

**To:** Operations & Scheduling Committee

**Date:** 11/03/2022

**From:** Bill Churchill, General Manager

**Reviewed by:**

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**SUBJECT: CCTA Framework for the Development of a Coordinated Entity (CE)**

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### **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: Americans with Disabilities Act (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, Executives of Social Service Agencies, and City Council members. Although significant progress was made, due to grant constraints the Accessible Transportation Strategic (ATS) Plan was required to be completed by February 28, 2021, ending the study before all solutions could be contemplated.

Following the development of the ATS Plan, a Task Force was established made up of members of non-profit transit organizations, policy makers and transit personnel to explore potential solutions and begin to implement some of the action items identified. Some key action items were, analyzing potential structures for a Coordinated Entity (CE), identifying gaps in service, developing sources of funding, and creating a set of roles and responsibilities.

County Connection staff supports the concept of developing a CE that could provide a single source of information for individuals seeking accessible transportation in Contra Costa, across all existing modes of transportation as well as new programs, as they are developed. Potential customers could call a single number and then be routed to the program that best fits their needs whether it be a public paratransit provider or a non-profit service such as the Lamorinda Spirit or something else not yet conceived of.

On October 13<sup>th</sup> CCTA provided Contra Costa's three transit operators, County Connection, TriDelta and WestCat with a copy of a proposed framework for a CE (see Attachment 1). CCTA staff invited the operators to a meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup> to provide feedback and comments regarding the framework before taking it to their Board for approval in December. At the meeting, operators were informed that CCTA has been working on being designated a Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) making them eligible for Transportation Development Act (TDA) 4.5, State Transit Assistance (STA) Revenue and Measure J funds. Operators were unanimous in expressing their concern such a designation could have profound negative impacts to existing revenue streams, severely compromising the paratransit services that exist today. Additionally, the lack of clearly defined roles and

responsibilities for the CE creates the potential to take over transportation functions currently provided existing operators. It was suggested that the ATS Guiding Principles (see Attachment 2) would prevent the CE from performing the transportation functions of the existing operators but, in their current form they do not prevent this potential outcome.

While staff supports the concept of a CE and the potential to improve accessible services within Contra Costa County, the framework in its current form, without strong guardrails and a set of clearly defined roles and responsibilities, has the potential to seriously harm existing paratransit programs. Staff looks forward to the continued effort in working with the ATS Plan Task Force and CCTA in developing an effective CE that can improve and grow accessible transportation and protect current programs.

**Financial Implications:**

A CTSA designation for CCTA may jeopardize the existing TDA 4.5, STA Revenue and Measure J funds used to operate the County Connection LINK service (and other existing Contra Costa County paratransit providers) for the provision of paratransit services. The current budget projects these three revenue sources at \$4,639,748.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends supporting the CE effort with the addition of a set of roles, responsibilities and guidelines that both protects existing public Transit Operator programs and provides for an enhancement of accessible services to communities in Contra Costa County. Additionally, staff would oppose a CTSA designation for CCTA due to the risk of degrading revenue sources currently supporting accessible services provided by existing operators. Any erosion of these funds could imperil the most vulnerable residents of our County.

**Action Requested:**

Staff respectfully requests the O&S Committee forward to the full Board a resolution supporting the concept of a CE with a set of clearly defined roles and responsibilities that does not erode or impede the existing public Transit Operators ability to provide their existing accessible transportation programs and to formally oppose a CTSA designation for CCTA preserving the existing TDA 4.5, STA Revenue and Measure J funds for the suite of paratransit services provided by the public Transit Operators.

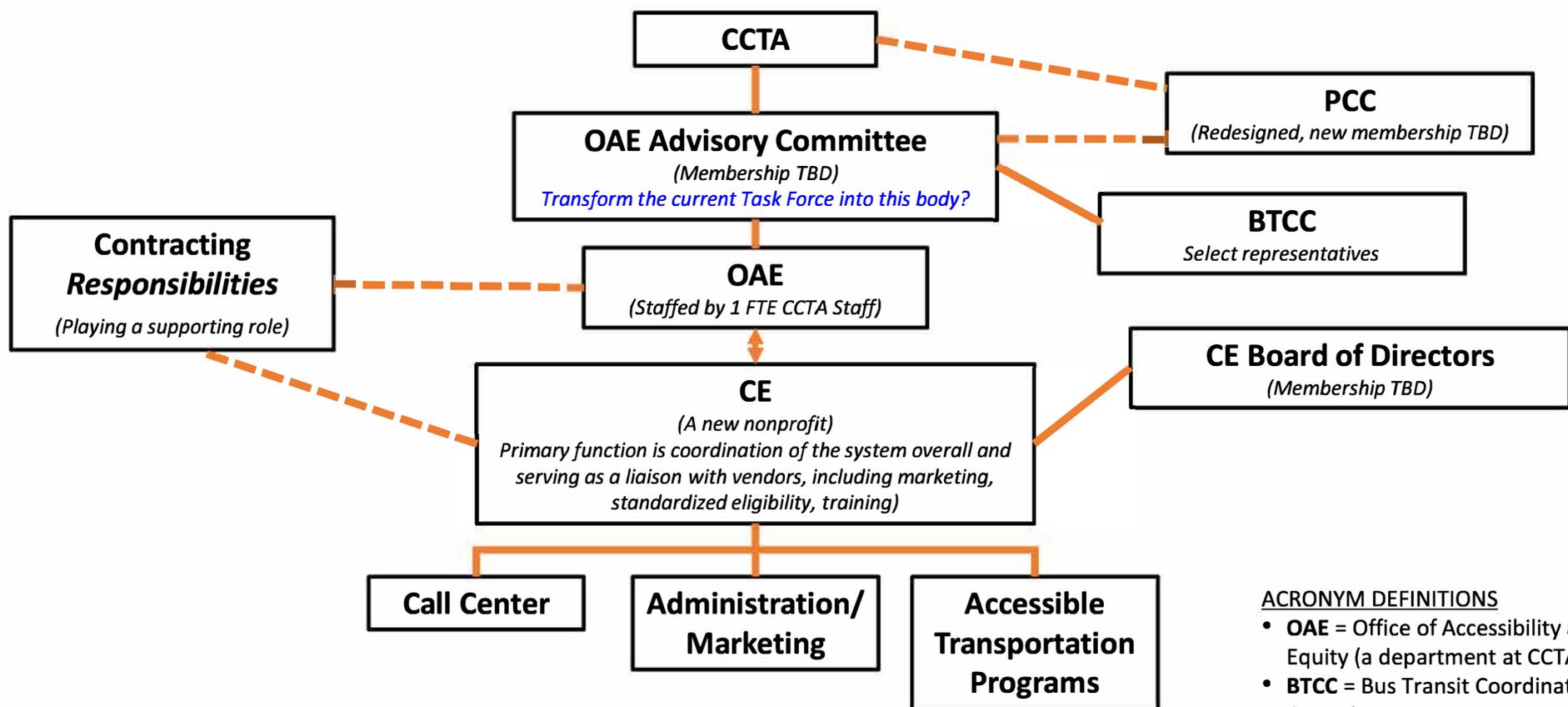
**Attachments:**

Attachment 1: Proposed Framework for the Coordinated Entity

Attachment 2: Guiding Principles

# The following recommended design for Contra Costa County's Accessible Transportation Coordinating Entity (CE) was collaboratively developed

## Contra Costa County's Accessible Transportation Coordinating Entity and its Supporting Networked Infrastructure



### ACRONYM DEFINITIONS

- **OAE** = Office of Accessibility and Equity (a department at CCTA)
- **BTCC** = Bus Transit Coordinating Committee
- **CCTA** = Contra Costa Transportation Authority
- **CE** = Accessible Transportation Coordinating Entity
- **CTSA** = Coordinated Transportation Services Agency
- **PCC** = Paratransit Coordinating Council



## MEMORANDUM

To: Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan Task Force

From: Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan Team

Date: February 7, 2022

Subject: Guiding Principles

The ATSP Task Force Working Group met on January 20<sup>th</sup> and February 2<sup>nd</sup> to review draft suggestions for the Guiding Principles. Attendees discussed materials from the ATSP, prior planning efforts, and regional guidance from the MTC. The Project Team received the input and incorporated comments into these Draft Guiding Principles:

1. The Task Force (TF) and future Coordinated Entity (CE) plan to implement a person-centered, user-friendly, and seamless accessible transportation system including enhancing mobility management to provide equitable and effective access to transportation.
2. All stages of implementation of the Contra Costa Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan (ATSP) including planning, policy, engagement, design, operations, and evaluation will involve multiple stakeholders. Stakeholders will include relevant human service agencies, transit agencies, elected officials, disability and older adult advocates representing a range of segments of these communities, veterans, all County sub-regions, funding bodies, and other representatives.
3. Public outreach and planning activities will include countywide needs and characteristics, with the ultimate goal of providing equitable, consistent, and scalable service across the County.
4. In order to facilitate accessible transportation to and from destinations outside of the County, and to advocate for increased resources for these and other trips, the TF and CE will engage with outside agencies and in state and regional planning processes.
5. The TF and CE will prioritize strategies that were identified through the extensive public engagement during development of the ATSP, and will conduct future public engagement through ATSP updates at regular intervals.
6. New strategies, approaches, and programs being considered by the CE will be subject to review and consultation with all stakeholders, existing and/or new, in a consensus-based process.
7. The TF and CE will not recommend adding responsibilities to a transportation or human service provider without identifying new revenue sources. The TF and CE

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will not recommend redistributing revenues without providing recommendations for achieving a corresponding decrease in obligations funded by those revenues. Members are asked to review the draft principles and be prepared to discuss and finalize at the Task Force meeting.