

AGENDA ITEM 2A
Action Item

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 5, 2022
TO: El Dorado County Transit Authority
FROM: Brian James, Planning and Marketing Manager
SUBJECT: My Ride - Mileage Reimbursement Program

REQUESTED ACTION:
BY MOTION,

Approve the My Ride mileage reimbursement program as proposed

BACKGROUND

The 2019 Short- and Long-Range Transit Plan states:

“Many transit services with difficult-to-serve mobility needs turn to volunteer driver programs to try to meet such needs, particularly for lower density areas. Programs often focus on medical trips, but often once established expand to include other essential trip purposes, such as grocery shopping or social service appointments.”

“A volunteer driver program is a cost-effective strategy to meet mobility needs in low density areas. This could work well in areas such as Garden Valley or Georgetown where fixed route transit has proven inefficient. As discussed in previous chapters, there are two types of volunteer driver programs: volunteer driver and mileage reimbursement. The former would require El Dorado Transit to dedicate a substantial amount of staff time recruiting and processing volunteers as well as matching volunteers with passengers. For a mileage reimbursement program, passengers recruit their own volunteers. This significantly reduces administrative staff time. Therefore, the mileage reimbursement program is recommended as part of this plan.”

“It is challenging and not cost efficient for El Dorado Transit to transport every resident to services in Placerville at different times. The mileage reimbursement program will help with this aspect but continuing to work closely with local social service agencies to group appointments, sessions, etcetera, which would make public transit more cost effective, will become increasingly important over both the short-term and long-term planning period.”

DISCUSSION

Implementation of the proposed My Ride mileage reimbursement program would fulfill the recommendations from the 2019 Short- and Long-Range Transit Plan to offer a volunteer driver program in the service area. The program would enable seniors (60 or older) or disabled residents of El Dorado County (not including the Tahoe basin) who are registered for the My Ride program at El Dorado Transit to reimburse their friends, neighbors, or family members for providing transportation in their personal vehicles. Trips would be for any purpose, including medical appointments, grocery shopping, hairdresser, and social activities. There would be no fees to participate in this program. The trips would be free for the passenger, and the driver would receive a reimbursement for providing a valuable service for the passenger.

Passengers would register for the My Ride mileage reimbursement program by submitting an El Dorado Transit application. They would recruit friends, neighbors, or family whom they know and trust and have them each complete a registration form and a W-9 form and submit them to El Dorado Transit. Passengers would then track and record miles and driver information for each trip and submit their completed monthly trip log by the 10th of the next month to El Dorado Transit so staff can process the reimbursement in a timely manner. El Dorado Transit would send reimbursement checks to registered drivers who drove participants each month at the current IRS issued standard mileage rate (58.5 cents per mile in 2022) for allowed trips. This rate would be adjusted each year to correspond with the updated IRS issued mileage rate. Each passenger would be allowed up to 350 miles per month. Trips must begin or end in El Dorado County (not including the Tahoe basin), and participants cannot be both the driver and the passenger.

This service would give residents in the rural areas of the county a program to meet their travel needs. It would also give residents in the 50 corridor another transportation option to relieve pressure on the ADA and Dial-a-Ride services at El Dorado Transit. Staff recommends that the Board approve the My Ride mileage reimbursement program as proposed.

FISCAL IMPACT

COST SUMMARY

My Ride Mileage Reimbursement Program	<u>\$25,000</u>
<i>Total Cost</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>

FUNDING SOURCES

Local Transit Funds	<u>\$25,000</u>
<i>Total Revenue</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>