

County Connection

INTER OFFICE MEMO

To: Board of Directors

Date: 11/11/2019

From: Melody Reebs, Manager of Planning

Reviewed by: *Rtf*

SUBJECT: 2019 Summer Youth Pass Update

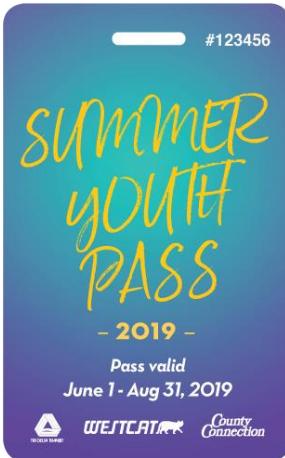
Background:

County Connection offers a discounted pass for youth to use over the summer. Prior to 2019, the pass was a 20-ride punch pass valid from June through August and was sold for \$15, which provided a discounted rate of \$0.75 per ride. This year, the punch card was replaced with a countywide Summer Youth Pass, which offered unlimited rides on County Connection, as well as on neighboring transit agencies Tri Delta Transit and WestCAT, from June through September. In previous years, Tri Delta Transit and WestCAT have offered a similar program but it was limited to the two agencies.

511 Contra Costa partnered with County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, and WestCAT to subsidize the passes and help administer and promote the program. While the pass is valued at \$60, 511 Contra Costa provided a subsidy of \$25 per pass, bringing the retail price down to \$35. 511 Contra Costa also took the lead on designing and producing the passes and managed online sales and fulfillment. The individual transit agencies were responsible for in-person sales at their administrative offices.

Marketing and Outreach:

511 Contra Costa took the lead on designing the passes and related marketing materials. The pass was a plastic card that was shown to the driver when boarding. County Connection also distributed lanyards that could be attached to the pass to help keep track of it. 511 Contra Costa provided information about the program to schools, libraries, and community centers, and also developed and distributed a press release. The program was also promoted through each of the four participating agencies' websites, email lists, and social media channels.



Pass design

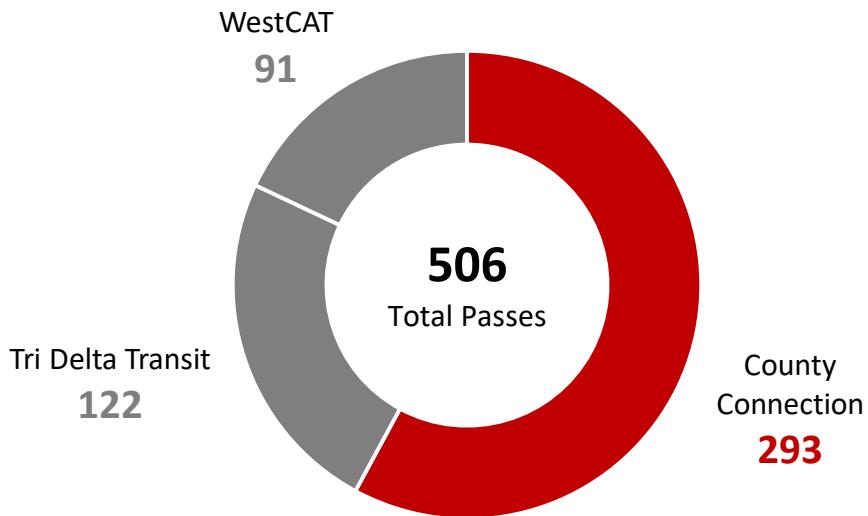


Graphic for web & social media

Pass Sales:

A total of 506 passes were sold across the three agencies, with 67% of passes sold online. Online sales and associated revenues were allocated among the agencies based on mailing address location, whereas in-person sales were allocated to the agency where the transaction took place. Based on this allocation method, a total of 293 passes, or about 58% of all passes sold, were attributed to County Connection.

2019 Summer Youth Passes Sold by Agency



While it is difficult to compare the number of passes sold to last year given the difference in pass structure, Tri Delta and WestCAT, who had a more similarly structured program last year, had increases in pass sales of nearly 50% and 100%, respectively. Staff from both these agencies agreed that the inclusion of County Connection in this year's program, coupled with

a new online store and additional subsidy from 511 Contra Costa, largely contributed to this increase.

Below is a breakdown of pass sales by jurisdiction within County Connection's service area. Concord and San Ramon accounted for over half of all County Connection pass sales.

Jurisdiction	# Passes
Alamo	2
Clayton	5
Concord	89
Danville	11
Lafayette	6
Martinez	17
Moraga	12
Orinda	11
Pacheco	2
Pleasant Hill	10
San Ramon	73
Walnut Creek	20
<i>Bulk sales (DVC, Contra Costa Office of Education)</i>	30

Total pass sales revenue received by County Connection, including the subsidy paid by 511 Contra Costa, totaled \$17,580. This is approximately double the revenue generated from summer youth punch pass sales in 2018.

Pass Usage:

Overall, ridership with the new Summer Youth Pass on County Connection routes increased about 38% compared to ridership last year using the punch pass. This increase may have been even higher if Routes 11, 14, and 16 had not become free routes starting in July. The most significant increases were in June and July, indicating that the passes were being used more for non-home-to-school trips during the summer, as opposed to just being used during the first few weeks of school in August.

Month	2018	2019	% Change
June	1,165	1,956	67.9%
July	1,633	2,726	66.9%
August	2,291	2,367	3.4%
TOTAL	5,089	7,050	38.5%

Routes 10, 20, and 35 accounted for almost half of all pass usage, which is consistent with the amount of pass sales in Concord and San Ramon. Route 35 in particular had a significant increase in pass usage, which tripled over last year.

Of the passes that were sold and allocated to County Connection, each pass was used on County Connection's routes for about 24 rides. Based on the retail price of \$35 per pass, this averages to \$1.45 per ride. While this is higher than the discount that was provided with the punch pass, it is still a discount off the regular Clipper fare of \$2.00. Also, based on historic ridership and sales numbers, it is likely that most punch passes were not being completely used up. In addition, this does not take into account any rides that may have been taken on Tri Delta Transit or WestCAT.

Survey Results:

After the conclusion of the program, 511 Contra Costa distributed a follow-up survey to those who had purchased a pass. A total of 130 responses were received from the survey, representing a 35% response rate. Overall, the program was very well received by participants and many expressed appreciation for it being available. The following table shows the most common trip purposes while using the pass. While attending school or summer school was the most common reason for using the Summer Youth Pass, students also used it for many other purposes, such as meeting friends or getting to a job.

Trip Purpose	% of Respondents
School/summer school	65%
To meet or visit friends	36%
Job	22%
To meet or visit family	18%
Sports practice	16%
Summer camp	13%
Other	7%

Open ended questions at the end of the survey asked respondents how the Summer Youth Pass program could be improved or for any additional comments. General themes that emerged among responses were requests to have a year-round youth pass program and to have a digital pass on smartphones.

Financial Implications:

Total revenue received by County Connection for the 2019 Summer Youth Pass program was \$17,580. This includes a subsidy from 511 Contra Costa of \$7,075 towards the cost of the pass. In addition, 511 Contra Costa covered the costs of the operating the online store, including transaction fees and fulfillment, producing the fare media, and developing the marketing campaign.

Recommendation:

None, for information only. However, County Connection staff intends to continue this partnership in future years and welcomes any feedback from Board members on ways to further promote the program.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.