

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: April 2, 2008

SUBJECT: 2008/09 Unmet Transit Needs – FINDINGS

SUMMARY

A total of 320 individual requests were submitted for improvements in 104 specific categories during the 2008/2009 Unmet Needs cycle (See page B-1-3 to B-1-5).

- **One hundred** (100) of these requests will be addressed with comments by transit operators.
- **One** (1) meets the “Unmet Need” criteria and was subsequently analyzed for “reasonable to meet”.
- **Three** (3) others warranted additional consideration.

The one (1) transit request that meets the threshold criteria as an Unmet Need is evaluated in this staff report. Additionally, three (3) requests did not meet the “Unmet Needs” criteria, but required additional consideration. Staff has referred the remaining 100 requests to transit operators for comment. All bike-related requests (not subject to the Unmet Needs review) were forwarded to local jurisdictions for their consideration and response before the June 2008 meeting.

One (1) transit item was found to be an “Unmet Need” and three (3) others are included for discussion. They are as follows:

A. Request weekday RTA Route 12B northbound service from Morro Bay Park at 5:15 PM.

This request is an “unmet need,” found “reasonable to meet” and recommended for phased implementation in FY 2008/09 (See page B-1-6).

B. Request funding to subsidize continued \$2.00 fare on Ride-On Senior Shuttles.

This was not found to be an Unmet Transit Need based adopted criteria and TDA rules as to eligible sources toward supplemental fares (See page B-1-10).

C. Request SCAT Route 24 service to Strother Park and Bolsa Chica be discontinued.

This is an operational request, which does not meet the “unmet need” criteria (See Page B-1-11).

D. Request region-wide non-emergency medical transportation to/from hospitals/medical clinics.

While this issue brought at January 08 SSTAC meeting does not meet all “unmet needs” criteria, it warrants further evaluation for grant eligibility under the next New Freedom cycle (See Page B-1-12).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Staff:**
- A)** Approve Resolution 08-0_ finding there is one “unmet transit need” that is “reasonable to meet” for the 2008-09 fiscal year. Direct RTA to implement a supplemental short run to Cayucos in coordination with the County or the City of Morro Bay to minimize impact on current active fleet.
 - B)** Review in more detail recent productivity and cost efficiencies of the Ride-On-led Senior Shuttles with recommendations on how to streamline the program (August 2008)
 - C)** Encourage SCAT staff to monitor productivity and reevaluate this leg of SCAT Rte 24 once the Pismo Prime Outlets Transfer Center is completed (spring 2008).
 - D)** Bring to the Board in June 2008 a funding request for a proposed Non Emergency Medical transportation (NEMT) pilot project under the New Freedom grant program (June 2008)
 - E)** Bring back jurisdictional responses to transit operational requests and bike-related requests at the June Board meeting.

SSTAC:

TTAC:

CTAC:

BACKGROUND

The Transportation Development Act mandates that each Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) give the public the opportunity to request new expanded or modified transit services each year. Requests were received via letters, petitions, telephone, fax, e-mail and public testimonies at the February 6, 2008 Public Hearing, or submitted by the February 13th deadline. After grouping all the requests by operator, staff performs a two-tier review to determine:

- a) Which (if any) requests are found to be "Unmet Transit Needs;" and
- b) Among items found to be "Unmet Transit Needs," which ones are "Reasonable to Meet."

As adopted at the October 2007 Board meeting, a transit-related request must meet all four (4) regional criteria to be considered an "**Unmet Need**" (prior to being assessed for "Reasonableness to Meet"):

- 1a. **Gap:** the request fills a gap in transit service or is identified as a deficiency in Regional Transportation Plan, Clean Air Plan, ADA Paratransit Plan or Short Range Transit Plan;
- 1b. **Community Support:** sufficient broad-based community support is demonstrated by persons who will likely use the service on a routine basis (at least 15 requests for general public service and 10 requests for disabled service);
- 1c. **Current:** the request is a current rather than a future need; and
- 1d. **Expansion:** the request is for service expansion such as increased hours, increased frequency, new routes, significant modifications to existing routes; and not operational in nature, such as minor route changes or bus stop changes, etc. (If the request is for minor service changes, the request will be forwarded to the transit operator for follow-up.)

Only if all of the above criteria (1a-1d) are met, is the request considered an "Unmet Transit Need." For those requests that do not meet the above four criteria, SLOCOG staff will work toward developing solutions by coordinating requests and potential near-term remedies with transit operators and report back at the June Board meeting. Staff encourages each operator to address the public input from the Unmet Transit Needs process during the FY 07/08 budget preparation, mid-year budget adjustment or current/pending Short Range Transit Plan updates.

For those requests that meet the above four criteria (1a-1d), the next step in the evaluation is assessing "**Reasonableness to Meet.**" An Unmet Transit Need is recognized by SLOCOG as "reasonable to meet" if all of the following criteria (2a-2d) are satisfied.

- 2a. **Farebox:** The request is projected to generate the required farebox ratio (10% rural, 20% urban, 16.2% RTA) by the third year demonstrating continuous progress after the first and second years.
- 2b. **Fairness:** Service will not involve funding from a non-served entity.
- 2c. **Comparable:** Service is comparable with other similar transit services (Such as local fixed-route, regional fixed-route, local general public Dial-A-Ride, specialized Dial-A-Ride, circulator, trolley, etc.) or will be similar, based on the projected number of passengers per hour the proposed service would carry.
- 2d. **Funding Available:** The request is fundable with existing TDA funds, without reducing other existing transit services. The new, expanded, or revised service, if implemented, will not cause the responsible operator to incur expenditures in excess of available TDA funds (If 100% of the TDA funds are being used for transit, no mandate can be imposed upon the operator.) "The fact that an identified transit need cannot be fully met based on available resources shall not be the sole reason for finding that a transit need is not reasonable to meet." (*TDA PUC. Section 99401.5 (c)*)

DISCUSSION

Attachment A below summarizes the requests received from the public between February 15, 2007 and February 13, 2008. Based on preliminary review, one item shown with the asterisk was found to meet the above "Unmet Transit Needs" criteria.

ATTACHMENT A

Unmet Transit Needs Requests Received and Updated as of February 13, 2008						
Transit Service Request		Number of Requests	Fills Gap in Service	Community Support	Current Need	Service Expansion
"Unmet Needs" Definition Criteria						
SLO City						
1	Request bus service to SLO Airport.	3	Y	N	Y	Y
2	Expanded Rte 2 evening service on Thursdays during the summer.	1	N	N	N	Y
3	Expanded Rte 2 evening service on Fridays.	1	N	N	Y	Y
4	Request same Rte 6a and 6b schedule on Fridays as weekdays.	3	Y	N	Y	Y
5	Request later run from Cal Poly on Rte 6a.	1	N	N	Y	Y
6	Request schedules be posted at each bus stop.	1	N	N	Y	N
7	Request schedules posted at bus stops use larger font size (i.e. 14 point Sans Serif) and be placed to ADA standards.	1	N	N	Y	N
8	Comment that transit route map on schedule is difficult to understand.	1	N	N	Y	N
9	Comment that \$1.00 price tag on schedule be removed.	1	N	N	N	N
10	Request more buses run during peak hours at Cal Poly (i.e. 7:15-8am and 5:15-6pm).	1	N	N	Y	N
11	Request better coordination with Cal Poly class schedules.	2	N	N	Y	N
12	More convenient transfer times with regional system to Rte 3 going to Marigold Center.	1	N	N	Y	N
13	Request last Rte 3 bus not park continuously at Broad/Santa Barbara Rd. blocking bike lane.	1	N	N	N	N
14	Request lighting be installed in bus stop shelters (i.e. Johnson/Bishop, Laurel/Southwood, Laurel/Orcutt, Marigold Center).	1	N	N	Y	N
15	Request bus drivers call out fixed route stops.	1	N	N	Y	N
16	Request weekend service on Rte 1.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
17	Request to expand evening service on routes serving Foothill Blvd.	1	N	N	Y	Y
18	Request for more bike racks on buses.	2	N	N	Y	N
Ride-On (CTSA, TMA, etc.)						
19	Request additional Senior Shuttle vehicles be made available due to reservation issues.	2	Y	N	Y	Y
20	Request Ride-On vehicles stored at Las Tablas PnR lot park on the street.	1	N	N	Y	N
21	Request funding to subsidize continued \$2.00 senior fare on Ride-On Senior Shuttles.	57	N	Y	N	Y
22	Comment that Ride-On Senior Shuttle fare is too expensive.	1	N	N	N	N
23	Request Ride-On Senior Shuttle expand/increase service days throughout the week.	3	Y	N	Y	Y
24	Request Senior Shuttle operate on Fridays.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
SLO Regional Rideshare						
County Services:						
South Bay DAR						
Avila Trolley						
Cambria Trolley						
Nipomo DAR						
25	Request service as far north as Sheehy or Old Summit Rd. off Thompson Ave.	1	N	N	Y	Y
26	Request service to Hwy 166/101.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
SCAT						
27	Request staggering departure times for buses leaving Pismo Outlet Center.	1	N	N	Y	N
28	Comment that SCAT bus service map is very hard to read/understand.	3	N	N	Y	N
29	Comment that SCAT/RTA fare combinations on schedules are difficult to understand.	1	N	N	Y	N
30	Request less transfers to reach SLO from Five Cities area.	1	N	N	Y	Y
31	Request bus drivers stay on time with schedule.	2	N	N	Y	N
32	Request that Rte 24 service to Strother Park and Bolsa Chica be discontinued.	9	N	N	Y	N

Transit Service Request		Number of Requests	Fills Gap in Service	Community Support	Current Need	Service Expansion
RTA						
* 33	Request Rte 12B service from Morro Bay Park at Harbor Blvd northbound to Cayucos at 5:15 M-F (increase frequency).	20	Y	Y	Y	Y
34	Request mid-day southbound time change to Rte 12B be reversed (12:30 pm back to 11:30 am).	1	N	N	Y	N
35	Request bus service to Hwy 227/Los Ranchos intersection.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
36	Request increased frequency of Rte 12B from Cambria to SLO.	3	N	N	Y	Y
37	Request to recombine Rtes 12A and 12B into one route.	1	N	N	Y	Y
38	Request to revisit early departure time on SB Rte 12B in Cambria.	1	N	N	Y	N
39	Comment that routing changes are difficult to understand and hurt existing riders.	1	N	N	Y	N
40	Request "Rider Alert" notices be posted earlier and on all buses when making service changes.	1	N	N	Y	N
41	Request to provide bus service on Price Canyon Rd. to SLO Airport.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
42	Request bus stop at Buckley/Hwy 227.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
43	More service frequency on Rte 12A from Los Osos to SLO.	1	N	N	Y	Y
44	Request bus service on Hwy 41(i.e. Camp 8 to Atascadero).	1	Y	N	Y	Y
45	Request that Rte 12A afternoon express run leave earlier from SLO Government Center.	1	N	N	Y	N
46	Request more Rte 9 express runs (i.e. 5:05 or 5:15pm and 7:45am from Templeton).	2	N	N	Y	Y
47	Request Saturday SB Rte 9 run arrive at Government Center at 8:30am and return NB at 5:10pm.	1	N	N	Y	N
48	Request for a Rte 12A bus stop before or around South Bay Blvd. and LOVR.	1	N	N	Y	N
49	Request evening Rte 12A express go up 10th rather than South Bay from LOVR to Santa Ysabel.	1	N	N	Y	N
50	Request for larger capacity regional buses (i.e. Rte 9), or allow people to stand.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
51	Add additional Rte 9 express buses for morning and afternoon/evening commute hours.	3	N	N	Y	Y
52	Request that bus #F758 not be used for Rte 9.	1	N	N	N	N
53	Request Rte 9, 10 and 12 drivers stay on time with schedule and stop at designated bus stops.	2	N	N	Y	N
54	Request bus stop locations on schedules refer to landmarks.	1	N	N	N	N
55	Request larger sized text be used on schedules.	4	N	N	Y	N
56	Request timetables use a white background on schedules to be easier to read.	1	N	N	N	N
57	Transfer points on map portion of schedules is too small to read.	1	N	N	Y	N
58	Request for reliable operations of tie-downs and wheelchair lifts on vehicles.	1	N	N	Y	N
59	Improve limited schedule/times of service b/w South County and SLO.	1	N	N	Y	Y
60	Request RTA bus service b/w SLO and Arroyo Grande on the half hour (schedule issue).	1	N	N	Y	Y
61	Request for a bus stop at LOVR and Pallisades in Los Osos.	1	N	N	Y	N
62	Request buses not stop too far from curb.	2	N	N	Y	N
63	Request bus passes be sold in Los Osos.	1	N	N	Y	N
64	Request earlier morning run on northbound Rte 10 express bus and less SLO stops.	1	N	N	Y	Y
65	Request more/smooth transfers from Rte 10 to SCAT at Prime Outlets Center.	2	N	N	Y	N
66	Petition dated May 2007 objecting to Rte 10 service changes.	81	N	Y	Y	N
67	Request Rte 10 express runs eliminate Nipomo stops to improve travel times.	1	N	N	Y	N
68	Request improved maintenance of RTA fleet.	1	N	N	Y	N
69	Request RTA drivers receive pay increase without cuts to service.	1	N	N	N	N
70	Request later Rte 9 evening service on Saturdays.	1	N	N	Y	Y
71	Request RTA drivers receive breaks.	1	N	N	Y	N
72	Request Regional Transit Manager position be filled as soon as possible.	2	N	N	Y	N
73	Request RTA provide periodic perimeter routes outside of SLO downtown core to reduce walking.	1	N	N	Y	Y
74	Comment that new Rte 10 schedule is difficult for disabled persons.	1	Y	N	Y	N
75	Request SB Rte 10 provide stop at Hwy 166/101.	1	Y	N	Y	Y

Transit Service Request		Number of Requests	Fills Gap in Service	Community Support	Current Need	Service Expansion
Atascadero						
76	Request fixed-route service to zoo/lake.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
77	Request expanded evening service on North County Shuttle.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
78	Request North County Shuttle stop on west side of Hwy 101 interchange at Vineyard Dr.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
79	Request Atascadero DAR extend service hours.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
80	Request improved connection times b/w NC Shuttle and RTA Rte 9 at Paso Multimodal Center.	1	N	N	Y	N
81	Request fixed-route service along Hwy 41 west to Morro Bay (i.e. summer shuttle pilot program).	2	Y	N	N	Y
Morro Bay						
Paso Robles CAT						
82	Request City of Paso provide senior/disabled discount card to people who live outside city limits.	1	N	N	Y	N
83	Request discount fare passes be available at Transit Center and Senior Center.	6	N	N	Y	N
84	Request evening bus to SLO Farmer's Market on Thursdays.	1	Y	N	N	Y
85	Request shuttle service along Hwy 46 west to Cambria (i.e. summer shuttle pilot program).	1	Y	N	Y	Y
Region-Wide						
86	Request more bike racks on all buses.	2	N	N	Y	N
87	Request low-cost door-to-door evening paratransit DAR service throughout the County.	1	Y	N	Y	Y
88	Request to provide non-emergency medical transportation to/from hospitals and medical clinics	8	Y	N	Y	Y
89	Request bike locker storage at high-use stops.	1	N	N	Y	N
90	Request for a universal discount card that is recognized by all transit operations county-wide.	1	N	N	Y	N
91	Request all providers use a standard format for the map portion on schedules.	1	N	N	Y	N
92	Comment of too many fare categories for seniors.	1	N	N	Y	N
93	Comment that system-to-system fare sharing is unclear.	2	N	N	Y	N
94	Comment on lack of consistent transit service to mobile parks.	2	N	N	Y	Y
95	Request drivers not leave bus stop too early (missed connections).	1	N	N	Y	N
96	Request for more senior transportation choices within the county.	1	Y	N	Y	N
97	Request for upright surfboard racks on public transit vehicles.	6	N	N	Y	N
98	Request all TDA funds be spent on public transit.	3	N	N	Y	N
SLOCOG						
99	Request that trash/recycle receptacles be placed at Las Tablas PnR lot.	2	N	N	Y	N
100	Request large print UTN flier handouts at a reachable level on buses for people with low vision.	1	N	N	N	N
101	Request bus stop improvements be made to Halcyon PnR.	1	N	N	Y	N
102	Request to expand Las Tablas PnR lot.	2	Y	N	Y	N
Runabout						
103	Request Runabout vehicles install bike racks if used to replace out-of-service RTA buses .	4	N	N	Y	Y
104	Request to increase operating hours (i.e. expand evening service hours).	2	Y	N	Y	Y

Total 320

A) Request Weekday RTA Rte 12B N/B run from Morro Bay to Cayucos at PM commute hour

Background:

The Cayucos community with approximately 3,000 residents and located 8 miles north of Morro Bay, has very limited regional transit access along the North Coast. The current frequency (3 round trips a day on weekdays, 4 on Saturdays and 3 on Sundays) did not significantly change since Fiscal Year 2003/04, when the RTA was running a “thru bus service” into Cayucos and Cambria, without needing to transfer at the Morro Bay Park.

The “newer” service in place since August 2007 is structured as follows: hourly runs on RTA Route 12-A provide timed transfers at the Morro Bay Park, from which only three times a day patrons can ride RTA Route 12-B, going north along Route 1. This north coast route also serves North Morro Bay, Cayucos core part, Cambria and San Simeon Acres with a few longer runs to the Hearst Castle Visitors Center. Both “12-A” and “12-B” are treated as “pairs” in the same route 12 structure, thus passengers can ride both on the same monthly pass and transfer from one bus to the other at no extra cost if they use the cash fares (in either direction). Ridership on Route 12-B (Cambria-Morro Bay) was 515 riders (November 07) at a productivity at 5 riders per hour (note: this service has been in place as a feeder to Route 12-A for less than one year).

Based on the February 2008 unmet needs request for one supplemental northbound run between Morro Bay and Cayucos at the PM commute hour, there are many regular riders, who rely upon the RTA to reach Morro Bay, the main Cuesta campus (including Achievement House), Cal Poly campus and job sites in San Luis Obispo with regular daytime work/school hours. Those regular riders would like a more convenient return time to match their end-of-the-weekday schedules; they also expect more riders (from North of Morro Bay) to join them, if the improved return trip was added.

North Coast Transit Plan:

In 2005/06, SLOCOG with partial funding from the County contracted with a transit consultant to prepare the North Coast Transit Plan, made of 3 components (Los Osos; Morro Bay; and Cambria). One recommendation from the Morro Bay component was directly related to Cayucos as follows:

“By 2009/10, evaluate the ***potential for expanding the Morro Bay Dial-a-Ride to Cayucos***”.

The consultant had identified a future operating scenario with a single bus running on two hour headways (such a scenario assumed the deployment of a new DAR van-thus expanding the City fleet with County financially responsible); this concept would warrant 100% County commitment to the City incremental costs of the added service (capital, maintenance and operating) and negotiations between the RTA (on behalf of the County) and the City.”

Based on the North Coast Transit Plan direction to **improve connections between North Morro Bay and Cayucos**, the consultant had *not* recommended more frequent RTA service along the north coastal corridor. If the above expanded DAR scenario was indeed feasible, it would *more than address* the above request. Regular RTA riders on the southernmost leg of Route 12-B; instead of transferring to the current RTA bus 12-B, could transfer to a DAR van. The current request is much more “modest”: for a once-a-day earlier connection and fixed route coverage *instead of* the curb-to-curb Dial a Ride.

February 08 Cayucos Request Evaluation:

Given below are the findings on unmet needs status, followed by more discussion for each criterion.

TABLE B-1-1 Qualifying Criteria for “Unmet Needs”

Improvements Requested by Cayucos riders	CRITERIA			
	1a Fill a gap in service	1b Broad Community Support	1c Current Need (instead of Future)	1d Service expansion or new service
Augment Routes 12 A/B Service Connection in Morro Bay (City Park) onto Cayucos (pier vicinity) at the PM commute time on weekdays				
Finding/ Recommendation				
Earlier northbound trip from RTA Rte 12-A to North Morro Bay and Cayucos (commuter focus)	YES	YES	YES	YES
An unmet transit need: review for reasonableness to meet via several service options (near term) and incorporate in the 2008/09 RTA Short Range Transit Plan service elements				

1a) Fill a gap in current service:

The schedule of RTA Rte 12-B, implemented in August 2007, does not have enough window to start an earlier run headed northbound *without* removing the current last run (leaves Morro Bay at 6:17 PM). This request, adding “one hour” earlier return time for commuters or students starting in SLO and at intermediate points on the way to Morro Bay, fills a gap in “time of day” coverage on the North Coast. For now, except for the small Cayucos senior van operated by volunteer drivers, no other transit option can fill that gap. ***This criterion is met under current conditions.***

1b) Community Support:

A total of 20 individuals requested filling that gap in service in the PM commute hour and on weekdays only. There is sufficient broad-based community support (i.e. a minimum of 15 requests). ***This second criterion is met.***

1c) Current need instead of a future need:

This request is for a current need, already identified in the 2006 North Coast Transit Plan and further amplified by the August 2007 service re-structuring (due to the introduction of a “forced:” transfer in Morro Bay). ***This 3rd criterion is met.***

1d) Service expansion:

This request for an extra northbound connection, tied to the current Rte 12-A arrival at 5:15 PM is for more service. This request is not operational in nature as supplemental service (hours, driver and vehicle) are warranted. ***This fourth criterion is met.***

Unmet Needs Finding:

The Morro Bay to Cayucos “increased weekday commute connection” is an unmet need to be evaluated for reasonableness to meet.

For this evaluation, three options were developed. They all assume that the service would be “seamless” to the public-no change in the fixed route afternoon operation within North Morro Bay and Cayucos. The proposed vehicle would run in fixed route mode up to the Cayucos pier (stopping at designated RTA stops along North Main Street in North Morro Bay and Ocean Avenue in Cayucos). The three options differ as follows:

- ✓ **Option A** would provide an extra short run (tripper) operated by the RTA contractor and warrant an extra leased vehicle; the evaluation assumes a 12 month lease, which is a costly

investment for the expected demand (8 to 12 average daily). Yet the lease cost would not necessarily be fully borne by that service, subject to fleet assignment to runs on other RTA routes.

- ✓ **Option B** assumes an inter-agency agreement between the County and Morro Bay for the City contractor to deploy one of its existing DAR vans into Cayucos. This option would be funded entirely by the County; it may not be operationally feasible due to the current Morro Bay DAR hours up to 6:30 PM and the needed intra-city capacity to serve local trips within the City.
- ✓ **Option C** assumes the deployment of an RTA-owned (*County ownership was transferred to the RTA in July 2007*) Dial-a-Ride van from Los Osos, where the local weekday DAR service ends at 5 PM. This option would be funded entirely by the County; it might be more feasible than Option B due to the current administrative agreement between the County and RTA, as well as their joint operating contractor since January 2008.

Given below is a summary on the reasonableness to meet test, followed by highlights for each criterion

TABLE B-1-2 Qualifying Criteria for Reasonableness to meet Evaluation

Service Request	CRITERIA			
	2a Farebox Recovery Ratio	2b Funding from served entities	2c Comparable with similar services	2d Fundable with TDA
Add one commute "short run" between Morro Bay Park and downtown Cayucos (weekdays only) to supplement the existing RTA Route 12-B last run				
Option A) -RTA operating w/leased vehicle (near term)	YES	NO	YES	YES, maybe
Option B) Dedicated County Funding toward a local Morro Bay DAR weekday coverage (one trip):	YES	YES	YES	YES
Option C) Coverage by a local South Bay DAR weekday to Cayucos via Morro Bay (no new van)	YES	YES	YES	YES
Finding/ Recommendations:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Option A is not reasonable to meet at this time (fleet requirement would be too costly) ✓ Option B is not feasible in the short term; it should be reviewed within a Morro Bay DAR day time expansion to Cayucos scenario under a potential cost sharing agreement with County (upcoming RTA SRTP) ✓ Option C is reasonable to meet with the County deploying one South Bay van to Morro Bay (past the end of the current service day) 				

2a) Farebox Recovery Ratios

Table B-1-3 gives the projections of the annual performance for each option, which could fill the current gap in PM commute service (Morro Bay to Cayucos). As shown, the Option B farebox ratio would be the highest (although total costs to the County of the Morro Bay contractor providing that service might be understated). Overall the projected farebox ratios for the new service (based on the current RTA fare structure) would be well above the 10% minimum for a rural service. Under all options, this short run service meets the minimum farebox ratio (for that short segment) and has negligible impact upon the overall farebox ratio for the RTA fixed route operations.

Those annual projections are based on:

- Providing the service for a single extra run, 5 days a week, northbound only;
- Achieving the current average fare at \$1.00 (January 08 RTA report system wide average) consistent with the free transfer policy between 12-A and 12-B implemented since August 2007;
- Assuming current operating costs per hour (from \$65 under Option C to \$75 under Option B and up to \$85 under Option A)-although under Option B, the city of Morro Bay might choose to increase those costs under contract with the County; and
- Projecting running times comparable to the current RTA timetable (same route structure to downtown Cayucos).

Based on the above findings on future performance, ***this criterion is met.***

Table- B-1-3- Projected Performance of Morro Bay-Cayucos Commute Direction: One PM run to Cayucos-only

Cayucos Commute Options		Days of Service	Ridership (est.)	Passenger Fares	New Hours	Operating Costs	Segment level Farebox ratio	Cost effectiveness impacts	Local DAR systems Farebox Ratios (06-07)
	Scope		Annual boardings	Same as current RTA structure	Weekday only	See Sources	Rte 12 Minimum at 10%	RTA system Farebox Ratio (all corridors)	DAR Minimum Met
A	Assign additional RTA "short run" (with extra vehicle)	Mon thru Fri	1,820	\$1,820	109	\$9,282	19.6%	15.14%-not significantly impacted	N/A
B	Deploy one additional Morro Bay DAR van (with extra driver)	Mon thru Fri	2,340	\$2,340	109	\$8,190	28.6%	No Direct Impact on MBDAR operating cost effectiveness	13%
C	Deploy one existing South Bay DAR van (no extra vehicle)	Mon thru Fri	2,600	\$2,600	195	\$12,675	20.5%	No Direct Impact on SBDAR cost effectiveness	15%

Sources:

August 2007 RTA operating and financial data for Rte 12-A and B combined-at \$85 an hour
 September 2007 Morro Bay TDA transit annual report and Jan 08 TDA transit quarterly reports (first two quarters)-at \$75 an hour
 August 2007 County operating and financial data for South Bay Dial A Ride-at \$65 an hour

Note: The RTA Operating costs shown do not include the bus lease costs, estimated at \$3K per month-those are excluded from farebox ratios, although they would add at least **\$36K** a year to the costs of implementing this service in the short term

ASSUMPTIONS

- 1) For each scenario, ridership combines North Morro Bay and Cayucos passengers (same stops at Rte 12-B)
- 2) The current fare structure on Rte 12-B provides free transfers from Rte 12-A; each option uses same average fare at \$1.00
- 3) Scenarios A and B assume 25 min. roundtrips to Cayucos (no southbound stops); Scenario C assumes 45 min. round trip

2-b) Funding from served entities

This criterion is met under Options B and C, since the RTA short route segment primarily benefits members of the Cayucos community within the County. Under Option A, the RTA incremental cost would be part of the regional RTA budget under the JPA-funding formula;

2c) Comparable with similar services

There are special commute runs in other parts of the region, usually meant to accommodate extra passenger loads and shorten the bus riding times at commute hours (more direct trips). While neither one of those aspects directly pertain to the Morro Bay-Cayucos market at PM peak hours, the fact that special consideration is already given to commuters in all other corridors (Rte 9 to Paso Robles, Rte 10 to Santa Maria and Rte 12 express to Los Osos), the rationale for this added run is very similar in terms of responding to commuters/students needs as already offered in those other areas. ***This criterion is met under all three options.***

2d) Fundable with TDA

Option A: Under the JPA formula, a request for supplemental funding toward added service (for the short leg of a regional route) might not qualify for LTF contributions-as it may not support the regional service levels expected on rural segments. Yet since the August 2007 service restructuring among all RTA routes, there are very few remaining legs of the regional network (except for trips between Paso Robles and San Miguel) with less than three weekday round trips. In addition, this option would incur a much larger cost than Options B or C, potentially quadrupling the expenses (up to \$45K with the lease). ***This criterion may not be met under Option A.***

Other options: This added service not only caters to Cayucos residents, but only serves North Morro Bay commuters, students and residents returning from San Luis Obispo, Cal Poly and Cuesta College. In the case of Option C, that same service could also cater to Los Osos workers, who reside in Cayucos. This small expansion is fundable with LTF monies from the County. ***This criterion is met under Options B and C.***

Finding:

Adding a short commute run to RTA Rte 12-B between Morro Bay and Cayucos is an unmet need, reasonable to meet. Implementation in the near term would be easier under Option C.

Recommendations:

- 1) The RTA together with the County should fill the Morro Bay-to-Cayucos afternoon gap by deploying a South Bay DAR van to connect with the RTA Rte 12-A on weekdays (added service funded by the County) and setting aside \$14,000 in LTF funds toward that service as defined under Option C.
- 2) The upcoming RTA Short Range Transit Plan update should assess the future potential for the County to contract with Morro Bay for an expansion of its DAR service into Cayucos, consistent with the 2006 North coast transit plan recommendations for the Morro Bay area. (Note: Such a review goes beyond the scope of this unmet needs request, as Option B only covered a single northbound run (instead of several scheduled round trips a day)).

B) Request More Funding toward the Continued \$2.00 Fare on Ride-On Senior Shuttles
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1a) *Fill a gap in current service:*

This request focuses on one among *many* alternative transportation solutions for seniors; even with the last 10-months of added service days (up to at least 3 a week), the overall scale of this program remains small if compared to the volume of senior transit riders. A region wide estimate based on recent plans or ridership reports showed close to *400 senior riders* on an average day, among all services, out of which 50 to 60 use Senior Shuttles (or no more than 15% of the total). The Senior Transportation Options project (See staff report E-7) identified many opportunities for seniors to use transit, available at the lowest out-of-pocket cost-including the free Gold Pass (80+) on several systems. In some areas, the Ride On Senior Shuttles have a limited market or may duplicate options already in place, such as two senior vans (North Coast-funded by the County), the senior volunteer driver program (North county-privately funded) and the Five Cities Senior Shuttle (South County local jurisdictions), also operated by Ride On . ***This criterion is not met.***

1b) *Community Support:*

This request was submitted by a very large number of seniors (more than 55 individuals), although the scope of their requests often lacked clarity. ***This criterion is met.***

1c) *Current need instead of a future need:*

This request addresses the need for Ride On to secure supplemental funding (local support) for compensating for the discounted senior fares. While the Ride-On decision to lower fares was triggered by seniors' reaction to the historical fare (\$4.00) being too high, the sudden influx of additional operating funds (STA supplemental operating award in March 2007) was another catalyst. Yet the need for supplementing fares is not the same as the need for supporting service expansion. At this time ***this criterion is not met***, as Ride On has not actively sought other revenues or donations from the community to support its rapidly increased service span. No commitment was secured before making that shift.

1d) Service expansion:

This request calls for subsidizing fares *instead of* expanding service (longer hours, more days, more vehicles etc...). Other requests for expanding the senior shuttle (#19, 23 and 24) had much fewer individuals requesting those (less than 3 individuals). However, if the current Ride-On operated program can afford to maintain the half fare on all rides (regardless of the trip length, the number of riders or how far in advance a reservation is made), one can expect the demand to grow and remain strong. Additional funding would indeed support the increase in ride requests and/or higher capacity on weekdays. **This criterion is met.**

Finding:

This request is not an unmet transit need.

Recommendations:

Closer evaluation of the Ride On Senior Shuttles is warranted before the 2008/09 triennial performance audit. Better tracking of the 10+ month program expansion is warranted to address at least the following:

- 1) Ensure the added rides support a more cost-effective service,
- 2) Determine whether the current flat fare structure enables Ride-On to recover a large enough share of the direct cost of the services,
- 3) Set monthly productivity targets for Senior Shuttles by area and weekday/Saturday and compare those to actual ratios; and
- 4) Identify willing funding partners in the region, if the Ride-On policy is to maintain the discount fares in the future.

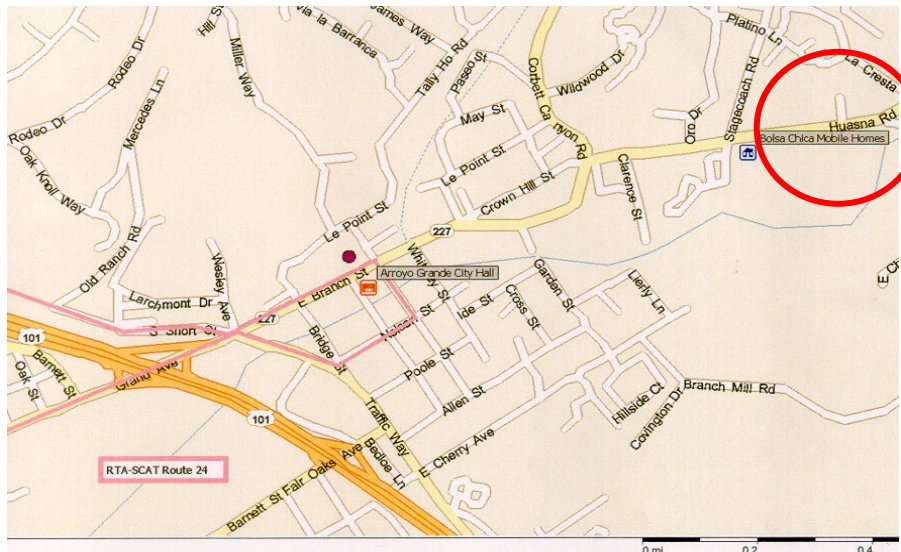
C) Request SCAT Route 24 service to Strother Park and Bolsa Chica be discontinued

Background:

During the 2005/06 Unmet Transit Needs study 23 people requested fixed-route bus service to Bolsa Chica Mobile Estates (East of Arroyo Grande Village). This request was later found *not* to meet the “unmet need” criteria because it did not “fill a gap in transit service”. At the time, service consisted of the Five Cities Senior Subsidized Taxi which served the Arroyo Grande area from 6AM to 8PM seven days a week. However, at that time, when SCAT service changes were implemented outside of the Unmet Needs process, the SCAT Rte 24 was extended and began providing fixed-route bus service to the area. Currently, SCAT Rte 24 serves Bolsa Chica Mobile Estates and Strother Park at approximately 40 minutes after the hour seven days a week.

Current Request:

Since February 2007 SLOCOG staff received a petition signed by 9 individuals requesting that SCAT Rte 24 service to Bolsa Chica Mobile Estates and Strother Park be discontinued, “as it would be in the best interests of SCAT bus riders.” There was no additional reason provided in the petition (nor contact info) for discontinuing this leg of SCAT Rte 24.



SCAT Rte 24 Request Evaluation:

Given below (Table B-1-4) is a summary of the findings on the unmet needs evaluation for this request.

TABLE B-1-4 Qualifying Criteria for “Unmet Needs”

SCAT Rte 24 to Bolsa Chica and Strother Park Discontinue SCAT Rte 24 service to Bolsa Chica Mobile Estates and Strother Park in Arroyo Grande	CRITERIA			
	1a Fill a gap in service	1b Broad Community Support	1c Current Need (instead of Future)	1d Service expansion or new service
Finding/ Recommendation Not an unmet transit need: encourage SCAT staff to monitor productivity and reevaluate this leg of SCAT Rte 24 once the Pismo Prime Outlets Transfer Center is completed	NO	NO	YES	NO

- 1a) **Fill a gap in current service:**
There is no gap in service as SCAT Rte 24 currently serves this location. ***This criterion is not met.***
- 1b) **Community Support:**
A total of 9 individuals requested discontinuing this leg of SCAT Rte 24. There is not sufficient broad-based community support (i.e. a minimum of 15 requests). ***This second criterion is not met.***
- 1c) **Current need instead of a future need:**
This request is for a current need as requests were submitted during the current Unmet Needs cycle. ***This third criterion is met.***
- 1d) **Service expansion:**
This request does not require additional hours of operation or vehicles. ***This fourth criterion is not met.***

Unmet Needs Finding:

This is an operational request and therefore does not meet all the “unmet need “criteria. However, SCAT staff intends to revisit this request upon completion of the Pismo Prime Outlets transfer site.

Recommendation:

Encourage SCAT staff to monitor productivity and reevaluate this leg of SCAT Rte 24 once the Pismo Prime Outlets Transfer Center is completed (spring 2008).

D) Request regional non-emergency medical transportation to/from hospitals/medical clinics

Background:

This issue was raised by a number of representatives during the January 2008 Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) meeting, and was subsequently discussed at length by the Council. Due to standard operating hours for the majority of public transit providers, people who experience sudden non-threatening injuries and illnesses have few options available to them for non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) to county-wide hospitals and medical clinics. Additionally, because of irregular/random discharge times that do not correspond with transit providers' normal operating hours, some patients are left without any, or few, transportation choices once being released from the hospital and medical clinics.

Currently, county-wide Dial-a-Ride (DAR) services and Senior Shuttle operations provide the only means of transportation for some people, and only then by advanced reservation during limited days and times throughout the week. As such, some people are left with little or no other choice but to call an ambulance for transportation when experiencing non-emergency medical injuries and illnesses.

Regional Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Request Evaluation:

Given below is a summary of the findings on the unmet needs evaluation for this request.

TABLE B-1-5 Qualifying Criteria for "Unmet Needs"

Regional Non-Emergency Medical Transportation	CRITERIA			
	1a	1b	1c	1d
Provide region-wide non-emergency medical transportation to and from hospitals and medical clinics	Fill a gap in service	Broad Community Support	Current Need (instead of Future)	Service expansion or new service
Finding/ Recommendation Not an unmet transit need: warrants further evaluation for grant eligibility under the next New Freedom cycle (June 2008)	YES	NO	YES	YES

- 1a) **Fill a gap in current service:**
At this time, other than limited DAR and Senior Shuttle services, there is no other public transit option for filling this gap. **This criterion is met.**
- 1b) **Community Support:**
A total of 8 individuals requested a program for filling this gap in service. There is not sufficient broad-based community support (i.e. at least 15 requests). **This second criterion is not met.**
- 1c) **Current need instead of a future need:**
With limited options available county-wide, this request qualifies as a current need. **This third criterion is met.**
- 1d) **Service expansion:**
The request for a region-wide non-emergency medical transportation service will require a new and/or expanded service involving additional vehicles and/or hours of operation. **This fourth criterion is met.**

Unmet Needs Finding:

While this request does not meet all the "unmet needs" criteria, it warrants further evaluation.

Recommendation:

Bring back to the Board in June 08 an evaluation of a proposed non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) pilot project per Caltrans criteria for "beyond ADA" under New Freedom grant (fall 08 awards). Tim Gillham, Eliane Guillot and Peter Rodgers prepared this staff report.