



## City of Needles, California Request for City Council Action

☒ CITY COUNCIL ☐ NPUA

☒ Regular ☐ Special

**Meeting Date:** September 9, 2025

**Title:** Receive and file the Needles Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) 2025-2030

**Background:** San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) requires each transit agency to prepare a Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP), which is a multi-year operating and capital plan. The SRTP provides information on the transit services provided, their performance, any needs and deficiencies, and a proposed plan for the operations and capital investments covering the next five years. The City of Needles (City) SRTP is for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025/2026 to FY 2029/2030.

### Summary of Existing Transit Services and Performance

The City operates the following public transportation services:

1. **Needles Area Transit (NAT)** is the primary local public transportation provider in the City. NAT operates one (1) deviated fixed route service on one-hour headways. The route includes two loops, both beginning and ending on G Street at Broadway. The first loop is the West Loop with stops at the Elks Lodge, Needles Regional Senior Center, Colorado River Medical Center, Needles Branch Library, and the Sheriff's Department. The second loop is the North-South Loop with stops at Carl's Jr. and Best Western Hotel. NAT runs Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:55 p.m. and on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:55 p.m.
2. **Needles Dial-a-Ride (DAR)**, also known as the Senior Shuttle, provides curb-to-curb service for persons age 60 and over and for persons with a disability that limits mobility. Service is provided Monday through Friday beginning at 9:00 a.m. with final drop-off at 1:15 p.m. Trips are scheduled on a reservation basis with same-day trips scheduled after 9:00 a.m. Needles Dial-a-Ride provides trips within the city limits.
3. **Needles Dial-a-Ride (DAR) Medical** is a service provided twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday, available to the general public on a first-come, first-served basis strictly for medical appointments in the Bullhead City, Arizona area. Service is by advanced reservation and requires advance payment of fares. Prospective riders are asked to schedule medical appointments accordingly. **The medical transportation service was discontinued as of June 30, 2025, being replaced with the new Fort Mohave/Bullhead Shuttle service.**
4. **Shopper Shuttle Pilot Program**, a new service beginning July 10, 2019, is provided once a week on Wednesdays, departing the El Garces Intermodal Transportation Facility's west parking lot at 8:15 a.m. The Shopper Shuttle stops at the Walmart Supercenter, Safeway, Smith's, and CVS in Fort Mohave. The Shopper Shuttle returns to the City at approximately 12:30 p.m., dropping passengers at their residence. Passengers schedule a reservation up to 11:00 a.m. on the Tuesday prior. Round trip fare costs \$9.00; however, trips were fully subsidized through December 2019 by donations as the City received a total of \$1,475 in donations to offer pre-paid trips. **This service, like the medical transportation service, was discontinued as of June 30, 2025, being replaced with the new Fort Mohave/Bullhead Shuttle service.**
5. **Fort Mohave/Bullhead Limited Shuttle (FMBS)**, a service recommendation in this SRTP, began operating on July 1, 2025, and provides, on a first-come first-served basis, two round trips on Tuesday and Thursday traveling within a one-mile radius of Highway 95 up to Silver Creek Road, Bullhead City. The service departs from the El Garces Intermodal Transportation Facility at 8:15 a.m. and again at 11:30 a.m. returning at approximately 11:15 a.m. and 2:20 p.m., respectively, dropping passengers at their residence. Prepaid advance reservation is required no later than 11:00 a.m. the day prior to taking a trip with roundtrip fare for destinations in Fort Mohave (Zone 1) of \$9.00 and Bullhead City (Zone 2) of \$12.00.

### Summary of Proposed Transit Services

The City does not generate enough Local Transportation Funds (LTF) to cover its operating expenses. Through the SRTP and allocation process, the SBCTA Board of Directors approves supplementing the City's operations with State Transit Assistance (STA) funds. This funding comes from the mountain/desert population share, which does not affect other operator allocations as it is a small amount dispersed over a five-year period. Additionally, SBCTA allocates other funding, such as Measure I Senior and Disabled, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311, and State of Good Repair, to assist with any shortfalls.

There are four financially constrained recommendations for the City of Needles Transit Services:

1. **Bus Stop Improvements** – NAT has 33 bus stops for its Deviated Fixed Route services. Due to extreme weather, this SRTP recommends improving bus stops to include a shelter, bench, and trash receptacle. The goal is to improve all 33 bus stops within the NAT service routes.
2. **New Garage and EV Infrastructure** – Construct a new garage shell for DAR Vehicles; as well as install EV infrastructures in all garages to accommodate future Zero-Emission Vehicles.
3. **Vehicle Replacement Plan** – Replace aging vehicles and begin introduction of the first Zero Emission vehicle to the City of Needles Transit Services.
4. **Fare Pass Technology** - Implement technology to allow app-based fare payment. This will allow riders more flexibility to purchase tickets immediately or for future use.

**Fiscal Impact:** SBCTA provides annual funding for transit operations including all capital expenditures

**Environmental Impact:** N/A

**Recommended Action:** Receive and file the Needles Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) 2025-2030

**Submitted By:** Cheryl Sallis, Community Services Manager

**City Manager Approval:** Patrick J. Martinez

**Date:** 9/4/2025

**Other Department Approval (when required):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_