

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 11/19/2025

Staff Report No. 25-543

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Salvador Llamas, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer
SUBJECT: Next Generation Clipper Tap-and-Ride Pilot

ACTION ITEM

AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST: ☐

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider approving a six-month pilot of Clipper's Tap-and-Ride feature to enable staff to complete the required Title VI equity analysis.

Staff Contact:
Phillip Halley, Interim Director of Civil Rights & Compliance

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Strong Public and Policymaker Support

In accordance with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1B, recipients must conduct a fare equity analysis to evaluate the effects of proposed fare changes on Title VI-protected populations. This process includes public outreach and feedback to ensure the District's continued compliance with FTA regulations.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no budgetary impacts associated with approving a six-month pilot of Clipper's Tap-and-Ride feature. However, there will be costs associated conducting public engagement as part of the Title VI analysis. Those costs are unknown at the time of this report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

On Monday, October 20, 2025, the Clipper Executive Board announced December 10, 2025 as the official start of transitioning to Next Generation Clipper. In addition to a host of other features, the new Clipper service includes the 'tap-and-ride' feature that allows riders to use a contactless bank card for fare payment (traditional plastic cards or mobile wallet cards).

The "tap-and-ride" feature is considered a new fare media; therefore, a Title VI fare equity analysis is required before permanent implementation. However, the time between the announcement and implementation dates is insufficient for staff to complete the analysis and conduct public engagement. FTA guidance permits agencies to pilot fare changes for up to six months without first completing the Title VI equity analysis. Adopting the "tap-and-ride" feature as a six-month pilot would allow staff to coordinate necessary resources

and complete the required equity analysis prior to permanent implementation.

Following the completion of the Title VI equity analysis, staff will present the findings and any appropriate recommendations to the Board.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

The advantage of adopting the six-month pilot is that the “tap-and-ride” feature rolls out as planned and it provides sufficient time for staff to complete the required Title VI equity analysis.

There are no known disadvantages approving the pilot.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

Alternatives to the requested action include:

- Allow the “tap-and-ride” feature transition as planned without conducting the required Title VI equity analysis. This is not recommended as it would violate FTA guidance and could jeopardize District funding.
- Allow the “tap-and-ride” feature to transition as planned and direct staff to complete the required Title VI equity analysis as soon as possible. While the analysis would eventually be completed, it would not occur prior to the permanent implementation of the new fare media, as required by the FTA. This could result in a finding during the next FTA triennial review.
- Delay the “tap-and-ride” feature transition until staff complete the required Title VI equity analysis. Although this is a compliant alternative, it would place the District out of alignment with other Bay Area transit operators.

Staff does not recommend any of these alternatives as the requested action allows for immediate transition, provides sufficient time to complete the required Title VI equity analysis, and ensures continued compliance with FTA guidance.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

Board Policy 518

ATTACHMENTS:

None

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