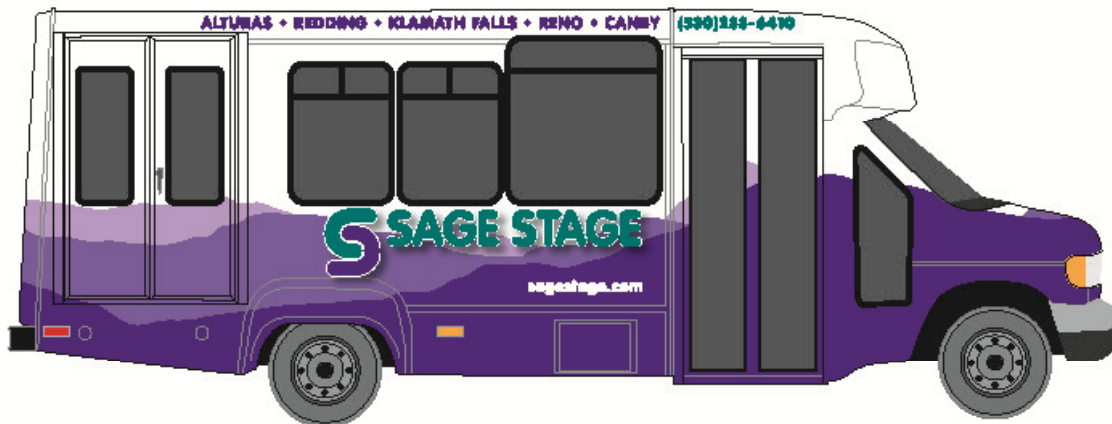


**Modoc County
Transportation Commission
Short-Range Transit
Development Plan
FY 2013/14 to FY 2017/18**



Final Report – June 2013

Prepared by:
TRANSIT marketing LLC



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Executive Summary

The Short-Range Transit Development Plan (SRTDP) is a five-year plan for the development of public transportation service in Modoc County. The SRTDP process:

- Provides opportunities for input from the public and key stakeholders into the future of Sage Stage services within Modoc County and to critical destinations in Redding, Reno and Klamath Falls.
- Identifies the need for existing and future public transportation services.
- Evaluates the recent performance of existing services.
- Establishes goals, objectives and performance standards over the next five years.
- Provides service plan and fare recommendations.
- Develops a comprehensive marketing plan for communicating MTA services.
- Establishes a detailed operating and capital financial plan.

Overview of Existing Sage Stage Services

The existing Sage Stage services consist of three intercity routes and a Dial-A-Ride service within a ten-mile radius of Alturas. A brief summary of existing service follows.

Intercity Services

For all of the intercity services described below, a reservation must be made at least one day in advance. Reservations can be made by calling the driver, online at sagestage.com, or by calling the Sage Stage office. The trip is not made unless there are two reservations or, if there is only one reservation, if a single passenger pays for two fares. Passengers may carry up to two pieces of baggage each with an extra fare for additional baggage.

Alturas-Redding: Service is provided on Mondays and Fridays with pick-ups as requested in Alturas on Dial-A-Ride starting at 6:45 am and departing from Alturas at the Rite Aid stop at 7:00 am. Stops by request are made in Canby, Adin, Bieber, Fall River Mills and Burney, arriving in Redding at 10:00 am with connections to Greyhound, RABA and Trinity Transit at the Redding downtown transit center and direct service to the Mt. Shasta Mall. The return trip to Alturas starts at the Mt. Shasta Mall at 12:00 pm stopping in the same communities as the inbound trip, arriving in Alturas at 3:20 pm at Rite Aid.

Alturas-Susanville-Reno: Service is provided on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with Dial-A-Ride pick-ups as requested in Alturas and departing from Alturas at 7:30 am from the Rite Aid. Stops are made in Likely, Madeline, and Susanville, arriving in Reno at 11:15 am. The bus starts from the Reno/Tahoe Airport for the return trip at 1:30 pm stopping in the same communities as the inbound trip, arriving in Alturas at 5:30 pm at Rite Aid.

Alturas-Klamath Falls: Service is provided on Wednesdays with pick-ups as requested in Alturas on Dial-A-Ride starting at 7:45 am and departing from Alturas at 8:00 am from the Rite Aid stop. Service is

provided to Canby, Newell and Tulelake with the first drop off in Klamath Falls at 9:50 am. Passengers can be transported within Klamath Falls for an additional fare. The bus departs from Greyhound at 1:30 pm in Klamath Falls and from Walmart at 2:00 pm serving the same communities in the reverse direction and arriving in Alturas at 4 pm, providing the option of Dial-A-Ride service to the passenger's final destination in the Alturas service area for an additional fare. In addition to the Klamath Falls service on Wednesday that arrives in Canby at 8:20 am and departs from Canby at 3:40 pm, an additional round trip has been added in the midday that starts at 10:40 am from the Ride Aid in Alturas and returns from Canby at 11:00 am, arriving at the Ride Aid stop in Alturas at 11:20 am.

Dial-A-Ride

Dial-A-Ride is shared transportation service within ten (10) miles of Alturas. The service is operated Monday through Friday on a first-come, first-served basis. In Alturas, the first pick up time is 8:00 am and the last drop off is 4:00 pm. For Modoc Estates, the first pickup is at 8:15 am and last drop off is at 3:30 pm. In Cal Pines, the first pick up is at 8:30 am and last drop off is at 3:00 pm.

Advance reservations are accepted or passengers can call the driver for trips the same day. Priority is given to health care appointments when scheduled one day in advance.

Policies and Performance Standards

MCTC has adopted the following local performance criteria for MTA services. These criteria are currently utilized during the annual transit unmet needs process.

- Farebox ratio not to exceed 33.3 percent across the transit system.
- For fixed-route intercity bus services, with a one quarter mile deviation, to Modoc communities, Klamath Falls, Redding, Reno and interim destinations, there will be a minimum of two fare-paying passengers to terminus city or equivalent, unless for travel to/from verifiable medical appointment.
- For local DAR service there will be a minimum of three fare-paying passengers or average equivalent per service hour during any month.

Farebox Recovery Ratio

Farebox recovery is defined as the ratio of fare revenues to total operating costs. In FY 2011/12, the farebox recovery ratio systemwide was 20.9%. MCTC currently has a policy for Local Performance Criteria for transit operations such that the "Farebox ratio not-to-exceed thirty-three and one-third percent (33.3%) across the transit system." Rural transit systems that receive Transportation Development Act funds are required to have at least a 10% farebox recovery ratio. Sage Stage is double what is required and well below the maximum threshold of 33%. It is important to note that any changes that might reduce fares have to be made up by public subsidy dollars.

The recommended performance for farebox recovery would be a minimum of 15% over the next five years with a target standard of 20%.

Minimum of Two Fare-Paying Passengers for Intercity Services

There is a strong financial rationale for this policy. There is no need to make a trip if there are not sufficient fare-paying passengers. The policy has worked well for the Redding Route in particular when there is often not sufficient demand to operate the service twice a week.

Where the policy does not work well is for travel trips back from Reno, Redding and Klamath Falls. For example, if a passenger from Alturas is able to take a trip on a Monday to the Downtown Transit Center in Redding and take a Greyhound trip and wants to return to Alturas on Friday from Redding, but nobody else has booked a trip from Alturas to Redding on that Friday, the passenger would need to pay a double fare in order for that return trip to be provided or wait until Monday for the next trip. This discourages ridership.

There are two recommended modifications to this policy. The first one is that a passenger booking a round trip on different days should be able to guarantee that the return trip will be made. It is recommended that trips when a passenger books a return trip and is willing to pay the fare in advance will guarantee the return trip. The second recommendation is that for any once a week intercity service (currently Klamath Falls), the trip operates if there is one paying passenger.

Dial-A-Ride Performance Standard

The Dial-A-Ride productivity as measured by passengers per vehicle hour has ranged from 4.1 in FY 2007/08 to 3.38 in FY 2009/10. The productivity was 3.8 in FY 2011/12. It is recommended that the 3 passengers per hour be a minimum standard. The target standard should be 4.0 passengers per hour. This would encourage improved dispatching to group trips whenever possible.

Guidelines for Improving Services

Based on stakeholder input, there are a number of recommended improvements that would warrant consideration if monies were available to operate and sustain the service. The adopted Regional Transportation Plan has several relevant policies to guide the MTA Board in deciding on which improvements might have priority:

- Consider each transportation improvement project on its merit and according to available resources.
- Maintenance and management of the existing transportation system have priority over capacity expansion.
- Coordinate public transit access with those in adjacent jurisdictions to maximize connectivity and access.
- Number of requests for transit service currently unable to serve.

A primary consideration which is not addressed in the Regional Transportation Plan is whether services within Modoc County should have priority over improvements that link to destinations outside the County.

Sage Stage has done an excellent job in obtaining federal funds to support intercity services to Reno, Redding, and Klamath Falls. MTA has provided the necessary matching funds. It is recommended that

improvements for trips within Modoc County receive a higher priority than further improvements to trips outside Modoc County.

Factors Influencing Future Transit Demand For Sage Stage Service

In rural counties like Modoc County, public transportation demand for Sage Stage services is driven by a number of factors. Many of these factors are outside the influence of MTA management.

- Senior residents as a percentage of the population will grow significantly. According to California Department of Finance projections, the total population of Modoc County will remain relatively constant with 9,648 residents in 2010, with a growth of just 317 residents in 10 years to a projected 9,965 in 2020. However, the number of seniors 65-74 is expected to increase from 1,109 in 2010 to 1,565 in 2020. Seniors 75 and older are expected to increase from 773 in 2010 to 1,032 in 2020. Seniors 65 and older are estimated to grow from 19.5% of the population in 2010 to 26.4% in 2020. The aging of the population and the need for transportation will be a significant contributing factor to Sage Stage demand over the next five years, the planning horizon of the SRTDP.
- Modoc County is a frontier county. Residents are mostly very self-reliant. However, some shopping and medical specialists can only be accessed outside the County. Access to airports, Greyhound and Amtrak are two to three hours away by automobile. There is an ongoing need to provide intercity bus services to Redding, Klamath Falls, and Reno especially for individuals who do not have access to an automobile or in the case of the aging population a decrease in the physical ability to drive at night or in bad weather. The demand for these intercity bus services will be influenced by price of gasoline. In general, the higher the gasoline prices are, the more demand Sage Stage will experience.
- Government and social service agencies currently utilize Sage Stage to provide needed mobility to eligible clients. Future demand for Sage Stage services will partially depend on the ability of these social service agencies to provide funding to fill mobility gaps for transportation disadvantaged individuals who do not own a car or do not have a driver's license. CalWORKS provides employment training and services to their clients and utilize Sage Stage whenever possible for welfare to work activities. During the stakeholder interview process, CalWORKS indicated they offer Sage Stage rides for six clients through a voucher reimbursement program. Four clients have children and CalWORKS pays for the transportation of the children. In Modoc County, T.E.A.C.H. currently administers 48 state, federal and local grants. T.E.A.C.H. provides gas vouchers and Sage Stage vouchers depending on client needs. It is not known how expected reductions in Federal and State social service funding will affect the social service agencies' abilities to subsidize Sage Stage services.
- CalWORKS and T.E.A.C.H. are important existing partners with MTA. The SRTDP planning process has identified future expansion of partnership opportunities with Modoc County Senior Center, Tribal TANF, Modoc Unified School District, and Big Valley 50+. These partnerships could help to increase future demand for Sage Stage services.

All four of these factors could contribute to strong growth in Sage Stage ridership over the next five years. The potential for partnerships with the other agencies described above is likely to have the greatest influence on future ridership. The aging of the population and the expected increase in seniors 65 and older over the next five years will generate growing demand for Sage Stage services.

Dial-A-Ride Alternatives and Recommendations

Weekday Longer Hours

Stakeholder and Passenger Input

The following are the main comments heard from stakeholders and passengers regarding Dial-A-Ride:

- A stakeholder with mental health services said they have to transport clients later in the day and would prefer to buy them tickets on Dial-A-Ride if it were available.
- A worker who uses the DAR (because her vehicle was totaled) has to leave work by 4 in order to get home. Her boss would prefer her to stay until 5.
- Particularly in the summer when it is light longer, people would like to be able to get home from recreational activities.
- CalWORKs noted that a longer service span (possibly earlier and later) would make more jobs accessible to their clients.
- A Social Services manager noted that their agency is open until 6 pm and that it would be good if the Dial-A-Ride service ran until then as well.
- The Modoc Work Activity Center manager felt that some of their clients could use DAR if it was available until 6 pm or on some Saturdays.

It should be noted that Dial-A-Ride has been operated as late as 5:30 pm by Sage Stage in the past, but service was reduced due to budgetary considerations and lower ridership in the last hour of service.

Estimated annual costs of extended weekday hours

- Extended service in the morning from 8:00 am to 7:30 am and extend service in the afternoon from 4:00 pm to 6 pm: \$38,742.
- Extend service from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm only: \$15,489.

Action plan dates:

2014/15: Extend Dial-A-Ride end time from 4 pm to 5 pm for a one-year trial period.

2015/16: Implement Dial-A-Ride extended hours from 5 to 6 pm on weekdays.

Saturday Service

Stakeholder and Passenger Input

Saturday service was mostly a request of existing passengers, although a couple of social service agencies did mention Saturday service as a need for their clients in Alturas. Employed residents who do

not have a car would like to utilize Saturday service primarily for shopping but also for social visits and recreation.

Some stakeholders suggested that Saturday service might be provided at the beginning of the month only and others suggested service on every Saturday.

Estimated Cost of Saturday Service

- Annual cost for first Saturday of the month (12 Saturdays), 9 am to 4 pm: \$5,143
- Annual cost for 51 Saturdays (assumes one holiday), 9 am to 4 pm: \$21,857

Action Plan Dates:

2014/15: Implement first Saturday of the month service for Dial-A-Ride in Alturas.

2016/17: Implement second Saturday for Dial-A-Ride service in Alturas.

Increased Service to California Pines

MTA management brought up the issue of providing Dial-A-Ride service to California Pines on a fixed schedule instead of a demand responsive basis. At present, any person within a 10-mile radius of Alturas can request a trip during regular Dial-A-Ride hours between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm. The distance between Alturas and California Pines is 10 miles. The fares for service to California Pines are \$6 for the general public and \$4.50 for discount fares.

It is recommended that the extension to California Pines on Mondays and Thursdays be implemented on a one-year pilot basis. If the pilot program is evaluated and is determined to have more benefits than costs, then a third day would be considered on Wednesday or Fridays.

There has been some recent discussion regarding the potential of Sage Stage operating an outlying route to California Pines. Collaboration between school districts and the transit agency are quite common throughout California. The routes and schedules must be open to the general public and could be incorporated into the scheduled route in the afternoon from Alturas to California Pines. These special trips open to the general public are typically described as “school trippers.”

A potential area of collaboration between Sage Stage and the Senior Center was identified for transportation to and from the Senior Center lunch program. The Senior Center bus does not serve California Pines.

Action Plan Dates:

2014/15: Extend Dial-A-Ride service between California Pines and Alturas on a set schedule on Mondays and Thursdays on a one-year pilot basis.

2014/15: Work with Modoc Senior Center to provide regular transportation from California Pines to the senior lunch program in Alturas. Develop funding agreement if feasible.

2014/15: Discuss potential of “school tripper” service between Alturas and California Pines with Modoc Unified School District. Implement service if feasible and funding available.

Dial-A-Ride Fares

A primary objective of offering different fare media is to encourage specific behavior – e.g. to encourage people to use transit regularly and to reward them when they do. To this end, it is recommended that Sage Stage consider two new fare media that would encourage regular use of Dial-A-Ride and the Intercity Routes.

Local Day Pass for Dial-A-Ride

This would be a flat priced day pass that would be good for up to a maximum number of boardings within a single day. It would allow low-income riders to use the service for more trips within their available resources and would increase ridership. For example:

- The Alturas day pass might sell for \$5 and be good for up to 4 boardings in the City of Alturas zone.
- The Modoc Estates day pass might sell for \$8 and be good for the trip to and from town, plus two additional stops within Alturas.
- The Cal Pines day pass might sell for \$12 and be good for the trip to and from town plus two additional stops within Alturas.

The Dial-A-Ride Day Pass will enable very low income individuals to group trips on a single day. The benefits to riders and the potential for increased ridership outweigh the costs of accommodating higher demand and the potential for some lost revenue. In order to ensure the Day Pass is manageable, Sage Stage should first limit the sale of the Day Pass to trips within the Alturas zone.

Action Plan Dates:

2013/14: Implement Day Pass for Dial-A-Ride

Simplified Voucher System for Social Service Agencies

Both MTA and CalWORKs staff wish to simplify the current voucher system used to purchase transportation for CalWORKs clients.

Action Plan Date:

2013/14: Work with CalWORKs, Department of Social Services, T.E.A.C.H. and the Modoc Senior Center to replace the vouchers system with the sale of printed ticket books with the ticket denomination clearly displayed.

Alturas-Redding Intercity Route

Intercity bus service operates on Monday and Fridays and arrives in Redding at 10:00 am with connections to Greyhound, RABA and Trinity Transit at the Redding downtown transit center and direct service to the Mt. Shasta Mall. The return trip to Alturas starts at the Mt. Shasta Mall at 12:00 pm.

Performance of the Alturas-Redding route has shown a steep decline over the past four years. Ridership has dropped by more than 50% from 644 annual passengers in FY 2008/09 to 312 annual passengers in FY 2011/12. The Alturas-Redding route only operated 73 times or about 70% of the time. This means

that approximately 30% of the time the route did not run because it did not have the required reservations for 2 passengers.

Stakeholder and Passenger Input

In stakeholder interviews, the Redding Route is most often referenced in relation to the need to get people to specialty medical providers that accept Medi-Cal. However, the current service configuration makes it difficult to schedule medical appointments around the bus.

- A social service manager noted, “It’s not a long enough window (for appointments) and many doctors don’t work on Friday.” She suggested a four-hour window and thought Monday to be a good day for the service.
- The manager at Mental Health said, “It would be better to have a longer window for appointments, though it would make for a longer overall day for clients. There are more Medi-Cal providers in Redding.”
- The manager at the Modoc Work Activity Center noted that non-emergency medical transportation, particularly to Redding, is one of their most important needs.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Sage Stage extend the hours during which the bus is in Redding to 3.5 hours on Monday, retain the existing schedule on Fridays, and add two additional scheduled stops at the medical centers in Redding. Dropping off passengers within one mile of the scheduled stop after the bus arrives in Redding and picking up passengers at the same location on the return trip to Alturas would add significant convenience to the potential passenger. Costs would increase annually by \$2,800 for adding the additional stops in Redding.

Action Plan Date

2013/14: Extend the hours when the Alturas-Redding bus is in Redding on Mondays from 10:00 am-12:00 pm to 10:00 am to 1:30 pm.

Alturas-Klamath Falls Intercity Service

Service is provided on Wednesdays with pick-ups as requested in Alturas on Dial-A-Ride starting at 7:45 am and departing from Alturas at 8:00 am at the Rite Aid stop. Service is provided to Canby, Newell and Tulelake with the first drop off in Klamath Falls at 9:50 am.

The overall trend has been declining ridership on the Klamath Falls route over the past five years, with the exception being FY 2010/11. Annual ridership was 610 in FY 2007/08 and was 423 in FY 2011/12. The ridership includes the special Canby run on Wednesday.

Stakeholder and Passenger Input

The Klamath Falls route is perceived largely as a route for senior citizens to go shopping and to medical appointments. One social service provider noted, “Everyone on the Klamath Falls bus is 70 to 90.”

Riders expressed interest in having Saturday service to Klamath Falls at least once a month to accommodate the needs of younger adults who work or go to school.

The excursion fare for the Klamath Falls route is perceived by some riders as “too pricey” in addition to the base fare. However, there is some desire to stop at a few additional destinations – e.g. Fred Meyer. The current service schedule and window appears to work well.

There is no Senior Center service from Tulelake to Klamath Falls. A reasonable fare similar to the Alturas-Canby Fare would help to attract additional senior ridership.

Recommendation

Add one Saturday a month to the Alturas-Klamath Falls routes. If the one Saturday a month meets performance targets, implement a second Saturday of the month. The Saturday would be operated with the same fares and same excursion fare policies as weekday service. The cost of one Saturday a month would be \$6,348. The cost of two Saturdays a month would be \$12,696.

Action Plan Dates

FY 2015/16: Implement second Saturday of month service from Alturas to Klamath Falls.

FY 2017/18: Expand service from Alturas to Klamath Falls to a second Saturday of the month.

Alturas-Susanville-Reno Intercity Service

Service is provided on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with Dial-A-Ride pick-ups as requested in Alturas and departing from Alturas at 7:30 am from the Rite Aid. Stops are provided in Likely, Madeline, and Susanville, arriving in Reno at 11:15 am. The bus starts from the Reno/Tahoe Airport for the return trip at 1:30 pm stopping in the same communities as the inbound trip, arriving in Alturas at 5:30 pm.

Ridership on the Reno route between FY 2009/10 and FY 2011/12 increased significantly from 1,376 in FY 2009/10 to 1,897 annual passengers in FY 2011/12. The average fare per passenger was relatively flat over the past four fiscal years, ending at \$21.36 of fare revenue generated per passenger.

Stakeholder and Rider Input on the Reno Route

The Reno route is clearly the best known and used among the general population. It provides the greatest number of connections for longer trips and is used regularly to connect to the Reno Airport, Amtrak and Greyhound. It appears to serve a broad group of occasional riders that include individuals of varied ages, incomes and trip purposes. Even in Cedarville where there is no connecting service, many residents are aware of the Reno route and have used it for trips to the airport or to connect with Amtrak or Greyhound.

In addition to its Alturas ridership, the Reno route also serves a separate rider population in Susanville. A majority of the ridership is from Susanville to Reno. Additionally, there is significant ridership to the Thunder Mountain area.

There were no service alternatives suggested during the stakeholder interviews and public workshops. Overall, the current service is working well and has attracted strong ridership.

The most significant input from stakeholders was from the Lassen County Transportation Commission and the Susanville Rancheria. The Susanville Rancheria is currently planning to operate their own independent bus service from Susanville to Redding on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. According to a representative of the Susanville Rancheria, they have secured funding to operate the service and hope to run two loops a day between Susanville and Reno. The Susanville Rancheria has also received funding for a 30-passenger bus. They plan to start the service in 2013. Recent information indicates that the Susanville Rancheria service will most likely charge fares comparable to Sage Stage fares.

Recommendation

No service plan recommendations are made.

Action Plan

FY 2013/14 and 2014/15: Carefully monitor the ridership and fare impacts on the Reno route from implementation of Susanville Rancheria service to Reno.

Alturas-Cedarville-Ft. Bidwell

There is currently no service between Alturas and Cedarville. Sage Stage has made several attempts to provide Cedarville service in the past including in 2000, 2001, 2003, and 2005. Each time the service was discontinued due to poor ridership or funding issues.

Summary of Stakeholder Input

The County Supervisor for the Cedarville area and a representative for the Cedarville Rancheria both advocated for the consideration of Sage Stage service between Cedarville and Alturas. They noted that there is a growing elderly population in the Surprise Valley that is limited by their inability to drive or unwillingness to drive over the pass. While they were aware that past services had not been successful, they felt that things had changed significantly since the last “try.” An aging population and higher gas prices were reasons they thought it was time to reconsider the service. The fact that there is no pharmacy in Cedarville and Rite Aid no longer delivers to the Surprise Valley was another point that was raised.

A representative of the Cedarville Health Care District noted that their hospital and the Modoc Medical Center in Alturas each offer some unique services that require residents to travel between the communities. For example, physical therapy is offered in Alturas, but not in Cedarville.

The consulting team also spoke with stakeholders who voiced the need for service beyond Surprise Valley to Ft. Bidwell. Representatives of the Tribal TANF Partnership and the Mt. Warner Indian Health Clinic discussed the need for a transit link between Ft. Bidwell and Alturas to serve Reservation residents, many of who have neither driver’s licenses nor cars.

- The Tribal TANF program has 10 clients who live in Ft. Bidwell. The third week of each month, they are required to attend a workshop in Alturas, normally from 10 am until 2pm (flexible). They would be able to pay for bus tickets for their clients for the monthly workshop, in essence guaranteeing some level of ridership on the route. Tribal TANF staff is checking on the eligibility of transportation funding if a member uses Sage Stage to come to Alturas to pick up their check and go shopping around the first of the month.
- The Indian Health Clinic provides some but not all medical services. For example, they have no X-Ray machine. If patients need to go to Cedarville, Alturas or Canby for services, they are “on their own” for transportation. While needs would be sporadic, the representative felt there is demand for such service.
- One stakeholder noted that Ft. Bidwell residents need to come to Page’s Market in Cedarville, as there is no grocery store in Ft. Bidwell.

A survey of Cedarville residents was conducted to determine the level of interest in such service. Since the primary target is likely to be older adults, Sage Stage staff attended the monthly 50+ luncheon and asked participants to complete a survey regarding their interest in the service. Questionnaires were also handed out at Rabbit Trax convenience store and the Cedarville Hospital. In total 33 questionnaires were returned. The following are key findings:

- All respondents said they travel to Alturas at least twice a month. Most (61%) go 5 times per month or less frequently, while 21% said they go daily (20 times per month or more).
- 39% of respondents get a ride with others to Alturas, while 61% drive themselves. Among those who go 5 or fewer times per month, two-thirds say they get a ride with family or friends.
- The questionnaire asked: “If there were bus service between Cedarville and Alturas one or two days per month, and the fare was \$6 each way for seniors (\$8 for non-seniors), would you personally use it?” Virtually all respondents said they would use a bus service to Alturas (91%) while 76% said they had family members or neighbors who would use it.

Recommendation

Based on input received during the SRTDP planning process, Sage Stage staff has collaborated with staff at Tribal TANF and has submitted a grant application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5316 funding for \$275,135 for three years operating funding and an additional \$87,550 for a bus. If approved, service would be provided on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays among Alturas-Cedarville-Ft. Bidwell, with two round-trips daily. The morning trip would depart from Alturas at 5:00 am and arrive in Ft. Bidwell at 6:15 am. The bus would return to Alturas and arrive in Cedarville at 7:00 am and in Alturas at 7:45 am. If approved, the Reno, Klamath Falls and Redding intercity routes would all depart at 8:00 am, allowing for connecting passengers. The afternoon return bus to Cedarville-Ft. Bidwell would depart at 5:15 pm after the intercity buses from Reno, Redding and Klamath Falls have returned to Alturas. The bus would arrive in Cedarville at 5:55 pm and arrive in Ft. Bidwell at 6:30 pm. The bus would return to Alturas and arrive at 8:00 pm.

If the grant application is not approved, then subscription bus service would be operated at least twice a month in partnership arrangement with the Tribal TANF.

Intercity Fares

One-Way Fare Recommendation

Based on stakeholder input, the zone based fare categories would be broadened to increase the number of fare zones by two to three depending on the route. The following additional fare categories are recommended:

Alturas-Reno Route

- Likely to Reno
- Madelline to Ravendale to Susanville
- Madelline to Ravendale to Reno

Alturas-Klamath Falls

- Newell to Klamath Falls
- Tulelake to Klamath Falls

Alturas-Redding

- Canby to Redding
- Adin to Redding

Recommendation for One-Way Fares for Intercity Service

It is recommended that the basic fare structure be maintained with two exceptions. The first is to add the new fare categories. It is recommended that Likely-Madelline to Reno and Likely-Madelline to Susanville be added as fare categories as shown below in the recommended fare structure:

Origin-Destination Pair		Recommended Fares	
		General	Discount
US 395 Alturas-Reno Route			
Alturas	Susanville	\$ 18.00	\$ 13.50
Susanville	Reno	\$ 22.00	\$ 16.50
Alturas	Reno	\$ 32.00	\$ 24.00
<i>Likely-Ravendale</i>	<i>Reno</i>	\$ 28.00	\$ 21.00
<i>Likely-Ravendale</i>	<i>Susanville</i>	\$ 15.00	\$ 11.00
SR 299 Alturas-Redding Route			
Alturas	Burney	\$ 16.00	\$ 12.00
Burney	Redding	\$ 12.00	\$ 9.00
Alturas	Redding	\$ 26.00	\$ 19.50
<i>Canby</i>	<i>Redding</i>	\$ 21.00	\$ 16.00
<i>Adin-Bieber</i>	<i>Redding</i>	\$ 16.00	\$ 12.00
SR 139 Alturas-Klamath Falls Route			
Alturas	Canby	\$ 6.00	\$ 4.50
Alturas	Klamath Falls	\$ 18.00	\$ 13.50
<i>Newell-Tulelake</i>	<i>Klamath Falls</i>	\$ 6.00	\$ 4.50

Italics include origin-destination pairs that currently do not have a fare category

Day-Trip Fare Recommendation

The affordability of fares was a common theme among passengers and key stakeholders. Passengers utilize the intercity routes to connect to regional transportation services including Greyhound, Amtrak, and the Reno Airport. Local residents of Modoc County also utilize Sage Stage for the purpose of day trips mostly to Redding and Klamath Falls according to passengers and stakeholders interviewed.

To encourage local riders to make day-trips on the intercity routes, particularly Redding and Klamath Falls routes, it is recommended that Sage Stage offer a Day-Tripper fare which would include a same-day round trip plus one or two additional stops within the destination community. The prepaid fare could provide a small discount off the price of two regular one-way trips and include the additional stops as a bonus. This would make it more attractive for seniors and other to use the bus to go shopping or to medical appointments.

- For example, the Day Tripper fare from Alturas to Klamath Falls might be \$35 (general) or \$26 (senior/disabled), and would include a drop-off at a location in Klamath Falls, one trip between locations within Klamath Falls, and pick-up from a location in Klamath Falls for the return trip to Alturas.
- Similarly, the Day Tripper fare from Alturas to Redding might be \$50/\$38 but might include taking the person directly to and from their medical appointment if it's not a regularly scheduled stop, one trip between locations in Redding, and pick-up from a location in Redding for the return trip to Alturas.

Intercity Fare Action Plan Dates

FY 2013/14: Implement new fare categories for intercity routes, adding new categories for Newell/Tulelake to Klamath Falls (already implemented) , Canby to Redding, Adin-Bieber to Redding, Likely-Ravendale to Reno, and Likely-Susanville to Reno.

FY 2013/14: Implement the Day Tripper Fare on the Redding and Klamath Falls routes.

Marketing Plan

The SRTDP includes a set of marketing strategies to build on Sage Stage's excellent reputation and maximize the effectiveness of the service plan recommendations. These strategies address five objectives:

- Enhance visibility through bolder vehicle branding and bus stop signage.
- Increase ease-of-use through enhanced passenger information tools.
- Build on existing awareness, through outreach and targeted communications to educate gatekeepers and potential users about the specifics of using each of Sage Stage's services.
- Continue to use local media advertising and public relations, as well as co-promotions with connecting transit partners, to generate awareness and ridership.
- Improve affordability through expanded fare media that reward regular riders.

Visibility

In conjunction with the introduction of the new Sage Stage facility, it is recommended that the system update its system brand and expand bus stop signage in order to increase visibility and awareness of the local and intercity services.

To facilitate implementation of this strategy, an updated logo, vehicle wrap design and bus stop sign were developed as part of the SRTDP process. These are shown at the right. The logo retains the Sage Stage name (which has a high level of awareness) and builds on the style of the existing logo, while introducing a more contemporary, easier to use symbol.

The colors are bold and eye catching and will stand out among the vehicles on the highway. The vehicle design utilizes the mountain graphic which will be used on the face of Sage Stage's new facility. In addition, it includes the names of communities served, to build greater awareness of Sage Stage's route destinations.



Sage Stage's bus stops are largely unmarked. Hence they do nothing to increase the visibility of the service and potential riders must figure out on their own where to catch the bus. Bus stop signs offer low cost, long term communications value that can be paid for with capital funding. It is recommended that Sage Stage sign as many of its bus stops as possible using a sign design such as that shown above.

Signing the bus stops would offer several advantages. First, it would greatly increase the visibility of the service as these signs would be seen by hundreds of people each day, letting them know that public transit service is available in that corridor. Second, it would provide new riders with the security of knowing they are waiting in the right place. And third, it would provide an opportunity to convey additional information including a phone number and web address, or even route and schedule information (discussed further under passenger information).

Passenger Information

Easy to understand passenger information is the most important marketing tool for any transit agency. Without clear "directions" for use, the transit product is incomplete. While Sage Stage's current passenger guide and website provide quite complete information about the services, they are neither intuitive nor easy-to-use for the novice rider. It is recommended that Sage

MODOC COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT MAP

LEGEND - All Sage Stage Services Are by Reasonable Only

- Alturas to Redding (M-F)
- Alturas to Klamath Falls (M-F)
- Alturas to Reno (M-F)
- Alturas to Canby (M-F)
- Alturas to Klamath Falls (M-F)
- Alturas to Reno (M-F)
- Alturas to Canby (M-F)

Schedule Table:

Service	From	To	Time
ALTURAS TO REDDING, RENO, AND CANBY	Call to arrange pickup and fare required	REDDING - (530) 241-1100	1:30
	Alturas	Redding	7:00
	Alturas	Reno	7:30
	Alturas	Canby	7:30
ALTURAS TO KLAMATH FALLS, RENO AND CANBY	Call to arrange pickup and fare required	REDDING - (530) 241-1100	1:30
	Alturas	Klamath Falls	7:00
	Alturas	Reno	7:30
	Alturas	Canby	7:30

Stage provide enhanced transit information via three channels:

- A well designed and broadly distributed full-color passenger guide that includes a color coded system map and schedules, fare information and complete how-to-ride details.
- A redesigned website which should include an interactive system map, Google Transit trip planner, complete schedules, detail maps for destinations, easy-to-use fare calculator and links to connecting services.
- Information at the bus stop provided via decals on the base sign (showing departure times for that stop) or via secondary information panels with route maps and schedule information (for key stops).



Education

Gatekeeper Outreach Program

Gatekeepers, such as social service agencies that work with transportation disadvantaged populations, are important partners in teaching their clients how to use public transit to meet their mobility needs. The Marketing Plan outlined a strategy for developing a gatekeeper outreach program which includes establishing a list of gatekeepers, maintaining regular communication via an e-mail or snail mail newsletter and conducting periodic presentations to staff.

Targeted Communications through Gatekeepers

Strategies are also recommended for working with gatekeepers to identify targeted channels for promoting transit use among their constituents. Potential tactics include information displays in social service lobbies and offices, flyers for distribution to clients and trip plans tailored to the needs of specific constituencies.

Advertising and Public Relations

Route Specific Advertising

Sage Stage has effectively used newspaper and radio advertising to build awareness for the service. Now it is time to use those same channels to increase knowledge and trial ridership of its individual services. It is recommended that the generic ads be replaced with route specific newspaper ads and radio spots for each intercity route and Dial-A-Ride. Draft text for these ads is provided.

News Release Calendar

Articles about public transit in local newspapers and stories on the radio can increase awareness of Sage Stage service and educate residents about what it has to offer. News coverage about transit services can be increased by making sure that local media are provided with a regular stream of information about transit, its benefits and its progress in Modoc County. Therefore it is recommended that MTA create and maintain a systematic news release calendar.

Partner with Connecting Transit Agencies to Promote Ridership on Intercity Routes

The Sage Stage system is built around intercity connections. Opportunities exist to cross-promote with these various systems through signage, mentions in each other's passenger information and website links.

Lassen County is of particular interest as a marketing partner because it contributes both funding and significant ridership to the Reno route. Strategies for partnering with Lassen County include: inclusion of information about the Reno Route connection in the Lassen Rural Bus transit guide, placement of an on-board bus poster promoting the Reno route on the Lassen County buses, and installation of an information display regarding the Reno route at the Walmart bus stop.

Potential Introduction of New Route to Cedarville and Ft. Bidwell

When Sage Stage introduces service to Cedarville and Ft. Bidwell, a dedicated marketing effort will be needed to build awareness and trial ridership of the new service. In addition to integrating the new route into the passenger guide and website, route specific marketing should include the following tactics:

- Engage the support of the gatekeepers for Cedarville and Ft. Bidwell in spreading the word.
- Posters, information displays and outreach events at high traffic locations.
- Advertising and news articles in the Modoc Independent News.
- Outreach presentations to key potential user groups, such as the 50+ club, TANF participants, the Cedarville Chamber and Rotary groups.

Fare Media

The SRTDP recommends the implementation of a local Day-Pass for Dial-A-Ride and a Day Tripper Pass for the Klamath Falls and Redding routes. These new fare media have the potential to increase frequency of use and satisfaction among current riders, as well as attract new users. Promotion of the new fare media needs to be incorporated into all of the communications strategies previously discussed – passenger information, outreach, advertising and public relations.

Summary of Actions

Exhibit ES-1 on the following page is a summary of the service plan, fare, marketing and partnership actions recommended in the SRTDP. The next section provides a financial plan based on these recommended actions.

Exhibit ES-1 Summary Schedule of Recommended Actions

FY 2012/13 FY 2013/14 FY 2014/15 FY 2015/16 2016/17 FY 2017/18

DAR=Dial-A-Ride

	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	2016/17	FY 2017/18
Service Plan Actions						
FTA 5316 Grant for Ft. Bidwell-Cedarville						
Recruit new drivers						
Initiate Alturas-Cedarville-Ft. Bidwell service						
Intercity timed transfers at 8 am 2 days/week						
Extend hours in Redding layover to 3.5 hours						
Implement first Saturday service on DAR						
Extend DAR from 4 pm to 5 pm on trial basis						
Implement Sat. service to Klamath Falls						
Extend DAR from 5 pm to 6 pm						
"School tripper" from California Pines if funding						
Add second Saturday for DAR						
Add second Saturday for Klamath Falls						
Monitor ridership and fare impacts of changes						
Fares						
Day tripper fare on Redding/Klam. Falls routes						
Introduce day pass for Dial-A-Ride						
New fare categories for intercity routes						
Develop new voucher system for agencies						
Marketing Plan Actions						
Design and Approve updated brand						
Create marketing toolkit						
Wrap vehicles to reflect new brand						
Introduce new passenger guide						
Initiate gatekeeper outreach						
News release calendar						
Introduce "route specific" print/radio ads						
Co-promote connecting services						
Install bus stop signage at all stops						
Capital Plan Actions						
Apply for FTA 5316 grant for cutaway bus						
Order new bus for Ft. Bidwell/Cedarville						
Complete bus decals on existing buses						
Equipment purchase for new facility						
Order three replacement buses						
Database system upgrade						
Conduct electronic farebox feasibility study						
Order two replacement minivans						
Order two replacement cutaways						
Order replacement cutaway bus						
Partnership Actions						
Collaborate with Tribal TANF on grant						
Senior Center discussion on California Pines						
Explore FTA 5311 for extending Dial-A-Ride						
California Pines to Senior Center lunch						
Discuss "school tripper" with MUSD						

Financial Plan

The financial plan provides the details on the operating and capital costs and revenues from FY 2013/14 to FY 2017/18. The Financial Plan is broken into four sections over a five-year period:

- Operating Expenditures
- Operating Revenues
- Capital Expenditures
- Capital Revenues

Operating Expenditures

Based on the recommended service actions described above, annual vehicle service hours are expected to increase from 4,686 in FY 2011/12 to 6,779 in FY 2017/18. Annual vehicle service miles are expected to increase from 119,512 in FY 2012/13 to 170,142 in FY 2017/18. Based on the planned service improvements and increased operating costs through inflation and anticipated increases in driver costs, total operating costs are expected to increase from \$328,534 in FY 2011/12 to \$533,566 in FY 2017/18.

Operating Revenues

Overall operating revenues are expected to increase from \$385,102 in FY 2012/13 to \$552,974 in FY 2013/14. The following is a summary of funding revenues by major funding category shown in the Financial Plan:

- Fare revenues would increase from \$62,380 in FY 2012/13 to \$73,590 in FY 2017/18.
- Funding from the Lassen County Transportation Commission would increase from \$30,000 in FY 2012/13 to \$33,122 in FY 2017/18.
- Local and state funding revenues would increase from \$146,760 in FY 2012/13 to \$187,377 in FY 2017/18.
- Federal operating funding support would increase from \$145,961 in FY 2012/13 to \$255,959 in FY 2017/18.

Capital Expenditures

There are three primary categories of capital expenditures over the five-year period covered by this SRTP:

- Vehicle procurements: A total seven cutaway buses and two minivans are scheduled for procurement over the next five years at a cost \$906,595.
- Office Equipment and minor equipment includes \$21,000 for vehicle graphics, \$9,000 for bus stop improvements, \$30,000 for office equipment and computer including the new Transportation Center, \$68,000 for a feasibility study of electronic fareboxes and potential procurement if proven feasible.

- Transportation center project includes Phase I interior work for \$20,000, \$15,000 for Phase I roof cap extension and \$400,000 for a potential Phase II project for beautification, parking and bus stop enhancements.

A total of \$1,408,095 in capital procurements are expected over the next five years.

Capital Revenues

The following revenue sources would be utilized to fund the capital expenditures:

- \$234,601 in State Transit Assistance funds
- \$219,721 in Local Transportation funds from the ¼ cent sales tax
- \$223,595 in FTA 5311 (f) funds for intercity buses
- \$234,00 in FTA 5311, the federal formula funding for rural transit services
- \$87,550 in FTA 5316 funds for a new cutaway bus, assuming the Job Access and Reverse Commute grant for the Cedarville-Ft. Bidwell service is approved by Caltrans.
- \$402,128 from existing MTA capital reserves
- \$6,500 from Proposition 1B Security funds

A total of \$1,408 in capital revenues would be utilized over the next five years.