

To: Operations and Scheduling Committee

Date: March 27, 2026

From: John Sanderson, Director of ADA and Specialized Services

Reviewed by: *Ref*

SUBJECT: New Memorandum of Understanding with Choice in Aging

Background:

Choice in Aging (CiA), an adult social service agency accounted for about 20% of County Connection’s daily paratransit trip volume, before the COVID-19 pandemic. In January 2022, following a nearly two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the Board approved a demonstration pilot project through which County Connection reimbursed CiA for door-through-door trips provided by a third-party Transportation Network Company (TNC) operator, SilverRide, for CiA attendees who are County Connection LINK-eligible, but whose needs exceed the standard of care available through shared-ride paratransit service, or who need rides to and from CiA on very short notice. Within a short time, the pilot program proved highly beneficial to CiA and its clients and cost effective for County Connection. As a result, the Board authorized extensions of the pilot program through 2023 and 2024. For 2025, the Board approved transitioning the pilot to a permanent program.

Program Update:

The CiA-SilverRide program continues to provide a comfortable and flexible alternative for qualifying CiA riders and remains very affordable for County Connection. To support the program long term, a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between County Connection and CiA is needed. The new MOU will document the roles and responsibilities of both County Connection and CiA related to the program, clarify and streamline the enrollment process for new program riders, and include necessary “pass-through” provisions to ensure that the service CiA contracts for with SilverRide meets County Connection’s regulatory compliance and reporting needs. The new MOU will include a base term of three (3) years, with two (2) one-year extension options, for a potential term of up to five (5) years. This will allow both CiA and County Connection to effectively incorporate the program into long range plans.

Financial Implications:

In fiscal year 2025 (FY25), County Connection LINK transported 99,677 registered riders at a total contract cost of approximately \$7.7 million, or roughly \$77.24 each. During the same time period the CiA-SilverRide program transported 9,829 registered riders at a cost of \$36.95 each – an average savings of about \$40.30 per trip, or about \$396,000 overall. \$400,000 was budgeted to support the program through FY26. Actual trip counts have come in slightly higher than expected, and as a result \$450,000 has been included in the preliminary budget for FY27.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends executing a new MOU with Choice in Aging, to enable them to sign a new contract with SilverRide. This will continue to provide an 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:

Staff respectfully requests the Operations & Scheduling Committee forward to the Board of Directors authorization for the General Manager to enter a new MOU permitting County Connection to reimburse CiA for their SilverRide trip costs, for up to five years.

Attachments:

None.