

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 5/8/2019

Staff Report No. 19-165

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors

FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager

SUBJECT: Possible Line 60 Partnership with California State University, East Bay

BRIEFING ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving report on a possible partnership with California State University, East Bay that would include more frequent service on Line 60 and participation in the EasyPass program.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no budgetary/fiscal impact associated with this item. If supported by the Board, staff will negotiate the cost of the service, and bring the final financial arrangement to the Board for consideration.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

California State University, East Bay (CSUEB) is one of the largest educational institutions in the area, with over 14,000 students and over 8,000 faculty and staff. CSUEB currently contracts with Transmetro, a local operations contractor, to operate shuttles between its main campus in the Hayward Hills and the Hayward BART Station. Their shuttles serve the same alignment as AC Transit's existing Line 60 between the BART station and CSUEB. West of downtown Hayward, Line 60 continues west to Chabot College via Winton Avenue.

CSUEB is currently investigating alternatives to their shuttle program; their contract with Transmetro expires at the end of the 2019 calendar year. Their preference is to contract with AC Transit to provide a higher quality service. District staff has suggested that in lieu of the existing shuttle service, the University consider funding additional frequency on Line 60 and transitioning towards including students, faculty, and staff in AC Transit's EasyPass program. EasyPasses would not only give CSUEB affiliates access to destinations served by the existing shuttle, but also facilitate local transportation throughout the East Bay and possibly to San Francisco and the Peninsula via Transbay bus service.

Staff anticipates that such a partnership would be mutually beneficial. EasyPass would provide CSUEB staff, students, and faculty with robust travel alternatives, and AC Transit would see increased ridership and productivity on Line 60 and throughout the District. This increase in frequency would also benefit all others along Line 60, including those in downtown Hayward and those traveling to and from Chabot College. Staff will provide the Board with the terms of a tentative agreement for consideration once finalized at the staff level. If both parties reach a mutual agreement, the contract for service would begin in conjunction with the Winter Sign-up scheduled for December 2019, with the potential EasyPass program launching in 2020.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

An advantage of a CSUEB partnership is that it would bring ridership increases to Line 60 and other lines in and around Hayward. This large population of new riders on EasyPass would be transformative in terms of service productivity, even when considering that the District would need to add additional service on Line 60 to accommodate the anticipated demand.

One potential disadvantage of partnering with CSUEB is that in order to accommodate the demand, the District would incur costs associated with additional service on Line 60. However, staff intends for an agreement with CSUEB to cover the cost of new service to accommodate the anticipated demand. One other potential disadvantage is that the increase in frequency on Line 60 will cost the District additional fleet and human resources, which staff intends to be ready to provide at the start of operations.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

Rather than pairing an EasyPass program at CSUEB with service increases on Line 60, the District could propose an EasyPass program without additional service. Staff does not recommend this alternative because estimates indicate that such an arrangement would result in unacceptably heavy loads on Line 60 and a substantial reduction in service quality for those traveling along the Line 60 corridor.

The District could also forgo a potential partnership with CSUEB entirely. Service would be maintained at existing levels and no new revenue would be generated from a new EasyPass program participant. Staff does not recommend this alternative. By abandoning this potential collaboration, the District would miss out on an opportunity to improve service for existing AC Transit riders while attracting large numbers of new riders into the transit network.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

None

ATTACHMENTS:

None

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