

The Board of Supervisors

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Contra Costa County



David Twa
Clerk of the Board
and
County Administrator
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August 2, 2019

Robert Taylor, Chair
Contra Costa Transportation Authority
2999 Oak Road, Suite 100
Walnut Creek, CA 94597

Subject: Draft 2020 Transportation Expenditure Plan & Sales Tax Ballot Measure

Dear Chair Taylor:

The Board of Supervisors would like to thank the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (Authority) for the substantial effort put in to the draft Transportation Expenditure Plan (TEP). Regardless of the outcome of this effort we hope that some of the transit and safety concepts proposed in the TEP, which don't necessarily require new revenue, are implemented in the near future.

This comment letter does not constitute an endorsement by the Board of the concept of a 2020 transportation sales tax. The Board will consider that broader issue at a future meeting in the context of other critical needs.

On July 30, 2019, the Board of Supervisors authorized the Chair to transmit comments on the draft TEP. The comment letter covers three topics; access to jobs, accessible transit, and the advanced mitigation program.

Access to Jobs

Based on action at the July 17th CCTA Board meeting, we understand that this program will be reinstated. The County believes that the nomenclature used to describe this program can be improved such that it would be more understandable and informative to the voters. The County proposes the following name for the program, *Reverse/Reduced Commute Projects*.

In addition to the title of the program, the description could be refined to make it clear that the intent is to reduce commute distances and better utilize the reverse-commute capacity of the existing transportation infrastructure. This could incentivize local jurisdictions and partners to set the stage for creating new jobs in housing-rich areas. Examples that could illustrate the concept include new or upgraded rail crossings to

“unlock” development potential for employment centers, rail-based goods movement improvements, bike lanes and bike facilities in business parks and on routes from transit stations to employment centers, and other new or upgraded transportation infrastructure intended to strategically attract jobs.

Accessible Transit

The revision below “establish a user-friendly, coordinated system with a single point of entry”, was cooperatively developed by County and CCTA staff. The TEP is referencing the Accessible Transportation Strategic (ATS) Plan in numerous places. The ATS Plan has just been initiated, the process needs to be respected and allowed to play out but considering the pattern of unfulfilled plans and policies documented in the attached history of paratransit policies (Contra Costa County: Paratransit Policies/Guidance 1990 - 2019), staff believes that leadership should set some base expectations for the process, and that a “user-friendly, coordinated, and single point of entry” are all reasonable criteria:

In collaboration with stakeholders and service providers, CCTA will develop an Accessible Transportation ~~Services~~ Strategic Plan to establish a user-friendly, coordinated system with a single point of entry and to further guide the use of these funds.

The rationale for the suggested revision below, replacing “...appropriate model...local structure...” with “deliver a streamlined and unified experience for the customer”, is twofold: 1) The suggested language is currently in the TEP but only in reference to conventional transit, serving the able bodied. Staff believes it is reasonable to set the same expectation for the population of elderly and persons with disabilities, and 2) The deletion of “appropriate model for our local structure”, is proposed. The reason is that this statement could be construed to mean, “changes are only acceptable so long as the administrative structures remain unaffected”. The County does not believe this is a reasonable standard.

An Accessible Transportation ~~Service~~ Strategic (ATS) Plan will be developed and periodically updated during the term of the Measure. No funding under the ~~Affordable~~ Accessible Transportation for Seniors, Veterans, and People with Disabilities category will be allocated until the ATS ~~Strategic~~ Plan has been developed and adopted. No funds may be distributed to a service provider before it adopts the plan except as noted below. The development and delivery of the ATS ~~Strategic~~ Plan will establish a user-focused system, with a single point of entry, on using mobility management to ensure coordination and efficiencies in accessible service delivery. The ATS ~~Strategic~~ Plan will address both Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and non-ADA services. The ATS ~~Strategic~~ Plan will deliver a streamlined, affordable and unified experience for the customer evaluate the appropriate model for our local structure including and address how accessible services are delivered by all service providers and where appropriate

coordination can improve transportation services, eliminate gaps in service and find efficiencies in the service delivered. The ATS ~~Strategic~~ Plan will also determine the investments and oversight of the program funding and identify timing, projects, service delivery options, administrative structure, and fund leverage opportunities.

Advanced Mitigation Program

We understand that the Advanced Mitigation Program language from the 2016 Measure X effort was initially carried over. Staff from our two agencies worked collaboratively to develop that language. However, we understand that the program is now only recently being reworked to address; CEQA, SB375/743, and endangered species/habitat (State and Federal) mitigation in a combined manner that is not yet defined.

It is in the best interest of the County to ensure that the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) is not impeded. The habitat protection and expedited project delivery afforded by the program both contribute substantially to the County's livability. Based on the limited information available at this time, it is not clear that the new program does this. Please continue working with staff to develop language that is mutually agreeable to both of our agencies.

The Board of Supervisors appreciates the work of the Authority Board and its staff on this effort.

Sincerely,



John M. Gioia, Chair
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor, District 1

C:

Chris Kelley, Chair – WCCTAC/WestCAT
Dave Hudson, Chair – SWAT
Sean Wright, Chair – TRANSPLAN
Sue Noack, Chair – TRANSPAC/County Connection
Robert Taylor, Chair – Tri Delta Transit

Attachments:

Contra Costa County: Paratransit Policies/Guidance 1990 - 2019

Contra Costa County: Paratransit Policies/Guidance 1990 - 2019

Highlighted policies/recommendations from the following approved/adopted documents have **not** been implemented:

1. CCTA Measure J (2004) Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan (Ordinance # 04-02)
2. CCTA Paratransit Improvement Study – 2004
3. Contra Costa Mobility Management Plan 2013
4. Contra Costa County Paratransit Plan 1990

Contra Costa Transportation Authority Measure J (2004) Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan (Ordinance # 04-02)

Transportation for Seniors & People with Disabilities funds shall be available for

(a) managing the program,

(b) retention of a mobility manager,

(c) coordination with non-profit services,

(d) establishment and/or maintenance of a comprehensive paratransit technology implementation plan, and

(e) facilitation of countywide travel and integration with fixed route and BART specifically, as deemed feasible.

Paratransit Improvement Study 2004

“...the consulting team recommends continued delivery of ADA paratransit in Contra Costa under the current decentralized model. Under the current model, improvements to service efficiency and service quality are possible through the implementation of selected elements from the following “toolbox...”*

***Note:** The approach recommended in the 2004 study, “...continued delivery...under the current decentralized model...” was subsequently and unintentionally identified as a flawed approach in the 2013 Mobility Management Plan (described below and which also contains substantial unimplemented recommendations), “...lack of a structural platform...major impediment to action...”. In addition to the need for a “structural platform” to implement findings in the 2004 study, the recommendations would not likely be cost effective on a sub-regional (aka “decentralized”) level.

6.4.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF A SEPARATE OPERATING ENTITY TO COORDINATE TRANSFERS

6.4.4 STANDARDIZATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE, OPERATIONAL AND SERVICE DELIVERY POLICIES AND PROCESSES

6.4.4.1 Standard Policies Regarding Scheduling Parameters (including advance booking times, application of scheduling windows, etc.)

6.4.4.2 Automating Scheduling of Inter-Agency Transfers

6.4.4.3 Allocate a Dedicated Fleet of Vehicles for Inter-Agency Transfers

6.4.8 COORDINATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED AGENCY TRANSPORTATION

A mobility manager is a transportation organization serving the general public that responds to and influences the demands of the market by undertaking actions and supportive strategies, directly or in collaboration with others.

The mobility management function may assume one or more of the following responsibilities:

Centralized information dissemination and referral service -

Support services

Brokerage service

6.4.9 TECHNOLOGY ROLE

Trip Planning

AVL Implementation

MDT Implementation

Coordinated Client Data Management

IVR implementation

Contra Costa Mobility Management Plan 2013

The plan has broad support from CCTA, transit operators, and human service agencies.

This Plan recommends the formation of an organization to take the lead in implementing a broad range of mobility management strategies. Specifically, a Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) is recommended for

Contra Costa County. Further, careful consideration has been given to alternative legal structures for a CTSA. The result of that dialog has been **the agreement to pursue a non-profit corporation model**. The principal basis for recommending this structural model is the level of success in other communities that have adopted this structure.

The planning process identified that **a major impediment to action is the lack of a structural platform to serve as the vehicle through which action is accomplished**. **That vehicle has now been identified as a Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA).**

Of the models presented above the **non-profit agency model has historically been the most notable in terms of implementing programs with long-term sustainability**. Non-profit agencies such as Outreach¹ and Escort, Ride-On, and Paratransit, Inc. have delivered successful coordinated transportation programs throughout California for many years. Each of these organizations continues to evolve to meet the needs of the communities they serve. **Non-profit organizations have typically been the most successful CTSA model for a number of specific reasons.**

Contra Costa County Paratransit Plan 1990

Mission: Promote a **comprehensive, integrated quality paratransit system** to meet the special needs of persons, who, because of age or disability, are unable to use the County's fixed-route public transportation services.

Goal 1: Promote **standardized service policies to equitably improve mobility** for persons unable to use fixed-route transit.

Goal 2: Promote a coordinated paratransit service network within the County to maximize convenience and ease of use.

Goal 3: Ensure the most efficient^{**} and effective service within available funding.

Other

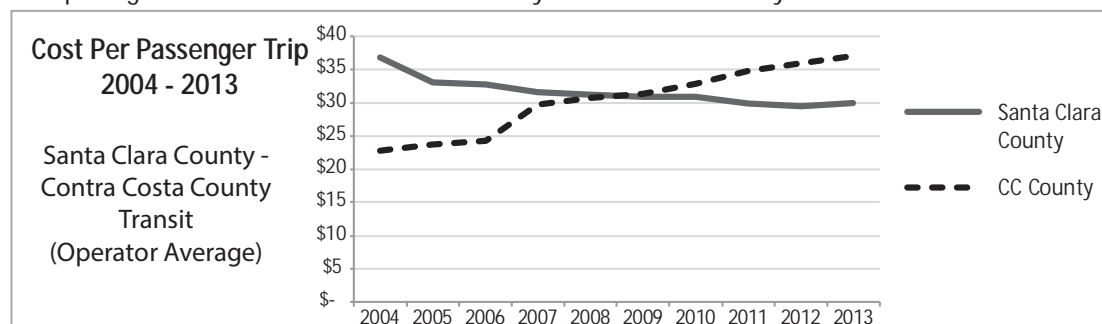
It is the Transportation Authority's view that **one way to meet the County's paratransit goals and objectives might be to allocate funds for a professional paratransit coordinator or broker from the sales tax revenues targeted for paratransit**. This approach has been recommended in Alameda County as part of that County's Measure B transportation program.

The Transportation Authority sees **the development of a cohesive, coordinated paratransit plan as a key milestone in addressing Countywide paratransit issues.**

Due to staff constraints, a critical deficiency in the PCC is **the lack of performance monitoring and operational analysis, both of which are crucial to making informed planning decisions**. Existing PCC members have indicated they would welcome objective, non-operator, professional paratransit input on a regular basis as a means to broaden the group's planning perspective.

Different service hours, reservation and shared ride procedures, fares, eligibility criteria, escort procedures and trip purposes served make it difficult to effectively coordinate service among the various operators. Differing service policies also result in inequities from a user perspective.

****Note:** Relative to the "most efficient" goal, the data² and chart below were provided during the 2016 Measure X effort comparing the cost effectiveness of a countywide coordinated system relative to Contra Costa's system:



¹ Relative to the claims of fraud by the Valley Transportation Authority and subsequent investigation by the FBI of Outreach Paratransit in 2016, an audit in 2018 by the County of Santa Clara found no wrongdoing, no charges were ever filed.

² 60% increase in paratransit cost per trip from 2004 - 2013 (average of all Contra Costa transit agencies) Data source: 2004-2013 National Transit Database