

**CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA  
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: 4/19/2021  
Reviewed by: NA

**SUBJECT:** FY 2021-22 Paratransit Program Plan Application

**REPORT BY:** Sid Schoenfeld, Neighborhood & Community Services Manager

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**SUMMARY**

The item before Council is the submittal of the FY 2021-22 Paratransit Program Plan Application in the amount of \$63,192.81 to the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) for the continued implementation of the City's Paratransit program which includes the Taxi Subsidy program, shopping trips, recreational and walking trips.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the Council adopt Resolution No. 2021-34, authorizing the submittal of the FY 2021-22 Paratransit Program Plan Application in the amount of \$63,192.81 to the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC).

**BACKGROUND**

In November 2000, the voters of Alameda County approved the half-cent transportation sales tax through the passage of Measure B, re-approving the tax measure originally passed in 1986. In November 2014, voters approved Measure BB which renews the half-cent transportation sales tax approved in 2000 and increases the tax by another half-cent. The Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) has the responsibility administering funds collected from the Measures and reviewing expenditure plans.

**DISCUSSION**

ACTC projections indicate that the City of Albany will receive a total of \$63,192.81 to administer the Albany Paratransit Program. The City has used Measure B funding to implement the Albany Paratransit Program since 1987. The program provides a subsidy on taxi rides, shopping trips to local destinations and recreational group trips throughout the Greater Bay Area.

To establish eligibility for the Albany Paratransit program, applicants must first fill out a simple one-page application. Albany Senior Center staff provides assistance to fill out the application, if requested. Copies of a California ID, California Driver's License or utility bill are used to establish residency and age eligibility. Certification from East Bay Paratransit or a Medical Statement form signed by a doctor are documents used to establish eligibility based on disability.

The City of Albany Paratransit Program is a supplemental service to East Bay Paratransit, the regional mandated service provider for the East Bay that provides advanced reservation. transportation services for individuals 18 years of age or older who cannot drive or use public transportation due to a disability or disabling condition.

#### Taxi Subsidy program

The Albany Paratransit Program relies on local taxi companies as well as Transportation Network Companies (TNA) such as Uber and Lyft to provide eligible Albany residents same day/on demand service, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Riders pay for the ride up front and then turn in their receipts to the Albany Senior Center for a reimbursement rate of 80%, or up to \$25.00, whichever is least. Residents who are 18 years of age or older with a disability or disabling condition that make it difficult or impossible to stand at bus stops, walk long distances, or ride AC Transit and BART, or residents who are at least 70 years of age are eligible for the Taxi Subsidy Program.

Proposed changes to make the program accessible to more residents in this year's application include increasing the subsidy rate from 75% to 80% and decreasing age eligibility from 80 to 70.

#### Group Trips

Using the Albany Senior Center Community Shuttle, shopping trips with a door-to-door component are provided to increase accessibility to meet basic needs.

Participants are picked up from their homes, taken to local grocery stores, malls, and then taken home when they are done. The driver also helps riders with their grocery bags. Shopping destinations include Safeway, Costco, Target, El Cerrito Plaza, Ranch 99, Hilltop Mall, Thrift Town and the Dollar Store. Trips to the Albany Senior Center, to give participants the opportunity to come to the congregate dinner program and special events are also provided.

Albany residents 60 years of age and older are eligible for this free service.

Using the Albany Senior Center Community Shuttle, recreational and walking group trips are organized by the Senior Center. Transportation is provided to go on outings throughout the greater Bay Area. Adults 50 years of age or older are eligible to register for trips. Recreational group trips enhance the quality of life of participants as they provide opportunities for social interaction, enjoyment and exercise on trips that are safe and designed to suit their needs.

Approximately 8 to 10 trips will be provided on a monthly basis.

Recreational and walking group trips are currently suspended due to the pandemic and shopping trips have been modified to continue to provide the service during the pandemic. It is anticipated that group trips provided with the shuttle will resume once County and State health order restrictions are lifted.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The City of Albany provides a wide array of services for seniors and people with disabilities to complement services offered by the regional ADA (American Disability Act) mandated program to meet local transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities.

## **SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSIVITY CONSIDERATIONS**

Albany Paratransit services provides safe and reliable transportation to seniors and people with disabilities that improve access to basic needs, health care, community services and activities, provide recreational trips that decrease isolation, promotes lifelong learning and fitness, allow for aging in place and promote independence and enhance overall quality of life by allowing those who cannot drive opportunities to participate in their community.

## **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION**

The City's Measure B and BB allotment estimated by the Alameda County Transportation Commission is \$63,192.81 for FY2021-22 and covers costs associated with the operation of the Albany Paratransit program.

### **Attachments:**

1. Resolution No. 2021-34

