



INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

P.O. DRAWER Q
INDEPENDENCE, CA 93526
PHONE: (760) 878-0201
FAX: (760) 878-2001



Ted Pedersen
Executive Director

TO: Inyo County Local Transportation Commission

FROM: Ted Pedersen, Executive Director

DATE: June 16, 2010

SUBJECT: Unmet Transit Needs Findings - Recommendations

I have reviewed the information presented at the March 19, 2008 and the April 16, 2008 Unmet Needs Hearings. I have also reviewed the information provided by the Social Service Transit Advisory Committee. Finally, in order to evaluate the items presented, I have reviewed the definitions of "Unmet Transit Need" and "Reasonable to Meet." The definitions for the mentioned items were adopted by the ICLTC on May 23, 1995 and are as follows:

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 farebox 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 destination of the trip is within two miles of the established area of operation or cohesive community.

20010/2011 Unmet Needs Hearing Context

Your Commission is being asked to a) adopt Unmet Transit Needs Findings as presented by staff and b) approve Resolution No. 2010-05 regarding unmet transit needs.

The Inyo County Local Transportation Commission will not allocate TDA funds to local streets and roads in the 2010/2011 year. All TDA funds will be allocated to TDA eligible set-asides (2% to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, 5% for administration, and 5% for community transit services) or to transit.

Since the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority (ESTA) is not receiving additional TDA funds, it is not clear that the ESTA will be able to respond to unmet transit needs that will require additional funding to provide. It is because of these circumstances that the findings below recommend that ESTA should (not shall) investigate serving those unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet.

Findings/Recommendations

This needs to be qualified in that this year's unmet transit needs workshops and hearings identified **no** new transit needs that satisfy the definition of an *unmet transit need* and *reasonable to meet*. The comments this year can be divided into several categories. These are:

1. General concerns about possible reduction of services.
2. Requests for changes in service hours. This includes requests for service on different days, different hours, and for longer layovers to conduct business.
3. General comments about the transit provider. Most of these were positive. Clients were pleased with how the drivers are friendly and try to meet passenger needs. There were specific requests for the driver to assist carrying groceries into the riders house and for the drivers to slow down.
4. Possible unmet transit needs that are already being provided. Transit staff was able to clarify that these service are already in existence.
5. Unmet transit needs requests that are not reasonable to meet. Extending service to the community of Darwin does not meet the definition of reasonable to meet because Darwin is not "within two miles of the established area of operation."
6. Questions about the ESTA policy such as ability to provide Charter Service for recreational activities.

ESTA will still be asked to investigate the need for providing evening service to Cerro Coso Community College and is encouraged to monitor transit demand in the Olancha-Cartago area.

Below is a synopsis of comments received and an evaluation of whether these comments meet the definition of *unmet transit need* and *reasonable to meet*.

**Testimony Presented at the Social Services Transit Advisory Council Meeting
February 25, 2010
Bishop, California**

Name	Need	Unmet Transit Need that is Reasonable to Meet	Next Step
Jean Turner, IMAAA	There is a need for transportation from Tecopa and Shoshone to Pahrump for medical appointments.	This service is currently available on a weekly basis from Shoshone and Tecopa to Pahrump. This is a coordination issue and not an unmet transit need. There have been requests in the past to add a second day to the route. However, the current route does not meet farebox, so a second day of service is not yet needed.	None needed.
Edie Schrader, HHS (1)	Is there any way to get a better connection to the VA Hospital in Reno?	This is a coordination issue. As an informational point, the VA Hospital can be accessed either via bus or cab. Additionally, clients may be able to arrange transportation by the VA Hospital if they call ahead of time.	None needed.
Edie Schrader, HHS (2)	Is there Dial-a-Ride from the Alabama Hills?	There is service on the Lone Pine DAR bus to the Alabama Hills. This is not an unmet transit need.	None needed.
Edie Schrader, HHS (3)	Is there bus service to Cerro Coso College?	This service exists, but not after 5:30 p.m. This is a scheduling issue and not technically an unmet transit need. Since most classes at Cerro Coso are after 6:00 p.m., the Dial-a-Ride services do not really serve the community college when it most needs the service. The Cerro Community College Transportation page at http://www.cerrocoso.edu/campuservices/transportation.htm describes in detail service provided to their Indian Wells Valley campus. The page features a note that ESTA no longer provides evening service. However, no information is provided for the service that ESTA does provide. It is suggested that Cerro Coso Community College provide contact information for the services that are provided by ESTA. The Cerro Coso website should consider providing information describing: 1) the type of service (Dial-a-Ride), 2) the cost, 3) contact information for ESTA (760-872-1901), 4) a link to the ESTA website and 4) services provided by ESTA at their Mammoth Lakes campus.	Though, this is not technically an unmet transit need, ESTA should consult with Cerro Coso Community College staff to determine the number of students needing this service. If the estimated use would meet farebox, ESTA should consider providing the service once nightly when funds allow.
Edie Schrader, HHS (4)	Is it possible to provide bus service to the Rovana and Round Valley area?	The Mammoth Express bus can provide north or southbound service on a call-stop basis from Rovana and Round Valley. Riders need to contact ESTA the day before their trip.	None needed.
Edie Schrader, HHS (5)	Is there mid-day service to Mammoth?	Yes. The schedule for this bus was recently changed to provide mid-day service. The Mammoth Express route leaves Bishop for Mammoth at 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. Return trips are at 2:05 p.m. and 5:15 p.m.	None needed.
Edie Schrader, HHS (6)	Is there any chance of getting Sunday service	There is currently mid-week service to Wilkerson. This is technically a scheduling issue and not an unmet	None needed.

	to Wilkerson?	transit need.	
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**Testimony Presented at the Unmet Transit Needs Workshop
on February 17, 2010 at Bishop, California:**

No new unmet transit needs were presented at this meeting. There was some discussion about the unmet transit needs hearing process and about potential cuts to existing services.

**Testimony Presented at the Unmet Transit Needs Workshop
April 21, 2010
Independence, California**

Name	Need	Unmet Transit Need that is Reasonable to Meet	Next Step
Selma Calnan (Jane McDonald)	Ms. McDonald presented a letter from Selma Calnan of Bishop. The letter expresses general concerns over transit needs to the elderly in the Bishop area and specifically for charter services to recreational events for the elderly.	This is not an unmet transit need. Unmet transit needs do not include recreational events. ESTA can provide some charter services, though arrangements need to be made ahead of time.	None needed.
Seth Roberts, Public Works Director, Bishop Paiute Tribe	There are general unmet needs for transportation to necessary medical services. In particular, there are needs for transport to Toiyabe Indian Health Clinic and to Reno. The tribe can access FTA grant funds for transit and would like to partner with ESTA to create expanded services.	ESTA and the Bishop tribe are encouraged to meet to discuss ways to support and expand transit services. There are currently Dial-a-Ride services in Bishop and transport from Bishop to Reno four days a week so this is technically not an unmet transit need. The Bishop Tribe is encouraged to communicate with ESTA as to their specific needs.	ESTA is encouraged to coordinate with the Bishop Paiute Tribe.
Richard Cervantes (1)	There is an unmet transit need for a longer layover in Ridgecrest for client to be able to attend medical appointments and to complete necessary shopping.	This is a scheduling issue and not an unmet transit need. Currently, clients on the southbound CREST bus are let off at 11:30 a.m. and then are picked up at 4:05 p.m. After being dropped off in Inyokern, they need to take the Ridgecrest Transit Services bus. The wait and the travel to Ridgecrest reduce the trip by approximately one hour. This leaves approximately 3.5 hours for Lone Pine residents in Ridgecrest. It is difficult to extend the stay, because the driver of the CREST southbound bus is already near the cap amount of time to be driving in one day. Yes, the layover is a bit short to attend a medical appointment and to go shopping, but it is also a long layover for those who are just doing one activity.	None needed.
Richard Cervantes (2)	Dust mitigation activities at Owens Dry Lake have picked up and the population of communities around the lake has increased as a result. There is a need for transit service to Keeler, Darwin, Olancha, and Cartago.	Dial-a-Ride services are provided to Keeler Monday through Friday. The route does not meet farebox. Residents of Cartago and Olancha can get bus service to Ridgecrest three days a week. Transit to Darwin may be an unmet transit need. However, the service is not reasonable to meet, as	None needed. ESTA is encouraged to monitor transit demand in

		it is more than 2 miles beyond the end of all existing ESTA routes.	the Olancha area.
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**Testimony Presented at the Unmet Transit Needs Hearing
May 19, 2010
Bishop, California**

Name	Need	Unmet Transit Need that is Reasonable to Meet	Next Step
Ole Vegge	He expressed concern that there are only two bus drivers working on Saturday and Sunday. He feels that one more should be added for each day. He also suggested one more each day during the week after school is out.	Dial-a-Ride service currently exists in Bishop. This is a coordination issue and not an unmet transit need.	None needed.
Betty Hinga	Ms Hinga asked if there would be a Dial-a-Ride cut. People on the outer edges of the town depend on this service, and she feels it would be heartless, and cruel to take it away. She said there are many poor and disabled seniors in this area.	This is not an unmet transit need. As was explained at the meeting, ESTA is not planning any reduction in Dial-a-Ride services.	None needed.
Laurie Kilgore	Ms Kilgore stated that she uses Dial-a-Ride constantly. The drivers are kind, and they work hard. She said that in a small town, this type of service is needed.	This is not an unmet transit need.	None needed.
Betty Stanovich	Ms Stanovich said she lives in the Rocking K area, and needs Dias-a-Ride to go to the senior center everyday, and on Fridays to go to the bank.	This is not an unmet transit need. As was explained at the meeting, ESTA is not planning any reduction in Dial-a-Ride services.	None needed.
Selma Calnan	Ms Calnan thanked the commission for holding a hearing. She said that the fixed routes are half the cost of Dial-a-Ride, and no reservation is needed, however many elderly can't walk to the bus stop, or stand in bad weather. She then read a prayer about aging. She said that ESTA must "shift gears" from vacationers to the local baby boomer population. She noted that there are occupational stresses on bus drivers. She said that the community must express goals, and the experts must make them work.	This is not an unmet transit need. As was explained at the meeting, ESTA is not planning any reduction in Dial-a-Ride services.	None needed.
Norberta Fullin	Ms Fullin said she had done some research on Dial-a-Ride and had some suggestions to share. No agency can do it alone; cooperation is needed. She noted that in some other areas, the bus drivers use blackberries and GPS units. She also suggested that ESTA could benefit from hiring a grant writer.	This is not an unmet transit need. ESTA should continue to embrace technological innovations which can be used to make their service more productive.	None needed.
Dolores Garcia Wright	Ms Wright suggested the expansion of Dial-a-Ride. She said it is not available in the evenings for seniors to go to the movies or other social activities. She also noted that it is too expensive to ride the bus. It costs her \$6.00 to go to the bank, which is a lot for someone on a limited income. She noted that the bus stops are too far from home for someone with groceries to carry, etc. She said that grant money is available, and ESTA needs to work to apply for it. She also mentioned that IMAAA had \$7000 set aside for special trips, and wonders what happened to it.	Dial-a-Ride service currently exists in Inyo County in Lone Pine and Bishop. This is a coordination issue and not an unmet transit need.	None needed.
Brigid Salamon	Ms Salamon said that transportation after 5 p.m. is needed for the elderly and disabled during the week. She noted that the Friday and Saturday evening routes seem to make money. She suggested the possibility of subsidies from the County to run the buses until 10 p.m.	Dial-a-Ride service currently exists in Inyo County in Lone Pine and Bishop. This is a coordination issue and not an unmet transit need.	None needed.

	She stated that she is not able to drive anymore, and that it is hard for seniors and the disabled to get up early and get ready to catch the bus.		
Carmen Matson	Ms Matson stated that she is on oxygen. She said it sometimes takes her an hour and a half to shop, so sometimes she has to walk home. She asked for an additional driver from 5-6 p.m. Also if she misses the bus after a doctor appointment, she has to walk.	There are limits to the service that ESTA can provide.	None needed.
Robert Tarin	Mr. Tarin said he lives in Rovana. He said his vehicle is broken and with no buses, he has no way to get to town for shopping or doctor appointments. He said neighbors try to help him, but Dial-a-Ride to Rovana is needed.	There is currently bus service to Rovana, if ESTA is contacted a day ahead of time. This is a coordination issue and not an unmet transit need.	None needed.
Joan Stathem	Ms Stathem said that more drivers are needed, noting that she sometimes has to wait for an hour for a ride. She also asked for evening service during the week for meetings or college classes. She said that she is a disabled senior, and relies on the bus. She noted that the bus was originally set up for seniors.	This is not an unmet transit need – this is a coordination issue. ESTA keeps a record of average wait time for Dial-a-Ride users.	None needed.
Douglas Cooper	Mr. Cooper stated that he had moved to Bishop from Los Angeles 5 months ago, and said it is nice to know that the ESTA bus service is available. He noted that people are asking for more. He feels that they should be thankful for what they have. He also commented that the bus drivers are very friendly.	This is not an unmet transit need.	None needed.
Roger Rasche	Mr. Rasche said in regards to “no service to Rovana”, that in Lone Pine, they need only to call a day ahead, and arrangements are made. He said the same is probably true for Rovana.	Rovana actually does receive bus service twice a week via the Mammoth Express bus. Riders need to call a day ahead of time to reserve the service.	None needed.
Diane Moore	Ms Moore said she wished the hours were later, but is thankful, especially to the lady bus drivers, because they help her with her walker.	This is not an unmet transit need.	None needed.
Brigid Salamon	Ms Salamon said she is thankful for the bus service. She said that people live longer because of the chance to get out. She just wants the hours extended. She mentioned that she has a friend who moved to this area because of the bus service. She recommended that people attend ESTA board meetings.	This is not an unmet transit need. Extension of service hours is a coordination issue. Many of the concerns heard today would be appropriate to express at an ESTA board meeting.	None needed.
Misti Clark-Holt	Ms Clark-Holt said she works for Wild Iris, and relies on the bus to get victims out of the area, and out of danger.	This is not an unmet transit need.	None needed.
Beth Himelhoch	People should call John Helm or Jill Batchelder regarding rumors about service cuts. She noted that people should realize that everyone is short of money right now.	This is not an unmet transit need. Staff agrees with this assessment.	None needed.
Eileen Peterson	Ms Peterson stated that she lives in Benton, and because of several back surgeries must go to Bishop for lab work and hospital visits. She noted that the bus only runs on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. She said that she also goes there for shopping. She has trouble walking, her groceries are heavy, and she must leave by 2:30. She said the bus drivers used to help her with her groceries, but now they only stop on the road. She wants help bringing her groceries into her home. She noted that bus service is costly.	This is a coordination or scheduling issue and not an unmet transit need. Benton is in Mono County. Staff forwarded this comment to Mono County LTC staff. Since ESTA serves both Inyo and Mono, this comment was received and acknowledged by ESTA.	None needed. Comment forwarded to Mono County LTC staff.
Robert Tarin	Mr. Tarin said that he wants the bus service to Rovana to be adjusted to later in the day.	This is not an unmet transit need. This is a coordination issue.	None needed.
Juanita Andreas	Jane McDonald read a not from Ms. Andreas. Ms	This is a service issue and not an	None

(Jane McDonald)	Andreas wrote that she is grateful for the drivers, but noted they tend to drive too fast around corners and over speed bumps. She requested that they reduce their speed.	unmet transit need.	needed.
Daniel Steinhagen, IMACA	He asked why the hearing came about, and what the role is between ESTA and the LTC. He said there has been confusion about this. He suggested that it would be more appropriate to direct scheduling questions to the ESTA Board. He asked about concerns for future cuts, and what role the LTC plays in this. He encouraged the LTC to join with ESTA in hiring a consultant to define the roles, and instructions from LTC to ESTA.	This is not an unmet transit need. See discussion below.	None needed.

Roles and Responsibilities

Mr. Steinhagen of IMACA of the LTC and ESTA board in the addition and reduction of transit routes

LTC

The LTC is responsible to authorize funding to transit and to ensure the public participation process and needs assessment are conducted.

LTC is responsible for conducting the unmet transit needs process. There shall be an implementation period of two years for a new route identified through the Unmet Transit Needs Determination process to allow the route to become established. That is, new routes shall have two years to reach the minimum farebox ratio.

ESTA

ESTA, as the public transit provider, receives capital and operating funds for transportation projects. ESTA is a Joint Powers Authority that includes the County of Inyo and City of Bishop

- attachments: -Resolution No. 2010-05
 -April 20, 2010 Letter from Selna Calnan
 -IMACA *Protect Our Access to Public Transportation* flyer

**INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
RESOLUTION 2010-05**

A RESOLUTION REGARDING UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS

WHEREAS, on February 25, 2010 the Social Services Transit Advisory Committee held a duly noticed Public Hearing to receive testimony identifying or commenting on unmet transit needs that may exist in the County; and

WHEREAS, on February 17 and April 21, the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission (LTC) held duly noticed workshops to receive testimony identifying or commenting on unmet transit needs that may exist in the County; and

WHEREAS, on May 19, 2010, the LTC held a duly noticed hearing to receive testimony identifying or commenting on unmet transit needs that may exist in the County; and

WHEREAS, the LTC notified persons and organizations that it knows to have an interest in the subject of the hearings; and

WHEREAS, the LTC Executive Director received written communications concerning transit assistance; and

WHEREAS, the LTC has also considered the following factors in its transportation planning process:

1. Identified the size and location of groups with potential transit dependence.
2. Evaluated the adequacy of existing transportation services.
3. Examined potential alternate transportation services and service improvements that would meet potential travel demands; and

WHEREAS, the LTC adopted its definition of "Unmet Transit Needs and "Reasonable to Meet" on May 23, 1995, which are:

"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. Documentation regarding the unmet need and the person's residential address must be provided in a letter addressed to the Executive Director of the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission or by testimony at a public hearing held for the purpose of determining unmet transit needs. An unmet transit need is, at a minimum, those public transportation or specialized transportation services that are identified in the Regional Transportation Plan 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 farebox ratio of 10% of operating costs, and:

- a) It is a 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 services 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 destination of the trip is within two miles of the established area operation or a cohesive community;
- and

WHEREAS, the LTC has considered all available information, including that presented at the public hearings, all of which is contained in the ICLTC findings report dated June 16, 2010.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the ICLTC finds that through the 2010 unmet transit needs process, no medical and social services needs raised meet the definition of being an *unmet transit need* and *reasonable to meet*.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Eastern Sierra Transit Authority will be encouraged to investigate the feasibility of those recommendations specifically described in the findings presented on June 16, 2010. After completing an analysis of the cost to provide this expanded service, Eastern Sierra Transit Authority will be requested to present their findings to the LTC.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the ICLTC has determined that there will be no remaining Local Transportation Funds available to the City of Bishop and County of Inyo for local streets and roads.

Passed and adopted this 16th day of May, 2010, by the following vote:

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstains:

Absent:

Chairman, Inyo County Local Transportation Commission

Attest:

Ted Pedersen, Executive Director

4/20/2010

To Inyo County Transportation Commission

From: Public transit dependent resident
Selma Calnan
198 Mac Iver St. #4
Bishop, CA 93514
769-872-1407 or email selmacalnan@gmail.com

Re The unmet transportation need I gave verbally at the recent meeting of the Social Services Transit Advisory Council

Mr. Smith,

Thanks to the committee for accepting this recap of my remarks. I was the last to speak on behalf of the elderly and appreciate the chance to expand that testimony for you. Our numbers in Inyo are as follows: 3,000 age 60 to 75, 1,300 age 76 – 85 and 500 age 86 and older (my group)

At the Bishop Senior Center, we enjoyed three and a brief tour to see the Christmas lights under the Inyo Mono Transit Authority but the trips were discontinued under the Eastern Sierra Transit Authority with no explanation. This is even more bewildering since the Director announced that another Senior Center had found a change in calculations that put the tours within the budget. (See Attachment)

At the recent workshop the ESTA representative explained that the tours would need too much "paper work" considering how many charter companies had to be notified. At the same time she acknowledged that the notices were merely routine since few of them would be interested considering the small number of riders. When asked if the notification could be done by email, the answer was "yes." Today I read about the 41st reunion in Manzanar, also part of our history as the WWII generation. We are disappearing down the memory hole nationally at the rate of 1500 per day, so every day is a special gift after lifetimes of postponed pleasures.

On the Mono County Transit Website the service that once was for disabled AND elderly is posted as limiting service only to the disabled elderly, requiring applications and a doctor's verification and notification 24 hours in advance. This certainly seems like an increase in paper work for a smaller number of riders. We in Inyo County have been assured that "It can't happen here" but we can remember similar assurances before WWII and find little comfort in them. We hope that a closer look at the ESTA service will reveal other hidden changes to restore the few day tours that added so much to our quality of life.

Thank you.

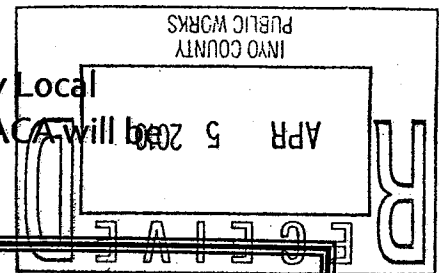
PROTECT OUR ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION!

Survey results are in!

Our survey showed that more than half of IMACA clients use public transportation. 79% of users say transportation cost limits their use of transportation, and 71% of Users use Dial-a-Ride, the majority due to issues of accessibility.

Many of you have expressed concerns that ESTA may reduce Dial-A-Ride Services in Inyo County, as they have in Mono County. In Mono County, residents can now only ride at night if they are certified as disabled, and make an appointment 24 hours in advance. A number of you have also expressed concerns that the cost of riding ESTA makes transportation inaccessible to low income residents of Inyo county.

On April 21, we will be voicing our concerns to the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission during their regular meeting. IMACA will be providing transportation to the meeting.



VOICE YOUR CONCERNS!

Date: Wednesday, April 21

Meet at 7:45 am at Bishop IMACA, and 8:30 am in Lone Pine

Transportation will be provided to the meeting which begins at 9 am in Independence, Board of Supervisors' Chambers, 224 N. Edwards St.

To sign up for a ride, call 760-873-8557 x22.

