

Milwaukee County
Interoffice Communication

DATE: October 2, 2020

TO: Sup. Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Jon Janowski, Interim Executive Director, Milwaukee County Department on Aging

RE: Request from the Interim Executive Director of the Department on Aging for authorization to amend the 2020 specialized elderly transportation purchase of service contract

Background & Rationale

Specialized Elderly Transportation Services are provided for Milwaukee County seniors with mobility challenges. Under the original terms of the contract, 90,000 rides were to be provided to both individuals and groups to healthcare appointments, congregate meal sites, senior centers, grocery stores, and wellness programs.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic all group transportation has ceased, and only individual riders were permitted. The vendor was required to adopt CDC and FTA recommended protocols for screening passengers and drivers, use personal protective equipment, and clean vehicles on a daily basis. The vendor was also asked by the Department to significantly add to the modality of services through the end of the year by delivering meals and Stockboxes to the homes of congregate diners. Beginning in October, the vendor will also transport older residents to the Division of Motor Vehicles to obtain Voter Identification cards, to early voting sites, and to the polls on Election Day.

Program Budget

The Department awards funds to provider agencies based on allowable costs, availability of federal, state and local funds, anticipated usage by older persons, and changing service needs. When additional funds become available, the Department seeks to use such funds to expand services and/or reimburse the provider for services rendered.

As noted, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Able Access Transportation, Inc. worked with the Department on Aging staff and meal site vendors to transition services within 24 hours of the closure of congregate Senior Dining Programs. Able Access changed its operation from transporting older adults to meal sites to bringing meals to the homes of food insecure seniors in order to allow them to safely shelter in place. Additionally, the demand for meals from seniors has increased during the pandemic.

The increased funds recommended in this report would enable the Department to continue to fund meal delivery services by Able Access Transportation, Inc, and to support the agency as it returns to the role of transporting Milwaukee County seniors with mobility challenges to essential in-person trips, including medical appointments and voting.

Racial Equity Impact

Transportation is a noted issue in terms of racial equity and has been documented in Milwaukee County by the Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The lack of a vehicle for a household is a more common issue in neighborhoods of Milwaukee that are primarily populated by African Americans. For example, in the Amani neighborhood, 92% of residents are African American and over a third (37%) do not have a vehicle available to their household, compared to 14% of households across Milwaukee County.¹ Additionally, Able Access Transportation Inc. itself is the County's largest African-American owned business vendor.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the County Board of Supervisors approve the attached resolution which authorizes the Interim Executive Director of the Department on Aging to increase by a total of \$360,000 the purchase of service contract for specialized transportation service with Able Access Transportation, Inc from January to December of 2020.

Fiscal Effect

Funding for this contract amendment will have no direct impact on the County, and will not require additional tax levy. Monies to support increased funding comes from the Older Americans Act, and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. A fiscal note form is attached.

If you have questions, please contact me at 414-379-3569.



Jon Janowski, Interim Executive Director
Milwaukee County Department on Aging

¹ Amani BNCP Profile, Data You Can Use. <https://datayoucanuse.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Amani-BNCP-Profile.pdf>

Transportation Services 2020 Contract Amendment Report

October 2, 2020

Page **3** of **3**

cc: County Executive David Crowley
Sup. Jason Haas, Chair, Finance Committee
Sup. Supreme Moore-Omokunde, Chair, Health & Human Needs Committee
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Julie Landry, DAS Director
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Steve Cady, Research Director, Comptroller's Office
Pam Matthews, Fiscal & Management Analyst, DAS
Lottie Maxwell-Mitchell, Research & Policy Analyst, Comptroller's Office