



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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### **Ed Roberts Campus Awarded New Freedom Grant**

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) voted today to award the Ed Roberts Campus (ERC) a \$669,405 New Freedom grant. The MTC is providing funds to the Campus because it is a major transit-oriented development that will result in greater utilization of public transit by the disabled and elderly.

The Ed Roberts Campus will be an international center on disability and independent living. It will be located at the Ashby BART station in South Berkeley, where it will be easily reachable by public transportation by people who live in the Greater Bay Area and other parts of the US and the world. It has been formed by seven nonprofit organizations, which will locate at the ERC and will collaborate on independent living, rehabilitation and educational services as well as an extensive program of research, policy development and advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities.

The New Freedom Program makes grants to address the transportation needs of disabled persons through the provision of new services and facility improvements that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. New Freedom funds will be used at the ERC to fund the central ramp connecting the two floors and other accessibility features.

“The Ed Roberts Campus will be a national and international model dedicated to disability rights and universal access,” said Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates. “Berkeley is the birthplace of the disability civil rights movement and I can think of no better place in the world to house such an important facility to serve this important community.”

“The Board of the Ed Roberts Campus is very appreciative of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s support and for its commitment to promote access to persons with disabilities,” said Dmitri Belser, ERC President. “The New Freedom grant will help ensure that seniors and people with disabilities will enjoy the benefits of the Ed Roberts Campus that is fully accessible by public transportation.”

The Ed Roberts Campus is a nonprofit corporation that has been formed by disability organizations that share a common history in the Independent Living Movement of People with Disabilities. The Ed Roberts Campus will house the offices of the collaborating organizations and other non-profits as well as fully accessible meeting rooms, a computer/media resource center, a fitness center, a cafe, and a child development center. LMS Architects designed the



86,000 square foot Campus. Construction of the ERC by Cahill Contractors, Inc. is expected to start in August 2008.