



Community Services and Youth Committee Memorandum

City of Arts & Innovation

**TO: HONORABLE COMMUNITY SERVICES
AND YOUTH COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

DATE: MARCH 13, 2019

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

WARDS: ALL

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
DEPARTMENT'S SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION DIVISION AND RESULTS OF
ANNUAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY**

ISSUES:

Receive an update on the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department's Special Transportation Division and results of Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Community Services and Youth Committee receive an update on the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department's Special Transportation Division and the Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Riverside's Special Transportation Program (CRSTP) offers transportation services for senior and disabled residents within City limits. The program, implemented in 1975 with just five buses, currently has a fleet of 35 paratransit compressed natural gas (CNG) buses, a sedan, and a passenger van. The program fleet expanded by five CNG buses in Fiscal Year 2012/13 to keep up with rising service demand, and a modern state-of-the-art CNG garage maintenance bay was constructed to ensure the CNG buses are well maintained and serviced. The program provides on average 500 to 600 rides per day. It has served the seniors and disabled residents of Riverside for 44 years.

DISCUSSION:

Over the past year, Special Transportation has gone through significant staffing changes. A second Operations Supervisor position was added to the division. The vacant Senior Office Specialist position was reclassified and changed to a Management Analyst position. Three new Minibus Driver positions were added to help keep up with the service demand.

On November 6th, the City Council approved an agreement with RouteMatch Software Inc. to add

a new Mobile Fare Collection module to the existing scheduling software that was purchased in 2006. This new module will give customers the ability to pay for transit fares using their smart phones or an issued smart card. This module also incorporates a mobile application and web portal for users, caregivers and or family members to add funds to a customer's transit account and check on the status of their ride. Once fully implemented, transit customers will be able to schedule rides online creating greater convenience and efficiencies to the program.

Special Transportation will also embark on a new branding campaign to promote the service to our senior and disable community in Riverside. This branding campaign will incorporate a new proposed name for the service, "Riverside Connect" and will involve wrapping all of the 35 buses with a new color scheme and design created by the City's Marketing Division. Our hope is to distinguish the City's paratransit program from Riverside Transportation Agency (RTA) Dial a Ride service and bring positive attention to the City's paratransit service that has served the seniors and disabled community in Riverside since 1975.

In an effort to provide more efficient transportation services to ambulatory passengers, Special Transportation will be purchasing 2 new 8 passenger service vans. These vans are smaller and more suited for smaller streets and drive aisles compared to the current 16 passenger Minibuses currently being used by Special Transportation.

Special Transportation conducts a customer satisfaction survey annually to get feedback from customers about how they rate the service and overall satisfaction with the Special Transportation Program. This year several questions were added asking customers about their transportation needs after our current service hours end at 5:30 p.m. This information will help Special Transportation determine if there is a sustainable need to extend our operating hours. The demand for transportation service after 3:00 p.m. drops dramatically and previous analysis on continued service after 5:30 p.m. suggest that the demand did not warrant the additional operating cost especially since the RTA Dial a Ride program provides the service for Riverside residents after the City's paratransit service ends. According to RTA they average approximately 69 trips per week around the City of Riverside after 5:30 p.m. This equates to approximately 6.9 passengers a day who use the transportation service at night.

A total of 500 surveys were sent to current riders of Special Transportation during the week of January 21st and as of February 13th, 205 surveys responses have been received. Three key questions were asked in the survey to help determine the demand for after hour's services. As you can see from the results below, less than 14% of the respondents currently use or have a need for transportation services after 6:00 p.m. Of those who responded, 53% stated that they would be willing to pay an additional fee while 47% stated that they would not pay an additional fee to use the service after 6:00 p.m.

Survey responses as of 2/13/2019**Do you currently use RTA or other transportation Services after 6:00 p.m.?**

Yes 29

No 176

Do you currently have a need for Special Transportation services after 6:00 p.m.?

Yes 52

No 153

Would you be willing to pay an additional fee for Special Transportation services after 6:00 p.m.?

Yes 108

No 97

Based on the survey results and current demand for service, Special Transportation concludes that extending the current service hours is not needed or warranted at this time. Special Transportation will continue to survey passengers and monitor the demand. We will work with RTA to ensure that all senior and disabled resident of Riverside are aware that transportation services is available through RTA's Dial A Ride after 6:00 p.m.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Adolfo Cruz, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director
 Certified as to
 availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer / City Treasurer
 Approved by: Rafael Guzman, Assistant City Manager
 Approved as to form: Gary G. Geuss, City Attorney

Attachment: Presentation