COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
AGENDA

South Berkeley Senior Center
1901 Hearst Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94709

Wednesday, March 16, 2016
1:00 p.m.

Preliminary Matters

1. Roll Call

2. Public Comments
The public may comment about any item not on the agenda. Public comments are limited to two minutes per speaker. Public comments regarding agenda items will be heard while the Commission is discussing the item.

3. Approval of the February 17, 2016 regular meeting minutes (attachment 1)

Announcements (5 minutes)

Updates/ Action Items
The Commission may take action related to any subject listed on the Agenda. Public comments regarding agenda items will be heard while the Commission is discussing the item. Public comments are limited to two minutes per speaker.

4. Election of Chair

5. Election of Vice Chair.

6. Presentation: Mobility Matters: Rides for Seniors. Victoria Williams, Program Manager.

7. Presentation: Seniors and Medical Cannabis. Sue Taylor, Executive Director, iCann Health Center


Information Items
10. Recommended Candidate to Paratransit Advisory Planning Committee (PAPCO) 
(attachment 4)

Communications

Adjournment

Future Items

Review of nursing home infractions.

Meeting decorum/discussion protocol.

Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.

COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION
This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services specialist at 981-6342 (V) or 981-6345 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date.

Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City’s electronic records, which are accessible through the City’s website. Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to a City board, commission or committee, will become part of the public record. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the commission secretary for further information.

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the North Berkeley Senior Center located at 1901 Hearst Avenue, during regular business hours. The Commission Agenda and Minutes may be viewed on the City of Berkeley website: http://www.cityofberkeley.info/commissions.

Secretary:
Leah Talley
Health, Housing & Community Services Department
(510) 981-5178
E-mail: LTalley@CityofBerkeley.info

Mailing Address:
Commission on Aging
Leah Talley, Secretary
1901 Hearst Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94709
COMMISSION ON AGING
Draft Minutes

North Berkeley Senior Center
1901 Hearst Avenue
Berkeley, CA

Wednesday, February 17, 2015
1:00 p.m.

Preliminary Matters

1. Roll Call
   Present: (4) Commissioners Castello-Kramer; Lazaris; Porter; Schechner
   Absent: Hallberg
   Excused Absent: Jacqulin
   Staff Present: Leah Talley, Paul Buddenhagen
   Public: 3 present

2. Public Comment
   Three members of the public spoke.

3. Approval of February 3, 2015 special meeting minutes.
   (M/S/C): (M: Porter; S: Lazaris) Ayes: Castello-Kramer; Lazaris; Porter; Schechner.
   Abstain: None
   Absent: Hallberg
   Noes: None

4. Election of Chair

5. Election of Vice Chair.
   Election of Chair and Vice Chair tabled until March meeting when more commissioners will be present.
   (M/S/C) M: Castello-Kramer; S: Porter. Ayes: Castello-Kramer; Lazaris; Porter; Schechner.
   Abstain: None
   Absent: Hallberg
   Noes: None
6. **Discussion and possible action on Commission location.**
Commission voted to hold meetings at South Berkeley Senior Center during the months of March, April, May, June and July; and hold meetings at North Berkeley Senior Center during the months of September, October, November, January and February.
Abstain: None
Absent: Hallberg
Noes: None

7. **Discussion and possible approval of workplan (topics: housing/homeless issues, communication and civic engagement, health, transportation and safety). Possible creation of subcommittees.**
Commissioner Lazaris will write a document to review and approve at the next meeting, with the goal of submitting to City Council.
(M/S/C). (M: Lazaris; S: Schechner). Ayes: Castello-Kramer; Lazaris; Porter; Schechner.
Abstain: None
Absent: Hallberg
Noes: None

The Commission on Aging voted to plan the creation of a subcommittee to focus on homeless seniors and work alongside a subcommittee of the Homeless Commission as soon as convenient.
Abstain: None
Absent: Hallberg
Noes: None

Discussion only, no action.

Future agenda items:
Presentations from Mobility Matters: Rides for Seniors
Presentation on Information on medical cannabis for seniors
Information and update on the City’s senior center facilities

Minutes Approved on: ________________

____________________________________
Leah Talley, Commission Secretary
This document explores the current state of elder and disabled consumers’ experiences with Berkeley Paratransit Services.
1. Context & Purpose
In 2014, Alameda County voters approved Measure BB, a 30 year Transportation Expenditure Plan for that increased the County sales tax by 0.5 percent to improve transportation in the County. This has increased the City of Berkeley’s ability to serve the transportation needs of elders and people living with disabilities. This needs assessment aims to identify, analyze, and recommend the transportation needs and potential solutions of current and potential users of Berkeley Paratransit Services.

2. Assessment Process
The survey was designed and implemented by a staff member in the Office of the Director of the Health, Housing and Community Services Department. Surveys were mailed to 950 current paratransit users, handed out by staff at the Center for Independent Living and at the City of Berkeley Taxi Scrip reimbursement window at 1947 Center Street, and hand-delivered to local service providers. One-hundred and fifty-five surveys were returned. Two focus groups were held at the South Berkeley Senior and at Redwood Gardens Apartments, a subsidized senior housing facility.

Of the consumer respondents, 131 are current Berkeley Paratransit users; 24 are not. Of the Berkeley Paratransit users, 36% are seniors; 12% are non-senior disabled adults; 52% are both. No surveys were returned by taxi drivers. To assess taxi driver needs, surveyer interviewed the 3 staff who primarily interact with taxi drivers related to paratransit program scrip on a regular basis.
3. Assessment of Current Conditions

3.1 Results of the Mailed Survey

I. TRANSPORTATION USAGE

Shopping, medical visits, and socializing were consistently the most frequent activities. Places of worship and government services were the least common destinations.

The most common “other” categories that consumers shared were health- and socializing-related.

Specific “Other” Destinations

- Health & wellness
  - exercise classes
  - pharmacy
  - physical therapy
- Senior Center
- Paid employment
- Volunteer work
- Libraries
- Community meetings
- Bank
- Post Office
II. TRANSPORTATION DESTINATIONS

In nearly all instances, taxi scrip, a ride from friends or family, and AC Transit buses were the most frequently used modes of transportation. Taxi scrip was most popular, particularly for medical visits and trips to the grocery store.

**Other Modes of Transportation**
- Rides from consumers’ In Home Supportive Services (IHSS) attendant
- Apartment shuttles
- Walking
- Respondent’s private vehicle

**Other Destinations**
- Distant locations outside of Berkeley to visit friends & family
- Senior Centers
- Libraries
- San Francisco Museums
- Pharmacy
- Health & wellness activities (e.g. exercise classes)
III. TRANSPORTATION LIMITATIONS

Transportation issues prevent you from going to which places?

- Distant Locations
- Socialization
- Medical Visits
- Green Spaces
- Evening/Weekend Events

Socialization (47%)
- Theater
- Coffee shops
- Museums
- Visiting friends and family
- Movies
- Political meetings
- Special events, particularly in the evening
- Concerts
- Restaurants

Green Spaces (17%)
- Regional Parks
- Tilden
- Lake Anza
- Chabot

IV. POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS: FIXED SHUTTLE

If Berkeley Paratransit added a shuttle with fixed stops, would this be helpful to you?

- Yes
- No
V. POTENTIAL SHUTTLE DESTINATIONS

For the 65% who answered “Yes,” groceries, socialization, retail shopping, and green spaces were the most desired destinations, with pharmacies, medical visits, exercise classes, and church trailing.

Specific locations for the various types of destinations include:

**Grocery Stores**
- Safeway (on Rose)
- Berkeley Bowls
- Costco
- Ranch 99
- Trader Joes

**Socialization**
- Family/Friend Events
- Senior Centers
- Different housing projects & senior living facilities
- Visiting specific neighborhoods*

**Green Spaces**
- Lake Anza
- Tilden
- Botanical Gardens
- Regional Parks

**Retail Shops**
- El Cerrito Plaza
- Hilltop Mall
- Target (Emeryville & Albany)

**Health & Wellness**
- CVS, on Shattuck and on Telegraph & Derby
- Walgreens
- Kaiser Oakland
- Kaiser Richmond
- Physical Therapy
- YMCA
- Public Swimming

*Specific Neighborhoods*
- Oakland Chinatown
- Downtown Oakland
- Downtown Berkeley
- Jack London Square
- Rockridge
- SF museums
- Solano
- Lake Merritt
- Grand Lake
VI. TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Please rate the importance of the following in meeting your transportation needs.

- Paying for my trip is easy
- There are many options to choose from
- Drivers understand the needs of elders and people living with disabilities
- Bus stop is close to my house
- Services are wheelchair and walker accessible
- Services are free or reduced-price
- Buses and shuttles come frequently
- Service is reliable

Reliability, cost, and driver empathy were the most valued aspects of respondents’ transportation needs.

Wheelchair and walker accessibility, having many options, and the ease with which people pay for their trips were the least important.

3.2 Results of the Taxi Driver Survey

No taxi drivers returned surveys. Information gathered by City of Berkeley staff at the reimbursement desk, taxi stands and through phone conversations with taxi companies indicates that drivers favor the use of electronic payment for taxi scrip to replace the paper scrips they use today. Potential barriers to implementation for taxi drivers include cost of equipment needed in taxi cabs. Currently, taxi companies are paid through a submitted invoice, or individual taxi drivers bring paper scrip to the customer service desk where they exchange scrip for cash payment.
3.3 Results of the Consumer Focus Groups

The results of the mailed survey aligned with the more in-depth feedback received from participants in the focus groups we conducted.

**Taxis**

1. Not all taxi drivers accept scrip. Focus group members have a list of specific cabbies whose cell phones they call. They rarely or never call the cab company itself.
2. Taxi riders are concerned about the accuracy of what they’re being charged and if the driver is taking them “the long way” because they are seniors.
3. Some riders feel unsafe because they are elderly, female, and don’t understand the customs or primary language of the driver.
4. Taxis are particularly important for people who are in chronic pain. Participants reported that transit buses are uncomfortable for riders with pain issues, and that East Bay Paratransit shuttle buses can also be a painful ride.

**Confusion around Berkeley Paratransit Services**

1. Focus group participants confused Berkeley Paratransit Services with East Bay Paratransit.
2. Some community members were not aware of Berkeley Paratransit Service programs, including requirements of program participation.
3. Some assumed the process for signing up would be long and arduous.

**Fixed Shuttle**

Focus group participants reported that a fixed shuttle offered by the City could connect people to other existing shuttle routes, as well as a variety of destinations.

**Desired destinations include:**

- Doctor appointments
- Banks on Shattuck
- Costco
- Movie theaters
- Downtown Berkeley
- Kaiser Oakland
- Pharmica
- Berkeley Bowls
- Bear’s Pond
- The Cal campus for concerts (seniors often can’t participate because it’s hilly)
- Various area festivals
- YMCA warm pool
- Rose Garden
- 4th Street

**Socialization**

Focus groups prioritized transport for socialization as a key transportation need. Participants reported that they would like to get out at night to go to plays or other events, go see family and friends, and access museums, parks, coffee houses, and retail areas on a regular basis. Current paratransit users reported that they use their taxi scrip for medical visits, which limits transportation options for socialization and other needs.
4. Analysis

1. The cumulative results of the mailed survey indicated that shopping, socializing, and health/wellness-related destinations are most important to respondents. By using scrip for medical and grocery needs first, transportation to social opportunities becomes more difficult.

2. People most frequently travel via taxi scrip, followed by rides from friends or family, and then the bus. They do not take East Bay Paratransit or BART unless their preferred options are unavailable. When asked why they do not take the bus, both survey respondents and focus group participants noted physical discomfort with AC Transit buses. While respondents are familiar with the bus system, many prefer taxis and private vehicles that are more comfortable and able to maneuver around bumps and potholes that cause pain for some riders.

3. Empathy for taxi riders is important. By ordinance, all Berkeley taxis are required to accept scrip. However, taxi riders report that not all taxis will accept the call for a scrip ride. Taxi driver education on senior and disabled rider issues was seen as a need by taxi users. Additionally, developing contractual relationships with larger taxi providers may provide the City with a better relationship to provide taxi services that meet the needs of senior and disabled citizens.

4. Survey respondents and focus group participants value a fixed shuttle to meet the needs not currently met by current options. Shopping and socializing seem to be the most unmet need and most desired type of fixed shuttle destinations.

5. Electronic payment for taxi rides would improve payment system for taxis in Berkeley. Costs for hardware to implement system would be a barrier to taxi operators. Berkeley Municipal Code requires all taxi drivers to accept scrip; many providers would not be able to implement hardware improvements without cost.

6. Berkeley Paratransit Services was not recognized as a separate transportation program. Some confused East Bay Paratransit with Berkeley Paratransit Services.
5. Recommendations

These recommendations are aimed to increase access to transportation in the City of Berkeley and respond to expressed needs of seniors and people living with disabilities. These include travelling to the doctor, the pharmacy, and the grocery store. The need to socialize and the need to be understood by those providing transportation services are also a priority for the Berkeley community.

TIER ONE
These recommendations could be implemented in the current year’s plan:

- Change the name of Berkeley Paratransit Services to alleviate confusion between it and East Bay Paratransit and increase rider education.
- Provide travel training and assess to determine if training results in increased public transit usage.
- Provide driver education on the needs of senior and disabled riders.

TIER TWO
These recommendations could be in development during FY16, and implemented in the FY17 plan:

- In consultation with AC Transit, and based on community input, develop and implement a fixed shuttle to provide access to shopping and neighborhood activities.

TIER THREE
These recommendations have barriers to completion, which could be addressed during the FY17 plan:

- Consider developing contractual relationships with taxi companies to provide taxi services through scrip payments.
- Analyze and address barriers to implementing electronic payment for scrip; barriers include cost of equipment and current requirements of Berkeley Municipal Code.
Berkeley Paratransit Community Survey

We want to make sure that Berkeley’s Paratransit Plan serves YOU! Your input is invaluable and will help us provide useful and reliable transportation for you and your neighbors. Please note, this survey covers Berkeley Paratransit services, not East Bay Paratransit services.

1. Are you in the Berkeley Paratransit Program? Please select one.
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

2. If YES – are you a senior, disable adult, or both? Please select one.
   - ☐ Senior
   - ☐ Disabled Adult
   - ☐ Both

3. In a typical week, how frequently do you go to the places below?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 or more trips</th>
<th>2-3 trips</th>
<th>Once</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tr>
<td>Medical visit</td>
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<td>Grocery store</td>
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<td>Government / Social Services errands</td>
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### Place of worship / spirituality

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### 4. How do you typically get to these places?

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<th>Place of worship &amp; Spirituality</th>
<th>Paratransit</th>
<th>Taxi (use taxi scrip)</th>
<th>Taxi (pay out of pocket)</th>
<th>AC Transit Bus</th>
<th>BART</th>
<th>Easy Does It</th>
<th>Ride from friend or family</th>
<th>Senior Center Shuttle</th>
<th>Other Shuttle Service (Please write in below)</th>
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<td>Medical Visit</td>
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<td>Entertainment, Recreation, &amp; Sightseeing</td>
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Please share your “Other” destinations and how you get there here: ___________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________

5. Do transportation issues prevent you from going places?
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

6. If yes, which places? Please write them in here:
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

7. If Berkeley Paratransit added a shuttle with fixed stops, would this be helpful to you?
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

8. If yes, where would you want it to go? Please be specific (eg. Safeway on Rose Street, Lake Anza, etc)
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
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9. Please rate the importance of the following in meeting your transportation needs:

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<th>Very Important</th>
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<td>Service is reliable</td>
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<td>Paying for my trip is easy</td>
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Work Program: City of Berkeley Commission on Aging

INTRODUCTION:

The City of Berkeley’s Commission on Aging has spent its last calendar year reassessing its goals and aligning its work directly with the needs of the public. The Commission has carefully collected information from members of Berkeley’s senior population and has discussed and refined its set of policy and advocacy priorities based on discussion with and feedback from the city’s seniors. Having built both a policy-focused and service-focused framework of senior needs in Berkeley, the Commission on Aging has adopted a set of priorities to advance to the City Council which will serve to organize and direct the Commission’s work in the coming years.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS:

The Commission on Aging has focused much of its energy on identifying the spectrum and intricacies of senior needs within the city. The Commission has worked to establish a broad knowledge base of City projects, services, and resources which it can use to best address these needs and meet policy and service shortcomings which affect daily life for Berkeley seniors. Given the Commission’s consistent work and communication with City commissions, City task forces, the Aging Services Division, and Berkeley’s citizenry, the Commission plans to use this information and knowledge to construct a cohesive set of priorities through which it will hold itself accountable to the needs of the public.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Berkeley’s Commission on Aging is naming the following advocacy categories as “Commission Priorities” on which its members will focus their collective efforts. These priorities were created from information gathered from Berkeley citizens at the Commission’s inaugural community forum held on November 7, 2014. The Commission will prioritize policy and programming in these priority categories in order to impact and benefit the lives of older adults in a Berkeley whose senior population continues to grow. Each category includes a sampling of priority projects on which the Commission will focus subsequent Commission meetings and discussions.

PRIORITIES

1. Housing
   a. Creating a sustainable model of affordable housing for low-income seniors in conjunction with City officials and commissions
   b. Creating and allocating supportive housing units for homeless seniors in new housing developments within the City
   c. Ensuring representation of resident voices in long term care and senior housing decision-making
2. Communication and Civic Engagement
   a. Establishing a centralized information dissemination platform and adopting methods of expanded outreach to Berkeley elders
   b. Providing stimulating volunteer opportunities for older adults
   c. Expanding and maintaining older adult education and Senior Center services
   d. Enhancing broad participation, public policy engagement, and involvement of the community in Commission meetings

3. Health
   a. Investigating and enforcing nursing home violations, elder abuse, and City board and care center oversight
   b. Ensuring the provision of senior-specific mental health services and senior-specific crisis training for providers and intervention teams
   c. Assisting with transitions to coordinated care and connecting uninsured seniors with resources

4. Transportation and Safety
   a. Ensuring the funding and provision of affordable senior and disabled transportation services
   b. Assessing crosswalk/traffic signal safety and making intersections accessible and safe for seniors
   c. Assessing City lighting and sidewalk integrity for senior safety purposes

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Commission’s work plan does not directly affect the environmental sustainability of the city, yet many of our priorities may lead to a more economical use of City land and commercial/residential spaces. Our work plan may positively impact City expenditures by reducing numbers of homeless individuals and reducing the physical and mental health needs of our seniors that may require emergency attention.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The Commission’s work plan does not itself have any fiscal impact. The execution of many projects outlined in the work plan, however, may require the allocation of existing City funds and services.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTIONS

Based on Commission research and public hearings, the Commission will draft and submit recommendations and communications to Council when necessary.
The Paratransit Advisory Planning Committee (PAPCO) of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) is responsible for recommending to ACTC how to distribute Measure B and Measure BB city-program paratransit funds and other paratransit funds. The City of Berkeley needs a citizen representative on PAPCO to effectively represent the voices of Berkeley’s paratransit users and the City’s interests.

PAPCO is a 28-member citizen advisory group, which administers Measure B funds approved by Alameda County voters in November 2000 and Measure BB funds approved by Alameda County voters in November 2015. This funding source provides revenue for the local paratransit programs that are operated by most of the cities of Alameda County. PAPCO is also responsible for recommending to ACTC how the “coordination and gap” funds should be allocated and used.

The City’s former appointee recently vacated her seat. ACTC has requested that the City nominate a new citizen representative. In keeping with past practice, the Housing Department has facilitated the following nomination process:

In early September 2015, Aging Services staff distributed over 900 letters to the City’s paratransit riders, soliciting interest in sitting on the PAPCO. Three interested candidates contacted City staff, and one interested candidate, Ms. Linda Smith, returned an application to the Aging Services Staff at the end of October.

Although Ms. Smith is the only applicant, she is recommended as an excellent candidate to serve as the City of Berkeley appointee to PAPCO. Ms. Smith has demonstrated interest and experience in issues pertaining to residents with disabilities generally, and to transit and paratransit specifically. Ms. Smith has been a long-time user of public transit, and has been a
regular user of Berkeley Paratransit Services since 2014. Ms. Smith is a consumer of East Bay Paratransit services.

Through her activist work, she demonstrates a commitment to the Berkeley disabled and aging community. She has been a Commissioner on the Mental Health Commission and a member of the Mental Health Services Act Advisory Committee. She is currently an active participant in the Mental Health Services Act Advisory Committee’s work, and is currently an elected member of the North Berkeley Senior Center Advisory Committee. She also volunteers through the City’s Senior Centers, and through the Alameda County Pool of Champions.