

## Finance and Budget Committee

Meeting date: January 15, 2025

Agenda Item #: 3

### **Discussion of a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute an extension to the agreement with Charitable Adult Rides and Services, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$180,000 for the period beginning March 1, 2025, and ending February 28, 2026, with options to extend for two additional one-year terms.**

Agenda item type: Action item

#### **Summary**

DRCOG contracted with Charitable Adult Rides and Services, doing business as On the Go, to provide call center and trip scheduling services for the Choice Services Transportation program. DRCOG has been working with On the Go since July 2024 and would like to continue working with them to provide these services.

#### **Background**

In 2023, DRCOG issued a request for proposals for a call center to support the Choice Services Transportation program. It was determined that based on the call volume coming into the AAA to schedule rides, hiring a call center would allow for staff to answer live calls, as well as allow the call center to schedule on demand trips with Uber and Lyft. The intent behind contracting with a call center was to better improve customer service for the program.

The call center went live at the start of the fiscal year in July 2024. Since then, all calls to schedule rides have been forwarded on to On the Go. While we are still early on to fully evaluate the effectiveness of this program, DRCOG has already seen some benefits. So far staff have been able to answer over 400 live calls this year. In comparison staff were not able to answer any live calls in the previous year. In addition, On the Go has scheduled over 3,000 trips using Uber and Lyft through their integration with these two providers. Many of these calls have been on demand requests, that would have gone unfulfilled prior to DRCOG working with On the Go. On average, clients calling into schedule a ride with On the Go are not having to wait on hold for an agent to answer, as opposed to having to leave DRCOG staff message and wait for a call back. Approximately 11% of calls into On the Go had any sort of hold time, and of those that had to wait, the average wait was less than 3 minutes. From a client perspective, working with On the Go has improved accessibility into the program, by allowing clients to be able to schedule trips as needed, and not needing to plan out for a week or more in advance to schedule their trips.

Having a call center has also been beneficial for staff, as it has allowed them to focus their time on managing other aspects of this program. This includes more time to enroll new clients off the waitlist, as availability opens to enroll in the program. It has also allowed staff to work on cleaning up policies, managing the waitlist, data analysis, and to work on developing a travel



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training program to complement the services in the region. In addition, since there has been an increase in the number of people utilizing lower cost services because of On the Go's ability to schedule over the phone for Uber and Lyft, DRCOG has only seen a slight increase (less than 10%) in the average cost per trip, which includes the cost of On the Go's administrative fees.

DRCOG intends to continue to use On the Go to schedule trips for the choice services program given the benefits that DRCOG has seen with the program. This contract only represents the costs associated with On the Go's administrative fees for operating the call center. Those administrative fees are in total about \$15,000 per month. On The Go charges DRCOG a fee per ride scheduled, as well as a fee per minute for phone calls coming in. In addition, there is a set fee per month that DRCOG pays to On the Go. DRCOG has a separate agreement with On the Go to pay the costs of fares for their Uber and Lyft subcontracts, that terms in June.

**Action by others**

None

**Previous discussion/action**

None

**Recommendation**

Move to adopt a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute an extension to the agreement with Charitable Adult Rides and Services, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$180,000 for the period beginning March 1, 2025, and ending February 28, 2026, with options to extend for two additional one-year terms.

**Attachment(s)**

Draft resolution

**For more information**

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