

To: O&S Committee

Date: July 31, 2020

From: Rashida Kamara, Manager of Accessible Services

Reviewed by: *WC.*

SUBJECT: Regional Transfer trips and COVID-19 Demonstration project

Background:

In September of 2019, staff informed the committee of their desire to implement a pilot program in which Regional ADA Paratransit Transfer passengers would only use one service provider to travel across several service areas. For example, if a passenger travels from Antioch to Oakland, they must take three coordinated trips starting with Tri-Delta, transferring to LINK, then transferring to East Bay Paratransit. Below is a description of how Regional Transfer trips are currently being processed.

All Regional Transfer trips are coordinated in advance and require special booking procedures. These procedures include the passenger calling their home agency, requesting the trip to the final destination, then the agency having a dedicated person coordinate the trip with a partner agency. This process can take anywhere from 2 to 7 days to complete. The passenger is then notified of the multiple pick-up times, multiple meet locations, multiple fares (especially if they have a three-legged trip) and multiple policies that govern each transit agency. On the day of service, travel is especially problematic as each agency deals with driver shortage, miss communication if the passenger misses one leg of the trip, long hold times on the phones to dispatch, and rebooking trips when the passenger is not ready for multiple agencies. The biggest issue is long wait times at the various meet points, especially when the passenger is on-board waiting for the other transit agency. The driver wait times, range from 10 minutes to 120 minutes at a time.

For passengers waiting to go to specialized appointments, they face frustration and anxiety wondering when the next vehicle is coming. For transit providers, there is a drain on resources as drivers are held captive at the meet point and cannot move to their next pick-up or are instructed to take passengers back home or all the way to their destination, potentially taking the driver outside of the service area. This is extremely costly by way of resources, driver/dispatcher time and passenger dissatisfaction

One Seat Ride Concept:

Providing the trips in the manner in which they are currently provided is still compliant with the ADA, but not very efficient for the agencies, nor does it provide reasonable customer service. As a result, County Connection was working on a project to provide a "One Seat Regional Ride". Under the "One Seat Regional Ride" program, a rider will book a regional ride with one agency,

the trip will be put into one database, the passenger will pay one fare and one service provider will take the passenger from point A to B without waiting or transferring.

In an effort to build this program, County Connection has approached Tri-Delta, WestCat, East Bay Paratransit and LAVTA. Each agency has expressed an interest in this solution. County Connection will continue to collaborate with them on developing a Pilot program that will mitigate many of the problems we currently experience. County Connection has vetted this concept with CCHS (County Costa Health Services) as well as CCTA and we have received positive feedback.

Regional Transfer Trips and COVID-19

In an effort to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the CDC, State and County health departments have mandated the need for face coverings, frequent handwashing, social distancing of 6ft or more, sanitization of frequently touched places and viewing others as potential carriers. This has put an enormous strain on public transportation and has even changed the landscape of Paratransit use. Paratransit has been reduced to carrying just one passenger at a time, and even though transfer trips have been reduced significantly, the risk of compromising a driver and a passengers safety during a transfer trips is twice if not three times higher than a single trip. As described above, these trips require special handling. With the process in place to manage regular paratransit trips under COVID-19 protocols is twice as time consuming as regular trips. Passengers are now having to increase their contact with drivers for one trip. Contact tracing with multiple drivers and multiple passengers are increased with Regional Transfer trips.

As a result, staff has asked our contractor to start performing direct regional trips across service areas. We have engaged the various transit agencies in this effort, and they agree that performing these services, would minimize exposure for the riders and drivers. It will also help with contact tracing and streamline the regional trip transfer process by significantly reducing the amount of travel time on the van. This is a demonstration process that was already pitched but **made a priority due to the health and safety concerns of all involved.**

Recommendations:

Staff would like the committee to inform the Board of Directors of County Connection's implementation of a one seat Regional Transfer trip program and ask for their formal approval.

Financial Implications:

The cost of each trip will be divided by each participating agency and billed according to our current agreement with our contractor. Currently we are using miles driven in each participating agency's service area, plus the cost of fuel, as a way to separate cost. Implementing this pilot is the only way to capture the true cost which will be brought to the board for review.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – February Regional Trips Report 2020

Attachment 2 – March Regional Trips Report 2020

Attachment 3 – April Regional Trips Report 2020

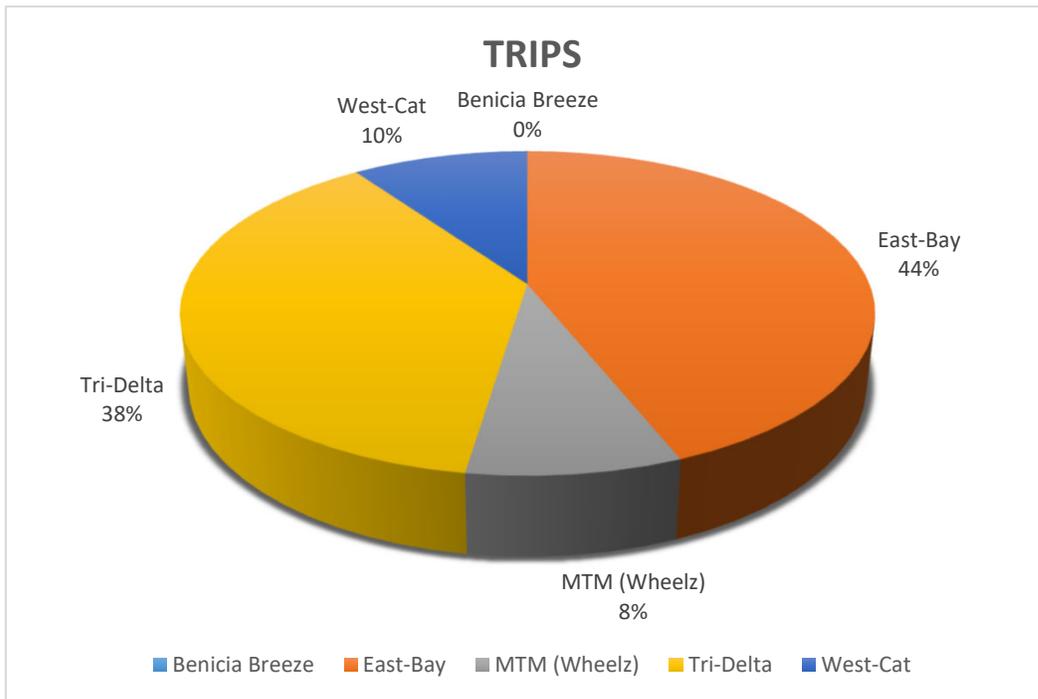
Action Requested:

Approve and recommend to full board



**TRANSFER TRIP REPORT
FEBRUARY 2020**

AGENCY	TRIPS	% of all trips
<i>Benicia Breeze</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0%</i>
<i>East-Bay</i>	<i>477</i>	<i>4%</i>
<i>MTM (Wheelz)</i>	<i>92</i>	<i>1%</i>
<i>Tri-Delta</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>4%</i>
<i>West-Cat</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>1%</i>
Total Trips:	1086	10%

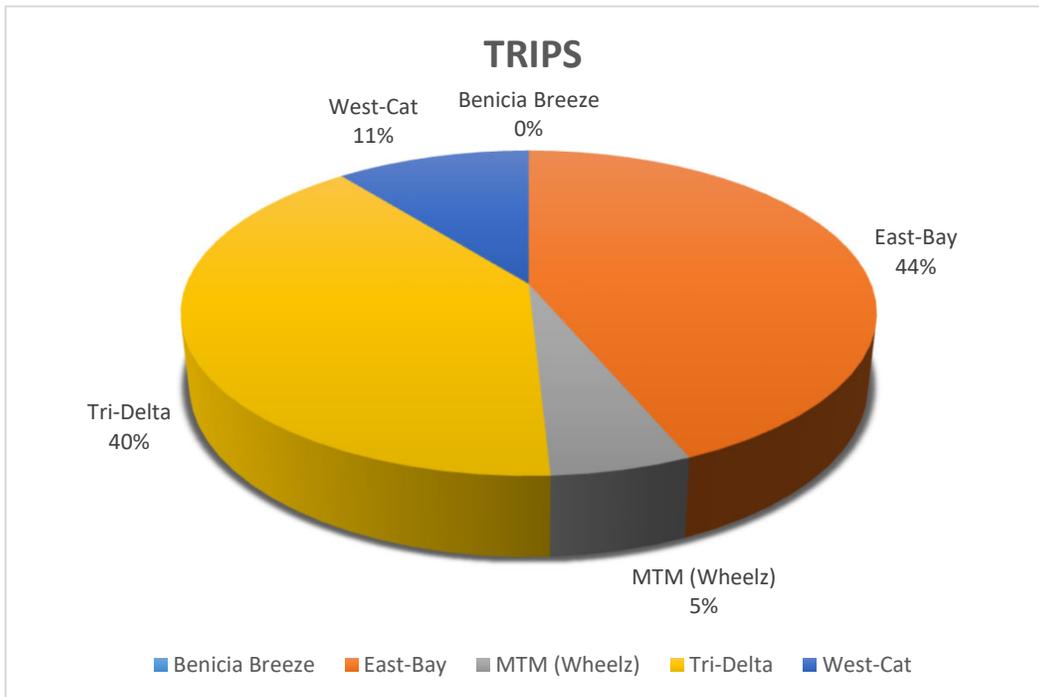


** The percentage on the Chart is based on the number of trips divided by Total Trips (10,606)*



**TRANSFER TRIP REPORT
MARCH 2020**

AGENCY	TRIPS	% of all trips
<i>Benicia Breeze</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0%</i>
<i>East-Bay</i>	<i>313</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>MTM (Wheelz)</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>1%</i>
<i>Tri-Delta</i>	<i>288</i>	<i>4%</i>
<i>West-Cat</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>1%</i>
Total Trips:	718	11%

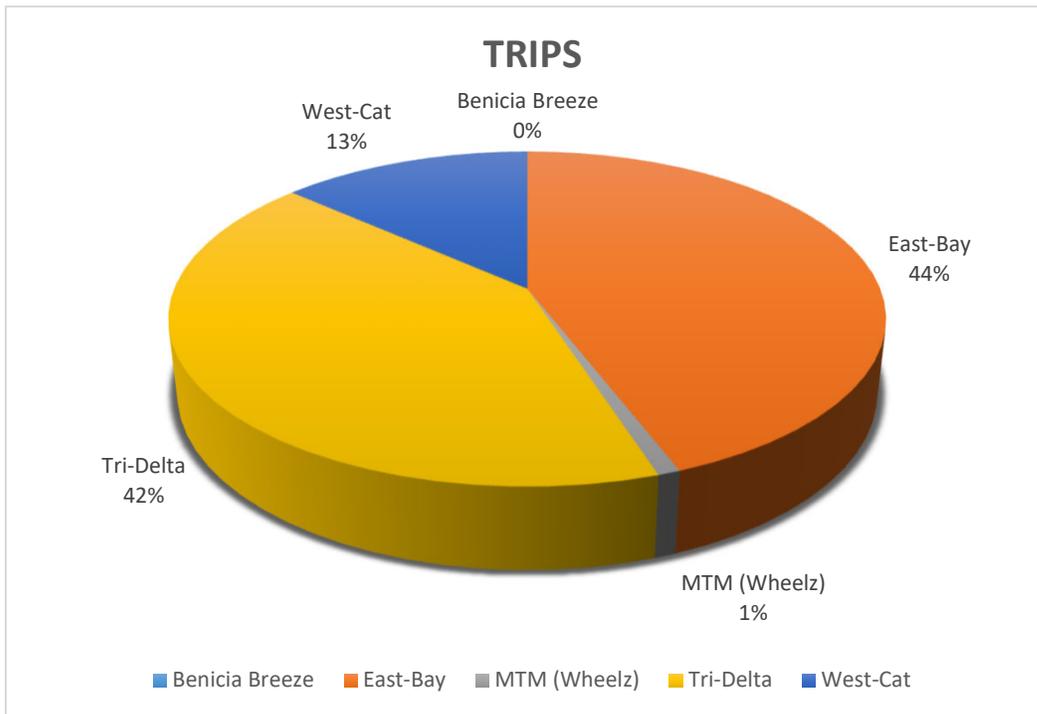


* The percentage on the Chart is based on the number of trips divided by Total Trips (6,402)



**TRANSFER TRIP REPORT
APRIL
2020**

AGENCY	TRIPS	% of all trips
<i>Benicia Breeze</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0%</i>
<i>East-Bay</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>17%</i>
<i>MTM (Wheelz)</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2%</i>
<i>Tri-Delta</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>16%</i>
<i>West-Cat</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>4%</i>
Total Trips:	231	11%



** The percentage on the Chart is based on the number of trips divided by Total Trips (1,827)*