



COMMISSION ON SENIORS BUDGET RECOMMENDATION
20220309 -04Cvii
SUPPORT FOR TRANSPORTATION AND VOLUNTEER DRIVER RIDE SERVICE
FOR OLDER ADULTS
Strategic Direction: Mobility

Date: March 9, 2022

Subject: FY23 Budget Recommendations

Motioned By: Varteressian

Seconded By: Kareithi

Recommendation

Provide funding and/or partner with organizations which provide the volunteer driver ride programs in Austin (examples include Chariot, Drive a Senior, Capital City Village, and others).

Description of Recommendation to Council

- Direct the City Manager to identify appropriate City department staff and have them engage in discussions with the volunteer driver ride program managers to determine needs.
- Have City department staffs identify funds, staff support, or other potential partnerships.
- Include funding for transportation services in contracts for social service programs serving older adults.
- Provide funds to expand these programs, such as supporting van services with paid drivers

Rationale:

Volunteer ride share providers serve a critical need for our community's senior and people with disabilities. Demand for this service is high. Many people in these populations cannot drive. While Parks and Recreation and Capital Metro have services to assist these populations, the demand far exceeds the capacity. Further, many older adults who do not qualify for Metro Access will not ride the bus (for example, because there is not a nearby bus stop). Austin has one of the fastest growing senior populations in the nation so demand will only continue to increase. Older adults responding to the Commission on Seniors budget survey often cited transportation as a barrier to accessing city programs and services. Comments submitted to the Commission from the public also show a strong preference by older adults for transportation by the own vehicle, a ride share or a volunteer driver program.

Volunteer Driver Ride programs provide a means to get older adults to the doctor, grocery store, or other critical appointments. Rides to social and cultural events would provide a means to help reduce social isolation, but these rides have to be given lower priority when demand exceeds capacity. If the City provides help, it could allow the organizations to scale up to meet demand, improve the organization's ability to provide services more equitably, and develop collaborations to share resources. These

organizations are largely dependent on grants and their clientele cannot afford to pay a service fee.

Vote

For: Briesemeister, Varteressian, Angel, Bauman, Bordie, De Maria Nicola, Garcia-Pittman, Kareithi, Lopez-Guerrero, Spain, Temperley, Van Sickle

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Cagle, Lugo

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janee Briesemeister", written over a horizontal line.

Janee Briesemeister