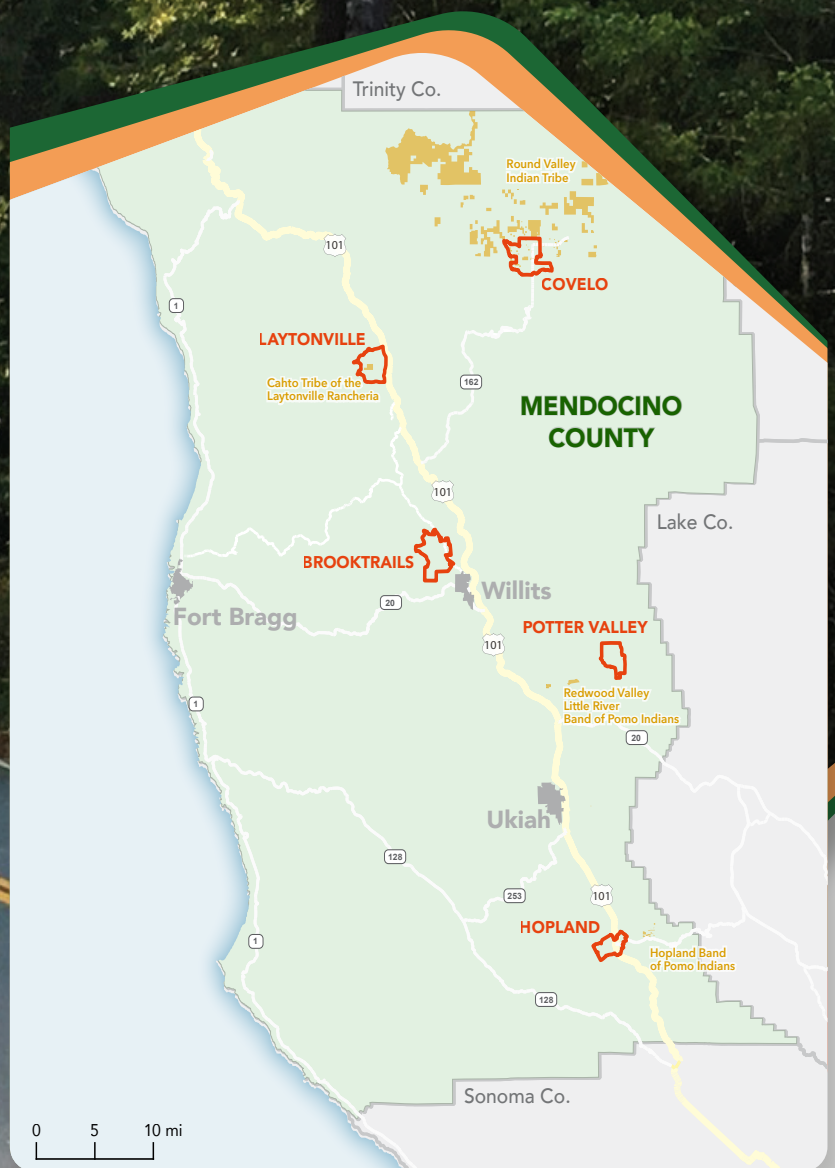


MENDOCINO COUNTY RURAL INLAND MOBILITY SOLUTIONS

Volume 2: Mobility Solutions Research and Analysis



Prepared for



Prepared by



January 2023

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Mendocino County Rural Inland Communities Mobility Solutions

Volume 2: Mobility Solutions Research and Analysis

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Mendocino County Rural Inland Communities Mobility Solutions

Volume 2: Mobility Solutions Research and Analysis

I. About This Document

This document is the second of three volumes. The first, **VOLUME 1: FIVE COMMUNITIES' TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT**, reports on available mobility choices in each of the five communities available to residents.

II. Introduction

This document is the second of three volumes. The first, **VOLUME 1: A RURAL MOBILITY TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT**, reports on available mobility choices in each of the five communities available to residents.

This **VOLUME 2: MOBILITY SOLUTIONS RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS** examines potential solutions for innovatively addressing transportation need. Through research and analysis of potential solutions, **VOLUME 2** identifies solutions that are feasible to bring back to the communities for their comment and reaction. This document will also enable discussion of funding sources through which to support recommendations.

The subsequently developed **VOLUME 3: A RURAL MOBILITY ACTION PLAN** will address community responses to the needs assessment and the proposed solutions in order to define recommended solutions. Implementation actions will be presented for solutions both feasible, with strong community support and for which sustainable funding can be identified.

To get to feasible rural mobility solutions for Inland Mendocino County, Volume 2 presents:

- Chapter III's individual solutions, designed to address documented mobility needs in each of five study communities. Solutions presented as a stand-alone services, constructed to address needs surfacing in one or more communities.
- Chapter IV describing organizational choices by which to implement these solutions, considering potential roles played by Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG), the Monterey Transit Agency (MTA) or the Family Resource Center Network in moving each solution or packages of solutions into operation.

- Chapter V presentation of preliminary, sketch-planning operating costs which work from the same assumption of stand-alone solutions. Only operating costs are considered at this stage. Further refined operating costs plus capital costs will be developed as part of Action Plan recommendations.

Community input received through the study’s next phase will help to shape the individual solutions into packages for going forward, both in terms of seeking new funding and in their administration and operation.

III. Feasibility of Mobility Solutions Addressing Needs

Eight Mobility Solutions Overview

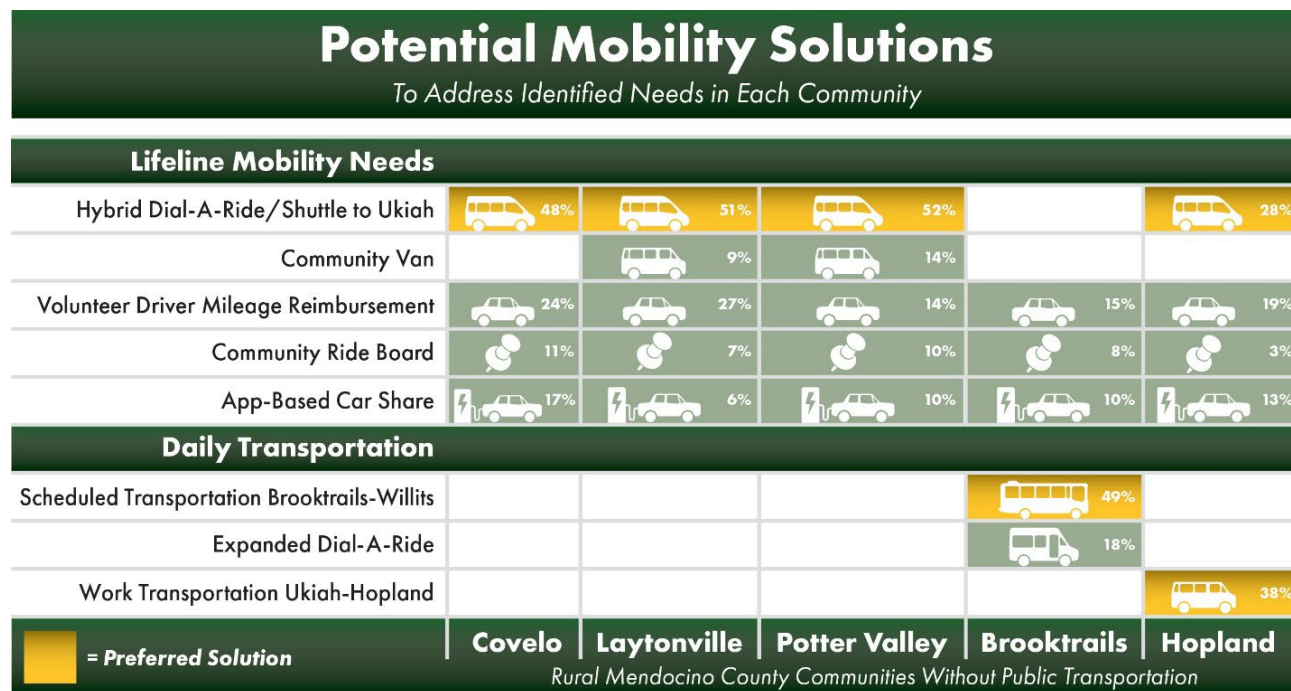


Figure 1, Overview of Tested Mobility Solutions and Community Preferences

Drawing upon VOLUME I: NEEDS ASSESSMENT findings from each individual community, Figure 1 presents the eight mobility solutions tested within the study communities and reflects community preferences and preferred solutions.

Design Principles for Assessing Mobility Solution Feasibility

Five principles to guide design, assess feasibility and inform implementation were developed by which to assess the mobility solutions identified as responsive to community needs. Reviewed by the Project Management Team, these may be amended before the study concludes.

Recommended solutions shall:

1. **Address identified needs or markets**, prioritizing lifeline service connections over trips for improved convenience.
2. **Build upon existing partnerships** and programs and does not duplicate; services should extend, expand, or where feasible, introduce new programs that are responsive to identified needs.
3. **Ensure transportation-related innovation in design or service elements** support the customer experience or improve operating efficiency.
4. **Be financially sustainable**, at scalable levels, which means:
 - Services initiated at small-scale, levels of service sufficient to test demand; potential for growth, if demand is realized.
 - Opportunities for efficiencies identified, such as minimizing deadhead.
 - Service unit costs, such as cost per passenger trip or cost per vehicle mile, are reasonable, even while reflecting rural transportation realities.
 - Initial funding can be identified.
5. **Strive to meet identified benchmarks in use or unit cost**, to determine whether any given transportation service should be continued beyond an initial pilot period.

These principles are incorporated into the following assessment of each of the eight mobility solutions.

1. Hybrid Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle to Ukiah

Service Description

On this regularly scheduled service, you would be able to make a reservation to have the bus pick you up at your home or a nearby location. At least one scheduled stop would be established in each community to residents to ride the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle without a reservation on a first-come, first-served basis. The bus or wheel-chair accessible van would travel from your community nonstop to Ukiah. For Laytonville and Covelo riders, the bus could make one or two scheduled stops in Willits. Once in Ukiah, the bus would circulate to drop riders at their desired destinations. After a couple of hours, the bus would pick riders up to make an express return trip back to your community and drop you at your home or the scheduled stop location. There would be a fare for the service. Reservations would be made in advance by phone or through an electronic app.

Communities That Could be Served with Such a Service

- Covelo
- Laytonville
- Potter Valley
- Hopland

How the Service Responds to Findings of Community Outreach

Three of four communities identified the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle as their preferred solution, generally by half of the responding population (Figure 2). For the fourth, Hopland, this solution was essentially tied with first place — preferred by older adults and persons with disabilities while younger, working-age persons selected a different preferred solution.

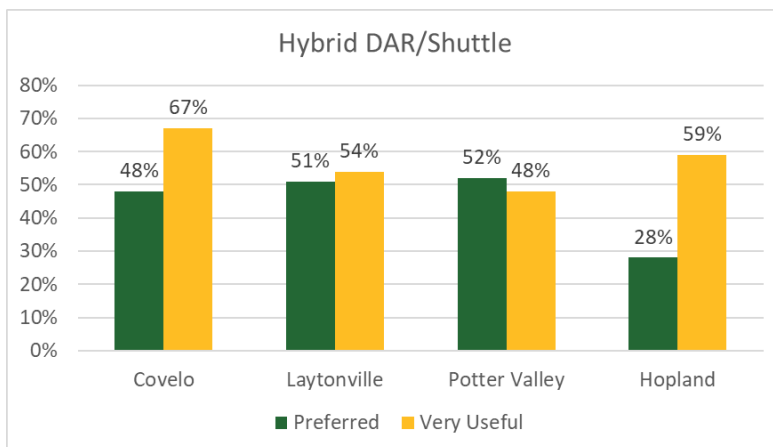


Figure 2, Preferred and Very Useful E-Survey Ratings by Community for the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle

Covelo

With no public transportation alternatives, Covelo participants spoke of the challenges traveling into Ukiah — and sometimes to Willits — for the numerous households without cars sufficiently reliable to travel Highway 162 and then south on Highway 101. Usually

a long, all-day trip, participants expressed concern about traveling with strangers (e.g., in a rideshare or hitchhiking mode) and were interested in a public transit solution.

Periodic trips into Ukiah were for purposes of:

- Shopping — affordable food and pharmacy
- Medical/dental appointments
- Dialysis — 12 person/two to three times per week
- Social Services/WIC
- Courts and jury duty
- Mendocino College

Ninety-five percent (95%) of E-survey participants saw the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle as useful or somewhat useful. It was the preferred solution by a plurality of Covelo E-survey participants (48%). Among older adults and persons with disabilities, 67% saw this as their preferred solution while for younger adults, 43% selected this as their preferred solution. For those with a reliable vehicle, 50% identified this as a preferred solution.

Further supporting need for an out-of-town transportation support to Covelo residents, median household income is \$38,000, which is 48% below the statewide median of almost \$79,000 per household. One-third of Covelo residents are living below federal poverty levels and almost half of youth ages 17 and younger (29%) are living in poverty.

Laytonville

Most Laytonville residents have access to a private car, but the rising gasoline cost makes it difficult to make the 44-mile roundtrip to Willits or the 92-mile roundtrip distance to Ukiah. Workshop participants included or represented persons who cannot drive or do not have a license, those attending DUI classes or are too young or too old to easily drive the round-trip distance to Ukiah.

Periodic trips to Willits and to Ukiah were for purposes of:

- Medical/dental appointments
- Shopping — less expensive food
- Behavioral Health — Ukiah
- Mendocino College in Willits and Ukiah
- DUI Classes
- Youth recreation
- Driver's Ed Class

E-survey respondents under age 60 between 70% and 80% spoke to court, college and work trip purposes where they needed transportation assistance. Older adults identified college and social service trip purposes. The Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle was seen as useful or somewhat useful by 92%, while 51% saw it as their preferred solution. Older adults

chose this as their preferred solution by 61%; persons with disabilities by 65% while younger adults selected it as their preferred solutions by 44%.

Further supporting need for an out-of-town transportation support to Laytonville residents, median household income is \$37,000, which is 47% of the statewide median of almost \$79,000 per household. Two-in-ten (19%) Laytonville residents are living below federal poverty levels while four-in-ten youth ages 17 and younger (40%) are living in poverty.

Potter Valley

Potter Valley residents travel a few miles along Highway 20, then another several miles on Highway 101 south to Ukiah. For the many residents who own or have access to cars, this is a short, relatively easy trip. Potter Valley youth, persons with disabilities, older adults and low-income residents without access to a car have difficulty with this trip as there are no alternatives to asking a friend or family member for assistance.

Potter Valley has extremely limited local services and no grocery store. Trip purposes into Ukiah were reported as:

- Periodic trips to Ukiah
- Medical/dental appointments
- Behavioral Health — Ukiah
- Shopping — less expensive food
- Mendocino College
- DUI Classes
- Youth recreation
- Driver's Ed Class

The Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle service was seen as very useful by almost half (48%) of Potter Valley survey respondents and somewhat useful by another one-third (31%). When asked to select just one, 52% identified the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle as their preferred solution. Six-in-ten older adult respondents named this as their preferred solution, with 45% of those under age 65 identifying the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle as their top choice.

Further supporting need for out-of-town transportation support to Potter Valley residents, median household income is \$56,000, which is 71% of the statewide median of almost \$79,000 per household. Fifteen percent (15%) of Potter Valley residents are living below federal poverty levels and a comparable proportion of youth ages 17 and younger (15%) are living in poverty.

Hopland

Hopland is the community closest to Ukiah, at just 14 miles to the south of Ukiah. While a majority of residents have access to a car, and no households report zero vehicles,

still there are individuals who cannot drive to Ukiah. These include youth, and tribal youth from the Hopland Band, persons with disabilities who cannot drive and older adults who do not drive or are driving less. As Hopland has no grocery store and very limited services that are not tourist-focused, most people orient to Ukiah for a range of trip purposes.

Periodic trips needs to Ukiah for older adults, persons with disabilities and low-income individuals, included:

- Medical/dental
- Ukiah Valley Medical Center
- Hillside Medical Clinic
- Adventist Health Howard Memorial in Willits
- Shopping — Safeway/Walmart

Among Hopland E-survey participants, one-third (33%) named the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle as very useful to them, and somewhat more than one-quarter (28%) chose it as their preferred solution. As noted elsewhere in this document, Hopland trip needs split between work-related trip needs, and those with other types of trip needs. This was reflected in the prioritized solutions with the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle more responsive to non-work trip needs.

Further supporting need for out-of-town transportation support to Hopland residents, median household income is \$57,000, which is 73% of the statewide median of almost \$79,000 per household. Almost two-in-ten (18%) Potter Valley older adults are living below federal poverty levels and four-in-ten youth ages 17 and younger (40%) are living in poverty.

Innovative Features

This mobility service option has several potential innovative features:

- A pilot project would be initiated one day a week each for:
 - Covelo
 - Laytonville
 - Potter Valley
 - Hopland (optional)
- Hopland survey results did not show as strong demand for the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle compared to the other three communities. However, there was relatively strong demand for shopping and medical trips among survey respondents and demand was expressed during the public outreach, including on behalf of tribal youth of the Hopland Band. Ridership from Hopland may not be strong enough to justify over the long-term but could be included in a pilot program to actually test the demand.

- Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle will provide pick-ups for multiple riders in the community with at least one scheduled stop, and then drop-offs at several destinations in Ukiah. The vehicle would wait in Ukiah for passengers to complete their business before returning to designated community.
- In Laytonville and Covelo, the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle would provide two fixed-scheduled stops in Willits on the way to Ukiah, likely in downtown Willits and in the Adventist Health Memorial area. Passengers could utilize MTA's Route 1 for additional circulation within Willits. No Dial-A-Ride service would be provided within Willits.
- Depending on availability, passengers could book multiple trips in Ukiah if time allows. For example, a passenger could book a doctor's appointment and then be picked up and driven to a pharmacy while in Ukiah, all for the same fare.
- Vehicles would accommodate package and grocery bags, and drivers would assist passengers at least door-to-door, and possibly door-through-door, at the location in Ukiah and then at the home end.
- If the Dial-A-Ride Shuttle service were operated by MTA, the Dial-A-Ride vehicle and driver could rotate one day a week to each of the four communities, providing a full schedule for a driver. If the Dial-A-Ride Shuttle were operated by the individual Family Resource Centers, the driver employed by the Family Resource Center and vehicle could start and end the service from the Family Resource Center in that community.
- Electric vehicles could be utilized in Hopland and Potter Valley. Due to electric vehicle range constraints, plug-in hybrid vehicles could be utilized in Covelo and Laytonville. However, if a 6-7 passenger wheelchair plug-in hybrid vehicle is not available at the time of program commencement, a similarly configured gasoline fueled vehicle could be utilized.
- There are several applications that could provide the option of booking a trip online and then tracking the vehicle on a map (like Uber) both at the home end and in Ukiah for pick-ups. Passengers would also be able to book trips and communicate with the driver.
- Due to the importance of phone communication, passengers would possibly be able to charge their phones aboard the bus.
- While the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle could be operated independently as a stand-alone service one day or two days a week from each community, a Community Van in each community could be utilized to operate the service one or two days a week.

Industry Examples of Similar Services

In Calaveras County, Calaveras Transit operates a Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle on Wednesdays only to travel from the very rural and isolated community of West Point to Jackson in Amador County. West Point is 21 miles from Jackson, with access on a very narrow and

curvy road. Jackson has multiple medical destinations and a Raley's grocery store where many West Point residents wish to shop.

Passengers can book a trip seven (7) days in advance, or at least 24 hours in advance, by phone or through the Spare App. This allows the dispatcher to plan a Dial-A-Ride route and pick-up times in both West Point or Wilseyville and then in Jackson for the ride home. While passengers know the Spare App is available, according to Calaveras Transit staff, the app is rarely utilized as passengers prefer to book trips through the Calaveras Transit dispatcher.

The service was started in October 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic with no fares and had 76 passengers in August 2021 with five service days (service ran once per week) or an average of seven passengers, making a round trip per day. When fares of \$3.00 per one-way trip or \$6.00 per round trip were instituted, the number of passengers per day had dropped to 56 per day in August 2022. However, Calaveras Transit staff in recent email correspondence indicated that demand has continued very strong, and ridership is growing. According to Calaveras Transit, the implementation of fares has not had an adverse impact on ridership.

The service is operated by Calaveras Transit and the bus must deadhead on Wednesdays from San Andreas in the morning and back from West Point to San Andreas in the evening, where the contractor's bus yard is located.

The service was planned in response to an outreach effort similar to that of Mendocino County. Previously, Calaveras had operated a fixed-route, fixed-schedule service between West Point and San Andreas, the County seat of Calaveras County with often zero to one passenger per day. The Calaveras County outreach effort, including surveying at a food bank, church luncheon and at a West Point Dollar General Store, found that most individuals without a reliable automobile had a desire to go to Jackson in Amador County for grocery and medical trips.

The primary benefits of the Calaveras Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle service include food shopping at a lower cost, full-service grocery store in Jackson and the ability to book and guarantee bus service to doctor's appointments in Jackson.

Benefits and Costs

Benefits

The primary benefits of the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle will be to residents of each community who will have access to increased mobility options, enabling them to shop for more affordable food, to schedule and have reliable transportation to doctor's appointments in Ukiah and to access government services located in Ukiah, among other trip purposes.

Based on the needs and the experience from West Point in Calaveras County, the estimated annual ridership (one-way trips including trips within Ukiah) is estimated at 700 annual passenger trips. While the monetary benefit from shopping at a full-service grocery store and other store and making needed medical appointments cannot be estimated at this point without a survey of passengers, the value to the passenger or user benefits might range from \$20-\$70 per passenger trip. This does not include other societal benefits that might include avoided trips to the emergency room and avoidance of expensive hospital stays for the many users who would likely be on Medi-Cal.

Challenges

The primary challenge of the service is the deadhead required to operate the service to and from each of the four communities. However, when Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) operated services to Covelo and Laytonville in the past, the vehicle was parked in the community, and MTA drivers started and ended the service in both communities without any deadhead. It is assumed under all institutional options that a single vehicle would be utilized for the service to operate between the community and Ukiah. Under this scenario, the four vehicles would be parked overnight in each of the four communities and the driver would start the service from the community with no deadhead required. The other scenario is where two vehicles are utilized, one serving Covelo and Laytonville and one shared between Potter Valley and Hopland. In this scenario, it is likely that the vehicle would be located in Ukiah or Laytonville under either of two different institutional options. Regardless, the vehicle would need to operate in non-revenue service from either Ukiah or Laytonville to Covelo, before starting its revenue service back to Ukiah. Once passengers are dropped off in the community of origin, it would again need to travel back to Ukiah or to Laytonville in non-revenue service.

Operating Costs

A preliminary schedule was developed to determine the total hours and miles that the vehicle would travel each day to and from Covelo, Laytonville, Potter Valley and Hopland. Two institutional scenarios were developed:

1. MTA operates and manages the service.
2. Family Resource Center in Laytonville and Potter Valley operate and manage the service.

In Potter Valley, it is assumed that a wheelchair-accessible electric minivan vehicle would be utilized. In Hopland, it is assumed that an electric wheelchair small cutaway bus would be utilized. Due to electric vehicle range constraints, it is assumed plug-in hybrid wheelchair accessible vans are utilized in Covelo and Laytonville.

Figure 3 provides the estimated costs for either MTA or the individual Family Resource Center operating the service. For comparison purposes, it is assumed that the Dial-A-Ride Shuttle service is provided one day a week, 51 weeks per year, from each community utilizing a 6-passenger van with room for groceries and other shopping items. The costs below assume the driver and vehicle start and end the service in each community, with no deadheading costs. These are sketch planning estimates, which means there could be significant variation using different cost assumptions. More detailed cost assumptions are discussed later in the section on institutional options.

Overall, the Family Resource Center would have a lower cost structure for providing the service than MTA. In general, electric power generation for charging an electric vehicle is about one-half the cost of gasoline. Maintenance costs are also lower as electric vans do not have oil changes and routine maintenance is less expensive.

| Community | Operating Statistics | | | MTA | | Family Resource Center | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Total Daily Miles (3) | Daily Driver Hours (3) | Propulsion Type | Gasoline | Electric/Hybrid | Gasoline | Electric/Hybrid |
| | | | | Annual Marginal Operating Costs (1,2) | Annual Marginal Operating Costs (1,2) | Annual Marginal Operating Costs (1,2) | Annual Marginal Operating Costs (1,2) |
| Covelo | 182 | 8 | Hybrid | \$ 43,413 | \$ 39,914 | \$ 30,149 | \$26,691 |
| Laytonville | 145 | 7 | Hybrid | \$ 37,629 | \$ 34,840 | \$ 22,128 | \$21,130 |
| Potter Valley (4) | 93 | 6 | Electric | \$ 31,469 | \$ 30,186 | \$ 20,461 | \$16,899 |
| Hopland | 72 | 5.25 | Electric | \$ 27,285 | 26,299 | N.A. | N.A |
| Total Marginal Costs | | | | \$ 139,796 | \$ 131,240 | \$ 72,739 | \$ 64,719 |

- 1) Marginal Operating includes driver wages, benefits, maintenance and gas or electric charging costs.
- 2) 15% administrative cost added to marginal cost as a placeholder. Actual administrative costs will be determined in next phase of the project.
- 3) Per 12/6/2022 meeting with MTA, assumes vehicle parked in community of origin and no deadhead.
- 4) Requires charging in Ukiah during layover.

Figure 3, Sketch Planning Comparison of Hours, Miles and Estimated Operating Costs for Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle One Day a Week, 6 passenger Wheelchair Accessible Van

2. Community Van for Laytonville and Potter Valley

Service Description

A Community Van and driver would be available for providing local trips and shopping trips to Willits and Ukiah on designated days of the week and recreational group trips. The use of the van would be determined by the agency operating and managing the Community Van.

The prerequisite for acquiring, operating, and maintaining a Community Van would be a willing and able local agency that has capacity to manage a Community Van, including hiring or having a driver available, scheduling trips, obtaining the necessary insurance requirements, monitoring performance and reporting operating and financial performance.

Communities That Could be Served with Such a Service

- Laytonville
- Potter Valley

How the Service Responds to Findings of Community Outreach

The Family Resource Centers in Laytonville and Potter Valley provide an array of social services for residents of both communities. In Laytonville, for example, the Family Resource Center serves as a local social service office, getting people signed up for benefits — CalFresh, Medi-Cal, Social Security, Covered California, etc. They also operate a local food bank and are opening a library. While there is a network of neighbors helping neighbors, the Family Resource Center would benefit from having a Community Van to serve their extensive low-income community who do not own a car and need access to the food bank and other services.

The Family Resource Center in Laytonville currently has access to the Long Valley Health Clinic van, but only for needed medical trips to Ukiah.

Community Van general interest in Laytonville is high with almost six-in-ten (57%) rating it as very useful and another one-third (36%) as somewhat useful. It did not rate as highly as the preferred solution, with just 9% of respondents indicating that it was their preference. However, older adults were somewhat more likely to identify this as their preferred solution (16%), presumably for assistance with local trips and perhaps sometimes trips out-of-town.

In Potter Valley, the Family Resource Center had operated a Community Van with funding from the Mendocino Community Foundation, until that funding was exhausted. Comments on its usefulness were high, with 45% rating this as very useful. When asked

to select one, it dropped to 14%, where respondents valued the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle connection to Ukiah over the localized trip-making of the Community Van.

Innovative Features

Although, the Community Van is a standalone mobility solution, for Potter Valley and for Laytonville, the Community Van would likely be operated in combination with the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle. In this scenario, the Community Van would operate three days a week for local service and one or two days a week to Ukiah. For Laytonville, a scheduled stop could also be provided in Willits.

Due to this likely combination of service, the type of vehicle would need to be consistent with both types of services. For the purposes here, it is assumed that a plug-in hybrid six-passenger wheelchair accessible van is utilized in Laytonville with a similarly configured gasoline fueled vehicle utilized if a cost-effective plug-in hybrid is not available at the time of program commencement. In Potter Valley, a low floor wheelchair accessible minivan is assumed for operation, with an electric vehicle desirable if it is available for purchase.

There is a need for a back-up vehicle when the Community Van is out of service. There are several options for a replacement vehicle, including a reciprocal agreement with the Long Valley Health Clinic that currently has a van. MTA's insurance would not allow the use of one of their spare vehicles. Ideally, the Family Resource Network would own a used wheelchair accessible van that could be utilized as spare when needed by an individual Family Resource Center.

There will be a need for regular and ongoing maintenance of the Community Van. Unfortunately, due to insurance constraints, MTA is not an option. Therefore, the vehicle would need to be maintained at a dealership in Ukiah or possibly even Santa Rosa. The logistics for having the vehicle maintained and having a back-up vehicle are estimated in the cost figures provided below. The possible innovative feature is that such logistics are coordinated through the Family Resource Network.

Industry Examples of Similar Services

In the broader definition of industry examples, it is very common for a local Senior Center to own and operate a van for services to members of the Senior Center. This is the most common example of a Community Van being operated and managed by a nonprofit.

In East Palo Alto, a community hydrogen-fueled van was operated and managed by a Mobility Manager for five years. It was operated and managed by the City, which manages the local Senior Center. The Community Van was utilized as a community

shuttle for local trips, a shopper's shuttle for residents wanting to go to a full-service grocery store outside of East Palo Alto, and a youth shuttle for after-school trips.

An industry example of a Community Van program operated through a transit agency is the Ben Franklin Transit Community Van Program in Washington state's Franklin and Benton counties. In this program, seven passenger vans have been provided by the transit agency to nonprofit organizations and local government agencies. The vans can be used within a 150-mile radius and the nonprofits are charged \$0.58 per mile to cover the operating costs. The nonprofit provides the drivers, and they are able to schedule the van as they see fit.

Benefits and Costs

Benefits

The benefits of a Community Van are increased mobility to very low-income residents of Laytonville and Potter Valley. The Community Van would improve access to local food banks for fresh food items and provide lower cost shopping trips to Ukiah. The Community Van could be utilized to provide increased access to programs and services offered by the Family Resource Center, including enrollment in CalFresh, Covered California, etc.

Operating Costs

For purposes of providing cost estimates, it is assumed that the Community Van operates five days a week, 6 hours a day, 52 weeks a year.

Laytonville and Potter Valley

Laytonville operating costs will vary depending on how the driver labor is provided to operate the Community Van. In Laytonville, the Executive Director of the Family Resource Center indicated that existing staff could drive the Community Van if such a vehicle were available. Driver wages and benefits typically are about 2/3 of total operating costs, so the ability to utilize existing staff would reduce costs significantly. For a gasoline-fueled vehicle, the estimated fuel and maintenance costs for a gasoline-powered vehicle are about \$13,000–\$17,000 per year and could be lower depending on the price of gas, and the availability of maintenance in Ukiah. The use of an electric or plug-in hybrid would be less due to replacing fuel costs with electric charging costs. Since electric vehicles do not require oil changes, and other less routine maintenance than internal combustion engines, an electric van would reduce fuel and maintenance costs by about \$4,000 and possibly more, depending on the actual electric charging costs. The logistics for a back-up vehicle and travel to and from the maintenance shop could add another \$3,500 to the annual costs.

For Potter Valley, there is a need to recruit, hire and maintain a driver to operate the vehicle. There is also a need to provide some level of dispatching for scheduling the vehicle, in addition to having a back-up driver when the driver is sick or on vacation.

It is assumed that some additional costs may be encumbered for dispatching costs, including all costs including driver recruiting, driver wages, driver benefits, dispatching, fuel and/or electric charging, logistics for having back-up drivers and back-up vehicles, and administrative costs. For each community, the annual operating costs estimate for a complete turnkey program, possibly perhaps under a service delivery contract, would range between \$90,500 annually for an electric passenger van to \$100,400 annually for a gasoline-powered van per community. The costs would be less if existing Family Resource Center staff could perform any of the driving, dispatching or administrative functions.

There would also be economies of scale by combining the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle with the Community Van.

3. Scheduled Service Between Brooktrails and Willits

Service Description

A regularly scheduled bus or van would provide service that would pick up/drop off at Sherwood Market, the Brooktrails Community Service District (CSD) Community Center and downtown Willits, three or four round trips per day. At least one route deviation trip for pick-up at home in a designated area would be allowed. In Willits, passengers would be able to connect to the MTA bus system.

Communities That Could be Served with Such a Service

- Brooktrails

How the Service Responds to Findings of Community Outreach

August Listening Session participants identified four types of trip needs that are not now met by the Willits Senior Center Dial-A-Ride. These included:

- Service to Willits for connection to the MTA system
- Youth trips needs that are not served by school buses
- Long-time residents aging in place anticipating need for transit
- Residents without access to private vehicles need service to Willits

Among E-survey respondents, almost half (49%) saw this as their preferred solution. Several groups identified this as their preferred solution by six-in-ten to seven-in-ten: youth and students (60%), those under age 60 (61%), employed persons (68%) and among larger households, of three or more (63%). Three-quarters of respondents saw fixed-route service between Brooktrails and Willits as very useful to somewhat useful.

Brooktrails' 4,600 residents include 52% who are adults under the age of 65 and 35% who are below the age of 18. These almost 4,000 individuals are not eligible for the existing Willits Senior Center-operated Dial-A-Ride. Of these, persons of low income are 6% of Brooktrails residents and more likely to have limited transportation choices. Additionally, 4% of households do not have access to a vehicle and one-third of households (32%) have only one vehicle but may have a second adult who needs transportation but does not have access to a car.

Innovative Features

A fixed-route, fixed-schedule service with established bus stops is the traditional service delivery model for rural transportation services. Route 1 for local service in Willits is very typical of the traditional transit service. Potential innovations that could be incorporated into this service could be:

- In addition to the three scheduled stops in Brooktrails and the scheduled stops in Willits, the schedule could be adapted to allow the bus to either pick up or drop off one passenger at their home within one mile of the scheduled stop in Brooktrails per round trip. The route deviation service could require a reservation one day in advance for each direction of the trip. Therefore, if there were four round trips between Brooktrails and Willits, there would be up to eight reservations taken for route deviation trip reservations per day.
- In response to recent unmet needs request for a commuter service from Brooktrails to Willits and input from the community outreach, one innovative service delivery option would be adding a special trip to the existing Route 1 service. The added trip – known as a tripper – would be designed to serve the needs of work trips. As an example, Route 1 would start in Brooktrails at perhaps 6:45 a.m. and make pick-ups at a few key locations before starting its regular service at 7:12 a.m. at Creekside Drive. In the afternoon, the Route 1 schedule would be adjusted for a return commuter tripper to Brooktrails after the last drop-off at the Integrated Service Center at 5:18 p.m. with a special trip to Brooktrails before making the last run starting at the Creekside stop at 5:42 p.m. (with a likely later start time for the last run to accommodate the Brooktrails run. This is an illustrative example on how to accommodate a commuter run from Brooktrails in the morning and a commuter run from Willits to Brooktrails in the afternoon.
- The bus or van on the fixed route could be an electric vehicle since the range of four round trips between Brooktrails and Willits is within the typical range for an electric van or bus.
- Since the demand level from Brooktrails to Willits is expected to be very low, one possible innovative option would be to contract with a taxi company to operate a fixed-route service with regularly scheduled service. With the taxi-operated service, the route deviation option could be handled with perhaps only an advanced reservation of one to two hours.

Industry Examples of Similar Services

As explained above, a fixed-route, fixed-scheduled service is the traditional service delivery model, and this is how MTA currently operates both for local and regional routes.

Route deviation services are not uncommon in the transit industry. An example of such a service with the type of street configurations as in Brooktrails is in the Woodbridge area of Virginia. The service is operated as a regularly scheduled service on a loop alternating between clockwise and counter-clockwise directions.

As shown in Figure 4, the bus has regularly scheduled stops at the numbered stops but can deviate $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile within the pink-colored band on the map to pick up and drop off passengers on a demand response basis. Something similar could be operated in the Brooktrails area perhaps from a stop in downtown Willits that would connect to MTA Routes 1 and 20.

Benefits and Costs

Benefits

The primary benefit of the proposed service would be to provide a transit mobility option for residents of Brooktrails. With planned schedule coordination between the Brooktrails route and MTA Routes 1 and 20, the ability to travel throughout the MTA system will significantly broaden the mobility options for Brooktrails residents.

Operating Costs

For cost estimating purposes, it is assumed that the scheduled service would operate three days a week, 52 weeks a year, and an MTA driver would be assigned to operate the route for a full 8-hour shift, including checking in the vehicle, driving to the start from a location within Willits, operating the service for approximately six to seven hours in revenue service, and then parking and doing the vehicle check out at the end of the day.

The marginal operating for operating such a service, not including administrative costs, is estimated at approximately \$110,000 for an electric Ford E-Transit van or \$117,000 for a gasoline-powered Ford Transit van. While administrative costs will be determined in the next phase of the project, a placeholder of \$6,000 can be utilized for this mobility solution option, bringing the annual total expense to \$116,000 for an electric vehicle powered service and \$123,000 with a gasoline-fueled service.

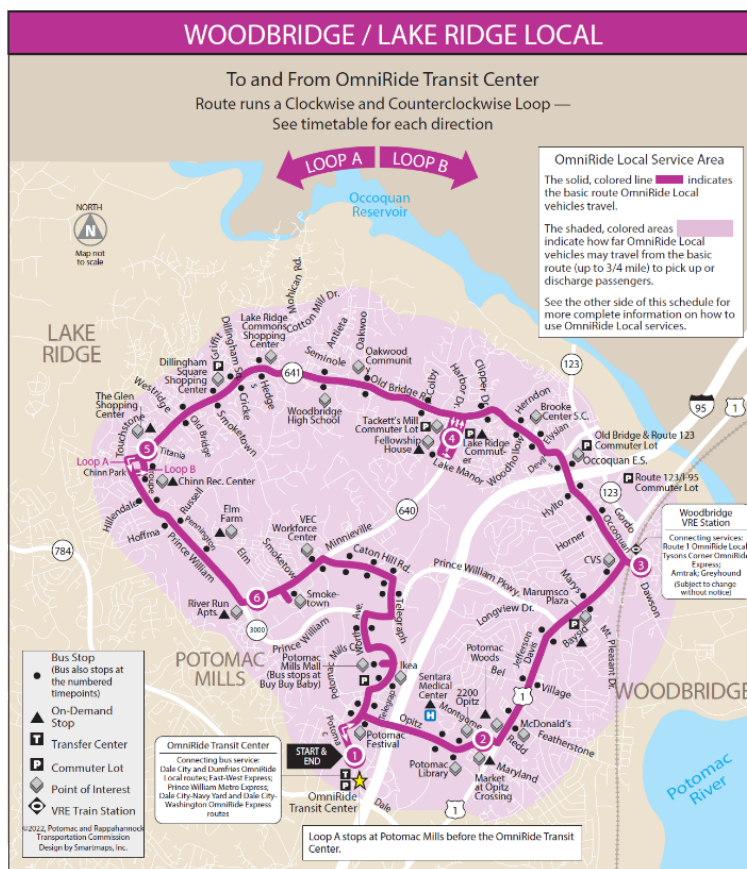


Figure 4, Service Example from Woodbridge, Virginia

4. Expanded Dial-A-Ride for Brooktrails

Service Description

The Willits Senior Center currently provides Dial-A-Ride service (Mondays-Fridays, 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.) to seniors and persons with disabilities who live in Brooktrails. An advance reservation and fare are required. This service would be expanded with an additional vehicle at certain hours to accommodate the general public and possibly a longer day. It would also allow for connections to MTA bus network for service within Willits, as well as to and from Ukiah.

Communities That Could be Served with Such a Service

- Brooktrails

How the Service Responds to Findings of Community Outreach

MTA currently operates its weekday Dial-A-Ride service through the Willits Senior Center between Willits and Brooktrails. It is only available to Brooktrails residents who are older adults aged 65 and older or eligible persons with disabilities. The primary need expressed by outreach participants was for a connection to Willits for those who are not now served by the Dial-A-Ride. This includes youth traveling to and from school and school-related activities, and Brooktrails residents without access to a car, including low-income residents living in the area.

Among E-survey respondents, 43% identified the expanded Dial-A-Ride as very useful and another 34% said it would be somewhat useful. Together, almost eight-in-ten say the expanded Dial-A-Ride is of some use. Among those who chose this as their preferred solution, 18% of Brooktrails E-survey respondents, they were far more likely to be older adults and persons with disabilities.

Of Brooktrails' 4,600 residents, 13% of the population are older adults who are currently eligible for the existing Dial-A-Ride and another 12% are adults with disabilities, who may be eligible for the existing Dial-A-Ride. Those who are not now eligible and could potentially use an expanded Dial-A-Ride include youth who are one-third (35%) of Brooktrails residents and persons of low income at almost 6% of residents. Additionally, 4% of households do not have access to a vehicle and one-third of households (32%) have only one vehicle but may have a second adult who needs transportation but do not have access to a car.

Innovative Features

This mobility service option has several potential innovative features:

- The general public Dial-A-Ride scheduling would be coordinated for drop-off and pick-ups for transfers to Route 20 to Ukiah. This would enable a seamless transit between Brooktrails and Ukiah in both directions.
- There are several app applications that could provide the option of booking a trip online and then tracking the vehicle on a map (like Uber) both at the home end and in Ukiah for pick-ups. Passengers would also be able to book trips and communicate with the driver.
- Due to the importance of phone communication, passengers would possibly be able to charge their phones aboard the bus.
- Because the service would be demand responsive requiring advanced reservations 24 hours in advance, the dispatcher would be able to determine when a second Dial-A-Ride bus would be required to accommodate the scheduled trips, providing increased efficiencies in service delivery.
- MTA currently provides funding for the Willits Senior Center transportation program and has a contract to provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) service outside of regular service window. There is potential for expanding the partnership arrangement between the Willits Senior Center and MTA to potentially provide an additional vehicle and driver to accommodate general public demand when vans are available.

Industry Examples of Similar Services

While it is very common for public transit agencies to provide general public Dial-A-Ride that goes beyond the requirements of the ADA for Complementary ADA Paratransit service, there are no known industry examples of a Senior Center operating a general public Dial-A-Ride service.

Benefits and Costs

Benefits

Currently, the Willits Senior Center only provides service to seniors in the community, which is the mission of the Senior Center. Although their FTA 5310 vehicle would allow provision of general public trips on an incidental basis, those rides are not provided. This option would enable Brooktrails general public residents to take the demand response service from Brooktrails to any destination within Brooktrails or to any destination in Willits. It would also enable residents to Brooktrails to connect with the MTA bus network to Ukiah and other destinations in the MTA bus network.

Operating Costs

The Willits Senior Center currently budgets \$80,500 for driver wages, benefits, maintenance and fuel costs. Insurance and administrative costs are not included as the administrative costs for managing the service will be determined in the next phase of the project.

The Willits Senior Center currently operates two vehicles with drivers from 7:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. with two vehicles operating most of these times Monday to Friday, but these times are staggered at the beginning and end of the day. The marginal cost of adding a third gasoline vehicle and driver for a third shift and the associated benefits, maintenance and fuel costs have been estimated to add approximately \$43,000 per year and assumes that additional insurance would need to be paid, and inflation would add 10% to the FY 2021/22 budgeted costs when implemented. Adding a 15% administrative cost as a placeholder until actual administrative costs are determined in the next phase of the project, the total annual operating cost for a gasoline van would be approximately \$49,500.

If an electric six to seven passenger wheelchair van were utilized, the operating costs would be lower with less electric charging costs than gasoline and lower maintenance costs. The estimated marginal operating costs of adding a third vehicle would be approximately \$38,000. This does not include additional administrative costs. Adding 15% administrative cost as a placeholder until actual administrative costs are determined in the next phase of the project, the total operating cost for an electric van would be approximately \$43,700.

5. Work Transportation for Ukiah-Hopland Trips

Service Description

There would be a regularly scheduled transportation service between Ukiah and Hopland that would be coordinated with work start and end times at Hopland employment sites. It would be provided for a reasonable fare. The service could connect with the MTA bus network at the Pear Center or Library in Ukiah.

Communities That Could be Served with Such a Service

- Ukiah
- Hopland

How the Service Responds to Findings of Community Outreach

Employers participating in the Hopland August Listening Sessions spoke to the numbers of employees working in lower wage positions in the agriculture, winery and restaurant businesses in Old Hopland and in the Greater Hopland area. Many of these individuals come from Ukiah, to work in Hopland, but the current MTA Route 65 arrives in the late morning and leaves mid-afternoon at times inconsistent with employment requirements:

- Agricultural workers — from very early mornings to early afternoon
- Tasting Rooms — mostly 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Restaurant workers — from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Parents of youth and advocates for persons with disabilities spoke to the need for greater choice in scheduled public transit trips between Hopland and Ukiah. For youth, after-school activities that are school or work related were identified as a common need for transportation. Among persons with disabilities, Ukiah grocery shopping was identified as among the highest need as there is no local grocery store. In terms of Hopland's 255 residents, 18% are older adults and 40% of youth are living in poverty, presumably with limited transportation choices.

Hopland residents identified regularly scheduled work transportation between Ukiah and Hopland as useful to four-in-ten persons (41%), and another one-third (34%) say this was somewhat useful — together this is three out of four individuals. Overall, 38% chose work transportation as their preferred solutions. This rose to more than half among persons under age 60 (52%), identifying this as their preferred solution, and the preferred solution for the same proportion for persons with disabilities (50%).

A small group of Ukiah residents who orient toward Hopland — presumably for work or perhaps for the possibility of work — responded to the E-survey. While three-fourths of

these respondents were not employed, and just 21% were employed, six-in-ten (61%) did see a scheduled work transportation service as very useful and another one-third (34%) as somewhat useful.

Innovative Features

This mobility service option has several potential innovative features:

- A competitive RFP process would be developed to send out to local transportation providers (e.g., MTA, taxi, tour bus companies, school bus providers) to get competitive quotes on the cost of providing a one-way work trip between Ukiah and Hopland. Service parameters would be set such that it would need to meet the work schedule needs of local employers in Hopland. Competitive bids could include demand response, fixed route/fixed schedule, or a hybrid approach for a minimum number of one-way trips per year, with pricing per additional one-way passenger trip.
- The RFP process could be managed by Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) to provide a level playing field to an array of potential service providers.
- In advance of the RFP process, MCOG could convene a series of working sessions with Hopland employer representatives to define the service parameters and potential subsidy sharing. Local employers would need to guarantee a negotiated employer contribution that in essence would provide at least a guaranteed 20% farebox recovery ratio during a pilot project period.

Industry Examples of Similar Services

Locally, one of the service provision options could be a subscription bus operated by MTA. MTA has a contract with the Regional Center to provide bus service from participant homes to a developmentally disabled worksite. If MTA decides to submit a bid for this service, it could be provided in a similar manner. This is an example of a transit agency-provided subscription bus service picking up riders from home and transporting them to a work site. Such a subscription bus service has historically been a common service delivery model. However, for agencies like MTA that receive Federal Funding, Charter Party regulations require competitive bidding for such subscription services that a taxi company or local tour bus company could operate.

Commuter vanpools are also a variant of subscription service where 6-14 passengers and a driver (who often rides for free) agree to pay a monthly fee to subscribe to the daily service. They meet the vanpool at typically one or two staging locations and then commute directly to a work site. The vanpool does not operate unless there are sufficient riders who agree to pay the monthly cost. However, vanpools are most economically feasible for commutes of 70 miles round trip and greater. They typically do not work for short-distance trips, such as between Ukiah and Hopland.

There are reportedly seven active taxi companies in Ukiah. One taxi company or a consortium of taxi companies could provide a bid for a subsidized taxi service. Public agency-subsidized taxi programs are common for a transit agency. While they are primarily utilized to supplement an ADA Paratransit Service, the same subsidized service delivery model could be utilized between Ukiah and Hopland.

A typical subsidized taxi program is provided by the Cities of Fremont, Newark and Union City. The Taxi Service is a same-day service that is available to Fremont, Newark and Union City residents who can use a curb-to-curb service. Rides usually arrive within 10-45 minutes of a ride request. Riders purchase taxi vouchers for \$4 each and each voucher subsidizes up to \$20 of taxi meter fare. Only one taxi voucher can be used per one-way trip. Riders are responsible for paying any fare beyond the \$20 voucher subsidy and any tip provided to the driver. There are no additional charges for companions or attendants traveling with a rider.

In the Hopland-Ukiah model patterned after the tri-city model, vouchers could be purchased for regular work trips for \$3 by workers in Hopland and the taxi ride for a trip between anywhere in a defined area in Ukiah to any work destination in Hopland. This would cost \$3 for the worker and the subsidy for the rest of the trip would be shared by the employers and a public agency source as just one possible iteration.

Benefits and Costs

Benefits

The benefits of providing a commuter service between Ukiah and Hopland would be that existing and potential residents of Ukiah that do not own an automobile, do not have a driver's license or cannot afford to operate an automobile would have a mobility option for accessing employment opportunities in Hopland.

Operating Costs

The contract costs would be based on a competitive bid process. To normalize the costs among the different possible mode of service delivery, bidders would be asked to provide a base bid for the cost of providing a minimum number of trips. At a minimum to be viable, perhaps this could be a minimum of 10 workers per day X 2 one-way trips per day X 300 days per year (including some weekends, but on some days no trips are provided due to lack of demand), resulting in a minimum of 6,000 annual one-way trips for a one-way pilot. Bidders would provide a bid on the base cost for providing the 6,000 one way-trip, and \$XX.XX per additional trip above 6,000. The actual number of base one-way trips to be included in the RFP process would receive input from the consortium of employers in Hopland.

It is not known if one or more taxi companies would respond to an RFP for a subsidized taxi program. The taxi meter fare is \$3.00 drop and \$3.00 per mile. A sample trip between Ukiah and Hopland is 14 miles. For sake of illustration, if a taxi company were to charge the full taxi fare cost, the cost for a one-way ride would be \$55 per one-way trip. There would likely be some, but undetermined, discounted for some guaranteed number of trips. But even if the discounted tip cost were \$40 per trip, and employers agreed to pay for \$10 per trip, and passengers were paying \$3 per ride, the public subsidy requirement would be \$138,000 for 6,000 rides. This is for illustration purposes only, as it isn't known what the discount from a taxi company might be and what type of contribution employers would be willing to make.

It is not known what MTA might bid for such a service. But if three round trips in the morning and three rounds trips in the evening were provided for 300 days, the estimated annual cost for the marginal costs of drivers' wages and benefits, fuel and maintenance is estimated at \$170,000 for a gasoline-powered van or small cutaway bus and \$160,000 for an electric van or small cutaway bus. The total cost per trip for 6,000 trips would be \$26.67 for an electric van. If employers were to provide \$10 per trip for illustration purposes and passengers would provide a \$3 fare for the service, the annual public subsidy would be approximately \$82,000. This is for illustration purposes only, as it not known what MTA would bid for such a service, what the administrative costs would be and what level of contribution employers might contribute.

6. Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program for All Communities

Service Description

In Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement programs, riders choose and recruit their own volunteer drivers from friends and neighbors they know and trust in their personal vehicles and are reimbursed for each mile they drive, but at no cost to the rider.

Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement programs are highly successful in rural communities. These programs were designed to be a low-cost, low-maintenance, rider-focused approach to provide transportation for unserved and underserved, transit-dependent older adults, persons with disabilities, individuals with low incomes or in rural communities, and other populations that are difficult to serve with public transit. Importantly, this program successfully serves out-of-county trips, a perennial challenge that many transit riders face.

Preliminary Design and Key Features

- Administrator develops eligibility criteria and an eligibility process, then certifies applicants and assigns mileage cap and trip purposes or eligibility type, based on program and budget parameters.
 - When approving a participant's application, mileage caps and trip purpose conditions can be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the participant's need.
- Enrolled participants choose and recruit their own volunteer drivers from friends and neighbors they know and trust.
- Participants submit a monthly reimbursement form and then directly reimburse their volunteer driver(s).
- Rides are scheduled by participant and volunteer drivers, as mutually convenient.
- Transportation is provided in personal volunteer drivers' vehicles.
- 24/7 transportation is available, as negotiated between participant and volunteers.
- Door-through-door, and other assistance available, as negotiated between participant and volunteers.
- Travel can be provided to other communities or outside the County, depending on program parameters. Participants will only receive reimbursement up to their mileage allotment.
- Rides are free to the participant.

Communities That Could be Served with Such a Service

- All communities in the study area
- Mendocino County as a whole

How the Service Responds to Findings of Community Outreach

The concept of a Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program was tested in all five communities. While it was not the top preferred solution in any community, it was frequently a runner-up and was rated as very useful by one-third to one-half of respondents in each community (Figure 5). Additionally:

- Among Covelo residents under 60 years, this strategy was their primary preference.
- Laytonville residents with larger households preferred this strategy.
- For Potter Valley residents, there was a preference for this program among a small number of respondents with a disability.

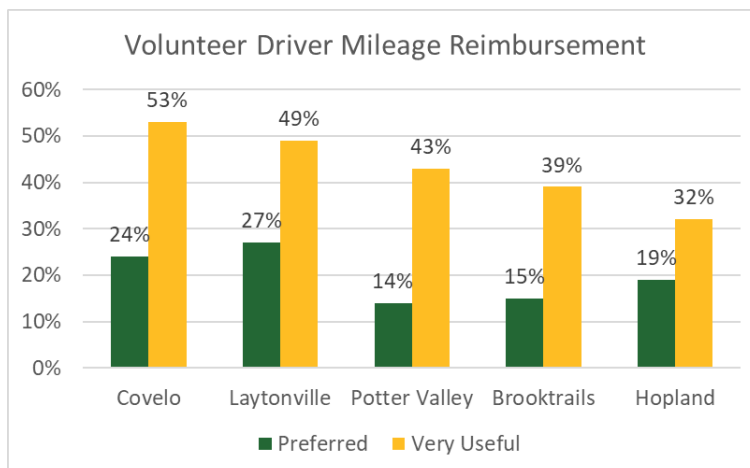


Figure 5, Preferred and Very Useful E-Survey Ratings by Community for the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program

As such, it would be a useful supplement to other services.

This solution addresses several challenges addressed during this study, including:

Occasional need for transportation to Ukiah and Willits for various purposes was reported by every community during Listening Sessions. Trip purposes included medical appointments, dental appointments, dialysis — which can be up to three times per week — shopping, court appearances or jury duty, and car repairs.

- For Covelo, Laytonville and Potter Valley residents, this was the primary need reported during Listening Sessions.
- In Hopland, periodic trips to Ukiah were reported as a primary need for seniors and persons with disabilities and low incomes. Youth also reported a need for periodic transportation to Ukiah.

For older adults, persons with disabilities, and individuals with low incomes, a volunteer driver mileage reimbursement program may help with the need for occasional local trips for shopping, medical trips or social services. This need was reported by every community in the E-survey, notably:

- Covelo: Forty percent (40%) of older adults 60+ and 20% of respondents with disabilities reported a need for local trip-making. According to the American Community Survey, half of older adults in Covelo report they have a disability, 15 points above the countywide proportion.
- Laytonville: Eighty-four percent (84%) of respondents reported this need for local transportation. In Laytonville, disabilities reported are high for the older adult population, 47%, versus 35% for the County as a whole. Regarding low-income individuals, Laytonville's \$37,000 median income is 30% below the countywide median of \$53,000.
- Brooktrails: Nearly half (46%) of older adults 60+ and 40% of respondents with disabilities reported this need.
- Hopland: Fifty-seven percent (57%) of older adults 60+ reported this need. Older adult residents of Hopland are somewhat more likely to be living below the poverty line (18%).

All communities reported some need for transportation for out-of-county trips for medical appointments or to connect to out-of-county transit services in both Listening Sessions and through survey responses.

- Covelo: Residents spoke about out-of-county referrals to medical specialties, many of whom are in Santa Rosa. Nearly half (45%) of survey respondents reported a need for out-of-county transportation for medical destinations.
- Laytonville: Out-of-county trip needs referenced included specialty medical referrals or to connect to the larger region through the SMART Train or the Airporter in Santa Rosa. Twenty-three (23%) percent of survey respondents reported a need for transportation for out-of-county medical destinations.
- Brooktrails: Some residents need to make a connection down to Sonoma County, to the Airporter or SMART Train to travel beyond the region. One-third of survey respondents (33%) reported a need for out-of-county medical trips.
- Potter Valley: There is no health care in Potter Valley, so all residents must go elsewhere for regular check-ups, chronic care, vaccinations and specialty care. Four-in-ten of survey respondents reported they need transportation for out-of-county medical destinations.
- Hopland: There are no medical care facilities in Hopland nor practicing dentists — residents must travel to Ukiah or beyond for health care. Almost half (47%) of survey respondents reported a need for out-of-county medical transportation.

Innovative Features

This mobility service option has several potential innovative features:

- Rider-centric approach: volunteer drivers are selected entirely by the rider. This minimizes liability for program administrators and places the rider in control of their transportation. While this can be difficult for some isolated individuals, there are strategies to assist them with this. And, in fact, when the rider can offer a neighbor or friend some reimbursement for gasoline, it becomes easier to make the request for assistance. Experience in other, similar programs finds that the volunteer driver and rider often become good friends.
- The budget is highly scalable. Controllable operations cost variables include:
 - Size of service area
 - Number of riders served
 - Purposes of travel allowed
 - Number of miles of travel authorized
 - Mileage reimbursement rate paid
- Eligibility criteria are tailored by the program administrator. Eligibility might be limited to older adults and persons with disabilities or could be determined by an income threshold. Criteria should be determined by the service area need and the requirements of funding sources.
- Mileage caps and trip purpose conditions can be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on participant's need.
- This program requires no cost to the rider. Volunteer drivers will be reimbursed at a rate lower than the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) standard mileage rate to ensure their role remains classified as "volunteer." The reimbursement rate, which is less than the IRS Standard Mileage Rate, but is enough to cover the associated cost of fuel and maintenance of their vehicle for the trips they provide — around \$0.40—\$0.47 per mile.

Industry Examples of Similar Services

The nationally acclaimed Transportation Reimbursement and Information Program (TRIP) model in Riverside County was designed to serve older adults and persons with disabilities who are not served by or cannot utilize public transportation. TRIP is administered by the Independent Living Partnership (ILP) and was designed and created through the collaboration of the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and the Riverside County Office on Aging. TRIP began serving Riverside County's Coachella Valley in 1993 and expanded to service for the entire county by the following year. Since then, TRIP has provided more than 2.5 million one-way trips and more than 35 million miles of volunteer-assisted transportation for persons with

disabilities who had no other way to access needed care or services, or to improve the quality of their lives and continue to live independently.

TRIP is funded through grants from RCTC's Measure A Specialized Transit Program, the Riverside County Office on Aging, FTA Section 5310, and with financial assistance from Angel View, a local nonprofit, funding rides for developmentally disabled children.

During FY 2021/2022, the average cost per one-way trip was \$8.26. Volunteers were reimbursed a subsidy of \$0.48 per mile. Riders traveled 849,016 miles of volunteer-assisted transportation during this reporting year. Also, 102,772 one-way trips were provided for 930 individual TRIP clients. Twenty-four percent (24%) of the trips provided were for medical services and 22% of trips were taken by clients with disabilities to shop for groceries and other essential items. These trips were provided by more than 1,000 volunteer drivers donating the equivalent of 4,060 days of their personal time.

ILP currently has one part-time employee (30 hours per week) to manage TRIP data entry and reimbursement payments.

Additionally, as a national model, TRIP offers multiple services:

- Lease of their TripTrack software for data entry, invoicing and reporting.
- Support in program development and implementation.
- Contract Program administration — In this scenario, MTA or a partner would develop program parameters and conduct eligibility process and contract ILP to administer reimbursements and mileage tracking.

Benefits and Costs

Benefits

This solution establishes a low-cost and gap-filling solution for those who are not served by or cannot utilize public transportation service. Other advantages include:

- Offsets high gas prices
- Good for rider and driver
- Potential to reimburse In-Home Health Support Services (IHSS) caregiver
- Escorted trip for those who are elderly or frail
- Ability to trip chain

Costing Considerations

Cost would be impacted by which administration scenario is appropriate for Mendocino County:

1. MTA or a stakeholder agency administers the program in-house, while leasing ILP's TripTrak software for data entry, invoicing and reporting.

2. MTA or a stakeholder agency contracts ILP to administer their program. Contract costs include one-time start-up cost and a fee per rider reimbursed per month.

This section provides estimated operating and capital needs and costs for each administration scenario, and details estimated costs for future program expansion.

Capital Needs

MTA/another agency administers program in-house:

- Lease of ILP’s TripTrak software.
- Workspace with desk and printer (laser recommended), internet connection and phone

Partnership with ILP:

No capital costs are anticipated for this scenario.

Estimated Capital Cost

MTA/another agency administers program in-house:

Figure 6 presents capital costs for leasing the TripTrak software. Estimated costs for the initial year are \$1,695. Costs for subsequent years are \$1,195 (annual renewal fee and ongoing maintenance fee).

| TripTrak (1) Lease Initial Year (2 authorized users) | Cost |
|--|---------------------------|
| Start-up (2) (encryption/virtual private network license): | \$275 |
| Ongoing cloud maintenance fee | \$920 per year |
| TeamViewer start-up and use training | \$250/first hour |
| | \$85/each additional hour |
| Total | \$1,695 |

1) TripTrak is a proprietary software developed by ILP. This administration model incorporates leasing TripTrak for use for data entry, invoicing and reporting.

2) The annual renewal fee is \$195.

Figure 6: Estimated Cost for Lease of ILP’s TripTrack Software

Operational Needs

MTA/another agency administers program in-house:

- Existing staff time: For the scale of this program, no additional staff is anticipated. Staff time would include the application process, data entry and reimbursements and conducting reviews.

Partnership with ILP:

- Minimal existing staff time: No additional staff is required. Staff time would include the application process and payments to ILP.

Estimated Operating Cost

MTA/another agency administers program in-house:

Figure 7 provides example cost scenarios for MTA or stakeholder agency-administered program. These scenarios anticipate 50 to 100 riders at various mileage allotments. At an initial funding level, the total budget is scalable between \$50,000 and \$118,000.

A second funding level for potential program expansion is also presented, in the case that the program could be opened to residents across the County. The estimated total budget ranges from \$199,000 to \$365,000.

| Riders | Miles per Month per Rider | Total Annual Miles Reimbursed (1) | Total Annual One-Way Trips (2) | Software Cost (TripTrak) (3) | Marketing Costs (4) | Operating Costs | Total Budget | Estimated Cost/Trip |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Initial Funding Level | | | | | | | | |
| 50 | 170 | 102,000 | 3,400 | \$1,695 | \$1,678 | \$47,940 | \$49,618 | \$14.59 |
| 50 | 250 | 150,000 | 5,000 | \$1,695 | \$2,527 | \$72,195 | \$74,722 | \$14.94 |
| 100 | 200 | 240,000 | 8,000 | \$1,695 | \$4,007 | \$114,495 | \$118,502 | \$14.81 |
| Program Expansion | | | | | | | | |
| 200 | 170 | 408,000 | 13,600 | \$1,115 | \$6,751 | \$192,875 | \$199,626 | \$14.68 |
| 250 | 250 | 750,000 | 25,000 | \$1,115 | \$12,377 | \$353,615 | \$365,992 | \$14.64 |

1) Reimbursement rate is \$0.47 per mile. This figure is used to calculate Operating Costs.
 2) Estimated median trip length is 30 miles. A 30-mile trip is used to calculate Total Annual One-Way Trips.
 3) TripTrak is a proprietary software developed by ILP. This administration model incorporates leasing TripTrak for use for data entry, invoicing, and reporting. The Initial fee is \$1,695 and is included in the Total Budget calculation. Annual renewal fee is \$1,115 and is included in Total Budget for the Program Expansion.
 4) Marketing costs are estimated at 3.5% of the operating costs.

Figure 7: Operating Cost Estimates for MTA/Other Agency-Administered Volunteer Driver Program with Several Funding Levels

Partnership with ILP:

ILP can administer the program for a one-time start-up cost and a fee of \$21 per rider reimbursed each month. Sample budgets for this scenario are presented in Figure 8, Operating Cost Estimates for ILP Administration of a Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program at Several Funding Levels At the initial funding level, the total budget can range from \$60,500 to \$138,000. This includes between \$12,600 and \$25,200 in fees to ILP for administering the program.

Mendocino County Rural Inland Communities Mobility Solutions
Volume 2: Mobility Solutions Research and Analysis

| Riders | Miles/Month/ Rider | Total Annual Miles Reimbursed | Total Annual One-Way Trips (1, 2) | Total Annual Admin fee (3) | Total Annual Reimbursement Amount (3) | Marketing Costs | Operating Costs | Total Budget | Estimated Cost/Trip |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Initial Funding Level | | | | | | | | | |
| 50 | 170 | 102,000 | 3,400 | \$12,600 | \$47,940 | \$2,119 | \$60,540 | \$62,659 | \$18.43 |
| 50 | 250 | 150,000 | 5,000 | \$12,600 | \$70,500 | \$2,909 | \$83,100 | \$86,009 | \$17.20 |
| 100 | 200 | 240,000 | 8,000 | \$25,200 | \$112,800 | \$4,830 | \$138,000 | \$142,830 | \$17.85 |
| Program Expansion | | | | | | | | | |
| 200 | 170 | 408,000 | 13,600 | \$50,400 | \$191,760 | \$8,476 | \$242,160 | \$250,636 | \$18.43 |
| 250 | 250 | 750,000 | 25,000 | \$63,000 | \$352,500 | \$14,543 | \$415,500 | \$430,043 | \$17.20 |

- 1) Reimbursement rate is \$.47 per mile. This figure is used to calculate Total Annual Reimbursement Amount.
- 2) Estimated median trip length is 30 miles. A 30-mile trip is used to calculate Total Annual One-Way Trips.
- 3) ILP Administration includes a one-time start up cost of \$890.00 and a fee a \$21.00 per rider reimbursed per month. These costs are calculated in the Total Admin Fee column.
- 4) Estimated marketing costs are 3.5% of operating costs.

Figure 8, Operating Cost Estimates for ILP Administration of a Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program at Several Funding Levels

Responding to Community College Trip Needs with a Mileage Reimbursement Program

Final consideration is offered for use of a Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program to address Community College trip needs. There was high interest among younger E-survey respondents for this solution.

The program described in this previous subsection – and the Riverside TRIP program after which it’s modeled – is heavily oriented towards non-emergency medical transportation trip needs and those of older adults. These are generally infrequent trips, perhaps for groceries or of some length to out-of-county medical destinations. They typically aren’t made more than once or twice a month. Exceptions may involve those receiving cancer or dialysis treatments with more frequent trips and of some duration.

Trips to college are different – they are recurring, usually twice or even three times a week and intensively during the semester (or quarter) when a given class is in session. Among the e-survey participants, significant proportions identified the “need to travel to college.” Figure 9 presents these results by community, as well as the levels of interest in the various solutions indicated by respondents who expressed “need to travel to college.”

Almost half of Covelo and Laytonville respondents and six-in-ten from Hopland indicated need to travel to college. For both Brooktrails and Hopland, at least one-third of respondents indicated college trip needs. While the interest in transportation solutions differed by community, there was reasonably consistent interest in the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement program by these individuals. See the black outlined box in Figure 9 indicating proportions of respondents choosing this as their preferred solution.

Mendocino County Rural Inland Communities Mobility Solutions
Volume 2: Mobility Solutions Research and Analysis

| Home Community | Need to Travel to College (Ukiah or Willits) | Comm Ride Board | Vol Driver Mil Reimb | Preferred Solution | | | | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| | | | | DAR/Shuttle | Sched Transp | Work Transp | Expan DAR | Car Share | Comm Van |
| Brooktrails | 36% | 5% | 9% | N/A | 77% | N/A | 5% | 5% | N/A |
| Covelo | 48% | 7% | 38% | 41% | N/A | N/A | N/A | 14% | N/A |
| Laytonville | 47% | 6% | 34% | 41% | N/A | N/A | N/A | 9% | 9% |
| Potter Valley | 33% | 7% | 14% | 50% | N/A | N/A | N/A | 7% | 21% |
| Hopland | 59% | N/A | 29% | 18% | N/A | 47% | N/A | 6% | N/A |

Figure 9, All Communities - College Travel Needs and Preferences

A program oriented towards college trips would need to be structured differently from the TRIP program presented in this subsection, in order to accommodate a greater frequency of trips. Contributions to gasoline costs might be more along the lines of “incentive payments” for ridesharing, rather than a specific mileage reimbursement. Models for a rural ride share program could be fleshed out through the recommendations and Action Plan development.

7. Community Ride Board

Service Description

The Community Ride Board would be a modern and innovative take on the “ride-boards,” which are popular at colleges. It would be an online platform where community residents could share their need for a ride or willingness to share their ride — to Willits, Ukiah or beyond. This strategy would encourage and facilitate ridesharing on common trips and enable residents to share gas costs, benefitting both the rider and driver.

Communities That Could be Served with Such a Service

- Covelo
- Laytonville
- Potter Valley
- Hopland
- Brooktrails

How the Services Respond to Findings of Community Outreach

The concept of the Community Ride Board was tested in all five communities. While it was not the top preferred solution in any community, it was rated as very useful by one-third to one-half of respondents in each community (figure 10). As such, it would be a useful supplement to other services.

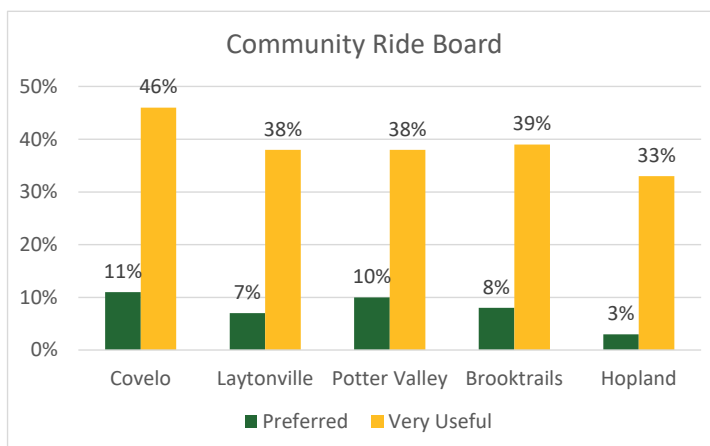


Figure 10, Preferred and Very Useful E-Survey Ratings by Community for the Community Ride Board

Covelo

In Covelo, the Community Ride Board was the preferred option for 15% of households with 3+ members and for 13% of students. It might provide a useful means of coordinating trips to college or for after-school activities, which would not be served by a one- or two-day-a-week shuttle. It would address the fact that some people lack reliable vehicles, while others have vehicles but cannot afford gas.

Laytonville

In Laytonville, the Community Ride Board was the preferred choice of 12% of employed respondents and 13% of student respondents. It would provide a useful tool for matching travelers for trips to work or college in Willits, Ukiah or elsewhere. As in

Covelo, it would address the fact that many residents have a vehicle but cannot afford gas for longer trips.

Potter Valley

In Potter Valley, there was significant interest in travel for after-school activities. The Community Ride Board might assist families in organizing carpools for picking up and dropping off youth.

Brooktrails

In Brooktrails, there was a high level of interest in travel to and from college, school and after-school activities in Willits and Ukiah. The Community Ride Board could assist college students in finding rideshare partners and families in organizing carpools for picking up and dropping off youth.

Hopland

The primary interest in the Community Ride Board in Hopland was among employed persons. It might provide one small element of a work transportation package.

Innovative Features

The innovative feature proposed for the Community Ride Board is that it would be an online platform easily accessed from a smartphone and hence, available to almost everyone. The recommended platform is a Facebook Group, administered by a local community partner. This option offers several benefits:

- Facebook is already heavily used by the residents of the various communities. In fact, it was reported that some people use the existing community Facebook pages to ask for rides. Hence, a Facebook Group will provide a familiar interface.
- Facebook Groups has a variety of tools for moderating membership and content. A local administrator (such as a library or Family Resource Center) will ensure that the group is used for its designed purpose and is a safe environment for the communities' residents.
- While there are a number of rideshare specific platforms, such as Ride Amigos and Ride Shark, these are generally focused on commute trips, require users to use a dedicated app or website and carry significant cost to implement. Casual Carpooling apps exist in major metropolitan areas but are predicated on large number of trips and are not viable for the small rural communities in Mendocino County.
- "Vetting" membership in the group is possible through Facebook tools, as well as an opportunity to establish group rules that provide some assurance to other members.

Examples of How This Could Be Implemented

Procedural Considerations

Private groups can be established within Facebook with various parameters that serve to protect its members. It is envisioned that each community would establish its own Facebook private group, with definitions as to which individuals can view what contents (Figure 11).

| | Public | Private |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Who can see what members post, comment and share in the group? | Anyone, on or off Facebook | Current Members |
| Who can see the list of members in the group? | People on Facebook | Current Members |

Figure 11, Who Can View Certain Elements with Facebook Private Group Settings

Elements of the private group could include:

1. Simple screening of participants
2. Rules to which to adhere in requesting, providing or taking a ride
3. Rating of driver and of rider or prospective rider

A basic screening process can be established by which to allow persons into the group. Such elements could include the requirement that you live in or near the community. You would be asked whether you were requesting a ride or able to provide a ride. You could provide your age and your trip purpose. For example, students traveling to Mendocino College could be helped to “find” one another through a simple screening process. If you were offering to drive, you might be asked questions about car insurance and your car’s reliability.

Rules regarding sharing of gas costs could be established, but they are probably better left to the rider and passenger to work out, given the fluidity of gas prices and the varying lengths of trips.

In Figure 12 regarding a tropical fish Facebook Group, “Membership is pending approval” until prospective members answer several questions. Included among these is an assertion that the individual has read a set of rules and agrees to abide by these rules.

Rules for a Community Ride Board could include:

- Assuring that a ride is confirmed the night before (by driver and rider).
- Assuring that the driver is fully licensed and that his or her vehicle is roadworthy.
- Assuring that unless other arrangements are made, the driver will transport the rider in both directions.

- Assuring fairness in sharing the gas costs, possibly with such agreements worked out in advance of making the trip.

A simple review process could potentially be established whereby the driver and the rider rate each other, after the ride. This could be monitored by, perhaps only seen by the administrator, to ensure that all was and remained above board. Importantly, it could be a way to affirm that an individual was safe and secure to ride along with in your car.

An Administrator

It would be necessary to identify someone willing to administer the Facebook Group for the community.

Such individuals could be an interested member of the public or might be associated with the Municipal Advisory Council, the Family Resource Center or, in the case of Covelo, at the public library.

In order to recruit an administrator, there would be value in connecting Community Ride Board administrators throughout the County, presuming the concept was adopted in several settings. These persons could get together via a Zoom meeting a couple of times a year to share tips and experiences. For example, if the Family Resource Center network were to encourage development of Community Ride Boards, they could convene a group of them periodically to share “lessons learned in the field.”

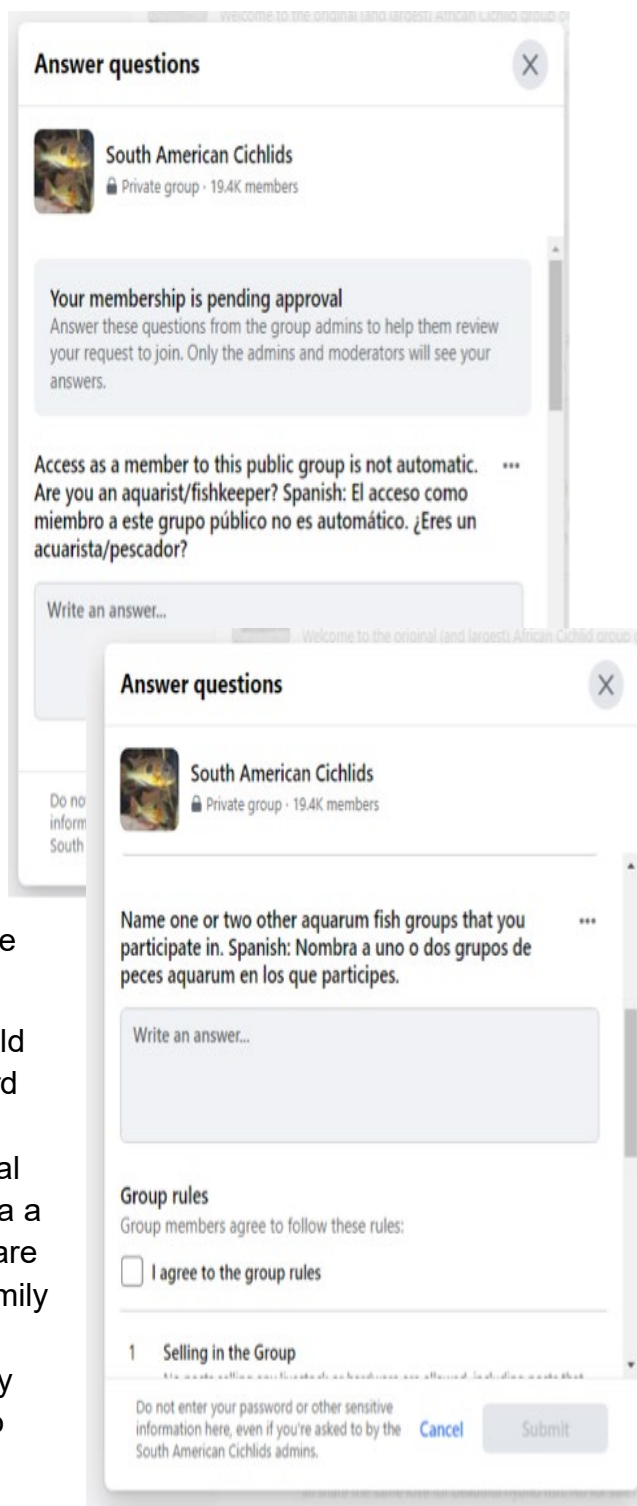


Figure 12, Membership Vetting Questions for a Private Facebook Group

Benefits and Costs

This is a low-cost to no-cost solution. Connecting local residents with others making the same trip will have benefit to both in sharing of the gasoline expense.

Costs could include a modest \$50 a month stipend for the administrator or no stipend for a volunteer administrator. Publicity expense is minimal but could include developing, printing and posting a flyer in public places (Figure 13).

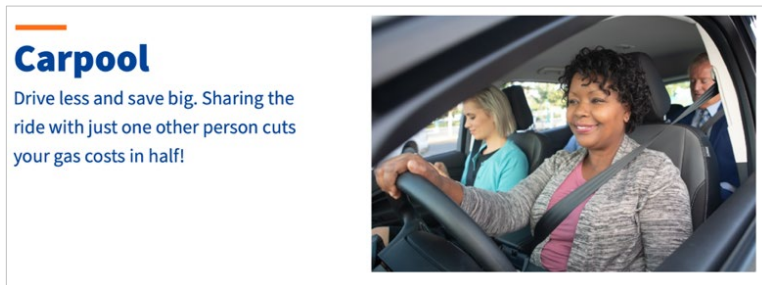


Figure 13, Sample Marketing for Ride Board Participation

8. App-Based Car Share

Service Description

The App-Based Car Share service would provide a rental car that would be parked and based in each community, available for rent by the hour or by the day on an as-needed basis by any registered customer. Carsharing allows individuals to gain the benefits of using a private car without the costs and responsibilities of owning a car and expanding travel destination options for end users.

A car share vendor provides vehicles that are parked at specified locations within the community and are available for rent through a mobile app on a first-come, first-served basis. The user pays a rental fee to access the vehicle, makes their desired trip and then returns the vehicle after refueling. The car share vendor maintains the vehicles and manages the mobile application through which the user rents the vehicle.

Communities That Could be Served with Such a Service

- Covelo
- Hopland
- Potter Valley
- Laytonville
- Brooktrails

How the Services Responds to Findings of Community Outreach

The concept of an App-Based Car Share was tested in all five communities and rated as useful by one-third to more than 40% of each community's respondents (Figure 14). As such, it would be a useful supplement to other services.

Covelo

This solution rated most highly in Covelo, in contrast with the other four communities. Identified as the preferred solution by 17% of respondents, it came in as the third-top preferred solution among five. Forty-six percent (46%) rated car share as very useful, also the highest such rating. This is consistent with 18% of Covelo

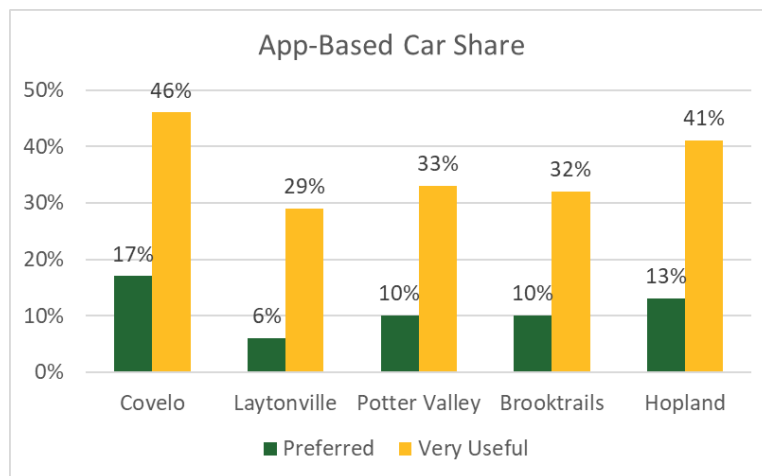


Figure 14, Preferred and Very Useful E-Survey Ratings by Community for the App-Based Car Share

households without private automobiles and reported high numbers of vehicles insufficiently reliable to climb Highway 162 to Highway 101 and return. Participants also spoke of the length of the trip — long travel times between Covelo and Ukiah — to indicate they would prefer to travel alone or with someone they knew, and that the car share option makes this easy.

Several areas of town were identified as potential secure garaging locations, with comments about the importance of selecting one that ensures residents and tribal members alike could readily access it.

Laytonville

While just 6% of Laytonville respondents rated this as preferred, about one-third indicated it would be very useful. This may reflect the higher levels of car ownership in Laytonville, contrasted with Covelo, and so there is somewhat less need. However, one-third (29%) of residents indicated this would be very useful. Participants at the Listening Session expressed interest, among those with a driver's license and sufficient funds for gasoline or among the 10% of households who do not own a car.

Brooktrails

Ten percent (10%) of Brooktrails survey respondents selected this as their preferred choice. While car ownership is relatively high in Brooktrails, there are 4% of households that do not own a car and many larger households where there are likely more licensed drivers than automobiles. One-third of respondents (32%) identified this solution as very useful to them.

Potter Valley

Potter Valley, although a much smaller community, had responses to the App-Based Car Share that were quite similar to that of Brooktrails. Ten percent (10%) selected this as their preferred alternative and one-third (32%) reported that it could be very useful to them. In Potter Valley, 15% of households are below the poverty level and may or may not be able to maintain and fuel a private automobile.

Hopland

Interest by Hopland residents in an App-Based Car Share solution was higher, at levels more similar to Covelo. Four-in-ten survey respondents indicated this would be useful and 13% selected this as their preferred solution. While the 17-mile distance to Ukiah is relatively short, participants spoke of multiple trip purposes and needing to chain trips — make multiple stops. Others spoke of traveling to destinations in Napa and Sonoma County and that an app-based car share could make that much easier.

Innovative Features

This mobility service option has several potential innovative features:

- Car share programs enable individuals to affordably rent a car by utilizing technology (e.g., app, smartphone, GPS, etc.).
- On-demand capability allows for instant use of available vehicles at any time of the day.
- Vendor-provided administration, maintenance and insurance minimizes management costs for sponsor agencies.
- User planned trips expand service area limitations of public transit.

Industry Examples of Similar Services

Car share programs have grown in popularity and use in recent years as they provide a means to conveniently meet specific transportation needs in underserved communities. The Victor Valley Transportation Authority (VFTA), in its capacity as the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency for the desert region of San Bernardino County, implemented a car share program in the rural and isolated community of Needles, California. This small isolated and rural community lacked a grocery store and essential medical services that were only accessible by traveling across state lines into Arizona.

Through an agreement with Enterprise CarShare, the program featured two cars, a mini-van and a sedan, parked in the lot of a local credit union and available to rent for \$5.00 per hour. The agreement assured Enterprise a minimum monthly service fee per vehicle if the user fare did not reach the agreed-upon amount. In 2019, prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Enterprise was guaranteed \$1,450 per month for the use of a Dodge Caravan and \$1,250 per month for the use of a Nissan Altima. At that time, the average member usage fees accounted for more than 40% of the monthly program cost with cost recovery as high as 70% per month during some periods.

Benefits and Costs

Benefits

Implementation of an App-Based Car Share program in each of the five communities would provide residents with access to flexible transportation options, increasing the range and convenience of travel without the expense of owning a car. Users are capable of making short trips within the community or longer distance trips outside of the community and to places like Willits and Ukiah for an affordable price. The car share user fee can be spread amongst multiple passengers on group trips to the same location, further lowering the cost per trip for each rider.

The administrative burden is greatly reduced for the sponsor agency as the car share vendor is responsible for maintaining the vehicle, providing and managing the mobile application and tracking utilization.

Operating Costs

The operating costs of the App-Based Car Share program are inclusive of the car share vendor program fee per vehicle, annual marketing costs and sponsor agency administration costs. Based on the needs identified through the outreach process, the potential distances of trips taken, lack of existing transportation resources and an assessment of the licensed population supporting potential use, it is recommended that the communities of Covelo and Laytonville initiate the program with two vehicles, a sedan and a minivan, and the communities of Potter Valley, Hopland and Brooktrails begin with a single minivan.

Projected program costs (Figure 15) are based on the Needles' experience for maximum vendor costs per vehicle, marketing and administrative costs less an estimated user contribution of 35%-45% of vehicle cost. The estimated operating cost of \$19,157 per single vehicle community and \$29,444 per two-vehicle community equates to a total annual operating cost of \$116,356 to serve all five communities.

| Community | # of Sedans | Max Vehicle Cost per Month (1,2) | # of Minivans | Max Vehicle Cost per Month (1,2) | Admin FTE | Admin Cost | Total Monthly Max Cost |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Covelo | 1 | \$ 1,350.00 | 1 | \$ 1,575.00 | 0.1 | \$ 500.00 | \$ 3,425.00 |
| Laytonville | 1 | \$ 1,350.00 | 1 | \$ 1,575.00 | 0.1 | \$ 500.00 | \$ 3,425.00 |
| Potter Valley | | | 1 | \$ 1,575.00 | 0.1 | \$ 500.00 | \$ 2,075.00 |
| Hopland | | | 1 | \$ 1,575.00 | 0.1 | \$ 500.00 | \$ 2,075.00 |
| Brooktrails | | | 1 | \$ 1,575.00 | 0.1 | \$ 500.00 | \$ 2,075.00 |
| Program Totals | 2 | \$ 2,700.00 | 5 | \$ 7,875.00 | 0.1 | \$ 2,500.00 | \$ 13,075.00 |

- 1) Max cost per vehicle based on recent Enterprise Carshare rates
- 2) Cost per vehicle is a guarantee to vendor, actual agency cost is offset by passenger fares
- 3) Fare revenue is estimated at 35% of vehicle cost recovery for mini-van and 40% of cost recovery for sedan

| Community | Annual Max Cost | Estimated Marketing Cost | Estimated Fare Revenue (3) | Estimated Annual Agency Cost | Low End | High End |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Covelo | \$ 41,100.00 | \$ 1,438.50 | \$ 13,095.00 | \$ 29,443.50 | \$ 25,000.00 | \$ 35,000.00 |
| Laytonville | \$ 41,100.00 | \$ 1,438.50 | \$ 13,095.00 | \$ 29,443.50 | \$ 25,000.00 | \$ 35,000.00 |
| Potter Valley | \$ 24,900.00 | \$ 871.50 | \$ 6,615.00 | \$ 19,156.50 | \$ 15,000.00 | \$ 25,000.00 |
| Hopland | \$ 24,900.00 | \$ 871.50 | \$ 6,615.00 | \$ 19,156.50 | \$ 25,000.00 | \$ 35,000.00 |
| Brooktrails | \$ 24,900.00 | \$ 871.50 | \$ 6,615.00 | \$ 19,156.50 | \$ 15,000.00 | \$ 25,000.00 |
| Program Totals | \$ 156,900.00 | \$ 5,491.50 | \$ 46,035.00 | \$ 116,356.50 | \$ 105,000.00 | \$ 155,000.00 |

Figure 15, App-Based Car Share Operating Costs per Community

IV. Institutional Options for Operating and Managing

This section considers the institutional arrangements by which individual services or multiple services could be administered, managed and operated.

There are essentially three institutional options for operating and managing the array of mobility solutions for the five rural communities:

- Mendocino Transit Authority (Transit Agency Operated and Managed)
- Family Resource Center (Nonprofit Operated and Managed)
- Mendocino Council of Governments (Regional Transportation Plan Agency [RTPA] Operated and Managed)

The institutional options are not mutually exclusive. One or more mobility solutions could be operated or managed by different entities.

For the expanded Dial-A-Ride mobility option for the Brooktrails area, the Willits Senior Center could potentially operate the general public service. Because they are currently under contract with MTA for the funding in return for providing the Dial-A-Ride service, this could be handled with a simple contract amendment to the existing contract. Since this is for only one of the mobility options, it not part of the broader institutional option discussion in this section.

For each of the institutional options, the following organization is provided:

- Institutional capabilities
- Relevant mobility solutions options
- Key challenges of Institutional Option

Preliminary estimates have been provided for each of the mobility solutions in order to provide an order of magnitude comparison of operating costs. The cost was developed with basic assumptions that are provided in more detail in Appendix A. Capital costs including vehicle and infrastructure costs will be provided in the next phase of the project.

Transit Agency Operated and Managed

Institutional Capabilities

The Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA) has a mission to provide safe, courteous, reliable, affordable and carbon-neutral transportation service. MTA operates the public bus system that serves the most densely populated parts of the county: Ukiah, Willits, Anderson Valley and the coastal regions of the County. MTA's service area encompasses about 2,800 square miles. The transit system includes a network of long-distance, commute and local fixed routes, and demand response services. MTA has a fleet of approximately 43 vehicles. MTA also contracts with five local senior centers to

provide Dial-A-Ride services. MTA is the Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA) responsible for coordination with human service agency transportation.

MTA has a long history of mobility management, matching services to market needs. MTA has a Board-adopted policy to encourage mobility management services to reduce the carbon footprint where traditional public transportation cannot be provided:

In Mendocino County communities where fixed route, flex route and dial-a-ride services cannot maintain minimum productivity and farebox recovery standards, mobility management strategies such as e-Ride (volunteer driver program), vanpools, carpools, taxi ride subsidies will be considered to provide needed mobility options for both priority target market segments and riders desiring an alternative to driving as a means of saving money or reducing their carbon footprint.¹

MTA also has a policy that priority is given to serve the mobility needs of low-income households, youth, seniors, students and persons with disabilities. As described earlier, the needs identified in the community outreach and survey effort are very reflective of these market segments.

In order to carry out these policies, MTA has a mobility manager responsible for carrying out nontraditional mobility options among other duties.

Potential Rural Mobility Solutions That MTA Could Operate and/or Manage

MTA has the institutional capacity if sufficient financial resources are provided to operate and/or manage any of the rural mobility solutions:

- Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle service for four communities
- Community Van for Laytonville and Potter Valley
- Scheduled service between Brooktrails and Willits
- Expanded Dial-A-Ride for Brooktrails
- Scheduled Work Trip Shuttle for Hopland
- Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement for all communities
- Community Ride Board
- App-Based Car Share

Key Challenges

The primary challenge for MTA in order for MTA to take on one or more of the rural mobility solutions is a sustainable funding source to provide the service. MTA has a

¹ Transit Marketing and Mobility Planners, *Final Report, 2012-16 Short Range Transit Development Plan*, Mendocino Transit Authority, March 2012.

commitment to restore services that were severely reduced during the pandemic. Based on the FY 2022-23 budget, this will consume most, if not all, of the currently available funding from the variety of existing Transportation Development Act (Local Transportation Funds and State Transit Assistance) and federal funding resources. Additional funding resources or allocation of a portion of the growth in existing funding sources would be required to operate or manage the rural mobility solutions.

Primary Rationale for Considering MTA to Operate and Manage Rural Mobility Options

MTA is a very experience transportation provider in Mendocino County. MTA has historically been a countywide service provider and is best situated for adding one or more rural mobility solutions to their mix of services. As the CTSA with a Mobility Manager, they have strong organizational capabilities to work with the local rural communities to meet the mobility needs of their communities.

Family Resource Center Network

Institutional Capabilities

The Family Resource Network (FRC) of Mendocino County is a group of 10 community-based family resource centers. This includes Family Resource Centers in Potter Valley, Laytonville and Covelo. The mission of the organization is to: "...nurture the collaborative efforts of Family Resource Centers within Mendocino County to provide strength-based service that embraces all culture in response to our community needs." Family Resource Centers are family-friendly access points for numerous services tailored to the culture, resources and needs of the communities they service. They serve and use a whole family approach to help families achieve personal and family sustainability.

The individual Family Resource Centers have significantly different institutional capabilities in being able to operate and manage various rural mobility solutions. Interviews with three of the Family Resource Centers found two of three with relatively high levels of interest in making additional mobility services available to their constituents.

An example of a Family Resource Center that has institutional capacity to operate and manage a transportation service is Laytonville's Healthy Start Family Resource Center. They provide a long list of 24 services, including CalFresh application assistance, Medi-Cal and Covered California application assistance, a food pantry once a month, senior center luncheon, among other services. They have a small staff that could be drivers of a van that does not require a Commercial Driver's License. They are very experienced with grant management and reporting requirements.

Potter Valley's Family Resource Center, similar in its breadth of focus on local social services, has historically provided some transportation. They have a working, licensed five-passenger vehicle to do so but no longer have the funding to pay driver, maintenance and fuel expenses. There is interest in being able to again provide transportation and willingness to consider partnering with the local school district, which has not been able to secure a second full-time driver position.

Potential Rural Mobility Solutions That Family Resource Center or Network Could Operate and/or Manage

- Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle service for four communities
- Community Van for Laytonville and Potter Valley
- Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program for all communities
- Community Ride Board
- App-Based Car Share

Key Challenges

A sustainable funding source for operating and managing the mobility solution is the key challenge for any of the five mobility solutions discussed above. A good example of the current lack of funding is in Potter Valley where they have a van but do not have the funding available to provide the driver and other operating expenses.

Another challenge of the Family Resource Centers is that some of the individual FRCs have self-proclaimed institutional capacity to operate and manage mobility solutions and others do not. If the Family Resource Center Network were to operate a Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle for Covelo, Laytonville and Potter Valley, all of the individual FRCs would need to help assist in marketing the service, at a minimum.

There are no Family Resource Centers in Hopland or Brooktrails and therefore if the Family Resource Center Network were to manage a Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement for all communities, there would be gaps in how the service would be marketed and monitored in both Hopland and Brooktrails.

Primary Rationale for Considering the Family Resource Centers to Operate and Manage Rural Mobility Options

The Family Resource Centers provide an array of human services to seniors, low-income and disabled individuals. Filling the mobility gaps for the constituents they are already serving is very consistent with achieving their missions. A couple of the Family Resource Centers have the organizational capability for operating and managing a Community Van, Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement program, Community Ride Board or App-Based Car Share.

MCOG Operated and Managed Service

Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA). In this function, MCOG disburses state and federal funds for transportation. MCOG assists local governments in planning to address common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional, community and intercommunity development.

The large majority of RTPAs in California directly hire their staff. MCOG is staffed through third-party contracts. Administrative and fiscal services are contracted to Dow & Associates, while transportation planning services are under contract to Davey-Bates Consulting. MCOG does not have any direct employees.

Most RTPAs in California do not operate and manage mobility options for their constituents. There are several rural RTPAs that have a separate joint powers agreement to operate and manage transit services and the RTPA Board also sits as the transit agency board. The RTPA staff in these agencies also provide staffing for the transit agency. Butte County, Tuolumne County, Calaveras County and Modoc County are examples that have Boards that both sit as the RTPA and transit agency. In Mendocino County, the staff and boards for MCOG and MTA are completely independent, as they are in most counties statewide.

Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) is an example of an RTPA that does provide a limited amount of transportation services that the local transit agency Redding Area Bus Authority does not provide. In this case, the authority to contract for professional services, including transportation services, is provided in a Cooperative Agreement among the members of the joint powers authority creating the Authority. SRTA currently contracts with a nonprofit agency to provide Sunday Dial-A-Ride service for residents in a designated service area. Staff at SRTA have added the function of managing the transportation services contract into their Overall Work Program.

While an unusual arrangement, similar to SRTA, MCOG could administer and contract for operations of one or more of the mobility solutions if the MCOG Board decides it wants to provide that function.

Potential Rural Mobility Solutions That MCOG Could Operate and/or Manage

- Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle service for four communities
- Expanded Dial-A-Ride service to Brooktrails
- Scheduled Work Trip Shuttle for Hopland
- Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program for all communities
- Community Ride Board
- App-Based Car Share

In all of the above examples, MCOG would contract with a third-party entity to provide mobility solution service.

Key Challenges

According to MCOG staff, they do not have the staff to develop the RFPs and manage any contracts for the mobility solutions. Staff would need to be hired for that purpose.

A primary role of MCOG is the disbursement of state and federal funds. There are no operating funds that they could utilize to provide the service. MCOG would need to rely on special grants to provide the funding.

As stated above, the existing third-party contract, with two different third-party entities for administration and transportation planning, could make this option more difficult. The current scope of work for these contracts did not envision managing contract to directly provide mobility solutions.

Primary Rationale for Considering MCOG for Operating and Managing Selected Rural Mobility Options

MCOG has very strong experience and expertise in three relevant areas for funding and enabling successful rural mobility solutions: grant writing, grant administration and procurement. MCOG also has a countywide perspective in addressing unmet mobility needs. They could help address MTA's Federal Transit Administration Charter Party restrictions by providing opportunities for the private sector, including local taxi and tour bus operators to compete for mobility solution service delivery.

V. Packaging Solutions to Address Community Needs

An Overview

Each community included in this study is characterized by a variety of mobility needs, differing among segments, such as working families, college students, older adults and persons with disabilities. While a primary solution may address the major need of getting residents from their home community to Willits or Ukiah, it is likely that supplemental services will be necessary to meet other, more specialized needs, such as out-of-county medical trips or daily travel for work or college. This section considers a “package” of solutions appropriate for each community.

Covelo

Primary Solution



48%

The **Hybrid Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle** with service to Willits/Ukiah will serve the primary need of Covelo residents to get to these communities for a variety of purposes — shopping, medical appointments and social services. It was rated as very useful by 67% of survey respondents and was the preferred choice of nearly half (48%).

Supplemental Services



24%


A **Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program** was rated as very useful by 53% of respondents and was the preferred choice of 24%. A 5310 funded program could facilitate out-of-county medical trips for seniors and persons with disabilities and would address the needs of individuals requiring additional assistance with mobility.

It should be noted that much of the interest in the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement program was among younger respondents who are likely looking for assistance with the cost of commuting to college. This would require a program other than the established TRIP model (which focuses on the occasional trips made by older adults). A Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement program to incentivize college students to rideshare could be designed in partnership with Mendocino College.



17%


Many Covelo households do not have a reliable vehicle, even though their members are licensed drivers. An **App-Based Car Share** program could provide access to a vehicle for occasional trips to Ukiah or beyond. Almost half (46%) of Covelo survey respondents said that such a program would be very useful, while 17% chose it as their preferred solution.

 **11%** An online **Community Ride Board** was rated as potentially very useful by 46% of Covelo survey respondents and was the preferred solution for 11%.


For minimal cost/time, a Facebook Group would provide a means of matching riders and drivers for trips to Mendocino College, Willits, Ukiah or longer-distance trips. It could address the need to travel outside the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle schedule/area and would allow participants to share vehicle and gas costs. The Community Ride Board could also work in tandem with the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program and App-Based Car Share to help riders find drivers, and car share renters find partners with whom to share costs.


Laytonville

Primary Solution


 **51%** The **Hybrid Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle** with service to Willits/Ukiah will serve the primary need of Laytonville residents to get to these communities for a variety of purposes — shopping, medical appointments and social services. It was rated as very useful by 54% of survey respondents and was the preferred choice of more than half (51%).

Supplemental Services


 **9%** A **Community Van** was rated as very useful by 57% of Laytonville respondents and would facilitate local travel needs, which were expressed by more than two-thirds of respondents. It could be operated using the same vehicle as the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle, on days of the week when the shuttle is not running.

 **27%** A **Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program** was rated as very useful by 49% of survey respondents and was the preferred choice of 27%. A 5310-funded program could facilitate out-of-county medical trips for seniors and persons with disabilities and would address the needs of individuals requiring additional assistance with mobility.

It should be noted that much of the interest in the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program was among younger respondents who are likely looking for assistance with the cost of commuting to college. This would require a program other than the established TRIP model (which focuses on the occasional trips made by older adults). A Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program to incentivize college students to rideshare could be designed in partnership with Mendocino College.

 **6%** Many Laytonville respondents do not have a reliable vehicle, even though their members are licensed drivers. An **App-Based Car Share** program could provide access to a vehicle for occasional trips to Willits, Ukiah or


beyond. However, only 29% of Laytonville survey respondents said that such a program would be very useful, and only 6% chose it as their preferred solution.

 **7%** An online **Community Ride Board** was rated as potentially very useful by 38% of Laytonville survey respondents and was the preferred solution for 7%. For minimal cost/time, a Facebook Group would provide a means of matching riders and drivers for trips to Mendocino College, Willits, Ukiah or longer-distance trips. It could address the need to travel outside the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle schedule/area and would allow participants to share vehicle and gas costs.


The Community Ride Board could also work in tandem with the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program and App-Based Car Share to help riders find drivers, and car share renters find partners to share the cost with.


Brooktrails


Primary Solution

 **49%** **Scheduled Service** between Brooktrails and Willits would serve the primary need to Brooktrails residents to get to Willits for shopping, medical appointments and after-school activities and to connect to MTA for trips to Ukiah. It was rated as very useful by 64% of survey respondents and was the preferred solution of 49%.

Supplemental Services

 **18%** Brooktrails is already served by the **Willits Senior Center Dial-A-Ride**. Expansion of the Dial-A-Ride, to provide somewhat later service, would meet the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities who prefer not to drive into Willits, particularly after dark. This was the preferred solution for 36% of respondents 60+ and 38% of respondents with a disability.

 **19%** A **Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program** was rated as very useful by 39% of survey respondents and was the preferred choice of 15%. A 5310-funded program could facilitate out-of-county medical trips for seniors and persons with disabilities and would address the needs of individuals requiring additional assistance with mobility.

 **8%** An online **Community Ride Board** was rated as potentially very useful by 39% of Brooktrails survey respondents and was the preferred solution for 8%. For minimal cost/time, a Facebook Group would provide a means of matching riders and drivers for trips to Mendocino College, after-school trips for youth and longer-distance medical trips.

The Community Ride Board could also work in tandem with the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program help riders find drivers to share the cost with.

Potter Valley

Primary Solution



52%

The **Hybrid Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle** will serve the primary need of Potter Valley residents to get to Ukiah for a variety of purposes — shopping, medical appointments and social services. It was rated as very useful by 48% of survey respondents and was the preferred choice of more than half (52%).

Supplemental Services



14%

A **Community Van** was rated as very useful by 45% of Potter Valley respondents and would facilitate local travel needs, which were expressed by 69% of respondents, and the need for after-school transportation described by the Family Resource Center. It could be operated using the same vehicle as the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle, on days of the week when the shuttle is not running.



14%

A **Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program** was rated as very useful by 43% of survey respondents and was the preferred choice of 14%. A 5310-funded program could facilitate out-of-county medical trips for seniors and persons with disabilities (who were the strongest supporters of this service) and would address the needs of individuals requiring additional assistance with mobility.



10%

Most Potter Valley respondents had access to a reliable vehicle; however, 19% did not. An **App-Based Car Share** program could provide access to a vehicle for occasional trips to Ukiah or beyond. One-third (33%) of Potter Valley survey respondents said that such a program would be very useful, and 10% chose it as their preferred solution.



10%

An online **Community Ride Board** was rated as potentially very useful by 38% of Potter Valley survey respondents and was the preferred solution for 10%. For minimal cost/time, a Facebook Group would provide a means of matching riders and drivers for trips to Mendocino College, Willits, Ukiah or longer-distance trips. It could address the need to travel outside the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle schedule/area and would allow participants to share vehicle and gas costs.

The Community Ride Board could also work in tandem with the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program and App-Based Car Share to help riders find drivers, and car share renters find partners to share the cost with.

Hopland

Primary Solutions



38%

Work transportation between Ukiah and Hopland will serve the needs of area residents to travel to the many jobs in Hopland and will assist local employers in recruiting workers. Work transportation was rated very useful by 41% of survey respondents and was the preferred solution for 38%.



28%

Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle Service to Ukiah one or two days a week will meet the needs of Hopland residents, particularly those without vehicles, who need to travel to Ukiah for shopping and services. This solution was rated as very useful by 33% of respondents and was the preferred choice of 28%.

Supplemental Services



19%

A **Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program** was rated as very useful by 59% of Hopland respondents and was the preferred choice of 19%. A 5310-funded program could facilitate out-of-county medical trips for seniors and persons with disabilities (those 60+ were the strongest supporters of this service) and would address the needs of individuals requiring additional assistance with mobility.



3%

An online **Community Ride Board** was rated as potentially very useful by 48% of Hopland survey respondents, though it was the preferred solution for only 3%. For minimal cost/time, a Facebook Group would provide a means of matching riders and drivers for commute trips to and from Hopland, for after-school activities and for college trips.

Discussion of Expense and Funding to Move These Solutions Forward

Sketch-planning operating costs for these eight mobility solutions presented previously are summarized in Figure 16 following, to facilitate discussion of funding sources and possible selection or sequencing of solutions. Marginal operating cost estimations were derived using assumptions that are fully detailed in Appendix A. Capital costs will be developed subsequently.

There are two current unknowns that will significantly impact the estimations developed:

- **Vehicle-fueling type.** Operating expense for both electric-powered vehicles and gasoline-fueled vehicles were developed, but it is not known at this time which fuel type might be selected.
- **Program administration.** Who operates the service and how services could be combined to achieve economies of scale is not known at this time.

Costs by Service Mode

For the **Dial-a-Ride/Shuttle** as the primary solution for three of five communities, marginal cost estimations are between \$65,000 to \$73,000 annually for one day a week service, if administered by the Family Resource Centers. If a Dial-a-Ride Shuttle is administered in all four communities where it was the preferred solutions, and operated by MTA or under contract to them, it would be between \$131,000 and \$140,000 annually for one day a week service.

The **Community Van**, proposed for two communities and likely operated by the Family Resource Centers, costs out somewhat more expensively with operating costs of \$181,000 to \$201,000, largely due to assumptions about full-time driver employment with the service operating five days a week, six hours a day. These costs could be lowered by combining with the Dial-a-Ride Shuttle and/or reducing vehicle operating hours.

Brooktrails Expanded Dial-A-Ride, adding operating hours and being opened to the general public, the marginal cost increases to the existing Willits Senior Center contract are estimated at \$44,000 annually.

Brooktrails Scheduled Service, which was the preferred solution, introduces fixed-route service three times in each direction between Brooktrails and Willits three days a week. The marginal annual cost is between \$116,000 and \$123,000.

Work Transportation Ukiah-Hopland was the preferred solution by younger, working-age Hopland survey respondents. Estimated for about 6,000 trips on a per-trip basis, this solution is considered as a user-side subsidy contracted to a taxi provider or as operated by MTA. Accounting for employer per-trip contributions and a rider fare, an annual operating subsidy of \$82,000 is estimated.

The **Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program** is costed at several levels and with two administrative options. The low end is \$50,000 to \$60,000 for about 3,400 trips. The high end is \$119,000 to \$143,000 for about 8,000 trips.

The **App-based Car Share Program**, operated through a commercial entity like MioCar or Enterprise, is costed in terms of the number and type of cars made available for car

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share in each community. For seven vehicles, dispersed among the five communities, an annual cost of \$118,000 is estimated.

The **Community Ride Board** is essentially a no-cost program and presumes a voluntary coordinator to manage a Facebook group. An honorarium of \$50 per month is proposed for a \$3,000 total annual expense.

| | Covelo Annual | | Laytonville Annual | | Brooktrails Annual | | Potter Valley Annual | | Hopland Annual | | ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS |
|--|------------------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|---------|------------------------|
| | Ops | Vehicle | Ops | Vehicle | Ops | Vehicle | Ops | Vehicle | Ops | Vehicle | |
| Hybrid Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Administered by FRC, EV/Hybrid | \$26,691 | | 21,130 | | | | \$16,899 | | | | \$64,720 |
| Administered by FRC, Gasoline OR | \$30,149 | 1 | 22,128 | 1 | | | \$20,461 | 1 | | 1 | \$72,738 |
| Administered by MTA, EV/Hybrid | \$39,914 | | 34,840 | | | | \$30,186 | | \$26,299 | | \$131,239 |
| Administered by MTA, Gasoline | \$43,413 | | 37,629 | | | | \$31,469 | | \$27,285 | | \$139,796 |
| <i>Administrator</i> | <i>Laytonville FRC</i> | | <i>Laytonville FRC</i> | | | | <i>Potter Valley FRC</i> | | <i>MTA</i> | | |
| Community Van | | | | | | | | | | | |
| EV/Hybrid | | | \$90,500 | 1 | | | \$90,500 | 1 | | | \$181,000 |
| Gasoline fueled | | | \$100,400 | | | | \$100,400 | | | | \$200,800 |
| <i>Administrator</i> | <i>Laytonville FRC</i> | | <i>Laytonville FRC</i> | | | | <i>Potter Valley FRC</i> | | | | |
| Expanded Dial-a-Ride | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Administrator</i> | | | | | \$43,700 | 1 | | | | | \$43,700 |
| | | | | | <i>Willits Sr. Ctr Ops</i> | | | | | | |
| Scheduled MTA Service Brooktrails-Willits | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Electric Vehicle | | | | | \$126,315 | 1 | | | | | \$126,315 |
| Gasoline fueled | | | | | \$134,535 | | | | | | \$134,535 |
| <i>Administrator</i> | | | | | <i>MTA</i> | | | | | | |
| Work Transportation Service Ukiah-Hopland | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Subsidy for 6,000 trips - Less Employer Share @ \$10/trip & Rider Fare @ \$3/ trip | | | | | | | | | \$82,000 | | \$82,000 |
| <i>Administrator</i> | | | | | | | | | <i>Sub-contracted to Taxis</i> | | |
| Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Initial Level A - Administered "In-House" [est. 3,400 trips] | \$9,924 | | \$9,924 | | \$9,924 | | \$9,924 | | \$9,924 | | \$49,618 |
| Initial Level A - Administered Under Contract with ILP [est. 3,400 trips] | \$12,108 | | \$12,108 | | \$12,108 | | \$12,108 | | \$12,108 | | \$60,540 |
| Initial Level B - Administered "In-House" [est. 8,000 trips] | \$23,700 | | \$23,700 | | \$23,700 | | \$23,700 | | \$23,700 | | \$118,502 |
| Initial Level B- Administered Under Contract with ILP [est. 8,000 trips] | \$28,566 | | \$28,566 | | \$28,566 | | \$28,566 | | \$28,566 | | \$142,830 |
| <i>Administrator</i> | | | | | | | | | <i>MCOG/MTA CTSA Countywide</i> | | |
| App-Based Car Share Program | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Subsidy Per Community - Less Rider Fares | \$29,500 | 2 | \$29,500 | 2 | \$19,200 | 1 | \$19,200 | 1 | \$19,200 | 1 | \$116,600 |
| <i>Administrator</i> | <i>MTA or MCOG</i> | | <i>MTA or MCOG</i> | | <i>MTA or MCOG</i> | | <i>MTA or MCOG</i> | | <i>MTA or MCOG</i> | | |
| Community Ride Board | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Administrator</i> | \$600 | | \$600 | | \$600 | | \$600 | | \$600 | | \$3,000 |
| | <i>Covelo Library or MAC</i> | | <i>Laytonville FRC</i> | | <i>Unknown</i> | | <i>Potter Valley FRC</i> | | <i>Hopland MAC</i> | | |

Figure 16, Sketch Planning Marginal Cost Estimates for Potential Mobility Solutions - Annual

Funding Options

Selected formula and discretionary transit funding programs, largely for operating funding, are highlighted here, for consideration as to where funding could be found for some package mobility options.

Discretionary Funding

California's Clean Mobility Options Voucher Program

Some combination of projects could be funded through the California CMO voucher program. Operating costs for electric vehicles, or hybrid vehicles, were costed out in hopes that the California Clean Mobility Options could be a funding source for five years operating and capital expenditures. This may still prove feasible for some service, but the concerns about electric vehicle battery range to and from Covelo, and possibly Laytonville make this a less feasible option for those outlying communities. For services associated with Hopland and Potter Valley, this may still be a funding source.

Federal Department of Transportation RAISE

Some combination of projects could be funded through a new national program, RAISE. As part of the federal National Infrastructure Investments legislation, through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, is the new program Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program with applications due February 28, 2023. This competitive \$1.5 billion program could fund 100% of projects in areas of persistent poverty of historically disadvantaged communities. There is a “target at least 40 percent of resources and benefits towards low-income communities, disadvantaged communities, communities underserved by affordable transportation, or overburdened4 communities.” Infrastructure projects must improve “improve: safety; environmental sustainability; quality of life; mobility and community connectivity; economic competitiveness and opportunity including tourism; state of good repair; partnership and collaboration; and innovation.”

Federal Transit Administration, Section 5310

Selected projects, specifically the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program, is an eligible Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310, *Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program* expenditure. However, 5310 grant funds can only be used to subsidize trips for older adults and persons with disabilities, consistent with the program goals. Costs for service to non-senior persons, including persons of limited-means, are allowable so long as the program **predominately serves** older adults and persons with disabilities. FTA Section 5310 can fully fund operations and capital expense, without a match, but must meet utilization thresholds of operating

hours per week and projected trip levels. The next cycle is anticipated for January 2024 and successful projects are funded for two years.

When tested in the e-survey, the Volunteer Driver Mileage Reimbursement Program primarily appealed to individuals under 60 — young adults needing to get to college or persons with low-incomes. Other, non-5310 sources will need to be identified to fund this program for those target populations. One potential source is through a partnership with Mendocino College to reimburse volunteer mileage provided for enrolled students.

Existing State Transportation Funding

Current Mendocino Transit Agency (MTA) Funding includes two primary sources for sustainable, continuing funding from California are the Transportation Development Act's *Local Transportation Fund* and the *State Transit Assistance Fund*. Figure 17, on the following page, present MTA revenues from these two sources, over the past seven years.

Local Transportation Funds (LTF)

LTF funds are the larger of the two, providing about \$3 million in the early years of this seven-year period (FY 16/17 to FY 22/23) and growing to \$4.7 million by FY 22/23. The past two years have seen the greatest increases, 14% and 15% respectively as a consequence of Pandemic spending patterns that resulted in increased sales tax revenue. LTF provides some support to the network of Senior Center transportation programs.

State Transit Assistance (STA)

STA funds provide a smaller share of state support to public transit and are a more variable fund source, sometimes greater and sometimes less than the year prior. STA funds provide some support to the network of Senior Center transportation programs.

Existing Federal Funds Administered by Caltrans - Regional Surface Transportation Program (Section 5311)

Federal-aid highway funds are authorized by Congress to assist states in the construction, reconstruction, and improvement of highways and bridges on eligible Federal-aid highway routes. Authorizing legislation for highways began with the Federal-Aid Road Act of 1916 and the Federal Highway Act of 1921. These acts provided the foundation for the Federal-aid Highway Program as it exists today. As re-authorized in SAFETEA-LU, ISTEA and then TEA-21, the Surface Transportation Program, as administered by Caltrans, provides the most flexible Federal funding that may be used for projects on any Federal-aid highway, bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and public bus terminals and facilities.

Figure 17, following, presents MTA's seven-year history of State Local Transportation Fund (LTF) and the State Transit Assistance (STA), as well as Federal Section 5311 funding. The expenses associated with each fund source are detailed by year. Pandemic-era CARES Act funding is also reported.

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| Expense Area by Fund Source | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 7-Year Trend |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| TDA Local Transportation Fund (LTF) | | | | | | | | |
| MTA Ops | \$ 2,549,564 | \$ 2,549,564 | \$ 2,661,288 | \$ 2,993,124 | \$ 2,993,124 | \$ 3,434,291 | \$ 3,428,087 | |
| MTA & Senior Capital | | | | | | | | |
| Senior Center | \$ 473,057 | \$ 473,057 | \$ 493,777 | \$ 555,499 | \$ 555,499 | \$ 637,376 | \$ 729,019 | |
| Transit Planning | | | | | | | \$ 200,000 | |
| Unmet Transit Needs | | | | | | | \$ 300,000 | |
| Capital Reserve | | | | | | | | |
| Totals | \$ 3,022,621 | \$ 3,022,621 | \$ 3,155,065 | \$ 3,548,623 | \$ 3,548,623 | \$ 4,071,667 | \$ 4,657,106 | |
| Percent Change From Prior Year | | 0% | 4% | 12% | 0% | 15% | 14% | |
| State Transit Assistance (STA) | | | | | | | | |
| MTA Ops | \$ 175,000 | \$ 175,000 | \$ 300,000 | \$ 946,179 | \$ 834,637 | \$ 455,221 | \$ 967,375 | |
| Senior Center | | \$ - | | | | | | |
| MTA & Senior Centers | \$ 224,536 | \$ 180,000 | \$ 49,000 | | | \$ 200,000 | \$ 200,000 | |
| MTA Capital- Reclaimed Carryover | \$ 134,076 | \$ - | | | | | | |
| Capital Reserve | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 331,645 | | | | | |
| Totals | \$ 533,612 | \$ 355,000 | \$ 680,645 | \$ 946,179 | \$ 834,637 | \$ 655,221 | \$ 1,167,375 | |
| Percent Change From Prior Year | | -33% | 92% | 39% | -12% | -21% | 78% | |
| Capital Reserve | | | | | | | | |
| Current Year MTA | \$ 14,000 | \$ 39,375 | | | | | | |
| Current Year Senior center | \$ - | \$ - | | | | | | |
| Long Term MTA/Seniors | \$ 306,264 | \$ 283,865 | \$ 632,138 | \$ 674,846 | \$ 685,021 | \$ 696,296 | \$ 701,179 | |
| LTF/STA Contribution | \$ - | \$ - | \$ (331,645) | | | | | |
| Totals | \$ 320,264 | \$ 323,240 | \$ 300,493 | \$ 674,846 | \$ 685,021 | \$ 696,296 | \$ 701,179 | |
| Percent Change From Prior Year | | 1% | -7% | 125% | 2% | 2% | 1% | |
| Federal Funding | | | | | | | | |
| 5311f Intercity Bus Program | | \$ 122,833.00 | | \$ 30,000.00 | \$ 272,708.00 | \$ 300,000.00 | N/A | |
| 5311f Program - Regional Apportionment | \$ 473,918.00 | \$ 484,742.00 | \$ 503,210.00 | \$ 503,210.00 | \$ 552,134.00 | \$ 717,774.00 | \$ 732,129.00 | |
| Regional Surface Transportation Program | \$ 698,827.00 | \$ 693,248.00 | \$ 753,776.00 | \$ 780,992.00 | \$ 787,764.00 | \$ 813,998.00 | \$ 816,035.00 | |
| **FTA 5311 CARES Act/CRRSA (revenue) | | | | | \$ 557,349.00 | | \$ 2,968,317.00 | |
| Totals | \$ 1,172,745 | \$ 1,300,823 | \$ 1,256,986 | \$ 1,314,202 | \$ 2,169,955 | \$ 1,831,772 | \$ 4,516,481 | |
| Totals | \$ 5,049,242 | \$ 5,001,684 | \$ 5,393,189 | \$ 6,483,850 | \$ 7,238,236 | \$ 7,254,956 | \$ 11,042,141 | |

*Data from annual LTF/STA allocations provided by MCOG

**In FY 20/21 MCOG received \$2,065,962 in stimulus funds but only expended \$557,349. FY 22/23 stimulus funds shown are a cumulative rollover of funds.

Figure 17, Mendocino Transit Agency's Seven-Year History with State and Federal Funding Revenues

VI. Appendices

Appendix A: Operating Cost Estimation Methodology and Assumptions

The purpose of providing annual operating costs in each of the mobility solutions was to provide an order of magnitude cost estimates for five of the mobility solutions that require a paid vehicle driver to operate the service. The projected total operating costs are meant to provide reasonable estimates based on a realistic set of cost assumptions. Of course, the actual operational costs will be based on who actually operates the services, and the cost variables that agency actually utilizes for determining the cost. Therefore, these are sketch planning estimates that utilize a standard set of assumptions with the same methodology applied across each of the five mobility solutions for comparison purposes.

Basic Methodology for Operational Costs

The following basic methodology was utilized to determine the estimated annual operating costs for the:

- Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle
- Community Van
- Expanded Dial-A-Ride in Brooktrails
- Scheduled Bus Service from Brooktrails to Willits
- Work Transportation between Ukiah and Hopland

The basic methodology for determining operational costs was the following:

1. Determine the total annual miles and the total driver paid hours that the service would operate. The miles were determined by developing a sample schedule and calculating the total miles the service would operate in a day and then multiply by the total days per year the service would operate to determine the annual miles of the service. If the service was in demand response service, an average of 13 mph was utilized, which is typical of demand response service. For fixed-route service, the actual distance between locations per Google Maps was utilized. For total hours, the span of service and number of vehicles provided provides a reasonable estimate of paid driver hours for the day. The daily hours were then multiplied by the total number of days a year the service would operate to determine the total annual hours.

2. Determine the annual marginal costs for adding the mobility service. The marginal costs are the driver wages, benefits, fuel (or electricity generation costs for electric vehicles) and maintenance costs that are needed to add the service, but do not include administration and overhead costs. The rates for the marginal cost per mile and marginal cost per hour will vary by the agency providing the service, and the assumption utilized to calculate the rates is presented later in this Appendix.

The basic formula for services that operate with a paid driver with a vehicle that needs fuel or electricity for propulsion and needs to be maintained was:

Annual marginal cost= (service A annual hours* hourly marginal costs/hour) + (service A annual miles* maintenance cost per mile) + (service A annual miles*fuel cost per mile)

Service A is the mobility solution being evaluated, such as the Dial-A-Ride/Shuttle.

3. To determine the total annual operating costs, a placeholder cost for the mobility solution administration was added. Since it was not known which agency might operate the service, standard 15% administrative costs were added to the marginal cost to determine the estimated total operating cost. While administration and overhead costs that include management staff, facility leasing and maintenance, etc., can vary widely. The average administrative costs in rural transit agencies are about 15%.

Assumptions for Mileage and Hourly Rates

Mendocino Transit Authority

In the past few years due to the pandemic, the Mendocino Transit Authority has not operated the same service levels as pre-pandemic. MTA only started to fully restore service just this fiscal year. Because management and overhead costs and some of the driver-related costs, such as benefits, have been maintained with significantly less hours and miles, recent operating costs per vehicle service hour are inflated and should not be utilized. In FY 2018/19 MTA operated 48,588 vehicle service hours at an operating cost of \$120.67 per vehicle service hour. In FY 2020/21 due to the pandemic, MTA operated 25,789 vehicle service hours at a cost of \$195.17 per vehicle service hour. Most of the significant jump in the operating cost per vehicle service hour was due to significant less vehicle service hours being provided in FY 2020/21.

It was determined for the purposes of cost estimation, FY 2018/19 provided a more realistic base year and the financial report provided figures for wages, health benefits, retirement and workers comp for hourly based costs; and parts, lube and tires for mileage-based costs. Utilizing figures from Transparent California for Mendocino Transit

Authority² \$628, 253 in management costs were deducted from the total wages and benefits. The reason that marginal costs are utilized is because the addition of Dial-A-Ride/ Shuttle or other mobility solution with a paid driver will not affect the management or general overhead costs of the agency. The marginal costs were then inflated using the CPI from 2019 to 2022. The revised marginal costs were then divided by 48,588 vehicle service hours to come up an adjusted 2022 marginal cost per vehicle service hour of \$82.76.

For maintenance costs per mile, Transparent California was utilized to determine the mechanic, mechanic helper, and cleaner wages and benefits and this was added to parts, lube and tires costs for a total of \$411,000 marginal maintenance costs. This does not include the Maintenance Manager and maintenance facility costs as they would not change with the addition of a specific mobility solution. Dividing this by the 987,183 vehicle service miles resulted in the marginal maintenance cost per mile of 41.6 cents per mile.

For electric vehicles, maintenance costs are generally less due to no oil change and fewer routine preventative maintenance procedures than internal combustion engines need. The maintenance cost per mile of a Ford Transit van was estimated at .21 per mile, but because the industry does not have extensive experience with transit agency maintenance of such a vehicle, there could be significant variation.

For fuel costs per mile, a Ford Transit vehicle was assumed for operation and while it is rated at 15 mpg and 19 for highway, 14 miles per gallon was utilized to reflect the hilly terrain of Mendocino County, based on feedback from MTA management. Fuel prices have varied widely in the past couple of years and while prices have recently dropped, a conservative cost of \$6 per gallon was utilized. A fuel cost rate of 42.9 cents per mile was utilized.

For electric vehicles, according to tests on a Ford E-Transit vehicle, the effective range of the electric van in Mendocino County due to the hilly terrain and climate conditions is about 70 miles. It takes 68 KWH to fully recharge a Ford Transit vehicle. With an estimated electric generation of \$0.20 per KWH, the cost per mile would be about 19 cents per mile to recharge a Ford E-Transit van. The \$0.20 is an average figure, and the actual electric generation costs could vary substantially. However, this is a reasonable figure compared to fuel cost for an internal combustion engine van or small cutaway.

Family Resource Center

The driver wage for a Family Resource Center would need to be at least the California minimum wage of \$15.50 per hour. There are a number of factors that are mostly unknown at this time, which would likely have a significantly higher fully loaded rate:

² transparentcalifornia.com/salaries/2019/mendocino-transit-authority/

- Recruiting time and costs of the driver
- The benefits package for the driver
- The ability to attract a qualified driver that would be willing to perhaps be shared with one or more other rural communities
- Needed arrangements for a back-up driver and back-up vehicle and the logistical costs of having a temporary driver cover due to illness or vacation
- Dispatching and scheduling costs to support the driver

The methodology utilized to account for these unknown cost factors was to determine what it would cost on an hourly basis to contract for a third-party firm to provide a driver that would both drive a community van and Dial-A-Ride/ Shuttle from either Covelo, Laytonville or Potter Valley. Based on the review of third-party contracts that operate transit service in rural communities, a contractor would likely charge between \$40 and \$50 per hour to provide such a service, addressing the issues above. A cost of \$45 per driver paid hour has been utilized. While a Family Resource Center may be able to provide a driver and address the above challenges for less, this is reasonable cost per hour of service provided given the challenges described in the bullets above.

A 15% administrative cost has been added to be consistent with the MTA cost estimation. The actual administrative costs would be determined in the next phase of the project.

For maintenance costs, a Family Resource Center vehicle would need to be maintained at a local Ukiah dealer and would require the driver to stay in Ukiah while the vehicle is being serviced. For that reason, the maintenance cost per mile has been estimated at the same rate as MTA.

Willits Senior Center

For the expanded Dial-A-Ride mobility option for Brooktrails, we utilized budget information from a file provided by Willits Senior Center, "MTA Exhibit B Worksheet June 2022.xlsx." For their current contract with MTA, the Willits Senior Center currently has three drivers who work on two shifts on two vehicles. Detailed budget information driver wages, driver benefits, insurance provided by MTA, maintenance and fuel and oil. With this detailed information, the methodology utilized was to determine what it would cost to add a third vehicle and driver shift to accommodate general public trips. The budget information for the two-driver shift was multiplied by 1.33 to add a third shift and inflated by 10% to account for inflation. Additional insurance was added for the third vehicle. The additional cost was determined by subtracting the operational cost of the total operational cost with three driver shifts minus the 2020/21 costs for providing two shifts.

Determining what the additional administrative costs will be addressed in the next phase of the study, but a 15% administrative cost could be utilized as a placeholder.