

# Mono County Local Transportation Commission

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## Staff Report

February 27, 2024

**TO:** Mono County Local Transportation Commission

**FROM:** Aaron M. Washco, Planning Analyst

**SUBJECT:** Unmet Transit Needs Outreach Process

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Receive staff report and provide any desired direction to staff.

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Unmet Transit Needs outreach and adoption are required annually by the state and budgeted by the LTC.

### ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

N/A

**POLICY CONSISTENCY:** Consistent with State law requirements for the unmet transit needs process and the annual public hearing for the citizen participation.

### BACKGROUND

State law provides for a Citizen Participation Process that requires the Mono County Local Transportation Commission (LTC) to hold at least one public hearing to ensure broad community participation and solicit the input of transit-dependent and transit-disadvantaged persons, including the elderly, handicapped, and persons of limited means. A public hearing on unmet transit needs is also required prior to the LTC allocating any funds not directly related to public transportation services, specialized transportation services, facilities provided for the exclusive use of pedestrians and bicycles, or any allocation for purposes subject to subdivision (f) of Public Utility Code (PUC) § 99400. The purpose of the unmet needs hearing is to solicit comments on unmet transit needs that may exist within Mono County and that might be reasonable to meet by establishing or contracting for new public transportation or specialized transportation services or by expanding existing services.

LTC Resolution 98-01 (Attachment A) defines "unmet transit needs" and "reasonable to meet" transit needs as follows:

- **Unmet Transit Needs:** A need of the Mono County elderly, disabled, low income, youth, and other transit-dependent groups for transit service that is currently not available and, if provided for, would enable the transit dependent person to obtain the basic necessities of life primarily within Mono County. "Necessities of life" are defined as trips necessary for medical and dental services, essential personal business, employment, social service appointment, shopping for food or clothing, and social and recreational purposes.
- **Reasonable to Meet:** Transit needs for the necessities of life which pertain to all public and/or specialized transportation services that:

- a. Can be proven operationally feasible;
- b. Can demonstrate community acceptance;
- c. Would be available to the general public;
- d. Can be proven to be economical; and
- e. Can demonstrate cost effectiveness by meeting current fare box revenue requirements of the Mono County LTC within two years.

**DISCUSSION**

The LTC’s Unmet Transit Needs process begins at the start of each year, with hearings conducted in the spring so that a determination may be made prior to the reporting deadline of August 15 of the fiscal year of the allocation. Working within their role as the Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA), Eastern Sierra Transportation Authority (ESTA) staff and LTC staff work to create a schedule with Resolution adoption occurring typically in May/June because STA and LTF allocations occur in June.

An additional requirement of the Citizen Participation Process and unmet transit needs process is the LTC must consult with the Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) on transit needs in Mono County. SSTAC members are appointed by the LTC to ensure a broad representation of social service and transit providers representing the elderly, the handicapped, and persons of limited means (see Attachment B).

To begin the unmet needs process, SSTAC reappointments are scheduled for the February 27 LTC meeting. In early March, staff will convene with the SSTAC to discuss unmet transit needs identified by their agencies and constituents. In addition, throughout the month of March, the combined ESTA and LTC staff conduct public outreach by attending each of the County’s Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) and the June Lake Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings. ESTA will also attend public workshops with the Town of Mammoth Lakes’ Planning and Economic Development Commission to receive input. Finally, to meet the public hearing requirement for both the Citizen Participation Process and unmet transit needs, and facilitate public input on transit needs, the LTC and SSTAC will hold a joint public hearing on April 8, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in Mammoth Lakes with videoconferencing in Bridgeport. Public notices of these hearings will be published in accordance with state law in local newspapers, and flyers printed in both Spanish and English will be posted in County offices.

Based on input from the April public hearing, the unmet transit needs analysis will be revised and responses will be provided to other transportation issues raised. Before June 30, 2024, the LTC must adopt, by resolution, a finding that (a) there are no unmet needs, (b) there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet, or (c) there are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet. If the LTC finds that there are unmet transit needs, including needs that are reasonable to meet, then the unmet needs shall be funded before any allocation of Local Transportation Funds is made for streets and roads. It should be noted that the law specifically prohibits comparing unmet transit needs with the need for streets and roads. It should also be noted that the LTC has not allocated any funds to streets and roads for at least several years.

Transit needs expressed by the public in the previous year are retained for consideration in future RTP updates. See Attachment C.

The schedule below identifies the public outreach meetings LTC staff will attend to solicit input, in addition to the LTC public meetings. The schedule is adjusted each year.

<u>Date, Time</u>	<u>Task*</u>
<b>February 27 @ 9 am</b>	LTC meeting. SSTAC reappointments. Present “Unmet Needs Process.”
Week of March 11	SSTAC meeting

March 6, 6:00 pm	June Lake CAC
March 7, 6:30 pm	Antelope Valley RPAC
March 13, 6:30 pm	Mono Basin RPAC
March 14, 5:00 pm	Bridgeport RPAC
March 21, 6:30 pm	Long Valley RPAC
<b>April 8 @ 9:00 am</b>	Joint LTC/SSTAC public hearing on Unmet Needs
April 10	Town of Mammoth Lakes unmet transit needs meeting
April 25, 9:00 am	Collaborative Planning Team meeting
<b>May 13 @ 9:00 am</b>	LTC meeting: Unmet Needs Resolution adoption or defer to June
<b>June 10 @ 9:00 am</b>	LTC meeting: backup adoption date
June 30	File Unmet Needs documentation with state

This staff report has been reviewed by the LTC Co-Executive Director.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. LTC Resolution 98-01 defining “unmet transit needs” and “reasonable to meet.”
- B. Public Utilities Code §99238, Social Services Transportation Advisory Council.
- C. Summary and analysis of public transit requests for fiscal year 2023-24.