



Short Range Transit Plan for Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency

This is the first time that a Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) has been developed for the Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (WPCTSA), a newly-established organization initiated by the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) during 2008 to address specialized transportation needs and unmet transit needs within Placer County. This SRTP establishes both a near-term plan, including an evaluation of existing services, and proposes a longer-term vision.

CHAPTER 1 – CTSA DEVELOPMENT IN WESTERN PLACER COUNTY

This chapter considers the background for development of the WPCTSA in terms of a study of the county's dial-a-ride services conducted in 2007. With the establishment of the WPCTSA late in 2008, this chapter reviews the Joint Powers agreement and the existing service agreements under which the WPCTSA provides for services and fulfills its purposes.

2007 Regional Dial-a-Ride Study and Its Messages for Coordinated Services

During 2007 and 2008, the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) undertook an evaluation of all of the demand responsive programs operating in then South Placer County at that time. These included three dial-a-rides and the Taylor Road Shuttle operated under Placer County Transit, dial-a-ride services operated by the cities of Roseville and of Lincoln, the City of Auburn deviated fixed-route service and the CTSA, then operated by Pride Industries. This evaluation was specifically concerned with developing strategies for the coordinating or consolidating of dial-a-ride services. The study was prompted by concern for increased efficiencies and an awareness of growing population and increasing demand for expensive demand response services.

This 2007 study explored what levels of coordination and consolidation will best serve Placer County residents. The study suggested varying levels of coordination and consolidation were right for Placer County, characterizing these as a ladder comprised of four general areas of activity. These began with the simplest levels of maintaining the status quo, traveling up to some coordination on selected policies; then on to consolidating selected functions; finally consolidating services under a single regional operator.



Figure 1, Ladder of Coordination and Consolidation
For 2007 Placer County Regional Dial-a-Ride Study



The 2007 consultant team noted that within the many dial-a-ride functional areas that make service on the streets possible, it might or might not be practicable to coordinate or consolidate individual functional areas. In other words, coordination might be possible for some functions but not others; consolidation of selected functions might make sense but not others. Within the four recommended goal areas and twenty implementing activities, it was clear that Placer County transit operators would need to sort through those specific actions and areas for functional coordination or consolidation that the County's demand responsive providers wished to pursue for implementation.

The four general goal areas recommended in the 2007 Regional Dial-a-Ride adopted plan were:

1. Establish PCTPA leadership to guide the County's operators towards an integrated, regional demand response program.
2. Promote general public demand responsive policies that improve efficiencies and build capacity in South Placer County.
3. Establish a CTSA for South Placer County that promotes specialized transportation opinions and addresses the needs of residents.
4. Develop a coordinated information strategy for demand response services, oriented to the information needs of consumers, agency personnel and transit operators in South Placer County.



As a result of these 2007 recommendations and its review of long-standing CTSA programming, the PCTPA undertook a variety of program improvements, notably creating a new joint powers authority to govern and administer the CTSA functions. The Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (WPCTSA) was formed.

The new Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (WPCTSA) was formed in November 2008 and new services going into effect on January 2, 2009. On that date, three PRIDE Industries transportation programs – the I-Med program (a non-emergency medical transportation program), the transportation voucher program and the volunteer transportation program – transferred their administration to Western Placer CTSA. The private partners supporting this effort included: Seniors First Inc., Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital, Sutter Roseville Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente, Placer Collaborative Network and the Placer Independent Resource Services.

Generally, improvements sought by the PCTPA board were targeted to improve the mobility of individuals who, for a number of reasons, were unable to use the fixed-route transit services provided within and between Placer County's cities and towns and to provide for medical services within Sacramento County. An important focus in early discussions was on trips that could not be provided by the existing public transit, fixed-route network and supporting new trips to address unmet transit needs not met by existing transit programs.

In discussing the re-formed CTSA and its purposes with key stakeholders during this process and gleaned from CTSA background materials, as understood early in 2009 were: 1) to provide for transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities; 2) to address gaps and unmet transit needs in the existing Placer County public transit network for these individuals; and 3) to encourage and promote partnerships that extend the available Local Transportation Funds (LTF) by leveraging non-profit and human services agency funding to address mobility needs of these target populations.

Review of Joint Powers Agreement Creating the WPCTSA



With an effective date of November 5, 2008, the Joint Powers Agreement creating the Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Authority contains language that provides important direction and clarification regarding the mission, service area and organizational structure of the CTSA. This section cites the language in the Joint Powers Agreement and discusses its significance to the organization and operation of the CTSA.



Mission of the CTSA

In paragraph B of the Recitals, the range of services is clearly specified as:

“... the public interest will be served by ... the creation of the Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Service Agency ("CTSA") as a joint powers agency with the power to provide social service transportation, including services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities who cannot use conventional transit services, and perform any and all other duties of a consolidated transportation service agency;...” (underlining added)

This same language appears in Section 1, Authority, Purpose And Cooperation, with further citations relating to the roles of CTSA's and their funding under the Transportation Development Act.

At the present time, the transportation services funded by the CTSA concentrate almost entirely on seniors and individuals with disabilities. The language in the agreement clearly specifies that the CTSA is intended to provide “services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities,” but also allows the provision of services to other population groups under the broader mission of providing “social service transportation.” Such additional groups could include disadvantaged or at-risk youth, low income households, and others being served by social service agencies, which is supported by the cited authority to “perform any and all other duties of a consolidated transportation services agency.” The Social Services Transportation Improvement Act [California Government Code Sections 15950-15986], which is the origin of the Consolidated Transportation Service Agencies within the state, contains no restrictions as to population groups to be serviced by such agencies, instead focusing on the social service agencies to which this transportation is related.

CTSA Service Area

The service area for the CTSA is defined in Section 2, Creation of CTSA, of the agreement, which states:

The Members hereby create the Western Placer CTSA ("CTSA"), a public entity separate from each of the Members, whose jurisdiction is described as all of Placer County, except for the portion thereof lying within the jurisdiction of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). The CTSA's jurisdiction is depicted in Exhibit B, attached hereto and incorporated herein.”

The map referenced as Exhibit B in the Joint Powers Agreement follows as Figure 2

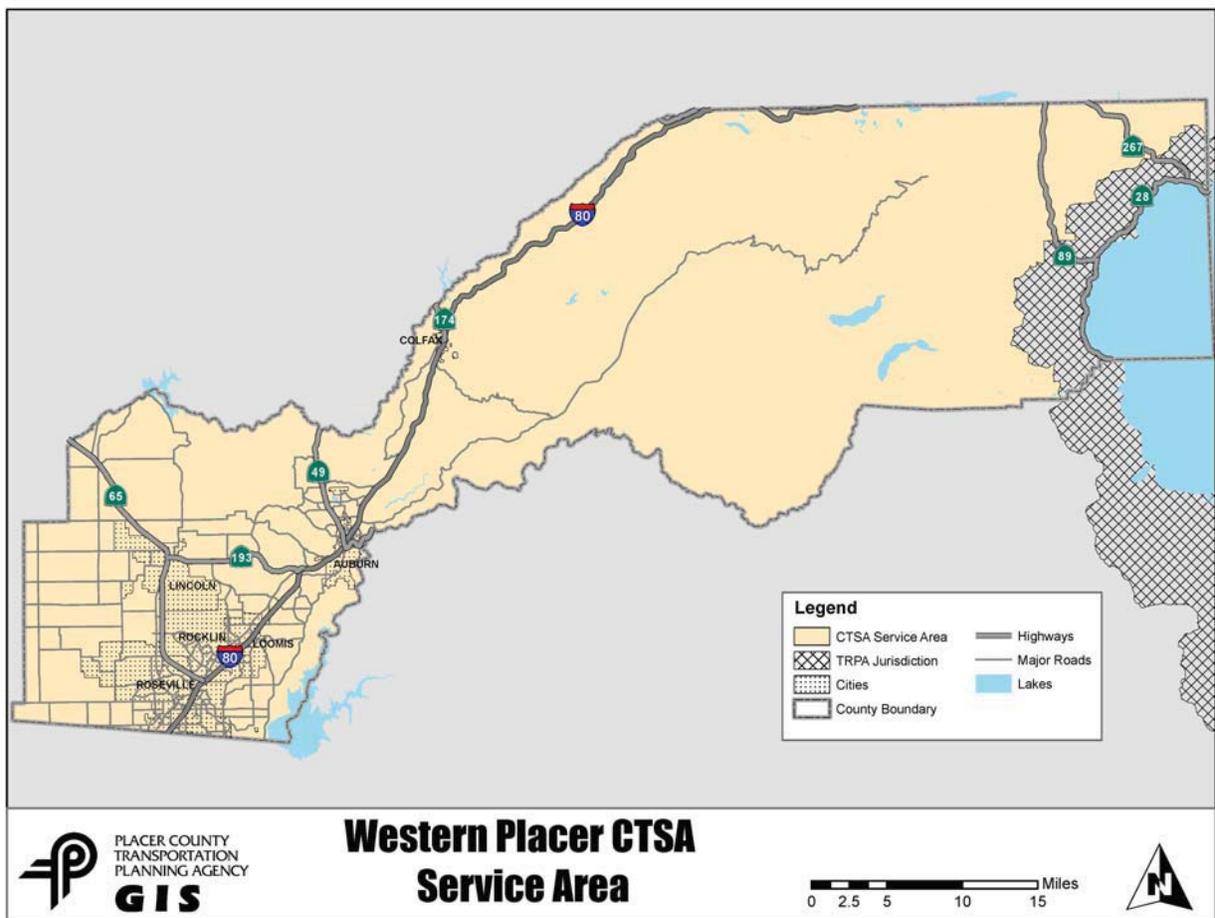
The defined service area is important relative to the transportation services being funded through the WPCTSA. There is no requirement that every funded program serve the entire service area,



although it is important to assess social service transportation needs throughout the entire area in terms of equity as well as cost-effectiveness of transportation service availability.

For example, it is important to recognize the lack of correspondence of political boundaries with some travel needs of residents, particularly for medical services. Similar to the need in the western portion of the county for transportation connections to medical services in Sacramento, residents of the eastern portion of the defined service area may have a need for transportation to medical services both east of the service area boundary, as well as to specialized medical service providers in Sacramento.

Figure 2: CTSA Service Area





Organizational Structure

Under Section 4, Powers, subsection A, the agreement authorizes the Authority to carry out the functions of a Consolidated Transportation Services Authority through either third party contracts or through direct administration and operation:

“A. to provide social service transportation within the jurisdiction of the CTSA and any non Member cities for which the CTSA provides social service transportation under a separate agreement and perform all other duties of a consolidated transportation service agency, whether by contract with a third party or with its own forces;”

Since its inception, the WPCTSA has not directly provided transportation services but instead, undertaken the provision of social service transportation almost entirely through partnership agreements with Seniors First, Inc., through Memoranda of Understanding [MOU] with existing public transit systems, or through agreements with eligible non-profit organizations in relation to the retired vehicle program.

Review of Service Agreements for WPCTSA Programs

The agreements executed by the WPCTSA for provision of services include:

Partnership Agreements

- With Seniors First for the Health Express Service
- With Seniors First for the Transportation Voucher Pilot Program
- With Seniors First for the Volunteer Door-to-Door Transportation Pilot Program

Memoranda of Understanding

- With the County of Placer for the enhanced Taylor Road Shuttle
- With the City of Roseville for the Transit Ambassador Program
- With the City of Roseville for the Centralized Call Center
- With individual, eligible non-profit organizations for retired vehicles

These individual agreements are reviewed in Appendix A. In general, we would note that the expenditure of public transit funds through these “partnership” arrangements is a novel means of leveraging limited CTSA funding. In each case, the “partner” agency is contributing a significant



portion of the project funding, with the WPCTSA contributing a specified funding amount as its share. With the MOUs, PCTPA contributes the funding because the programs service the public transit operators.

From the standpoint of organizational structure, and, particularly, with a view towards the long-term viability of the current policy of providing transportation services through contract as opposed to assuming direct operation of such services, there is no obvious impediment to the continued use of MOUs, partnership arrangements or third-party service contracts by WPCTSA. In fact, these partnership agreements clearly enable the WPCTSA to leverage other funding and enable it to pursue its mission.

At the current and projected levels of service, there are no perceived advantages to PCTPA to be gained by moving to the direct operation of transportation services. A discussion of alternative service arrangements is part of this study's recommendation process, balancing the opportunity to leverage external resources versus other issues of program control and efficiencies.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the background for creation of the WPCTSA and examined the written tools used to frame and to conduct its business. Working from its framing Joint Powers Agreement, the WPCTSA utilizes a mix of partnership agreements and memoranda of understanding, to construct programs that are targeted and focused to specific needs. Specifically, three service agreements and three MOU documents, plus agreements with eligible non-profits for vehicles, give form and structure to services and define the responsibilities of participating organizations.

In two instances, this service structure is enabling the WPCTSA to leverage other funding and resources, so that its LTF revenue base is not the sole means of support. Notably, the partnership agreement leverages funding provided by three hospitals for non-emergency medical transportation services. Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital, Sutter Roseville Medical Center and Kaiser Permanente are all partners in this service supporting trips to medical facilities. The Area 4 Agency on Aging is a contributing partner to the volunteer door-to-door rides program.

In-kind contributions of importance are leveraged by two programs. The volunteer door-to-door rides and the Transit Ambassador program each draw upon significant volunteer assistance.

Among issues highlighted by this review, the mission statement language of the WPCTSA appears limiting to services for seniors and persons with disabilities, as is currently reflected by service mix



provided. In fact, the WPCTSA authorizing regulation is broader. It includes persons of limited means and low-income households as among the target populations.

Additionally, the service area of WPCTSA is inclusive of all of Placer County except for the area of Placer County within the jurisdiction of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. The description does not recognize that some non-emergency medical trips require service to destinations outside the service area boundaries, which may include the greater Sacramento area, Nevada County and even Reno, Nevada.