

R.Y.D.E. EXPANDS SENIOR CAR SERVICE IN SAN JOSE AND MORGAN HILL

LOW-COST TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM PROVIDES CRITICAL LIFELINE TO INDEPENDENT SENIORS

SARATOGA, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, October 21, 2020

[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- Seniors in West Valley communities and Morgan Hill will soon have expanded access to a safe, affordable ride service for riders aged 65 and older, thanks to a federal grant aimed at helping seniors living in "transportation deserts" lacking easily accessible public transportation. The grant will enable the "Reach Your Destination Easily," or RYDE, car service program, to expand its current area of operations into parts of San Jose and all of Morgan Hill.



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“We're excited to be able to bring this program to more people in need,” says Josh Selo, Executive Director of West Valley Community Services (WVCS). The original RYDE program, launched three years ago thanks to the partnership between WVCS and the Saratoga Area Senior Coordinating Council (SASCC), was designed to help seniors continue living independently by offering them an easy, low-cost option for getting where they need to go and back, whether it be a doctor's appointment, grocery shopping, or other errand. Rides are booked in advance, and fees are charged on a sliding scale, based on ability to pay. Financial assistance is also available.

The expansion will be particularly noticeable in Morgan Hill, whose Get'n Around Town Volunteer Driver Program, which provided rides to seniors participating at the Centennial Recreation Senior Center, will be expanded and re-branded as RYDE. “Merging with RYDE means additional funding, marketing, and a supportive network of two caring organizations aligned with our goal

of keeping older adults connected to the community,” says Debbie Vasquez, Recreation Supervisor for the City of Morgan Hill Centennial Recreation Senior Center.



More than just transportation. . “We are not transportation specialists; we are social service agencies,” explains Tylor Taylor, SASCC’s Executive Director. “We have a combination of paid and volunteer drivers, and all of them get to know our riders, listen for cues that indicate a need, and are able to respond with resources.” Taylor recalls one client en route to a senior center who confided she

wasn’t eating well -- the agency quickly connected her to a senior meals program. When ridership was down during the COVID-19 pandemic, the program pivoted to delivery. Hundreds of meals were delivered from the Live Oak Senior Nutrition Program, along with essentials and food pantry items from WVCS.

Today, as the County continues phased reopening, RYDE is ready to resume and expand its role as a transportation lifeline for seniors. A trip for groceries, to get a flu shot, or even visit a place of worship is just a phone call away. RYDE also provides transportation to VTA transit hubs located within its service area.

It’s safe. “People using RYDE are those who could be significantly impacted by COVID-19, so we take extra precautions,” Selo asserts. Those precautions include pre-ride temperature-taking and/or health screenings, plexiglass dividers, masks and gloves, and deep cleaning between rides, among other steps. “It’s just you and the driver -- the safest way to travel!” he adds.

It’s affordable. Riders pay on a sliding scale, which is based on the senior’s income alone, not the value of their home or the income of any other family member in the household. Fees are based on the number of miles traveled and range from as little as \$.90 to \$18.00; financial assistance is available.

It’s easy! Just call your local RYDE coordinator between two days and one month before your trip. Visit www.rydesc.org for hours of operation and how to book.

Volunteers needed. We need you! RYDE provides an essential service, helping give seniors the independence they need to age in place and stay connected to their community. “Without transportation, older adults can become homebound, isolated, and disconnected, which can cascade into other health issues,” Vasquez cautions. “Volunteer drivers are the key to the success of our program and our ability to have a meaningful impact.”

The Saratoga Area Senior Coordinating Council and West Valley Community Services will host a joint press conference at the SASCC office to formally announce RYDE's new service area.

WHERE

The Saratoga Area Senior Coordinating Council
19655 Allendale Ave
Saratoga, CA 95070

DATE

Wednesday Oct. 21, 2020

TIME

10:00 AM

WHO

- Tylor Taylor, Co-Operator of R.Y.D.E program
- Joe Simitian, Santa Clara County Supervisor
- Howard Miller, Mayor of Saratoga
- Rich Constantine, Mayor of Morgan Hill
- Lisa Oakley, Board President of SASCC & Volunteer R.Y.D.E Driver
- R.Y.D.E. drivers and clients

For more information about the R.Y.D.E. program, go to: www.rydescc.org

- [About WVCS](#)

- [About SASCC](#)

- [About the City of Morgan Hill Centennial Recreation Senior Center](#)

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