



Legislation Text

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TITLE:

ENHANCED MOBILITY FOR SENIORS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES GRANT FUNDING - OCTA

DEPARTMENT: PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

**PRESENTED BY: BRIAN GRUNER, PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
DIRECTOR**

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RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council conduct the public hearing to meet Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) grant fund application (Attachment 1) requirements to establish coordination with non-profits and ensure services are not being duplicated.

BACKGROUND:

The Orange County Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (EMSD) Program was developed to support local agencies in the delivery of Federal Transit Administration eligible activities. The EMSD Program is intended to meet the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when transportation services provided are unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meet these needs. The EMSD program offers grant funding for capital (vehicles and equipment) and operating mobility management and operating assistance type projects.

On May 28, 2024, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors approved the use of up to \$8.5 million for the 2024 EMSD Call for Projects using local funding support based on Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 (FTA 5310) amounts allocated to Orange County.

On June 27, 2024, City staff applied for \$285,000 in grant funding, which requires a 20% match (\$57,000) from the City that is not currently budgeted, totaling \$285,000 in funds. The funds would be expended over an 18-month period beginning January 2025. As a condition of applying to the EMSD, the City is required to hold a public hearing to establish coordination with non-profits and ensure services are not being duplicated. Awards are expected to be announced by OCTA in September 2024.

ANALYSIS:

The City of Costa Mesa Senior Center Senior Taxi Program is a free door-to-door driving service to all residents of Costa Mesa ages 60 and older. The program is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for rides to medical appointments throughout Orange County. The Senior Taxi Program also provides non-medical rides throughout the city of Costa Mesa's boundaries. (Attachment 2).

The current program is funded by a combination of grant and general funds. Due to increased demand and usage, both grant and general funds will be depleted by February 2025 if current service levels are sustained. Without these grant funds, the City of Costa Mesa may need to consider more restrictive boundary limits for medical appointments, restrictions on the types of destinations for non-medical appointments, charging fees for rides, or increasing general fund appropriations to maintain services throughout FY 2024-25.

City staff identified two non-profits, Abrazar and Age Well, that provide non-emergency medical transportation services to seniors in Orange County that have been notified of the city's grant application and the public hearing. Both were requested to provide feedback on whether there is sufficient overlap in services that we can better coordinate.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City may withdraw the grant application; however, as discussed above, city staff estimates that current funding will be depleted; hence there is a clear need for the grant funds.

FISCAL REVIEW:

There is currently no fiscal impact associated with this item, however a 20% match in the amount of \$57,000 is required if the City is awarded the full \$285,000.

LEGAL REVIEW:

This City Attorney's Office has reviewed this agenda report and approves it as to form.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

This project works toward achieving the following City Council goals:

- Strengthen the Public's Safety and Improve the Quality of Life.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends the City Council conduct the public hearing to meet Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) grant fund application (Attachment 1) requirements to establish coordination with non-profits and ensure services are not being duplicated.