



*City of Arts & Innovation*

## Commission on Aging

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR'S COMMISSION  
ON AGING MEMBERS**

**DATE: APRIL 11, 2017**

**FROM: PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

**SUBJECT: SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FARE INCREASE FROM \$2 TO \$3 EFFECTIVE  
JULY 1, 2017**

### **ISSUE:**

Vote and support a Special Transit fare increase from \$2.00 to \$3.00 effective July 1, 2017.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Commission support the fare increase from \$2.00 to \$3.00 effective July 1, 2017.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The City of Riverside's Special Transportation Program offers transportation services for senior and disabled residents 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.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The current fare structure for a one-way trip for the City's Special Transportation 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, the Transportation Development Act of 1971 requires the program to recover 10% of its operating costs through fares. The program has been able to achieve its mandatory farebox ratio of 10% or more over in the years since the last fare increase in 2006 but that has become increasingly difficult to maintain with the rise in operating costs and meeting demand for the service.

Ridership has grown from 186,000 passenger trips traveling over 701,700 miles in fiscal year 2014/15 to 190,000 passenger trips traveling 1,060,692 miles in fiscal year 2015/16 – an increase of 2.15% in passengers and a 51% increase in miles traveled in the course of a year. The increase in passenger miles traveled decreases the amount of rides the program can provide with the current amount of routes and drivers.

While costs have been kept to a minimum, the program struggles to maintain the 10% farebox recovery requirement largely due to exorbitant overtime costs incurred trying to meet service demand. As a result, the program's on-time performance has suffered. In fiscal year **14/15** the service registered **3,750 late trips** out of **147,213 total trips** for that year. In fiscal year 15/16 **4,034 trips** out of **141,959 total trips** were **late**. This year our service so far has registered **4,355 late trips** out of **91,673 total trips** and with four months left in the year, it is anticipated that the number of late trips will continue to rise. These late trips are a direct result of trying to accommodate the daily service demand from our residents. This demand has taken a physical and mental toll on our existing group of drivers. In an effort to meet demand, a number of part-time drivers were upgraded to full-time status to ensure passengers are picked up on time and reduce the amount of denials for service. As a result, it became difficult to replace the part-time drivers because of the increase in minimum wage and drop in unemployment. Thus, full-time staff have had to work mandatory overtime to cover weekends and additional routes.

Staff recently conducted a market survey of agencies providing similar transportation services for seniors and disabled. Below are results of the survey.

Senior & ADA Transportation Programs	Base Fare	Additional Fees
OmniTrans (Access ADA Service) Zones 1-3	\$3.25	\$1.00 (per additional zone)
Riverside Transit Authority (Dial-A-Ride)	\$3.00	per zone with a \$9.00 maximum fee
Corona (Dial-A-Ride)	\$2.50	N/A
City of Riverside (Special Transportation)	\$2.00	N/A
Moreno Valley (MoVan)	\$2.00	N/A
Beaumont (Dial-A-Ride)	\$2.00	N/A
Banning (Dial-A-Ride)	\$2.00	N/A
SunLine Transit Agency (SunDial)	\$1.50	\$2.00 (city to city)

The City of Riverside Special Transportation Program lags behind the Riverside Transit Agency's Dial-A-Ride service which covers areas within Riverside County outside of the City limits and would, in the absence of the City program, be the area's service provider. Resident's traveling outside of the City limits such as Temecula are required to use the Dial-A-Ride service and are subject to the \$3 fare plus the additional amount based on the number of zones traveled to their destination. Special Transportation charges a flat fee for any destination within the City limits.

For the Special Transportation Program to efficiently serve the seniors and disabled residents of the City of Riverside the fare must increase to \$3.00 per trip. Doing this will provide the financial resources necessary to: 1) maintain a farebox recovery ratio of 10% or more; 2) Increase staffing to meet the growing service demand; and 3) More importantly, allow the program to continue to provide our residents the independence to meet their transportation needs without the reliance of care givers or family members. The additional revenue generated from the increase will help fund 6 additional full time bus drivers to help meet the customers' demands for service and ensure that the buses on time performance is maintained. These additional drivers will also help bring relief to our currently overworked bus driving staff and end the mandatory overtime that is currently in place. Additionally, the increased revenue will allow the Special Transportation office to add additional staff in the form of a clerical assistant and an accounting technician. These additions to the office will provide additional help in taking reservations and making sure that the program is current with all Federal and State reporting requirements needed for maintaining the Special Transportation Program. This commission has given its support for a proposed rate increase the

past two times it has been brought forward to this commission, August 11, 2015 and April 12, 2016. Staff recommends that the Commission on Aging vote to continue its support for increasing the fare for the Special Transportation Program from \$2.00 per passenger per trip to \$3.00 per passenger per trip effective July 1, 2017.

Prepared by: Ron Profeta, Transit Manager, Special Transportation Program  
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