

FAQ Taxi Subsidy Program

Are there changes being proposed to the Taxi Subsidy Program?

As part of the Village's Long Range Budget Plan, the Village recently adopted ordinances implementing a phased elimination of the Taxi Subsidy Program.

Why is the Taxi Subsidy Program being phased out?

The Village of Lombard has proactively developed a Long Range Budget Plan, with strategies to address a structural budget deficit and the rising costs of state mandates and non-discretionary (required) expenses. The Village Finance and Administration Committee, consisting of Lombard residents, was tasked with holding meetings to develop recommendations on how to eliminate the Village's structural budget deficit. The Committee recommended a combination of increased revenues and expense reductions related to discretionary non-core services. The non-core services identified for expense reduction include the Taxi Subsidy Program, the Sewer Rodding Reimbursement Program, the Village banner and holiday décor program, and others. In April, the Village Board and Finance Committee held a joint workshop on the proposed Long Range Plan, which was adopted by Board resolution in June of 2016.

Why was there a need to reduce non-essential services, including the Taxi Subsidy Program?

The challenges faced by the Village are associated with maintaining excellent core service levels to residents and business owners, while expenses continue to increase faster than revenues due to State mandates beyond the Village's control. The reduction of non-essential services, including the Taxi Subsidy Program, along with the other budget measures of the Long Range Budget Plan will make it possible for the Village to adopt and deliver a balanced budget.

Why was the Senior Taxi Program identified as a non-core Village service?

"Core services" are those services that are generally considered by staff to be critical to essential functions of municipal operations. The Village is focused on providing levels of excellence of core services including public safety provided by Police and Fire Departments; road, sewer, and water maintenance from Public Works; building and code enforcement from Community Development, and responsible long term financial planning from the Finance Department.

"Enhanced services" are those services that, which while still important, are discretionary and non-essential in nature and may be the product of historical service delivery, local policy and/or preference.

Examples of enhanced services currently provided by the Village:

- Senior Taxi Cab program
- Downtown early start cleanups
- Downtown banner program and holiday decorations

Aren't local transportation programs like the taxi subsidy program considered essential services as well?

Transportation and public transit needs are important services that, while sometimes offered, are not considered essential or core services of municipal governments. Transit and paratransit transportation services are key services primarily provided by the state and transportation agencies, not municipal governments. Where offered locally, enhanced transportation services are often provided through local townships. A survey of DuPage communities revealed that only four communities within the County run taxi subsidy programs. Over recent years, three other area communities have eliminated or suspended their local taxi subsidy programs. There are thirteen municipalities within DuPage County that do not currently offer a municipal transportation program.

Will the Taxi Subsidy Program be eliminated immediately?

No. The taxi subsidy program will be phased out over the course of the next eighteen months, with full elimination of the program by January 1, 2018. The Village will continue to register participants and sell taxi subsidy vouchers until January 1, 2017. Thereafter, unexpired vouchers purchased in 2016 will continue to be

redeemed through calendar year 2017. The formal termination of the program will take place on January 1, 2018.

What alternative transportation options are available for seniors?

As the Taxi Subsidy Program is phased out, there are multiple alternative transportation options available to eligible disabled residents and senior citizens. These options include the following programs (click on program name for detailed information):

INCOME/MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY

- [Ride DuPage Program](#) - Income eligible seniors and medically eligible obtain subsidized medical travel and free transport for non-medical transport (errands, etc.).
- [Illinois Department of Human Services \(IDHS\)/First Transit](#) – Free transportation for medical appointments to eligible seniors with primary insurance through Medicaid.

RESIDENCY BASED TOWNSHIP PROGRAMS

- [Addison Township Transportation Ride DuPage](#) – 65+ or disabled resident 24/7 taxi transportation for \$2.00 per ride plus \$1.00 per mile (companion travels for free)
- [Addison Township Pilot II](#) – 65+ or disabled resident – Taxi subsidy program where riders may purchase coupons at 50% of cost.
- [Milton Township Ride DuPage](#) – 65+ or disabled resident – Curb to curb transportation to any DuPage County location via paratransit bus or taxi for \$2.00 per ride plus \$1.00 per mile.
- [York Township Senior Transportation Service](#) – 55+ or disabled resident – Offering prescheduled township rides during business hours. One way medical or grocery store rides for \$3; non-essential rides for shopping or salon \$4 each way during certain hours.

ALL SENIORS

- [RTA Seniors Ride Free Program](#) – 65+ ride free on fixed routes on CTA, Metra and Pace
- [RTA Reduced Fare Permit](#) – 65+, veterans, Medicare and qualified disabled persons ride all CTA, Metra and Pace at half fare

SENIOR LIVING OPTIONS

- [Beacon Hill](#) – Scheduled transportation to medical appointments, shopping centers, and specific outings (within a designated area).
- [Lexington Square](#) – Transportation to appointments and outings to places in and around Chicago

What other options are there for discounted taxi services?

A number of licensed taxi providers servicing Lombard do offer discounts to senior citizens that wish to use taxi services for travel. Senior discounts through local taxi companies range from 10-27% off per ride. A full list of taxi discounts may be found on the Village website at www.villageoflombard.org/seniors. Contact the taxi companies directly to confirm discounts and eligibility.

How many users of the taxi voucher program will be affected by the program elimination?

In 2015, 251 program participants purchased taxi subsidies through the Lombard Taxi Subsidy Program. Through June 2016, 170 program participants have purchased taxi subsidies through the program.

How much does it cost the Village of Lombard to fund the Taxi Subsidy Program?

In 2015 and 2016, the Village of Lombard budgeted \$65,000 per year for the Taxi Subsidy Program (\$433 per participant in 2015). The net cost of the program varies from year to year ranging from \$35,000-\$45,000 per year. Under the current program, all Village seniors are eligible for subsidies of up to \$504 per year to use towards \$624 of rides.