



Office of the City Manager

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ACTION CALENDAR

December 3, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager  
Submitted by: Kelly Wallace, Interim Director, Health, Housing and Community Services  
Subject: Companion Report: Taxi scrips to be provided to residents of Pathways/the STAIR Center

RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager will ensure that STAIR Center staff are incorporating applications and access to existing community transportation programs, such as East Bay Paratransit and Berkeley Rides for Seniors and the Disabled, into routine provision of services to mobility-impaired STAIR guests.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Staff time.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Homeless Commission raises a very important concern for the well-being of clients at the STAIR Center. As of this writing in early October, 71% of clients currently at the STAIR Center, and 75% of clients who have ever used a STAIR bed, report having a disability of any kind; of that, 42% of current clients, and 47% of clients ever using a bed, specifically report having a physical disability. At any given time, the STAIR Center serves a large number of clients who are mobility-impaired and use wheelchairs or walkers. Therefore, the program's physical location, from which crossing the railroad tracks is necessary to access almost every other service in Berkeley, does pose challenges and potential danger to these individuals.

It is important to note that disabled STAIR residents already have access to a number of existing Berkeley and Alameda County transportation programs, including East Bay Paratransit and Berkeley Rides for Seniors and the Disabled (BRSD),<sup>1</sup> which includes taxi scrips for low-income seniors over the age of 70 or anyone certified as disabled by East Bay Paratransit.

Therefore, staff advise against creating a separate taxi scrip program for three reasons:

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/ContentDisplay.aspx?id=3992>

1. Mobility impairment affects clients at all of Berkeley's homeless programs, so targeted investment in transportation services for one program without consideration of similar needs elsewhere would not be equitable.
2. Creating a new transportation program would duplicate existing City and County transportation services, which would not be an efficient use of limited city resources.
3. Assistance with the BRSD application<sup>2</sup> for anyone who is mobility-impaired can and should become a routine part of existing STAIR case management services for mobility-impaired program guests, and helps empower these individuals to access similar resources in their community once they transition out of the shelter and into housing.

Accordingly, we recommend that Council direct the City Manager to ensure that BRSD and other community transportation application assistance is incorporated into the day-to-day service provision at the STAIR Center.

#### BACKGROUND

At their September 11, 2019 regular meeting, the Homeless Commission approved the report, "Taxi scripts to be provided to residents of Pathways/the STAIR Center," with the following motion:

**Action:** M/S/C Hill/ Mulligan to approve the report to Council with the following amendments: (i) add "..., as well as public shuttle system coordinated by the City of Berkeley and Alameda County" to the last sentence under the Recommendation section, and (ii) remove the sentence under the Alternative Actions Considered section, and replace it with "We considered changes to the AC Transit bus routes."

**Vote:** Ayes: Hill, Mulligan, Marasovic, Hirpara, Kealoha-Blake, Hollyman, Behm-Steinberg.  
Noes: None. *Abstain:* None. *Absent:* None.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Helping clients access existing resources, rather than adding new shuttles/vehicle programs, helps reduce vehicle congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, and is therefore consistent with Berkeley's climate goals.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The STAIR Center's case management philosophy aims to minimize dependence on the program by providing connections to community resources and teaching skills that

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<sup>2</sup> A copy of the application can be found here:

[https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Housing/Level\\_3\\_-\\_General/Berkeley%20Paratransit%20Non-ADA%20Appication\\_FILLABLE\(1\).pdf](https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Housing/Level_3_-_General/Berkeley%20Paratransit%20Non-ADA%20Appication_FILLABLE(1).pdf)

last after the client has been housed. Utilizing existing case management resources to access existing community transportation programs is consistent with this philosophy and represents the most efficient and equitable use of limited resources.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSON

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