

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 4/23/2025

Staff Report No. 25-110

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Kathleen Kelly, Interim General Manager/Chief Executive Officer
SUBJECT: Paratransit Coverage under the August 2025 Service Change

BRIEFING ITEM

AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST: ☐

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving an update on Paratransit coverage for East Bay Paratransit (EBP) riders under the August 2025 service change, limiting coverage to a three-quarter mile buffer around the new network.

Staff Contact:
Ramakrishna Pochiraju, Executive Director of Planning & Engineering

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Convenient and Reliable Service
Initiative - Service Quality

Providing adequate paratransit coverage within the guidance of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is key to ensuring there are transportation options for those who cannot ride fixed-route service and who qualify to use paratransit service.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

Adhering to a three-quarter mile buffer for paratransit eligibility associated with the service network that will be implemented in August removes eligibility for 76 existing riders and results in an estimated annual savings of up to \$150,000 for EBP based on Fiscal Year 2024 ridership data (more recent data from the first half of this fiscal year suggests the number of impacted riders could be less). As a reminder, the District pays 69% of EBP costs with the remainder paid by the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART).

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

Prior to the pandemic, EBP provided an estimated 2,700 trips per day. Following the state of emergency and shelter-in-place orders, the number of trips fell to about 300 trips per day, almost overnight. With additional capacity to provide service during the pandemic, the District participated in food delivery to seniors and those in need outside of the normal paratransit eligibility zones. Although this program was initially intended to be in effect for a six-month period, the Board later extended the food delivery program until June 2021.

Since the pandemic, paratransit service has remained available to some people outside the mandated

eligibility area. With the Board-approved service changes set for implementation in August 2025, the EBP paratransit service coverage will adhere to the ADA mandate of three-quarters of a mile around the fixed-route network. The table below lists current users that reside outside of the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of realigned fixed-route network:

	FY 23/24	FY 24/25 (July 1 - Dec 31, 2024)
EBP Riders	76 ⁽¹⁾	18 ⁽²⁾

(1) Of these 76, eight (8) were San Mateo residents associated with the operation of Line M and would not be eligible.

(2) These 18 riders took 541 total trips. 76% percent of the trips were taken by three (3) individuals.

The eight (8) San Mateo residents associated with the operation of Line M would be referred to SamTrans' paratransit system, Redi-Wheels. Of the 541 total trips, referenced in footnote (2) above, 62% of the trips had a destination to another city and would therefore require a transfer. Staff has and will continue to work with City of Hayward, Union City Paratransit and Ride-On Tri-City to transition these 18 individuals to alternative transportation services. The affected riders are primarily located in Union City and Hayward (see Attachment 1). These riders will be notified well in advance of implementation and given at least 60 days prior to the change to explore alternative transportation options. Fortunately, Alameda County has robust city-based paratransit programs and alternative ADA paratransit programs, funded largely through the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC), that affected riders could be referred to (see Attachment 2).

Past Practice

The paratransit coverage area was adjusted in compliance with ADA mandate during major service changes in 2003 and 2010. The 2003 service changes had a similar impact on 70 then-existing 70 paratransit riders as will the service changes happening in August 2025. At that time, staff similarly conducted extensive outreach to ensure the 70 affected paratransit riders were aware of the change and available alternatives.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

Adhering to uniform coverage for paratransit service, with no exceptions, avoids unfairness and confusion among riders. In addition, adhering to the guidelines will result in annual cost savings.

The primary disadvantage of adhering to the ADA mandate is that service for some current paratransit riders won't be retained or will require a transfer.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

Staff considered an alternative to retain EBP access for some duration of time for the East Bay riders impacted by the new network coverage. This alternative would apply to existing riders but would not extend paratransit service to new customers outside of the three-quarter mile buffer of the new network. Logistically, this alternative would require overriding the dispatching system and locking-in the existing riders for them to continue to book trips. Staff does not recommend this alternative.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

Staff Report 23-250k - Consider adopting Resolution No. 24-035, which approves the proposed Final Network

Plan

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Map of EBP Riders Affected by the new network plan
2. Alternative Alameda County Paratransit Services

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Approved/Reviewed by:

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