

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

Agenda Date: 5/18/09
Reviewed by: BP

Subject: Resolution #09-20 authorizing city staff to implement the proposed plan for the City of Albany's Paratransit Program for Fiscal Year 2009-2010.

Report By: Isabelle Leduc, Senior Services Supervisor

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve Resolution #09-20 authorizing staff to implement the proposed plan for the City of Albany's Paratransit Program for fiscal year 2009-2010.

BACKGROUND

In November 2000, the voters of Alameda County approved the ½ cent sales tax through the passage of Measure B, re-approving the tax measure originally passed in 1986. For the next 15 years the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA), will have responsibility for reviewing plans and administering funds collected from Measure B.

Cities that provide "Special Transportation for Seniors and People with Disabilities" will receive \$3,237,450 in non-mandated funds this fiscal year. Albany expects to receive a total of \$24,572 to administer Albany's Paratransit Program.

DISCUSSION

The City has used Measure B funding to provide Albany's Paratransit Program since 1987. Measure B funds enable the City of Albany to subsidize the cost of travel for those who find it difficult or impossible to stand at bus stops, walk long distances, or ride AC Transit and BART. East Bay Paratransit Consortium is the main paratransit provider for the East Bay. East Bay Paratransit provides advanced reservation transportation services covering all of Alameda County. The City of Albany's Paratransit Program is a supplemental service to East Bay Paratransit.

Many individuals find it difficult to use East Bay Paratransit for doctors' appointments when punctuality is of great importance, when last minute transportation services are needed or for short distance trips. In order to use Albany's Paratransit program, applicants must fill out a simple one-page registration form. Albany Senior Center staff provides assistance in filling out the registration form to applicants who request it.

Copies of a California ID, or California Drivers License and an East Bay Paratransit ID or certification letter are requested to verify residency, age and registration with East Bay Paratransit. All users of Albany's Paratransit Program are asked to register with East Bay Paratransit unless they are 80 years of age in which case they are automatically eligible for Albany Paratransit. We do encourage them to apply to East Bay Paratransit as an additional resource available to them.

The Albany Paratransit Program will continue to rely on local taxi companies to provide Albany residents same day/on demand service. Taxi riders pay for the taxi ride up front. They are then reimbursed for 70% of the fare up to \$15.00, which ever is least, upon submitting their receipt to Senior Center staff. Taxi service allows for Paratransit clients to call for a taxi directly 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Wheelchair users get same day on demand transportation by calling Friendly Transportation. Friendly Transportation has wheelchair accessible cabs that serve the area.

The new Albany Senior Center Community Shuttle bus will be used for the shopping program. The bus will pick up riders at their homes, drops them off to shop independently at a local grocery store, pick them up when they are done and take them home. The paid driver also helps the rider to the house with their groceries. There is no fee for this service.

Lastly, the new Albany Senior Center Community Shuttle bus will be used for the group day trip program and Measure B funds will be used to pay for the driver. Many seniors find it difficult to independently travel to places like Point Reyes, San Jose, and San Francisco. This program enhances the lives of seniors as it provides them opportunities for social interactions and enjoyment on trips that are safe and designed to suit their needs. Three excursions per month are planned at a reasonable cost. Three walking trips that promote health and wellness will also be provided on a monthly basis.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The City's Measure B allotment covers most operational costs associated with the different types of transportation services that the Albany Paratransit Program provides as well as a portion of the Recreation Supervisor and Recreation Coordinator salaries. It covers in full, the salary of the bus driver. Other operational costs are covered with the GAP Grant that the city received for FY08-10 to purchase the new Albany Senior Center Community Shuttle.

ACTIA estimates that during Fiscal Year 2009-2010, the City of Albany will receive \$24,572 in Measure B funds to provide Paratransit services for people with disabilities and seniors.