



INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



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Doug Wilson
Executive Director

To: Members of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council

From: Courtney Smith, Transportation Planner

Date: January 19, 2012

Re: Social Services Transportation Advisory Council Meeting

A meeting of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) will be held on February 24, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. in the Mt. Tom Conference Room at Caltrans District 9 office located at 500 S. Main Street, Bishop.

The SSTAC is an advisory committee to the Local Transportation Commission (LTC) addressing all transportation issues, including the transit needs of transit dependent and transit disadvantaged persons. The SSTAC assists the LTC in identifying unmet transit needs.

A copy of the minutes of last year's SSTAC meeting is enclosed for your convenience.

Ideas discussed at the SSTAC meeting will be presented during the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission Unmet Transit Needs Hearings in April and May. The SSTAC meeting is the first step in determining allocation of transit funds for the upcoming 2012/2013 fiscal year. Your input is important.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at (760) 878-0207 or at csmith@inyocounty.us if you have any questions regarding this meeting.

Thank you for participating.



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MINUTES

Social Services Transportation Advisory Council

February 24, 2011

Caltrans District 9 Offices, 500 S. Main St., Bishop, CA

Attendees:

Selma Calnan	IMACA
Jane McDonald	IMACA
Adelina Rico	IMAH
Jean Turner	Inyo Co HHS / IMAAA
Rick Franz	Caltrans
Edie Schrader	Inyo Co HHS
Jill Batchelder	ESTA
Courtney Smith	Inyo Co LTC
Linda Baffrey	Inyo Co LTC

Courtney Smith opened the meeting of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) at 10:00 a.m. and thanked everyone for coming. He noted that the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council meeting will kick off the Unmet Needs process for this year.

“An Unmet Transit Need exists if an individual or individuals of any age or physical condition are unable to transport themselves from one location to another. An Unmet Transit Need is, at a minimum, those public transportation or specialized transportation services that are identified in the Regional Transportation Plan and that have not been implemented or funded.

A documented Unmet Transit Need is reasonable to meet if a service can be provided which meets a minimum fare box ratio of 10% of operating costs; and

- a) It is transit service for essential intra-county purposes which are defined as medical or dental services, shopping, employment, personal business, or social service appointments; or,**
- b) It is a transit service for essential inter-county purposes which are defined as medical or dental services or social service appointments not available in this county or the out-of-county destination is the closest location where the services are available to the origin of the trip; and, The origin and/or designation of the trip is within two miles of the established area of operation of cohesive community.”**

Mr. Smith said that the notes from this meeting would be compiled, and presented at the Unmet Needs Hearings.

He stated that for the past several years, all TDA funding had gone for transit. He also stated that when there is a new unmet need, something else might need to be cut. ESTA has been very good at adjusting routes to serve as many needs as possible.

Jane McDonald inquired about a reference on the ICLTC website about an Unmet Needs Workshop. Mr. Smith explained that only one hearing is required per year. She asked if comments from the workshop *and* the hearing would be included in the report. Mr. Smith said they will be treated the same. (Note: Upon further evaluation, it was decided that two hearings would be held.)

Selma Calnan asked if people should keep the fare box ratio in mind when they make requests or suggestions. Mr. Smith said it would be helpful when analyzing the suggestions, as would an estimation of the size of potential user groups.

Eddie Schrader asked how the rising fuel prices would affect the transit system.

Jill Batchelder said the last time this happened, ridership went up because of the expense of driving.

Mr. Smith said that TDA revenues might decrease, as they have the last few years.

Ms Schrader asked if the rates would go up. Ms Batchelder said ESTA budgets for fuel price adjustments. She said the current rate for Dial-a-Ride in Bishop is \$2.50, and for Fixed Point Dial-a-Ride is \$1.50.

Selma inquired about the impact the new CA legislation might have on TDA funds. Courtney Smith said that so far, the ¼% Transportation Development Act set-aside of sales has not been affected.

Adelina Rico said that IMAH's Lone Pine routes have worked out well for her clients. It was noted that IMAH has submitted a draft application for a 5310 bus to replace a vehicle that has become too expensive to operate.

Jane McDonald commented that the seniors seem to be happy with ESTA bus service. She said IMACA will be doing a Needs Assessment soon. She believes transit to Benton and Rovana will remain an issue.

Selma Calnan said she hopes to have charter service available again. She noted that in the past, Inyo Mono Transit made trips to Mammoth or Manzanar for elder groups.

Jean Turner reported that IMAAA had done a Needs Assessment study in June. There were two questions regarding areas of transit concerns. The first was 'access to local transportation for shopping and services'. The second was access to transportation for out-of-area appointments. 55 of the 99 respondents rated both of these concerns as "moderate to large". She noted that 22 of the 99 respondents were 85 years or older.

Courtney Smith commented that ESTA still runs a bus to Tecopa and Pahrump despite low ridership.

Jill Batchelder reported that ESTA has had to reduce some of its routes, such as the Lone Pine to Bishop route (first Saturday only), and the Bishop to Mammoth Saturday service. On Tuesday and Thursday the bus goes into Rovana on a call-stop basis. A Benton to Bishop route also runs twice weekly, leaving Benton at 8:30 a.m., and then leaving Bishop for the return trip at 2:30 p.m.

Ms Batchelder explained that check-point dial a ride involves picking up passengers at specific locations and times, and then taking them to wherever they need to go in town. They pick up passengers at Dwayne's at 9:30 a.m., and then at the post office at 12:30, 2:30, and 4:30 p.m. She will email a flyer detailing this service.

Jane McDonald asked if there were still service at Clarke St. Ms Batchelder said there is not. The route was eliminated because they had only five riders during the entire month.

Jill Batchelder stated that the Lone Pine Dial a Ride has had a 25% increase in ridership. The Mammoth Express route has also had an increase. They still go into Rovana twice a week, but it is a call stop, and is not used frequently. The Lone Pine Dial a Ride goes to Keeler occasionally.

Rick Franz asked if the CREST route could accommodate people with disabilities. Ms Batchelder replied that all their buses are wheel-chair accessible. They take passengers north for medical appointments, but do not go directly to the VA Hospital in Reno. She said ridership is down somewhat on the CREST North

Route, possibly because of air service and the south route taking some of the ridership; the south route to Lancaster is doing well.

Courtney Smith asked if the Check point dial a ride is meeting its goals. Ms Batchelder said it is, overall, but they have had to shift some routes.

Rick Franz said that everything is funded through this fiscal year. He said that next year is a “wait and see” situation.

Courtney Smith said the funds have decreased the last few years, and the LTC has spent more than it received. This is because of the fund balance that had been maintained previously. Right now, things are okay, but the fund balance has almost disappeared and it may not be possible to meet TDA monthly payment commitments to ESTA.

Mr. Franz said he hopes that TDA funds will continue to come in, but they could be taken away.

Courtney Smith told the group that if they think of anything to add, they can call, email, send a letter, or present their concerns at either of the upcoming Unmet Needs Hearings.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Attest:

**Doug Wilson
Executive Director**

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by Linda Baffrey, ICLTC Secretary