

January 27, 2004

Attachment II

Jan Beautz, Chair
Santa Cruz Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: Paratransit Public Hearing and Formation of a Paratransit Task Force

Dear Commissioners and Madam Chair,

We strongly believe that for the process begun by the upcoming Public Hearing on Paratransit to be a success, the focus needs to be on creating solutions for the community as a whole. This is about transportation for seniors and disabled members of our community. It's about caregivers and families. It's about access to health care providers. It's about access to shopping, dining and socialization. It's about access to destinations the riders frequent.

This is a community wide issue. It is NOT a debate about Lift Line vs. METRO.

Most of all, its an issue for riders of paratransit and their caregivers, be it Lift Line, Paracruz, private taxi, churches, Volunteer Center drivers, or whoever.

The major stakeholders are the riders of these services throughout the community.

The emphasis needs to be re-focused towards the community as a whole, and towards making the entire system meet the needs of the community while complying with funding limitations and regulations.

The task before the Commission (and the entire community) is clear. The role a CTSA will play in the Santa Cruz County must be re-envisioned and redefined. The new vision must:

- Insure all paratransit services are as coordinated and seamless as funding and regulations allow;
- Determine which agency should operate as the Santa Cruz County CTSA;
- Identify new and existing funding sources for the CTSA's operation.

The Commission's creation of a Task Force will be crucial in the development of this new vision. The work of the Task Force must be timely, comprehensive, and, most importantly, be empowered through the participation of the major stakeholders and funders in the community, including riders, elected officials, METRO, service providers, Lift Line, and the Commission.

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Among its challenges, the Task Force must;

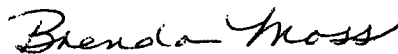
1. Identify its goals;
2. Include policy and decision makers of the major stakeholder and funding agencies;
3. Review History of local services and the legislation that created Consolidated Transportation Service Agencies (C.T.S.A.'s);
4. Identify less obvious stakeholders and funders;
5. Identify and clarify regulatory guidelines of funding sources;
6. Review other successful service models;
7. Design the optimal system for Santa Cruz County;
8. Recommend which agency should be designated the local C.T.S.A., and;
9. Work with the SCCRTC to implement the adopted recommendations;
10. Develop a model to educate riders and the community regarding available services.

The Regional Transportation Commission is in the position to provide community leadership in creating this new vision for the transportation of elderly and disabled members of Santa Cruz County.

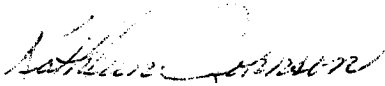
We, the undersigned, embrace the Commission's recent actions to hold this hearing and form a broad-based Task Force to address these issues and improve the quality of services available to our seniors and disabled individuals. We know concerted efforts will not only improve services but will also eliminate duplication and result in saving hundreds of thousands of dollars.



Clay Kempf, Executive Director
Seniors Council



Brenda Moss, Executive Director
Senior Network Services



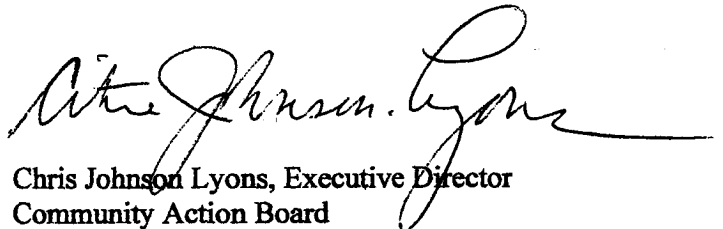
Kathleen Johnson, Executive Director
Ombudsman/Advocate Program



Caroline Bliss-Isberg, Ph.D., Director
Cabrillo College Stroke Center



Majel Jordan, Director
Elderday Adult Health Care Center



Chris Johnson Lyons, Executive Director
Community Action Board