



**STAFF REPORT**  
Board Meeting of June 22, 2022

**AGENDA ITEM:** 6-A

**PREPARED BY:** Evelyn Espinosa, Associate Regional Planner

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**SUBJECT:**

FY 2022-23 Unmet Transit Needs Recommendations

**Enclosure:** Yes

**Action:** MCTC Staff recommends the MCTC Policy Board approve the Social Service Transportation Advisory Council's 2022-23 Unmet Transit Needs finding by Resolution No. 22-07

**SUMMARY:**

Pursuant to Section 99401.5 of the California Public Utilities Code, the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC), as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency, must make a finding after holding a Public Hearing that there are no unmet public transportation needs within the jurisdiction of claimants which can be reasonably met before it may approve Local Transportation Fund claims for streets and roads.

The MCTC Policy Board adopted the following definitions by Resolution No. 22-01 for its Unmet Transit Needs process:

- A. **UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS:** an unmet transit need is an expressed or identified need that is not currently being met through existing public transportation services. An unmet transit need also is a need required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- B. **REASONABLE TO MEET:** The term "reasonable to meet" shall apply to public or specialized transportation services that meet the following minimum criteria:
  1. **Feasibility**
    - The proposed service can be provided with available Transportation Development Act (TDA) funding and/or other funding sources (per state law, the lack of available resources shall not be the sole reason for finding that a transit need is not reasonable to meet per PUC Section 99401.5(c).
    - Sufficient ridership potential exists for new, expanded, or revised transit services.

- The proposed transit service will be safe and comply with local, state, and federal law.
- 2. Community Acceptance
  - The proposed transit service has community support from the general public, community groups, and/or community leaders.
- 3. Benefit to Population
  - The proposed transit service serves a significant number of residents where it is needed and would benefit the general public and/or senior and disabled persons as a whole.
- 4. Cost Effective
  - The proposed transit service will not affect the ability of the overall system of the implementing agency or agencies to meet applicable transit system performance objectives or the State TDA farebox ratio requirement after any exemption(s) period(s) if the service is eligible for exemption(s) per CCR 6633.2.
  - The proposed transit service, if implemented or funded, would not cause the responsible operator to incur expenditures in excess of the maximum amount of LTF, STA, FTA funds, and fare revenues and local support.
- 5. Consistent with Intent of Existing Transit Service(s)
  - Once established, the proposed transit service will not abuse or obscure the intent of existing transit service(s).
  - The proposed transit need should be in conformance with the goals included in the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, and consistent with the intent of the goals of the adopted Short Range Transit Plan.

The role of the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) is to aid the MCTC Policy Board in its review of transit issues with emphasis on the annual identification of transit needs within Madera County. The establishment of the Madera County SSTAC is consistent with State Law (SB 498, Chapter 673, 1987) which mandates both the purpose and minimum membership of this body. The purpose of the SSTAC is to:

- A. Annually participate in identification of transit needs (Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing Process).
- B. Review and recommend appropriate action by the MCTC Policy Board which finds, by resolution, that:
  1. There are no unmet transit needs,
  2. There are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet,
  3. There are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet.
- C. Advise the MCTC on any other major transit issues, including the coordination and consolidation of specialized transportation services.

At the “Unmet Transit Needs” Public Hearing on Wednesday, April 20, 2022, the MCTC Policy Board opened the hearing to receive public testimony. The following staff evaluation was

prepared in cooperation with the SSTAC. MCTC Staff, on behalf of the SSTAC, will submit that body's findings to the MCTC Policy Board under separate correspondence.

## **NARRATIVE OF EVALUATION**

### **City of Madera**

There are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet at this time in the City of Madera.

MCTC staff has reviewed and discussed testimony regarding the City of Madera's transit services with the SSTAC. The recommendation from MCTC staff and the SSTAC is that there are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet at this time.

Testimony was received regarding the Walmart stop. The City of Madera is currently evaluating all bus stops as part of its on-going transit plan study. This bus stop will be under evaluation as well.

Testimony was received about the need for wastebaskets at bus stops in the City of Madera. The SSTAC recommended that there be waste baskets at each bus stop and that it is regularly maintained. Madera METRO is currently looking to improve sanitation around transit stops.

Testimony regarding wait times due to shortage in drivers is already being addressed. The City of Madera informed the SSTAC that they are in the process of hiring and training additional drivers that should improve wait times.

Testimony was received about street improvements, safety, lighting, speeding on the streets, and safety around parks and schools, and will be shared with the appropriate agencies. Testimony about signage improvements was also received and the City of Madera informed the SSTAC that those improvements will be part of their planned system improvement after the Transit Plan is finalized in 2023. Testimony about a fare decrease was received. The City of Madera indicated that they are not currently charging fares.

Testimony about driver customer service was received. Customer service training and safety training will resume in person, which should be more effective. Driver training was held virtually during the pandemic.

### **City of Chowchilla**

There are no unmet transit needs in the City of Chowchilla.

### **County of Madera**

There are no unmet transit needs in Madera County.

Testimony received about street improvements, safety, lighting, speeding on the streets, safety around parks and schools will be shared with the appropriate agencies.

Testimony about a fare decrease was received. Madera County has not raised the fare in many years. It will be considered in the future when the County has more capacity.

Testimony about signage improvement was received. The County informed the SSTAC that they are working on purchasing signs for bus location with more information as part of their service improvement plan.

Testimony about service expansion was received. The County indicated that it has already expanded service in the La Vina area. Monday was added as an extra day of service by the County.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

No fiscal impact to the approved 2021-22 Overall Work Program and Budget.