

To: Board of Directors

Date: 12/08/2022

From: Rashida Kamara Director of ADA and Specialized Services

Reviewed by: *RK*

SUBJECT: County Connection Contract with Choice in Aging

Background:

Choice in Aging (CIA), an adult social service agency, represented about 20% of our daily paratransit trip volume, pre-COVID. In the Summer of 2017, when First Transit was our contractor, CIA experienced several service issues related to the County Connection LINK service. County Connection's General Manager and CIA President and CEO, Debbie Toth, agreed that insight from a neutral third party would be mutually beneficial in assessing the issues and making a recommendation to improve the paratransit experience. In response to the growing number of complaints, County Connection retained the consulting services of an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit expert to investigate, summarize and recommend best practices to improve the service.

A small subset of passengers CIA customers were identified as having challenges using the County Connection LINK service. Upon the recommendation of the consultant, one of the proposed solutions was to provide a more tailored service to the small subset of individuals that found the existing paratransit service challenging to use. Staff proposed using a specialized ADA Transportation Network Company (TNC) – SilverRide – to solve this issue. As a result, in March 2019, the Board approved a six-month pilot project that partnered CIA with the services of SilverRide. Following the six-month pilot, staff intended to recommend expanding the partnership with the option for same day booking. Unfortunately, effective March 16, 2020, there was a Statewide shelter in place order issued by the Governor of California, due to the widespread number of COVID-19 cases. Social services like Choice in Aging were forced to close their doors and the program was temporarily halted.

In January 2022, the County Connection Board of Directors approved a new and improved demonstration project for Choice in Aging customers that provides a same-day option to book trips using SilverRide. This same-day option eliminated unforeseen no-shows and gave other passengers the opportunity to book rides and benefit from the program.

Project Update:

Staff continue to review the success of the project. On time performance has been sustained at 92% and above; no shows due to late rides have significantly decreased. When the new project started in January 2022, only one vehicle was in use. Given the increase in demand, the program now requires three (3) vehicles. As a result, the growth and the success of the project has called for continued support

from County Connection. With labor issues facing traditional paratransit services, having a partnership with Choice in Aging and a TNC service like SilverRide has been beneficial for all.

Financial Implications:

County Connection budgeted \$300,000 for FY 23, anticipating the program would ramp up this summer and operate for a full year. The subset of passengers using the SilverRide service has been slower to return than other paratransit passengers resulting in a significant drop in expected expenses. Staff projects the program expense at \$150,000 through June 2023 with an average trip cost of \$37.50.

Recommendation:

Due to the success of the demonstration project both from a customer service standpoint and a financial perspective, the committee recommends entering a multi-year contract with Choice in Aging, providing them the ability to extend their contract with SilverRide. This will provide a permanent alternative transportation service, offered by County Connection through CIA, which is safe, reliable, and cost effective for a vulnerable population in our service area.

Action Requested:

The Operations and Scheduling Committee and staff respectfully request the Board of Directors allow the General Manager to enter a multi-year contract with Choice in Aging, thus extending the contract with SilverRide by signing resolution number 2023-021.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Resolution No. 2023-021

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-021

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS, CENTRAL CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT AUTHORITY
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

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**AUTHORIZING NEW MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
WITH CHOICE IN AGING FOR A PERMANENT PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the County of Contra Costa and the Cities of Clayton, Concord, the Town of Danville, Lafayette, Martinez, the Town of Moraga, Orinda, Pleasant Hill, San Ramon and Walnut Creek (hereinafter "Member Jurisdictions") have formed the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority ("CCCTA"), a joint exercise of powers agency created under California Government Code Section 6500 *et seq.*, for the joint exercise of certain powers to provide coordinated and integrated public transportation services within the area of its Member Jurisdictions;

WHEREAS, in 2019, CCCTA retained Douglas Cross Transportation Consulting to investigate, summarize and recommend best practices to improve CCCTA's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit services;

WHEREAS, as a result of this investigation, CCCTA's Director of ADA and Specialized Services worked in conjunction with Choice in Aging to launch a six-month pilot program on June 1, 2019 to passengers most affected by the constraints of CCCTA's ADA paratransit services;

WHEREAS, on January 1, 2022, CCCTA and Choice in Aging entered into a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") to extend the pilot program for one year, during which SilverRide continued to deliver round-trip door-through-door service for eligible Choice in Aging participants, and the parties evaluated the program to determine whether to implement a permanent program;

WHEREAS, in March 2020, the program was suspended as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, on January 1, 2022, the program resumed and CCCTA worked with Choice in Aging staff to identify new passengers and provide a same day option to book trips;

WHEREAS, CCCTA and Choice in Aging have worked together to develop a new MOU to continue the program as a permanent program for one year;

WHEREAS, the new MOU sets forth the terms of the one-year extension and the obligations of the parties, and has been approved by both agencies' legal departments;

WHEREAS, the program will be managed by Choice in Aging and CCCTA will provide guidance and periodic audits to ensure the program is meeting its intended goals;

WHEREAS, Staff will provide the Board yearly reports on the efforts of this program; and

WHEREAS, Staff recommends the Board authorize the General Manager to enter into the MOU with Choice in Aging to carry out the program for a period of one year, commencing January 1, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority Board of Directors hereby authorizes the General Manager to execute the MOU with Choice in Aging and to take all other actions necessary to give effect to this Resolution.

Regularly passed and adopted this 15th day of December 2022 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

Amy Worth, Chair, Board of Directors

ATTEST:

Lathina Hill, Clerk to the Board