funding for non-transit purposes (i.e. streets and roads), SBCAG staff performed the annual transit needs assessment as required by state law. Staff collected public comment and made draft findings regarding the existence of unmet transit needs and whether or not identified unmet needs are reasonable to meet. Staff then prepared a Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment and presented it to the Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC), the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC), and the SBCAG Board for review. SBCAG received no TTAC, Board, or public comments on the Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment, and only editorial comments from SBCTAC.

The Final Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment is attached for your review and approval. The recommended finding for FY 2010-11 is that there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet. TTAC and SBCTAC, at their meetings on May 6 and May 11 respectively, unanimously recommended approval of the Final Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment and findings of unmet transit need and reasonable to meet.

DISCUSSION:

Background

The state Transportation Development Act (TDA) requires SBCAG, through the annual transit needs assessment, to adopt, by resolution, findings regarding the existence of unmet transit needs and determinations on whether or not identified needs are reasonable to meet. SBCAG

must adopt these findings before an agency can allocate TDA funds for non-transit purposes (i.e. streets and roads).

Public Input & Analysis

SBCAG received public input on unmet transit needs via testimony at the public hearing, transit agency workshops, e-mails, letters, telephone calls, and the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC). Staff must make findings as required by TDA:

- for new or expanded transit service (not operational service issues¹)
- in jurisdictions not already dedicating all TDA funding to public transportation—the City of Lompoc and unincorporated North County

Some of the comments related to operational issues and requests for new service in the cities of Buellton, Guadalupe, Santa Maria, and Solvang, and on the South Coast (MTD’s service area including the cities of Carpinteria, Goleta, and Santa Barbara, and unincorporated South County) received this year include the following:

- More stops around Lompoc, especially H Street
- Breeze departure from Santa Maria to later than 5:20 PM
- A cement pad at the Breeze bus stop at the VAFB front gate
- Last Clean Air Express stop should be at Yanonali & State instead of Gutierrez & Nopal
- Commuter service from the South Coast to Santa Maria, Lompoc
- Weekend service from Santa Barbara to Santa Maria, Santa Ynez
- Service from Pioneer Valley High School (in Santa Maria) for special education students
- Better SMAT service in the evenings
- More direct (not through UCSB) routes from Ellwood to Goleta/Santa Barbara
- A later bus from downtown Santa Barbara to UCSB and Goleta

Staff evaluated the *applicable* input using the Board’s adopted definition of “unmet transit need” and adopted criteria for determining whether or not a need is “reasonable to meet.” It is important to note, however, that SBCAG forwards *all* comments and requests to the appropriate transit operators.

Findings

Several requests were found to be “unmet transit needs.” These requests are listed in the table below.

Request for New or Expanded Service	Source
Local	
Service to Beattie Park or River Park	Letter (ASERT card)
Additional service to Allan Hancock College	Letter (ASERT card)
Sunday service on key COLT routes	Letter, Public Hearing (SBCAN)
Extended late night service on COLT	Letter, Public Hearing (SBCAN)
Express service from Orcutt to SM	Letter, Public Hearing (SBCAN), SMAT Workshop (3)

¹ Operational issues include, but are not limited to, the adequacy or location of bus stops, minor route improvements, marketing, and service reliability.

Request for New or Expanded Service	Source
Saturday night service from Town Center Mall to Orcutt	SMAT Workshop
Regional	
Commuter service from SYV to SM	E-mail (William twice), Telephone (Enrique)
Commuter service from SYV to Vandenberg	E-mail (William twice)
9:00 AM run on Wine Country Express	Letter (Linda)
Weekend service on Breeze (particularly on Sunday)	Letter, Public Hearing (SBCAN)
Service between Lompoc and Surf Amtrak	COLT Workshop
Service from Casmalia [to SM]	SMAT Workshop
Interregional	
Weekend service on Clean Air Express	Letter, Public Hearing (SBCAN)
Service from SM to South Coast (2-3x/wk for short trips)	Letter, Public Hearing (SBCAN)
Service from Lompoc to SB (during the day/every day)	Letter (SBCAN, Linda twice), Public Hearing (SBCAN)

SBCAG made findings on “reasonable to meet” for these requests using the Board’s adopted criteria. All requests were found to be not reasonable to meet. Several of this year’s requests were for regional and interregional services, which are particularly challenging because multiple jurisdictions must work together to negotiate operating arrangements and cost-sharing agreements, and most jurisdictions already expend all TDA funding for transit purposes. Such requested services would have caused a claimant to incur expenses in excess of the maximum allocation of TDA funds. Other requested services were not projected to reach the required farebox recovery ratio within three years. It should be noted that most of the requests were identified by a very limited number of individuals or organizations and many of the requests were very general, making it challenging to analyze need and assess reasonableness.

Committee & SBCAG Board Review

Staff presented the Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment to the Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) on April 1, 2010, and the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC) on April 13, 2010. Members had no comments on the draft findings, and SBCTAC had only editorial comments on the report. As you recall, staff presented the Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment to the SBCAG Board on April 15, 2010. Board members asked questions regarding farebox analysis, peer agency outreach (see attachment 3), the Ag Van program, and transit for the disabled, but had no comments. There were no comments from the public.

Staff presented the Final Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment to TTAC on May 6, 2010, and to SBCTAC on May 11, 2010. Both committees unanimously recommended approval of the Final Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment and findings on “unmet transit need” and “reasonable to meet.”

Changes from the Draft

As staff received only editorial comments on the Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment from TTAC, SBCTAC, the SBCAG Board, and the public, and no comments on the final draft report from TTAC or SBCTAC, staff made only the following changes to the draft report:

- Added mention of TTAC, SBCTAC, and SBCAG Board review of the draft report, and TTAC and SBCTAC review of final draft report, at the end of Chapter 2:

On April 1, 2010, TTAC (Technical Transportation Advisory Committee) reviewed the draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment at its public meeting. Members had no comments on the draft findings **or report.** **On April 13, 2010, SBCTAC reviewed the draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment at its public meeting. Members had no comments on the draft findings and only editorial comments on the report.** ~~and the~~ SBCAG Board ~~will also~~ reviewed the draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment **at its public meeting** on April 15, 2010. **Members had questions about the assessment, but no comments on the draft findings or report. There were no public comments.**

On May 6, 2010, TTAC reviewed and unanimously recommended approval of the 2010 Transit Needs Assessment and findings of unmet transit need and reasonable to meet. SBCTAC reviewed and unanimously recommended approval of the 2010 Transit Needs Assessment and findings of unmet transit need and reasonable to meet on May 11, 2010.

- Added mention of Community Partners in Caring on p. 24:

Misc. Specialized Transportation

Community Partners in Caring (CPC) offers free, volunteer-provided, door-to-door transportation to seniors in the Santa Maria, Lompoc, and Santa Ynez Valleys. Volunteers are trained and screened. Services are provided 24/7, dependent upon volunteer availability, to seniors who are alert and ambulatory. CPC maintains a website at www.partnersincaring.org.

In addition to the transportation provided by SMOOTH **and CPC**, various nonprofit social service agencies provide transportation services for their clients. SBCAG, in coordination with SBCTAC, completed a survey of all social service agencies in the Community Resources Directory, or CRIS Directory, in November 2006. 79 of 1,200 agencies responded; more than half of the respondents indicated they provide transportation services. Eleven agencies indicated that a CTSA (Easy Lift or SMOOTH) provided transportation services to their clients.

- Edited the text on p. 41:

The Breeze, **although it is primarily an intercity commuter service between the Cities of Lompoc and Santa Maria and Vandenberg Air Force Base with limited stops between the three primary destinations, does serve** ~~serves~~ the Clark Avenue Park-and-Ride lot in Orcutt, the intersection of Foster Road and South Broadway, and six more stops in Santa Maria, including the Town Center Mall. It provides 16 trips every weekday (8 northbound and 8 southbound) both at peak commute times and throughout the day. The trip from the Clark Avenue Park-and-Ride in unincorporated Orcutt to the Santa Maria Town Center Mall takes less than 30 minutes. The Breeze provides free transfers to all SMAT routes.

- Updated tables 5 and 6 and figures 6 and 7 in Chapter 5 with FY 2010-11 TDA LTF allocations for Lompoc and the County

Table 1: Historical TDA LTF Allocations—City of Lompoc

Lompoc	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Transit	\$707,648 51%	\$497,047 33%	\$811,472 54%	\$888,316 59%	\$730,010 57%	\$895,015 72%
Streets & Roads	\$679,697 49%	\$1,008,471 67%	\$688,554 46%	\$605,371 41%	\$549,531 43%	\$343,586 28%
Total	\$1,387,345	\$1,505,518	\$1,500,026	\$1,493,687	\$1,279,541	\$1,238,601

FY 2005-06 - FY 2009-10 data from June 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 staff reports to the SBCAG Board. Preliminary FY 2010-11 data from TDA claim forms.

Table 2: Historical TDA LTF Allocations—Unincorporated North Santa Barbara County

North County	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Transit	\$983,379 47%	\$1,221,843 53%	\$1,142,737 49%	\$1,717,433 72%	\$1,647,846 82%	\$1,719,846 88%
Streets & Roads	\$1,109,214 53%	\$1,062,492 47%	\$1,202,262 51%	\$655,853 28%	\$355,207 18%	\$237,666 12%
Total	\$2,092,593	\$2,284,335	\$2,344,999	\$2,373,286	\$2,003,053	\$1,957,512

FY 2005-06 - FY 2009-10 data from June 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 staff reports to the SBCAG Board. Preliminary FY 2010-11 data from TDA claim forms.

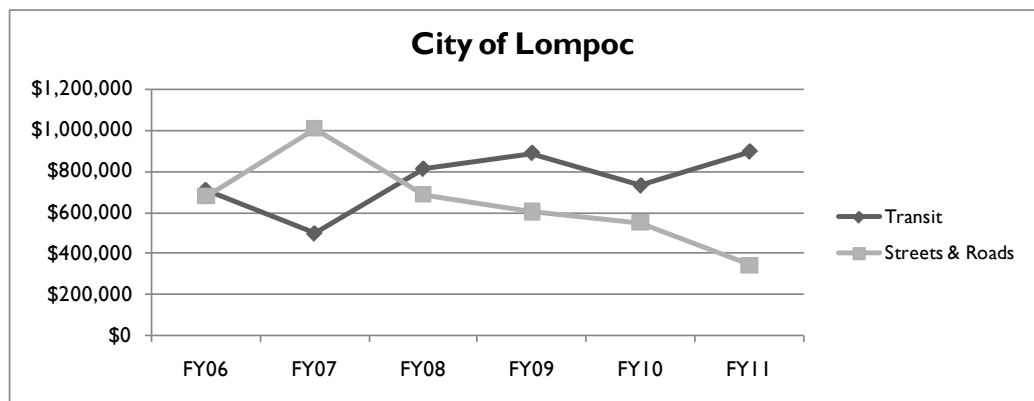


Figure 1: Historical TDA LTF Allocations—City of Lompoc

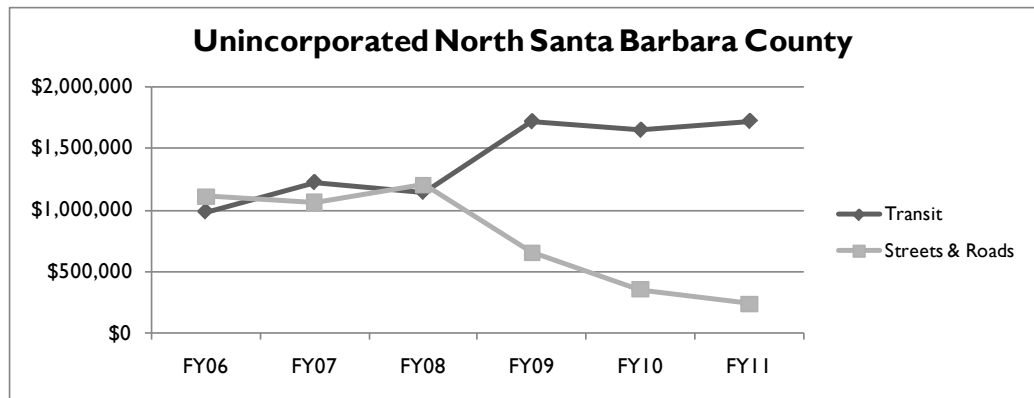


Figure 2: Historical TDA LTF Allocations—Unincorporated North Santa Barbara County

Staff will add reference to SBCAG Board review of the final draft report at the end of Chapter 2 and include the SBCAG Resolution in Appendix G before printing the final 2010 Transit Needs Assessment.

Conclusion

The Final Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment is attached for your review. The recommended finding for FY 2010-11 is that there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet. Staff recommends that the SBCAG Board adopt by resolution the 2010 Transit Needs Assessment and findings of unmet transit need and reasonable to meet.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Final Draft 2010 Transit Needs Assessment for Santa Barbara County

Attachment 2: Resolution No. 10-15: Transit Needs Assessment Finding of Unmet Need and Reasonable to Meet

Attachment 3: Comparative analysis of unmet transit needs outreach efforts by peer RTPAs