

# ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



## STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 11/13/2024

**Staff Report No.** 24-441

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

### ACTION ITEM

**AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST:**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Consider receiving an update on FY 2024-25 First Quarter Customer Service Metrics.

Staff Contact:  
Nichele Laynes, Director of Marketing, Communications & Customer Services

**STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:**

Goal - Convenient and Reliable Service  
Initiative - Service Quality

The Customer Services unit provides a general overview of the quarter's customer service-related activity, including the rider and customer feedback, summaries of recent fare media sales and institutional pass ridership and penetration. Staff leverages in-person interaction and proven technologies, many of which are available 24/7 across diversified, user-friendly, and accessible platforms. Staff continuously looks 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:**

**Customer Service Center (Attachment 1)**

The Customer Service Center (Clipper Customer Service Center), monitors all 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 Districts' Lost and Found. The Customer Service Center also assists District employees with Dependent and Pensioner ID cards.

In Q1 of FY2025, fare revenue reached \$435,414.20, reflecting a 6% decrease from Q4 of FY2024. Most schools and organizations start their fiscal year in July, which often results in an extended budget finalization

process. Consequently, the Customer Service Center does not typically see a significant increase in spending until August. This delay is evident in the revenue trends, with August usually exhibiting a marked upswing as budgets are finalized and spending resumes. As anticipated, August generated the highest revenue for Q1 of FY2025.

In August, staff observed a higher volume of ticket sales, with both higher value tickets and increased transaction frequency compared to the other months in the quarter. Notably, a significant number of 31-day youth and adult tickets were sold, contributing to the revenue increase. For instance, the City of San Pablo purchased 500 31-Day Youth Fares, in a single transaction, contributing to the higher number of 31-day passes sold. These 31-day adult and youth tickets generated \$80,494 in revenue for the month, accounting for 46% of August's total revenue.

The Customer Service Center processed a total of 589 Regional Transit Connection (RTC) applications for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of FY2025, reflecting an 8% increase in application processing from Q4 FY2024. Although the Customer Services team did not attend any events, the new school year prompted qualified students to renew, replace, or apply for a RTC card. 35% of applications processed by the Customer Service Center were replacement applications for RTC.

### **Customer Relations (Attachment 2)**

Customer Relations manages the District's feedback resolution process. Staff monitors all incoming feedback through the Customer Relations (CusRel) ticket database, which is 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. Additionally, staff provides data and statistics to appropriate internal departments as well as external stakeholders, as part of an effort to determine areas needing service quality improvements.

Customer Response Times - Division staff met the five-day response time goal on 86% of all CusRel tickets, down from 95% in the previous quarter. District-wide, the number was 76% for the quarter. Customer Service continues to work with the Director of Transportation and recently appointed Division staff to ensure all staff is aware of and invested in meeting the District's Five-Day-Response-Time goal.

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.

Customer Feedback - From July through September of 2024, Customer Service received 2,413 unique customer contacts, approximately 26% more than the previous year's same quarter (1,909 contacts).

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).

No-Shows - No-Show and Pass-Up complaints were the most reported incident type for this quarter, each representing 14% of all feedback. Each of these complaints was sent to a Division Superintendent for investigation. This quarter, there were eleven lines that received more than ten no-show complaints and

twelve lines that received more than ten pass up complaints.

Commendations - Division 2 received the most commendations from riders, who specifically called out operators on the 12-line on 13 different occasions. Below is a selection of reported commendations:

*“When no one pulled the stop request cord, the Driver took the time to ask if any passengers needed the stop. Good thing she did as an elderly passenger with mobility issues had gotten distracted and forgotten to pull the cord. It’s lovely to see how often AC Transit drivers look out for passengers with disabilities!”*

*“I was speaking with another passenger about the safety of my bicycle that was on the bike rack. The driver was extremely polite in assuring us he would remember who loaded the bike and that he would be protective of the bicycle. Subsequently, he was a joy to converse with. Naturally his driving skills and interactions with other passengers were superb. Kudos to AC for employing such a great and committed driver. You can tell he is proud of his job and that he enjoys providing a top service. They say that bus drivers have the toughest job in the world. Well, he definitely rose to the occasion. Thank you!”*

*“Such a nice @rideact bus driver this morning on the P-line to SF. Giving us updates, checking the air temp, adjusting the windows, gave us a lovely pep talk as we got to the Transbay terminal. 5 stars. Everyone left the bus pumped up for a day at work. It was great!”*

### **Clipper-based Institutional Pass Programs (Attachment 3)**

The institutional pass programs (EasyPass, Student Transit Pass Program (STPP), BayPass Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Regional Pilot, City of Alameda Senior and Person of Disability Free Pass Program) enrolled 21,740 new participants this quarter, bringing the total number of eligible participants to an impressive 99,214 marking an 8% increase compared to Q1 FY2024.

As the student population makes up most of the institutional programs, the number of users often correlates with the academic calendar. With the beginning of the new academic term, 75% of new enrollments were from EasyPass College programs and 21% of new enrollments come from the Student Transit Pass Program.

Clipper card ridership experienced a notable increase in the first quarter, rising by 7% compared to the previous quarter and 6% compared to the same quarter last year. A total of 1,600,687 rides were recorded through institutional programs during Q1, reflecting strong usage and continued demand.

### Clipper Usage

MTC provides monthly Clipper data to examine trends in Clipper boardings and mobile card usage. Clipper boardings in September were the highest of the quarter, with September also having the highest number of trips made using mobile cards.

MTC and Clipper also share monthly data on the Clipper START program. Clipper START application submissions remained flat, averaging around 2,300 for the quarter, however they are still being submitted and approved at a higher rate than Q1 of last year.

### **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

**Prepared by:**

Debora Garcia, Customer Services Manager

**In Collaboration with:**

Dionte Delcambre, Customer Services Supervisor

Dan Talbott, Program Specialist

Annie Chau, Program Specialist

**Approved/Reviewed by:**

Nichele Laynes, Director of Marketing, Communications & Customer Services