

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Paratransit One-Seat Ride Program – Permanent MOU

FROM: Kadri Klm, Paratransit Planner

DATE: December 2, 2024

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**Action Requested**

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the Executive Director to enter into a permanent MOU with County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, and WestCat to continue the One-Seat Ride program.

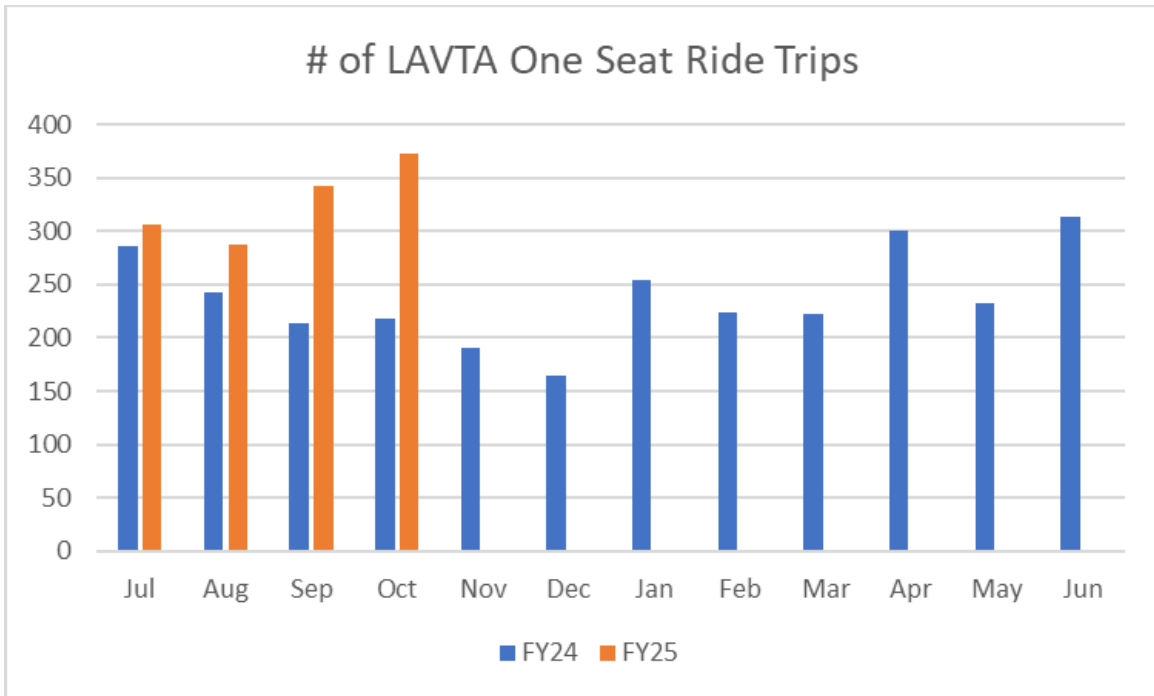
**Background**

In November 2020, the County Connection Board approved a six-month One-Seat Ride (OSR) pilot program serving ADA paratransit eligible passengers across multiple transit agency service areas, governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between participating agencies including: Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority, Central Contra Costa County Transit Authority, Eastern Contra Costa Transit Authority, and Western Contra Costa Transit Authority. The pilot program simplified regional travel on paratransit by eliminating the need for transfers when crossing between paratransit service areas, ensuring passengers have a seamless one-seat ride throughout their journey.

The pilot program was extended in April 2021, November 2022, and November 2023, while the program matured and partner agencies implemented a variety of innovations and improvements, including: streamlining customer service procedures, expanding fare payment options, unified data management and invoicing algorithms, and procedures for reporting OSR program data to the National Transit Database (NTD).

**Discussion**

After an extended pilot phase, the OSR program has proven itself to be enormously beneficial for riders as well as operationally advantageous and cost-effective for the partnering agencies, when compared to the previous system of coordinated inter-operator transfer trips. LAVTA OSR ridership has been steadily increasing as the chart below illustrates:



Customers benefit from shorter and more comfortable origin to destination rides as well as lower fares, while OSR partner agencies benefit from significantly greater predictability and much lower shared per-trip costs.

All OSR trips are booked and dispatched through County Connection’s LINK paratransit call center. OSR trips are performed primarily by County Connection’s paratransit subcontractor, with the primary contractor providing “reverse rescue” service in cases where the subcontractor is unable to provide the trip – typically about 12% of monthly OSR trips. OSR passengers are charged the local ADA paratransit fare for the jurisdiction where each one-way trip originates. For example, if the OSR trip originates from LAVTA service area in Livermore and the destination is Pinole, the rider only pays \$3.75 LAVTA fare for this trip. For the return ride from Pinole the rider would pay \$3.00, which is the WestCAT’s fare. Following the close of each month, County Connection invoices the other partner agencies for the actual hours and reverse rescue miles operated within each partner’s jurisdiction. Going forward, County Connection will report all OSR operations data to the NTD in the same way as ADA paratransit service is reported, and the partners will report program costs through coordinated reports.

In consultation with the partner agencies and Legal, County Connection has prepared a draft permanent MOU to govern the OSR program going forward. The draft MOU is based largely on the earlier pilot-phase agreements and incorporates significant changes at the request of all parties involved. Notable changes from the pilot MOUs include clarification of party roles and responsibilities, and new provisions for cost sharing and monthly reporting. As before, the operating costs for OSR service will be apportioned between the partners based on the actual time and distance traveled in each agency’s service area. However, the new MOU also

includes partial support for County Connection’s overhead costs, which would increase each partner agency’s share of the cost, including LAVTA, by about 10%.

In FY24 the average cost per OSR trip for LAVTA was \$15.14 compared to regular Dial-a-Ride trip for the same time period, which was \$58.09. The cost for OSR during the pilot phase of the program has been lower since LAVTA (as well as Tri-Delta Transit and WestCAT) have only paid variable costs (based on revenue hours and miles traveled within LAVTA service area), but not the fixed costs, which have been covered by County Connection.

The new MOU also includes a list of specific metrics that will be reported to the partner agencies every month – which is also expected to facilitate more detailed and timely reporting and analysis to the Board.

**Fiscal Impact**

With OSR becoming a permanent program, County Connection will add about 10% administrative fee to partner agencies’ costs. Assuming current ridership levels, the anticipated increase in cost to LAVTA will be approximately \$5,000 annually, making the total annual cost for the program about \$55,000. Starting in FY25, LAVTA’s OSR trips are partially paid for by Alameda CTC discretionary grant for Wheels Access Mobility Management.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors approve Resolution 35-2024 to authorize the Executive Director to enter into a permanent MOU with County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, and WestCat to formalize the One-Seat Ride Paratransit program.

Attachment:

1. Resolution 35-2024

**RESOLUTION NO. 35-2024**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE  
LIVERMORE AMADOR VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY AUTHORIZING  
THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A MEMORANDUM OF  
UNDERSTANDING IMPLEMENTING THE ONE-SEAT RIDE PROGRAM  
WITH THE PARTICIPATING AGENCIES**

**WHEREAS**, on August 20, 2020 the Central Contra Costa County Transit Authority's Board of Directors approved a six-month pilot program to provide a one-seat regional ride for paratransit passengers wishing to travel across multiple transit agency service areas;

**WHEREAS**, the participating agencies included Central Contra Costa County Transit Authority (CCCTA), Eastern Contra Costa Transit Authority (TriDelta Transit), Western Contra Costa Transit Authority (WestCAT), and Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (LAVTA);

**WHEREAS**, the pilot program streamlined regional paratransit ride practices by eliminating required transfers for trips that crossed multiple transit service areas, enabling passengers to have a one-seat ride for the entire duration of their trip;

**WHEREAS**, due to the success of the pilot program and the participating agencies' need to collect and analyze data, the pilot program was extended through November 30, 2024;

**WHEREAS**, due to the continued success of the pilot program, LAVTA and the other participating agencies wish to implement the One-Seat Regional Ride Program as a permanent program; and

**WHEREAS**, staff recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the Executive Director or designee to execute the Memorandum of Understanding with the participating agencies implementing the program.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors authorizes the Executive Director or designee to execute a Memorandum of Understanding implementing the program and to take any other actions necessary to implement the program.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 2nd DAY OF DECEMBER 2024.**

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Evan Branning, Vice Chair

ATTEST

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Christy Wegener, Executive Director