

Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC)

MEETING AGENDA

November 9, 2021

Tulare County Association of Governments

ZOOM/ CALL-IN

Meeting ID: 585 064 9981

Passcode: 296011

Join by Phone: 833 548 0282

10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the California Ralph M. Brown Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, including auxiliary aids, translation requests, or other accommodations, or to be able to access this agenda and documents in the agenda packet, please contact the TCAG office at 559-623-0450 at least 3 days prior to the meeting.

NOTE: This meeting will allow Board Members and the public to participate in the meeting via Teleconference, pursuant to Assembly Bill 361, available at

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB361

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons wishing to address the Council on items within its jurisdiction but not on this agenda. Unscheduled comments are limited to 3 minutes.

Note: Prior to action by the Council on any item on this agenda, the public may comment on that item.

ITEMS FOR ACTION AND DISCUSSION:

I. Welcome & Introductions.

II. Action: AB 361 Emergency Certification

III. Action: Approval of Minutes

- a. August 10, 2021 (Pages 4-5)

IV. Discussion: Transit System Feedback from Members

V. Discussion: FTA Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Program

- a. Areas of Persistent Poverty study proposal

VI. Discussion: Vacant Positions

- a. Representative from Local Youth
- b. Potential Transit User with a Disability/Disabilities (2nd seat)

VII. Discussion: Cal-ITP Contactless Fare Payment Demonstration

VIII. Transit Provider Updates

- a. Visalia Transit
- b. Tulare County Regional Transit Agency (TCRTA)

IX. Social Service Provider Updates

- a. Optional updates from those in attendance

X. Other Items/Future Agenda Item Requests

XI. Adjourn. The next meeting is scheduled for **February 8, 2022**, at the Tulare County

Association of Governments Office, 210 N. Church St., Suite B, Visalia, CA, 93291, and via teleconference, at 10:00 a.m.

**Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) Members
of the
Tulare County Regional Transportation Planning Agency (TCAG)**

Dan Fox ¹ - Chair	Representative of Potential Transit User 60 Years of Age or Older
Rebecca Donabed ² – Vice Chair	Representative of Potential Transit User who is Disabled
Michael Esquibel ²	Representative of a Local Social Service Provider for Seniors/Social Service Transit Provider
John Mauro ¹	Representative of a Local Social Service Provider for Seniors/Social Service Transit Provider
Mark Michaelian ³	Representative of a Local Social Service Provider for the Disabled/Social Service Transit Provider
Norma Verduzco ³	Representative of a Local Social Service Provider for the Disabled/Social Service Transit Provider
Albert Cendejas ³	Representative of a Local Social Service Provider for Persons of Limited Means
Teresa Ortega ²	Transit Operator Representative
Angelina Soper ¹	Transit Operator Representative
Carlos Garza ¹	Representative of Potential Transit Users from Local Youth

¹ indicates term ending June 30, 2022.

² indicates term ending June 30, 2023.

³ indicates term ending June 30, 2024.

SSTAC Chair – term ending June 30, 2022.

SSTAC Vice Chair – term ending June 30, 2022.

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TCAG Transit Staff

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Giancarlo Bruno, Regional Planner; GBruno@TulareCAG.ca.gov

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Tulare County Association of Governments
Social Services Transportation Advisory Council
August 10, 2021
ATTENDANCE LIST

Representative of potential transit user 60 years of age or over	Dan Fox - Chair (P)
Representative of potential transit user who is disabled	Rebecca Donabed (P)
Representative of local social service provider for seniors/social service transportation provider	Michael Esquibel (P)
Representative of local social service provider for seniors/social service transportation provider	John Mauro (P)
Representative of local social service provider for the disabled/social service transportation provider	Mark Michaelian (P)
Representative of local social service provider for the disabled/social service transportation provider	Norma Verduzco (P)
Representative of local social service provider for persons of limited means	Albert Cendejas (A)
Transit Operator Representative	Teresa Ortega (P)
Transit Operator Representative	Angelina Soper (A)
Representative of potential transit users from local youth	<i>Vacant</i>

Others Present: Richard Tree, TCRTA; Caleb Bowman, City of Visalia

TCAG Staff: Giancarlo Bruno

SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

Public Comments

No public comments were received.

I. Welcome & Introductions

The Social Services Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) was called to order by Chair Fox at 10:00 a.m. on August 10, 2021. Persons in attendance noted presence over Zoom teleconference.

II. Action: Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the May 11 & 18, 2021 were unanimously approved, with the request that language of unmet transit need reasonable to meet #5 be amended as described below, upon a motion from Vice Chair Donabed and a second by Member Esquibel.

III. Discussion: 2020/21 Unmet Transit Needs Follow-Up

Chair Fox initiated the discussion on this year's unmet transit needs. He noted that the draft recommendations incorrectly stated that the 5th transit need reasonable to meet stated that 'each bus stop' should be announced by the driver or an annunciator when it should be 'each *timed* stop and transfer point' that is called out. Mr. Bruno noted the correction and confirmed that the corrected language had been presented to and adopted by the TCAG board at its June meeting.

Chair Fox also noted that unmet need reasonable to meet #6 was contingent upon the necessary technology to issue & accept regional day passes is in place. Mr. Bruno answered that local agencies will not be penalized for failing to implement these day passes if a good faith effort has been demonstrated towards this goal this year.

Chair Fox then began a discussion concerning distribution of print materials for unmet transit needs outreach. He expressed concern at the small number of preaddressed comment cards received by mail this year and stressed the importance of making sure that postcard flyers are posted in transit vehicles to make them more visible and readily accessible.

IV. Discussion: FTA Areas of Persistent Poverty grant application

Mr. Bruno described the FTA Areas of Persistent Poverty funding opportunity and the application TCAG and TCRTA are preparing to submit to that program. He noted the collaboration with Tulare County HHSA, Kings-Tulare Area Agency on Aging (KTAAA), and local healthcare facilities. He elaborated on the specific proposals to develop a transportation brokerage and increase access to NEMT that would be further studied if funds were to be awarded. The proposed project cost would be approximately \$300,000 which includes a 10% local match.

V. Tulare County Regional Transportation Agency (TCRTA) Update

Mr. Tree discussed the initial stages of transit consolidation, which began in July when the newly formed Tulare County Regional Transit Agency assumed responsibility for transit operations in the cities of Dinuba, Tulare, and Woodlake. He explained that operationally not much has changed as these cities are still operating under their existing transit contractor agreements. He added that County and City of Porterville transit operations are due to be transferred to TCRTA at the start of the new fiscal year, and that meetings to discuss the details of this transition would soon be taking place.

Mr. Tree also provided an update on the agency's free fare promotion which began in July, and the resulting increase in ridership. He mentioned other strategies TCRTA has developed to increase and stabilize transit ridership: including providing all transit information in a single central place, enhanced sanitation protocols due to COVID, and social media advertising. Finally, he noted that all TCRTA fixed routes will return to normal hours of operation and full seating capacity. He invited those interested to attend the upcoming TCRTA monthly board meeting for more information on agency developments.

Chair Fox thanked Mr. Tree for his updates and asked whether there was sufficient funding to support free fares in the long-term. Mr. Tree responded that the initial funding is expected to last approximately through the end of the year but that other funding sources are being explored. He estimated that it would take about \$2 million annually to fund free fares.

Member Ortega noted that free transit rides are being partly supported by continuing T-Pass sales to HHSA. She also added that approximately 43,000 free rides were given in the month of July.

VI. Transit Provider Updates

a. Visalia Transit

Mr. Bowman noted that the Visalia Transit Center is now fully reopened and that capacity restrictions have been lifted on buses. The mask mandate remains in place for people on transit vehicles or at the transit center. He explained that agency staff has made a commitment to City Council to reevaluate system performance within the next few months and potentially eliminate poorly performing routes. Visalia Transit has also brought a new community outreach coordinator on board to lead public engagement and identify strategies to restore ridership.

Mr. Bowman also mentioned that a pilot project in cooperation with the California Integrated Travel Project (Cal-ITP) to test contactless payment equipment.

Chair Fox asked whether Sequoia Shuttle is operating this year. Mr. Bowman answered that Sequoia Shuttle is currently operating a reduced service, with a shortened season that began on Fourth of July weekend. He explained that service evaluations to improve service efficiency are going to be explored in the coming months.

b. Tulare County Area Transit (TCaT)

TCaT is nearly complete with the installation of in-vehicle security cameras and automatic passenger counters (APCs). They are also expecting the delivery of three (3) new low floor transit buses, purchased with Section 5339 funds.

VII. Social Service Provider Updates

No social service provider updates were provided.

VIII. Other Items/Future Agenda Items Requests

Chair Fox announced that he has secured free September 2021 T-Passes for SSTAC members so that they can ride the local transit system to evaluate service and provide their feedback. Those in attendance who requested to receive a pass were noted.

Mr. Bruno informed those present of Member Garza's departure from the Council. SSTAC vacancies and recruitment were discussed. Chair Fox remarked that he was aware of at least one local resident who would be interested in serving on the SSTAC but that there was not a suitable position open for him. He went on to suggest that an additional seat be added to the Council and requested that TCAG staff explore the possibility of adding another seat for local transit users and bringing the matter to the TCAG board.

Mr. Bruno answered that the SSTAC was free to make recommendations regarding its composition for the TCAG board to consider. He committed to bringing a request for a second seat for a local transit rider who has a disability to the TCAG board at its next regular meeting.

IX. Adjournment.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:06am on August 10, 2021.