



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: March 18, 2014

Prepared By/Phone Number: Juanita Jackson/854-4467

Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head: Sherri E. Fleming,
County Executive for Health and Human Services and Veterans Service

Commissioners Court Sponsor: Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Ratify Request From Travis County Health & Human Services And Veterans Service To Make Application To Capmetro For The Purchase Of Bus Passes In Accordance With Provisions In The Funds.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

See attached memo

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

See attached memo

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

See attached memo

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

See attached memo

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Mary Etta Gerhardt, Assistant County Attorney'
Leslie Browder, County Executive, Planning and Budget Office
Cyd Grimes, CPM, Travis County Purchasing Agent
Nicki Riley, CAP, CMA, Travis County Auditor
Patty Lennon, Financial Analyst, Travis County Auditor's Office
Aerin Toussaint, Analyst, Planning and Budget Office
Sherri Fleming, County Executive, HHSVS

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to the County Judge's office, agenda@co.travis.tx.us by **Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.



**TRAVIS COUNTY HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES
and VETERANS SERVICE
502 E. Highland Mall Blvd
P. O. Box 1748
Austin, Texas 78767**

**Sherri E. Fleming
County Executive
(512) 854-4100
Fax (512) 854-4115**

Date: March 3, 2014

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT

FROM:

Sherri E. Fleming

Sherri E. Fleming, County Executive

Travis County Health and Human Services and Veterans Service

SUBJECT: Acceptance of 2014 Basic Transportation Needs Fund, Capital Metro Bus Pass Program Application

Proposed Motion: Consider and take appropriate action to approve the 2014 Basic Transportation Needs Fund, Capital Metro Bus Pass Program Application.

Summary and Staff Recommendation: Staff requests the acceptance and approval of the application for the 2014 Basic Transportation Needs Fund (BTNF), Capital Metro Bus Pass Program. This program allows the accepted applicants to purchase deeply discounted Capital Metro bus passes to be distributed to Travis County residents who are at or below 150% of the current federal poverty income guideline and are transit dependent. The passes may only be used to seek employment, educational opportunities, healthcare and / or social services. The department anticipates the need to purchase 1,215 7-day local fare passes and 1,345 31-day local fare passes. As indicated in the application, the department will distribute these passes to eligible individuals at the department's seven Family Support Services center locations.

Budgetary and Fiscal Impact: The department anticipates the total needed to purchase the fare passes will be \$13,830. and will internally fund this program purchase upon notification of an approved application by Capital Metro. The current grant program period is 9/1/13 through 8/31/14.

Issues and Opportunities: The department has participated in a grant bus pass program administered by Capital Metro since May, 2013. This is the first year Capital Metro has offered this program as purchasing fare passes at deeply discounted rates.

Using the current program guidelines, the department has distributed 653 daily passes and 991 7-day passes. The department anticipates this program being offered to again help with offsetting transportation costs for the working poor and homeless persons in the County.

cc: Leslie Browder, County Executive, Planning and Budget Office
Aerin Toussaint, Budget Analyst I, Planning and Budget Office
Nicki Riley, CPA, Travis County Auditor
DeDe Bell, Financial Audit Manager, County Auditors
Cyd Grimes, C.P.M., C.P.P.O, Travis County Purchasing Agent
Shannon Pleasant, Purchasing Agent Asst. III, Purchasing Office
Mary Etta Gerhardt, Assistant County Attorney
Jim Lehrman, Social Services Director, Family Support Services



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**Travis County Health and Human Services and Veterans Service
Basic Transportation Needs Fund - Bus Pass Program 2014-2015**

1. Overview

Organization: Travis County Health and Human Services and Veterans Service [HHS/VS]

Contact Name: Jim Lehrman 512-854-9879; Ross Stephens 512-854-1521

Contact emails: jim.lehrman@co.travis.tx.us; ross.stephens@co.travis.tx.us

Website: http://www.co.travis.tx.us/health_human_services/default.asp

We estimate that at least 2500 clients will receive passes.

Number and Type of Passes Requested: 1345 Monthly and 1215 Weekly passes at the Local fare rate from the Basic Transportation Needs Fund [BTNF] for distribution

2. Project Description

Need: A high percentage of clients served by TCHH/VS through FSS programs are transit-dependent. This means that due to age, disability, income or lack of a working car, they are more likely to be reliant on public transportation to meet basic life needs such as obtaining food, accessing health care, or getting to work. Transit-dependent populations face many challenges. For those living in central areas of the city, a trip to work or a doctor's office will often require a number of transfers and several hours from door to door. For those living in outlying areas of the County, public transportation infrastructure is not robust enough to meet the needs of working families and individuals without imposing significant hardship.

A recent analysis performed by KFH Group, Inc. found that, relative to other counties in the region, most of Travis County has a high density of transit-dependent individuals. Those transit-dependent individuals who speak languages other than English and/or are members of minority communities are transit-dependent at higher rates than their white, English-speaking counterparts. Offsetting the cost of transportation makes it possible for these populations to use their scarce resources to meet other basic needs as they move toward self-sufficiency.

Purpose: The purpose of this program is to offset the transportation costs of the working poor, refugees and homeless persons served by TCHHS/VS. By offering passes to our FSS clients, we are maximizing our investment in services to the client by ensuring that they will have transportation to get to medical appointments, job interviews or other service sites and it won't be lack of bus fare that keeps them from continuing to move toward self-sufficiency.

Self Sufficiency: Bus Passes will be provided to individuals/families who live in the community, but have a need for assistance to enable them to maximize their ability to gain, regain and/or maintain self-sufficiency.

Geographic Area: Travis County

¹ KFH Group, Inc. Update to Capital Area Coordinated Public Transit- Health and Human Services Transportation Plan, March 2011, <http://www.caction.org/CAN-Research/Reports/2011/CAMPO%20RTCC%20TM%204%20-%20Needs%20Assessment%203-17-11.pdf>, accessed February 25, 2014.

**Travis County Health and Human Services and Veterans Service
Basic Transportation Needs Fund - Bus Pass Program 2014-2015**

Client Eligibility:

Clients who are at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty and are transit dependent and need assistance in Employment, Education, Healthcare Access, and Social Services Access

Distribution:

1. A Family Support Services (FSS) staff member will ensure that the client is at or below 150% FPIG for last 30 days.
 - a. If client has no income, clients must sign Bus Intake form specifically stating "no Income".*
 - b. If a client has income, income can be calculated using the Data links income calculator to ensure clients eligibility and attach that income documentation to the Bus Intake form.*
 - c. If a client is currently receiving services through a community center and has already had income determined, that income documentation can be used and attached to the Bus Intake form.*
2. An FSS staff member completes or has the client complete an Eligibility Form.
3. An FSS staff member enters the information from the Eligibility Form into the Daily Pass Tracking Form.
4. An FSS staff member completes the Bus Tracking Database Form
5. An FSS staff member distributes the Bus Passes to the named recipient.

Safety:

Upon receipt of bus passes, HHS/VS' BTNF Point of Contact will secure the bus passes in a locked cabinet (only accessible to the SSPA) at the Del Valle Center.

Centers participating in the BTNF will designate a Bus Pass Custodian that will secure passes in a locked cabinet only accessible to that person and/or a proxy chosen by the bus pass custodian.

3. Performance

We estimate that for 2014, the bus passes requested will provide at least 48,855 rides in the 12-month period.

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**Travis County Health and Human Services and Veterans Service
Basic Transportation Needs Fund - Bus Pass Program 2014-2015**

TCHHS/VS has nearly exhausted all of its 2013 bus pass allocation with less than 80 passes remaining and will complete the remaining distribution of passes by the end of March 2014.

4. Leveraging

TCHHS/VS has been partially funding the Capital Metro route serving Del Valle for a number of years. A grant from the BTNF will enable more working poor, homeless and refugee clients to utilize this route, therefore maximizing our investment in this vital piece of local transportation infrastructure. Most FSS sites are co-located with other services that many clients utilize in addition to FSS services. The FSS Oak Hill site is co-located with a WIC site, a Community Care Clinic, services for seniors, a Justice of the Peace Court, and a Travis County tax office. The Del Valle FSS site is co-located with a WIC site, a Community Care Clinic, as well as SMART, a substance abuse treatment program for ex-offenders, Travis County Correctional Complex and a senior program. The Post Road FSS site is co-located with an Attorney General Child Support Court, Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Travis County Drug Diversion Court, and the Offices of both the Juvenile Public Defender and the Mental Health Public Defender. Palm Square FSS is co-located with the Office of Children's Services, Workforce Solutions, Goodwill Industries, Travis County Veterans Service, and Children FIRST. The bus passes distributed to FSS clients will maximize utilization and efficiency of services provided at organizations co-located with FSS sites.

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