

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 5/24/2023

Staff Report No. 23-285

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

BRIEFING ITEM

AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST: ☐

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving a report on the third quarter FY23 customer services metrics

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 provides quarterly updates that provide a high-level overview customer service-related activity, including rider feedback and fare sales and institutional usage. 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 customer's AC Transit experience.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no budgetary or fiscal impact associated with this report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The Customer Services unit plans, directs, and monitors all aspects of the District's customer service functions. It is comprised of the Customer Service Center (CSC), Customer Relations (CusRel), Institutional Pass Program production, and supervises the outsourced Call Center.

Customer Service Center (Attachment 1)

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

customers (District employees) with Dependent and Pensioner ID cards.

As shown in Attachment 1, February and March were close in revenue, with a difference of \$1,529.34. Notice both 1-Rides and Day Passes were purchased in high quantities for those two months, which increased revenue. February and March revenue averaged \$131,776.33, a 13.8% increase from January's revenue. All RTC sticker users have been transitioned to Clipper fare users, with the exception of OUSD Transportation and Berkeley Mental Health because of logistical limitation. Both organizations have a consistent order each month; 12 RTC Stickers for Berkeley Mental health and 69 RTC stickers for OUSD Transportation, which generally averages about 80 or 81 RTC stickers sold each month. Since January 2023, Clipper's electronic 31-Day senior/disabled monthly pass has increased in revenue, likely due to the end of the RTC stickers sales.

Revenue slightly increased 2.11% from Q2 2023 to Q3 2023 totaling \$7827. After the past holiday season, schools are again scheduling field trips and spending funds before the end of their fiscal year. Schools requested large bulk orders for AC Transit tickets during February and March. Annual trend illustrates January revenue is typically less than the other months.

A total of 492 RTC applications were processed during the 3rd quarter of 2023, only one more application processed than last quarter. Two RTC outreach events were held in January at the School of the Deaf and in February at the School of the Blind. Customer Service Staff collected an additional 30 RTC applications with the two RTC outreach events.

Clipper Boardings and Penetration Rates

AC Transit saw an average Clipper penetration of 46% in January and February 2023, which was a 5% increase compared to the same timeframe in 2022. About 20% of those rides used Clipper mobile in the first two months of 2023. MTC launched a "Clipper of your phone" marketing campaign at the end of the last calendar year, which AC Transit supported with social media and through the donation of on-bus promotional assets. Additionally, AC Transit also increased Clipper Start visibility by donating bus exteriors, bus interiors and social media inventory to leverage new MTC-generated a new Clipper START creative look.

Customer Relations (Attachment 2)

As outlined extensively in Staff Report 23-225, Customer Relations manages the District's 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. Additionally, staff provides data and statistics as part of an effort to determine areas needing service quality improvements.

Customer Response Times - Top five departments most productive departments

Division staff met the five-day response time goal on 88% of all CusRel tickets, the same rate as this quarter last year. District-wide, the number was also 88%.

Customer Feedback - From January through March of 2023, Customer Service received 1,535 unique customer contacts, down approximately 8% from the previous year's same quarter (1,665 contacts).

Reasons

From January to March, No-Show complaints accounted for the largest share of all feedback both this year and

last. Pass-Up complaints were 11% of the total, down from 14% for the same period last year.

Pass-ups

During the first ninety days of 2023, the 18-line had the most Pass-Up complaints of any single line, with 21 for the quarter. Most of these complaints (57%) were for buses headed towards University Village. Among other lines, pass-up complaints were dispersed, without concentration in any one area.

No-shows

The percentage of no-show complaints were similar for Divisions 2, 3 and 6, with an average rate of around 15% of their total complaints. Division 4 received far more: 31% of their complaints were about no-shows, and seven of the top ten lines with the most no-show complaints were from D4.

Commendations

Division 2 again received the most commendations from riders, who specifically called out operators on the F and 33 lines. And despite the aforementioned Pass-Up list, 51A-line operators received eight commendations.

"Caller said that he has been riding the bus since April 2022. He said that he has been in attendance for the public board meetings three times and counting. He said that the bus driver for this route (F-line) is serving customers beyond expectations. He wants to acknowledge the bus driver today for getting out of her seat and making sure there was space for him to board and communicated with him to make sure that he was safe. (S) he was so kind that he waited for another bus because there was a passenger already seated in the front section. Just for her courteousness he is happy."

"This (F-Line) driver is going above and beyond to make sure that we disabled passengers are safe and feel welcome. A woman in an electric wheelchair boarded before me. The driver waved all the young people away from the door, so he could put out the ramp. He got out of his seat and requested that people move from the front seats. After he got her situated, I boarded also using the ramp, since I use a walker. He greeted me and made me feel really welcome. It's obvious that this man is doing more than just "his job." He is watching out for us and making us feel safe and valued. Please thank him again for me."

"The (33-line) bus driver was so patient. There was a very rude and disruptive passenger shouting and causing annoyances to other riders. She handled him without raising her voice and didn't engage with his antics. I'm so grateful to calm and professional bus drivers, she was amazing and made me feel safe. Huge thank you!"

"I was waiting for the bus with my back turned. Tiffany stopped her (51A-line) bus and said she was not sure if I wanted to board the bus. She was very friendly and a careful driver. Great job!"

Contact Sources

In the first three months of this year, customers returned to their typical habit of choosing the AC Transit app as their preferred method for submitting feedback after a shift in the previous quarter to a higher percentage of call center usage.

Institutional Programs (Attachment 3)

The institutional programs enrolled 4,479 new participants this quarter, bringing the total to 76,831 with 1,170,616 rides. The ridership has increased by 30% compared to the last fiscal year Q3 2021-22. The number

of users increased by 9% with Peralta Colleges returning to the program, the latest STPP program expansion with 43 new schools, and a rise in enrollments in the UC Berkeley Bay Pass Pilot program through the EasyPass program, which is considered an institutional pass and those boardings added to institutional pass data accordingly.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

There are no notable advantages or disadvantages associated with this report.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

This report does not recommend an action, therefore, there is no alternative analysis.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

None

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Customer Service Center
2. Customer Relations and Call Center
3. Institutional Programs

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