

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY 2019 COUNTY-SPONSORED LEGISLATION PROPOSAL

There are several compelling, compounding factors that support the proposal; these issues were reported to the BOS during the TEP and CTP processes:

- 1) **Demographics:** The aging of the population, referred to as the “silver” or “aging” tsunami, will result in a substantial increase in the population requiring service,
- 2) **Costs:** the cost of providing this type of transit service is increasing rapidly, faster than costs² for conventional bus,
- 3) **Sustainability:** Existing transit structures have evolved organically with public transit providers, non-profits, and other agencies/organizations providing service and filling gaps as they arise. For decades, concern has been raised at the local³, regional⁴, state level⁵, and federal⁶ level that these structures are not robust or sophisticated enough to adequately respond the forecasted increase in demand.
- 4) **History:** There have been three paratransit plans developed in the County which have largely **not** been implemented. In initiating the fourth study of this type, staff is attempting to be methodical in removing barriers to implementation. One such barrier is limited funding which this proposal directly addresses.

A state response is warranted as Contra Costa County is not facing these problems alone. Both nationally and statewide⁷ there is an acknowledgement that public institutions are ill prepared to respond to these issues.

- ***Consequences if State or Federal assistance is not provided***

The existing, organically developed structures for providing this service are likely to strain under the increased demand and may substantially underperform relative to the need.

² Federal Transit Administration, 2014, “*Accessible Transit Services for All*”, the cost of providing demand response service is increasing faster than other types of transit. From 1999 to 2012, the cost of providing ADA paratransit service increased 138%. During the same time frame conventional fixed-route bus service increased by 82%

³ During the 2016 Measure X Transportation Sales Tax initiative, the Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee identified improvements to services for seniors/persons with disabilities as a priority. Detail here:

http://www.cccounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/46455/EPAC-Input-Exercise-Results_20130303Meeting?bidId=

⁴ MTC: 2018 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Plan, “*Current senior-oriented mobility services do not have the capacity to handle the increase in people over 65 years of age...the massive growth among the aging ...points to a lack of fiscal and organizational readiness...the closure and consolidation of medical facilities while rates of diabetes and obesity are on the rise will place heavy demands on an already deficient system.*”

⁵ **January 15, 2014 CCTA Board Meeting Minutes:** Commissioner [David] Durant [Pleasant Hill] said that the need for coordination in the area was great, and the dysfunction in the overall system needed to be solved. Representative [Amy] Worth [Orinda, MTC ex-officio]...given limited resources and inefficiencies of the current model, the Authority needs to be looking at a better way and that the plan created a framework and pathway. Mr. [Rick] Ramacier [County Connection] noted that there had been an explosion of paratransit services being provided by non-transit, social service/non-profit operators...while there were many benefits to the new services being provided, the future for those providers was uncertain because most rely upon grants.

Metropolitan Transportation Commission, 2018 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Coordination Plan;

“*Current senior-oriented mobility services do not have the capacity to handle the increase in people over 65 years of age...the massive growth among the aging ...points to a lack of fiscal and organizational readiness...the closure and consolidation of medical facilities while rates of diabetes and obesity are on the rise will place heavy demands on an already deficient system.*”

⁶ The U.S. Government Accountability Office has produced reports for decades highlighting problems with this sector of the transportation system.

⁷ California State Plan on Aging, describes the demographic shift as an “*aging tsunami*”, which will be “...felt in every aspect of society...” inclusive of transportation services.

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Previous analysis provided to the BOS and national studies⁸ establish that coordinated systems are more cost effective than our uncoordinated system. As demographic pressure increases, service demands will result in the current operational and fiscal inefficiencies being aggravated.

As public transit systems evolve in response to technological changes, there is no guarantee that these changes will be positive for public transit in general and specifically to the target, disadvantaged population. Funding this program will help to insulate the target population from negative impacts of these changes.

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority is initiating an Accessible Transportation Strategic (ATS) Plan with substantial assistance from County staff. The ATS Plan is proposed to be complete in 2019 at which point it is anticipated that additional revenue will be needed for implementation.

- *Steps taken locally to advance issue*

Staff has:

1. Collaborated with two staff level mobility management groups (West County & “Rest of the County”) comprised of leadership from transit agencies, non-profits, and staff from various city providers.
2. Consulted with the Advisory Council on Aging on the need for improvements to transportation and an increase in funding.
3. Supported CCTA in their development of a successful Caltrans grant application to fund the ATS Plan.
4. During the 2016 TEP and 2017 CTP efforts, developed numerous reports for the BOS which resulted in communication to CCTA emphasizing the need for increased funding and policy/administrative/governance changes relative to transportation for seniors/persons with disabilities. These efforts, in addition to several joint CCTA/Contra Costa County joint staff meetings, resulted in the ATS Plan now underway.
5. In preparation for the related ATS Plan, County and CCTA staff have jointly met with transit districts to listen to concerns, collect feedback, etc.

II. Action Requested:

Briefly describe the specific State/Federal assistance requested, e.g. a specified amount of funding for a particular purpose, a change in law promoting a particular outcome, etc.

The proposal is for two programs, operations and capital. The two identified issues, service/administrative fragmentation and demographically driven increases in demand are addressed by 1) a Capital program focused on efficiency-improving investments, and 2) an Operations program with allocations based on population served by the program and subsequently indexed to the growth (or contraction) in the same population. Because this proposal serves disadvantaged individuals independent of geography as defined in, statutory action may be necessary to accommodate the proposal.

⁸ Transportation Research Board of the National Academy of Sciences: Transit Cooperative Research Program, Report 91: Economic Benefits of Coordinating Human Service Transportation and Transit Services: “*Significant economic benefits — including increased funding, decreased costs, and increased productivity — can be obtained by coordinating human service transportation and transit services.*”

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a. Affected Code Sections (if known):

Numerous, with respect to the GGRF, the proposal may seek to modify the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) which was established as a part of the Transit, Affordable Housing, and Sustainable Communities Program established by Senate Bill 862 (2014) and modified various sections of the Health & Safety Code and the Government Code. These sections may need to be further modified to accommodate the proposal.

The definition of disadvantaged communities has been established by way of geographic descriptions (Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code were modified by Senate Bill 535 - De León, Chapter 830, Statutes of 2012). This proposal serves exclusively disadvantaged individuals *independent* of geography. That said, the defining statutes may need to be further revised to also define disadvantaged communities by individual characteristics independent of narrow geographic definitions.

After the GGRF proposal, the advice of our legislative advocate is to leave the revenue source, at this stage, open. This program, with public health implications, is consistent with other general fund programs.

b. Proposed Statutory Language (if available):

Pending

III. Fiscal Impact:

a. County

As drafted, the proposal could bring new revenue in to the County to provide service to the target population.

b. State (if applicable)

The proposal requires that the state undertake certain activities to ensure effective use of the funds. These activities are defined in the “Support Services” section of the proposal and include administration of a grant program, research and establishment of metrics to evaluate expenditures and effectiveness, performance audits relative to Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) and Coordinated Plan compliance. The State would, similar to other grant programs, administer grants to rural areas.

c. Other (if applicable)

As drafted, the proposal would require administration of a grant program by Metropolitan Planning Organizations in urbanized areas.

IV. Anticipated Supporters of proposal:

Pending

V. Anticipated Opponents of proposal:

Pending

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VI. Position on proposal by CSAC or League of California Cities (if available):
Pending

VII. Prior History of Proposal (if any):

2018: The California Senior Legislature (CSL) sponsored [Assembly Bill 2877 \(Mathiis\)](#) “[Vehicular air pollution: nonemergency medical transport](#)” which had some characteristics similar to this proposal, funding senior/disabled transportation services with GGRF revenues. The bill was held in Committee. County staff has initiated coordination with the CSL on the County’s 2019 proposal. We hope to merge the requests from the CSL and the County in to a single bill and secure CSL support for the County proposal.

In Contra Costa, and the greater Bay Area, staff believes this specific proposal is new. The following are local precursors:

2018: The Board of Supervisors adopted the following language in to the County’s 2018 State Legislative Platform:

SUPPORT efforts to expand eligible expenditures of the Greenhouse Gas Revenue Fund to investments in accessible transit/transportation systems (serving seniors, disabled, veterans) which result in more efficient (shared trips, increased coordination) service and corresponding reductions in greenhouse gas production.

With the following rationale:

This policy is in support of the accessible transit/transportation initiatives discussed during the Measure X and 2017 Countywide Transportation Plan approval, and is consistent with the "Accessible Transportation" report provided to the Board of Supervisors in September 2017 which documented the need for substantial investment to make improvements in this field. The September 2017 report established that the County is not unique in this situation; these issues are widespread which justifies a statewide/nationwide legislative approach.

May 2018: The Board of Supervisors sent a [letter](#) to the Committees responsible for drafting the FY 2018-19 GGRF Budget proposal. The letter requested revenue be set aside for efficiency and GHG reducing improvements to elderly/disabled transportation programs. This proposal builds on that original request proposing a specific program to distribute the revenues with a substantially more developed rationale.

2018: CCTA, with the assistance of the County, is initiating an the ATS Plan to determine how best provide transportation service to the elderly/disabled population. The intent is to have the ATS Plan complete by 2019. Similar, prior studies have not been implemented due to many factors, one of which is lack of funding. In anticipation of the completion of the ATS Plan, staff initiated this effort. The approach is to ensure that the outcome of the ATS Plan will be eligible for the proposed, new revenue.

2017: The Bay Area Regional Mobility Management Group developed a proposal for Regional Measure 3, “*Accessibility Improvements and Specialized Transportation Services in the Bridge Corridors for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities*” but the concept failed to get traction.