

**FORT BEND COUNTY FY 2010
COMMISSIONERS COURT AGENDA REQUEST FORM**

Return Completed Form by E-Mail to: Agenda Coordinator, County Judge's Office

Date Submitted:	1/20/2010	Submitted By: Stephen Gipson
Court Agenda Date:	1/26/2010	Department: Public Transportation
		Phone Number: 281-633-7433 Opt. #3

SUMMARY OF ITEM:

- 1) Take all appropriate action to approve the Charter Policy for Public Transportation
- 2) Authorize County Judge to sign and the Transportation Director to submit on behalf of Fort Bend County the FY10 Federal Certifications and Assurances to the Texas Department of Public Transportation.

RENEWAL AGREEMENT/APPOINTMENT YES NO

REVIEWED BY COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE: YES NO

List Supporting Documents Attached: 1) Final Charter Policy
2) FY10 Grant Application Part II

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

BUDGETED ITEM: YES NO

FUNDNG SOURCE: Accounting Unit: Account Number:
Activity (If Applicable):

DESCRIPTION OF LAWSON ACCOUNT: _____

Instructions to submit Agenda Request Form:

- Completely fill out agenda form: incomplete forms will not be processed.
- Agenda Request Forms should be submitted by e-mail, fax, or inter-office mail, and all back-up information must be provided by Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. to all those listed below.
- All original back-up must be received in the County Judge's Office by 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday.

DISTRIBUTION:

Original Form Submitted with back up to County Judge's Office (✓ when completed)
If by E-Mail to ospindon@co.fort-bend.tx.us If by Fax to (281) 341-8609

Distribute copies with back-up to all listed below. If by fax, send to numbers below:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Auditor	(281-341-3774)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comm. Pct. 1	(281-342-0587)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Budget Officer	(281-344-3954)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comm. Pct. 2	(281-403-8009)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Facilities/Planning	(281-633-7022)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comm. Pct. 3	(281-242-9060)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purchasing Agent	(281-341-8642)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comm. Pct. 4	(281-980-9077)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Technology	(281-341-4526)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Clerk	(281-341-8697)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Atty	(281-341-4557)

RECOMMENDATION / ACTION REQUESTED:

Special Handling Requested (specify):

FORT BEND COUNTY

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

Pilot Program – Group Charter SERVICES

For Qualified Human Service Organizations

Fort Bend Transit has begun a pilot program to provide charter services for Fort Bend County residents. Group Charter service is defined as an affiliated group of people traveling to and from a specific location on a bus or buses that do not allow other passengers not part of the groups affiliation to travel along with the group. This service is available to qualified human service organizations chartered within Fort Bend County.

Eligibility

Qualified Human Service organizations chartered within Fort Bend County who have completed the required registration and/or met requirements of the Federal Transit Administration for charter service eligibility. Qualified Human Service Organization means an organization that serves persons who qualify for human service or transportation related programs or services due to disability, income or advanced age. Requirements and registration information are listed in the Federal Register, Volume 73, No.9 Dated 1-14-08. The specific trip purpose must either be for educational or entertainment events/activities.

Reservations

Qualified Human Service organizations may be required to register with the Federal Transit Administration. This registration process requires a minimum of 90 days for completion. Reservations will not be accepted until an organization has met the registration requirement of the Federal Transit Administration.

Reservations will be accepted up to 90 business days in advance of the trip request but no later than fifteen business days prior to the requested date of the charter trip. Reservations will be accepted Monday - Friday (excluding County holidays) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

A signed contract for service from the agency requesting service must be in place before reservations will be accepted. The contract must be executed by the agency's representative with authority to contract for services and expend agency funds. The contract document will define service dates, service times, itineraries, designated bus monitors for each vehicle (determined by the agency), pick up and drop off locations and related charges. Itineraries approved in the contract must be adhered to on the day of service unless extenuating or emergency conditions warrant a change on the day of service. Fort Bend County retains the sole authority for determining whether an itinerary change on the day of service meets these exceptions. Agencies will be responsible for any additional costs incurred on the day of service. Payment will be required within 15 business days of the service date for these additional costs. Failure of agency to pay additional costs within the prescribed time frame will result in the agency being denied access to charter services provided by Fort Bend County.

Changes to itineraries or cancellations made within ten business days of the requested trip will result in a change/cancellation fee of 20 percent of total cost of charter contracted. All itinerary changes or cancellations must be received in writing with the signature of the authorized agency representative. Payment of the change/cancellation fee will be required within 15 business days of the change/cancellation notice. Failure of agency to pay the change/cancellation fee within the prescribed time frame will result in the agency being denied access to charter services provided by Fort Bend County.

Service Areas

Charter trips must originate and end within Fort Bend County. No trips will be provided outside of the boundaries of Fort Bend County, except under special exceptions. These exceptions include trips into Houston utilizing the Hwy. 59 corridor and ending in downtown Houston and trips into the Museum District of Houston utilizing the Hwy. 90 corridor.

The boundaries of the service area served through the 59 corridor are areas bounded by the following streets: Congress to the North, Texas to the South, Hamilton to the East and Bagby from the west.

The boundaries of the service area served through the 90 corridor are areas bounded by the following streets: Binz to the North, Old Spanish Trail to the South, South Main to the East and Almeda to the West.

Fees and Availability

It is the policy of Fort Bend County to only accept Charter reservations for educational or entertainment trips for agencies that qualify under the US DOT Charter Regulations. Charters will be offered 7 days a week excluding County Holidays. First pick-ups may begin as early as 8:00 a.m. and last drop offs must be completed before midnight. Services offered Monday through Friday from 8am to 6p and are subject to fleet availability. Fort Bend Transit will provide options of which vehicles to use considering the size of the group and activity of the group.

Charters in Fort Bend Transit vehicles are available at a flat rate of \$25 per hour, per vehicle, with a two-hour minimum. Included in the two-hour minimum is one half hour at the beginning and one half hour at the end of the charter for preparation and clean-up. A deposit equal to 50% of the total cost for the planned services is required at contract execution. The remaining amount due will be required at the beginning of the scheduled trip. Payments can be made only with an organization check. Cash payments will NOT be accepted. Cost estimates are given on the contract.

A maximum of fifty (50) passengers is allowed for one trip. An agency is initially allowed only one trip per County fiscal year through this pilot project. An agency must be registered through the US DOT Charter website PRIOR to contacting FB Transit for reservations. Registration for each agency may be completed at:

[http://ftawebprod.fta.dot.gov/CharterRegistration/\(S\(s4pqgj55ggwy2ynnjcwrrw55\)\)/Splash-CharterRegistration.aspx](http://ftawebprod.fta.dot.gov/CharterRegistration/(S(s4pqgj55ggwy2ynnjcwrrw55))/Splash-CharterRegistration.aspx)

Any additional costs incurred on the trip will be billed to the organization after the trip is completed.

ADDITIONAL CHARGES MAY INCUR IF:

- **the passengers smoke, possess alcoholic beverages, or have illegal drugs**
- **the bus is damaged, vandalized, or grossly littered**
- **any other events occurring that are deemed inappropriate by Fort Bend Transit**

Policies

At least ten business days before the trip, the agency must provide Fort Bend County with contact information and name for a primary contact person who will be in attendance for the entire trip. This individual will be identified to the driver(s) assigned as the individual authorized to make decisions for the entire group during the service day.

All passengers must follow and adhere to vehicle safety rules.

Drivers are instructed to wait for passengers for up to 30 minutes from the pick-up time listed on the contract.

When chartering more than one bus, the buses will travel as a group whenever possible.

Unscheduled stops will be made at the discretion of the driver in consultation with the designated contract person.

No smoking or open alcoholic beverages will be permitted on any bus at any time.

Passengers are allowed to bring soft drinks, juices, water and light snacks on board vehicles and are responsible for securing such items while the vehicle is moving. All waste materials must be secured in appropriate on-board waste containers or held by the passengers in a secured location until they can be disposed of properly.

Ice chests are allowed on-board providing that they can be properly secured when the vehicle is moving. Ice chests must be removed if the driver determines that they cannot be transported securely and safely.

The driver reserves the right to request that any passenger exit the bus if:

- The passengers smoke or possess open alcoholic beverages.
- The Program Guidelines are violated.
- Any activity occurs that limits the driver's ability to drive safely or affects the safety of passengers.

The driver reserves the right to request law enforcement or emergency medical assistance.

Although Fort Bend Transit will make every effort to meet the terms of a contract, there may be instances, due to unforeseen circumstances that make it necessary to substitute the type of bus reserved with a comparable and equivalent vehicle.

Fort Bend County reserves the right to cancel the contract or trip without advance notice due to safety concerns associated with severe weather or other emergencies.