

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 14, 2002  
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *ps*  
SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF A PILOT PROGRAM FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE SENIOR TAXI SERVICE PROGRAM

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**ISSUE:** City Council Approval of a pilot expansion of the Senior Taxi Service Program to provide transportation for the elderly to medically-related appointments up to a five-mile limit outside the Alexandria City Limits.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council authorize the allocation of up to \$30,000 set aside in Contingent Reserves in the FY 2003 Budget for establishment of a pilot program expanding the Senior Taxi Service Program for medically-related appointments up to a five-mile limit outside the Alexandria City Limits.

**BACKGROUND:** At the April 18, 2002, budget work session, staff presented information on the requested expansion of the current Senior Taxi Service Program (Attachment 1). The program expansion would provide taxi service for the elderly outside the city limits of Alexandria for medically-related trips. Council raised questions about possible income restrictions on program participants and asked staff to provide additional information. The proposal included the cost of a five-mile radius program (\$30,000) and a ten-mile radius program (\$33,125). Funding to cover the estimated cost the ten-mile radius, \$33,125, was designated in the Approved FY 2003 Contingent Reserve account pending the staff review.

**DISCUSSION:** Senior Services of Alexandria began the current Senior Taxi program with funding from the Older Americans Act. The Act requires that its funded programs be accessible to all seniors regardless of income. The FY 2002 budget for Senior Taxi, \$129,149, is financed with \$111,717 in City funds and \$17,432 in State funds; however, the program continues to operate under the original guidelines of The Older Americans Act regarding accessibility. The current program and any "out-of-city" expansion is able to set its own guidelines. The Senior Taxi Program collects participant data which includes trip origination, destination and rider income. Chart 2 (attached) provides a sample of trip origination information for April, 2002. Of 61 identified trips in that month, 39, or 64%, originated from low income addresses (Claridge House, Ladrey and Annie B. Rose). The remaining 22 trips, 36%, originated from a mix of moderate to high income addresses. Senior Services staff believes that the proposed expansion of the program would be heavily utilized by low to moderate income riders who have few transportation options available.

Senior Services of Alexandria is proposing a pilot program starting in FY 2003 to assess the actual need for the expanded service and to determine the costs of such an expansion. Under the pilot program, transportation for medical appointments will be provided up to a five-mile limit outside the Alexandria City limits. This pilot program will allow Senior Services staff the opportunity to gauge the need for the expanded service and to obtain information on the actual cost of the program. The pilot program will be assessed jointly by Senior Services and the Office of Management and Budget after six months. At that point, decisions on whether, and how, to amend the program will be made. If funding is approved by Council, procedures and evaluation criteria for the pilot expanded program will be developed over the next sixty days with program start-up in early fall.

In a related matter the Commission on Persons with Disabilities and the Commission on Aging have agreed to jointly study fare and service differences between the City's DOT Paratransit program and the Senior Taxi program. For example, an in-City round trip costs \$3.00 in the Senior Taxi program but \$4.00 in the DOT Paratransit program. For the out-of-City medical appointment pilot program the Senior Taxi round-trip fare is proposed at \$5.00. This compares with a \$4.50 DOT Paratransit fare. The joint group, which will work with City Staff, plans to report back before the end of the calendar year.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The proposed pilot for the expansion of the Senior Taxi Service program is to be funded from Approved FY 2003 Contingent Reserves. Council designated \$33,125 in that account for this possible expansion. The proposed five-mile radius program is proposed to be funded at \$30,000. These funds will be allocated to the Department of Human Services, Office of Aging and Adult Services budget to contract with Senior Services of Alexandria to carry out this pilot program.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Budget Memo #13: Expansion of Senior Taxi Service Program
2. Statistics for Senior Taxi, April, 2002

**STAFF:**

Stott Mason, Analyst, Office of Management and Budget  
Gene Swearingen, Director, Office of Management and Budget  
Mark Jinks, Assistant City Manager

## City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 8, 2002

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 13 : EXPANSION OF SENIOR TAXI SERVICE PROGRAM (COUNCILWOMAN PEPPER'S REQUEST)

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This memorandum is in response to Councilwoman Pepper's request for information on the cost of expanding the Senior Taxi Service Program (Attachment 1) as proposed by Senior Services of Alexandria. The cost of the proposal is estimated at \$30,000 to \$33,125 depending on the option selected.

The Senior Taxi Service Program, managed by Senior Services of Alexandria, provides transportation services via taxi for medical, senior recreation, and grocery visits within the City limits. The program is provided to City of Alexandria residents, age 60 or older, and has no income restriction for participation. Transportation services for this program are provided through a contract with Diamond Cab. For Fiscal Year 2001, the Senior Taxi Service Program provided a total of 12,515 one-way trips at a cost of \$120,000. The cost per one-way trip in FY 2001 was \$9.60. Currently, riders pay \$1.50 per trip to the driver as a stipend. The \$1.50 stipend is not counted as offsetting revenue to the program. This service program receives its funding from the City through monthly usage reports from the contractor to the Office of Aging and Adult Services. The program is very popular with the 700 senior citizen users and has received very few timeliness or driver complaints.

Senior Services of Alexandria has submitted a proposal to expand the current Senior Taxi Service to either a five or ten mile radius outside of City limits. The expanded trips would be made available for medically-related appointments only. For the five-mile program, riders would pay \$2.50 each way for medical destinations up to five miles beyond the City limits. This is projected to generate an additional 1,875 one-way trips at a cost of \$16.00 per trip for a total cost of \$30,000. For the proposed ten mile program, medically-related trips can be made only to Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the Washington Medical Center. This program, if funded, is projected to generate an additional 125 one-way trips and is expected to cost \$25.00 per trip for a cost of \$3,125. Riders would be expected to pay \$3.00 each way. The ten mile

proposal would also include the ability to travel within five miles of the City limits, which is previously noted to generate 1,875 trips at a cost of \$30,000. Total cost of implementing the ten-mile proposal would be \$33,125 and may add a total of 2,000 (125 ten-mile + 1,875 five-mile) trips per year. The \$2.50 or \$3.00 stipend paid to the driver would not be considered offsetting revenue for the program.

The medically-related five and ten-mile proposals will not be available to elderly citizens whose medical destinations are beyond these limits. The limited proposed expansion of the Senior Taxi Service beyond the City limits is likely to create new and larger demands for transportation services and the necessary increased budget funds to support them. Medicaid funds are not available to help offset any of these increases in service. The DOT Paratransit program, which also provides medically-related transportation, is available only for disabled persons whose needs cannot be met by mainstream public transportation.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1- Proposed increase to Senior Taxi Service to allow for trips outside the City limits of Alexandria for medical related appointments only

**STAFF:**

Susan Dawson, Executive Director, Senior Services of Alexandria, Inc.  
Gene Swearingen, Director, Office of Management and Budget  
Carol Moore, Acting Deputy Director of Management and Budget  
Stott Mason, Budget/Management Analyst

# Senior Services

OF ALEXANDRIA

North St. Asaph Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 • 703-836-4414 • (fax) 703-836-1252 • snrsrvcs@aol.com

## Proposed increase to Senior Taxi Service to allow for trips outside the city limits of Alexandria for medical related appointments only

### Present Program

Based on FY 2000-2001 numbers

<u>One Way Trips</u>	<u>City subsidy</u>	<u>Program Costs</u>
12,500 rides	\$9.60 a trip	\$120,000

### Increase to 5 mile radius from City limits

Rider pays **\$2.50** each way for outside city limit trips

One Way trips inside city	12,500 x \$10.00	\$125,000
One Way trips outside City (15% increase) <u>in trips</u>	1,875 x \$16 a trip Estimated Cost:	<u>\$30,000</u> \$155,000

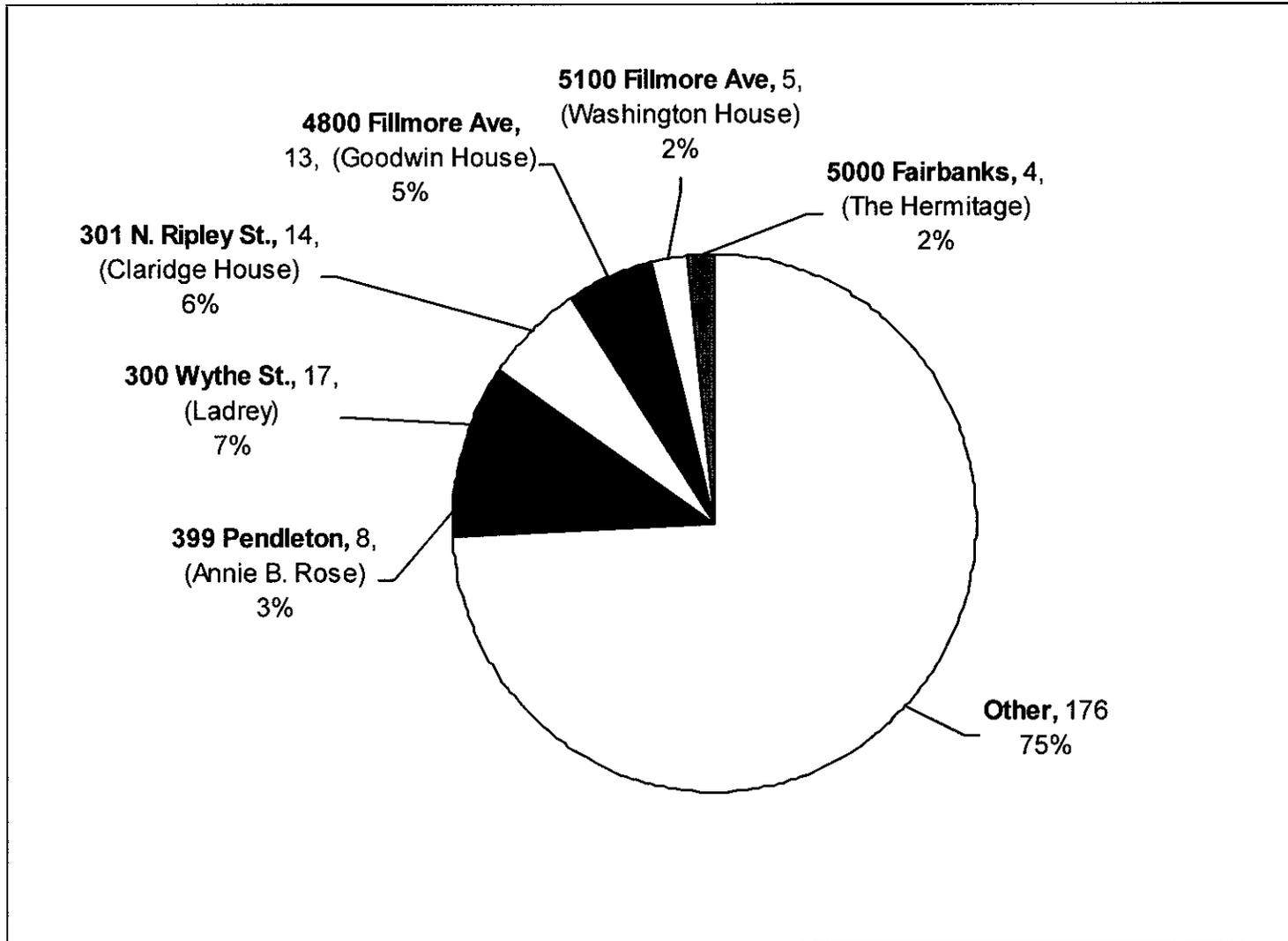
### Increase to 10 miles radius from City limits

Rider pays **\$3.00** each way

Would allow access to Walter Reed and Washington Medical Centers *only*

One Way trips inside city:	\$12,500 x \$10.00	\$125,000
One Way trips outside City:		
15% at 5 miles	1,875 x \$16 a trip	\$30,000
1% at 10 miles	125 x \$25	<u>\$3,125</u>
	Estimated Cost:	\$158,125

# Statistics for Senior Taxi, April 2002



•Chart prepared by Office of Management and Budget

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6-25-02

June 16, 2002

Mayor Kerry Donley  
City of Alexandria  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

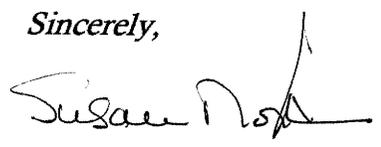
Dear Mayor Donley:

Please add my name to the list of supporters for the Senior Taxi service.

I use it frequently for grocery and drug store trips, but unfortunately my doctor is in Washington. It would be most helpful if the service could be extended to nearby jurisdictions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Susan E. North  
807 N. Howard Street  
Alexandria, VA 22304



20  
6-25-02

**IDA MELLO**  
**5250 Valley Forge Drive, Apt. 107**  
**Alexandria, VA 22304**

June 12, 2002

The Hon. Mayor Kerry Donley  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mayor Donley:

I am a senior citizen, 79 years old, living alone and, unfortunately, never learned to drive.

I have lived in Alexandria for 45 years and I had no problems in the past taking the bus or subway. However, I have now developed a balance problem and getting to the bus or subway is impossible.

Recently, I had a doctor's appointment in the Pinecrest area and called the Senior Citizen Cab, only to be told that they do not cover the Pinecrest area. Afterward, I called Yellow cab and was told the fare was over \$12.00 each way, a bit steep on my income. A friend then offered to drive me.

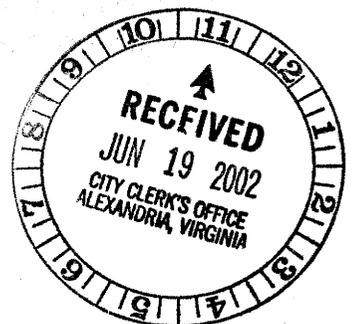
Sir, a Senior Taxi expansion would be a great help to me and other seniors.

Anything you can do would be gratefully appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

*Ida Mello*

(Mrs.) Ida Mello



Telephone Log  
Senior Taxi Expansion

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6-25-02

- 6/6/02 Bill Berger supports  
1110 S. Pitt St. 52314
- Florence Katz supports  
309 Yoakum Pkwy. #209 22304
- 6/7/02 Marie Taylor supports  
805 Grandview Dr. 22305
- 6/13/02 Carmen V. Terry supports  
307 Yoakum Pkwy. #705 22304
- 6/17/02 Naomi Shafex supports  
307 Yoakum Pkwy. #203 22304
- 6/17/02 Margaret Abbott supports  
307 Yoakum Pkwy. #212 22304
- 6/19/02 William Churning supports  
1250 S. Washington St. 22314-4445