

To: Marketing, Planning, & Legislative Committee

Date: May 28, 2015

From: Laramie Bowron, Manager of Planning

Reviewed by:

SUBJECT: FY2014-2015 Short Range Transit Plan – Performance Evaluation

Background:

The Short Range Transit Plan (S RTP) is County Connection's primary operations and financial planning document. It is required by MTC to be updated annually to comply with funding requirements and is used to support the allocation of federal funds for bus replacement and other discretionary transit funds.

The plan, which focuses on service evaluation, future planning efforts, and projections of operating and capital cost and revenues, will be presented to this committee in sections over the next several meetings.

The Performance Evaluation section measures the most recent three years of service against Board-adopted standards. This S RTP includes data from FY12, FY13, and FY14.

Staff is requesting the committee consider adjustments to the standards used to measure fixed-route cost per passenger and on-time performance.

Performance Evaluation - Fixed-Route

Notable changes from the three-year retrospective analysis of fixed-route performance include:

Passengers per Revenue Hour – This indicator declined in FY14 to 15 passengers / revenue hour, the lowest of the three years shown. This is due to ridership not growing at the same rate as increased service. Revenue hours were increased by 4.2 percent while ridership grew by only 1 percent.

Farebox Recovery Ratio – This indicator shows a 9.7 percent decrease in FY14 after a 1.8 percent increase from FY12. This is due to fare revenue declining by over 3 percent and ridership growing by 1 percent. This could reflect an increase in those paying reduced fares as well as the reintroduction of the senior and disabled mid-day free fare program.

Net Subsidy per Passenger – Due to the decreased fare revenue noted above, the net subsidy per passenger, the operating cost remaining after fare revenue is included, increased by over 8 percent in FY14.

Performance Evaluation - Paratransit

Notable changes from the three-year retrospective analysis paratransit performance include:

On-Time Performance – This indicator increased by nearly 7 percent in FY14. Although this still failed to meet the standard it begins to correct the 8.5 percent decline from FY12 to FY13.

Farebox Recovery Ratio – This indicator, similar to the fixed-route performance, shows a 13 percent decrease in FY14. This is due to fare revenue decreasing by 11 percent despite ridership growing by nearly 3 percent.

Accidents per 100,000 Miles – This indicator increased significantly in FY14 to 0.47 accidents per 100,000, causing the service to not meet the standard of 0.3 accidents per 100,000 miles.

Recommended Changes to Standards for Fixed-Route:

As part of the performance review, staff is requesting the committee consider updating two performance standards which have not been reviewed in several years.

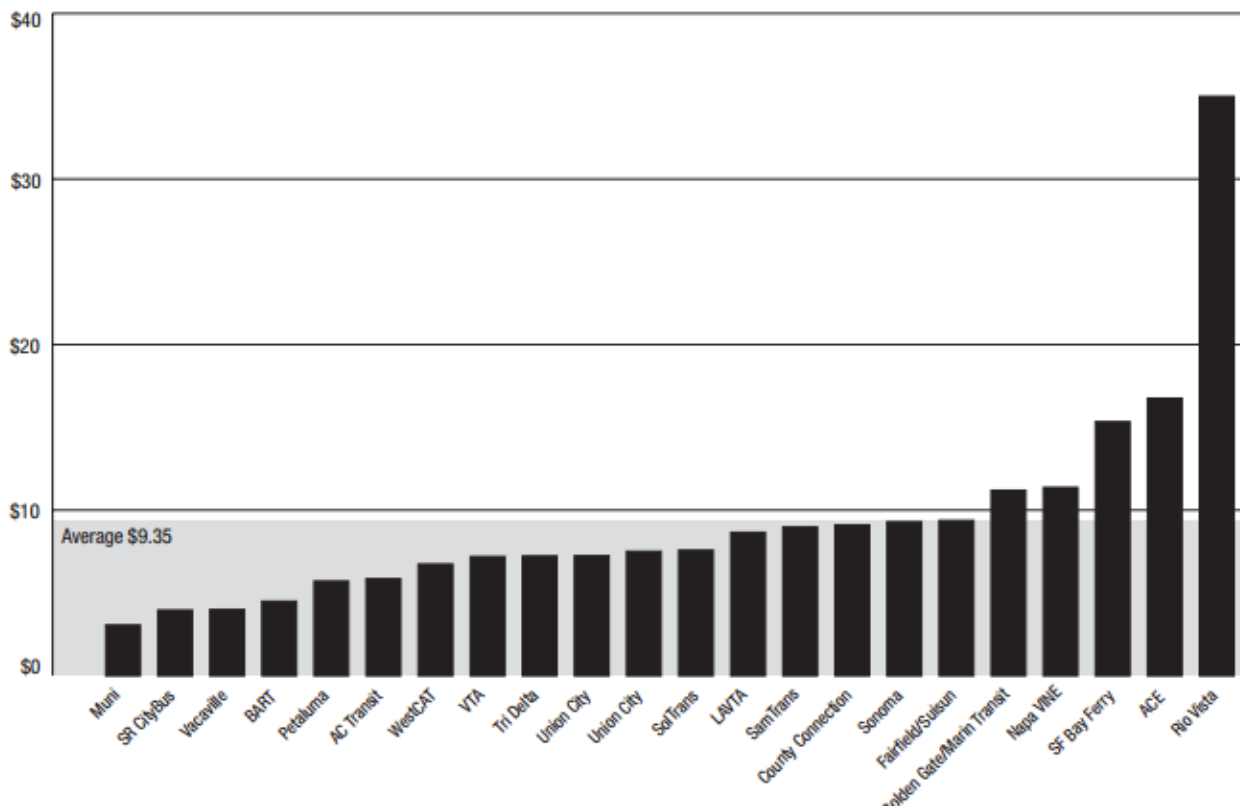
Cost per Passenger

The cost / passenger standard was last changed in FY10 from \$5.17 to \$7.00 per passenger. Since then the standard has never been met and cost / passenger has not been below \$7.00 since FY09. This is primarily due to the FY09 service cut, which resulted in a 10 percent reduction in operating cost and a 21 percent reduction in ridership.

Although FY15 data is not included in this year's SRTP, staff projects a ridership increase of over 8 percent, due in part to the increased adjustment factor (the statistical measure that seeks to correct boarding and alighting data from the on-board passenger counters). This will reduce the cost / passenger to below \$8.00 but with the regional emphasis on increasing ridership, the likelihood of meeting a \$7.00 cost / passenger standard is becoming increasingly difficult.

Additionally, the table below from MTC's most recent *Statistical Summary of Bay Area Transit Operators* shows County Connection below the regional average on the cost / passenger indicator.

Cost Effectiveness by Operator, FY 2012–13 [Cost/Passenger]



Recommended Change

Staff recommends adjusting the standard to \$8.50 per passenger.

On-time performance

The current on-time performance standard is 95 percent. County Connection defines a bus as late if it departs a time point five or more minutes later than the published time. Buses are considered early if they depart from a published time point at any time prior to the scheduled departure.

Performance has fluctuated over the three years shown with the standard continually not being met; and in FY14, on-time performance declined to 83 percent. Due to several factors described below, future performance is unlikely to reach 95 percent so staff is recommending the committee consider adjusting the standard.

Prior to 2012 on-time performance was measured by the road supervisors at the route endpoints or BART stations. Since 2012 we have used the data collected by the Clever Devices computers on the bus. The new method measures all trips on all time points. As a result, on-time performance appeared to decline despite service quality remaining the same. For example, Route #35 has seven time points in its schedule. If only the endpoints are measured (Dublin BART and San Ramon Transit Center), on-time performance is 90 percent. When all of the time points are included, the route’s on-time performance is 72 percent.

In some cases it is a good thing to run a little late to a mid-route time point. Because if the bus is early to a time point, it has to sit and wait, which irritates the passengers on board. For this reason the middle of the route is often scheduled tightly and the time between the last stop and the endpoint is scheduled loosely so that the bus arrives early or on time at the BART station (endpoint).

To build a schedule that operates 100 percent on time would require more recovery time mid route to allow for traffic, accidents, and wheelchair boardings that cause late buses. The Route #96X, which travels on I-680, is subjected to extremely unpredictable traffic making it difficult to add recovery time at the Bishop Ranch end because of the one-way loop and because there are always passengers onboard. In this case fixing on-time performance by building in more recovery time will negatively affect passengers when the recovery is not needed.

Factors that Effect On-Time Performance

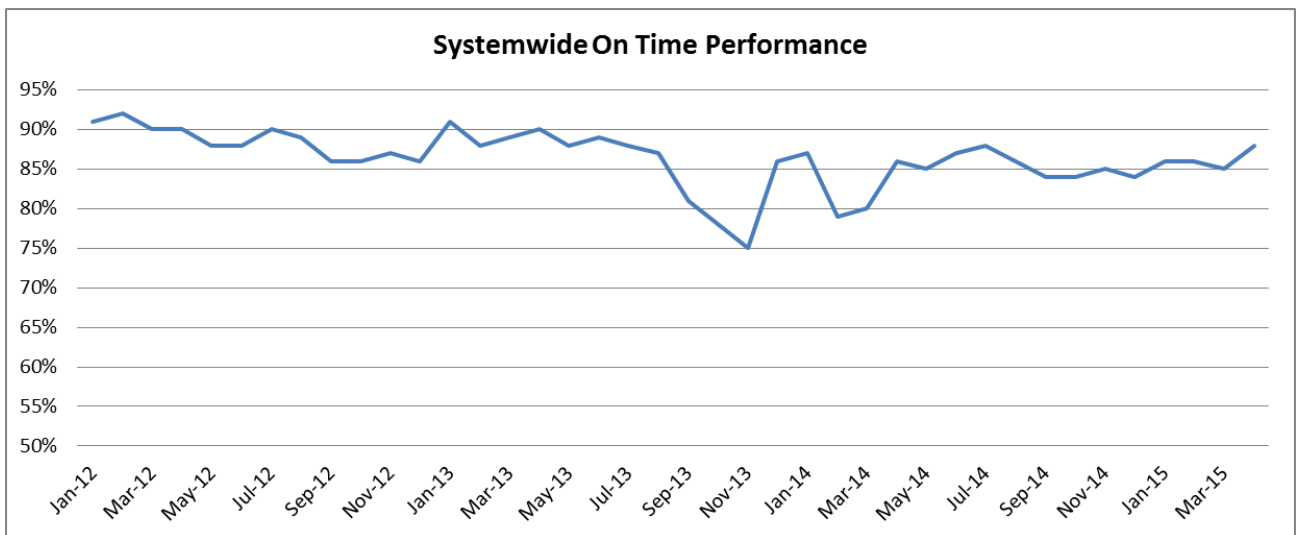
Traffic is the most obvious factor that effects on-time performance. The routes most effected are routes traveling long distances in busy corridors like the #96X (WC BART to Bishop Ranch), the #93X (WC BART to Hillcrest via Ygnacio), and the #21 (WC BART to San Ramon Transit Center). In June 2014 these routes had 66%, 78%, and 79% on-time performance respectively.

Dispatch activity can effect on-time performance. When drivers do not show for work, relief drivers are needed which can result in trips not starting on time.

Additionally, some routes and trips have notes that direct drivers to hold for a connection to another route. For instance; the #93X holds for transferring passengers from the #96X. This can make the #93X run late but passengers appreciate not missing their connection.

Trend in On-Time Performance

Prior to using 100% of the route’s time points, on time performance was always between 90% and 100%. Since January 2012, system performance has ranged from 75% to 92%. Volatility between October and April 2013 can be attributed to the BART strike, dispatch activity, and synchronizing the Clever clock. Since May of 2014, on-time performance has been relatively stable around 85%. The chart and table below show on-time performance trends at the system and route-type level.



On Time Performance by Route Type – Selected Months

	Weekday	Weekend	School	Express
March 2012	90%	87%	86%	80%
October 2012	86%	85%	84%	75%
December 2012	87%	84%	83%	71%
March 2013	89%	87%	86%	79%
October 2013	78%	64%	77%	65%
March 2014	81%	80%	73%	68%
June 2014	88%	82%	82%	76%
October 2014	87%	84%	80%	75%
March 2015	87%	79%	79%	77%

Recommended Change

Staff recommends continuing to use 100 percent of the time points for all routes as it provides the most detailed information. Additionally, the 2015 On-Board Survey revealed that passengers gave on-time performance a score of 3.82 on a 1-5 scale.

Staff recommends that performance standards are modified to measure weekday, weekend, school and express service types by different measures.

Regular routes: Goal: 87%

Express Routes: Goal: 75%

School Routes: Goal: 80%

Weekend Routes: Goal: 80%

Next Steps:

Staff will modify any performance standards agreed to by the committee and over the next several months will present sections of the SRTP to the committee. Comments and edits on all of the sections presented will be incorporated prior to Board action on the final draft. Additionally, a public hearing will be conducted at the Board meeting prior to adoption.

Fixed Route Service - Statistics				
	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	Change from Prior Year
Operating Cost	\$ 24,726,704	\$ 25,781,605	\$ 27,598,218	7.0%
Farebox Revenue	\$ 4,371,317	\$ 4,641,248	\$ 4,484,134	(3.4%)
Net Subsidy	\$ 20,355,387	\$ 21,140,356	\$ 23,114,084	9.3%
Total Passengers	3,170,879	3,296,763	3,328,558	1.0%
Revenue Hours	208,719	213,624	222,553	4.2%
Non Revenue Hours	29,385	29,352	30,035	2.3%
Total Hours	238,104	242,976	252,589	4.0%
Total Revenue Miles	2,325,896	2,384,645	2,421,102	1.5%
Non Revenue Miles	749,769	741,649	761,204	2.6%
Total Miles	3,075,665	3,126,294	3,182,307	1.8%

Paratransit Statistics				
	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	Change from Prior Year
Operating Cost	\$ 5,170,146	\$ 5,125,995	\$ 5,230,925	2.0%
Farebox Revenue	\$ 620,590	\$ 614,160	\$ 545,015	(11.3%)
Net Subsidy	\$ 4,549,556	\$ 4,511,835	\$ 4,685,910	3.9%
Total Passengers	160,901	154,945	159,294	2.8%
Revenue Hours	77,221	74,400	74,394	(0.0%)
Non Revenue Hours	17,674	18,000	18,403	2.2%
Total Hours	94,895	92,400	92,797	0.4%
Total Revenue Miles	1,238,026	1,208,228	1,219,582	0.9%
Non Revenue Miles	264,278	252,100	260,310	3.3%
Total Miles	1,502,304	1,460,328	1,479,892	1.3%
Road Calls	26	26	44	69.2%
Complaints	3	1	18	1700%
Accidents	4	4	7	75.0%

Performance Standards - Fixed Route							
GOAL	Objective	Measurement	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	Standard	Met?
EFFICIENCY							
	Cost Control	Cost/Revenue Hour	\$118.47	\$120.69	\$124.01	Increase < inflation	2.75% Growth
		Cost/Passenger	\$7.80	\$7.82	\$8.29	< \$7.00 / Pass	No
		Farebox Recovery Ratio	17.7%	18.0%	16.2%	18.0%	No
		Net Subsidy/Passenger	\$6.42	\$6.41	\$6.94	< \$6.00 / Pass	No
		Accidents/100,000 Miles	0.93	0.74	0.91	1/100K miles	Yes
EFFECTIVENESS							
	Market Penetration	Passengers per RV Hr	15.2	15.4	15.0	17.0	No
		Passengers per RV Mi	1.36	1.38	1.37	1.31	Yes
	Service Quality	Percent Missed Trips	0.09%	0.09%	0.13%	0.25%	Yes
		Miles between Roadcalls	33,619	25,521	25,811	18,000	Yes
		Percent of Trips On-time	91%	88%	83%	95.0%	No
		Complaints/100,000 miles	11.3	11.2	11.0	30 / 100K miles	Yes
		On-Board Passenger Surveys	Yes			Every 3 years	
		Customer Service Phone Response	93.1%	93.7%	93.0%	92.0%	Yes
EQUITY							
	Improve Transit Access	Lift Availability	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	Yes

Performance Standards - Paratransit							
GOAL	Objective	Measurement	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	Standard	Met?
EFFICIENCY							
	Cost Control	Cost/Revenue Hour	\$ 66.95	\$ 68.90	\$ 70.31	Increase < inflation	Yes
		Cost/Passenger	\$ 32.13	\$ 33.08	\$ 32.84	Increase < inflation	Yes
		Farebox Recovery Ratio	12.0%	12.0%	10.4%	10.7%	No
	Safety	Accidents/100,000 Miles	0.27	0.27	0.47	0.3 / 100K miles	No
EFFECTIVENESS							
	Market Penetration	Passengers per RVHr	2.1	2.1	2.1	1.9 Pass/RHr	Yes
	Service Quality	Denials	0	0	0	None	Yes
		Miles between Roadcalls	1.7	1.8	3.0	3.0 / 100K miles	Yes
		Percent of Trips On-time	95%	87%	93%	98% on time	No
		Complaints/100,000 miles	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.0 / 100K miles	Yes
		Employee Turnover	4.9%	11.0%	13.0%	5.0%	Yes
EQUITY							
	Improve Transit Access	Lift Availability	100%	100%	100%	100.0%	Yes