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CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Dan Lindheim
FROM: Department of Human Services
DATE: November 10, 2009

RE: **Informational Report On The Current Trends And Practices In The Field Of Senior And Disabled Mobility, Potential New Sources Of Funding, And The Oakland Paratransit For The Elderly And Disabled (OPED) Customer Satisfaction Survey Modifications**

SUMMARY

This report provides information on current trends and practices in the field of senior and disabled mobility in Alameda County. In addition, this report addresses the issue of new potential funding sources and planned modifications to the Oakland Paratransit for the Elderly and Disabled (OPED) annual customer satisfaction survey.

FISCAL IMPACTS

In FY 2007-08, OPED received a Measure B allocation of \$971,359. The FY 2008-09 planned budget was based on a \$963,900 Measure B projected allocation. The actual Measure B allocation for FY 2008-09 was \$845,987 due to a reduction in sales tax revenue, which was in-line with the economic downturn. The program's deficit of \$117,913 was alleviated through staff and contract savings (\$29,179); program reserves (\$9,552); ACTIA Minimum Service Level Gap Grant (\$50,000); and ACTIA Measure B Special Transportation Gap Grant (\$29,182). The year-end deficit was balanced to zero.

ACTIA established a stabilization fund during FY 2009-10 for programs that project deficits that will in turn lead to service reductions should sales tax levels not increase.

BACKGROUND

On May 26, 2009, the OPED Program Supervisor presented a request to the Life Enrichment Committee to approve a resolution authorizing the City Administrator to apply for, accept, and appropriate Measure B funds from ACTIA for FY 2009-10. The Committee approved the item and requested a follow-up report to provide information in relation to the items summarized above.

Item _____
Life Enrichment Committee
November 10, 2009

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Current Trends and Practices in the Field of Senior and Disabled Mobility

The Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA) is the local agency that administers the Alameda County one-half cent Measure B sales tax. Measure B funds various transportation projects throughout the county, including special transportation for seniors and disabled persons. The City of Oakland receives Measure B funds to operate paratransit services that supplement the local Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) service provided by AC Transit and BART under the East Bay Paratransit Consortium.

In 2008, ACTIA contracted with transportation consultants Nelson Nygaard to survey, report and evaluate the paratransit trends and best practices in Alameda County. Nelson Nygaard's findings are summarized in a report entitled *State of the System – Paratransit Outlook in Alameda County* which can be found at www.actia2022.com.

The ACTIA report cites the three major trends driving the future outlook of paratransit in Alameda County: (1) an aging population, (2) a suburbanizing senior population and (3) increases in the ADA eligible population. As referenced in the report, the U.S. Census 2006 American Community Survey, Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Projections 2005 establishes the following:

- In 2006, 13.1% of Alameda County residents had some form of disability (over 175,000 individuals); 42% of older adults (65+) had a disability (over 61,000 individuals).
- By 2030, the Alameda County population 65 and over is projected to increase by 240,000 (159% increase).

The projected population trends are predicted to have the following impacts on the future of paratransit services:

- Options beyond ADA paratransit will be required to meet the full range of mobility needs.
- Transportation needs will exceed available “paratransit” resources.
- More vehicles and service hours will be necessary.
- Land use, service-delivery and housing decisions that take mobility into account will be necessary.
- Transit-supportive development will be key.
- Walkable and accessible environments will be necessary.
- Support for prolonged safe driving will lessen the paratransit demand.

Currently, 10.5% of Measure B revenues allocated for specialized transportation for seniors and people with disabilities support three ADA-mandated services; ten (10) non-mandated, city-based services; and also provides funds for public agencies and non-profits to fill service gaps. Measure B is the primary funding source in Alameda County for cities to provide supplemental paratransit services for senior and disabled persons. In FY 2008-09, Measure B sales tax revenue declined in-line with the economic downturn. With such uncertainty of future economic trends, it

is necessary to continue to explore paratransit practices that operate more efficiently and collaboratively throughout the county.

The local trends and practices in the field of senior and disabled mobility mirror those across the nation. The economy and best practice research are prompting communities to take multi-faceted and multi-modal approaches to transportation planning and design to prepare for the projected increases of aging and disabled populations.

Nelson Nygaard's report, *Meeting the Mobility Needs of an Aging Population*, available through ACTIA, cites first level efforts that are being made in Alameda County to transition from separate transportation programs to blended transportation programs. The first phase of this approach calls for improving communication and cooperation among transportation providers and other organizations through advocacy and coalition-building; information and referral; and sharing technical expertise and joint planning.

The second phase emphasizes efforts to develop coordination between partners to use or subsidize transportation service for client travel; travel training partnerships and mobility management partnerships that consolidate information; support improved access to services by consumers; and reduce duplicative services.

The third phase requires transportation operators to coordinate services through joint grant applications; vehicle sharing; joint driver training or vehicle storage; and centralized reservations scheduling or dispatching.

Nelson Nygaard suggests that actions and activities at the "lower" levels of the coordination continuum can be just as valuable as those that result in blended transportation services.

Currently, Oakland is one of the 10 city-based programs in Alameda County that are participating in key coordination summits to share expertise, plan together, and to potentially build new partnerships. The summits are hosted by ACTIA for members of the Paratransit Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and other community-based profit and non-profit agencies. As a member of TAC, City of Oakland staff has participated in two summit meetings held on January 29 and May 21 of this year. The next summit meeting will be held at ACTIA on November 19. All summit meetings are open to the public.

The future of paratransit calls for coordination, collaboration and innovation. It is necessary for Alameda County jurisdictions to develop a network of paratransit services that support other transportation options. The current systems in place will not be sufficient to address the aging trends that will pose a high transportation service demand.

Potential New Sources of Funding

Measure B was approved once in 1986 and again in 2000 by 81.5% of Alameda County voters. The Special Transportation allocation increased from 1.5% in the first measure to 10.5% in the current measure, which demonstrates the importance of transportation services to our senior and disabled populations.

The City of Oakland receives .87466% of the 1.24000% designated for North Alameda County paratransit services. Oakland will continue to receive this portion of the measure through 2022. Prior to the sunset year of Measure B, ACTIA will seek authorization for a third measure that will address future transportation needs that will be identified in a new expenditure plan.

Despite the decline in sales tax revenue during FY 2008-09 of \$152,380.00, staff was able to balance the OPED budget and adapt services with minimal service reductions due to two gap grants received through ACTIA.

Staff continues efforts to identify new potential funding sources through affiliations with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA), and the California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT). Also, Oakland is a member of ACTIA's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which is comprised of all the city-based program managers that share information on possible funding that, may be leveraged through coordinated partnerships. No new funding sources have been identified. However, staff will continue efforts to research potential federal, state and local sources.

OPED Customer Satisfaction Survey Modifications

In response to Committee direction, staff has incorporated a series of new questions to the annual survey in order to elicit additional useful customer service data. The previous survey is provided as *Attachment A* and *Attachment B* is the modified survey intended to capture more detailed information in the following areas:

- Safe operation of vehicles.
- Length of time spent on the phone to request a ride.
- Identification of any unmet or underserved needs.
- Cleanliness and condition of vehicles.
- Customer service areas in need of improvement.

In addition, ACTIA has hired Quantum Market Research (QMR) to conduct a county-wide survey of all city-based paratransit programs. The QMR survey report will provide information and analysis on the level of overall customer satisfaction.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: The Paratransit Program allows for subsidized transportation services for seniors and disabled persons, while utilizing local businesses for service delivery that in turn supports the financial infrastructure of the city and county.

Environmental: The Paratransit Program encourages multi-rider transportation, thereby reducing the use of individual autos which reduces harmful auto emissions.

Social Equity: Paratransit makes services accessible for residents who due to age or disability would not be able to have access. Access to services improves the quality of life for paratransit participants.

DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

The Paratransit Program is designed to provide non-mandated, subsidized paratransit for seniors and persons with disabilities for access to medical services, shopping and other social and community activities.


RECOMMENDATION(S) AND RATIONALE

Staff recommends that the City Council accept this informational report as requested by the Life Enrichment Committee on May 26, 2009.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

That City Council accepts the informational report on the current trends and practices in the field of senior and disabled mobility, potential new sources of funding, and OPED customer satisfaction survey modifications.

Respectfully submitted,



ANDREA L. YOUNGDAHL
Director, Department of Human Services

Reviewed by:
Brendalynn Goodall, Manager
Aging and Adult Services

Prepared by:
Hakeim McGee
Senior Services Supervisor
Oakland Paratransit for the Elderly and Disabled

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment A – (Old) OPED Passenger Satisfaction Survey
- Attachment B – (Modified) OPED Passenger Satisfaction Survey

APPROVED FOR FORWARDING TO THE
LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE:



Office of the City Administrator

Item _____
Life Enrichment Committee
November 10, 2009

**City of Oakland
Oakland Paratransit for the Elderly and Disabled
(OPED) (Taxi Scrip/Van Voucher)
150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza # 4353
Oakland, CA 94612-2092
(510) 238-3036**

Passenger Satisfaction Survey

Dear Oakland Paratransit (Taxi Scrip/Van Voucher) Rider:

Oakland Paratransit would like to hear from you. We welcome feedback on our service and ideas for improvement.

Please take a moment to complete the survey below to help us serve you better.

We appreciate your patronage – thank you for riding with Oakland Paratransit.

1. Please tell us about your scrip/voucher usage

Name: (optional) _____

What zip code do you live in? _____

A. What was the primary purpose of your trips?

**37.1% Shopping 88.1% Medical
24.8% Social/Recreational**

(over on back side)

2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

| <i>Please check appropriate box (X)</i> | Always 100% | Almost Always 95% | Most 80-90% | Some- times 50% | Seldom 25% | Never 0% |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Rides are on time | 19.4% | 31.3% | 30.9% | 12.2% | 4.6% | 1.2% |
| I feel safe when riding | 45.4% | 27.4% | 16.7% | 8.5% | 0.8% | 0.8% |
| Drivers are helpful and friendly | 41.2% | 22.7% | 20.6% | 11.1% | 3.0% | 1.2% |
| Vehicles are clean and well maintained | 41.2% | 25.3% | 23.1% | 9.0% | 2.5% | 1.7% |
| Oakland Paratransit staff are helpful | 51.8% | 22.0% | 16.9% | 5.5% | 3.2% | 0.4% |

3. Overall Satisfaction of Oakland Paratransit service

23.3% Excellent 42.5% Very Good 20.8% Good
10.8% Fair 2.5% Poor

4. Check mode of transport.

A. 35.5% Van

B. 80.0% Taxi

5. What would you estimate your average ride time (minutes) per trip?

a. 8.0% 5-10 b. 22.3% 10 -15 c. 37.1% 15-20
d. 20.2% 20-25 e. 12.2% more than 25

6. What do you like best about Oakland Paratransit? Any success stories which you would like to share?

- **Not having to ask friends or family for transportation to or from the doctor.**
- **I can never predict when my doctor appointments and/or lab work will be finished, so I cannot schedule East Bay Paratransit. Your taxi voucher program permits me to call for a ride when my appointment is over.**
- **Your drivers are very kind helpful - Dorothy in the office is great!**
- **Fare is stable, and it is made available before the ride. It is not changeable by different drivers for the same distance. It is more business-like.**
- **They are very dependable and I feel way safe riding with them. They get my vote.**

7. Any suggestions for improvements or ideas for the future?

- **More taxi scrip.**
- **Taxi drivers should help the elders with their food; in and out of the cab; and be nicer.**
- **Your taxi scrip should be accepted by Taxis in other cities. I was in Berkeley trying to get home and the driver would not accept Oakland scrip, even though it was the same company that served me in Berkeley.**

When you are finished please return the survey in the enclosed stamped envelope

**City of Oakland
Oakland Paratransit for the Elderly and Disabled
(Taxi Scrip/Van Voucher)
150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza # 4353
Oakland, CA 94612-2092
(510) 238-3036**

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Please take a moment to complete the survey below to help us serve you better.

We appreciate your patronage. Thank you for riding with Oakland Paratransit.

Let's Begin!

Personal Information

- 1.** What is your age? _____
- 2.** What is your gender? Male Female
- 3.** What zip code do you live in? _____

(over)

Service Information

4. Which service do you use?

Taxi Scrip Van Voucher Both

5. What is the primary purpose of your trips?

Shopping Medical Social Recreational

6. How many minutes do you wait on the phone to request a ride?

5 min. or less 6 min. or more 10 min. or more

7. Are your rides on time?

Always Mostly Sometimes Seldom Never

8. Are the vehicles clean and in good condition?

Always Mostly Sometimes Seldom Never

9. Are the drivers helpful and friendly?

Always Mostly Sometimes Seldom Never

10. Do you have any complaints about the drivers?

ATTACHMENT B

11. Do the drivers operate the vehicles safely?

Always Mostly Sometimes Seldom Never

12. Have you seen drivers do any of the following during your rides?

Speed Talk on Cell Phone Drive Recklessly

Ignore Stop Signs Not Wear Seatbelt

13. How long are your trips on average in minutes?

5-10 10-15 15-20 20-25 25 or more

Service Improvements

14. How can we better serve your transportation needs?

15. How can customer service with Oakland Paratransit staff, van companies and/or taxi companies be improved?

(over)

ATTACHMENT B

**16. What do you like best about Oakland Paratransit?
Any success stories that you would like to share?**

**17. What is your overall satisfaction with City of
Oakland Paratransit service?**

Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor

Conclusion

**18. Do you have any other comments about your
experience with Oakland Paratransit to share?**

19. Your Name: (optional) _____

Thank you for your responses!

**Please return the survey in the enclosed
stamped envelope.**