

## APPENDIX B. DEFINITIONS FOR UNMET TRANSIT NEEDS

HCAOG applies the following definitions for the unmet transit needs process and findings. The HCAOG Board adopted these definitions in 2011 and the SSTAC reaffirmed the definitions in their 2017 Strategic Plan.

**Definition of “unmet transit needs”** — *Unmet transit needs* are, at a minimum:

1. Trips requested from residents who do not have access to public transportation, specialized transportation, or private transport services or resources for the purpose of traveling to medical care, shopping, social/recreational activities, education/training, and employment; or
2. Proposed public transportation, specialized transportation, or private transport services that are identified in the following (but is not limited to): Transportation Development Plans, the Regional Transportation Plan, the Coordinated Public Transit–Human Services Transportation Plan.

3. Sufficient broad-based community support exists, meaning that persons who will likely use the service on a routine basis demonstrate support with at a minimum two requests for general public service and five requests for disabled service.

Additionally, the TDA stipulates that, for this process, unmet transit needs do *not* include:

- Improvements funded or scheduled for implementation in the next fiscal year.
- Minor operational improvements or changes such as bus stops, schedules, and minor route changes.
- Trips for primary or secondary school transportation.
- Sidewalk improvements or street and road needs.

*"Minor operational improvements" are changes to service which do not affect the operating cost of the transit service either by requiring additional staff and/or additional vehicle hours of service or miles of service.*

**Definition of “reasonable to meet”** — Unmet transit needs may be found to be *reasonable to meet* by means of the following criteria:

1. To be considered reasonable to meet, a service must be operationally feasible and financially sustainable, as defined below:
  - a) To be considered operationally feasible, the service must have adequate running time, adequate roadways, and must be safe to operate.
  - b) To be considered financially sustainable, enough money should be available from identified sources of funding to pay for the marginal operating cost of the service continuously for three years.
2. Additionally, to be considered "reasonable to meet" the service must be projected to meet a minimum "marginal farebox return ratio" of 10 percent within two years. ~~If multiple competing services are requested, other factors such as~~ Performance measures including estimated subsidy per passenger trip and passengers per vehicle hour of service ~~may will~~ also be considered. Ridership and farebox return ratio thresholds will also be considered for continuing new introduced services.

3. Pursuant to the requirements of Transportation Development Act (TDA) Statutes (Public Utilities Code Section 99401.5(c)), a determination of needs that are reasonable to meet shall not be made by comparing unmet transit needs with the need for streets and roads, for the allocation of TDA funds.
4. Once a service is determined to be "reasonable to meet" and is implemented, it can be expected that the ridership in the first 1-2 years of the new service will be less than the projected optimal ridership. Ridership should be evaluated at 6-month intervals to determine if service is meeting performance standards adopted by the transit provider, and specifically, whether the service meets a minimum 10 percent marginal farebox ratio. If the service is being adequately promoted and fails to be within 60 percent of the identified standards after six months, 90 percent with the first year, or 100 percent within two years, the service may be cancelled and deemed "no longer reasonable to meet." An exception to this rule is when a community or group is willing to participate in sharing the ongoing cost of the new service.