

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 10/27/2021

Staff Report No. 21-398

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
SUBJECT: Solicitation for Driver Protective Barriers

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider authorizing issuance of a solicitation for the purchase of driver compartment protective barriers.

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Safe and Secure Operations
Initiative - Service Quality

Improving the safety and security of bus operators is paramount. Installation of a permanent and robust protection barrier will significantly enhance the safety and security of the operator's compartment in every bus.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

Purchase of the driver compartment protective barriers will be paid for using a mix of District funds and federal grant funds. Most of these funds are remaining from prior bus purchase projects. The estimated amount of this procurement is being withheld to solicit the most competitive pricing from the vendors.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

Safety and security of bus operators is a priority and focus for the District's Operations Safety Task Force. In collaboration with multiple District departments and Union partners, staff released several marketing and communications campaigns aimed at educating the public and riders regarding operator safety and assault prevention. To identify an engineering solution that would help protect operators, staff needed to research available options on the market. Thanks to input from ATU Local 192, the District investigated Driver Protection Barriers (DPB) designed to deter passenger-related assaults against bus operators. Viable solutions needed to allow for protection of the operator, safe operation of the bus, and still allow for interaction with customers.

In August 2019, a pilot program was implemented by the District's Safety Committee, comprised of members of the Safety Department, ATU Local 192, and the Operations Department. The team set out to evaluate two types of Driver Protection Barriers (DPB) that would become the standard. The test units were installed on two identical Gillig 40-foot low floor buses and were deployed in-service at all Divisions and on lines operating

throughout the day and evening so each barrier could be evaluated under various lighting conditions. Each of the four operating Divisions were assigned the test buses for a three-month period and operators were asked to complete an evaluation form after operating in service and interacting with the units. At the conclusion of the in-service testing and review period, the AROW Global Model (MV308) Driver Protection System (DPS) was ultimately selected based upon feedback received through the operator evaluations.

The AROW Global DPS is constructed of a stainless-steel door with a two-piece sliding tempered glass system. Additionally, the sliding glass system can provide operators with an unobstructed space to interact with customers, should that be desired. The base of the door extends to the floor of the operator's platform providing adequate lower coverage. The barrier is Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant as it does not interfere with the boarding of mobility devices. Stainless steel mounting hardware and framing support will be included in this procurement as a means of mounting the DPS to various bus models.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the District's Safety Committee quickly designed a temporary virus protection shield that was manufactured and installed by our Maintenance staff. However, the temporary shields were not intended to be a permanent operator safety barrier. Purchase of the AROW Global DPS is the permanent solution selected by our Safety Committee with feedback from our operators.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

The advantage of authorizing this solicitation is the District will be able to accelerate the timeline to install driver protective barriers on the fleet and standardize the driver protection system selected by our employees.

Staff could not identify a disadvantage with authorizing this solicitation.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

Staff analyzed two scenarios to purchase these units between new bus procurements and budgeted installations. One of the scenarios installed about 100 barriers per year and would complete the project in about a 5-year time span. The second scenario would budget approximately \$140,000 per year and install about 28 units per year and would complete the project in 8 years.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

Board Policy 465 - Procurement Policy

ATTACHMENTS:

None

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