

SUBJECT

Free Fixed-Route Transportation and Dial-A-Lift Paratransit Services on Election Day

RECOMMENDED ACTION

To authorize the President and CEO to provide fixed-route transportation and Dial-A-Lift paratransit services free of fare on the November 6, 2018 Election Day.

BACKGROUND

In an effort to reduce the barriers to voting for individuals that rely on Long Beach Transit (LBT) for mobility, staff is recommending LBT provide fixed-route transportation and Dial-A-Lift paratransit services free of fare on the November 6, 2018 Election Day.

In the June 2018 primary election, Los Angeles County saw a voter turnout of just 28 percent, which is the second-lowest election turnout of the 47 California counties that reported. Additionally, studies have shown that minority, low-income, persons with disabilities and youth voters have consistently lower turnout than the average. These populations are also the ones most reliant on public transportation, such as LBT, for mobility.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's 2016 Survey of the Performance of American Elections (SPAEE) found that approximately 30 percent of non-voters across the country claimed that the lack of transportation to the polls was a factor in deciding not to vote. In California, that number rose to 51 percent.

To encourage voter turnout, transit operators across the country plan to provide free public transportation on Election Day. Participating cities include Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Tampa, Kansas City and Durham. The number of transit operators taking this approach continues to grow, and LBT wants to ensure all voters have the opportunity to get to a polling station.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may choose not to approve the recommend. However, staff does not recommend this option as many voters who depend on LBT for mobility may not reach polls without adequate means of transportation.



Kenneth A. McDonald
President and Chief Executive Officer