SUBJECT: Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan Staff Summary

Background:

In October of 2019, Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) received a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant, to engage in a regional transportation study, specifically focusing on the gaps in services associated with seniors, persons with disabilities and disadvantaged persons. To conduct this study and offer recommendations, CCTA engaged Nelson Nygaard consulting firm. Nelson Nygaard convened two committees, one a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that was familiar with the transportation needs of the area as well as a Policy Advisory Committee (PAC). The TAC comprised of, ADA managers, volunteer service organizers specializing in transportation for seniors, transit riders and various senior advocacy groups. The PAC was mainly comprised of Transportation Agency General Managers, CEOs of Social Service Agencies, and City Council members.

In order to engage the public, a survey was created and mailed out to 23,000 individuals in Contra Costa County of which 1,149 participated. It was made available in English, Spanish and Mandarin. As part of the study the consultant interviewed senior managers of transit agencies, including public, volunteer, and non-profit transit agencies. Several townhall meetings were scheduled, but due to the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, these townhall meetings moved to a virtual platform. As the study progressed, updates were given to both the PAC and TAC for further discussion. Due to grant constraints the study was required to be completed by February 28, 2021.

Staff Update:
Unfortunately, most of the study was conducted during the COVID-19 Pandemic, preventing many entities from participating fully. Transit agencies were faced with many challenges as they struggled with plummeting service levels and keeping their drivers, customers and staff safe. For some volunteer transit agencies, shutting down was the only option as they were unable to sustain their transportation services even for essential services. Most of their drivers were either volunteers or at higher risk for contracting the virus. In addition to plummeting service levels, agencies were also dealing with service emergencies such as passenger COVID-19 outbreaks and being called on to participate in emergency services which took priority in managing the spread of the virus. Finally, as the study was coming to a close, transit agencies were busy attempting to vaccinate their operators and public facing staff in order to protect their employees and passengers.

Due to these afore mentioned challenges the study was unsuccessful in completing the development of all recommendations and has therefore suggested the establishment of a task force to continue the work of the study.
Highlighted in the study are three primary items:

- Identified 21 Potential Transit Strategies for improving the existing system
- Establishing a task force responsible for continuing the work of the study and bringing strategies to life
- The task force shall be responsible for identifying a Countywide Coordinated Entity (CE) which could be an existing non-profit or public agency or new entity with the purpose of consolidating the myriad of transportation entities into one

Implementing this plan would be profoundly challenging across a number of different aspects ranging from a lack of identified funding sources to overcoming existing federal regulations that dictate how, when and where federally funded vehicles may be used. Additionally, the sheer magnitude of consolidating a multitude of service models with different customer bases, performance criteria, software packages, and service areas is one that will take years of effort to complete.

Despite the challenges identified, County Connection along with many other transit partners have already identified gaps in service and are collaborating to address them as identified in the above-mentioned transit strategies. This includes the One Seat Regional Program. This is a six-month pilot, which offers a one seat ride for passengers crossing multiple transit jurisdictions, without transferring. The other transit strategy includes a collaboration with CCCTA/LAVTA to use one contractor to manage paratransit services for both agencies thus sharing resources, like scheduling software, vehicles, and call centers. These Transit Strategies have already improved the rider experience in multiple agencies to meet some of studies to life, improve ridership experience for the rider and show that transit agencies can work together for the common goal.

**Attachment:**

CCTA ATS Executive Summary

**Financial Implications:**

Unknown at this time

**Recommendations:**

None, Information only
CONTRA COSTA ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC PLAN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FEBRUARY 2021
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Contra Costa Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan was funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant.

Project Team

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Executive Summary

STUDY BACKGROUND

The Accessible Transportation Strategic (ATS) Plan provides a coordination structure with strategies to improve accessible transportation services, based on an examination of transportation challenges facing seniors, people with disabilities, and veterans in Contra Costa County.

Sponsored by a partnership between CCTA and the County, the ATS was funded by a Caltrans Sustainable Communities Transportation Planning grant.

Inclusive and equitable public engagement was a key focus of the Plan, with input from organizations, key stakeholders, and the broader Contra Costa community.

Project Oversight

The ATS process was overseen by Technical Advisory and Policy Advisory Committees. In March 2020, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the project team started working “virtually” to allow people to participate safely.

- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
  Provided subject matter expertise and public policy implications on service concepts

- Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
  Provided input on addressing policy barriers, communicating with stakeholders about the Study, liaising with elected or appointed Boards, and reviewing and prioritizing recommended strategies
Executive Summary

**STUDY CONTEXT**
Contra Costa County has a diverse population spread across a relatively large area.

**Population**
1,160,000

**Square Miles**
804

**3rd largest population and area in Bay Area**

**17 Cities**

**Two Towns**

Not including census-designated places and unincorporated areas

**Related Planning Initiatives 2016-2020**

- **2016 and 2020 Transportation Expenditure Plan**
  “CCTA will develop an Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan to implement a customer-focused, user-friendly, seamless coordinated system...”

- **2017 Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan**
  “Initiate the ATS Plan: Ensure services are delivered in a coordinated system...”

- **2019 Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Resolution 4321**
  “Each county must establish or enhance mobility management programs to help provide equitable and effective access to transportation.”
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

The distribution of older adults and people with disabilities reflects the general population spread throughout the county, with a few areas of unusual concentration. Rossmoor has a higher population both of older adults and people with disabilities—countywide, those two groups constitute 23% of the population.

**Older Adults**

Three areas have a higher density of older adults:

1) **Rossmoor** (between Moraga and Walnut Creek),
2) **Crow Canyon** (north of San Ramon), and the
3) **area South of Brentwood**.

**People with Disabilities**

People with disabilities have a similar geographic spread as the general population, except one concentrated area in Rossmoor.

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**Map showing concentrations of older adults and people with disabilities in Contra Costa County.**

- **Number of older adults (65 years or older) per acre by Census Blockgroup**:
  - Less than 0.5
  - 0.5–1.5
  - 1.5–2.5
  - 2.5–5.0
  - More than 5.0

- **Number of people with disability per acre by Census Tract**:
  - Less than 0.5
  - 0.5–1.0
  - 1.0–2.0
  - 2.0–3.5
  - More than 3.5

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**County Residents**

- **23%** over 65 or disabled
- **15%** over 65
- **8%** under 65, with disability
Executive Summary

Equity Considerations

**Household Income**

Low income population concentrations include West County, mid-County, and North county locations.

**People of Color**

Nearly half of the county population identifies as people of color or other non-white ethnicity.

**Countywide Ethnicity**

- **52% White**
- **48% People of Color/Other**
Transportation Need and Services

Access to Medical Facilities
Most medical facilities are clustered in the center of the County between Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek (2). Two facilities needed by residents throughout the County are the Contra Costa County Medical Center and the VA Medical Center, both in Martinez (2).

Community-Based Transportation
Services areas don’t always overlap areas of greatest demand, increasing the need for transit and paratransit services provided by community-transportation programs from public sector services or non-profit organizations.
OUTREACH

Outreach Toolkit

A virtual and paper flyer, along with tweets and postings on provider websites were distributed via social media, encouraging people to provide input through the online survey.

Let’s make transportation convenient for older adults and people with disabilities

If you’re an older adult, have a disability, or are a veteran, transportation in Contra Costa County can be challenging. We want to identify ways to make it easier for you to get around the county—whether you’re going to an appointment, getting groceries, visiting family, or anything else.

You can participate from home!

Due to the shelter-in-place we are asking individuals to complete the survey online or participate in a short phone interview. Participants will be entered in a drawing for a $25 gift card.

Take the survey on-line at www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCTA_Survey2 or in Spanish at www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCTA_SurveySPN

Call us at 857-305-8004
Email us at info@atspcontracosta.com
Visit us at atspcontracosta.com
Public Engagement Collateral

We are looking for older adults, people with disabilities, and veterans to participate in a short transportation survey that will gather information on ways to make transportation convenient in the community. Survey participants could win a $25 gift card! Participate in the survey (in English) and see more.

Thank you to all of our public engagement partners.

#ContraCostaCounty

We are gathering input from the community on ways to make transportation convenient for older adults and people with disabilities. Please visit atptoscontracosta.com/participate as your input will help us better meet your transportation needs and be entered to win a $25 gift card.

Keywords: @CCTA, transportation

Reach 4k

Tag • Translate • Share

511 Contra Costa @511CC

USA • Jun 8 • 11:13 am

RT @CCTA: We are gathering input from the community on ways to make transportation convenient for older adults and people with disabilities. Please visit https://t.co/1ChM8v78rV as your input will help us better meet your transportation needs and be entered to win a $25 gift card...

Keywords: @CCTA, transportation

Reach 4k

Tag • Translate • Share
Pre-COVID Outreach

Before the onset of the pandemic, surveys and engagement flyers were distributed and the project team made public presentations at the Developmental Disabilities Council of Contra Costa County and the Pleasant Hill Commission on Aging.

SURVEY

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), in coordination with Contra Costa County, is conducting a study to find out how to improve transportation services for seniors, people with disabilities, and eligible veterans who live or travel in Contra Costa County.

Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey and return it to the person who gave it to you, or you can also take the survey on-line at: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCTASurvey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCTASurvey).

If you have any questions or need assistance filling out this survey, please contact 510-506-7586 or info@atspcontracosta.com.

1. Which modes of transportation do you usually use? (Check all that apply; answer any related follow-up questions for BUS, ADA PARATRANSIT and LYFT/UBER)
   - □ BART
   - □ Bus Answer follow-up Q 2-4
   - □ Bicycle
   - □ Walk/Roll
   - □ ADA Paratransit (East Bay Paratransit, WestCAT Dial-a-Ride, County Connection LINK, Tri Delta ParaTransit) Answer follow-up Q 5-7
   - □ Drive myself
   - □ Lyft/Uber Answer follow-up Q 8-9
   - □ Taxi
   - □ Family, neighbor, or paid helper drives me
   - □ Other (example: R-Transit, Rossmoor Dial-a-Bus, Lamorinda Spirit Van, etc): ____________________

Q 2-4. BUS RIDER QUESTIONS
Skip questions 2-4 if you don’t ride the bus.

2. If you use the BUS, what service(s) do you use?
   - □ AC Transit
   - □ Tri Delta
   - □ WestCAT
   - □ County Connection
   - □ Other (please specify):

3. Please tell us about your BUS-riding experience and interactions with drivers:
   - □ Excellent
   - □ Satisfactory
   - □ Poor
   - □ Additional comments: ____________________

4. Please share any other comments about your BUS-riding experience, such as ease of use, maintenance issues, or vehicle cleanliness: ____________________________________________________

Q 5-7. ADA PARATRANSIT RIDER QUESTIONS
Skip questions 5-7 if you don’t ride paratransit.

5. If you use ADA PARATRANSIT, what service(s) do you use?
   - □ East Bay Paratransit
   - □ WestCAT Dial-a-Ride
   - □ County Connection LINK
   - □ Tri Delta ParaTransit
   - □ Other (please specify):

6. Please tell us about your ADA PARATRANSIT-riding experience and interactions with drivers:
   - □ Excellent
   - □ Satisfactory
   - □ Poor
   - □ Additional comments: ____________________

7. Please share any other comments about your PARATRANSIT-riding experience, such as ease of use, maintenance issues:

Q 8-9. LYFT/UBER RIDER
Skip questions 8-9 if you don’t ride Lyft/Uber.

8. If you use LYFT/UBER, please tell us about your riding experience and interactions with drivers:
   - □ Excellent
   - □ Satisfactory
   - □ Poor
   - □ Additional comments: ____________________

9. Please share any other comments about your LYFT/UBER-riding experience, such as ease of use, maintenance issues, or vehicle cleanliness: ____________________________________________________

Q 10-16 GENERAL RIDER QUESTIONS

10. Where are you usually going? (Please select up to three)
   - I go to...
   - □ Medical appointment
   - □ Grocery shopping/drugstore
   - □ Non-medical appointment
   - □ See friends or family
   - □ Attend a class
   - □ The Senior Center
   - □ Church
   - □ Work or Volunteer position
   - □ Other (please specify):

ES8 Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan
Post-COVID Outreach
Once the pandemic set in, the project team moved all outreach activities to safe platforms, utilizing virtual focus groups, stakeholder interviews, an online survey, and virtual town hall to safely interact with participants.

Focus Groups
Five virtual focus groups with seniors and persons with disabilities involved in-depth conversations with the project team, with an emphasis on reaching populations often overlooked through other forms of public engagement, such as adults with disabilities, people with Limited English Proficiency, and West County residents.

Stakeholder Interviews
Interview commencing in March of 2020 were put on hold in light of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Interview questions were reevaluated to reflect the circumstances, and the interviews with public and nonprofit agencies, representing an array of stakeholder groups and interests, were completed between September and November.

Telephone Town Hall
Nelson Nygaard hosted a live Telephone Town Hall on October 27, 2020 to outline the project and answer questions.
SURVEY RESULTS

Trip Destinations and Challenges

An online survey provided insight into how respondents get where they are going, where they go, and what factors complicate their trips.

Mode to Destination

Trips were most commonly made by solo drivers, followed by those driven by a family, neighbor or paid helper. BART was used by about a third of respondents, with ADA paratransit utilized by 10% of the entire survey sample.

* Respondents could choose as many modes as they used. Percentages reflect total respondents (1,063) selecting a particular mode they used.

Destinations

The top destination was medical appointments, with grocery/drugstore shopping in second place. Senior Center trips and non-medical appointments each accounted for an 8% share of destinations.

* Respondents could choose up to three trips that they take most often. Percentages reflect total respondents (1,063) identifying each trip type.
Trip Challenges
Almost one-third of respondents feel unsafe while traveling, with about a quarter unable to go where or when they want, or feeling their trip takes too long.

- **29%** Feel unsafe when traveling
- **24%** Can’t go when needed
- **22%** Can’t go where needed
- **23%** Trip takes too long

* Respondents could choose up to three challenges that they faced most often. Percentages reflect total respondents (1,063) identifying each trip type.

Trip Difficulty
Mirroring the top destinations, respondents had the most difficulty with medical appointments and making grocery/drugstore trips. Seeing friends/family and getting to the Senior Center rounded up the top four types of difficult trips.

- **35%** Medical Appointments
- **20%** Grocery/drugstore
- **19%** Friends/Family
- **11%** Senior Center

* Respondents could choose up to three trips that they take most often. Percentages reflect total respondents (1,063) for each trip type.
TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND GAPS
The project team’s review of existing conditions and survey data identified key needs and gaps in accessible transportation in Contra Costa County. These include:

**New Funding** – Grants are sometimes available for planning and pilots, but all recommendations will require new sustainable funding

**Safety** – Many respondents feel unsafe while traveling

**Volunteer Driving Programs** – Additional volunteers are needed, with more reliable funding to increase capacity

**Medical Access** – The Regional Medical Center and VA Medical Center in Martinez need reliable access throughout the county

**Quality of Life Visits** – Consumers have difficulty making quality-of-life essential trips to visit friends and family, the senior center, and church

**Service Coordination** – Accessible services need improved coordination because they are siloed between agencies, cities, and non-profit organizations
RECOMMENDATIONS

The Accessible Transportation Plan identified an urgent need for a coordinated structure to address transportation needs and gaps in Contra Costa County accessible transportation. A crucial first step would be the creation of an Accessible Transportation Task Force.

**Accessible Transportation Task Force**

The Task Force would:

- **Oversee Strategic Planning**, identifying coordinated strategies to be implemented by existing agencies/non-profits
- **Create a Countywide Coordination Entity** responsible for countywide strategy implementation
- **Investigate** funding opportunities

**Countywide Coordinated Entity (CE)**

- **The countywide CE Organization** could be an existing non-profit or public agency—or an entirely new entity
- **Strategy implementation** would be a key function of the CE, prioritizing projects to improve and expand countywide accessible transportation
Strategies and Implementation

A five-year timeline for strategy development and implementation was developed, with recommended strategies divided into tiered groups.

**Tier I**
- High transportation benefit
- Strong community support
- Leverages existing programs/resources
- Easy to implement (in stages or because of lower cost)

**Tier II**
High ranking strategies, sorted by:
- Service impact
- Cost
- Implementation challenges

---

**Plan Countywide Coordinated Entity**

**Establish**
- Transportation Task Force
- Countywide Coordinated Entity

**Implement**
- Short-Term Strategies
- Long-Term Strategies

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**ES-14**

**Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan**
Implementation Timeframes

Tiered Strategies will be implemented in phases, pending ATSP approval.

Immediate-Term
Within 1 Year

Short-Term
Within 2 Years

Long-Term
2 Years
or on-going implementation beyond five years

Implementation Agency

Recommended agencies for each strategy have been identified across three categories.

Public Agency
(e.g. Contra Costa Transportation Authority, County Administrator’s Office, County Health Services)

Non-Profit
(e.g. Mobility Matters, Choice in Aging)

Transit Agency
(e.g. County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, WestCAT)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Description</th>
<th>Implementation Term</th>
<th>Implementation Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increase Local and Regional Mobility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Improve connectivity between paratransit programs/eliminate transfer trips</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Same-day trip programs (including wheelchair-accessible service)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Expand existing and add new Volunteer Driver programs</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Service beyond ADA service areas</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Early morning and late-night service</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. On-demand subsidies</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improve Coordination Among Providers and Community Stakeholders</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Shopping trips with package assistance</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Hospital discharge service</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Customized guaranteed ride home programs for people with disabilities</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Means-based car-share including accessible option</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. One-call / one-click; information &amp; referral (I&amp;R)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Programs for disabled/senior veterans</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Real-time transportation information (paratransit vehicle location, BART elevators, wheelchair spaces on buses)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<td>14. Travel training (including inter-operator trips)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<td>15. Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS)</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop Partnerships for Supportive Infrastructure</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Administer a uniform countywide ADA paratransit eligibility certification program</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<td>17. Fare integration</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Procure joint paratransit scheduling software</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Sidewalk improvements to enhance safety for older adults and wheelchair accessibility in high-priority locations</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Long Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Means-based fare subsidy</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Wheelchair breakdown service</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Accessible bikeshare program</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Short-Term" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Public Agency" /> <img src="image" alt="Non-Profit" /> <img src="image" alt="Transit Agency" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How A Countywide Coordinated Entity Improves Accessible Transportation in Contra Costa County

Functions of the Coordinated Entity

- **Identifies/pursues** new funding
- **Develops and administers** uniform countywide ADA paratransit eligibility certification
- **Expands** mobility management
- **Implements** joint paratransit scheduling software
Oversees seamless rides for inter-jurisdictional trips inside and outside the county

Supports Service beyond ADA service areas and regular service times

Expands Travel Training

Advocates for Safe Routes for Seniors/Safe Routes for All

Helps establish means-based fare subsidy