



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

NORA VARGAS
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: September 24, 2024

04

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

AUTHORIZE A CONTRACT AMENDMENT TO EXTEND EXISTING SERVICES FOR THE NO-COST TRANSPORTATION FOR OLDER ADULTS PROGRAM (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

On June 8, 2021 (3), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) took critical action to advance support to San Diego County residents by approving the framework for the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Several projects were approved under the Senior and Youth Services component of this framework including the No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program.

The No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program created by the County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services (AIS) provides an equity-centered approach to transportation services for vulnerable low-income older adults residing in priority communities. These older adults are provided with up to 100 miles of transportation to and from much needed medical appointments, social engagements, and necessary errands like grocery shopping. Many of the older adults enrolled in this program would otherwise not have a mechanism to engage in their daily activities due to the cost and limited accessibility of transportation services. Importantly, these critical transportation services help reduce social isolation for program participants, allowing them to retain their independence and access community resources.

On June 25, 2024 (9), the Board adopted the Fiscal Year 2024-25 County budget including a Change Letter addendum that allocated an additional \$250,000 to the No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program. This funding will be leveraged to increase the contract amount and extend the contract term to support current program participants who may benefit from the No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program services, including curb-to-curb, door-to-door, and wheelchair accessible transportation.

Today's action requests the Board authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting to amend contract #567644 with Jewish Family Service of San Diego to extend the

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contract term for one year and an additional six months as needed, and amend the contract as required to reflect changes to services and funding allocations.

This item supports the County vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all, specifically those communities and populations in San Diego County that have been historically left behind, as well as our ongoing commitment to the regional *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities. This will be accomplished by supporting older adults through providing safe and reliable transportation.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

1. In accordance with Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurement, and Administrative Code Section 401, authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting to amend contract #567644 with Jewish Family Service of San Diego to extend the contract term for one year and an additional six months as needed, subject to the availability of funds; and amend the contract as required to reflect changes to services and funding allocations, subject to the approval of the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

As adults age, they face unprecedented challenges in maintaining their quality of life. These challenges are only heightened for lower income older adults. They become more dependent on social safety net programs like Social Security and less dependent on career growth for increases in income. This may lead to challenges in affording basic necessities like housing, transportation, food, and healthcare. Lacking the ability to maintain a quality of life that supports the ability to have access to food and healthcare, or stable access to transportation and housing, greatly increases health disparities and reduces quality of life. The No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program was created with equity at the forefront, to ensure low-income older San Diegans living on fixed incomes and residing in health equity zip codes and the California Healthy Places Index least healthy quartiles for San Diego county, continue to have access to basic services when they require it most. Accessible and reliable transportation ensures older adults are able to go grocery shopping, get to medical appointments, or attend social gatherings which reduces social isolation. This program supports the County of San Diego's commitment to equitable practices for all San Diegans by restoring independence for older adults who do not have access to basic public transportation and who might otherwise fall into isolation.

The No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program is evaluated monthly. Participants complete the survey outlining the strengths and challenges encountered by riders. Since the inception of the program in October 2022, more than 95% of survey participants indicated the program increased their ability to complete routine or social activities independently.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Working with partners to provide programs and services that contribute to the safety and welfare of older adults will advance the County of San Diego (County) Sustainability Goal #1 to engage the community in meaningful ways; Sustainability Goal #2 to provide just and equitable access to County services; and Sustainability Goal #4 to protect the health and well-being of everyone in

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the region. Specifically, the No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program provides older adults living on a low-income with access to safe and reliable transportation.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-26 Operational Plan in the Health and Human Services Agency. If approved, this request will result in costs of \$250,000 in FY 2024-25. The funding source is supported by resources budgeted in Countywide Finance Other. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

The Aging & Independence Services Advisory Council reviewed this item at their regular meeting on September 9, 2024, and recommended approval.

BACKGROUND

On June 8, 2021 (3), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) took critical action to advance support to San Diego County residents by approving the framework for the use of American Rescue Plan Act funding. Several projects were approved under the Senior and Youth Services component of this framework including the No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program.

On October 4, 2022, contract #567644 was awarded to Jewish Family Service of San Diego through a competitive procurement to provide safe, accessible, and no-cost transportation for low-income older adults with limited access to public transportation. The No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program offers eligible older adults, ages 60 or older, up to 100 miles of transportation per month to a variety of destinations including medical appointments, grocery stores, and social engagements to reduce social isolation. Program eligibility was designed to prioritize the County's highest need, including older adults living on lower incomes, residing in health equity zip codes and in the lower 50th quartile of the California Healthy Places Index. Although participants must live within the eligibility requirements, the transportation offerings allow eligible participants to request rides to locations countywide. These eligibility criteria were devised to ensure an equitable approach to service delivery and were originally identified as locations that had a more disproportionate burden of disease during the COVID-19 pandemic. The transportation offerings allow eligible older adults of all ability levels to participate in the program, countywide. Levels of service includes curb-to-curb, door-to-door, and wheelchair accessible transportation. For older adults that need support, one caregiver may accompany the older adult on their transportation trip at no cost.

During the first two years of program implementation, the No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program provided over 26,000 one-way rides totaling 151,541 miles of transportation to approximately 500 older adults. Evaluation of this program occurs monthly by having participants fill out a survey outlining the strengths and challenges encountered by riders. Since the inception of the program in October 2022, more than 95% of survey participants indicated the program

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increased their ability to complete routine or social activities independently. On June 25, 2024 (9), the Board adopted the County of San Diego budget and approved the Chief Administrative Officer Recommended Operational Plan Change Letter, which allocated an additional \$250,000 to the No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program. This funding will be leveraged to increase the Jewish Family Service of San Diego contract amount and extend the contract term to continue to support program participants currently benefitting from the No-Cost Transportation for Older Adults program.

Today's action requests the Board authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting to amend contract # 567644 with Jewish Family Service of San Diego to extend the contract term for one year and an additional six months as needed, and amend the contract as required to reflect changes to services and funding allocations.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action supports the County of San Diego 2024-2029 Strategic Plan Initiatives of Sustainability (Resiliency), Equity (Health), and Community (Quality of Life), and the regional *Live Well San Diego* vision by continuing services that assist vulnerable older adult, disabled residents, and their caregivers.

Respectfully submitted,


FOR

EBONY N. SHELTON
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

N/A