



City of Arts & Innovation

Commission on Disabilities

TO: HONORABLE COMMISSIONERS DATE: NOVEMBER 2, 2015

FROM: GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: UPDATE: SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FISCAL YEAR 2015/16 TO 2017/18 SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN AND PROPOSED RATE INCREASE FOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO SENIORS AND RESIDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

ISSUE:

The issue for Commission on Disabilities consideration is to: 1) receive an update concerning the Fiscal Year 2015/16 to 2017/18 Short Range Transit Plan (SRTTP); and 2) consider support of a fare increase for the Special Transportation Program from \$2.00 per trip to \$3.00 per trip.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Commission on Disabilities:

1. Receive the Fiscal Year 2015/16 to 2017/18 Short Range Transit Plan for file; and
2. Support the proposal to increase fares from \$2.00 per passenger per trip to \$3.00 per passenger per trip for the Special Transportation Program effective January 1, 2016.

BACKGROUND:

The City's Special Transportation Program (Program) offers transportation services for seniors and residents with disabilities within the City limits. The Program, which was implemented in 1975, has grown significantly and currently has a fleet of 35 paratransit compressed natural gas (CNG) buses, a sedan and a passenger van. The Program fleet was expanded by five CNG buses in Fiscal Year 2012/13 to keep up with rising demand and a modern state-of-the-art CNG garage maintenance bay was constructed to ensure that the CNG buses are well maintained and serviced. The Program provides on average 600 to 700 rides per day with an expected growth rate of 2% annually.

The current fare structure for a one-way trip for the City's Program is \$2.00 per passenger per trip. Clients may pay their fare in cash at boarding time or with pre-purchased tickets and punch cards. In order to continue to be eligible to receive transportation funds, RCTC requires the program to recover 10% of its operating costs through fares. The Program has achieved its mandatory fare box ratio of 10% without a fare increase for the past nine years.

The decline in farebox ratio is anticipated due to unavoidable increases in operating costs (necessary to keep up with rising demand and inflationary adjustments) which will outpace the increase in revenue that is collected through passenger fares. While costs have been kept to a minimum, the rising demand for services amply justified adding five buses to the fleet in 2013. The addition of these service lines has resulted in an increase in maintenance and fuel costs, especially as the fleet ages. Also, a number of part-time drivers were recently upgraded to full-time status due to the need for additional coverage to ensure passengers are picked up on schedule and to avoid declining requests for services.

On September 21, 2015, the Special Transportation division of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department presented a proposed rate increase to the Commission on Disabilities (COD). The motion to recommend approval to City Council passed with a vote of 6 in favor and 3 in opposition.

On September 22, 2015, Special Transportation presented the proposed rate increase to City Council. City Council requested that Special Transportation provide additional data and research into possible resources to supplement the rate shortfall and return to City Council within 90 days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

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