

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Connections

MEETING DATE: August 14, 2007

AGENDA ITEM: 4A

STAFF CONTACT: Michael Powers

RECOMMENDATION:

A. Discuss input from regional workshops

DISCUSSION:

The following information summarizes comments from each of the public workshops that were targeted to solicit input on transportation needs and priorities related to social service transportation. The expressed needs are summarized by major category and potential areas of resolution are identified at the end of each summary of regional workshops. A list of the attendees is also provided. A number of SBCTAC members also attended the workshops and their comments will supplement the staff summary. (The workshop flyer is also attached). The flyer announcing the workshops was widely distributed to social service agencies and providers via SBCTAC, specialized address lists, all County Departments and Divisions addressing social services, transit providers, SBCAG web site, among other means. The input received at these workshops complements the other data gathering activities described in the existing summary report reviewed last month by SBCTAC. These other activities included the SBCAG survey of agencies and non-profits, summary of census data, compilation of existing and prior years unmet transit needs testimony, summary of north county transit plan input and recommendations, among other sources.

Lompoc Workshop, 7/23/07

Attendees: Bea Merwin and Carolyn Chamberlin - Community Partners in Caring, Fausto Navarro - Queen of Angles, Jeannie Begly - Catholic Charities, Jody Taylor - Lompoc Family YMCA, Nita Streetman and Rick Hummel - LOVARC, Richard Fernbaugh - COLT

Staff: Michael Powers, SBCAG

Member Agencies

Buellton ■ Carpinteria ■ Goleta ■ Guadalupe ■ Lompoc ■ Santa Barbara ■ Santa Maria ■ Solvang ■ Santa Barbara County

Issues: Safety concerns of seniors:

- Difficulty of walking to bus with walkers over uneven pavement
- Homeless sleeping at bus stops
- Unlit bus stops
- Condition of pavement, flat tires on cars
- Transit driver knowledge and sensitivity to senior and disabled issues

Local Transit Access issues

- One-half hour frequencies insufficient
- Access to Vandenberg Village/Mission Hills, long walk up to the Club House and residences from where bus stops
- Access to St. Mary's Church, long walk from College where bus stops
- Bus service to College late at night
- Access to YMCA
- Access to YMCA After School Child Care Programs which is at 5 locations, 3 in city, 2 in Village

Interregional transit issues

- Breeze welcome addition and good service
- Earlier connection between COLT and Breeze to access Court in Santa Maria
- Increase Breeze frequency to account for variations in shift work

Miscellaneous

- Access to bus tokens by low income persons
- Odor on buses

Areas of Resolution

- COLT staff will discuss access issues to unincorporated County upper VV and MH with County of Santa Barbara, Public Works Dept. transit staff
- Driver orientation to include working at Senior Center
- More publicity on home delivery bus service of students at Hancock College after regular bus service schedule stops
- More publicity on Senior Dial-a-Ride service
- COLT staff to examine local transit access to YMCA Child Care facilities
- Examine enhanced Breeze service as funding permits. Potential JARC funding

Solvang Workshop, 7/24/07

Attendees: Dean Palius and Adriana Uribe - People Helping People, Paula Parinsotto - YMCA, Collen Klein - Buellton Senior Center, Lorena Ahumada - SYVT, Tully Clifford - City of Solvang

Staff: Michael Powers

Issues: Safety concerns of seniors:

- No bus stops or shelters in Buellton
- Unable to afford bus fare or other transport for senior lunch in Buellton

Local Transit Access issues

- Access to programs at YMCA
- Timely access from Los Olivos and Ballard to Santa Ynez, and from Oak Valley to Jonata
- Access from Oak Valley and Jonata to Sheriff Athletic League in downtown Solvang

- Transit frequencies in Santa Ynez, Los Olivos need improvement as it is 1:40 min. wait.
- Low income WIC residents east of SR 154 need transportation

Interregional Transit Issues

- Need Santa Ynez – Lompoc service to access Public Health, DMV, Hancock College, and other services in Lompoc. Service must accommodate mothers dropping off kids to school at 8:00 and mid-day service also important. Also lots of lower paid workers live in Lompoc and work in SY Valley, e.g., Lutheran Home, Albertsons.
- Medical transportation of low income Spanish Speaking persons requires better coordination among social service agencies. Translation an additional issue.
- Santa Ynez to Santa Barbara service need mid-day option on Valley Express to access medical services and get home from Cottage Hospital if discharged
- Los Alamos to Santa Maria, use a van, like Cuyama

Areas of Resolution

- City of Solvang staff currently working with Buellton on shelters. Plans are in place to add shelters in Buellton
- New transit service pilot program between Lompoc and Buellton/Solvang approved by SBCAG. Implementation to take place by 2008. Potential for JARC funding high given diversity of service needs.
- SYVT will work with County Public Works to address timeliness of service issues in unincorporated area.
- SYVT to examine local transit access issues to school child care and sports programs.

Santa Maria Workshop, 7/25/07

Attendees: Martha Yepes – Cuyama, Linda Walsh – Child Welfare, Sheila Martinez – Santa Barbara County Social Services, Michaela Manning - Santa Barbara County Social Services – Adults, Ashley Payne – Community Partners in Caring
Dana White – Health Care for the Homeless, Austin Odell - SMAT

Staff: Sarkes Khachek, Gregg Hart

Issues:

Local Transit Access:

- Clients don't have licenses to drive.
- Clients are too poor and can't afford the bus. Are discount bus passes eligible for a grant?
Discount bus passes would help us and help social service agencies. Can the MPO have a regional bus discount program for the entire county like a commuter check system?
- Breeze Bus is great but clients often have difficulty making connections on SMAT to their appointments and when returning to their community also misses connections to get home after disembarking the Breeze. The connections can be very confusing to clients and we don't know how to do it either.
- If agencies could refer clients to a centralized bus company and then clients could get assistance in planning their trip on the various buses it would help.

- It sounds like there are multiple options that exist but agencies don't know about them. Maybe a referral service could get this information out to agencies.

Interregional Service

- In Cuyama we only have one 12 passenger van that comes at 9:00 Am on Tuesdays and Thursdays and goes to Santa Maria and back to Cuyama t 3:00 PM. The van is paid for by the County Recreation Department. When this service doesn't work I sometimes have to drive families to appointments myself and must close the office when I do. Many of our clients don't have licenses to drive.
- Families that are separated in different parts of the county require lots of travel to coordinate services which requires more cars and more staff.
- The County Health Department has to transport families and seniors to UCLA, USC and even Stanford.
- Would dispatching software be eligible for grant funding?

Areas of Resolution

- Breeze, SMAT, COLT staff to assess local transit connectivity
- SBCAG staff will determine if New Freedom will subsidize bus passes around county and if dispatching software is eligible in the 5310 program
- SBCAG staff will notify County of request for improved frequency of service between Cuyama and Santa Maria
- Potential expansion of interregional medical services between north and south county emerging as a priority
- Improved distribution of available transit services to social service agencies important. SBCAG in cooperation with local agencies to update transit guide
- Initiate discussions with non profit support center to improve coordination of transportation services

Santa Barbara Workshop, 7/26/07

Attendees: David Damiano – MTD, Ernesto Paredes – Easy Lift Transportation, Dan Reid – SB County Public Health, HIV AIDS Program, Laura Inks – Arts Alive, Julie Guzman – SBCTAC, Dana Dorsey, Julie Kahn – SBCTAC, Tri counties Regional Center
Ada Conner – Alpha Resource Center, Steve ???

SBCAG Staff: Michael Powers, Gregg Hart

Issues: Local Transit Access:

- Vista Coastal Express does not access Arts Alive. Arts Alive's center is located on Calle Cesar Chavez. One of our art teachers commutes to work on the Vista bus from Ventura but the closest stop is at Gutierrez and Garden Street.
- MTD does not access the train station for early or late trains
- MTD does not access Arts Alive from local junior high and high school
- Is MTD safe?
- Does Easy Lift have loaner vehicles

Interregional Transit

- Our clients reside in both North and South County but the majority of our providers are in south county and the only dental provider is in south county so we have significant transportation issues. We use SMOOTH sometimes

but they have a shifting schedule and don't cover all the days. Our clients reside in Guadalupe, Lompoc and Santa Maria.

Areas of Resolution

- Yes, MTD is safe and security is increasing with addition of cameras at Transit Center and proposed for buses.
- SBMTD line 20 goes close to Arts Alive. New housing in area may necessitate new transit services in near future
- SBMTD will examine access to train station with renewal of contract with City of SB on downtown waterfront shuttle
- Easy Lift to distribute information on loaner program to Alpha
- Enhanced medical services transportation from north to South County is a significant need that could be addressed by expansion of service frequencies of COLT and SMOOTH Health Services Bus from Lompoc and Santa Maria.

To: Social Service Agencies and Non-Profits involved with Transporting Clients

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) would like to extend an invitation to your organization to participate in the development of Transportation Connections. Transportation Connections will be Santa Barbara County’s Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan.

Transportation Connections will help identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited incomes in Santa Barbara County and provide strategies for meeting these needs through improving coordination of public and private transportation services. The plan will prioritize the distribution of funding from the Elderly and Disabled, Jobs Access and Reverse Commute and New Freedom programs within the Federal Transit Administration.



Some funding will be available to meet multiple transportation purposes including but not limited to operation of services to the purchase of radio equipment, vans and buses. However, a plan is required by Federal regulations to insure our continued eligibility for these funding programs. Only projects that are consistent with the plan are eligible to receive future funding.

To determine the best strategies for prioritizing the distribution of funding, SBCAG is seeking input from your agency.

SBCAG and local transit operators are holding a series of regional meetings around the county to elicit your input. Your attendance is encouraged. Please review the meetings schedule below to see the date and time nearest you.

Transportation Connections Meeting Schedule

Date and Time	Region	Co-Sponsors	Location
Monday, July 23 at 1:30PM	Lompoc Valley	SBCAG, COLT	Lompoc City Hall, Council Chambers
Tuesday, July 24 at 1:30PM	Santa Ynez Valley	SBCAG, SYVT	Solvang City Hall, Council Chambers
Wednesday, July 25 at 1:30PM	Santa Maria Valley	SBCAG, SMAT, SMOOTH	Santa Maria City Community Development, Moon Room
Thursday, July 26 at 1:30PM	South Coast	SBCAG, SBMTD, Easy Lift	Santa Barbara County Administration Building, Planning Commission Hearing Room

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Michael Powers at 805-961-8910 or via email at mpowers@sbcbag.org.

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Transportation Connections

MEETING DATE: August 14, 2007

AGENDA ITEM: 4B

STAFF CONTACT: Michael G. Powers

RECOMMENDATION:

B. Review and comment on revised strategies and provide direction

DISCUSSION:

SBCTAC spent considerable amount of time last month reviewing proposed strategies that are intended to assist in the evaluation of applications for Section 5310, 5311, and 5317 programs. The meeting minutes for July reflect the range of comments. Staff has revised the strategies based on the input and these revisions are provided in Attachment I.

Austin and others asked for a set of specific allocation criteria. This approach is already available for the Section 5310 program and is summarized below. Staff believes this specific approach for the other two programs at this time is too detailed. However, SBCTAC should consider if a set of program specific strategies might help in selecting and prioritizing projects for specific programs. The criteria used in evaluating the most recently approved JARC and New Freedom projects this last cycle are also presented.

Section 5310 Program Background, Scoring Criteria, and, Project Rating

Background

This capital grants funding program was established by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA Section 5310) for meeting the transportation needs of elderly persons and persons with disabilities; in areas where public mass transportation services are otherwise unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate. It allows for the procurement of accessible vans and busses;

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communication equipment; mobility management activities; and computer hardware and software for eligible applicants.

Eligible applicants include private nonprofit corporations or public agencies where no private nonprofits are readily available to provide the proposed service or that have been approved by the State of California to coordinate services for elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

Projects are awarded through a competitive application process. Regional transportation planning agencies score projects from their region utilizing the California Transportation Commission (Commission) adopted project selection scoring and send a scored list of their projects to Caltrans. Caltrans forwards the regional lists to the statewide review committee which supplies a draft statewide prioritized list based on project scores calculated by the regions and determine a "cutoff point" (score) on the draft list based on the Commission's adopted criteria. The committee rescores any projects that are incorrectly scored by the regions and creates a statewide-prioritized list of projects representing 110% of the estimated available funds. The statewide review committee holds a staff level hearing for all stakeholders to discuss the statewide-prioritized list and hear any appeals on technical issue. The statewide evaluation committee submits a final statewide-prioritized list to the Commission. The Commission holds a public hearing to discuss the prioritized list, overall program policy and adopts the prioritized list

Assessment

Projects are rated based on four major criteria: project need, service effectiveness, applicant ability, and coordination. The assessment varies if projects are replacing used vehicles, expanding service, or obtaining other equipment such as communications or dispatch equipment. Project need is also assessed to determine if existing services are unavailable, insufficient or inappropriate. The attached Section 5310 Scoring Criteria chart provides information on the scoring criteria and point allocations.

Jobs Access – Reverse Commute and New Freedom

This section examines the Jobs Access and New Freedom Programs. The programs are briefly described and then the program rating criteria that was applied this last cycle is provided to illustrate potential rating criteria. The criteria used for this program was more general than that applied to the Section 5310 program described above. SBCTAC should consider how these two approaches might be reconciled and modified in the future.

FTA 5316 Jobs Access/Reverse Commute Program

This program provides transportation services to and from training, employment, and childcare services to qualified welfare and low-income recipients.

Eligible projects include but are not limited to promoting public transportation by low-income workers, promoting use of transit vouchers for welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals, or subsidizing the costs associated with adding reverse commute, bus, train, carpool, van routes or service from urbanized areas and other urbanized areas to suburban workplaces.

FTA 5317 New Freedom Program

This program provides for public transportation services and public transportation alternatives beyond those required by the American with Disabilities Act that assist individuals with transportation, including transportation to and from jobs, and employment support services.

Eligible projects include but are not limited to purchasing vehicles and supporting accessible taxi, ride-sharing, and vanpooling programs, providing transit services beyond minimum requirements, supporting voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers and supporting volunteer driver and aide programs.

JARC and New Freedom Scoring Criteria

Attachment III provides the rating criteria and point spread among the three projects that were submitted for funding this last cycle. These criteria are less specific than the criteria used for the Section 5310 Program.

SBCTAC should assess each of these approaches and comment on the implications to the draft strategies and subsequent refinements of the Transportation Connections Plan.

Attachments

- I Revised Goals and Strategies
- II 5310 Program Project Scoring Criteria
- III JARC and New Freedom Project Scoring Criteria

Attachment I

Section 6: Goals and Strategies to Improve Transportation Connections (Revised July)

6.2 Introduction

This section presents the goals and strategies that will improve Transportation Connections over time. These goals and strategies will be used to evaluate the projects submitted for the various federal transit funding programs.

6.2 Overlying Goals

The following goals will lead to improved Transportation Connections:

1. Improve the mobility of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes in Santa Barbara County by increasing coordination between Social Service Agencies and Transit Operators in Santa Barbara County.
2. Promote efficiency and productivity in the delivery of Human Services Transportation

6.3 Strategies

The following strategies, in priority order, that address improved coordination and expansion of transit services will help address the Goal of improving transportation connections.

Coordination

1. Increase awareness of Social Service Agencies and non-profits about existing transportation services provided by CTSA's and local transit operators in Santa Barbara County. As resources permit expand the role of CTSA's and transit agencies in coordinating services, to include bi-lingual services, in Santa Barbara County so they become mobility managers/transportation clearinghouse for social services transportation in their regions.
2. Promote exchange or brokering of client transportation needs between agencies to consolidate the provision of transportation services
3. Develop programs that provide multiple benefits and improve the information flow between transit providers and social service providers

Expansion of Transit Services

1. Improve the access of persons of low income to health care
2. Address Interregional Transit Needs
3. Target low income individuals in job access programs
4. Provide low income seniors and the disabled with new access opportunities
5. Promote use of CTSA's in providing and coordinating social services transportation as resources permit

Attachment II: Section 5310 Project Scoring Criteria

	Criteria	Fewest Points	Most Points	Point Range
I	Replacement			
	Vans	4 years or < 100,000	> 13 years old or 154,000 miles	0 – 20
	Buses	<200,000 miles or 7 years old	.254,00 miles or >16 years old	0 - 20
	Excessive Maintenance	Documentation Required		0 - 20
	Service Expansion			
	Service Hours/ Wk.	< 20 hours/wk.	> 38 hours/wk	0 -7
	Daily one way trips/vehicle hours	< 2 pass./service hour	> 8 pass./service hour	0 - 7
	Miles/vehicle/day	< 30	> 100	0 - 7
	Other Equipment			
	Fleet Size	< 3 vehicles	> 14 vehicles	0 - 15
	Manual System in Use (only 1 of 3 apply)		No communic. Eqpt.	0 - 5
			Commuter Replacement	0 - 5
			Manual Scheduling	0 – 5
II	Service Effectiveness			
	Service hours/week Number of Vehicles	<20 hours/week	>36 hours/week	0 - 10
	One way passenger trips Total service hours/day	One passenger/service hour	> 7 passengers/hr.	0 – 10
	Miles per day Number of Vehicles	<30 miles	> 101	0 – 10
	Total Users Wheelchair Users	< 20%	>65%	0 - 10
	III	Unavailable	How population un-served, how project addresses needs, what other funding sources were examined	
Insufficient				
Inappropriate				
IV	Ability			
	Experience	< 1 year	> 5 years	0 - 5
	CHP Inspection	No	Yes	0 - 2
	Operating Plan	Training, First Aid, Sensitivity, Dispatch		0 - 8
	Maintenance Plan	Pre and Post Veh. Inspection, Preventative Maint.		0 - 4
	Inspection Forms	No	Yes	0 - 2
	Contingency Plan	No	Yes	0 - 2
	Operating Funds	Audit, Operating funds, audited budget		0 - 8
	Experience (non transit)	< 1 year	> 3 years	0 - 2
	CTSA, RTPA letter	No	Yes	0 - 2
V	Coordination			
	Shared Use	No	Yes	0 - 2
	Dispatch, Training,	No	Yes	0 - 2
	Procurement, Planning	No	Yes	0 - 2
	Coordination,	No	Yes	0 - 2
	Back Up	No	Yes	0 - 2
Letter from CTSA/RTPA	No	Yes	0 - 10	

Attachment III
JOBS ACCESS & REVERSE COMMUTE AND NEW FREEDOM FUNDING PROGRAMS
GRANT SCORING CRITERIA FORM – FISCAL YEAR 2006

Scoring Criteria	Total Points Possible	Traffic Solutions Reverse Commute Vanpool Program JARC - \$30K	Community Partners in Caring Volunteer Driver Program New Freedom - \$25K	SMAT Nighttime and Saturday Service JARC- \$67.5K
Project Needs/Goals and Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - addresses transportation gaps and/or barriers - clearly states program goals and objectives - demonstrates consistency with JARC/NF objectives 	25	25	15	15
Implementation Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides well-defined service operations plan - describes implementation steps and timelines - indicates number of persons served - indicates number of trips expected - operations plan should identify key personnel and their qualifications 	25	20	20	15
Project Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - includes defined project budget indicating project expenditures and revenues - addresses long-term efforts and funding sources 	20	18	10	15
Coordination and Program Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to coordinate with other resources - clearly defines project stakeholders and how they will be involved throughout project - describes public awareness process 	20	18	15	10
Program-effectiveness and Performance Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ability to demonstrate the project is most appropriate for need and is a cost effective approach - identifies measurable outcome-based performance measures - includes plan to monitor and evaluate the service and steps to be taken if goals are not achieved - describes steps to measure the effective and magnitude of the impact the project will have on low-income residents 	10	8	5	7
Totals	100	89	65	62

