



INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



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Executive Director

TO: Inyo County Local Transportation Commission

FROM: John Pinckney, Transportation Planner

DATE: June 19, 2019

SUBJECT: Unmet Transit Needs Findings - Recommendations

Recommended Action Your Commission is being asked to a) adopt Unmet Transit Needs Findings as presented by staff and b) approve Resolution No. 2019-03 regarding unmet transit needs.

2019/2020 Unmet Transit Needs Hearing Context The Inyo County Local Transportation Commission will not allocate TDA funds to local streets and roads in the 2019/2020 year. All TDA funds will be allocated to public transit and TDA eligible set-asides (for TDA administration, 2% to bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and 5% for community transit services). TDA revenues have been trending upward over the last five years, but for Eastern Sierra Transit to provide a new service, they may need to cut or reduce an existing service.

None of the identified transit needs met the definition of both an “unmet transit need” and “reasonable to meet.” This is a valuable exercise in that it lets the Commission, Eastern Sierra Transit, and the public explore the strengths and weaknesses of the transit system. The dialogue at the SSTAC meeting and unmet transit needs hearing provides valuable information to transit entities of changing needs in the area. Eastern Sierra Transit has been effective at modifying their services to meet area transit needs and identifying new sources of funding to provide other services.

Unmet Transit Needs Findings We have reviewed the information presented at the February 28, 2019 Social Services Transit Advisory Council meeting. There no public comments at either of the two Unmet Transit Needs Hearings (April 17th & May 15th). Following are the definitions of “Unmet Transit Need” and “Reasonable to Meet.” The definitions were adopted by the ICLTC in 1995 and amended in 2007 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.

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 28, 2019 in Bishop, California			
Name	Need	Unmet Transit Need that is Reasonable to Meet	Next Step
Dan David Northern Inyo Hospital	Transport of Northern Inyo Hospital patients with medical needs to and from local communities at all hours	Northern Inyo Hospital previously discussed the need for transporting patients to and from the hospital. This does not qualify as an unmet transit because of the nature of the medical needs. This is a middle zone between ambulance service and medical transport.	Northern Inyo Hospital (NIH) is operating the CARESHUTTLE utilizing volunteer drivers and two donated wheelchair accessible vans. ESTA Dial a Ride is available to supplement as feasible.
Beth Himelhoch IMAH	As stated last year, there is a perceived need for bus service between Lone Pine and Bishop on evenings and weekends to attend social events.	This roughly qualifies as an unmet transit need. This probably does not meet the definition of reasonable to meet because the transport is to a social event and not a formal appointment. This is more of a scheduling issue and not technically an unmet transit need.	The primary focus of area transit is to provide access to basic services. There is a possibility that farebox could be met, especially during the summer when numerous PCT hikers seek transit. ESTA is encouraged to look for grant funding to provide this service.
Arlene Calahan, ESTA Rider	To decrease the wait times for Dial-a-Ride	This roughly qualifies as an unmet transit need, but it is more of a scheduling issue and not technically an unmet transit need.	Phil Moores, ESTA shared his idea of re-instituting a fixed route in Bishop to reduce the load and wait times on Dial-a-Ride. ESTA is encouraged to further explore this idea.

The SSTAC meeting and Unmet Transit Needs hearings were held in accordance with the Transportation Development Act and the Inyo County LTC Organization and Procedures Manual.

Findings:

The following findings are made in the attached resolution based on the analysis above:

1. A meeting of the SSTAC was held on February 28, 2019.
2. A duly noticed Unmet Transit Needs Hearing was held on April 17, 2019 in Independence and on May 16, 2018 in Bishop.
3. There are **no** new transit needs that satisfy the definition of an *unmet transit need* and *reasonable to meet*.

Attachments:

- Draft ICLTC Resolution No. 2019-03
- SSTAC February 28, 2019 meeting notes