



**Short Range Transit Plan for
Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency
Executive Summary**



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Short Range Transit Plan for *Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency*

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Short Range Transit Plan for *Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency* Executive Summary

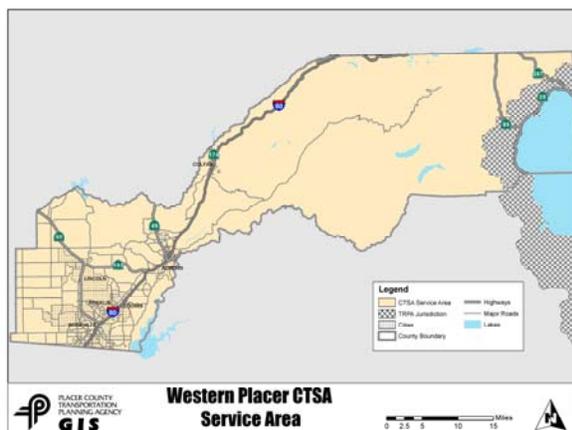
What are WPCTSA Existing Purposes and Program?

The Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (WPCTSA), its mission generally outlined in California statute Transportation Development Act (TDA), Article 4.5, formed late in 2008 to build upon recommendations of the 2007 *South Placer County Regional Dial-a-Ride Study*. The WPCTSA has developed a breadth of program activities during its first two and a half years of operation. These are targeted to specific, specialized transportation needs. Examined in Chapter 1 of this Short Range Transit Plan, the WPCTSA utilizes a mix of three service agreements, two Memorandum of Understanding documents, and one WPCTSA directly-administered program. Its varied activities include: a non-emergency medical transportation program; two volunteer-based programs, one with drivers in their personal autos and a second assisting travelers on fixed-route; a taxi-based last-resort trip project; a retired vehicle program provided to non-profit agencies; and support for the emerging transportation call center.



An important feature of the WPCTSA program is its ability to leverage other funding and resources so that its TDA Local Transportation Fund (LTF) revenue base is not a sole means of support. Notably, its partnership agreement with the Seniors First organization leverages funding provided by three hospitals for the non-emergency medical transportation service, Health Express. Sutter Auburn Faith Hospital, Sutter Roseville Medical Center and Kaiser Permanente are partners supporting non-emergency trips to medical facilities. The Area 4 Agency on Aging is a contributing partner to the Volunteer Door-to-Door Rides program providing critical door assistance to riders and, in turn, leverages volunteer support. Similarly, the Roseville Transit Ambassador program uses volunteers for its fixed-route travel training.

Exhibit ES-1, Existing WPCTSA Service Area



Among issues highlighted by this review are target population considerations and the physical service area within which WPCTSA services may be supported. While the mission statement language appears limiting to services for seniors and persons with disabilities, in fact, the WPCTSA authorizing regulation is broader. It includes persons of limited means and low-income households as among the target populations. In addition, the WPCTSA service area is described as inclusive of all of Placer County except for the area within the jurisdiction of the



Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. The service area description does not recognize that some specialized trips needed, often non-emergency medical trips, go outside these political boundaries traveling sometimes to the greater Sacramento area, Nevada County and even Reno.

This Short Range Transit Plan (S RTP) recommends broadening the service area expectations of the WPCTSA to the county as a whole for general reasons of equity, and, on a trip-by-trip basis to adjacent counties for specific trip purposes. Similarly, the target group definition is recommended to include low-income individuals and households, in line with California Government Code Sections 15950-15986 which does not restrict the target groups but focuses on the social service agencies whose clientele need transportation. Utilization of the FTA Section 5316 definition of low-income individuals is recommended, at or below 150 percent of Federal poverty levels, based upon household size.

What Are Placer County's Needs for Specialized Transportation?

In Chapter 2, the latest American Community Survey (ACS) data documents a 37% increase in Placer County population, almost 100,000 new residents who have moved to or been born in Placer County during this past decade. An important WPCTSA target group continues to be the County's senior residents. This group is expanding – from 12.9% reported in the 2000 Census to 15.4% in the 2010 Census. This represents 20,000 additional older persons, growing from 32,000 seniors in 2000 to the 2010 report of 53,562 residents over age 65.

Other target groups include low-income adults, 5.8% of the 2000 population and adults with disabilities, at approximately 13.8% of the adult population. Overlap among these groups suggests a range of 20,000 to 47,000 non-senior Placer residents, persons who may have specialized transportation needs.

Placer County's annual unmet transit needs process is an important window on needs. Prior cycles' recommendations related to the countywide call center and additional hours for the Taylor Road Shuttle are reviewed in Chapter 2. Other types of needs, including those in unserved areas of the county, are proposed by the Unmet Needs Hearing Process to be addressed through this Short Range Transit Plan development process.

What Issues Arise Around Performance of Existing WPCTSA Pilots?

Current WPCTSA activities are meeting a range of trip purposes and transportation-related needs:

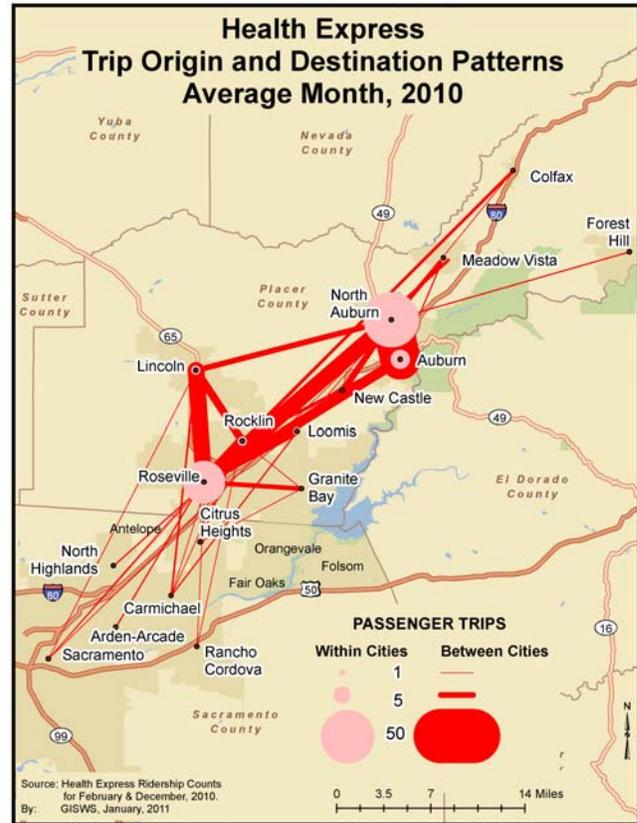
- non-emergency medical trips
- inter-county health care trips
- door-to-door assistance needs
- transportation information
- travel training in use of public transit
- non-profit agency vehicle replacement



Exhibit ES-3 Health Express Trip Patterns

Chapter 3 of this SRTP presents project-specific recommendations developed from review of existing pilot initiatives. On-site visits, coupled with examination of available performance data, operating agreements and contracts generated various findings. Several general comments are offered:

- Reporting Various WPCTSA reporting recommendations will enable each project to most accurately reflect the service it is providing and its performance, helping to ensure that PCTPA is making accurate and appropriate reports to the State Comptroller’s office.
- Meeting Demand/ Marketing Programs There are no waiting lists and demand appears met for trips (Health Express and Door-to-Door Rides), for transit information (Roseville Transit Ambassadors) and the WPCTSA vehicle acquisition program. This can be interpreted in two ways: either there is sufficient capacity to meet requests or existing programs are not adequately advertised to draw in latent demand. Other data suggests that some levels of latent demand, unmet transit needs exist among Placer County target group individuals.
- Contract Incentives for Trip Efficiency Unit trip costs reported for the Health Express are high and point to the need for tighter contract language that promotes productivity. To some extent, productive service may be difficult to ensure given the longer trips and increased frequency of inter-city trip-making that typify non-emergency medical trips. In the next contracting cycle it will be important to review and potentially restructure contractual expectations of the Health Express direct service providers.
- Monitoring Call Center Implementation The developing Call Center is still unfolding, making it difficult to evaluate at this time. As this new project moves forward, it will be important to document its reach across the county and the ability of the Call Center to assist callers. Various



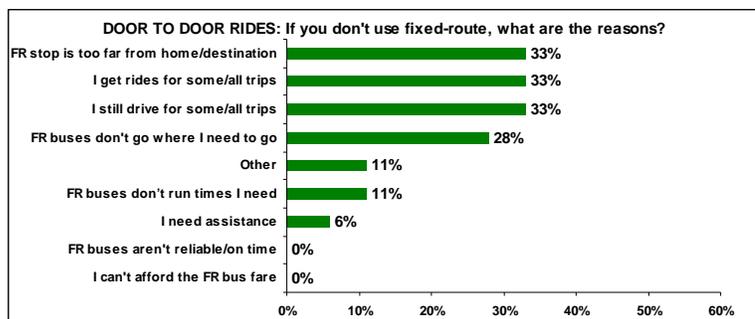
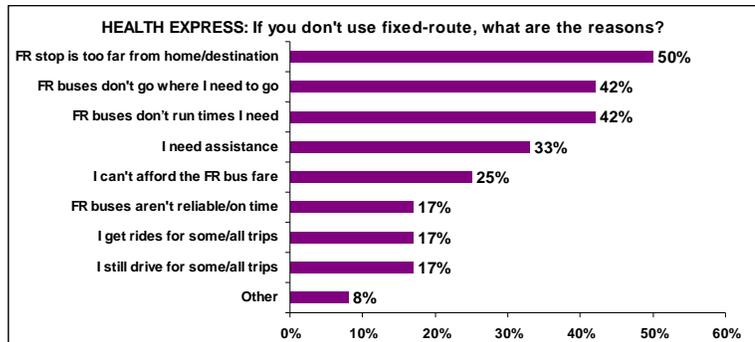
metrics will help to measure these questions and key statistics should be routinely collected and tabulated as the Call Center defines its functional responsibilities and develops its constituencies. Future SRTP efforts will be able to more effectively assess the program’s performance in relation to the goals and service levels set forth in its existing or future contracts.



What Are Consumer and Agency-Reported Unmet and Under-met Needs?

Exhibit ES -3 A and B, Customer Survey Results

Chapter 4 presents consumer and agency input from various sources, including current or recent-past users of the Seniors First/ WPCTSA-sponsored programs. Riders of Health Express, the Volunteer Door-to-Door Rides and Seniors First/ Gathering Inn transportation to County medical offices in Auburn were surveyed and found, by and large, to be very satisfied. Ratings reported were largely all within the *Good to Excellent* ranges on all variables, Consumers responses as to why they don't use fixed-route transportation varied by service. Health Express users reported the most difficulties with fixed-route networks, while Door-to-Door Ride users were more likely to report they had other transportation alternatives. Riders from The Gathering Inn were most likely to report they could not afford fixed-route fares.



Current year unmet transit needs hearing responses are also reported within Chapter 4. Many echo comments received in prior cycles, speaking of connectivity difficulties between communities and problems of the outlying, unserved areas such as Sheridan and Foresthill. Three community meetings or discussions held during this study process were reported: with the *Placer Collaborative Network*, with *The Gathering Inn* and with the *Truckee-North Lake Tahoe Transportation Management Association*. These entities report acute awareness of unmet transportation issues, as well as a range of resources and partnership opportunities for meeting selected needs.

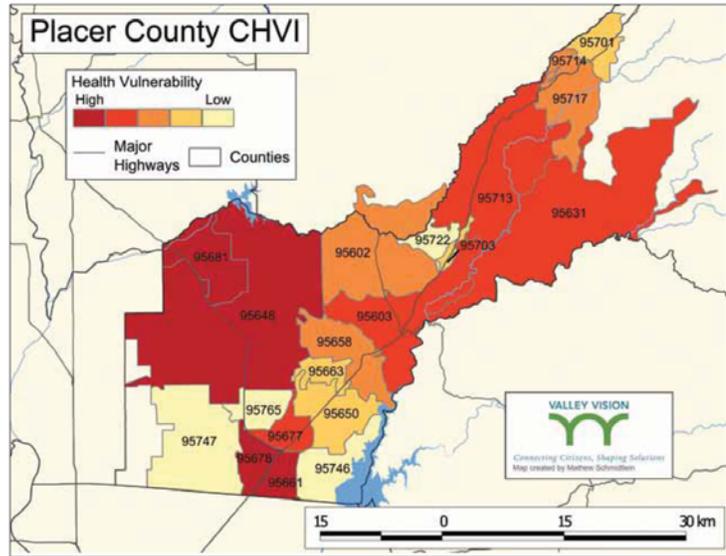


Placer County does appear to have a partnership-oriented, “collaborative focus”, as the PCN group characterizes it, with various entities willing and able to work collaboratively to help solve complex problems. In this regard, WPCTSA’s organizational structure – with its emphasis on partnerships and potential for fielding cost-effective, small-scale transportation solutions – provides important infrastructure for addressing current and future unmet specialized transportation needs of Placer County residents.



Exhibit ES-4, Placer County Community Health Vulnerability Index

Chapter 4 also includes a summary of three regionally-focused studies addressing issues of transportation need. The 2010 *Community Needs Assessment for the Greater Sacramento Region* was undertaken by all of the regional not-for-profit hospitals including Kaiser, Sutter Health, Catholic Health Care West and UC Davis Health Care System. The study examined health conditions and critical health indicators at the zip code level. Most of the Placer County zip codes did not rank as “highly vulnerable” when compared to other parts of the Sacramento region. Nonetheless, needs did emerge around two health care conditions for Placer County communities, in relation to: 1) mental health issues and 2) hypertension where for both hospitalizations and ER visits ranked well above statewide averages. These health conditions, and others, can be ameliorated by routine and preventative health care. Transportation, ensuring the access of patients to health care, plays a critical role in the health care delivery process.



Also reviewed was the Area 4 Agency on Aging planning process which continues to identify transportation as among the highest-ranking needs of Placer County elders. In the 2009 *Area 4 AAA Needs Assessment* it ranked as the number one priority need. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) conducted a 2011 needs assessment for transit-dependent individuals and their travel to and from “lifeline” destinations. Challenges identified by SACOG’s regional review points directly to potential WPCTSA projects. Among these were: basic access to health care; inter-county connectivity; affordability of transit fares; path of travel issues; and transit informational needs.

What Should the WPCTSA Be Doing? Mission, Goals and Program

Current WPCTSA funding is reviewed in Chapter 5 to establish the foundation for future year programming. This mix of services is currently supported with this \$887,000 program, of which just over \$709,123 is from PCTPA sources. Of eight different projects supported, the largest of these is Health Express which, with 56% of the WPCTSA funding base, operates with partnership match funding from three area hospitals. The volunteer-based, door-to-door rides program, although much smaller, generates significant match through the volunteer efforts of its drivers, as does the Roseville Transit Ambassadors program.

In response to the findings documented in this SRTP, Chapter 5 presents a more targeted mission statement placing emphasis on coordination and partnerships to derive projects.



Exhibit ES-5 Mission Statement

Proposed WPCTSA Mission Statement

Through coordination of public transportation, targeted partnerships and development of innovative specialized transportation projects, the Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (WPCTSA) shall develop, maintain and enhance – as resources allow – mobility options for seniors, persons with disabilities and persons of limited means.

The Local Transportation Fund (LTF) allocation to the WPCTSA is currently at 4% of the countywide allocation. This SRTP recommends that Placer County Transportation Planning Agency move to the fully allowable 5% level of LTF funding after five years.

The primary argument for increasing the WPCTSA’s funding base, in time, is the general population growth in the county, but more specifically of seniors. This is coupled with the value of developing a mix of projects responsive to individualized specialized transportation needs, some of which can deflect more expensive complementary Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit. Such needs are enumerated within Chapter 5 in relation to particular target population subgroups, identifying needs and proposing strategies by which to meet these needs.

Defining Strategic Direction and Alternatives

In Chapter 6, this SRTP brings forward recommendations from the *2007 South Placer Regional Dial-a-Ride Study* which recognized the challenges that a growing senior population represented to Placer County. Its recommendations addressed increasing mobility of these and other target groups. As many remain relevant, selected recommendations are reiterated in Chapter 6 to aide WPCTSA policy makers in planning for cost-effective and efficient mobility resources for those Placer County residents who cannot use fixed-route transit.

Additionally, special topic issues are considered with recommendations offered to the WPCTSA organization. These included: the WPCTSA service area and coverage; Americans with Disabilities Act program-level compliance; eligibility parameters; marketing and branding; technology; safety and security; capital requirements; and riders’ fares.

Seven goals are proposed to guide project development over the near and longer term, highlighting the entrepreneurial nature of the WPCTSA organization. Critical organizational characteristics include its ability to seek out and develop strong partners, to test potentially responsive projects and to explore





other services potentially meeting mobility needs of its target groups of seniors, persons with disabilities and individuals of low-income.

To implement these goals, five strategic principles are detailed to guide near-term activities:

- 1) modestly expanded geography and target population;
- 2) continued partnering
- 3) emphasis on small and targeted projects
- 4) re-structured third party agreements
- 5) importance of experimentation and evaluation

Various service alternatives are presented with related near-term and longer-term recommendations. The feasibility of each is considered with possible new initiatives discussed.

Input and direction from PCTPA's Transit Operators Working Group (TOWG) was sought and provided, responding to the WPCTSA direction proposed. TOWG comments are summarized in Chapter 6 as four key recommendations:

- 1) ***Do not expand WPCTSA programs*** to a 5% of TDA funding level at this time, given the extreme financial conditions in which jurisdictions' operators find themselves.
- 2) ***Do continue to work actively to include in the Call Center*** all of the County's demand response and specialized transportation programs, recognizing that policy and procedures needs to be developed to appropriately handle trip requests within existing budget levels.
- 3) ***Continue responsibility with the individual jurisdictions for bus stop and path-of-access improvements*** rather than moving this prioritization function to the WPCTSA, given that the jurisdictions remain responsible for funding these improvements.
- 4) ***Establish a new initiative providing some NEMT reimbursement*** to the public transit demand response operators for provision of NEMT trips that are new trips, are not ADA trips otherwise required of them, and are generally provided during off-peak periods when excess demand response capacity may exist.

WPCTSA Working to Meet Specialized Transit Demand

Placer County's demand for specialized transportation has been projected on at least two prior occasions, as this county considers how best to meet mobility needs of its most vulnerable residents. Chapter 7 updates the demand model prepared for the 2007 *South Placer Regional Dial-a-Ride Study*, using more recent demographic and trip information available. Trips made by target population members potentially requiring specialized transportation assistance of some type are estimated as a range of 82,000 to 280,000 annual one-way trips.

Demand responsive trips provided in FY 09/10, including WPCTSA trips, were 87,909 one-way trips. The good news is that this level of trip-making is above the low-end range of needed trips, as suggested by



this specialized transit needs' demand model. The higher end of the demand range, perhaps 280,000 trips, presumably includes latent demand of trips-not-made that would be made if the individual could connect with the appropriate service. It is important therefore to continue to grow the number of specialized transit trips provided. The demand model posits a significant gap between **trips provided** and the range's high-end of **trips needed**.

Increasing the number of specialized transit trips provided will diminish that gap. Moving the County closer to the mid-range of specialized transit trips needed — perhaps 140,000 one-way trips annually, from a current almost 90,000 trips provided — is a goal towards which to work. This will likely provide some trips currently needed and not taken. Increased specialized transportation trips will likely also contribute positively to various health and quality of life indicators suggested by the regional studies reported on in this document. Measuring trip volumes over time, using indicators such as trips-per-capita, will help Placer County Transportation Planning Agency and the WPCTSA monitor progress on addressing residents' mobility needs. For FY 2009/10 total trips provided represented 3.8 trips-per-capita. Specialized transit trips provided, as a subset of all transit trips for that same time period, were 0.26 trips per capita.



WPCTSA's Proposed Revenue and Expenditure Base

A WPCTSA seven year service plan is proposed, providing detailed expenses and projected revenue by year. To facilitate local planning two budget scenarios are provided: one holding constant the 4% TDA allocation level; the second growing to the 5% allocation level in the second year of this plan. Additionally, staff is to be commended for its past special grant-seeking efforts and encouraged to continue pursuit of future capital bond funding and FTA JARC and New Freedom funding that is consistent with WPCTSA purposes. Taken together these form the continuing funding base.

An additional critical feature of the current and proposed project funding base is the organization's ability to develop partnerships and to seek matching funds. Match funding levels vary from project to project. These are expected to be a mix of actual cash and of in-kind, both volunteer labor and agency-contributed resources.

Specific projects going forward are identified in Exhibit ES-6 following, summarizing key recommendations associated with each. Several projects are phased in over the next couple of years. The administrators for each project are identified where known. In some cases, these will have to be developed from interested, willing and able partnerships. Discussion of implementation issues, including needed program policy and procedures, are included in Chapter 7 and in accompanying Appendices-Implementation Tools.



Exhibit E-6, WPCTSA Recommended Projects and Initial Direction

Project Title/ Administrator	SRTP Funding Recommendations
<p>1. Health Express – NEMT Trips and Mobility Management Program <i>Administrator: Seniors First</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continued funding for NEMT trips, while developing mechanisms to reduce unit costs; modest increases annually for COLA and contribution to rising fuel expense. ➤ Recognition of mobility management role by tracking mobility management developments across state. ➤ Funding partners meeting to discuss and secure continued partnering levels of financial support and development of contract tools to enhance cost-effectiveness.
<p>2. Volunteer Door-to-Door Program <i>Administrator: Seniors First</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continued funding of project with a one percent increase annually for inflation
<p>3. Voucher-Last Resort Trip Program <i>Administrator: Seniors First</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Slight increase in funding level given careful utilization of this resource but in recognition of the service gap it meets, often inter-community.
<p>4. Public Transit Demand Response CTSA NEMT Trip Reimbursement <i>Administrator: WPCTSA</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reimbursement of CTSA NEMT trips allocated by the Call Center to Public Dial-a-Ride services. Use existing unused DAR capacity during off-peak hours only. CTSA NEMT trips are above and beyond required complimentary ADA paratransit trips. Will need a DAR maintenance-of-effort agreement with public operators. DAR services expand the ability of WPCTSA to provide NEMT services. Assists in meeting overall increased NEMT ridership goals.
<p>5. Transit Ambassador Program <i>Administrator: City of Roseville</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ CTSA share provided from grant funding set-aside. ➤ Determine with program how to promote activities and more actively engage the community to grow transit use or consider revising the travel training model now in use.
<p>6. Rural Placer County Mileage Reimbursement Program <i>Administrator: To be determined</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Set-aside funds to match with potential partner funds, including volunteer drivers, for a limited initiative; annual funding reliant upon identifying match dollars.
<p>7. Bus Pass Subsidy Program <i>Administrator: To be determined</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Set aside small funding base for a bus pass distribution project, once a host partner is determined.
<p>8. Capital - Non-Profit Vehicle Replacement Program <i>Administrator: WPCTSA</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establish modest line-item support for detailing of surplus vehicles and assurance of basic road-worthiness.
<p>9. Capital – Bus Stop/ Access/ Community Enhancement <i>Administrator: WPCTSA</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct a bus stop inventory on accessibility and prioritize for support to specific bus stop or path-of-access improvements that will demonstrably benefit the target populations.
<p>10. Capital - NEMT Vehicle Tracking & Upgrade Program <i>Administrator: WPCTSA/ Seniors First</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tracking device and software to enable Call Center to locate NEMT vehicles and manage usage and capacity.
<p>11. Contingency Reserve <i>Administrator: WPCTSA</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain a budgeted reserve of 15 percent, both to address special, circumstances and/or seed one-time projects.



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