

Needs Assessment Study

of West County Measure J-Funded Services for
Seniors and People with Disabilities



FINAL REPORT

February 2018

Prepared by

Table of Contents

	Page
Chapter 1 Introduction	1-1
Purpose of Study	1-1
Local Context.....	1-2
Funding.....	1-3
Summary of Prior and Current Studies.....	1-6
Chapter 2 Existing Conditions	2-1
Background	2-1
Description of Services.....	2-1
Summary of Findings.....	2-13
Key Findings.....	2-20
Chapter 3 Outcomes from Public Participation and Outreach Efforts	3-1
Stakeholder Interview Summary	3-1
Outreach Meeting Summary	3-2
Survey Results	3-5
Key Findings.....	3-11
Chapter 4 Transportation Needs and Gaps	4-1
Areawide Mobility Needs.....	4-2
City-Based and Unincorporated Areas Needs	4-3
Programmatic/Administrative Needs	4-4
Chapter 5 Strategies	5-1
Short-Term Strategies.....	5-2
Long-Term Strategies	5-5
Cost Implications.....	5-11
Chapter 6 Next Steps.....	6-1
Appendix A: Glossary	
Appendix B: List of Prior Studies	
Appendix C: Outreach Survey	
Appendix D: Outreach Flyer	
Appendix E: Outreach PPT	
Appendix F: Stakeholder Interview Summary	
Appendix G: Stakeholder Comments Received on Draft Report	

Table of Figures

	Page
Figure 1-1	Map of Study Area..... 1-2
Figure 1-2	Demographics of West Contra Costa County's Cities and Major Unincorporated Areas..... 1-3
Figure 1-3	Measure J FY 2015-2016 Funding as a Percentage of Total Funds by Operator for Paratransit Services in West Contra Costa County 1-4
Figure 1-4	Projected Program 15 and Program 20b Funding in FY 2015-2016 and FY 2017-2018..... 1-5
Figure 2-1	Number of Passenger Trips by Service within West Contra Costa County (FY15-16)..... 2-2
Figure 2-2	Summary of ADA-Mandated Paratransit Programs in West Contra Costa County 2-4
Figure 2-3	Summary of West Contra Costa County City-Based Paratransit Programs..... 2-6
Figure 2-4	Summary of Fixed-Route Transit in West Contra Costa County 2-8
Figure 2-5	East Bay Paratransit Trip Purpose..... 2-13
Figure 2-6	Top 10 Destinations of West Contra Costa Paratransit Passengers by Program Operator 2-14
Figure 2-7	Percent of Top Ten Destinations by Facility Type 2-15
Figure 2-8	Paratransit Passenger Trips vs. Active Users in West Contra Costa County..... 2-17
Figure 2-9	FY 14-15 On-time Performance Rates of Paratransit Providers in West Contra Costa County 2-18
Figure 2-10	Cost per Trip of Paratransit Services in West Contra Costa County 2-19
Figure 3-1	WCCTAC Needs Assessment Stakeholder Interview Basic Information . 3-2
Figure 3-2	List of Outreach Meetings and Locations..... 3-3
Figure 3-3	Feedback from Outreach Meetings..... 3-4
Figure 3-4	Which modes of transportation did you use TODAY? 3-5
Figure 3-5	Which modes of transportation do you USUALLY use?..... 3-6
Figure 3-6	What is the purpose of your most frequent travels?..... 3-7
Figure 3-7	Which of these destinations are most difficult for you to get to?..... 3-7
Figure 3-8	Where do you receive the majority of your care?..... 3-8
Figure 3-9	Where do you live?..... 3-8
Figure 3-10	What transportation services do you need that you do not currently receive? 3-9
Figure 5-1	Concierge Fees for Third Party Platforms..... 5-7
Figure 5-2	Estimated Annual Costs for Concierge Options..... 5-1
Figure 5-3	Cost Implications for Short and Long Term Strategies..... 5-11



Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee (WCCTAC) initiated this study in 2016 and selected Nelson/Nygaard Consulting to conduct the study. The purpose of this study is to evaluate existing West County paratransit programs funded by Measure J and determine potential enhancements, improved coordination, and possible new services to better meet the changing needs of the area's senior and disabled residents.

With a variety of economic factors challenging Bay Area communities, WCCTAC is taking an important step to determine the best way to allocate its local sales tax revenue to services for seniors and people with disabilities. Through the Measure J Transportation Expenditure Plan, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) Authority's Measure J program, WCCTAC currently funds mobility programs for El Cerrito, Richmond, San Pablo; and the transit operators AC Transit, BART, and WestCAT.

The key objectives of this study are to:

- Review Measure-J funded, 5310-funded, Lifeline grant-funded, and local non-profit existing programs to determine the most effective way to spend current and future Measure J funding (including for ADA and non-ADA services)
- Propose short- and long-term strategies to cover identified gaps
- Identify future funding sources for implementation of recommended strategies

LOCAL CONTEXT

WCCTAC is one of four Regional Transportation Planning Committees (RTPCs) in Contra Costa County. The Committee represents the western-most region of Contra Costa County, which is comprised primarily of five cities and several unincorporated areas (Figure 1-1).

These five cities include El Cerrito, Hercules, Pinole, Richmond, and San Pablo. The following unincorporated areas are represented by Municipal Advisory Councils:

- East Richmond Heights Municipal Advisory Council (recently formed)
- El Sobrante Municipal Advisory Council
- Kensington Municipal Advisory Council
- North Richmond Municipal Advisory Council

The other unincorporated areas are:

- Bayview
- Montalvin Manor
- Rollingwood
- Tara Hills
- Crockett
- Port Costa
- Rodeo
- Tormey

Figure 1-1 Map of Study Area

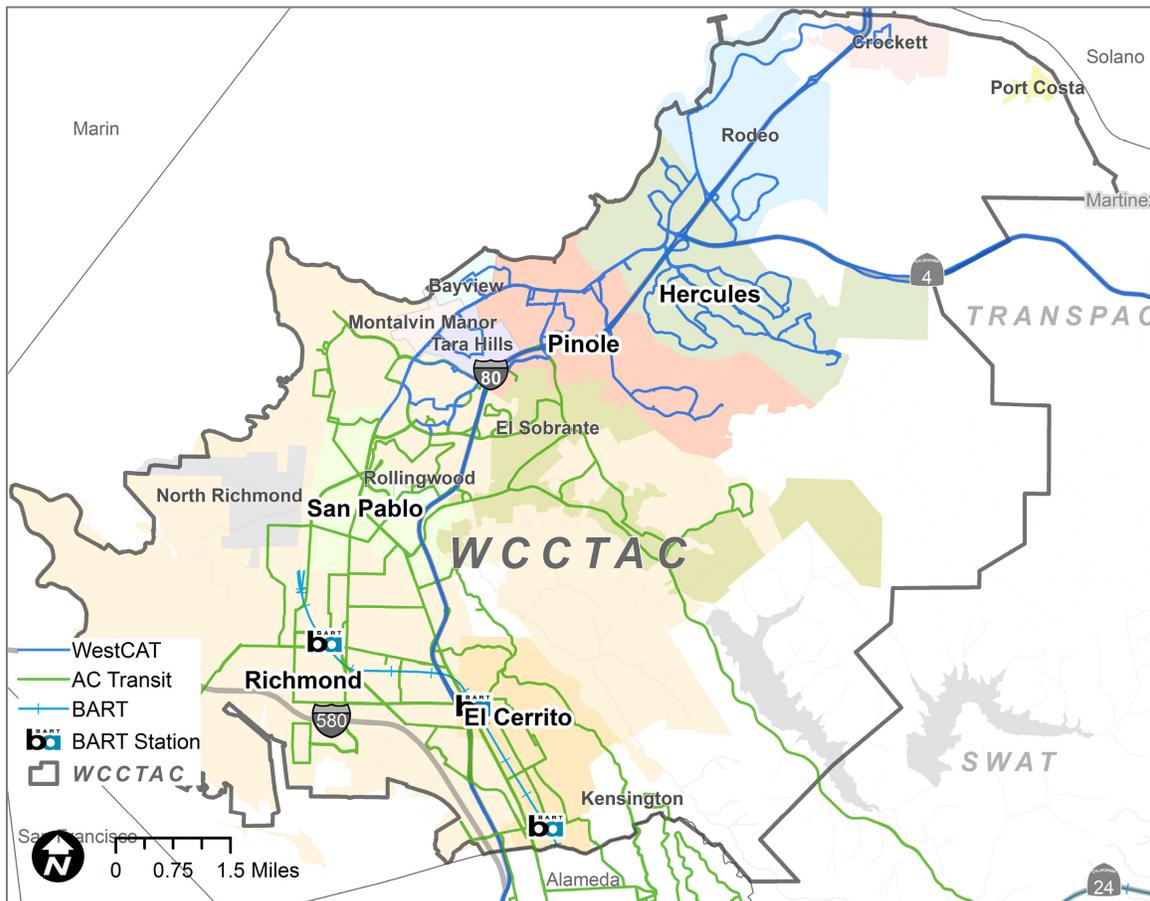


Figure 1-2 Demographics of West Contra Costa County's Cities and Major Unincorporated Areas¹

City/Municipality	Total Population	Percent 65 and Over	Percent Disabled
Crockett*	3,103	16.4%	9.3%
El Cerrito	24,646	19.2%	9.4%
El Sobrante*	12,963	11.8%	15.5%
Hercules	25,011	14.0%	8.5%
Kensington*	5,602	24.7%	9.9%
North Richmond*	4,039	6.4%	12.1%
Pinole	19,040	18.3%	14.2%
Richmond	108,303	12.0%	12.6%
Rodeo*	9,798	13.4%	14.0%
San Pablo	30,536	10.1%	12.6%

* Unincorporated Area

The City of Richmond is by far the largest municipality, with over 100,000 residents, while Crockett is the smallest, with a population of about 3,000. The unincorporated area of Kensington has the largest senior population (65 and over) per capita, representing over 24 percent of its total population, and the unincorporated area of El Sobrante has the largest disabled populations, represented over 15 percent of its total population (Figure 1-2). To determine disability, the American Community Survey asks questions regarding hearing or visual impairments, cognitive difficulties, difficulty walking or climbing stairs, difficulty dressing or bathing, and difficulty doing errands alone.²

FUNDING

In November 2004, Contra Costa County voters approved Measure J with a 71% vote. The measure provided for the continuation of the county's half-cent transportation sales tax for 25 more years beyond the original expiration date of 2009. As with Measure C (the original 1988 transportation sales tax measure), the tax revenues are used to fund a voter-approved Expenditure Plan of transportation programs and projects. Measure J provides approximately \$2.7 billion (escalated) countywide for local transportation projects and programs through the year 2034.

The Expenditure Plan allocates 5% of Measure J to Transportation for Seniors and People with Disabilities countywide through Program 15. Of this 5%, 35% is allocated to West Contra Costa service providers. Additionally, Program 20b (a Subregional Program) allocates 0.65% to West Contra Costa for Additional Transportation for

¹ 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

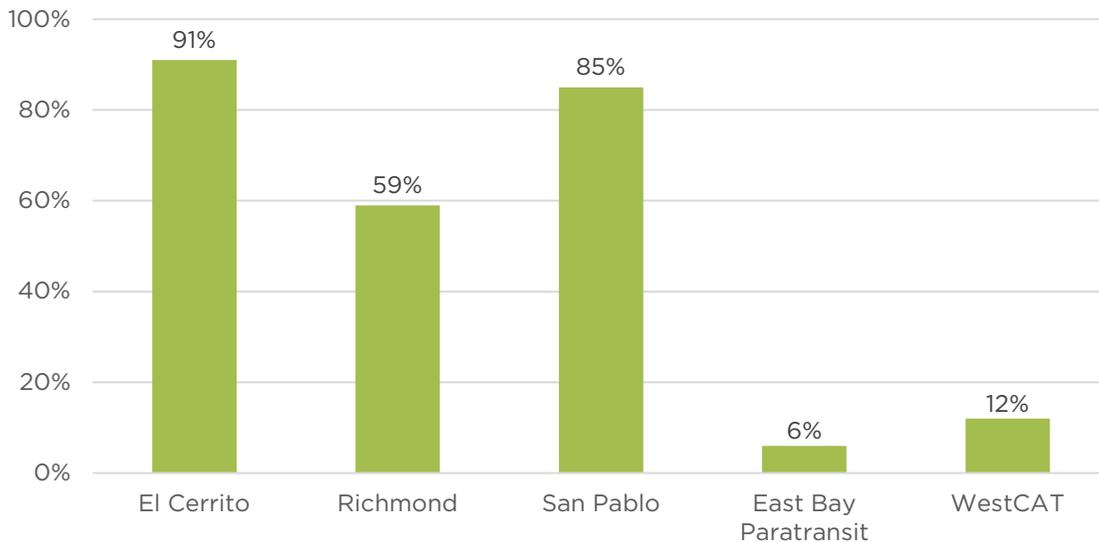
² American Community Survey. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/about/why-we-ask-each-question/disability/>

Seniors and People with Disabilities. Program 20b funds are approved by WCCTAC and can be used for such non-ADA services as shuttles, sedan/taxi service, fare subsidies, and/or other supplemental services beyond the ADA service. However, ADA service does qualify, and 20b can be used to expand the same “base” program expenditures that Program 15 is used for. Currently, the Measure J transportation programs are in fact using 20b funds as part of the same pool as Program 15 funds.

Program 15 funds are allocated by CCTA to the Measure J-approved transportation providers based on percentage allocations determined in the previous Measure C.

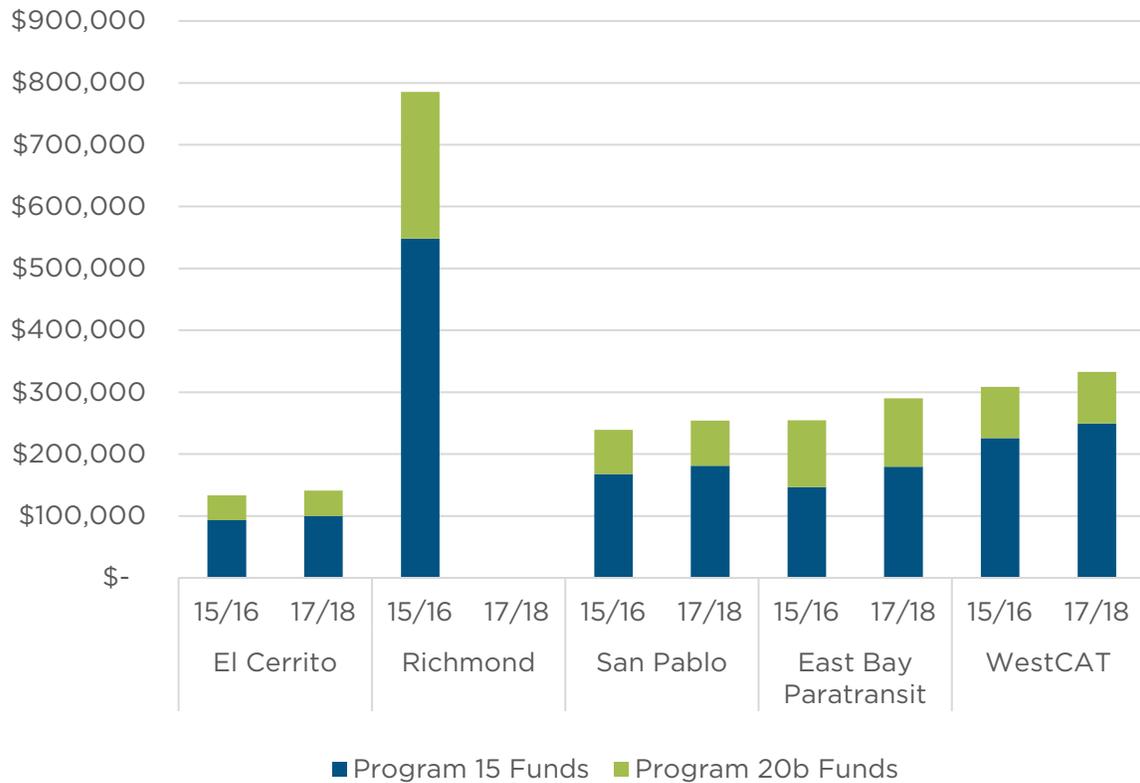
Measure- J funding comprises a significant amount of the total funding of city-operated paratransit services in West Contra Costa County. In fiscal year (FY) 2015-2016, over 91 percent of El Cerrito’s paratransit service, 85 percent of San Pablo’s service, and 59 percent of Richmond’s service are funded with Measure J funds.³ As a percentage of their total revenue, regional ADA paratransit service providers receive significantly less funding from the taxes generated through the voter-approved measure. Only 12 percent of WestCAT’s total revenue for dial-a-ride is funded through Measure J, and East Bay Paratransit receives around six percent of its funding for West Contra Costa County service from the Measure (Figure 1-3).

Figure 1-3 Measure J FY 2015-2016 Funding as a Percentage of Total Funds by Operator for Paratransit Services in West Contra Costa County



³ The vast majority of our data compiled for this report is from FY 2015-2016. For consistency’s sake, this is the baseline data presented throughout the document.

Figure 1-4 Projected Program 15 and Program 20b Funding in FY 2015-2016 and FY 2017-2018⁴



⁴ FY 2016-2017 not available.

In FY 2015-16, Measure-J was projected to bring in over \$1.7 million for transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. Richmond did not submit an application for FY 2017-18 Measure J funding so current funding is suspended. Without the allocation of Richmond's funding, at this time, Measure-J is projected to bring in just over \$1 million in FY 2017-18.

Measure X would have increased the sales tax 0.5 percent for 30 years to fund transportation improvements, essentially doubling the current funding. Among the programs included in the expenditure plan were funds for enhancing bus/transit. This covers seniors and people with disabilities, which would have received 4% of the funding (in addition to the 5% currently received from Measure J). Accordingly current funding would have increased approximately 80%. Measure X was projected to provide \$2.9 billion total of local funding over 30 years.

SUMMARY OF PRIOR AND CURRENT STUDIES

As a first step in the Study, the Nelson\Nygaard consultant team did a review of existing studies, audits, and planning documents with regards to paratransit and senior mobility services in Contra Costa County and the Bay Area region. The complete list of studies follows:

- **Internal Audit of Paratransit Operations**, City of Richmond, 2008
- **Transit Sustainability Project**, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), 2012
- **Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan**, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), 2013
- **Contra Costa County Mobility Management Plan**, Central Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCCTA), 2013
- **San Pablo Paratransit Study**, City of San Pablo, 2013
- **Bay Area Mobility Management Roadmap Study (Draft)**, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), 2016
- **Measure X Transportation Expenditure Plan (TEP)**, Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), 2016
- **White Paper on Accessible Transportation**, Contra Costa County, 2017
- **Draft Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan Update**, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), 2017
- **First Mile/Last Mile Transportation Strategic Plan**, City of Richmond, in process (being prepared by Nelson/Nygaard)

Common needs and proposed solutions from these studies include improving coordination, regulation, training programs, and oversight of paratransit services; enhancing existing fixed-route transit services to better serve seniors and people with disabilities; enhancing traditional paratransit services; and implementing and/or expanding non-traditional paratransit services that can improve independence and quality-of-life.

“Coordination” is a term that is used frequently in discussions of transportation for seniors and people with disabilities, and is sometimes used inter-changeably with

mobility management. The National Center for Mobility Management states that *“Coordinated transportation services are achieved when multiple entities work together in delivering one or more components of a transportation service so they can increase their capacity to provide trips. Coordination activities can range from sharing passenger trips and vehicles to collaborating on facilities, training, purchasing, or maintenance. Fully coordinated services may evolve into an integrated brokerage in which one entity schedules and collects payment for trips performed by several providers or into full consolidation of several transportation services under one agency.”*⁵ When discussing and/or planning coordination activities, it is necessary to be explicit about what that means.

Other needs and solutions that appeared more than once in the prior studies include the need for additional funding, sub-regional or regional mobility management, focus on medical trips, travel training, same-day service (possibly through taxis or similar services), senior-friendly shuttles, and volunteer driver programs.

One of the most recent studies, the *MTC Draft Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Transportation Plan Update*, was just released for public review in January 2018 and advocates for the accessibility of shared mobility solutions and the future use of autonomous vehicles.

The White Paper on Accessible Transportation accepted by the Board of Supervisors in September 2017, specifically calls out the need for administrative tools tied to mobility management solutions such as reporting, cost allocation, standards, and software.

In addition to other opportunities for improvement, Richmond’s First Mile/Last Mile Transportation Study has found deficiencies in infrastructure (inaccessible curb ramps, crumbling sidewalks, missing lighting) and the surrounding environment (empty parcels, high-volume streets, and the perception of safety), and a need for enhanced access to fixed-route transit services.

⁵ National Center for Mobility Management. <https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/by-topic/coordination/>



Chapter 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

BACKGROUND

WCCTAC represents the westernmost region of Contra Costa County as one of the County's four Regional Transportation Planning Committees (RTPC). The RTPC Committees were created in 1988 to guide transportation projects and programs included in the Measure C, half-cent, transportation sales tax approved by Contra Costa voters. WCCTAC includes the following member agencies: the cities of El Cerrito, Hercules, Pinole, Richmond, San Pablo; Contra Costa County; and the transit operators, AC Transit, BART, and WestCAT. In addition to the listed cities, West Contra Costa also includes the unincorporated areas of El Sobrante, Kensington, North Richmond, East Richmond Heights, Bayview, Crockett, Montalvin Manor, Port Costa, Rollingwood, Rodeo, Tara Hills, and Tormey.

There are a number of different transportation options that seniors and people with disabilities can access in West Contra Costa County. These include fixed-route transit, ADA-mandated paratransit, city-based paratransit, client-based and resident-based shuttles, private transportation such as taxis, Lyft, and Uber, and volunteer driver programs. Transportation options that are also available to these groups as well as to the general public, but are not described in detail, include walking, biking, and driving. Additional transportation-related resources can include subsidized fare/voucher programs, travel training, and information and referral services.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

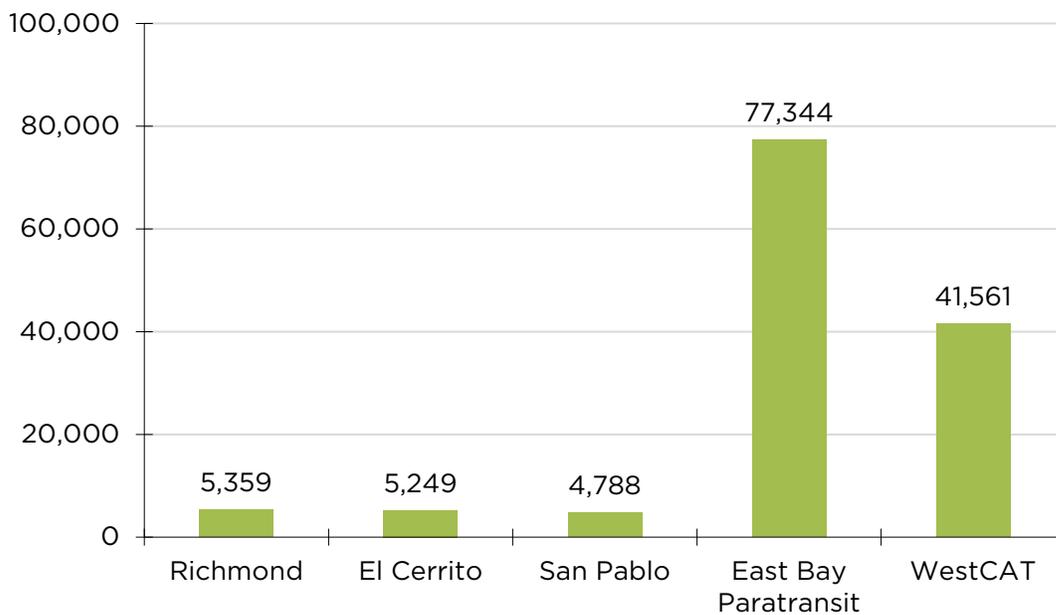
West Contra Costa offers a number of transportation options for seniors and people with disabilities. In addition to fixed-route transit, riders might use ADA-mandated paratransit, shuttle services, city-based door-to-door programs, non-profit transportation services, and private providers like taxis, Lyft, and Uber. Additional transportation options include walking, biking (for limited portions of the population), and driving or being driven by family, friends, or neighbors.

This memo focuses on the West County options funded by Measure J that specifically cater to seniors and people with disabilities who do not drive or have driving limitations. It provides a snapshot of resources available at the time of the report (it must be noted that resources change over time).

CCTA and WCCTAC provide funds to jurisdictions and transit agencies for ADA-mandated (East Bay Paratransit and WestCAT Paratransit) and city-based (El Cerrito, Richmond, and San Pablo) paratransit programs. ADA-mandated paratransit programs provide the majority of paratransit trips in the study area (Figure 2-1). WCCTAC also supports non-profit organizations and other agencies by inviting them to participate in planning through the West County Mobility Management Group.

The types of transportation resources available to seniors and people with disabilities in Contra Costa County are summarized in the in the sections below.

Figure 2-1 Number of Passenger Trips by Service within West Contra Costa County (FY15-16)



ADA-Mandated Services

ADA-mandated paratransit services are reserved for people who, due to a physical or cognitive disability, are unable to ride regular buses and trains, some or all of the time. The ADA gives transit agencies flexibility in designing their paratransit eligibility determination process, but there are several consistencies throughout each agency. These include a 21-day limit on the agency's response to an application submittal; the option of accepting either paper applications, in-person interviews, and/or functional assessments; and an appeals process for any applicant who is initially deemed ineligible.



ADA-mandated paratransit trips typically complement a fixed-route transit system and may be provided on small buses, vans, taxis, or in sedans. ADA-paratransit service generally operates as shared-ride, door-to-door, or curb-to-curb services that must be reserved at least by close of business the day before the trip.

As required by the American Disabilities Act of 1990, paratransit services across the United States provide complementary paratransit services to any person with a disability, who is prevented from using fixed route service. Service is required within three-quarters of a mile of a fixed-route public transportation system. The service must be available during the same hours and days that the fixed-route service is available and fares may not exceed twice the non-discounted regular adult fare of the parallel fixed-routes system.



Image from WestCAT

There are two such ADA-mandated paratransit service providers in Contra Costa County: East Bay Paratransit and WestCAT Dial-A-Ride. WestCAT offers a very flexible program beyond the ADA-minimum requirements, serving seniors above 65 without requiring ADA certification and residents in geographic areas without fixed-route transit access. Both of these providers' services are detailed in the table below (Figure 2-2).

Golden Gate Transit Paratransit (GGTP) and SolTrans ADA Paratransit also serve the study area in a limited capacity. They both go to Del Norte BART Station, where passengers typically transfer to East Bay Paratransit.

Figure 2-2 Summary of ADA-Mandated Paratransit Programs in West Contra Costa County

Agency	Service Area	Hours of Operation	Fares	Eligibility / Certification Process
East Bay Paratransit (EBP)	Within ¾ mile of any BART station or AC Transit bus stop (excluding BART stations east of Orinda on the Pittsburg/Bay Point line)	Operates during the same days and hours as AC Transit and BART’s regular fixed route services.	\$4.00 for trips between 0-12 miles; \$6 for trips between 12-20 miles; \$7 for trips over 20 miles	All people with disabilities throughout BART and AC Transit service areas; must complete a written application and arrange for an in-person assessment (IPA) at EBP offices or a satellite location
WestCAT Dial-A-Ride	Coverage for all eligible riders within service area; extended beyond service area (for special needs trips) for an additional fee. Service also provided into Martinez and Richmond. ADA service is provided to Hercules, Pinole and the unincorporated areas of Rodeo, Crockett and Port Costa. ¹	Monday-Friday, 6:00am to 8:00pm; Saturday, 9am to 7:00pm (early morning, late night, and Sunday service coordinated with East Bay Paratransit within ¾ mile of a fixed route bus route ²); extended service area available Monday-Friday, 9:00am to 3:00pm	\$1.25 single trip fare; \$10 for ten pre-purchase tickets; \$3 for cash fare outside of WestCAT service area; \$25 for ten pre-purchased tickets outside of service area	All seniors (age 65+) and people with disabilities throughout WestCAT service area, as well as the general public in Port Costa, Crockett, and Rodeo; must complete a written application; applicant is notified by mail of eligibility status within 21 days

¹ In addition to ADA, seniors (age 65+) and people with disabilities throughout the WestCAT service area may use Dial-A-Ride between any two points within WestCAT’s service boundaries, and will not be required to transfer.

² Service is provided within the timeframe that WestCAT fixed route operates, and ADA paratransit service is provided past midnight M-F.

City-Based Paratransit Services

There are three city-based, Measure J funded paratransit programs in West Contra Costa County: Easy Ride Paratransit Service, operated by the City of El Cerrito; R-Transit, operated by the City of Richmond; and San Pablo Senior Transportation and Paratransit, operated by the City of San Pablo. Some of these programs also provide services to adjacent cities and unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County. Types of services include door-to-door, travel training, group trips, and

scholarship/subsidized fare programs. San Pablo is considering applying for a grant to implement a “One Stop Ambassador Service” with other local agencies. The service would establish routes outside of their existing service area, and would operate on a limited schedule during the week, with the possibility of extending the service to nights and weekends. These city-based services are summarized in the table below (Figure 2-3).



Figure 2-3 Summary of West Contra Costa County City-Based Paratransit Programs

Service	City / Service Area	Description of Service	Hours of Operation	Fares	Eligibility / Certification Process
Easy Ride Paratransit Service (ERPS)³	El Cerrito	Easy Ride (door-to-door), day trips and excursions, limited service beyond El Cerrito, nutrition rides, and on-demand service	Monday-Thursday, 9:00am to 4:30pm; Friday, 9:00am to 3:30pm	\$2 single trip fare	Must be a resident of El Cerrito and 65+ years old or 18+ years old with a disability; Must complete a written application
R-Transit⁴	Richmond, El Cerrito, San Pablo, North Richmond, El Sobrante, Kensington, and Pinole	Door-to-door, group trips, senior nutrition program transportation service, and standing orders	Monday-Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm	\$4 single trip fare (pre-scheduled); \$5 single trip fare (same-day)	Must be a resident of Richmond, North Richmond, El Sobrante, or Kensington and 55+ years old or 18+ years old with a disability; Must complete an online/written application with proof of age/disability
San Pablo Senior Transportation & Paratransit	San Pablo, Pinole Kaiser, Richmond Kaiser, and points in between	Door-to-door, group trips, nutrition program (brown bag), EBP ticket subsidy, travel training program, and standing orders	Monday-Friday, 9:00am to 4:15pm	\$2 single trip fare	Must be a resident of San Pablo and 55+ years old or 18+ years old with a disability; Must complete a written application

³ <http://www.el-cerrito.org/index.aspx?NID=285>

⁴ <http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/2880/R-Transit-Paratransit>

Fixed-Route Transit

Fixed-route transit is operated by public transit agencies and offers services that run on regular, pre-determined, pre-scheduled routes, usually with no variation. Per the Federal Transportation Authority (FTA), all fixed-route transit providers are legally required to provide complementary paratransit “that is comparable to the level of service provided to individuals without disabilities who use the fixed route system.” Some certified paratransit riders are able to ride fixed-route transit, depending on the trip and/or their current ability. In a recent East Bay Paratransit Customer Satisfaction Survey Summary, 1 percent of riders have used public transit in their adult life since being disabled.

Aside from driving and walking, fixed-route transit is the most widely available transportation option available in West Contra Costa County. Accessibility features on fixed-route transit include:

- Buses and trains equipped with wheelchair lifts or low floor ramps to allow easy access for people with disabilities.
- Priority seating for seniors, people with disabilities, pregnant women, and other populations who need it.
- Bus drivers are trained to understand the needs of all populations who ride the bus, provide assistance in securing wheelchairs in designated spaces, and allow passengers sufficient time to be seated, and get on and off the vehicle.
- Automated announcement of stops at major intersections, stations, transfer points and, at the request of passengers, specific destinations.
- BART stations equipped with elevators to boarding platforms, for ease of access.
- Route and schedule information is provided by transit agencies, including the best way to reach a desired destination. This information is available in accessible formats, if needed.

Five of the key fixed-route transit agencies that operate in West Contra Costa County include: the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit), Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), Capitol Corridor, Golden Gate Transit, and WestCAT. Their services are summarized in the table below (Figure 2-4). In addition there are other services such as the San Joaquin intercity Amtrak service and multiple express bus services. In 2018 WETA will start ferry service between Richmond and San Francisco.



Figure 2-4 Summary of Fixed-Route Transit in West Contra Costa County

Fixed-Route Transit Agency	Service Area	ADA-Mandated Paratransit Provider
AC Transit	West, Central, and South Alameda County (Fremont to Albany) and Western Contra Costa County; Transbay service into San Francisco	East Bay Paratransit (in coordination with BART)
BART	Rapid rail transit in Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco counties (Santa Clara County in 2019)	East Bay Paratransit (in coordination with AC Transit); other applicable paratransit providers within ¾ mile of stations in other counties
Capitol Corridor	Rail service between Sacramento and San Jose	The ADA does not require that commuter rail and commuter bus services provide complementary paratransit service
Golden Gate Transit	Fixed-route bus service throughout Marin County; connects to West Contra Costa County via the Richmond-San Rafael bridge	Golden Gate Transit Paratransit Services
SolTrans	Fixed-route bus service (local and express) to the Solano County cities of Vallejo, Benicia and Fairfield, with express bus service connecting to the Contra Costa County communities of El Cerrito, Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek	SolTrans ADA Paratransit Bus Service
WestCAT	Fixed-route bus service throughout Western Contra Costa County is very comprehensive for a relatively low density area, including the cities of Pinole, Hercules, Martinez and the unincorporated areas of Montalvin Manor, Bayview, Tara Hills, Rodeo, Crockett and Port Costa; Transbay service into San Francisco.	WestCAT Dial-A-Ride (which provides service beyond the minimum ADA requirements)

Shuttle Services

Shuttle services are typically sponsored by public-sector agencies or non-profit organizations, and address unmet transit needs of the community. They can offer fixed-route, curb-to-curb, or door-to-door service. Fixed route services are defined as transportation services provided on an established and recurrent schedule on a defined route along which vehicles stop to pick up and drop off passengers at specific locations. In contrast, curb-to-curb services are defined as transportation services with a route and schedule dependent on the origin and destination of the individuals requesting rides. Door-to-door services are similar to curb-to-curb services, but also include taking their riders from the door of their origin to the door of their destination.



Community-based transportation services are sometimes dedicated for a specific clientele (i.e. Medicaid eligible persons, seniors attending meal programs, etc.). Riders often refer to these programs by an agency they are receiving services from, such as a senior center, County Human Service agency, or regional center. The following is a breakdown of the types of community-based shuttle services available in West Contra Costa County.

Services Provided by Jurisdictions

Some cities or communities offer free shuttles that are designed to assist people with commuting or shopping. In addition to being free and open to the general public, these shuttles generally offer the same accessibility options, such as lifts and ramps, as fixed-route transit.

Two such shuttles currently exist in West Contra Costa County in the Cities of Hercules and Richmond. Both operate out of their respective senior centers and are intended to provide senior residents with the opportunity to go on group shopping excursions or get to and from their respective senior centers. Both of these services are limited to senior and/or disabled residents. Hercules's shuttle operates twice a month,⁵ while the City of Richmond operates two vans through its Disabled Persons Program. These vans are used primarily for recreational group trips.⁶ Between 2011 and 2013, the City of Richmond operated a service called Easy Go, which provided subsidized electric car rentals, bike rentals, van services, and AC Transit passes for Richmond residents. The program was operated by transMetro and funded by the City's Chevron tax settlement, but was ultimately terminated due to high costs and low usage.⁷

⁵ <http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/4478>

⁶ Stakeholder interview with Rochelle Monk, Richmond Parks and Rec. 9.1.17.

⁷ <http://richmondconfidential.org/2014/12/06/after-exhausting-1-8-million-funding-richmonds-easy-go-program-yields-low-usage-rates-at-high-costs/>

Services Provided by Non-Profit Healthcare/Social Service Providers

Healthcare and social service providers also tend to offer shuttles and transportation services to and from surrounding communities. In West Contra Costa, the Kaiser Permanente Richmond Medical Center and the Center for Elders Independence (CEI) are two non-profit healthcare providers that provide shuttle services to nearby transit hubs. Lifelong Medical Care is affiliated with CEI, which runs door-to-door van service for their members.

The Kaiser Permanente Richmond Medical Center shuttle is a free weekday service offered to the Kaiser Permanente community. It runs between Richmond BART and the healthcare facility on Nevin Avenue in downtown Richmond. The shuttle runs every 15 minutes on weekdays between 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.⁸

The Center for Elders Independence (CEI) is a comprehensive medical/social service delivery system that provides community-based, long-term senior care services for seniors living in the East Bay. CEI has an in-house transportation service that provides transportation to and from Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) centers and outside medical appointments. The organization provides members throughout the East Bay with door-to-door van service for these appointments.⁹

⁸ <https://thrive.kaiserpermanente.org/care-near-you/northern-california/eastbay/locations/richmond-medical-center/public-transportation/>

⁹ [http://www.cei.elders.org/dnn/JoinCEI/TenMostAskedQuestions\(English\).aspx](http://www.cei.elders.org/dnn/JoinCEI/TenMostAskedQuestions(English).aspx)

Volunteer Driver Programs

Volunteer driver programs involve connecting riders to a network of volunteers that provide one-way, round-trip, and multi-stop rides. Participation in these programs can be provided free of charge, on a donation basis, through membership dues, or at a minimal cost, and typically have an eligibility process and advance reservation requirements. They are sponsored by non-profit organizations, transit agencies, or cities and counties.



These programs are generally designed for seniors and can fill key needs that are not met by other transportation services like ADA-mandated paratransit. This is because these programs usually offer door-through-door service, during which passengers are offered a stabilizing arm, help with a jacket, or assistance carrying groceries. These programs are also well-suited for certain medical trips, such as when someone needs to stop and pick up a new prescription before going home, or go to a facility in another county for specialized treatment. There is currently one organization providing volunteer driver services in West Contra Costa County, Mobility Matters, which runs a countywide volunteer driver program called “Rides for Seniors.” In FY 2015-16, Mobility Matters provided 259 one-way trips and had eight registered clients in West Contra Costa County.

Travel Training

Travel training programs provide seniors and ADA-eligible customers with a better understanding of how to use the various transit services in the area, thereby making them more comfortable with these travel options and empowering them to use transit services other than traditional paratransit. Much like providing free fixed-route service, such programs can help decrease paratransit costs and alleviate crowding on paratransit vehicles.



In FY 2016-2017, the Center for Independent Living (CIL) received 5310 funding¹⁰ and sponsored a travel training program in West Contra Costa County. CIL’s Community Connections in partnership with the three city programs (San Pablo, El Cerrito, and Richmond) and WestCAT, conducted train-the-trainer training to empower staff to train seniors and people with disabilities to ride transit. CIL staff intends to continue to recruit community volunteers to train their peers. All of the stakeholders as a cohort team will continue to provide travel training to seniors and people with disabilities. In stakeholder interviews, cities expressed that they did not have staff capacity to fully implement this program at the present time and would need additional funding in order to do so.

¹⁰ Section 5310 of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act provides federal funding to states to support private and nonprofit organizations in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the existing transportation service fails to do so.

Services Provided by Private Providers

Private transportation providers have always been an integral partner in the provision of transportation resources for seniors and people with disabilities. Private transportation providers are for-profit entities in the business of transporting people. As noted earlier, most fixed-route transit agencies contract with private transportation providers to provide ADA-mandated paratransit. This is also true of some of the shuttles described earlier. In these instances, riders do not request or access the transportation directly from the private company, but through the public agency sponsoring the service.



Other options are more likely to be requested directly by the rider. These include taxis, Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) like Uber and Lyft, client-based and resident-based shuttle programs, and limousine and sedan services. Taxis have filled gaps in service for transportation disadvantaged populations for decades. Recently, TNCs have begun to fill some of the same gaps. Three West Contra Costa cities are investigating TNC options for transportation for seniors: El Cerrito, Richmond, and San Pablo. However, smart-phone, software-driven transportation options are difficult to track because the data is privately controlled, and data sharing agreements are negotiated on a partnership-by-partnership basis.

A final example of private transportation is concierge service. In September, WCCTAC staff began exploring the feasibility of providing Lyft Concierge service to its paratransit-eligible population. This service would allow participants to remotely request Lyft rides without the need for a smartphone or app. Private transportation providers can be helpful in making first- and last-mile connections. However, riders can face barriers when trying to use private providers directly, including affordability, accessibility for riders with mobility devices, and access to smartphones.

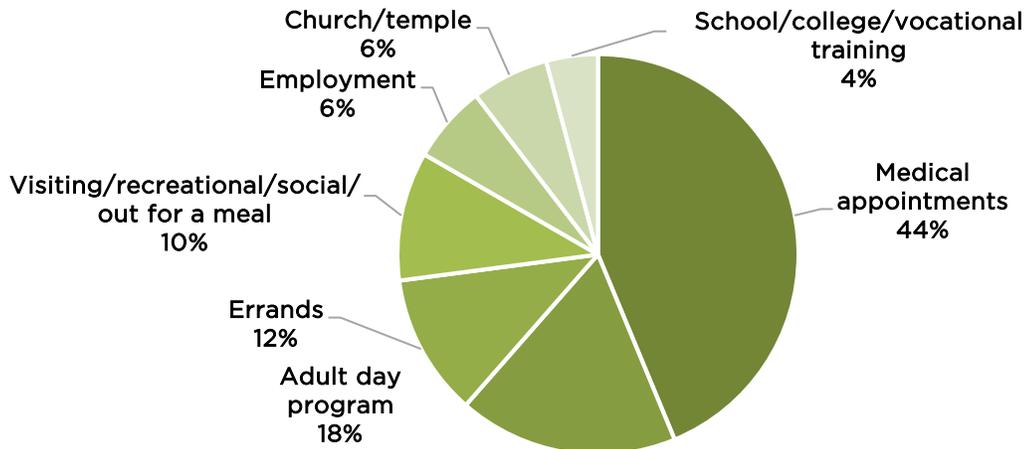
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The project team collected data from the various transportation agencies identified in this report, and compiled and analyzed this data to compare each service’s trip types, ridership, cost, on-time performance, funding sources, and top destinations. This analysis is illustrated in the sections below.

Types of Trips

Cities and paratransit agencies are not able to track trip purpose for all funded programs. However, the study area’s largest provider, East Bay Paratransit, reports trip purpose in their Customer Satisfaction Survey Summary. Recent data indicates that close to half (44 percent) of all trips were for medical appointments (Figure 2-5). This data applies to an area beyond West County, but data collected on destinations from West County providers confirms this. More detail on destinations is provided in the next section.

Figure 2-5 East Bay Paratransit Trip Purpose



Source: East Bay Paratransit Consortium Customer Satisfaction Survey 2016: Management Report

Destinations

The table below details each West Contra Costa County paratransit service’s top 10 passenger trip destinations (Figure 2-6). The overwhelming majority of trips made by passengers of these paratransit services are to either shopping/pharmacy facilities or medical facilities. Additional destinations include social/recreational facilities, senior living facilities, dialysis centers, and adult daycare facilities (Figure 2-7).

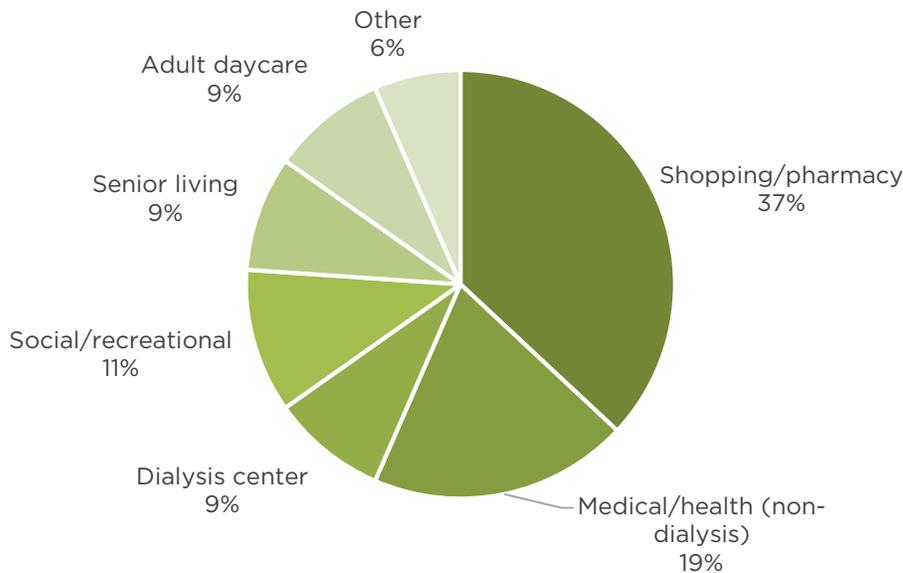
Among the top destinations of West Contra Costa paratransit passengers, several are out of WCCTAC’s jurisdiction. Based on data from East Bay Paratransit, 5,248 of its 77,344 trips are transfer trips to another operator. This means that almost 7% of East Bay Paratransit’s total number of trips are to outside of its jurisdiction. Many of these trips are to the medical facilities in Martinez, a city outside of East Bay Paratransit’s jurisdiction.

Figure 2-6 Top 10 Destinations of West Contra Costa Paratransit Passengers by Program Operator

City/Agency	Most Frequent Destination	Facility Type
Richmond	Richmond Senior Citizens Center	Social/recreational
	Heritage Park at Hilltop (senior housing facility)	Senior living
	Guardian Adult Day Health Care	Adult daycare
	Alzheimer's Respite & Adult Day Cares Services	Adult daycare
	NIAD Art Center	Social/recreational
	Dyer Family Care Home (assisted living facility)	Senior living
	Address on 26 th St, Richmond	Other
	Richmond Memorial Convention Center	Social/recreational
	West County Health Center	Medical/health
	Address on 47 th Street, Richmond	Other
El Cerrito	Senior Center	Social/recreational
	El Cerrito Plaza	Shopping/pharmacy
	Medical centers	Medical/health
	Safeway	Shopping/pharmacy
	Dialysis Center	Dialysis center
	BART Station	Other
	Hair dressers	Shopping/pharmacy
	Restaurants	Shopping/pharmacy
	Senior Housing	Senior living
	St. John's Senior Center	Social/recreational
San Pablo	Kaiser Richmond & Kaiser Pinole	Medical/health
	Safeway & Raley's	Shopping/pharmacy
	West County Health Center	Medical/health
	Walgreens (San Pablo & Richmond)	Shopping/pharmacy
	Hilltop Mall	Shopping/pharmacy
	Pinole Shopping Center	Shopping/pharmacy
	San Pablo Town Center	Shopping/pharmacy
	Hilltop Shopping Plaza	Shopping/pharmacy
	Pinole Medical Facilities	Medical/health
	Lab Corp, Lifelong & Medical Offices	Medical/health

City/Agency	Most Frequent Destination	Facility Type
East Bay Paratransit	El Cerrito Dialysis	Dialysis center
	CA Autism Foundation	Senior living
	Target Pharmacy	Shopping/pharmacy
	Asian Community Mental Health	Medical/health
	Ventura Hills Manor House	Senior living
	DaVita Dialysis	Dialysis center
	Contra Costa County – ARC	Adult daycare
	Kaiser Richmond	Medical/health
	Guardian Adult Day Health	Medical/health
	San Pablo Dialysis	Dialysis center
WestCAT	Pinole senior centers	Social/recreational
	Hercules senior centers	Social/recreational
	Kaiser Richmond & Kaiser Pinole	Medical/health
	Safeway	Shopping/pharmacy
	Lucky Supermarket	Shopping/pharmacy
	Food Maxx	Shopping/pharmacy
	Alliance Medical Group	Medical/health
	Hilltop Mall	Shopping/pharmacy
	Walgreens	Shopping/pharmacy
	Target	Shopping/pharmacy

Figure 2-7 Percent of Top Ten Destinations by Facility Type



Medical Trips

As noted above, medical facilities are a frequent destination for seniors and people with disabilities. Among the top ten destinations of the five West Contra Costa County paratransit providers, ten were to medical facilities. These include the Pinole and Richmond Kaiser Offices, West County Health Center, Asian Community Mental Health Services, Alliance Medical Group, LabCorp, Lifelong and other medical facilities whose names were not specified. The Contra Costa Health Plan through staff in Martinez helps MediCal/Medicare eligible people in Contra Costa County access transportation programs for medical needs.



A major impact on the landscape of medical trips in West Contra Costa County was the 2015 closure of Doctors Medical Center (DMC) hospital in San Pablo. DMC treated mostly MediCal and Medicare patients and the uninsured, and provided the only non-Kaiser emergency room facilities in West Contra Costa County.

LifeLong Medical Care, an urgent-care clinic across the street from the closed hospital, opened the same day the medical center closed and is staffed by some of the hospital's veteran emergency physicians. The county also set up a 24-hour advice line and added 1,200 ambulance hours per month.¹¹ According to the San Francisco Chronicle, the hospital served 250,000 residents between Berkeley and Vallejo for more than 60 years.

MD Urgent Care also opened a branch in El Cerrito in 2017, on the corner of San Pablo and Moeser, that offers drop in urgent care services seven days a week. These types of services offer residents local care but without Emergency Room wait times.

¹¹ <http://www.sfchronicle.com/business/article/A-year-after-hospital-closed-250-000-in-Contra-7278435.php>

Ridership

Due to the size of their service area, East Bay Paratransit and WestCAT serve far more passengers than do city-based paratransit providers. Compared to the other West Contra Costa paratransit providers, East Bay Paratransit service has the largest number of one-way annual trips per active user (36).

In contrast, WestCAT, the other regional paratransit service, and West Contra Costa County's city-based programs range between 3 and 11 trips per user (Figure 2-8). While WestCAT has the lowest number of annual trips per active user, the number of individuals who use it is significantly higher than the other operators. This may be due to the fact that WestCAT Dial-a-Ride service is available to certain non-senior or disabled residents based on geographic location, resulting in more people using the service, but doing so less often.



Figure 2-8 Paratransit Passenger Trips vs. Active Users in West Contra Costa County

City/Agency	Service	Passenger Trips FY15-16	Active Users FY15-16	Annual Trips per Active User
Richmond	Door-to-Door	5,359	1,484	3.6
El Cerrito	Easy Ride (door-to-door)	5,249	475	11.1
San Pablo	Door-to-Door	4,788	430 ¹²	11.1
East Bay Paratransit	Advance Reserve ADA Paratransit (door-to-door)	77,344	2,169	36.3
WestCAT ¹³	Dial-a-Ride	41,561 ¹⁴	14,243	2.9

¹² Estimate of total registered clients for FY 2015-2016

¹³ WestCAT Dial-a-Ride service is available to certain non-senior or disabled residents based on geographic location.

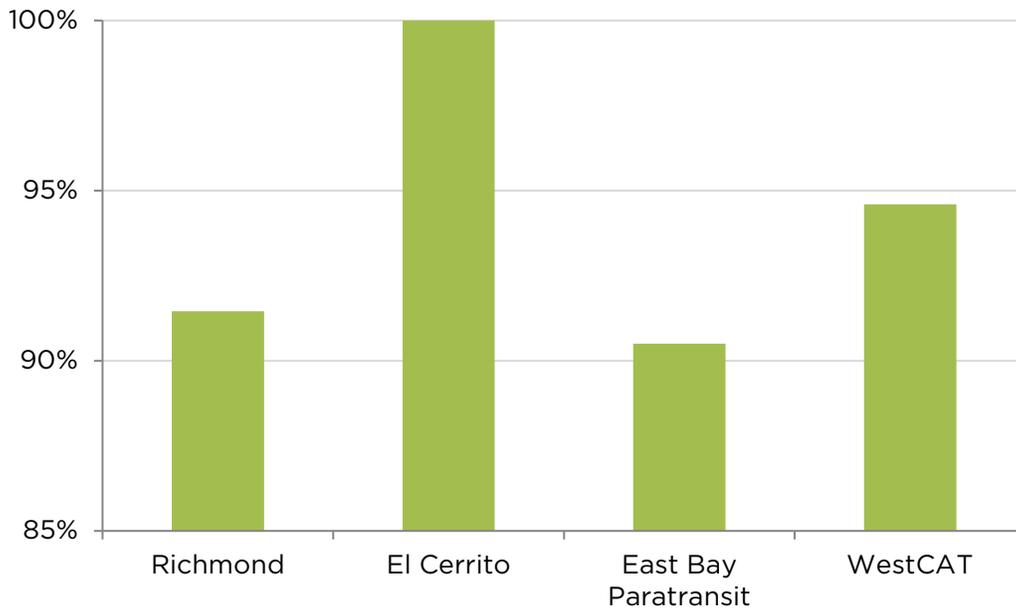
¹⁴ Passenger trips were recorded from the National Transit Database and confirmed with the program.

On-Time Performance

Many of the study area's paratransit agencies have a relatively high on-time performance (OTP) rate. None of the reporting agencies reported an OTP rate of less than 90%, and El Cerrito's program reported an OTP rate of 100% within a 20-minute window of vehicles' scheduled arrival time. San Pablo did not include any OTP metrics in its performance data, many smaller programs do not have the software to track on-time performance.



Figure 2-9 FY 14-15 On-time Performance Rates of Paratransit Providers in West Contra Costa County



Cost

Richmond's paratransit service costs notably more per trip than the other paratransit service providers in the study area, at just over \$100 per trip. The remaining paratransit services cost between \$25 and \$60 per trip, with El Cerrito having the lowest cost per trip for a city program. Contributing factors to El Cerrito's low cost per trip likely include the service's shorter trip distances, which enables them to make more trips per day (due to a smaller coverage area) and the fact that trips often carry multiple passengers. All El Cerrito drivers are part-time employees which has kept overhead cost lower.



Figure 2-10 Cost per Trip of Paratransit Services in West Contra Costa County



** The City of Richmond reported \$163.84 per passenger in FY 2016-17 from a May 23, 2017 Staff Report to Richmond City Council.*

Current Conditions

While there are large discrepancies between annual trips per active user, on-time performance, and cost per trip among the five paratransit programs in West Contra Costa County, these numbers have been relatively consistent over the past several years. The one exception to this is the City of Richmond, where the paratransit program has recently struggled to meet client needs within financial constraints due to driver injuries. While the City of Richmond's funding has been consistent between FY2013-14 and FY2016-17, and fares were increased to \$4, passenger fare revenue has decreased by over 50 percent. Over that same period of time, the City's gross cost per trip has nearly doubled and the total number of passenger trips has decreased by over one third.¹⁵ In September 2017, Richmond issued an RFP for operation of its paratransit services. Two responses were received, but as of December 2017, no contract had been awarded. It should be noted that Richmond's Measure J revenues have been suspended due to the program's operational issues and they did not receive FY 2017-18 funds.

KEY FINDINGS

- **All five agencies offer door-to-door paratransit trips in West Contra Costa County.** EBP and WestCAT technically offer curb-to-curb with door-to-door service upon request. Some service areas overlap indicating the benefit of continuing rider education on services.
- **There is a need for increased access to volunteer driver trips and travel training.** Mobility Matters is serving a small number of registrants. Cities do not have the staffing to fully implement travel training programs for their residents.
- **The overwhelming majority of trips made by passengers of these paratransit services are to either medical facilities, senior facilities, or grocery stores.** Additional destinations include senior housing, an art center, transit hubs, pharmacies, and shopping centers.
- **The closure of San Pablo's Doctors Medical Center hospital in 2015 resulted in an increase in trip requests for some transportation providers serving seniors and people with disabilities in West Contra Costa County but not others.** The providers reporting increases include the City of San Pablo and Mobility Matters, but East Bay Paratransit and WestCAT did not report an increase in demand. Interview respondents also noted challenges with access to medical services since the closure of the hospital (see Chapter Four). DMC treated mostly MediCal and Medicare patients and the uninsured, and provided the only non-Kaiser emergency room facilities in West Contra Costa County. This closure represents a broader trend of medical facility consolidations, which put added strain on existing paratransit services and threaten patient safety.
- **Richmond shows the highest cost per trip at \$107.** The other programs are within industry and area norms for curb-to-curb or door-to-door trips. In May 2017, Richmond staff gave their City Council an update on service and identified other challenges, as well as quoting a cost per trip of \$163.84.

¹⁵ Options for Restructuring Richmond Paratransit Service, May 23, 2017.



Chapter 3

OUTCOMES FROM PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND OUTREACH EFFORTS

The WCCTAC Needs Assessment Study's initial scope of work suggested several avenues for public participation. These included reviewing existing R-Transit (City of Richmond) paratransit satisfaction information, conducting stakeholder interviews, and holding one public workshop. Upon further review with WCCTAC Staff and the West County Mobility Management Group, project managers deemed one public workshop insufficient to meet the diverse geographic needs of West County. The revised plan involved WCCTAC staff presenting at a variety of existing West County meetings and events, with the Nelson\Nygaard consultant team supporting this effort through stakeholder interviews, and the development of an Outreach Toolkit, which would serve to identify additional channels of communication to the senior and disabled communities within West County. While the consultant team made every effort to interview all paratransit service providers and other stakeholders in West County, there were a few stakeholders they were unable to meet with due to scheduling conflicts and budget limitations.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Between May and September of 2017, the consultant team conducted ten stakeholder interviews with a diversity of stakeholders throughout West County. These stakeholders included staff from cities, transit agencies, county departments, and social service providers from around the County. Many of the issues brought up at the interviews are widespread and ongoing. These include the impact of Doctors Medical Center's closure, concerns with the City of Richmond's paratransit program, paratransit service and coverage gaps within West County, and the lack of coordination between West County paratransit providers.

The team conducted stakeholder interviews with Measure J transportation providers and other stakeholders based on their availability. Figure 3-1 shows the list of stakeholders that the Team reached out to for input. Staff reached out to all identified stakeholders and was able to make contact with ten out of eleven of those approached. Highlights from stakeholder meetings are detailed in the Appendix of this report.

Additionally the team met several times with the City of Richmond, WCCTAC, CCTA, and County staff to discuss Richmond’s program and upcoming RFP.

Figure 3-1 WCCTAC Needs Assessment Stakeholder Interview Basic Information

Jurisdiction/Agency	Interviewee – Staff	Interview Date
City of El Cerrito	Janet Bilbas, Vivian Brandt	May 18, 2017
WestCAT	Rob Thompson, Mica McFadden, Donesha McKinley	May 24, 2017
City of San Pablo	Vicky Voicehowsky	July 18, 2017
Mobility Matters	Elaine Welch	August 2, 2017
Center for Independent Living (CIL)	Rebeca Servin	August 4, 2017
Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development	John Cunningham	August 8, 2017
Board of Supervisors District I	Joan Carpenter	August 16, 2017
City of Richmond Community Services Director	Rochelle Monk	September 1, 2017
East Bay Paratransit	Mary Rowlands via email	September 25, 2017
City of Richmond	Lori Reese-Brown	Richard Weiner in communication throughout project

OUTREACH MEETING SUMMARY

Based on the plan agreed to by the WCCTAC and the Nelson\Nygaard consultant team, WCCTAC staff spearheaded the effort to advertise the Needs Assessment Study at relevant events throughout West County. The consultant team supported this effort by creating the PowerPoint presentation and outreach surveys for these events. In total, WCCTAC staff presented at seven such events, reaching a captive audience of almost 200 individuals. At several meetings, staff from relevant transit agencies was also present to support West County’s outreach efforts. This included East Bay Paratransit staff, who were present at outreach events in San Pablo, Pinole, and Hercules, and WestCAT staff, who were present at outreach events in San Pablo and Pinole. Staff also reached out to disabled residents to invite them to outreach events.

At each event, WCCTAC staff gave a brief presentation on the Study, responded to questions and comments from the audience, and distributed outreach surveys to participants. They also distributed “Way to Go Contra Costa” guides and goodie bags with WCCTAC swag to thank participants for attending. Individuals who completed the outreach survey were given a raffle ticket for a drawing. The winners of the drawing received a \$15 Jamba Juice Gift Card as part of an incentive to attend the event and respond to the survey. WCCTAC staff also provided food and refreshments

at each event to incentivize attendance. Figure 3-2 highlights the meetings at which WCCTAC staff presented. Participant feedback was diligently recorded at the meetings, which will ultimately contribute to the recommendations detailed in the Final Report.

Figure 3-2 List of Outreach Meetings and Locations

Community	Date	Type of Event	Venue	Number of Attendees	Contact
Richmond	October 18, 2017	Tabling event	City of Richmond Senior Center	25	Peter Defabio, Senior Center Coordinator
San Pablo	October 19, 2017	Morning brunch	San Pablo Senior Center	32	Vicky Voicehowsky
Hercules	October 20, 2017	Lunch program	Hercules Senior Center	47	Valerie
El Cerrito	October 25, 2017	Breakfast meeting	El Cerrito Community Center	20	Janet Bilbas
Pinole	October 26, 2017	Lunch program	City of Pinole Senior Center	30 (approx.)	Kristina Griffith
Kensington	November 1, 2017	N/A	Kensington Community Center	23	Kate Rauch
North Richmond	November 7, 2017	Monthly Municipal Action Council (MAC) meeting	North Richmond Senior Center	15 (approx.)	Robert Rogers
Total number of attendees				192	

Highlights from each outreach meeting’s participant feedback session are detailed in Figure 3-3. At several meetings, staff was urged to organize additional meetings around West County. Specifically, staff was asked to hold outreach meetings at the North Richmond Senior Center and the senior center at Christ Lutheran Church in El Cerrito. WCCTAC staff is in the process of following up on these requests.

Figure 3-3 Feedback from Outreach Meetings

Community	Feedback
Hercules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attendees were aware of WestCAT services and expressed positive feelings towards the local dial-a-ride and paratransit services ▪ There was a desire to use WestCAT/paratransit to travel outside of WestCAT service area without a transfer ▪ Attendees expressed frustration at fact that travel from Richmond to Hercules requires a transfer
Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Several attendees drive or are driven by family to the Senior Center ▪ Many attendees travel to Senior Center in the morning and leave early in the afternoon ▪ Senior Center is a social space, with a pool table, exercise class, and lunch ▪ Not many seniors purchase lunch at the Senior Center, as they find the \$2-\$3 lunch prices prohibitive ▪ Several attendees ride the bus or walk to the Senior Center ▪ A couple of attendees travel to the Senior Center regularly on R-Transit
San Pablo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many attendees ride City operated paratransit; some ride AC Transit ▪ Many attendees are actively engaged in Senior Center activities and attend them frequently ▪ Attendees are familiar with Senior Center staff and love City paratransit drivers ▪ Attendees expressed great appreciation for local paratransit service
El Cerrito	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General concern for lack of transit service in El Cerrito hills ▪ Appreciation for City operated paratransit, but want more service and coverage ▪ Interest in Lyft and Uber type programs, as well as GoGoGrandparent ▪ Concerns with safety on transit – especially BART and Route 72 bus ▪ Some interest in travel trainings
Pinole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Much of group affiliated with Homebound Housing (assisted living facility) ▪ General interest in Clipper Card Senior Discount Program
Kensington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General interest in concierge type services that work with Lyft and Uber (i.e. GoGoGrandparent) ▪ Pleased with low cost of senior disabled transit service ▪ No attendee knowledge of R-Transit or local paratransit services that serve unincorporated parts of West county ▪ Many attendees travel to Alameda County for medical appointments and activities ▪ Desire to pilot a subsidized ride-hailing program (e.g. Lyft, Uber) ▪ Concerns with safety and transporting people during a disaster ▪ Many attendees share transportation services to travel to airport, El Cerrito Plaza, and medical appointments
North Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very brief presentation at monthly Municipal Action Council (MAC) meeting ▪ WCCTAC staff introduced agency, shared the fact there is a study being done, and distributed Contra Costa “Way to Go” Guide

SURVEY RESULTS

The consultant team created a fifteen-question Needs Assessment survey to better understand how West County’s senior and disabled communities use existing paratransit services and how they would like to see these services improve. WCCTAC staff distributed this survey at outreach events, and posted an online version of the survey for local municipalities to distribute as they chose. In total, 89 surveys were submitted. Among these, 87 were filled out at outreach meetings and only two were submitted online. The results are highlighted in the charts below.

Travel Mode

Overall, almost fifty percent (48 percent) of survey respondents drove their own car on the day that they took the survey. While a similar number (57 percent) of respondents reported the car as one of their most frequented modes of transportation, almost as many respondents claimed to use BART (50 percent) or the bus (38 percent) on a regular basis. A significant number of respondents also walk (31 percent), and get a ride from a friend, family member, or neighbor (28 percent) (Figure 3-4 and Figure 3-5).

Figure 3-4 Which modes of transportation did you use TODAY?

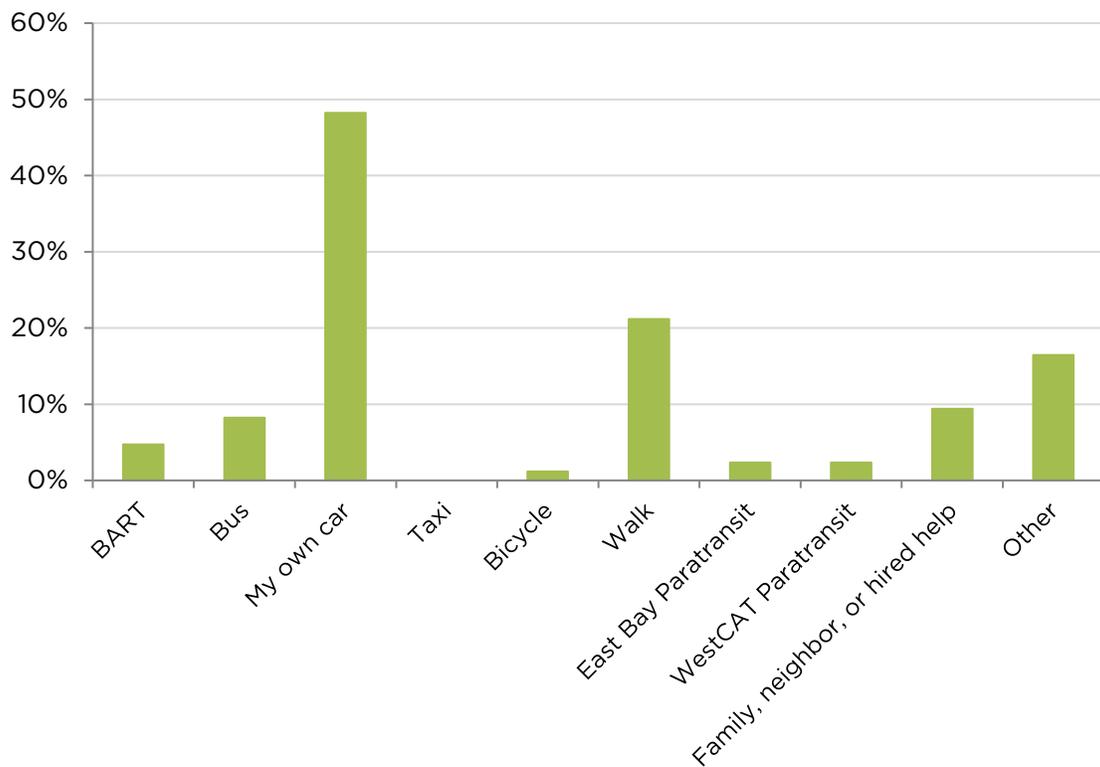
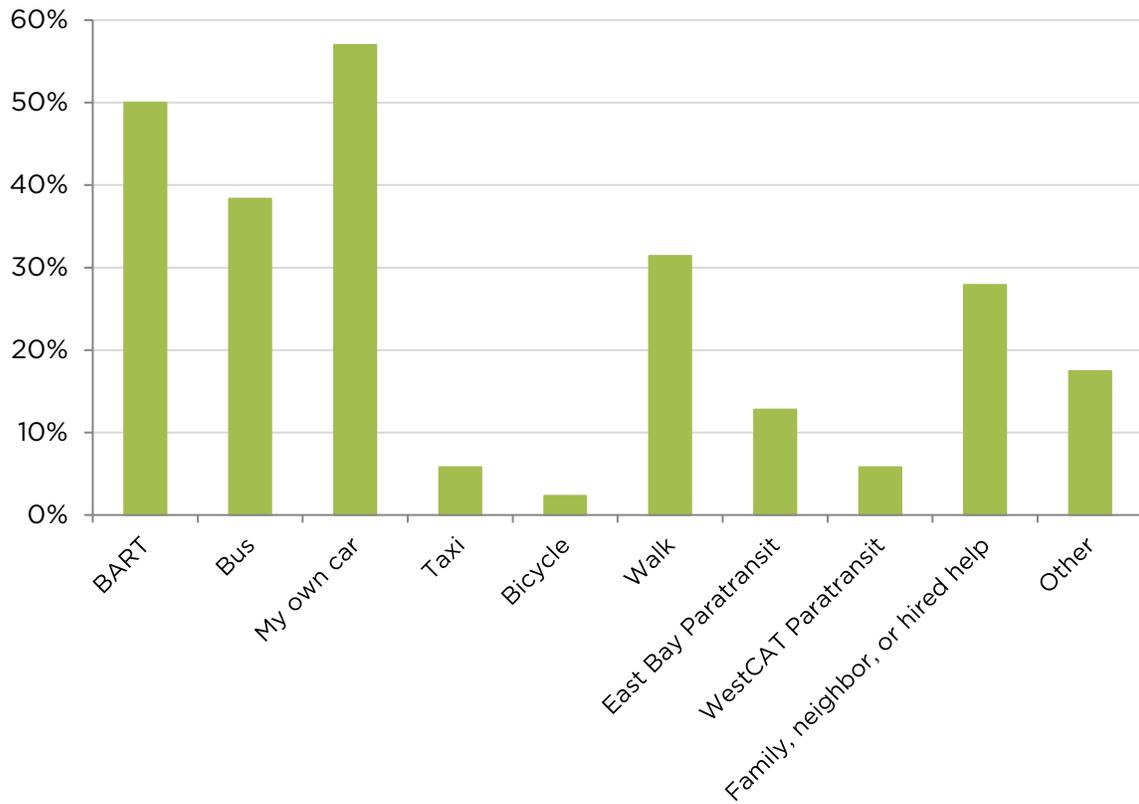


Figure 3-5 Which modes of transportation do you USUALLY use?



Trip Purpose

When asked about the purpose of their most frequent travels, almost three-quarters of respondents (72 percent) reported that they travel most frequently to get to medical appointments. Approximately two-thirds (67 percent) travel to shop for groceries, and a little over half (55 percent) travel to get to their local senior center (Figure 3-6). When asked about which destinations were most difficult for them to get to, respondents overwhelmingly chose medical appointments over other options (55 percent). Grocery shopping and visiting friends and family were a distant second, both at 30 percent (Figure 3-7).

Figure 3-6 What is the purpose of your most frequent travels?

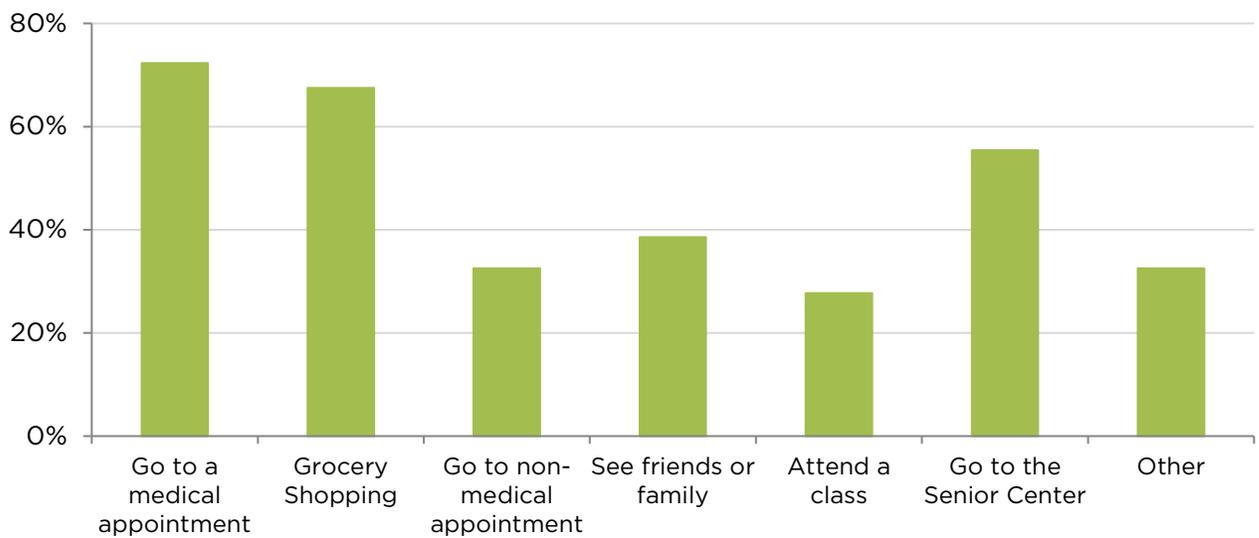
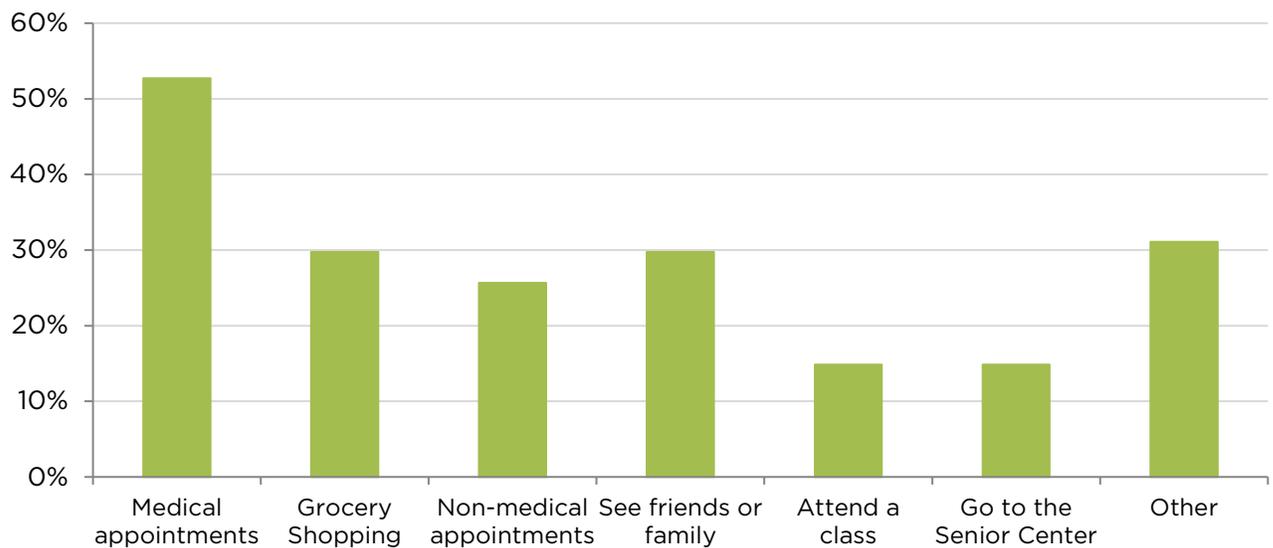


Figure 3-7 Which of these destinations are most difficult for you to get to?



When asked about where they receive the majority of their medical care, 32 percent said Richmond, 29 percent said Oakland, and 23 percent said Pinole (Figure 3-8). This may be a result of the fact that a plurality of respondents (21 percent) are from Richmond, while over a quarter (27 percent) live in either El Cerrito or Kensington, the southernmost municipalities in Contra Costa County (Figure 3-9).

Figure 3-8 Where do you receive the majority of your care?

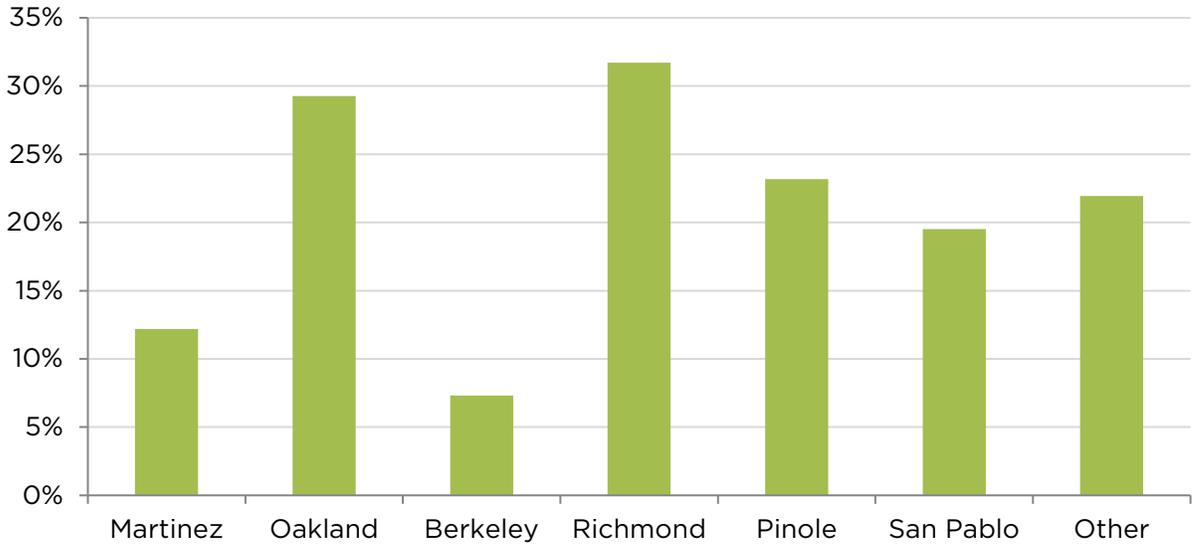
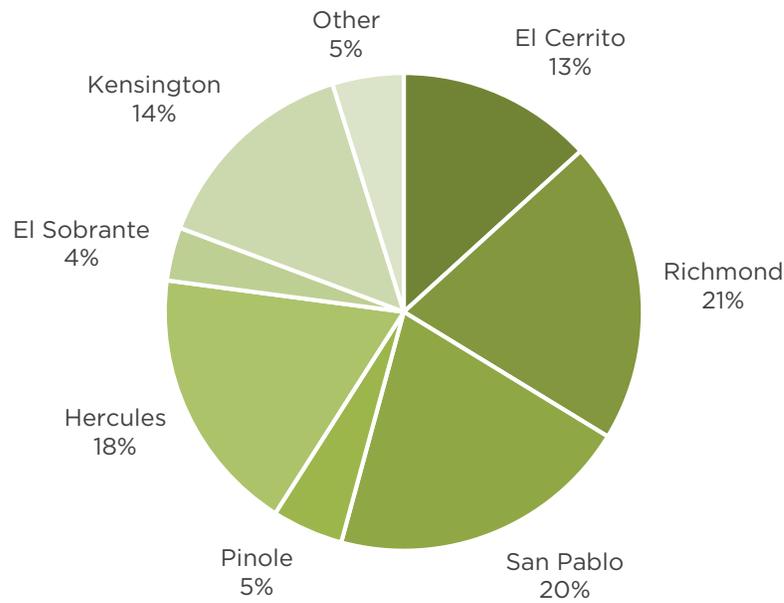


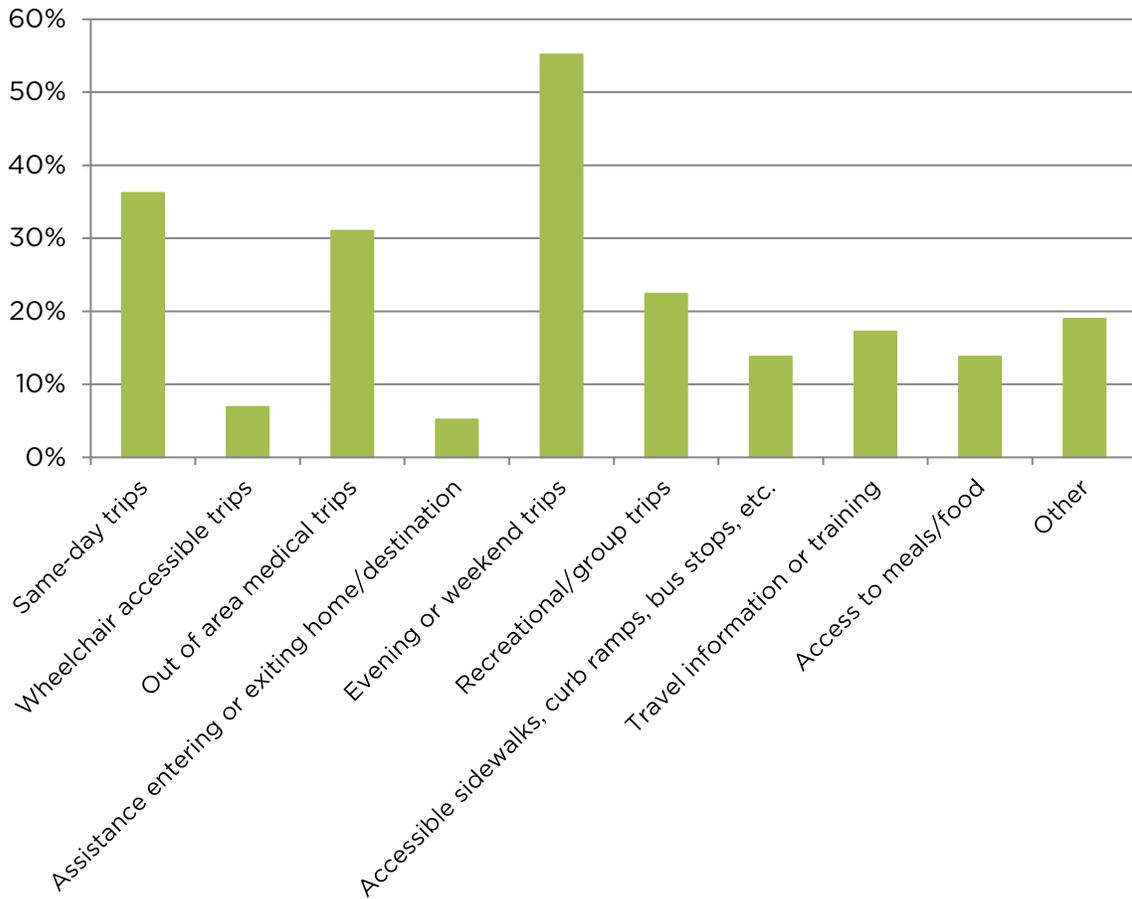
Figure 3-9 Where do you live?



Transportation Service Type

When asked about the type of transportation services that are needed but not currently received, a majority of respondents (55 percent) said evening and weekend trips. Same-day trips came in second with 36 percent of responses, while out-of-area medical trips received 31 percent of responses (Figure 3-10).

Figure 3-10 What transportation services do you need that you do not currently receive?



Other Notable Results

Other results from the 89 survey responses include:

- Around one-third of respondents (31 percent) have had challenges obtaining medical care since the closure of Doctors Medical Center
- Almost half of respondents (48 percent) would like to get to parts of Contra Costa County that they are unable to due to a lack of convenient transportation options
- Almost half of respondents (47 percent) travel with either a cane, a walker, or a rollator
- Around four-fifths of respondents (79 percent) are NOT certified as disabled with either East Bay Paratransit, WestCAT, or the Regional Transportation Connection (RTC) program¹
- Among the 87 percent of respondents who own cell phones, only 65 percent own a cell phone with internet capabilities.

¹ WestCAT does not require ADA certification for riders 65 and above

KEY FINDINGS

- **Many West County residents drive or are driven** by family and friends and report a lack of other convenient transportation options.
- **The greatest transportation coverage gap is getting to and from medical appointments.** A significant minority of residents need to access medical facilities in Alameda County, which requires a lengthy trip. City-based paratransit programs do not transport riders outside of the County.
- **Residents are interested in more evening, weekend, and same-day trip services.**
- **Many residents are disabled but are not certified as such** by any of the local paratransit agencies or the Regional Transportation Connection (RTC) program, which is required for a discounted Clipper Card, suggesting that these individuals would likely benefit from a more robust outreach program. It is unclear if these residents are eligible for Senior Clipper Cards, which are easier to obtain.
- **City paratransit programs do not all use the same eligibility application** or have the same requirements, making it difficult for West County residents to determine if they are eligible or how to apply.
- **There is a general concern with the lack of coordination** between paratransit agencies, which leads to burdensome transfers, disparate fares and payment options, and service and coverage gaps throughout West County.
- **West County paratransit service providers have had difficulty coordinating with Richmond's R-Transit** service or determining what services are available.
- **Richmond's R-Transit service does not consistently serve the unincorporated areas** around the City of Richmond, despite those communities being in its coverage area.
- **The closure of Doctors Medical Center** has created transportation concerns for many residents.
- **There is an interest in incorporating ride-hailing services** (Lyft, Uber, etc.) into future West County mobility plans.
- **There is a strong interest in receiving travel training** that focuses on the use of Clipper Card, ride-hailing services (Lyft, Uber, etc.), concierge services, the use of smartphones in making transportation choices, and general lessons on how to ride transit.

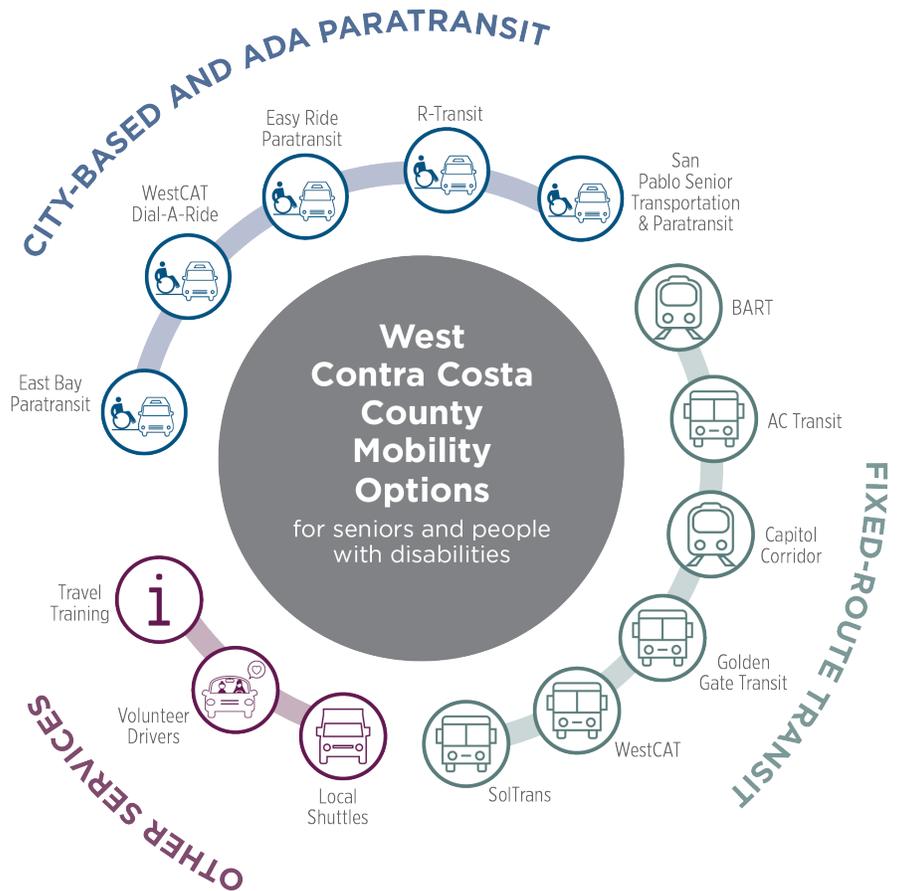


Chapter 4 TRANSPORTATION NEEDS AND GAPS

The purpose of this Study is to identify current mobility needs among West Contra Costa County's senior and disabled population so that funding from the county's Measure J sales tax revenues may be programmed to highest benefit.

An assessment of existing conditions as well as direct feedback from constituents throughout WCCTAC's service area provide a clear understanding of current mobility needs. According to these sources, the current needs persist despite existing funding, suggesting there may be a benefit in identifying additional funding sources, and also to reconfiguring the distribution of existing funding.

Also according to these sources, Measure J appears to be funding several successful programs including Easy Ride Paratransit Service in El Cerrito, San Pablo Senior Transportation and Paratransit, and supports ADA Paratransit provided locally by East Bay Paratransit and WestCAT. WestCAT is able to exceed ADA Paratransit requirements in geography, schedule, and eligibility. Measure J providers have also successfully partnered with the Center for Independent Living (CIL) on a train-the-trainer travel training program called Community Connections.



AREAWIDE MOBILITY NEEDS

- **Temporal gaps exist for seniors and people with disabilities.** Constituents throughout West County cite a lack of available mobility services at evening and weekend times. They also cite a desire to access same-day trip needs, such as shopping or last-minute medical needs.
- **Medical care access has been reduced with the closure of the Doctors Medical Center.** The Doctors Medical Center offered the only emergency room facility in West County. With its closure, stakeholders report an increase in trip needs to destinations outside of West County, such as Oakland or Martinez. Municipal providers only provide trips within jurisdictional boundaries.
- **Transfers between ADA Paratransit service providers, city-based services, and across service areas remain a barrier.** These transfers can be difficult to arrange, costly, result in longer trips, and raise concerns about passenger safety.
- **Awareness of programs among eligible population is lacking.** Stakeholders find a lack of awareness of programs. Further, many who might otherwise be eligible have not been certified to use paratransit services.
- **High reliance on personal auto** as a mode of travel among area seniors. If for no other reason to ensure the safety of the aging population, there is a need to increase services and awareness of those services among the eligible population. The most frequent trips this group tends to make are for medical trips, which are also the most difficult to get to, as reported by seniors.
- **Poor or lacking pedestrian infrastructure** makes many areas of West County difficult to navigate by seniors or other individuals with limited mobility. Improvements to area walkability would increase access to fixed-route transit.
- **Service area challenges for East Bay Paratransit.** West County is far from the EBP core service area. To serve it better, it would require a local storage and maintenance yard.



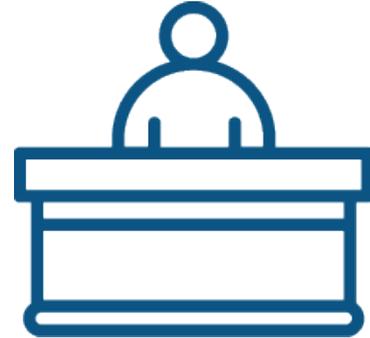
CITY-BASED AND UNINCORPORATED AREAS NEEDS

- **Travel training resources are limited.** Currently, cities offer travel training programs, but lack the staff resources to adequately implement CIL's train-the-trainer program. Further, constituents report a desire for training on finding internet-based travel information and also on interacting with mobile app-based transportation service. Close to 90 percent of survey respondents have mobile phones, but only 65 percent of those have internet capability on their mobile phones.
- **Limited service to lower density/hilly areas.** Even within city programs, providers find it difficult to serve lower density areas, and harder to reach the eligible population. The unincorporated areas in particular have less funding to address needs.
- **Current City of Richmond service is unreliable.** The City released an RFP in Fall 2017 and received two responses, but no new contract has been signed. Under service as reported for FY 2015-16, the primary destinations served include senior centers and housing, but other trip types may have been under-served. Richmond did not submit an application for FY 2017-18 Measure J funding so current funding is suspended.



PROGRAMMATIC/ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

- **Limited coordination between existing providers.**
This limits ease of use for users and presents difficulty to providers. There may be a benefit of providing a mobility manager role within West County in recognition of users' need to connect with destinations outside their jurisdiction (e.g. medical appointments in Richmond or Oakland).
- **Limited accountability for Measure J-funded program performance.** Measure J recipients report performance annually to CCTA as part of the Claim process but it is unclear what analysis is done on this data and who it is reported to. WCCTAC has the capacity to choose where most Measure J funds are allocated. Of the 35 percent of Measure J Program 15 funds that go to West County, 23 percent of the annual allocation is "protected" by the expenditure plan. WCCTAC has the capacity to direct the remaining 12 percent of the West County allocation and 100 percent of Program 20b funds. However, political will to redistribute funding is difficult to find in many jurisdictions, not just West County.





Chapter 5 STRATEGIES

The Nelson\Nygaard consultant team has reviewed information gathered in earlier stages of the report to develop short and long term strategies for the West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee (WCCTAC) to consider in the future. Strategies are based on a review of prior studies and existing conditions, stakeholder interviews, and outcomes from public participation.

Short term strategies are lower in cost and could be implemented in 1-2 years. Funding could come from current Measure J resources including Program 20b, or other pilot funding identified by WCCTAC, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), or Contra Costa County.

Long term strategies would take a longer time to implement and would likely take greater coordination and funding. In addition to Measure J, funding for these strategies could come from FTA 5310 and/or a future sales tax measure similar to Measure X.

It is worth noting that all the strategies face potential obstacles to implementation. The most obvious one is funding, but it will also be necessary for the various stakeholders (WCCTAC, Contra Costa County, transit agencies, cities, non-profit organizations, etc.) to commit to working together to implement new strategies. Many strategies may also require additional staff effort, which is a concern for staff with substantial duties already.

SHORT-TERM STRATEGIES



#1: BETTER COORDINATION OF WEST COUNTY NON-ADA SERVICES

What is it?

This strategy proposes several potential actions including:

- Specific program intervention in or related to Richmond
- Continuing education in city programs regarding all transportation services available
- Creating better communication between transportation service providers in West County

At the time this report is being written, the City of Richmond paratransit program (R-Transit) is having difficulty meeting demand and staying within budget. Many drivers are unavailable due to injury, and the unincorporated areas of West County are not being served. A recent Request for Proposals has not resulted in a clear direction for a new service configuration. WCCTAC and CCTA will need to work together with the City of Richmond to develop a full response. However, the current geographic layout of the City's transportation responsibilities are not logical and, combined with the other issues listed, make it infeasible to effectively meet the needs of City and unincorporated residents. One option would be to consolidate R-Transit services under another program (e.g. San Pablo) and reassign responsibility for the unincorporated areas. This might lead to a later long term strategy of creating one West County transportation service provider for all non-ADA trips.

El Cerrito and San Pablo staff continue to educate their residents and riders regarding all the transportation services available to them. El Cerrito recently hosted an informational meeting about Lyft as an option for seniors. San Pablo currently works with East Bay Paratransit, which conducts certification interviews weekly at the Senior Center. Program managers could implement a marketing campaign to promote all transportation services in West County. They should have a clear idea of how riders qualify for city programs and ADA-mandated paratransit certification. They should also have a clear idea of the limitations of ADA-mandated paratransit and identify what their program can do differently/better than ADA-mandated paratransit. Continued outreach can be done through senior center events and newsletters, City social media, and community advisory committees. Involving riders in the discussion about what the city program can do to supplement the ADA-mandated program will help increase buy-in and also serve as rider education. One important caution, with any increase in marketing and awareness, there is a concern that resources will not accommodate the corresponding growth in demand. Therefore it is helpful to implement such efforts in phases over time.

Building on the successful West County Mobility Management Group, WCCTAC should convene a provider advisory committee, similar to its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), to report to the WCCTAC Board. The provider advisory committee would need to be formalized with simple Bylaws, agreed to by each member, and recognized by

the WCCTAC Board. Convening a formally recognized advisory committee would serve several purposes – it would emphasize the importance of these services to the WCCTAC Board, it would create better communication between the transportation service providers, and demonstrate commitment to coordination for future funding opportunities.

The WCMM is currently serving as a de facto provider advisory committee. The new committee could meet on the same days at the beginning or end of the WCMM meeting. Recurring agenda items could include performance trends, certifications, and transfers to other areas/services. Recurring agenda items for the WCMM portion could include Information & Referral, travel training, funding, and updates and announcements. The committee could also open up discussions with the WCCTAC TAC about addressing path-of-travel issues.

What need does it solve for West Contra Costa County?

Improving service related to the City of Richmond program is a necessary step for coordination and to provide consistent service to consumers.

Continuing efforts to educate residents and riders regarding the transportation services available to them, and creating better communication between transportation service providers in West County will make better use of existing resources and Measure J funding. Better communication between providers allows better coordination. Providers can easily inform riders about other programs they can use and connect them immediately. This creates a more seamless transportation program for riders and better prepares all stakeholders for future mobility management improvements.

Who would be appropriate implementation partners?

Improvements in the City of Richmond's service area and possible reassigning of the unincorporated areas will require WCCTAC and CCTA to work together with the City of Richmond, and other necessary stakeholders.

Continuing rider education efforts will require input from city staff and East Bay Paratransit and WestCAT Dial-A-Ride staff. WCCTAC could support planning for efforts through the provider advisory committee, especially for areas without a city program.

How much does it cost?

All efforts will require staff administrative time for providers and from WCCTAC to implement.

Challenges in R-Transit already require staff time in Richmond, WCCTAC, and CCTA.

Are there any local examples?

Alameda County provides the closest example of a mixture of city and ADA-mandated paratransit programs that meet regularly, have uniform policies, and have ongoing communication. West County could provide an example to the rest of Contra Costa

County. SF Paratransit provides a good example of informing consumers about multiple options.

In relation to R-Transit, the City of Pleasanton provides an example of a city-run program that uses city employees and requires city funds. The City is currently looking at options to reconfigure its service to lessen the financial burden on general funds. Alameda County also has several examples of jurisdictions serving neighboring cities/areas, e.g. Oakland serves Piedmont, Fremont serves Newark, and Hayward serves unincorporated central Alameda County.

What are the next steps?

As noted above, WCCTAC could support planning for outreach and realignment efforts through the proposed provider advisory committee. The committee could also work on Bylaws, creating uniform definitions, policies, and requirements for Measure J funded paratransit programs. They could also work with CCTA on conducting more detailed analysis of the performance measures submitted through Measure J claim forms, and developing a uniform city application. Members could request examples of all of these from Alameda County.

Also as noted above, WCCTAC and CCTA will need to work together with the City of Richmond to determine how best to improve their current R-Transit model.



#2: CREATE A TRAVEL ORIENTATION PROGRAM

What is it?

Travel orientation, also known as transit orientation, is less formal and involved than traditional travel training and explains transportation systems by sharing information about trip planning, schedules, maps, fare systems, mobility devices, new mobility services, and benefits and services. It may be conducted in a group or one-on-one.¹

Within West County, two ideas for travel orientation are “tech” training by matching seniors with middle/high school students to practice using their smartphones and Clipper orientations to encourage use of fixed route transit. Alternately, a non-profit organization could be contracted to provide the “tech training.”

What need does it solve for West Contra Costa County?

Many consumers requested further information on using transit and/or ride-hailing apps. These strategies are fast low-cost ways to provide travel training.

Who would be appropriate implementation partners?

Senior center staff could contact their counterparts in the school district about arranging the “tech” training matching opportunities.

¹ <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/offering-travel-instruction>

Senior Clipper cards can be obtained online or through the mail. Senior centers can arrange an activity around applying for the cards, and then when they arrive offer the orientation. Curriculum help could be requested from Center for Independent Living (CIL) and/or the City of Fremont. In FY 2016-2017, CIL sponsored a train-the-trainer travel training program in West Contra Costa County.

How much does it cost?

These efforts would require staff administrative time to set up and run meetings.

Are there any local examples?

WestCAT currently distributes Senior Clipper Cards and has a Senior/ADA passenger orientation that is held monthly for passengers. AC Transit provides Clipper orientations at senior centers in El Cerrito and San Pablo. The City of Emeryville does the “tech” training matching program and the City of Fremont does Clipper orientations, as well as being authorized to issue senior Clipper cards. CIL has extensive travel training experience with youth and is already a West County partner. In addition, Marin Transit has contracted with a local non-profit organization to provide two-session “tech trainings” to seniors in the county.

What are the next steps?

Partners could plan for these next steps through the West County Mobility Management meetings. They could request further information from Emeryville, Fremont, and Marin.



#3: INVESTIGATE ROLE OF RIDE-HAILING CONCIERGE SERVICE

What is it?

Ride-hailing concierge platforms enable program sponsors to provide ride-hailing trips (on Lyft and Uber) to individuals without smartphones, and offer organizations the opportunity to manage and pay for rides for their customers and clients. There are several ride-hail concierge products now available, which include:

- Lyft Concierge
- Uber Central
- GoGoGrandparent
- Arrive Rides

Lyft Concierge is a Lyft product and relies on the Lyft network of drivers to provide curb-to-curb service. Akin to Concierge, Uber Central relies on the Uber network of drivers. GoGoGrandparent and Arrive Rides are third party services that arrange rides through providers like Uber and Lyft.

For organizations, the platforms enable a staff person to request on-demand or pre-scheduled rides on behalf of their clients, which can be billed to one central account or to customers directly.

Neither Uber nor Lyft drivers provide door-to-door service, except those specially trained through the UberAssist² program (available in limited markets). While Uber and Lyft drivers are expected to accommodate folding wheelchairs, scooters, canes, walkers, and other small assistive devices, they only offer motorized wheelchair-accessible rides in limited markets. Further, they cannot assist riders in physically getting into or out of the vehicle.

Both Arrive Rides and GoGoGrandparent pass on the responsibility of liability to the ride-hailing companies, which provide different levels of coverage for drivers and riders depending on the status of a ride.³ Funding partners may want to consider an indemnity provision in their agreement with the service provider.

Fixed-route transit agencies face more stringent expectations from the FTA regarding equity when using ride-hailing concierge platforms. They are supposed to ensure equitable service for people using mobility devices, or who have difficulty with smart phones, or using the current payment options. Many transit agencies also have strong liability concerns. For these reasons, many pilot programs are overseen by a city or non-profit organization instead.

What need does it solve for West Contra Costa County?

West Contra Costa County currently has no reliable public source of same-day transportation for seniors and people with disabilities who cannot access public transit. Concierge platforms would address this gap and can be tailored to target specific trip types (e.g. medical, shopping, or within certain geographic or temporal boundaries).

Due to the closure of the Doctors Medical Center, stakeholders report an increase in trip needs to destinations outside of West County such as Oakland or Martinez, suggesting there may be a pilot opportunity focused on medical trips. Alternatively, cities could define eligible trip purposes individually, recognizing that limiting trip purpose can help reduce program costs, but also reduces the clarity of the program for users. Note that Uber and Lyft offer wheelchair-accessible vehicle service only in limited markets and with limited availability. Therefore, this program would be focused primarily on ambulatory users or those with foldable mobility devices.

Who would be appropriate implementation partners?

There are two basic needs to initiate the program: funding and dispatcher staff. In regards to funding, potential partners are WCCTAC and CCTA (e.g. Measure J). Dispatch staff (individuals who take requests, enter them into the platform, and serve as a point-of-contact for riders) would likely have to come from a local non-profit. However, dispatchers could also come directly from an implementing partner, such as a dialysis clinic or senior center, or could be hired by an entity like WCCTAC and work remotely. Also Arrive Rides and GoGoGrandparent both offer elements of a more specialized call center for an additional cost than Lyft Concierge and Uber Central.

² <https://www.uber.com/toronto-drivers/services/uberassist-faq/>

³ See <https://help.lyft.com/hc/en-us/articles/115013080548> and <https://www.uber.com/drive/insurance/>

Further, given that Whistlestop in Marin County currently runs a pilot Lyft Concierge platform (see “Are there any local examples?” below), they may be an appropriate administrator of the program for West Contra Costa County if funding becomes available.

How much does it cost?

Cost depends on the platform and the level of subsidy for rides. Demand and cost can be managed by limiting trip purpose (e.g. medical trips) or the number of available trips per person in a certain time period. A pilot or phased roll-out would be advisable to determine demand.

Lyft Concierge and Uber Central charge no fee beyond the ride fares, which vary by product and market and are

based on a combination of trip distance and time. As third party platforms, both GoGoGrandparent and Arrive Rides charge a service fee on top of the ride fare.

The tables on the next page estimate what a platform like this might cost for occasional West Contra County same-day trips, assuming the funding partner funds both the concierge service as well as the ride fares themselves. Estimates are based on several assumptions regarding the total annual trips taken (1,343 or one percent of the annual passenger trips taken in the WCCTAC jurisdiction in FY 15-16), the average trip distance (6 miles), and the average trip length (14.4 minutes based on an average 25 miles per hour speed). In summary, using platforms provided by Lyft or Uber directly will reduce costs and provide a summary dashboard to the program administrator.

Figure 5-1 Concierge Fees for Third Party Platforms

Platform	Fee Structure
Arrive Rides⁴	<p>Ride Fare: Determined by Uber or Lyft</p> <p>Concierge Fee: \$10/month base fee \$5/trip (\$10/trip after hours)</p>
GoGoGrandparent (Bay Area)⁵	<p>Ride Fare: Determined by Uber or Lyft</p> <p>Concierge Fee: \$0.19 per minute</p>

⁴ <http://arriverides.com/pricing/>

⁵ Check pricing and availability at <https://gogograndparent.com/>

Figure 5-2 Estimated Annual Costs for Concierge Options

Lyft Concierge (Lyft Classic Trips)		Uber Central (UberX Trips)	
Pickup	\$1.50	Pickup	\$1.50
Service Fee	\$2.00	Booking Fee	\$2.00
Per Mile	\$0.91	Per Mile	\$0.91
Per Minute	\$0.15	Per Minute	\$0.15
Total Annual	\$14,934	Total Annual	\$14,934

<https://www.lyft.com/fare-estimate> <https://www.uber.com/fare-estimate/>

Arrive Rides and GoGoGrandparent	
Additional Annual Costs	\$6,000-\$24,000

"Pricing" on <https://gogograndparent.com/> and <http://arriverides.com/pricing/>

Prices were current at the time the report was written but are subject to change.

Are there any local examples?

Yes. Whistlestop is a Marin-based non-profit that provides wheelchair-accessible transportation for seniors and disabilities. It is Marin Transit's primary ADA paratransit provider (Marin Access) and also serves the needs of organizations like the San Francisco Institute on Aging and certain medical clinics. In mid-2017, Whistlestop initiated a six-month pilot program using Lyft Concierge. With funding from a private grant, Whistlestop partners with a Marin-based medical clinic to provide free as-needed rides for patients going to and from medical appointments. When a patient indicates difficulty accessing appointments due to lack of transportation, clinic staff send information about the patient and the appointment to Whistlestop, whose staff then act as the concierge using the Lyft platform. The Whistlestop dispatcher remains the patient's primary point-of-contact throughout the ride experience. Initial results indicate a reduction in missed appointments and positive feedback from customers. Whistlestop expects to release an evaluation report in January 2018.

Secondly, though not currently in service, note that GoGoGrandparent was a respondent to Richmond's 2017 Paratransit RFP.

What are the next steps?

The implementation process for a ride-hailing concierge can be fast. The time consuming components involve identifying funding and staffing, and preparing West County's existing mobility managers (e.g. municipal travel trainers) for training partners and individuals on the program.



#4: EXPAND VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAM IN WEST COUNTY

What is it?

Easter Seals Project Action (ESPA) defines volunteer driver programs as a “network of volunteers that provides one-way, round-trip, and multi-stop rides. These programs are provided free of charge, on a donation basis, through membership dues, or at a minimal cost, and typically have an eligibility process and advance reservation requirements.” The National Volunteer Transportation Center provides a list of common characteristics of volunteer driver programs that illustrate the different ways volunteer driver programs can be operated:

- Drivers (paid and/or volunteer)
- Vehicles (owned by organization and/or volunteer)
- Staff (paid and/or volunteer)
- Ride Scheduling (staff and/or driver)
- Organization (menu or free standing)
- Data Management (high tech, low tech, no tech)
- Insurance (full, some, no coverage)
- Service area (defined or flexible)

Mobility Matters, a non-profit organization serving Contra Costa County, offers a volunteer driver program known as Rides for Seniors. There are two models of volunteer driver programs that are being recommended for West Contra Costa County to supplement Rides for Seniors.

A. Traditional Volunteer Driver Program

The first model would be similar to the program currently being provided by Mobility Matters, but that would be operated by a local West County non-profit organization. The purpose of implementing this model would be to address the challenges faced by Mobility Matters in serving a geographic area with different characteristics to that found in the core service area of that program.

B. TRIP Model Volunteer Driver Program

This model originated in Riverside County and has been replicated in numerous locations throughout the country. Riverside’s TRIP program is a self-directed volunteer recruitment model, that was established in 1993 by the Riverside County Transportation Commission and Office on Aging. This resulted in the creation of a non-profit organization called Independent Living Partnership.

The unique model they developed involves friends and neighbors of seniors driving their own vehicles. The program offers consumers recruitment tips and coaching for communicating with drivers. Trips are scheduled by riders and drivers and drivers are offered mileage reimbursement by the program through the rider. Offering the mileage reimbursement, which not all drivers accept, empowers the consumer to request help without the reluctance they might have in a more informal request.

In order to be eligible for TRIP, the program does a careful assessment of applicant capabilities and needs. Riders must be unable to ride transit or reside in an area where it is unavailable; and they must not have other sources for rides, including family support, or the ability to pay for Lyft or Uber, or taxis. In an annual survey riders have reported having no car available, no family to help, difficulty walking, inability to use a bus or van, and feeling in danger of falls. Many also cited inability to pay transit fares, impairment from prescribed medications, frailty, weakness and vision problems.

What need does it serve for West Contra Costa County?

Despite the broad array of non-solo driving transportation options available in West Contra Costa County, there remain mobility gaps that can be addressed by a volunteer driver program. In particular this kind of program can serve people who no longer drive, or do not have access to an automobile, but need door to door – and sometimes door through door – service that a volunteer driver can provide, at times on a same day basis. Paratransit does not always fill this need for seniors, particularly those who are not ADA-eligible. Also, the fixed-route transit agencies have noted that they are experiencing driver shortages. This kind of service is therefore ideal for more frail individuals who cannot wait outside, may need a stabilizing arm, help with a jacket or carrying groceries, etc. This program is also well-suited for certain medical trips, for example when someone needs to stop and pick up a new prescription before going home, or go to a facility in another county for specialized treatment.

Who would be appropriate partners?

For Model A, a broad range of partners could be involved in establishing and operating the program, including faith-based organizations and social service agencies. For the TRIP program, a higher level agency such as the Area Agency on Aging or WCCTAC would be the preferred option, given the more substantial infrastructure that will likely need to be in place.

How much does it cost?

The cost of traditional volunteer driver programs varies substantially, but is often more than stakeholders generally assume due to the labor-intensive administrative functions. In addition, some programs used paid staff to provide a portion of their trips as this can be cheaper than locating and recruiting drivers for all program hours. To provide a high-level estimate of potential program costs, based on volunteer driver program costs in Alameda County, the cost per rider can be in the \$20 to \$30 range.

In Riverside County, the Independent Living Partnership offers start-up assistance for the TRIP model. This non-profit agency has developed a cloud-based web application to administer, manage, and report comprehensive data for TRIP model services. There is an annual subscription cost of less than \$900, which includes training staff on the Riverside TRIP model. Programs will have additional costs for staffing (unless TRIP administers), logistical costs, and mileage reimbursements. The organization estimates that the average cost per trip using this model is approximately \$6, so total program costs would depend on the anticipated trip volumes.

Are there any local examples?

As stated previously, Mobility Matters operates a limited volunteer driver program in West Contra Costa County. In FY 2015-16, Mobility Matters provided 259 one-way trips and had eight registered clients in West Contra Costa County. A three month snapshot in 2017, provided by Mobility Matters, shows 10 clients and 85 trips. Many of the volunteers providing these trips come from Central or East County, rather than West County. Mobility Matters also provides some trips using paid staff.

In the adjoining counties, there is a comprehensive program in Solano County called Faith in Action, and in Alameda County, there are a number of larger programs. These include VIP Rides in south Alameda County, VAST in the Tri Valley, American Cancer Society Road to Recovery, and Drivers for Survivors.

What are the next steps?

WCCTAC will need to make a decision about which of the two models is more feasible for West County. Based on this decision, the agency can choose to either solicit interest from a local non-profit organization or work with the Area Agency on Aging to design a TRIP program. The agency would also need to determine if this new program is going to operate as a one to two year pilot program, or if funding is available for the longer-term.

Based on previous experience, success of the TRIP model has proven to be dependent on leadership, development of funding, skills of program staff, and organizational support of the program. These should all be assessed before the agency makes a decision to pursue this option. If the TRIP model is adopted, WCCTAC should contact “The Independent Living Partnership” to enter an agreement for start-up assistance.

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES



#5: ESTABLISH COMPREHENSIVE WEST COUNTY MOBILITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

What is it?

Mobility management services cover a wide range of activities, such as travel training, coordinated services, trip planning, brokerage, and information and referral. Some mobility management services are closely related to information and referral, but go further by providing more individually tailored information and providing service linkage. Where available, mobility management is an ideal “entry point” for seniors and people with disabilities to the range of transportation resources available. Should funding become available, WCCTAC could implement these mobility management strategies:

- West County Mobility Manager
- West County Call Center
- West County Travel Training

Additional and ambitious long-term vision could lead to more extensive mobility management options. These could include a one call/one click service with centralized dispatch, eligibility, and funding aggregation/accounting services. Brokerages that oversee this service could be operated by a non-profit organization (which could be founded for this purpose) in West County, or possibly for all of Contra Costa County. Examples of similar non-profit comprehensive brokerages include San Diego FACT, San Luis Obispo Ride-On, and Portland’s RideConnection. Another potential longer-term strategy, resulting from concerns raised in strategy #1, would be the creation of one West County service provider for all non-ADA trips.

What need does it solve for West Contra Costa County?

Many stakeholders noted concerns during outreach that programs were too “siloes” and/or confusing. At the same time they expressed concern that West County is different from the rest of Contra Costa County, yet there is concern about missing coordination opportunities with the rest of the County. Mobility Matters is a non-profit organization based in Lafayette, but serving all of Contra Costa County, that offers a toll-free information line that answers questions and refers consumers to the transportation provider that matches their mobility needs. A West County Mobility Manager could take steps towards implementing a centralized call center offering more in-depth mobility management, such as more West County-specialized information, assistance registering with services, or a direct connection to a variety of transportation providers. West County could lead the way for Contra Costa County.

There is also interest in having a full-time West County travel trainer. CIL did not receive the full FTA 5310 funding they requested, which would have provided for that position.

Who would be appropriate implementation partners?

WCCTAC and the cities would need to discuss who should apply for funding for a Mobility Manager and where that office/person would be located. It is unlikely that the transit agencies would have the capacity to take the lead on an application, but they have experience with FTA funds and may be able to advise.

Creation of a centralized call center would benefit from coordination with Mobility Matters. They could provide helpful information about operating an information and referral line, and also retain a connection to the rest of the County. Mobility Matters has communicated with 2-1-1, but do more coordination with the Area Agency on Aging helpline.

The Center for Independent Living (CIL) has taken the lead on earlier travel training efforts and would be an obvious partner for the future.

How much does it cost?

It is difficult to estimate cost for high-level future programs, however the most recent FTA 5310 awards provide some examples. Sonoma County received a grant to cover continued support for countywide coordination: expanded partnerships, integration of non-emergency medical trips, outreach and survey, individualized trip planning; information and referral, and travel training – for a total program cost of \$130,000. CIL's partial grant award for travel training was for a total program cost of \$200,000. These grants cover approximately two years.

Are there any local examples?

Both Marin Transit and Transdev/SF Paratransit have hired Mobility Managers within the last few years. The Marin manager, Paul Branson, implemented a number of new programs and oversight was eventually absorbed back into Marin Transit and Whistlestop staff.

Solano Mobility is a centralized call center that was built on a commuter information service. Sonoma Access was initiated by Santa Rosa Transit staff, and Eden I&R in Alameda County is building a more in-depth one-call one-click service based on 2-1-1.

What are the next steps?

Stakeholders need to discuss roles in anticipation of applying for future funding. Implementing previously recommended coordination strategies will better position the applicants to receive funding. WCCTAC should also discuss CIL's plans for the partial FTA 5310 funding they did receive.



#6: EXPLORE INVESTING IN MICROTRANSIT PLATFORM FOR SAME-DAY TRIPS

What is it?

While the term “microtransit” is new, flexible and demand-response transit systems have been offered by transit agencies across the U.S. for many years. In our experience, the primary motivations for implementing these services include:

- To reduce the cost of providing ADA Paratransit and/or provide a same-day option
- To provide mobility in low-density environments otherwise difficult to serve by fixed-route transit, including feeder service to high-capacity trunk lines
- To provide mobility at lower demand times of day
- To test and/or generate demand for potential future fixed-route service
- To serve areas otherwise difficult to serve with larger vehicles
- To reduce single-occupancy vehicle travel for short trips

Newer providers use state-of-the-art dispatching and communications technologies, and typically sell software products rather than deliver transit services directly, but many of the same principles for what makes microtransit a feasible option for same-day transportation for seniors and people with disabilities still apply.

In West County, a microtransit service might address needs for both specialized as well as general public populations. The idea would be to link an existing provider’s network of vehicles and drivers with a dynamic dispatching software platform for demand-response trips. This service could also apply to the longer-term strategy listed previously of creating one West County service provider for all non-ADA trips.

What need does it solve for West Contra Costa County?

Similar to a ride-hailing concierge service, the primary benefit to West Contra Costa of a microtransit solution would be the introduction of a same-day transportation option. It also offers the opportunity to use lift-equipped vehicles, expanding the customer base to those with motorized wheelchairs or other large mobility devices unable to be transported by Uber and Lyft in most markets. To increase the potential market for microtransit, and thereby increase the feasibility for West Contra Costa County, program parameters could also be expanded to include trips for members of the general public (beyond currently eligible paratransit passengers). These trips may be less suitably made by fixed-route transit in less dense areas of WCCTAC’s jurisdiction.

Unlike a ride-hailing subsidy program, microtransit solutions typically focus on a specific geographic area. Therefore, this solution may be less effective at serving a generalized set of needs and rather tailored for specific trips (e.g. first/last-mile, medical destinations, or shopping centers) unless a West County area-wide program could be supported.

Who would be appropriate implementation partners?

Existing private sector microtransit providers typically sell scheduling and dispatching software to transit providers, who are then ultimately the operators of the system (using agency vehicles and drivers). The software package typically includes a customer-facing app, a driver app, and an administrator app for live monitoring of transit performance. Some of these companies include Via, DemandTrans, TransLoc, Ridecell, and DoubleMap.

In the Bay Area, two transit agencies have piloted such a service—AC Transit (using DemandTrans software) and VTA (using Ridecell software). AC Transit’s Flex service currently operates in Newark and Castro Valley.⁶ As such, AC Transit may be a viable operating partner for a West Contra Costa microtransit pilot. WestCAT, whose service area overlaps, may also be a candidate.

How much does it cost?

Exact costs to license microtransit software would be determined through a formal solicitation process. The primary costs are operational—drivers’ salaries and ongoing maintenance of the fleet. In the case of fixed-route replacement, there may be some opportunities for cost savings due to a reduction in vehicle size or fleet size. In the case of AC Transit’s pilot, planners report: “The permanent elimination of Line 275 and continuation of Flex service is cost-neutral in Newark...the additional cost of the tablet computers and hardware, as well as the software and support provided by DemandTrans, has been offset by the lower operation and maintenance costs of the 24-foot cutaways operating on Flex compared to the 30-foot diesel buses previously operating Line 275.”⁷ It is unclear how smaller vehicles reduce operation and maintenance costs, unless the savings apply in procurement.

Are there any local examples?

Yes. AC Transit currently pilots Flex—a microtransit service being tested as a replacement for Line 275 in Newark, Castro Valley, and Fremont.⁸ It is open to the general public, and individuals can book rides to or from designated bus stops through any internet-enabled device or through AC Transit’s call center. All vehicles can accommodate mobility devices.

The AC Transit Board of Directors approved the continuation of the Flex service at the December 23, 2017 meeting. Line 275 will be eliminated.

What are the next steps?

The first step would be to determine the feasibility of leveraging AC Transit or WestCAT as an implementation partner. Otherwise a vendor with appropriate vehicles

⁶ <http://www.actransit.org/flex/>

⁷ AC Transit Staff Report, “Line 275/Flex Service Public Hearing.” November 8, 2017. Available at http://www.actransit.org/wp-content/uploads/board_memos/14-247a%20Line%20275%20Flex%20Serv.%20PH.pdf

⁸ Ibid.

would need to be identified separately. Additional analysis would be required to identify feasible locations for serving the needs of seniors and people with disabilities, as well as providing a service relevant to a general public audience. Eventually, WCCTAC could issue an RFI to obtain specific information about technology costs and capabilities.



#7: SUPPORT INCREASE IN AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION FOR SENIORS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

What is it?

Consider a future ballot measure, similar to 2016's Measure X sales tax measure, to increase sustainable funding for seniors and people with disabilities. Currently, Measure J brings in over \$1.7 million into West County for transportation for seniors and people with disabilities.

Measure X would have increased the sales tax 0.5 percent for 30 years to fund transportation improvements, essentially doubling the current funding. Among the programs included in the expenditure plan were enhancing bus/transit including for seniors and people with disabilities, which would have received 4% of the funding (in addition to the 5% currently received from Measure J). Accordingly current funding would have increased approximately 80%. Measure X was projected to provide \$2.9 billion total of local funding over 30 years.

In California, 24 local county transportation agencies have passed voter-approved transportation sales tax measures. These agencies work with the California Transportation Commission, the California Department of Transportation, elected officials as well as other public and private sector interests to implement their Transportation Expenditure Plans (TEPs).

Other funding opportunities should be pursued as opportunities arise. Federal and Regional options include FTA 5310 and Lifeline funding, while State level examples include the recent Regional Measure 3, Senate Bill 1, Caltrans Sustainable Communities Planning Grants, and future greenhouse gas reduction funding opportunities.

What need does it solve for West Contra Costa County?

Additional sustainable funding would be necessary to implement the suggested long-term strategies. Furthermore, coordination and efficiency improvements in the absence of increased revenues will not allow accommodation of the projected growth in demand. Increased revenues are a necessity.

Who would be appropriate implementation partners?

All previously listed stakeholders (CCTA, WCCTAC, Contra Costa County, service providers, consumers, etc.) would need to assist in crafting/refining a new sales tax measure and providing information about it to the public.

How much does it cost?

The TEP for Measure X was prepared in 2016 and could likely be updated rather than requiring a whole new TEP to be created. It would be instructive to look at any analysis or market research on why Measure X did not pass.

Are there any local examples?

Alameda County recently passed Measure BB, a sales tax measure augmentation, in 2014 after not passing by a minimal margin in 2012. Measure BB was unusual in that it passed in a non-presidential election year. Alameda County is also unique in allocating ten percent of funds to transportation for seniors and people with disabilities.

In 2016, Monterey County passed their Measure X, which included the Senior & Disabled Transportation Services Program. The purpose of this program is to increase transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities to support their ability to live independently in their homes and communities. Per Measure X policies, the program is intended to fund non-profit transportation services to support seniors and persons with disabilities. The goals are to give seniors more transportation options, support independent travel by people with disabilities, and provide safer and more reliable senior transportation services. The program funding allocation is \$15 million over 30 years, which is approximately \$500,000 per year.⁹

What are the next steps?

Stakeholders are encouraged to discuss options for funding solutions with the WCCTAC and CCTA Boards, and the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors.

⁹ Transportation Agency for Monterey County. <http://www.tamcmonterey.org/measure-x/programs-projects/senior-disabled-transportation-program/>

COST IMPLICATIONS

Figure 5-3 Cost Implications for Short and Long Term Strategies

Strategy	Relative Cost \$ = Lowest Cost \$\$\$\$ = Highest Cost
#1: Better Coordination between ADA-Mandated and City Paratransit Programs	\$
#2: Create a Travel Orientation Program	\$\$
#3: Investigate Role of Ride-Hailing Concierge Service	\$\$\$\$ <i>Dependent on operational model</i>
#4: Expand Volunteer Driver Program in West County	\$\$
#5: Establish Comprehensive West County Mobility Management Program	\$\$\$
#6: Explore Investing in Microtransit Platform for Same-Day Trips	\$\$\$\$ <i>Dependent on operational model</i>
#7: Support Increase in Available Funding for Transportation for Seniors and People with Disabilities	\$



Chapter 6 NEXT STEPS

WCCTAC and the Measure J transportation providers have a unique opportunity to address upcoming transportation challenges for seniors and people with disabilities. West Contra Costa County offers services from a mixture of transit, private transportation, ADA-mandated paratransit, city-based paratransit programs, and non-profit organization partners. It is also a diverse area comprised of urban, suburban, and rural communities. One of the biggest challenges West County faces moving forward is striking a balance between meeting West County needs but still coordinating and collaborating with the whole of Contra Costa County.

WCCTAC can position West County to meet this challenge by working with partners to increase coordination and cooperation within the area and by supporting new solutions to some of the most urgent needs, such as improving the City of Richmond program, and increasing access to medical trips and travel training.

As noted earlier, coordination “can range from sharing passenger trips and vehicles to collaborating on facilities, training, purchasing, or maintenance. Fully coordinated services may evolve into an integrated brokerage in which one entity schedules and collects payment for trips performed by several providers or into full consolidation of several transportation services under one agency.”¹ When discussing and/or planning coordination activities it is necessary to be explicit about what each partner means.

WCCTAC and West County stakeholders should review and move forward with some or all of the recommended short-term strategies. Visible improvements in coordination, increased travel training, and potential access to ride-



¹ National Center for Mobility Management. <https://nationalcenterformobilitymanagement.org/by-topic/coordination/>

hailing and volunteer driver trips would provide a strong basis for upcoming planning and funding opportunities.

Regarding planning, Contra Costa County's proposed Measure X Transportation Expenditure Plan included a proposed Accessible Transit Study. On September 19, 2017, the County Board of Supervisors received a white paper addressing the issues and noting that completion of the Study should still be considered.² The white paper also notes this WCCTAC Study.

In October 2017, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) applied for a Caltrans Sustainable Communities Planning Grant for an Accessible Transportation Strategic Plan. Unfortunately the grant was not funded, but CCTA may apply again in 2018. WCCTAC's research and implementation efforts could contribute greatly to a future Contra Costa Accessible Transportation Study.

Implementation of long-term strategies would likely depend on access to increased sustainable funding. This will be necessary to establish a comprehensive mobility management program, either in West County or as part of a Contra Costa County program. It would also be necessary to pilot new emerging mobility-type strategies, such as a Microtransit Platform for a shuttle to meet some same-day trip needs. Support of funding for these types of programs is also a long-term strategy.

² Contra Costa County. <http://www.contracosta.ca.gov/6131/Accessible-Transit-Services-Resources>



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