

This chapter reviews a variety of strategies aimed at improving mobility for elderly, low income, disabled and otherwise transportation disadvantaged Placer County residents who are unable to use the traditional fixed route services. As noted in earlier chapters, the older population 85 + in western Placer County is anticipated to triple between 2010 and 2040. Seniors First staff are already beginning to see an uptick in demand for specialized services for the elderly. It is also likely that services for low income resident may see more demand as the cost of living in Placer County increases, particularly with regards for housing. The following strategies are intended to address these issues over the next five to seven years.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES

Serving lower-demand areas, serving low-demand periods (such as evenings) and making first-mile/last-mile connection have long been a challenge for public transit agencies. With the nationwide decline in public transit ridership, transit operators and public agencies are looking for new and innovative ways to provide public transit that will attract more riders at a lower cost. Contracting with Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) or “microtransit” companies is seen by many as a potential solution. Appendix D explores this topic in greater detail and presents a review of seven pilot projects which have been conducted throughout the country. TNC’s are incorporated into some of the strategies identified below.

HEALTH EXPRESS

Reservation and Scheduling Process

As noted in the previous chapter, the goal of WPCTSA programs is to promote and encourage the use of conventional public transit while providing mobility options for those who are unable to use traditional services. As such, it is worthwhile to reaffirm reservation and scheduling policies for Health Express to ensure that they are consistent with WPCTSA goals.

For a first time Health Express user who calls in to the South Placer Information Center, the reservation agency records basic information, whether or not they have a discount ID or require the use of a mobility aid. Then the agent reads from an approved script asking where and when the passenger would like to travel. If the trip falls into one of the DAR service areas, the agent explains that this trip is not eligible for Health Express and arranges the trip on the appropriate local DAR service. If the trip crosses DAR service area boundaries, the agent enters the appointment time and trip information into Trapeze software for routing and scheduling. Health Express reservation policy is compliant with WPCTSA goals and objectives.

Increase Health Express Service

Recently, Seniors First has been noticing an increase in the number of applications received for Health Express. In April of 2018, Seniors First received 35 applications, much greater than the monthly average of 18. Anecdotal evidence suggests that more residents are moving their aging parents to Placer County and therefore more specialized transportation services will be required.

Health and Wellness Trips

An eligible trip on Health Express is the Seniors First Recreation and Respite (R & R) Adult Day Care Program. The program is offered at two locations and provides activities for seniors with physical or cognitive impairments and respite for their caregivers. The program is offered every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9 AM to 1 PM at the Twelve Bridges Library in Lincoln and every Tuesday and Wednesday from 9 AM to 1 PM at the Seniors First office in Auburn. Health Express trips are also made to the “Daycation” program in Rocklin which is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Trips to these programs are booked on a subscription basis and include a medical evaluation. Therefore, it is considered a Non-Emergency Medical Trip.

Health Express ridership data shows that in FY 2016-17, 25 percent (1,547 trips) of Health Express trips were to/from R & R programs. The data also shows that 342 trips (5.6 percent of total trips) were denied due to capacity constraints in FY 2016-17. Ridership data shows the R & R trips for FY 2017-18 are on track to be a similar or slightly higher number than FY 2016-17. Within the first 10 months of FY 2017-18, a total of 539 trips have been denied due to capacity constraints, which is an increase of 60 percent over the previous year with only ten months of data for FY 2017-18.

The data shows (and is confirmed by discussions with Seniors First and MV staff) that there is sufficient demand to expand Health Express capacity to meet current and future demands. If Health Express operated an additional four vehicle service hours per day, the annual marginal operating cost would be roughly \$32,800. In addition to the 539 trips denied on Health Express for the first 10 months of FY 2017-18 for capacity constraints, there were 164 “Refusal/adversarial” denials. These passengers refused to take the time slot offered to them. This represents an average of 70 total denials per month. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that a minimum of around 900 one-way passenger-trips could be carried with the additional vehicle hours. Assuming the existing average passenger fare of \$0.77, resulting fare revenue would be on the order of \$650. Therefore the marginal operating subsidy would be \$32,150. This equates to a marginal operating subsidy per trip of \$35.70 which is less than the \$66 total operating subsidy per trip standard.

Expand Eligible Trip Purposes to Serve All Trip Purposes in Areas Outside of DAR Boundaries

There are portions of western Placer County which are outside of the DAR and fixed route boundaries and therefore only served by WPCTSA programs. Examples include Foresthill, Sheridan and parts of North Auburn. While older or low income residents in these areas can use Health Express for transportation to a medical appointment, the My Rides volunteer driver program is the only publicly funded transportation option available for non-NEMT purposes.

One strategy would be to “rebrand” Health Express and allow trip purposes outside medical appointments to qualified residents who are just outside the boundaries of the local DAR services. This option would still meet the definition of community transit services per TDA as well as the goals and objectives of the WPCTSA program as the service would “link inter community destinations” and provide services for those low income, disabled, or elderly.

As western Placer County is a large territory to cover, WPCTSA would need to define some parameters for this service. For example, the service could focus on the area just outside the boundaries of the Taylor Road Shuttle $\frac{3}{4}$ mile deviated service area. The *Placer Rural Transit Study* included the evaluation of an alternative which expanded the service area of the Taylor Road Shuttle to 1.5 miles from the fixed route. It was estimated that roughly 7 one-way passenger trips per day would be served, if the service were open to the general public. As noted in the *Placer Rural Transit Study*, roughly 47 percent of the Taylor Road Shuttle service fit into one of the transit dependent categories. Around 25 percent of PCT ridership purchased fare media in the senior/youth/disabled category. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that ridership demand for an expanded Health Express service, where the service is only available to elderly, disabled and low income residents, may be around 3 one-way passenger-trips per day.

This level of ridership does not justify the purchase of a new vehicle. However, as this is a relatively small number of trips, this alternative could possibly be accommodated with the existing vehicles. The additional mileage associated with the extra trips would not increase WPCTSA operating costs over the short term as the contract with MV is on a per revenue hour basis. If an additional van is purchased to increase Health Express capacity for R&R trips (discussed above), there would also be sufficient capacity for serving residents outside the DAR boundaries.

A similar analysis could be conducted for the community of Sheridan. The *Placer Rural Transit Study* identified daily general public demand of 3.5 trips for a service between Lincoln and Sheridan that operates five days per week. If half these trips are qualified passengers, there would likely be sufficient capacity with the existing number of vehicles.

There are also portions of North Auburn which are just outside the Highway 49 DAR service area. The PCT SRTP includes an alternative to expand the Highway 49 DAR which would increase public transit coverage for the Auburn area.

If trips purposes are expanded for Health Express, it will be important to track origin/destinations and trip purposes to determine if the expanded service is causing capacity constraints for medical purposes. It would also be reasonable to charge an additional fare for non-medical related trips.

Trips To/From Rural Areas

Health Express serves most of western Placer County including the rural communities of Foresthill, Colfax and Sheridan. To provide a one-way trip between Foresthill and Roseville takes at least one hour (including deadhead), leaving the Health Express vehicle unavailable for more productive trips within the South Placer area. For this reason, service to/from the upper portion of the county is limited to Wednesdays.

The possibility of entering into an agreement with a TNC for non-wheelchair/special assistance trips to/from the upper portion of the county was considered. Other communities have used TNC services to replace or augment underperforming Dial-A-Rides or fixed routes. Typically the transit agency will subsidize a portion of the cost of the TNC trip so that the cost to the passenger is similar to what it would be on public transit. A voucher code for the discounted rate can be provided to only qualified passengers and limitations on destinations can be set by the transit operator.

There are a few challenges with this option with respect to WPCTSA services:

- As discussed in Appendix D, TNC services work well for short trips and cost advantages are reduced for longer inter-community trips. For example, the cost of an Uber ride from Sheridan to Roseville is approximately \$30.00 (one-way) while the cost of a trip between Rocklin and Foresthill is \$45 (one-way).
- It is also very likely (particularly for Foresthill) that there would be no TNC drivers in the area available to pick up a passenger.
- Residents using WPCTSA services are typically special needs passengers. TNC drivers do not typically have wheelchair accessible vehicles and are not trained to provide service and support to special needs passengers. This makes the TNC option less appealing to many WPCTSA customers.
- Many WPCTSA customers do not have a smart phone or would have difficulty using a TNC app. However there are concierge services such as Go Go Grandparent who (for a fee) can assist TNC passengers with ride reservations and will confirm with a designated representative that the passenger is picked up and dropped off. Seniors First or the South Placer Transit Information “Call Center” could also potentially provide this type of service.

In the example of a TNC trip between Foresthill and Rocklin, a one-way trip may cost as much as \$45. As discussed in Appendix D, a typical TNC program would require the transit operator

subsidizing a substantial portion of the TNC trip so that the cost to the passenger would be similar to the existing Health Express fare (\$2.50 discounted same day trips within Placer County). This leaves a potential subsidy of around \$42.50 per trip. Per the current operating contract with MV (adjusted for inflation, the marginal operating cost per revenue vehicle hour is \$33 making a one-way trip (45 minute trip) between Foresthill and Rocklin cost roughly \$25 on Health Express or less than the cost of subsidizing the same trip using a TNC. Trips to Alta and Colfax would likely be similar. For this reason TNC service to the rural areas would not be cost effective. Health Express should continue to specify days of the week to provide NEMT service the upper portions of the county.

Increase Service Days to Sacramento

Currently, Health Express provides service to Sacramento only on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It is worth a review to determine if service to Sacramento should be increased. According to MV staff there are an average of four refusals or denials to Sacramento. This could be due to either capacity constraints or the time slot available was not satisfactory to the passenger. Health Express origin/destination data for October 2016 shows that 7 one-way passenger-trips were made to Sacramento, one to Rancho Cordova and one to Citrus Heights. This represents roughly four percent of total one-way trips for the month. Similarly, in October 2014, a total of 10 one-way trips were made to Sacramento on Health Express. This data shows that roughly 1.25 one-way passenger trips per Sacramento service day are carried, in order words not above capacity.

My Rides origin and destination data from October 2014 shows that 10 percent of round trips begin or end in Sacramento. My Rides appears to be the preferred service type for trips to Sacramento, likely due to the fact that medical appointment days and times are not restricted. Providing service through My Rides is less expensive than through Health Express. It is possible that one or two more passengers would use Health Express if more days were offered to Sacramento but it would likely come at the cost of Health Express then being unavailable for more productive trips within Placer County. Offering out-of-county medical transportation only two days per week is standard. El Dorado County's Sac Med service is only offered two days per week. Given the existing low demand for Sacramento trips and higher cost of Health Express providing service to Sacramento than My Rides, increasing service days to Sacramento is not a recommended option.

CONTRACT WITH TNC FOR MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION OUTSIDE HOURS OF PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE

As identified in the *Existing Conditions Memo*, hospitals around the country have developed many different strategies to address the issue of transportation to/from medical appointments and services outside the hours of operation of the public transit system. As an example, Denver Health Medical Center entered into a partnership with Lyft to provide transportation to discharged patients and patients needing transportation to/from outpatient clinic

appointments. Denver Health Center spent around \$1,500 on 200 rides over the course of 3 months on the project. Trips were limited to a distance of 25 miles.

One strategy would be for WPCTSA and local hospitals pool funding sources to implement a similar program for western Placer County. Given the existing current hours of transit service, this could be available from 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM on Monday through Friday. Hospital staff could provide qualified patients with a discount code for a TNC trip up to a certain cost limit. The hospitals and WPCTSA would need to determine eligibility criteria for patients and refine the maximum subsidy per trip. This could be based on available data on where transit dependent residents require travel. Initially a project budget of \$2,500 could be set for a 3 month pilot project. A limit should be placed on the length of the trip.

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

Much of the allure of TNC's is the technology which allows for convenient on-demand and on-line reservations. As time goes on, more of the population prefers to use smart phones and computers over speaking to someone in person. It is important for public transit services (even those serving the elderly and disabled) to keep pace with technological innovations.

Even though many WPCTSA clients may not have a smart phone or have difficulty using a computer, it is important to include WPCTSA (Health Express) in regional technology solutions that may happen over the next seven years. It is also likely that many passengers uncomfortable with smartphone technology have contacts that could assist them with the process. There are services (such as "GoGoGrandparent") where passengers can call to access online services. On-line reservations may also be made by human service agencies on behalf of their clients or designated delegates at a senior living facility.

There are several aspects of ride scheduling and on-line reservation software technology which can improve NEMT and paratransit services such as Health Express.

- Automated scheduling increases efficiency and reduces staff hours over manual scheduling and can increase on-time performance.
- Software which includes "interactive voice response" can make automated reminder calls the day before a ride. Not only does this reduce staff time but it keeps the phone lines open and minimizes "no shows".
- Software packages which have the capability to create reports limit time intensive manual data entry of ridership statistics.

WPCTSA should consider these options when procuring ride scheduling/reservation technologies through MV or other companies.

MY RIDES

Increase Volunteers

One challenge that has arisen for the My Rides program is a lack of available volunteers, particularly for transportation in the Roseville area. As Seniors First is located in Auburn and therefore more visible, there is a larger group of volunteers in Auburn.

The National Volunteer Transportation Center compiled at *Volunteer Driver Recruitment and Retention Experience and Practice Guidebook* in September 2016. The guidebook recommends the following Volunteer Driver Recruitment Methods:

1. Board involvement in recruitment
2. Emphasis on “pay it forward”
3. Driver involvement in “the sell”
4. Reimbursement for mileage
5. Meeting with community influencers
6. Scheduling flexibility
7. Software support
8. Comprehensive orientation
9. Ensuring maintenance of reputation
10. The personal sell

Seniors First is making strides to increase the pool of volunteers outside the Auburn area by raising awareness of Seniors First programs in other parts of the county. Staff is reaching out to community groups, such as the Lions Club, and attending Resource Fairs. Working with existing volunteer organizations may be one of My Rides best resources. The Placer Collaborative Network is an organization of over 40 non-profit agencies in Placer County. The PCN could be a good resource for recruiting volunteer drivers.

Supplement My Rides Service with TNC

Seniors First staff estimate that around one-third of trip denials for the Roseville area are due to a lack of volunteers. In May 2018, 3 percent of requested trips were denied due to lack of volunteers. Given the difficulty in recruiting volunteers for My Rides, particularly within the City of Roseville, contracting with a TNC service to supplement My Rides could be a feasible strategy to increase mobility for western Placer County residents. As noted above, long-distance trips would be much more expensive with a TNC than with a volunteer driver; however a trip within the City of Roseville on UberX would cost a more reasonable \$5.00 - \$10.00.

As part of this strategy, if volunteer transportation could not be found for a passenger, Seniors First could provide a discount code to the eligible My Rides participant usable on a TNC service for 50 percent of the cost of a TNC trip up to \$5.00. With a subsidy ceiling in place, there would

be no need for geographical limitations other than it should be within western Placer County. My Rides origin/destination data for cancelled rides for March 1, 2018 to May 19, 2018 show that around 46 one-way trips per month are denied because of a lack of volunteers. Roughly half of the trips could potentially be served by a TNC under this scenario. Assuming a maximum subsidy per trip of \$5.00, it would cost WPCTSA \$2,760 per year to supplement My Rides service with a TNC voucher program.

TECHNOLOGY

Scheduling Software for My Rides

Until recently, volunteer driver scheduling for the My Rides program was done using paper manifest. Seniors First just launched a web-based volunteer scheduling platform called Ride Scheduler. Seniors First staff can enter in passenger requests and volunteer drivers are able to log in and choose the rides they wish to take. Passengers may also make requests on-line. So far, the technology is helping the efficiency of the My Rides program.

TRANSPORTATION FOR VETERANS

As noted in the Demographics Section, there are roughly 27,500 veterans in Western Placer County. This represents roughly 7.8 percent of the total population. Many of these residents are low income and require transportation to medical centers in the Auburn and Sacramento areas. As providing alternative transportation options for veterans meets WPCTSA goals, the need for additional transit services for veterans was explored.

The Placer County Veterans Office is located at the Placer County Building in Rocklin at 1000 Sunset. Veterans living anywhere in western Placer County need to visit the office for various services or to complete paperwork. Staff indicates that they receive requests for transportation to the Veterans Service office 4 to 5 times per week. The office is served directly by the PCT Lincoln Sierra College Route and Rocklin DAR. There is also a VA clinic located on Heritage Oaks Place in Auburn which is directly served by the PCT Highway 49 fixed route and DAR.

For more extensive health care services, Veterans must go to the Mather VA Hospital in Rancho Cordova. My Rides data shows that 7 round trips are made per month to Mather while Health Express data shows that 1 round trip is made per month. Again, limitations in times and days for medical appointments likely makes the My Rides service preferable. As multiple transportation options are available to veteran's services, it is not recommended at this time that WPCTSA expand service beyond existing programs to include Veteran's specific transportation.

INSTITUTIONAL

WPCTSA was formed through a joint powers agreement between the County of Placer and incorporated cities for the purpose of providing specialized transportation services for those unable to use conventional public transit. WPCTSA is staffed by the PCTPA Senior Transportation Planner. Seniors First is contracted to administer WPCTSA programs Health Express and My Rides as well as coordinate with MV regarding certain South Placer Transit Information “Call Center” issues. More specifically, Seniors First duties include processing Health Express applications, recruiting and matching volunteers for My Rides and dealing with same day scheduling issues for the South Placer Transit Information “Call Center”. MV Transportation is contracted to provide the actual operation of Health Express while a separate unit of MV Transportation is contracted to staff the South Placer Transit Information “Call Center” (through the City of Roseville contract). The PCTPA’s Senior Planner provides oversight of all these programs. The Senior Planner estimates that 220 hours of his time is spent on these functions.

One institutional strategy would be to shift some of the WPCTSA oversight duties to Placer County. The County provides regional fixed route, commuter and DAR services and therefore is perhaps better qualified to directly oversee operations of public transit services. Additionally, Placer County already has an established relationship with MV, as the MV General Manager for Health Express is the same General Manager for the MV unit which operates Placer County DAR services. The MV contract for Health Express will end in 2019, making next year a good time to make any changes. Seniors First provides a valuable service to WPCTSA as they are deeply connected to the senior and volunteer community as well as has access to non TDA funding sources, which are currently used to finance a portion of WPCTSA services. Therefore, under this option, Placer County would only be responsible for oversight of the contract with MV for Health Express and Seniors First would continue to conduct the administrative functions related to Health Express.

Under this alternative, it can be assumed that 50 - 60 hours of PCTPA staffer’s time per year would be freed up to concentrate on other WPCTSA or PCTPA duties. Placer County estimates that oversight of the Health Express contract would be similar to management of the Lincoln DAR contract and cost around \$25,000 per year. Some of these costs would be offset by a reduction in oversight hours of PCTPA. Despite an increase in overall costs to WPCTSA, Placer County managing the Health Express contract would have important regional benefits: consistent oversight of regional transit services in the County, and the availability of trained field personnel to respond to complaints and operational challenges.

BUS PASS SUBSIDY PROGRAM

The South Placer Bus Pass Subsidy Program was designed to help meet the needs of low income individuals for basic transportation to access non-emergency medical care and general public assistance services. The goal of the program is to assist with transportation needs for residents

enrolled in various government programs such as WIC, Medi-Cal, CalWORKs, etc. Qualified social service agencies and non-profit organizations may be reimbursed for 75 percent of the cost of day passes on any of the three fixed route providers (PCT, Roseville Transit and Auburn Transit) for distribution to their clients. Agencies must fill out an application for the program annually and are responsible for determining which clients are eligible for the program. Agencies must also report to WPCTSA the number of clients using the service, trip purpose and passes sold.

Over the past three years, WPCTSA has provided around \$14,000 in bus pass subsidies. This is lower than the \$18,000 allotted to the program over the three years (roughly \$6,000 per year). For the period from January 2016 to June 2017, agencies reported that 1,018 unduplicated trips and 2,312 total trips were taken using a subsidized bus pass. A bus pass subsidy program is an easy and cost effective way of facilitating transportation for disadvantaged western Placer residents. Therefore it is worth a review of how this program can be maximized.

One complaint from social service agencies has been that in order to purchase a day pass for clients, the agency staffer had to physically go to the bus stop with the client to purchase the pass from the driver with cash. This is an obvious inconvenience for agency staff. The option to purchase a monthly pass for qualified clients would further increase the ease of use of the program.

The region wide Connect Card system could provide a solution to this problem. Connect Card is a plastic, reloadable smart card with an embedded computer chip that can store Cash Value, passes and discount fare. Passengers pre-purchase the cards online or at outlets. The Connect Card Program allows transit passengers to use just one card to ride all participating agencies include Sacramento Regional Transit, El Dorado Transit, Etrans, Folsom Stage Line, Roseville Transit, SCT/Link, Yolobus, Yuba-Sutter Transit. The appropriate fare is deducted from the card when the passenger uses it, and the card is reloadable.

Alta Regional Center uses Connect Card to provide bus passes to clients. Alta clients are told to fill out an application with Connect Card for a "Discount Card" and take it to a Connect Card location. The Connect Card representative processes the card and takes the client's picture. The client is then instructed to email the Connect Card unique number and security code to the Alta Connect Card Service coordinator who manages all accounts for Alta clients. The Alta Service Coordinator then adds cash value to the card as authorized for each client. Currently, the Alta Regional Center manages 2,500 client Connect Card accounts. This is essentially a full-time position.

WPCTSA deals with multiple agencies for the bus pass subsidy program. If the WPCTSA bus pass subsidy program were linked to the Connect Card program, a similar process could take place with WPCTSA or Seniors First acting as the Connect Card Service Coordinator. Each agency would apply for the program with WPCTSA and identify the amount of cash value or monthly pass that can be made available to each client. The agencies would then work with clients to sign up for the Connect Card Discount card and pass along the unique Connect Card numbers to

WPCTSA. WPCTSA would be responsible for funding the cards. This process may add some administrative staff time for WPCTSA but would provide social service agencies with an easier method of distributing bus passes to clients. Currently Auburn Transit is not part of the Connect Card program so Connect Card passes would only be usable on Placer County Transit and Roseville Transit fixed routes.

Currently, the Buss Pass Subsidy program is marketed through the Placer Collaborative Network directly to social service agencies. Marketing efforts could be expanded to the general public via transit websites and social media. Passengers could still be required to apply through a social service agency but expanding the marketing audience would create greater awareness of the program.

TRANSPORTATION TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO FOOD

A study conducted by the Placer Community Foundation indicates that one in eight residents of Placer County are “food insecure” or unsure where their next meal will come from. This includes low income families as well as seniors who are unable to get to a grocery store or make their own meals. It is consistent with WPCTSA’s to help facilitate transportation to food for low income, disabled and older adults.

Seniors First offers congregate lunch programs five days per week at various locations in Auburn, Colfax, Lincoln, Rocklin, and Roseville. As the “Senior Cafes” are generally located at senior centers or low income housing for older adults, there is little need to provide additional transportation to the lunch program. Additionally, Seniors First offers transportation for “home bound” seniors to the Senior Cafes.

As shown in the demographics section, food distribution sites are generally located on a public transit fixed route. Therefore, this component of transportation to access food could be improved through use of the Bus Pass Subsidy Program.

Seniors First also offers the “My Meals” program. Home-bound seniors can apply to have hot meals delivered to their door Monday through Friday. Subsidized payment plans are available for low income seniors. Seniors First uses volunteers to provide the actual delivery of the meal. Currently, the My Meals program has 40 different routes serving as many as 400 different seniors. This represents a significant increase over just a few years ago, when only 100 meals were served each day. Volunteers are offered mileage reimbursement but most do not apply for it.

Seniors First staff use paper manifests to track meals and delivery routes. One way that WPCTSA could provide transportation assistance would be to purchase software which increases the efficiency of the My Meals program through improved driver routing and scheduling. There are many types of “Meals on Wheels” software programs. Some work independently on a workstation and some are web based. Features of these programs include: data bases to manage client information including dietary restrictions, meal plans, route

development and reporting. The initial cost of the software would be around \$300 - \$500 (depending on the number of licenses) with a monthly fee of \$25 - 150 thereafter for hosting, customer service and support (depending on the level of support). Given the growing complexity of the My Meals program, the substantial costs incurred by volunteers and the program in distributing meals and the relatively modest cost of the software, this would be a beneficial investment.

COVER FULL COST OF CITY OF ROSEVILLE OPERATED WPCTSA PROGRAMS

South Placer Transit Information Center (Call Center)

As noted above, WPCTSA contracts with the City of Roseville to operate the South Placer Transit Information “Call Center” Ride requests for all of the western Placer County DAR services as well as Health Express are initially routed through the South Placer Transit Information “Call Center”. A portion of the WPCTSA TDA Article 4.5 LTF allocation funds the South Placer Transit Information “Call Center”. Currently, this amount is capped at \$300,000 per year.

This level of funding generally covers the contract with MV Transportation to operate the call center but it does not cover administrative overhead costs such as City of Roseville staff hours managing and marketing the program, telecommunications, supplies, utilities, etc. Without administrative support the program would not be able to continue as is. As part of this strategy, WPCSTA would increase the level of funding for the South Placer Transit Information “Call Center” to cover the full cost of the program for this SRTP planning period.

Transit Ambassador Program

Similar to the South Placer Transit Information “Call Center”, funding for the Transit Ambassador Program has been capped at \$30,000. This level of funding only covers the Community Relations Analyst position. Other indirect costs such as administrative oversight, supplies, marketing, and utilities are now funded through the City of Roseville. This strategy will adjust the level of funding for the existing transit ambassador program to cover the complete cost of the program.

REGIONAL MOBILITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The City of Roseville has a separate contract with Paratransit Inc. to provide resources and training to help residents to switch from DAR to the fixed route. This is an extensive program designed to teach persons with disabilities or others requiring assistance how to live more independently by riding the bus. This relieves capacity pressures on the more expensive DAR services. Operation of the Mobility Management Program is currently funded by a FTA 5310 grant. This grant will end in FY 2020/2021. However, administrative overhead costs were not covered by the grant.

The Mobility Management Program meets the goals of WPCTSA by improving mobility for elderly and disabled residents as long as the program operates at the regional level. Under this strategy, WPCTSA would fund the full cost of the Mobility Management Program after grant funding expires.

PRIORITIZATION OF STRATEGIES

The Consultant's recommendations of WPCSTA strategies to improve mobility for low income, elderly and disabled residents are as follows:

High Potential Strategies (not in any particular order)

- Serve regular NEMT clients and existing subscription R&R trips in a balanced manner using existing vehicles and funding levels
- Use Connect Card for Bus Pass Subsidy Program
- Supplement short distance My Rides trips with TNC voucher program
- Provide grant funds to Seniors First to purchase Meals on Wheels route scheduling software to increase efficiency and effectiveness of My Meals and Meals on Wheels programs
- Begin a discussion with health care facilities to review possibility of providing TNC subsidies for patients outside hours of public transit service

Strategies Reflecting Policy Trade-offs Due to Higher Costs

- Placer County manages Health Express Contract
- Expand capacity on Health Express to qualified residents outside DAR boundaries for non-medical trip purposes
- Expansion of the South Placer Transit Information "Call Center" Programs

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