



Approve Unmet Transit Needs Findings for the Sacramento Regional Transit District, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba Counties, and the Cities Therein

Consent

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**Attachments:** Yes

**Approved by:** James Corless

**Referring Committee:** Transportation

**1. Issue:**

The State Transportation Development Act (TDA) requires that SACOG make annual unmet transit needs findings for the Sacramento Regional Transit District (SRTD), and TDA-eligible jurisdictions in Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties.

**2. Recommendation:**

The Transportation Committee unanimously recommends that the board: (1) approve the minutes (Attachments F-I) of the public events and hearings held on unmet transit needs in Sacramento County, including the SRTD and cities therein, and Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties and the cities therein, and of the public hearing held on January 19, 2023, before the SACOG Board of Directors; and (2) adopt the attached resolutions regarding the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 unmet transit needs in each county, cities therein, and the SRTD.

**3. Background/Analysis:**

The State TDA statute establishes a Local Transportation Fund (LTF) for each county. LTF revenues are derived from a 1/4 cent of the state retail sales tax and are returned to each county according to the amount of tax collected. LTF funds are apportioned to jurisdictions within each county on a population basis. In Sacramento County, the LTF apportioned to jurisdictions located within the SRTD may only be used for transit service. However, jurisdictions located outside of the SRTD may use their LTF apportionments for streets and roads projects, provided they have no transit requests that meet SACOG adopted definitions of "unmet transit needs" that are "reasonable to meet." Under TDA statute, it is the responsibility of the board annually to make one of the following findings for each of the four counties, the cities therein, and the SRTD: (1) there are not unmet transit needs; (2) there are not unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet; or (3) there are unmet transit needs, including transit needs that are reasonable to meet. These findings must be made prior to SACOG approving claims for TDA Local Transportation Funds.

**4. Discussion/Analysis:**

TDA statutes require that SACOG follow a specific process in making an unmet transit needs finding for each jurisdiction. Staff has carried out this process for FY 2023-2024, described in Attachment A. As part of the process, transit service requests were identified during public events, public hearings, input submitted electronically, via phone and text, by mail, and through the transportation planning process. These requests

were evaluated as to whether they meet SACOG adopted unmet transit needs definitions (Attachment A).

The Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) for each county participated in the analysis with staff and concurs with staff recommendations. Comments on operational issues, rather than on transit service areas and routes, have been shared with the respective transit or other appropriate agencies. The public transit operators and jurisdictions and their respective recommended findings are listed in the attached resolutions and summarized in Attachment B. Attachments C, D, and E provide more details on comments and findings for each of the four counties.

Staff have continued to track TDA reform activities. The California Transit Association (CTA) is reviewing potential changes to the TDA statute, though any changes likely won't occur until late in the 2023-24 fiscal year. There are currently temporary changes in place made as part of the FY 2020-2021 state budget process and extended as part of the FY 2021-2022 state budget trailer bill AB 149. Those changes relate to a suspension in the farebox recovery ratio requirements that expire at the end of the FY 2025-2026, and suspension of the State Transit Assistance (STA) operating funding requirement to hold costs at or below the current consumer price index (CPI) level that expires at the end of FY 2022-2023. In FY 2023-2024 SACOG will again require operators that receive TDA funds to report on their operating costs versus the CPI. As part of AB 149 Caltrans must report to the State Legislature on TDA Triennial Performance Audits to identify opportunities for streamlining and to make them more effective. Later this year SACOG staff will be participating in the Caltrans TDA Working Group looking at TDA reforms. Staff will continue to track the TDA reform activities as they move forward.

#### **5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:**

Completion of this Unmet Transit Needs Process will allow SACOG to continue apportioning TDA LTF funds for FY 2023-2024 to the agencies eligible to use these funds. The costs to complete the Unmet Transit Needs process have remained stable. The current budget of approximately \$10,000 is fully covered by the adopted SACOG operating budget.