



Legislation Text

File #: 08-1488, **Version:** 1

Supervisor Santiago and Transportation Department recommending conceptual approval regarding the transfer of BlueGO OnCall transit services in unincorporated El Dorado County within the Lake Tahoe Basin, noting staff to return to the Board with a transfer agreement and any other documents necessary for said transfer.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve.

Since 2004, when the City of South Lake Tahoe experienced budget reductions related to the operation of the transit system, the City of South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado County jointly combined forces operated BlueGO OnCall, a curb to curb demand responsive service. The County funded service between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm, seven days a week with two vehicles within the City limits and unincorporated County areas and the City funded service with one to two vehicles between 7:00 pm and 7:00 am within the City limits only, yielding 24 hour service within the City limits and 12 hour daytime service in the unincorporated County areas.

The last two performance audits stated that there should be operational and administrative efficiencies for two demand responsive services that are part of BlueGO and serve the same cliental, but funded by either the City of South Lake Tahoe or El Dorado County. The recommendation from the auditor states: *"BlueGO is an integrated branding of public and private transportation services. To the current user, it is seamless as to who is paying the subsidy for the particular type of trip he or she chooses. The administrative and management structure should also be an integrated function and reflect the seamless nature of service delivery. Through a management agreement or memorandum of understanding, a simple administrative structure for funding, management, operation, and reporting should be established."*

The following are administrative functional goals that might be achieved under the BlueGO umbrella:

- *A single State Controllers Report on BlueGO services.*
- *A single annual fiscal audit of BlueGO services.*
- *A single detailed annual budget for BlueGO services.*
- *Performance indicators for fixed route, general public dial-a-ride, ADA paratransit services funded with TDA funds and optionally performance indicators for the various privately funded shuttle services.*
- *A regular competitive procurement process to operate and maintain the array of seven different BlueGO services. The current contractor has been providing service for the past 23 years, apparently without a competitive bid the entire time for at least three of the seven contracts.*

Achieving these goals would reduce administrative costs, provide a forum for important policy choices on service levels by mode, and provide regular and accurate reporting information to monitor service delivery."

The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency supports this recommendation and is responsible for carrying

out the recommendations as identified by the auditor in accordance with TDA requirements.

In September of 2007, the City of South Lake Tahoe made a change to BlueGO OnCall funded by with City TDA. This change eliminated 24 hour demand response service for passengers on the south shore due to requests by persons with disabilities wanted a dedicated ADA Paratransit service to complement BlueGO fixed routes. ADA Paratransit services are provided in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Since the service began officially on January 1, 2008, BlueGO ADA Paratransit has carried no riders. There are only four people certified for ADA paratransit service and since they are also eligible for the El Dorado County Special Needs Program, they opt to use their program.

The present program has some significant disparities that could be improved. These issues include fare disparity, certification disparity and service duplication. There is a lack of awareness that this program exist or how to use this program. Because of duplication of service, staff is recommending the following actions:

- El Dorado County would enter into a transfer agreement with STATA related to the operation and administration of BlueGO OnCall services within the City of South Lake Tahoe and the unincorporated areas of El Dorado County in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The transfer (STATA) would claim the County's TDA funds and relieve the County of any responsibility related to the Transportation Development Act (TDA) or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements. The agreement would state that STATA can not reduce the level of service beyond the present service levels of July 1, 2008 assuming that funding levels are available to sustain that level of service. Any service reductions recommended due to lack of funding would be discussed with El Dorado County Board of Supervisors.

This transfer will designate the South Tahoe Area Transit Authority (STATA) the responsibility for operating and maintaining the County's portion of BlueGO OnCall. As a result, STATA will claim all of the County's Transportation Development Act (TDA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds allocated to the Tahoe Basin of El Dorado County to support this service.

The County will close the Fund 274 - South Lake Tahoe Transit as a result of transferring the BlueGO OnCall service from the County to STATA or the City of South Lake Tahoe. There will no longer be any costs associated with transit operation burden by the County.

STATA will provide the County up to \$15,000 to support the processing of special needs clients in the Department of Human Services and transportation planning activities by the Principal Planner in the Transportation Department - Tahoe Engineering.

There is no Fiscal Impact associated with this agenda item. There is no cost to the County General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION: Board approve in concept the transfer of BlueGO OnCall transit services in the unincorporated El Dorado County within the Tahoe Basin and return to the Board all necessary documents and agreements to effect the transfer.