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## Taxi vouchers to help seniors on the move

By: [Laura Newell, Of the Telegraph](#)

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El Dorado Hills' seniors may have a new way to get around town through a taxi voucher program.

The proposed taxi voucher program will provide on-demand, subsidized taxi service within the El Dorado Hills Community Services District area of Western El Dorado County, said Robin Van Valkenburgh, planning and marketing manager for El Dorado Transit. The service will be provided to eligible seniors, 60 years or older, and disabled residents as specified by El Dorado Transit, of the El Dorado Hills Community.

“This service is considered a demonstration project and is really being provided in lieu of fixed route services, which currently would be overly expensive to operate and for which there is little in the way of infrastructure within the community,” Van Valkenburgh said. “The concept was developed through two separate studies done for El Dorado Transit and the El Dorado Transportation Commission.”

At this point, Van Valkenburgh said there is not a definite start date for the service.

“We are currently negotiating with a taxi vendor and hope to be able to award a contract in early March,” Van Valkenburgh said. “If this should be the case, then we expect that service might start in May so that we are able to properly promote the program and make sure the residents of El Dorado Hills actually are aware of the service.”

While this is only available for El Dorado Hills' residents, some eligible participants will be able to go into Folsom.

“This program is administered by El Dorado Transit and will only be available to residents of El Dorado Hills,” Van Valkenburgh said. “That being said, eligible participants in the program will be able to use the service for trips to locations beyond the current area of subsidy as long as they are willing to assume responsibility for the taxi fare from the El Dorado Hills Community Services District boundary to their destination.”

Van Valkenburgh will present the proposed taxi voucher program at 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 5, at the El Dorado Hills Senior Center in El Dorado Hills.

“El Dorado Hills is the most populated area of the county and the only place where there is no public transportation,” said Janet Kenneweg with the El Dorado Hills Senior Center. “We have many seniors who move here from the bay area who are used to numerous public transportation options. The current Dial-a-Ride van service is impacted and often unavailable to the seniors. El Dorado Hills has many seniors who are isolated and who can no longer drive. Many other seniors cannot drive after dark. We are so excited about the launch of this new transportation option for seniors and the disabled. It is going to be an inexpensive and comprehensive alternative being only \$3 per ride, and available extended hours seven days per week.”

For more information and to reserve a spot at the upcoming presentation, call (916) 358-3575.

### **Proposed Services provided by El Dorado Transit**

- Taxi services will be available seven days a week between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.
- Taxi services will be provided within the El Dorado Hills Community Services District
- Passengers must register with El Dorado Transit to verify eligibility
- Proposed one-way passenger fare of \$3

- Eligible passengers will purchase vouchers to give to the taxi operator for \$3. Vouchers are required or passenger would be required to pay full fare
- Vouchers will be available for purchase at the El Dorado Transit Office, by mail and at various local businesses and community agencies
- Passengers may travel on the taxi beyond the El Dorado Hills Community Services District at the sole expense of the passenger
- Eligible participants may call any contracted taxi vendor for a trip
- Taxi operator will arrive to pick-up eligible passengers within 45 minutes of a reservations call, unless otherwise specified by the passenger at the time of the reservation request.