

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 12/13/2023

Staff Report No. 23-523

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer
SUBJECT: Customer Service Metrics Update

BRIEFING ITEM

AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST: ☐

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving the Quarterly Customer Services Update for the first quarter, FY2024

Staff Contact:
Beverly Greene, Executive Director of External Affairs, Marketing & Communications

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Convenient and Reliable Service
Initiative - Service Quality

The Customer Services unit consists of three primary functions - engaging with customers and riders via the customer relations database; providing service at the Clipper Customer Services Center, and delivering the production of Clipper-based institutional pass programs along with customer-centric management of the Clipper product.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

This is a briefing item and there is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The Customer Services team provides quarterly updates to provide a high-level overview of the proactive and responsive service provided to riders and other customers. Staff leverages in-person interaction and proven technologies, much of which are available 24/7 across diversified, user-friendly, and accessible platforms, and staff continuously looks for ways to employ new channels and methods that enhance the AC Transit customer experience.

Customer Service Center (Attachment 1)

The Clipper Customer Service Center (CSC), handles all Clipper-related requests (sells AC Transit and other fare media) such as BART senior and disabled tickets, paratransit tickets, and Bike Link tickets; provides bus schedules and maps; handles Regional Transit Connection (RTC) Discount ID Card requests; and manages the Lost and Found. The CSC also assists internal customers (District employees) with Dependent and Pensioner ID

cards. A total of 727 RTC applications were processed in the 1st quarter of FY2024. There was a 55% increase in application processing, likely in anticipation of a return to college/school, along with planned RTC outreach events, and increased customer traffic caused an uptick in applications processed. Q1 FY2024 fare revenue increased 39% compared Q4 FY 2023. The month of August had the highest revenue this quarter. A large bulk order was placed by Bay Area Community Services in August. There was a bulk order in August placed by B.A.C.S. - with an order of 88,000 tickets for \$157,500. An increased number of 31-day local adult passes were sold in August, totaling a little more than \$53,000. The bulk order in August was almost equal to total revenue in July. With school back in session and group trips being organized, bulk orders increased this quarter.

Customer Relations (Attachment 2)

Customer Relations manages the District's feedback and complaint resolution process. Staff monitors all incoming feedback, which are received through various communication channels, such as phone calls, emails, walk-ins, letters and social media. Customer Relations collaborates with various departments to ensure a timely response to our customers. During Service Planning & Operations Committee (SPOC) meetings, staff provides data and statistics to identify trends in order to determine areas needing service quality improvements.

Customer Feedback

From July through September of 2023, Customer Service received 2,006 unique customer contacts, approximately 10% fewer than the previous year's same quarter (2,234 contacts).

Contact Sources

The AC Transit official app remains customers' preferred method for submitting feedback. Other sources include social media, phone, US Postal Mail, Walk-Ins, and through Service Supervision.

Reasons

From July through September, "Pass-Up" complaints accounted for the largest share (15%) of all feedback both this year and last. "No-Show" complaints were 13% of the total, the same as last year.

Pass-Ups

Pass-ups were the most reported incident type for this quarter, with fifteen percent of the total. These complaints were focused on the high-ridership 72, 18, and 40 lines.

No-Shows

The percentage of no-show complaints was lowest at Division 6, where 19% of their complaints were about buses that did not arrive. Division 3 was double that at 38%, and with the 71-line receiving the most.

Commendations

Division 2 again received the most commendations from riders, who specifically called out operators on the 12 and 29-lines.

"(The 29-line driver) handled a possibly unhoused person with grace and professionalism. There were many different ways she could have handled it, but she chose the high road and treated her with dignity and respect despite the other woman's poor behaviors. Kudos to her. I hope you recognize her skills, abilities, and humanity. She represents AC Transit well!"

"I am visiting San Francisco and am very unfamiliar with the transit system. The lady driving the L bus out of the Salesforce transit center...was very knowledgeable and helpful with explaining things. Wish all bus drivers were as good as her!"

"This lady is a very sweet and courteous driver. Even when a rider was very rude to her, she was calm and kept her composure. I appreciate her very much. I ride the (14-line) weekend bus instead of Uber because she's always on time."

"I really like this (60-line) driver. He is polite, fun, together, smart. Drives well, too. I usually ride a bike until lately. He inquires how I am. He is sincere. Really likeable guy. Thank you."

Response Times to Customers- Top 5 Departments Productivity

Division staff met the five-day response time goal on 80% of all CusRel tickets, down from 89% this quarter last year. District-wide, the number was 77% for this quarter. Customer Service and the Director of Transportation are working on a revision to the CusRel SOP for Division staff that will hopefully address the shortfall in this area.

Call Center Reviews

The Call Center continues to receive overall positive feedback gathered from its self-generated survey. Some examples of customers' comments are presented in attachment two (2).

Institutional Programs (Attachment 3)

Institutional Pass Programs administers the Clipper card production aspect of the EasyPass program and manages Student Transit Pass Program as well as the City of Alameda Senior Pass Program.

The institutional programs enrolled 14,109 new participants this quarter, bringing the total user number to 91,458. As expected, the colleges and STPP student population make up most of the new enrollments at the beginning of the new school year. 34% of new enrollments are from EasyPass college programs, and 59% from STPP. Overall, the user growth of the institutional program has increased by 36% compared to the same time frame last year in Q1 2022-23.

The Clipper card ridership number increased by 22% compared to the last quarter (Q4 2022-23) and with significant growth of 115% compared to Q1 2022-23.

Please note that the BayPass Pilot Program ridership has been added to this report. Only the UC Berkeley ridership number has been incorporated into the EasyPass numbers. BayPass Pass issued by other agencies is reflected independently from the AC Transit institutional pass.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

There are no advantages or disadvantages associated with this report.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

This report has no alternative analysis, as no recommended action is provided.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

None

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Customer Service Center Metrics
2. Customer Relations and Call Center Metrics
3. Clipper-based Institution Pass Program Metrics

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