

Plumas County Transportation Commission

SB 125 FORMULA-BASED TRANSIT AND INTERCITY RAIL CAPITAL PROGRAM & ZERO EMISSION TRANSIT CAPITAL PROGRAM

Allocation Package

December 2023

A. Introduction

The Plumas County Transportation Commission is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for the Plumas County region. Plumas Transit Systems (PTS) operates deviated fixed-route service along four routes with deviations of up to three-quarters of a mile available for ADA eligible passengers. Together, these routes serve the major population centers in Plumas County by providing connectivity both within and between these distinct communities. The proposed allocation of funding will ultimately enhance transportation infrastructure by expanding the available fleet, constructing bus shelters, reducing fares, and constructing a planned park and ride. This initiative holds several benefits including improving accessibility for low-income riders as well as improving the safety and comfort of existing bus stops.

B. Narrative Explanation

i. Explanation of funding and service actions being taken within the region that utilize resources other than SB125 funding.

Plumas Transit Systems is the only STA eligible operator in the Plumas County region. At this time, they do not anticipate any funding related operational deficits through 25/26. Revenue sources include FTA Intercity Transit funds, TDA Local Transportation Funds, TDA State Transit Assistance funds, State of Good Repair funds, and passenger fares. These revenue sources will exceed the cost of expenditures for the near future and SB 125 funding will be utilized to replace fare revenues as well as improving the existing transit facilities.

ii. Description and justification of the RTPA strategy to use SB 125 funding to construct capital projects and fund operating expenses that lead to improved outcomes in its jurisdiction.

Plumas Transit Systems does not anticipate funding related operating deficits or service cuts at this time. Therefore, PCTC's strategy focuses on supporting improvement in ridership. PCTC's strategy, developed in consultation with Plumas Transit Systems (PTS), addresses goals to increase ridership by improving the rider experience of public transit, increasing mode connectivity, and eliminating fare costs, and constructing a new park and ride facility. These approaches will be included in five projects, listed below.

- A) Project #1 – Arlington Park and Ride. This project has undergone a feasibility study, acquired environmental permits, acquired right of way and is ready to be constructed. Currently the location is being used as an unofficial park and ride facility. Construction will promote ride sharing, reduce congestion, and improve air quality.
- B) Project #2 – Bus Shelters. Within the PTS system there are 81 bus stops, only 12 of which have shelters. Constructing 10 additional bus shelters will improve the comfort of riders awaiting service, improving ridership.
- C) Project #3 – Matching Funds for Bus Purchases. PCTC has been awarded formula funding from FTA Formula Funding Section 5339 to purchase 3 new buses for the County's transit system. SB 125 funds will be used to fund the required local match. The purchase of new buses will improve the comfort of riders as well as the reliability and longevity of the system.

- D) Project #4 – Free Fares and General Operations Funding. Funding will be utilized to offset the anticipated revenue from passenger fares, allowing for free fares for all routes throughout the County. This will significantly improve the accessibility of the transit system to lower income riders who may be dependent on public transit. Free fares are known to increase ridership and will reduce congestion and improve air quality. Operations funding will cover costs involved in maintaining current operations including those necessary for ensuring safety and state of good repair of the vehicles and infrastructure necessary to operate service.

- E) Project #5 –Battery Electric Buses and Charging Infrastructure. PCTC’s CARB rollout plan expects to procure battery electric buses in the near future. The addition of zero emissions buses to PTS’s fleet will improve air quality, reduce the greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce dependence on combustion engines. Plumas County experiences harsh winter conditions which current battery electric bus models would be unable to navigate, therefore, these funds will be utilized to purchase a future model capable of traversing harsher conditions. Necessary advancements are predicted to be integrated into the 2031 models of electric buses, after which PCTC will begin the purchase 9 battery electric buses.

iii. Detailed breakdown and justification for how the funding is proposed to be distributed between transit operators and among projects, consistent with the legislative intent described in SB 125.

The Plumas County region has only one public transit operator, Plumas Transit Systems, therefore, this section focuses on projects rather than distribution among operators. Currently, the region does not have any TIRCP or ZETCP funded projects. For FY 2023-2024, the TIRCP funds will be distributed as such: \$613,200 for the Arlington Park and Ride, \$250,000 for the Bus Shelters, and \$100,520 for the Bus Matching Funds, and \$292,543 for Operating Expenses and Free Fares. For FY 2024-2025, all TIRCP funds have been allocated to Operating Expenses and Free Fares. All ZETCP funds have been allocated to the purchase of Battery Electric Buses and Charging Infrastructure at the earliest date of allocation because the year of purchase is currently not determined. All capital projects, including the park and ride, bus shelters, bus purchases, and battery electric bus and charging infrastructure purchase are high priority in the region. Remaining TIRCP funds have been allocated to providing free fares which will improve the ridership of the transit system and reduce the financial burden of transit dependent riders. Service cuts will be prevented by reducing PTS’s dependence on fares and providing increased funding to general operations.

Operations Funding – Plumas Transit System Operating Expenses and Free Fares

If an agency is requesting an allocation of funding for transit operations for one or more of the STA-eligible transit operators in its jurisdiction, it shall include the following information for each operator covered by its request:

1. **Name of Transit Operator:** Plumas Transit Systems
2. **2022-23 Ridership for the Operator and Operator’s Percent of Region’s Total Ridership:**

FY22/23 Ridership Data	Q1	Q2	Q3	Projected Q4	Total
Chester Route	2,136	1602	1584	1647	6,969
Portola Route	1,784	1873	1503	1563	6,723
Quincy Route	2109	2377	3021	3142	10,649
Total Ridership	6029	5852	6108	6352	24,341

Total 2022-23 Ridership data is estimated to be 24,341 for FY22/23. This ridership accounts for 100% of the region’s ridership because Plumas Transit Systems is the only operator in Plumas County.

3. Amount of Funding Requested, by source (TIRCP or ZETCP) and Budget Year

Source	Amount	Budget Year
TIRCP	\$292,543	FY 23/24
TIRCP	\$1,259,680	FY 24/25
Total	\$1,552,223	

Plumas Transit System Operating Expenses and Free Fares:

Plumas County Transit Systems is planning to utilize \$292,543 of TIRCP funding in Year 1(FY23-24) and \$1,259,680 in Year 2(FY24-45) to maintain free fares for riders of the Plumas County Transit System and fund transit operations for FY 2023 and beyond. The total funding requested is \$1,552,223. The amount of service paid for by this funding quantified in revenue service hours is approximately **6,500 hours** per year and is not expected to increase or decrease significantly. This funding will not increase service frequency or launch new routes but will be used to maintain free fares intended to maintain and increase ridership, fund operating expenses, and provide equitable services to the entire Plumas County population. The operation expense funding will go toward the maintenance of operations and legitimizing transit as the primary form of transportation. This will occur through the consistent maintenance of transit facilities and vehicles, the development of safety and security services, as well as the better coordination of routes and scheduling. Funding will also go towards costs involved in maintaining current operations including those necessary for ensuring safety and state of good repair of the vehicles and infrastructure necessary to operate service.

4. Identification of benefits to transit dependent riders of activities funded by the request

The estimated amount of transit dependent riders in Plumas County is 13,616 people and is based on the 2021 Census, combining youth (5-7), Senior Adults (65+), Low Income Residents, and Disabled

Persons. This estimate is 69% of the total population of Plumas County at 19,631 people. For transit dependent riders, free fares allow unencumbered access to the Plumas County Transit lines. This ensures that these transportation services are available to all residents regardless of their economic status. Additionally, free fares make it easier for residents to access jobs, education, and health care, contributing to overall community well-being and development. The general operations fundings will go towards running an equitable, efficient, and safe transportation system. This is crucial to maintain and increase ridership and therefore pose public transportation as the primary form of transportation.

TIRCP PROJECT FACT SHEET – Plumas Bus Shelter Project

Project name: Plumas Transit Shelter Project

Implementing agency: Plumas Transit Systems

Phase	Start Date
PA&ED	FY24-25
PS&E	FY24-25
R/W	FY24-25
CON	FY24-25
Veh/Equip Purchase	FY24-25
Operations/other	FY24-25

Anticipated date of construction:

Construction start date may begin at the beginning of FY 2024/2025.

Summary of project scope:

Construct 10 additional transit shelters across the Plumas Transit System. These transit shelters will serve transit users across the Plumas Transit bus routes. These transit shelters will be ADA compliant and be solar illuminated. The project includes concrete flat work, ADA upgrades, paved bus pull-out and purchase and assembly of prefabricated Tolar bus shelter.

Total project cost (USD\$):

The total project costs are estimated to be \$250,000, with each transit shelter costing approximately \$25,000.

Total project development cost (USD\$), if applicable:

N/A

Amount of funding used for project management, including RTPA project management (USD\$): N/A

FUNDING SOURCE	FUNDING TYPE	FUNDING AMOUNT (USD\$)
TIRCP	Capital	\$250,000

ADDITIONAL PROJECT DETAILS (REQ) – NOT TO EXCEED 2 PAGES

Explanation of greenhouse gas reducing features of a project:

Creating new and improved bus shelters across Plumas County will attract and increase ridership for the public transit system by providing protection from the weather, improving comfort, and enhancing safety. Attracting ridership helps decrease greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the amount of vehicle miles traveled by individuals for commuting, recreation, and other reasons for travel. In general, public transportation is more energy efficient per passenger mile compared to private vehicles.

Explanation of expected ridership benefits, including integration with regional modes & providers:

Adding additional bus shelters to the Plumas Transit System offers several advantages, including providing protection from the weather elements, specifically to escape the inclement winter weather in Plumas County, improving passenger comfort, and enhancing passenger safety. Bus shelters can attract more ridership by making public transportation more accessible and convenient. This project will support better integration by creating centralized locations for bus and route transfers. These shelters also serve as an information hub, providing schedule information and route maps to help riders better understand the entire transit network and to fully utilize the Plumas Transit System. Specifically placed

bus shelters would also provide connections to the Lassen Rural Bus, improving access to areas outside of Plumas County such as Alturas and Reno.

If applicable, explanation of the benefits to disadvantaged & low-income communities and/or households (per sb 535 and ab 1550):

The project is located in census tract 4 which is a low-income census tract in Plumas County. This tract also houses the Greenville Rancheria of the Maidu Indians which is classified as a SB 535 Disadvantaged Community Census Tract. The Plumas Transit Shelters will serve communities across Plumas County and extend to neighboring communities.

TIRCP PROJECT FACT SHEET – Arlington Park and Ride

Project name: Arlington Park and Ride

Implementing agency: Plumas Transit Systems

Phase	Start Date
Advertise	11-01-2024
Bids Open	12-05-2024
Award	01-05-2025
Approve Contract	01-20-2025
Start Construction	04-01-2025
End Project	09-30-2025

Anticipated date of construction:

The anticipated start of construction would be 04-01-2025.

Summary of project scope:

The proposed park and ride facility will accommodate all modes of transportation. This facility will be used by bicyclists and single-occupancy/multi-occupancy vehicles. A transit stop will also be available. This project proposes to install bike lockers, vehicle parking, a bus loading area, a bus shelter, a historical information kiosk, lighting in the facility, and safety lighting at the intersection. This project is proposed to align the adjacent private driveway to the intersection of Arlington Road and SR 89 to access park and ride and private property. Plumas County will be acquiring the right of way from private owners and Caltrans. The Facility will be owned by Plumas County Department of Public Works and maintained in accordance with a Maintenance Agreement between Caltrans and the County.

Total project cost (USD\$):

The total project costs are estimated to be \$614,200.

Total project development cost (USD\$), if applicable:

Project development has already taken place.

Amount of funding used for project management, including RTPA project management (USD\$):

N/A

FUNDING SOURCE	FUNDING TYPE	FUNDING AMOUNT (USD\$)
TIRCP	Capital	\$614,200

ADDITIONAL PROJECT DETAILS (REQ) – NOT TO EXCEED 2 PAGES

Explanation of greenhouse gas reducing features of a project:

The Arlington Park and Ride facility will attract and increase ridership for the public transit system by increasing accessibility for a wide variety of riders. This increased ridership will decrease greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the amount of vehicle miles traveled by individuals. In general, public transportation is more energy efficient per passenger mile compared to private vehicles.

Explanation of expected ridership benefits, including integration with regional modes & providers:

The Arlington Park and Ride facility offers several benefits, including improved accessibility, reduced traffic congestion, providing cost-effective multi-modal solutions, and improved community connectivity. A park and ride facility provides a convenient location for rural residents to park their vehicles, bicycles, and other alternative vehicles to access transportation services. This accessibility encourages the use of public transit ridership minimizing traffic congestion in rural areas. Additionally, this offers a cost-effective solution for residents who may find it more affordable to drive to a centralized location and use public transit for the rest of their journey. The park and ride facility will also serve as an information hub, providing schedule information and route maps to help riders better understand the entire transit network fully utilize the Plumas Transit System.

If applicable, explanation of the benefits to disadvantaged & low-income communities and/or households (per sb 535 and ab 155):

The project is located in census tract 4 which is a low-income census tract in Plumas County. This tract also houses the Greenville Rancheria of the Maidu Indians which is classified as a SB 535 Disadvantaged Community Census Tract. This park and ride facility is within 10 miles or a 15-minute drive from the Greenville Rancheria making this an important connection for this community and the greater Plumas County area.

TIRCP PROJECT FACT SHEET – Plumas Transit System Bus Matching Funds Project

Project name: Plumas Transit System Bus Matching Funds Project

Implementing agency: Plumas Transit Systems

PHASE	START DATE
Bus Purchasing	FY2024/2025

Anticipated date of purchase:

The anticipated date of acquisition for the zero-emissions buses would be starting in FY 2024/2025.

Summary of project scope:

The SB 125 funds will be allocated to a 20% funding match for the 5339 Bus Acquisition Funding to acquire new buses for the Plumas Transit Systems Transit Fleet. These purchases include 2 diesel freightliner 32' buses and one gasoline cutaway 25' bus to improve Plumas county's dated transit fleet.

Total project cost (USD\$):

The funds necessary to purchase for the purchase of conventional buses.

Total project development cost (USD\$), if applicable:

Project development has already taken place.

Amount of funding used for project management, including RTPA project management (USD\$):

N/A

FUNDING SOURCE	FUNDING TYPE	FUNDING AMOUNT (USD\$)
TIRCP	Capital	\$ 100,520

ADDITIONAL PROJECT DETAILS (REQ) – NOT TO EXCEED 2 PAGES

Explanation of greenhouse gas reducing features of a project:

The purchase of new conventional buses will reduce GHG emissions firstly by retiring the older, less efficient diesel and gas transit vehicles. New vehicles with improved technology may result in lower MPG. Improved rider experiences can increase ridership and therefore reduce overall vehicle miles traveled. The consistent update of the Plumas Transit Fleet illustrates a commitment to sustainable and eco-friendly rural transportation, positioning public transit as a primary form of transportation.

Explanation of expected ridership benefits, including integration with regional modes & providers:

The purchase of new buses will offer numerous ridership benefits for the Plumas County population, enhancing the overall passenger experience and contributing to sustainable rural transportation. One advantage lies in the reduced noise and vibrations, a result of new updated buses, providing a quieter and more comfortable ride. Modern amenities, accessibility, updated safety features, and enhanced design features will contribute to an improved ridership experience.

If applicable, explanation of the benefits to disadvantaged & low-income communities and/or households (per sb 535 and ab 155):

The project will serve the entire Plumas County population. This includes census tract 4, which is a low-income census tract in Plumas County. This tract also houses the Greenville Rancheria of the Maidu Indians which is classified as a SB 535 Disadvantaged Community

ZETCP PROJECT FACT SHEET – NOT TO EXCEED 2 PAGES

PROJECT TITLE: Plumas County Battery Electric Buses and Charging Infrastructure

IMPLEMENTING AGENCY OR AGENCIES: Plumas Transit Systems

PHASE	START DATE
Bus Purchasing	FY 2031

Anticipated date of purchase:

The anticipated date of acquisition for the zero-emissions buses would be starting in FY 2031.

Summary of project scope:

The ZETCP funding will be used to acquire new battery electric buses for the Plumas Transit Systems Transit Fleet. This would help to fund the capital projects to purchase buses, cutaway buses, and to construct electric bus charging infrastructure.

Total project cost (USD\$):

The funds necessary are estimated to be \$3,002,463 for the purchase of new battery electric buses and charging infrastructure. The SB 125 ZETCP funding will cover \$307,069 of the total cost. We'll be seeking additional funding from different resources in the future.

Total project development cost (USD\$), if applicable:

Project development has already taken place.

Amount of funding used for project management, including RTPA project management (USD\$):

N/A

FUNDING SOURCE	FUNDING TYPE	FUNDING AMOUNT (USD\$)
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ZETCP	GGRF	\$254,054
ZETCP	PTA	\$53,042

ADDITIONAL PROJECT DETAILS (REQ) – NOT TO EXCEED 2 PAGES

Explanation of greenhouse gas reducing features of a project:

The purchase of new battery electric buses (BEBs) will reduce GHG emissions firstly by retiring the older diesel and gas transit vehicles. New services with BEBs will produce zero GHG emissions. Improved rider experiences can increase ridership and therefore reduce overall vehicle miles traveled, specifically combustion engine vehicle miles traveled. The transition to battery electric buses aligns with a broader commitment to sustainable and eco-friendly rural transportation, positioning public transit as a primary form of transportation.

Explanation of expected ridership benefits, including integration with regional modes & providers:

The purchase of battery electric buses (BEBs) will offer numerous ridership benefits for the Plumas County population, enhancing the overall passenger experience and contributing to sustainable urban transportation. One advantage lies in the reduced noise and vibrations, providing a quieter and more comfortable ride. Improved air quality is another significant benefit, as BEBs produce zero tailpipe emissions, contributing to a healthier environment and mitigating the negative health effects associated with air pollution. Lower operating costs and increased reliability are additional benefits, with electric buses requiring less maintenance and offering a more cost-effective long-term solution.

If applicable, explanation of the benefits to disadvantaged & low-income communities and/or households (per sb 535 and ab 1550):

The project will serve the entire Plumas County population. This includes census tract 4, which is a low-income census tract in Plumas County. This tract also houses the Greenville Rancheria of the Maidu Indians which is classified as a SB 535 Disadvantaged Community Census Tract.