



BERKELEY CITY COUNCILMEMBER
TERRY TAPLÍN
DISTRICT 2

**SUPPLEMENTAL
AGENDA MATERIAL
For Supplemental Packet 3**

Meeting Date: March 30, 2021

Item Number: 23

Item Description: Discussion on East Bay Paratransit and the Transportation Needs of Berkeleyans with Disabilities

Submitted by: Councilmember Taplin

Amendment would make the following additions to the referral:

- Addition of the Commission on Aging as a co-host of the public discussion



BERKELEY CITY COUNCILMEMBER
TERRY TAPLÍN
DISTRICT 2

CONSENT CALENDAR

March 30, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Terry Taplin (Author), Councilmember Ben Bartlett, Councilmember Kate Harrison, and Councilmember Sophie Hahn (Co-Sponsors)

Subject: Discussion on East Bay Paratransit and the Transportation Needs of Berkeleyans with Disabilities

RECOMMENDATION

Refer the Disability Commission, Transportation Commission, and Commission on Aging to hold a joint public discussion on the use, effectiveness, and accessibility of East Bay Paratransit as well as the transportation needs of the members of our community with disabilities and seniors, and return recommendations to Council.

BACKGROUND

East Bay Paratransit is a public transit service for people who are unable to independently use or access public transit because of a disability or disabling health condition. Since 1990, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) has required all public transit agencies to provide paratransit services to eligible disabled people. East Bay Paratransit transports riders from their origin to their destination in vans equipped with a wheelchair lift. East Bay Paratransit was established by AC Transit. Service is provided during the hours of AC Transit's bus and BART's rail operations. Service is limited to areas within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of an operating bus route or BART station.¹

East Bay Paratransit provides a critical service to the members of our community with disabilities. Unfortunately, the service has been reported to be characterized by long wait times, poor treatment of its riders, and overall deficient service and reliability.²³ The importance of the program makes the repeated reports of its issues especially troubling. Two years since these problems with East Bay Paratransit's service were reported, deficiencies in wait times and consistency still persist. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the difficulties that people with disabilities have faced and access to safe and reliable transportation has been remarkably difficult during the pandemic.⁴ The

¹ <https://www.eastbayparatransit.org/frequently-asked-questions.htm>

² <https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2018/12/27/east-bay-paratransit-shaken-up-following-kpix-investigation/>

³ <https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2018/08/31/paratransit-disabled-detours-east-bay/>

⁴ <https://cal.streetsblog.org/2020/04/21/pandemic-underscores-difficulties-accessing-transportation-for-people-with-disabilities/>

City of Berkeley must develop a better understanding of the quality of service East Bay Paratransit currently offers to its riders and the ongoing transportation needs of Berkeleyans with disabilities.

CONTACT

Terry Taplin, Councilmember, District 2, (510) 981-7120

ATTACHMENTS

1. All About East Bay Paratransit
2. The Center for Independent Living Focus Group Report - Paratransit