

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 11/19/2025

Staff Report No. 25-535

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Salvador Llamas, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer
SUBJECT: Customer Service Quarterly Metrics

BRIEFING ITEM

AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST: ☐

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving an update on FY25-26 First Quarter Customer Services Metrics

Staff Contact:
Claudia Burgos, Executive Director of External Affairs and Customer Experience

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Convenient and Reliable Service
Initiative - Service Quality

This report provides a general overview of the quarter's customer service-related activity, including rider and customer feedback, summaries of recent fare media sales and institutional pass ridership. Staff leverages in-person interaction and proven technologies, many of which are available 24/7 across diversified, user-friendly, and accessible platforms. Staff continuously look for ways to employ new channels and methods that enhance the customer's AC Transit experience.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The Customer Service Center (Clipper Customer Service Center) monitors Clipper-related requests, sells AC Transit passes and other fare media such as paratransit tickets, and Bike Link tickets; provides bus schedules and maps; works with the Regional Transit Connection (RTC) Discount ID Card requests; and manages the District's Lost and Found. The Customer Service Center also assists District employees with Dependent and Pensioner ID cards.

In Q1 of FY25-26, fare revenue through AC Transit passes such as 1-Ride Local Adult, and Day passes, totaled \$438,764 (See Figure 1 of Attachment 1), reflecting a slight increase of 1% compared to Q1 of FY24-25. Most non-profit organizations, including schools, operate on a fiscal year that begins on July 1st. As the academic year typically resumes in late August, there is a noticeable increase in bulk orders related to school field trips

and student assistance programs. This trend contributes to a steady increase in revenue throughout each month of the quarter, reflecting the seasonal demand from educational institutions. Notably, organizations such as United for Success Academy and the Humanistic Alternatives to Addiction Research and Treatment (H.A.A.R.T) contributed significantly to these Figures, purchasing 2,000 and 800 1-Ride Local Youth tickets respectively. Figure 2 of Attachment 1 reflects the fare media sold during Q1 of FY25-26.

The Customer Service Center processed a total of 654 Regional Transit Connection (RTC) applications for the 1st quarter of FY25-26 (see Figure 3 of Attachment 1), reflecting an 11% increase in applications processed as compared to Q1 of FY24-25. While the Customer Services Department responds to and coordinates outreach events upon request, there were no event requests received during Q1.

Customer Relations

Customer Relations manages the District's feedback resolution process. Staff monitor all incoming feedback through the Customer Relations (CusRel) ticket database. Feedback is received through various channels, including phone calls, emails, walk-ins, letters and social media. Customer Relations staff collaborate with various District departments to ensure a timely response to customers. Additionally, staff provide data and statistics to appropriate internal departments as well as external stakeholders (such as the Interagency Liaison Committees and the General Manager's Access Committee), to assist in identifying areas needing service quality improvements.

Customer Response Times - Board Policy 421, the District's Customer Contact Policy, states "District employees responding to a ticket must respond via the customers' preferred method of contact within five (5) business days." Figure 1 of Attachment 2 shows that Division staff met the five-day response time goal on 96% of all CusRel tickets, up from 95% in the previous quarter. District-wide, 75% of tickets received a response within five business days during Q1 of FY26 as compared to 83% in the previous quarter. CusRel tickets often require additional time to investigate and respond to due to their complexity. These tickets often involve multiple departments or systems, necessitating cross-departmental coordination to gather all relevant information. This ensures that all aspects of the issue are fully understood and appropriately addressed, which can extend the response time. Figure 2 of Attachment 2 shows response rates within five days in Q1 of FY25-26 compared to Q1 of FY24-25.

Contact Sources - AC Transit customers continued to choose the AC Transit official app as their preferred method for submitting feedback. Almost half of all customer comments were received via the app as shown on Figure 3 of Attachment 2.

Customer Contact- In Q1 of FY25-26, Customer Service received 3,196 unique customer contacts representing a 32% increase from the previous year's same quarter 2,413 contacts (Figure 4 of Attachment 2). The increase in customer contacts aligns with projections of elevated contact rates during August and September, due to operational shifts following the Realign service change implemented on August 10.

Top Five Feedback Categories (Reasons)- From July through September of this year, the top five reasons for customer feedback were split between operator-related issues (pass-up, operator misconduct, hazardous operation) and service issues (no-show, late). See Attachment 2, Figure 5.

Commendations - Division 2 received the most commendations from riders (Attachment 2, Figure 6), who specifically referenced the 18 and F lines. Below is a selection of reported commendations:

"This guy is one of the best, if not the best, bus driver I've encountered in all these decades. The first thing that impressed me was that he brings the bus to a soft stop and VERY FEW drivers do that. He also slows down when riders are scarce so he doesn't get ahead of his schedule. He yields right of way to pedestrians and other cars, and I noticed a lot of people on the streets and in cars wave at him and he waves back. He is soft spoken, polite and a very conscientious driver. Please put this commendation in his file and TELL HIM about it. I will be checking with him. Thank you."

"The driver was so helpful and courteous to people asking for assistance and went out of his way to assist people who were waiting at stops that were no longer served due to schedule changes. I appreciate him and hope he is commended for his above and beyond service! He made AC Transit shine today."

"This (F-line) driver stands out for his friendly, polite and welcoming approach to the passengers, while still being in control of the bus and making us all feel we are in excellent hands. I ride with AC transit often and have for years, and getting (him) as the driver makes my day. He is a real gem. Thank you."

Clipper-based Institutional Pass Programs

The institutional pass programs (EasyPass, Student Transit Pass Program (STPP), BayPass, City of Alameda (Senior and Person of Disability Free Pass Program) enrolled 28,303 new participants this quarter, bringing the total number of enrolled participants to 103,647 as shown in Attachment 3, Figure 1.

Attachment 3, Figures 2 and 3, display the monthly totals for new and enrolled participants in institutional programs, which rose by 4%. Overall ridership decreased by 1% from Q4 FY24-25 to Q1 of FY25-26. While the decline in ridership is relatively minor, it contrasts with the typical seasonal increase expected during this period. Contributing factors may include production challenges related to the STPP and the recent implementation of the Bay Pass program for the entire student body at UC Berkeley. Figures 4 and 5 included in Attachment 3 present the ridership and enrolled participant data from this report in a variety of visual formats.

The BayPass pilot program provides a select group of participants with free access to all bus, rail, and ferry services across the nine-county region to evaluate the potential impact on travel behavior of an all-system pass. Attachment 3, Figure 6, shows the number of taps from BayPass participants, specifically UC Berkeley and the Alameda Transportation Management Association (ATMA). UC Berkeley and ATMA, whose ridership is counted under the EasyPass program, recorded 710,261 and 17,363 taps respectively for the quarter. It is notable to highlight that the BayPass ridership for UC Berkeley significantly decreased in July due to a gap caused by the end of UC Berkeley's last BayPass contract at the end of June, with the new contract starting in August.

Clipper Usage

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) provides monthly Clipper data to the District which allows staff to examine trends in Clipper boardings and mobile card usage. The monthly clipper data uses the National Transit Database (NTD) ridership data to calculate Clipper market share (trips taken with Clipper). AC Transit averaged 50% of market share, which is higher than the average for Transit Agencies with mixed-fare

media (that includes cash fare collection) for Q1, as shown in Attachment 3, Figure 7.

AC Transit continues efforts to promote Clipper usage by promoting the discount program Clipper START. In September MTC launched their Fall Clipper START promotional campaign. Examples of the campaigns creative materials are provided in Attachment 4. In concert with other regional transit agencies, including AC Transit, MTC is increasing Clipper START visibility and applications through regional advertising and through an expanding community-based organization (CBO) partnership. AC Transit provided more than \$10K in in-kind trade to support the campaign, and will also promote Clipper START in social media, through CBOs, and as a part of other fare related communications. In the Customer Service Center, printed Clipper START pamphlets are available in multiple languages.

Attachment 3, Figure 8 shows Clipper START trips on AC Transit continued to grow, reflecting a 7.67% upward trend in Q1 of FY25-26 when compared to Q4 FY24-25. In addition, Clipper START application approvals rose from 4,937 in Q4 FY24-25 to 6,164 during Q1 FY25-26 which is a 24.86% increase. Attachment 4 shows the regional creative for the Clipper START advertising campaign.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

There are no notable 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 Usage and Institutional Pass Program Metrics

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