



Legislation Text

File #: 2023-0267, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma Public Infrastructure - Transit Division

Staff Name and Phone Number: Johannes J. Hoevertsz, 707-565-2231

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

FY 2023-24 ADA Paratransit Services Agreement

Recommended Action:

Authorize the Director of Public Infrastructure to execute the proposed agreement with the Center for Volunteer & Non-Profit Leadership for countywide Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit Services, for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, in an amount not to exceed \$2,636,590.

Executive Summary:

As a fixed-route public transit operator, and in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, Sonoma County Transit provides complementary paratransit service within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of all its routes during the same days and hours as its fixed-route service. To meet federal ADA requirements, all paratransit trip requests, made by eligible clients, must be provided regardless of trip purpose, cost or number of trips taken within any period of time.

The proposed Agreement would renew services with the Center for Volunteer & Nonprofit Leadership (CVNL) to provide countywide ADA-compliant paratransit services. Under this agreement, CVNL will continue to serve as Sonoma County Transit's ADA paratransit services provider through FY 2023-24, under the name of "Sonoma County Paratransit."

Discussion:

CVNL (and its predecessor) has provided Americans with Disabilities Act paratransit service, on an annual basis, for Sonoma County since 2002.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and its implementing regulations, fixed-route transit operators are required to provide complementary paratransit service within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of their fixed-route service during the same hours and days that fixed-route services are provided. All trip requests, made by eligible passengers, must be met regardless of their trip purpose. Operators are required to provide, at a minimum, all next-day requested trips.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires transit operators to provide a sufficient level of paratransit service such that no eligible passenger is denied paratransit service due to capacity limitations. Transit operators that do not meet the required "no-denial" level of service jeopardize their federal funding eligibility and expose

themselves to potential legal liability.

Within Sonoma County, there are approximately 8,400 individuals that have qualified and signed up for paratransit services. Of those, approximately 2,700 are active users. For many of these individuals, the services provided under this Agreement are their sole access to on-going medical care, as-well-as, social activities, shopping and educational opportunities.

Sonoma County Paratransit operates a fleet of 31 vehicles including: 21 minibuses, 5 accessible minivans, and 5 sedans.

The impacts of COVID-19 on paratransit services began in March 2020 when daily ridership fell to 23% of its pre-pandemic level. Today, paratransit ridership is recovering and is approximately at 60% of its pre-pandemic level with slow increases as Sonoma County continues to return to normal. Although ridership is increasing, it's not anticipated to return to its pre-pandemic level until FY 2024-25. It's estimated that paratransit will provide approximately 40,821 passenger trips during FY 2023-24.

The proposed FY 2023-24 agreement permits up to a total of 45,136 paid driver hours (wheelchair accessible fleets) and 3,000 volunteer driver hours (sedan fleet).

The proposed Agreement will provide for a maximum payment of \$2,636,590 for services provided by CVNL, reflecting a 9.6% increase over FY 2022-23's agreement maximum of \$2,405,820. The increase in the proposed agreement is largely tied to the increased cost of labor for both driving and call center staff. The increased wage rates will keep CNVL staff competitive with other local paratransit providers that operate in the north bay area.

Under this agreement, fares are collected by CNVL and Sonoma County provides a subsidy that compensates CNVL its operating deficit. The operating deficit is the cost of services provided less passenger fares.

It should be noted that CVNL provides volunteer drivers to the County to support this service. Based on CVNL's hourly rate, the annualized value of the volunteer service for FY 2023-24 is projected at \$96,390. Due to their scheduling flexibility, CVNL's use of volunteer drivers has been a key contributor in its efforts to provide a "no-denial" level of service. The ability to "right-size" the level of service each year due to passenger demand is a benefit of utilizing CVNL for this service.

CVNL is the preferred vendor based on their non-profit status and experience, and that their use of volunteer drivers reduces the County's overall operating costs and provides the back-up necessary to provide the federally required "no-denial" level of service. It's estimated that the continued use of CVNL for the provision of ADA paratransit service saves the County approximately \$1.2 million annually versus a for-profit transit contracting firm.

County Purchasing has reviewed this request and has approved a Single Source Waiver for the proposed agreement.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Prior Board Actions:

5/10/22 - Board approved agreement with Center for Non-Profit Leadership for FY 2022-23 Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit services in the amount of \$2,405,820.

5/11/21 - Board approved agreement with Center for Non-Profit Leadership for FY 2021/22 Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit services in the amount of \$2,348,833.

5/19/20 - Board approved agreement with Center for Non-Profit Leadership for 2020-21 Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit services in the amount of \$2,506,592.

5/14/19 - Board approved agreement with Volunteer Center for FY 2019-20 Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit services in the amount of \$2,435,758.

5/08/18 - Board approved agreement with Volunteer Center for FY 2018-19 Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit Services in an amount not to exceed \$2,2333,292.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 22-23 Adopted	FY23-24 Projected	FY 24-25 Projected
Budgeted Expenses		\$2,636,590	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures		\$2,636,590	
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal		\$2,636,590	
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources		\$2,636,590	

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Funding for the FY 2023-24 agreement was included in the FY 2023-24 Transit Division Recommended Budget and is consistent with Sonoma County Transit’s annual TDA/STA funding claim with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None.

Attachments:

Agreement

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

Single Source Waiver