

EDAC ACCESSIBLE TAXI STATEMENT

DRAFT

In studying the transportation infrastructure as it impacts senior citizens and persons with disabilities in the Bay Area, the members of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee observed the following related to the availability of accessible taxis:

- Mobility is the key to independence and to enabling persons to “age in place” at home as compared to being institutionalized;
- Individuals with disabilities, like all citizens, need and desire transportation alternatives that are flexible and responsive to their needs;
- In most parts of the Bay Area, transit and complementary ADA paratransit services do not operate 24 hours per day;
- Some portions of the Bay Area are outside of the service areas of the public providers of transit and ADA paratransit services;
- Taxicabs are an important component of the Bay Area's transportation mix, providing the short-notice, on-demand, door-to-door rides that many individuals need and desire to create flexibility within their lifestyles;
- In most parts of the Bay Area, taxicabs are available on an on-demand basis for riders who are ambulatory, yet in only a small portion of the region, do taxicab companies provide service for users of wheelchairs;
- Taxicab companies are licensed and regulated by many jurisdictions with varying requirements, yet often with no requirements or incentives to provide accessible service for users of wheelchairs;
- The purchase cost of a wheelchair-accessible taxi can be significantly higher than for a standard taxi;
- At least one jurisdiction in the Bay Area purchased wheelchair accessible taxi cabs and made them available to for-profit taxi providers on a lease basis;

- Wheelchair accessible taxis have been successfully used in parts of the Bay Area for ADA paratransit transportation;
- When not in use for providing wheelchair rides, accessible taxis can be used to provide taxi rides to ambulatory individuals;
- In those areas where accessible taxis have been made available, market forces in have made their deployment financially successful for their owners.

Given the information outlined above, the members of the Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee find that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission should take the lead in promoting wheelchair accessible taxicabs as a viable component of mobility for all citizens within the region by:

- Convening various jurisdictions and taxi providers to discuss and clarify issues in the provision of wheelchair accessible taxi services;
- Developing model ordinances and incentives to stimulate the growth of wheelchair accessible taxi services in the region;
- If needed, develop capital funding sources to assist in the procurement of wheelchair accessible taxi vehicles.