

To: County Connection Advisory Committee

Date: January 4, 2012

From: Mary Burdick, Sr. Manager of Marketing

Reviewed By:

SUBJECT: Clipper Regional Fare Payment Program

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has been working on a regional fare collection system for many years. The regional program originally launched as Translink and has been rebranded as Clipper. Clipper is an all-in-one transit card that keeps track of any passes, discount tickets, ride books and cash value that you load onto it, while applying all applicable fares, discounts and transfer rules. This lets the rider customize the card for their own transit needs. The Clipper card can hold multiple passes, ride books or tickets (which are specific to the transit system being used), as well as up to \$300 in cash value at one time. Cash value on your Clipper card can be used to ride any participating transit system.

As the second phase winds down, MTC is anxious for the participating transit agencies to discontinue selling paper tickets and to transition riders to the Clipper card. Currently the participating agencies include BART, Sam Trans/Caltrain, AC Transit, San Francisco MUNI, Golden Gate Transit (buses and ferries), and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (buses and light rail).

The first agencies in Phase III to introduce Clipper will be the remaining Oakland/San Francisco ferry operators and the bus operators in Solano County. County Connection, Tri Delta Transit, Wheels, and WestCAT are projected to be among the last operators to be included in the program.

Ticket Distribution

MTC has established retail locations throughout the Bay Area to distribute the adult Clipper Cards. These include Walgreens, the Bills Ace Hardware chain, ticket offices of participating agencies, and numerous individual locations. Once the card has been issued, the cardholder can then register the card either on line or by telephone, and select the transit instruments to be loaded. In order to take advantage of agency fare discounts the cardholder must establish either an automatic credit charge or debit transfer when the remaining balance reaches a certain level. If the cardholder does not wish to link the card to a credit or debit account, they can simply load "cash" to the card at any retail location or at the Add Fare machines in the BART stations. This value is available for use on any participating system based on current adult cash fares.

Adult riders can get their Clipper card at any of the retail locations. Seniors or youths must get their discount Clipper cards in person.

Clipper and Title VI Concerns

There have been some federal Title VI concerns that are currently under review. Title VI grants equal access to all federally funded services and prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. MTC's original intent was to apply a \$3-\$5 fee to the card and/or require that a cash value be loaded on to the card at the time of purchase. To date, the cards have been distributed free of charge, with no requirement that a minimum cash value be loaded on to the card. MTC wishes to begin charging for the cards in 2012, and recently conducted a public hearing seeking comments on the Title VI Summary Report. If interested, please review MTC's Title VI Summary Report at

http://www.mtc.ca.gov/get_involved/rights/Clipper_Title_VI_Analysis_Summary_Report.pdf

Concerns Expressed To Date

By far, the biggest impact of the limited access to paper tickets has been on BART, and the new requirement that one's eligibility for a senior or youth discount be made at the point of purchase rather than point of use.

While transit riders are pleased with the program, and County Connection passengers are anxious to be able to use Clipper on our system, there are some areas of concern that we hear frequently from our drivers and callers:

- BART stopped supplying former retail locations with paper tickets several months ago. They are now only available at select BART stations.
*See attached BART flyer to seniors.**
- Getting a senior or youth Clipper Card is extremely difficult. The only physical location in our service area for someone to turn in the Senior or youth application, supply proof of age, and get their discount Clipper card is at the kiosk at the WC BART station, which is open from 2-7 PM Monday-Friday. Besides this, BART staff is conducting Clipper sign up events at Senior Centers and senior housing complexes. The schedule of events is primarily advertised only on the websites which many feel is inadequate. The local print media has published local events.
- BART agents are incorrectly advising passengers to get the senior Clipper card at our office. We can only do this through the RTC program - which is not immediate, not free, and not permanent. Our staff is left to explain the program to people who are frustrated.
- Commuters enrolled in the Commuter Check pre-tax programs are not able to use their Commuter Checks to take advantage of transit agency fare discounts. Fare discounts are only available for those who link their card to a credit/debit account, and Commuter Checks can only be accepted and deposited by merchants – not individuals. So the regular, loyal riders are not able to realize frequent use fare discounts.

How Is County Connection Responding?

- Marketing and Customer Service staff will continue to monitor the Clipper website to see when and where Senior and Youth Clipper sign up events will take place.
- Staff will provide accurate Clipper information to riders and pass along information regarding senior and youth Clipper distribution events.
- The General Manager is exploring the costs and benefits of distributing the Senior and Youth Clipper cards directly from the Concord facility.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff is not making any specific recommendation at this time. The information is presented to show how Central County transit riders are being affected by Clipper implementation. While County Connection is not yet a participating agency, our riders who use other transit systems are impacted, and look to us as a source of reliable and accurate information.



To Seniors who use Green Tickets on BART:

BART is moving away from paper tickets to Clipper. Here's what you need to know:

- ✓ Green tickets will continue to be sold but only at 9 locations (Lake Merritt BART and MyTransitPlus @ Civic Center, Powell, Montgomery, Embarcadero, Bay Fair, Coliseum, Walnut Creek, Richmond BART).
- ✓ BART faregates will always accept Green tickets.
- ✓ The Senior Clipper is the most convenient way to pay discount fares.
- ✓ You can apply for a Senior Clipper card at one of BART's outreach events, at BART's Lake Merritt station or at any other local transit agency.

Once you get the hang of it, you'll see that paying by Clipper is easier than dealing with Green tickets. ***And, of course, you'll get the 62.5% discount each time you take a trip!***

Here's how to use your Senior Clipper card:

First, you need to load money on your Senior Clipper Card. Use cash or credit or debit card.

- ✓ You can do this at ticket vending machines in all BART stations.
- ✓ Or, you can call or go on-line to Clipper Customer Service.

Now, you're ready to use your Senior Clipper Card to pay your fare.

- ✓ As you enter and exit, touch your card to the Clipper disk on the faregate. It's the raised round blue disk on top. If you're using the accessible gate, you'll find the disk to your right on the side of the faregate.
- ✓ As you exit, check the faregate display. You'll see the discount fare paid and your card balance.

What you'll love best about using your Senior Clipper card:

- ✓ You can put money on your card in BART stations. No more searching for a vendor that sells Green BART tickets before you make a trip.
- ✓ You can add whatever amount works best for you instead of being limited to a set denomination Green BART ticket. And, you can use cash or credit or debit card and order by phone or on-line, too.
- ✓ You'll never have to deal with leftover tickets again.
- ✓ You can check the card balance at any ticket vending machine before you start the trip and add money if you don't have enough.
- ✓ You'll know the true fare for each trip you take since your card will be charged the 62.5% discount fare as you exit.

You can get in-station help from a BART Station Agent or you can call the BART Transit Information Center (510 465 2278) or Clipper Customer Service (877 878 8883), or go online to www.BART.gov or www.Clippercard.com.