

## SBCAG STAFF REPORT

**SUBJECT:** 2018 Transit Needs Assessment

**MEETING DATE:** March 15, 2018

**AGENDA ITEM:** 4C

**STAFF CONTACT:** Michael Becker, Andrew Orfila

### RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution 18-13 (Attachment A) approving the 2018 Transit Needs Assessment, including findings that for Fiscal Year 2018/19 there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet.

### DISCUSSION:

Consistent with the requirements of the Transportation Development Act, SBCAG staff conducted the annual unmet transit needs process and prepared the 2018 Transit Needs Assessment (Attachment B). As was discussed at the February Board meeting, SBCAG must make findings regarding unmet transit needs, as required in the TDA (Sec. 99401.5) prior to allocating TDA LTF funds to the local jurisdictions. SBCAG staff considered all requests for new or expanded service in this cycle and is recommending that these requests are “unmet transit needs” or are not “reasonable to meet” according to SBCAG’s adopted definition and criteria. Based on the analysis in the draft report, staff recommends that the Board find that there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet.

### COMMITTEE REVIEW

The item was reviewed at the February Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC). There were no comments on the item and the committee recommended that the Board approve the 2018 Transit Needs Assessment. The Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC) reviewed the draft at its meeting in February. There was extensive discussion regarding future transit improvements throughout the County (Chapter 5). SMAT staff noted that there was a request for new service where they are already providing service, which resulted in SBCAG staff removing the request from the draft findings. SBCTAC recommended that the Board approve the 2018 Transit Needs Assessment.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. SBCAG Resolution 18-13: Transit Needs Assessment Findings of Unmet Needs and Reasonableness to Meet
- B. 2018 Transit Needs Assessment for Santa Barbara County (**web posting only**)

# ATTACHMENT A

## RESOLUTION OF THE SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT )  
FINDINGS OF UNMET NEEDS AND )  
REASONABLENESS TO MEET )

RESOLUTION NO. 18-13

WHEREAS the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Santa Barbara County, is responsible for the allocation to claimants of funds from the Transportation Development Act, Public Utilities Code (PUC) Section 99200 et seq.; and

WHEREAS the Association of Governments has adopted definitions of the terms "unmet transit need" and "reasonable to meet" pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 99401.5(c), which are provided in Exhibit A (attached); and

WHEREAS the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District, which provides transit service, Easy Lift Transportation, Inc., which provides paratransit and Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA) service to the southern portion of the county, and SMOOTH, which provides CTSA service to the Santa Maria Valley area and the Cities of Buellton, Guadalupe, Lompoc, Santa Maria, and Solvang, and the County of Santa Barbara plan to claim all of their apportionment of Local Transportation funds under the Transportation Development Act for transit and paratransit purposes for Fiscal Year 2018/19; and

WHEREAS all allocations made by the Association of Governments within the SBMTD/Easy Lift service area will be directly related to public transit services, specialized transit services, or facilities provided for the exclusive use of pedestrian and bicycling facilities; and

WHEREAS the Association of Governments has consulted with the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC), a social services transportation advisory council pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 99238; and

WHEREAS SBCTAC discussed options for and provided input on the public outreach strategy and approved the type, design, and distribution of other public outreach materials; and

WHEREAS the transit providers in the cities of Lompoc and Santa Maria, in cooperation with the County of Santa Barbara, held workshops that provided input to the Transit Needs Assessment by SBCAG; and

WHEREAS the Association of Governments held public hearings on October 25, 2017 in Lompoc, October 26, 2017 in Santa Maria, and, November 7, 2017 in Santa Barbara, pursuant to Section 99238.5 of the Public Utilities Code to receive testimony and comments on the existence of unmet transit needs within Santa Barbara County and one meeting to receive testimony on the staff recommendation; and

WHEREAS the Association of Governments gave notice of the public hearings at least 30 days in advance through publication in a newspaper of general circulation, and sent written notification to persons and organizations which have indicated an interest in the subject of the hearing; and

WHEREAS all transit needs expressed through the public process were reviewed and evaluated according to SBCAG's definition of "unmet transit need" and criteria for determining whether unmet transit needs are "reasonable to meet"; and

WHEREAS SBCTAC discussed and provided direction on public input received, focusing on input relevant to the Transit Needs Assessment (requests for new or expanded service in the unincorporated North Santa Barbara County), but also discussed input regarding other transit issues, including operational issues and requests for specialized transit service, and input regarding other jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS a transit needs assessment report was prepared that documents the nature of the transit-dependent population, analyzes transportation services, memorializes testimony at the SBCAG public hearings on unmet transit needs, provides the staff assessment of the testimony, presents findings on unmet transit needs, and documents the consideration of these issues by the advisory councils and committees; and

WHEREAS SBCTAC and TTAC reviewed and recommended approval of the draft 2018 Transit Needs Assessment and draft findings on unmet transit need and reasonable to meet.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments finds that for Fiscal Year 2018/19 there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet, as defined by SBCAG in Exhibit A; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, in making this finding, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments has determined, based on the findings of the Transit Needs Assessment, which is incorporated by reference, that:

1. **The Transit Needs Assessment process initially identified one "unmet transit need." However, analysis (included in the Transit Needs Assessment) found that, per the adopted reasonable to meet criteria, this "unmet transit need" is not "reasonable to meet":**
  - Midday service between the South Coast and the North County, including Lompoc, the Santa Ynez Valley, and Santa Maria
2. **The following are transit needs identified through this Transit Needs Assessment process not meeting the adopted definition of unmet transit needs (as addressed in the findings of the Transit Needs Assessment and incorporated by reference):**
  - More direct and frequent service between Carpinteria and Santa Barbara
  - More frequent service between the Santa Maria Transit Center and Orcutt
  - Peak hour express service between the Santa Maria Transit Center and Orcutt
  - Evening service in Orcutt
  - Add evening service (after 5:00 pm) on Breeze between Santa Maria and Lompoc
  - More frequent service between Orcutt and San Luis Obispo
  - Add late morning/late evening service between Lompoc to Santa Barbara (i.e. 10am–7 pm)
  - Reverse commute service: Santa Barbara to Santa Maria and Goleta to Buellton

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments for Fiscal Year 2018/19 will make all TDA fund allocations for public transportation services, specialized transportation services, facilities provided for the exclusive use of pedestrians and bicycles, or for purposes of Public Utilities Code Section 99400(f).

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 15<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2018, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

ATTEST:

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Terry Contreras  
Clerk of the Board  
Santa Barbara County  
Association of Governments

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Joan Hartmann  
Chair  
Santa Barbara County  
Association of Governments

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Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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*Rachel Van Mullem*  
Rachel Van Mullem  
Chief Assistant County Counsel

## **Exhibit A**

### **UNMET TRANSIT NEED DEFINITION**

*Adopted by SBCAG Board on January 19, 2006*

An unmet transit need is the expressed or identified need of the community for additional public transportation services to meet existing basic mobility needs, which are not currently being met through the existing system of public transit services or private transportation services. Included, at a minimum, are those public transportation or specialized services which are identified in the Regional Transportation Plan, short-range transit plan, and/or transit development plan that have not been implemented or funded.

If an expressed or identified need is determined by SBCAG to be an "operational issue", it shall not be considered to be an unmet transit need. Requests that do not require an identifiable additional increment of service will generally be considered operational. Issues such as, but not limited to, the adequacy of location of bus stops, minor route improvements, marketing, and service reliability will generally be considered operational.

The identified needs must be for the system of general public transit services. All eligible users of a given service should have equivalent access or opportunity to use the service.

### **REASONABLE TO MEET CRITERIA**

*Adopted by SBCAG Board on December 21, 2006*

An identified unmet transit need shall be determined to be "reasonable to meet" if SBCAG determines that the transit service will be in general compliance with the following criteria:

1. Can be implemented consistent with the transportation improvement priorities, policies and performance standards contained in the Regional Transportation Plan, the transit development plan, or the short-range transit plan for the area.
2. Can be implemented safely and in accordance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
3. Excluding the first three years of operation, the additional transit service shall not cause the system of which it is a part to fail to meet systemwide performance standards including:
  - a. the operator's ability to maintain the required fare to operating cost ratio;
  - b. the estimated number of passengers carried per service hour for proposed service shall be in the range of other similar services provided; and
4. The proposed service would not cause claimant to incur expenses in excess of the maximum allocation of TDA funds.
5. The proposed service is projected to reach a 20% fare box recovery within 3 years, 10% in non-urbanized areas providing rural services, 10% in non-urbanized areas serving urbanized areas, and projected to show continuous progress toward meeting the fare box recovery ratio within 3 years.