



**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
Inter-Departmental Correspondence  
County Manager



**Date:** October 7, 2013

**Board Meeting Date:** October 22, 2013

**Special Notice / Hearing:** None

**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** John L. Maltbie, County Manager

**Subject:** Agreement with SamTrans

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a Resolution authorizing an agreement with SamTrans whereby the County will provide \$5 million in each FY 2013-14 and in 2014-15 to subsidize service to youth, elderly and the disabled.

**BACKGROUND:**

The San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) provides SamTrans bus service, including Redi-Wheels and Redi-Coast Para-transit services, and the CalTrain commuter rail service. SamTrans bus services directly support routes to community-based safety net and County government services and students commuting to local schools. According to SamTrans, the system serves the neediest residents in the County: 41 percent of riders have an annual income below \$25,000 and 21 percent are elderly or disabled. SamTrans provides essential mobility for more than 6,800 elderly and disabled riders through Redi-Wheels and Redi-Coast Paratransit services.

In 2012, SamTrans fixed bus routes provided 500,000 trips to County services and associated facilities. Redi-Wheels provided more than 70,000 trips directly to County services. These facilities include the Daly City Service Center, the Safe Harbor Homeless Shelter in South San Francisco, Seton Coastside Hospital, the Pacifica Resource Center, San Mateo Medical Center, the County Housing Department, Mills-Peninsula Medical Center, Samaritan House, El Concilio, San Mateo County Peninsula Works offices, Belle Haven Community Center, Human Services Agency offices in East Palo Alto, North Fair Oaks, South San Francisco and Daly City and the County Government Center in Redwood City.

Additionally, San Mateo County Human Services Agency currently has an agreement with Sam Trans to purchase \$1 million in tickets and bus passes annually to serve low-income individuals who have applied for or who are on aid, as well as passes for

youth, child welfare cases and for those on juvenile probation. SamTrans provides a 5 percent discount on this purchase.

**DISCUSSION:**

SamTrans has a \$124 million operating budget, receives funding from the farebox and from Federal, State and local sources, including from a countywide sales tax measure approved by more than 75 percent of the voters in 2004. Nonetheless, SamTrans continues to struggle with a budget shortfall, despite cost-cutting measures. SamTrans has requested \$10 million or a \$5 million annual subsidy for the next two fiscal years to support its services, which include the annual 306,586 Paratransit trips in FY 2013, costing \$14.8 million. The Measure A proposal submitted in July projects a 1-2% growth in annual fixed-route and paratransit ridership. Para-transit service is required but not funded by the Federal American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

SamTrans asserts that it plays an essential role in the delivery of County services by providing the means by which many recipients can go to County facilities. Sam Trans argues that without a subsidy, it would face the elimination of fixed bus routes as well as reductions to others services, including Paratransit.

SamTrans just completed a comprehensive review of its entire fixed-route bus service with the goal of implementing service changes and improvements that would increase ridership and expand the reach of the bus and Paratransit services. SamTrans is undertaking several initiatives to stabilize its funding and to resolve annual structural deficits that have historically exceeded \$10 million. While the scope of the problem is larger than \$5 million request, such an amount will be of significant assistance in providing stability on an interim basis in reducing fiscal pressure to reduce services that would negatively impact County recipients of service.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURE(S):**

<b>Measure</b>	<b>FY 2012-13 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2013-14 Projected</b>	<b>FY 2014-15 Projected</b>
<b>Zero trip denials for Paratransit customers</b>	306,586 (baseline)	309,652 (+1% growth)	312,748 (+1% growth)

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

\$10 million: \$5 in each FY2013-14 and 2014-15 to subsidize Paratransit services that directly serve the elderly and disabled in San Mateo County have access to critical health, human services and safety net providers.