

To: Operations & Scheduling Committee

Date: 6/26/2018

From: Bill Churchill, Assistant General Manager of Admin.

Reviewed by: *BC*

SUBJECT: County Connection Innovation

County Connection has quietly been at the forefront of a wide range of advanced public transit initiatives dating back to the late 1980's. This memo highlights a number of these initiatives.

Accessibility

In the late 1980's County Connection became the first public agency in the nation to have one hundred percent of all fixed route buses equipped with wheel chair lifts. This meant that County Connection's fixed route service became fully accessible prior to the subsequently enacted Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA.)

Computer Software and System Integration

Below is a list of examples where County Connection was an early adopter of technologies that significantly enhanced operational efficiencies.

- In 1990 County Connection was the first transit agency to install Trapeze scheduling software. With the availability of this software staff mastered the process of "interlining" routes. Interlining allows the agency to minimize the number of buses leaving the yard at peak hours, reducing overall cost.
- County Connection was the first transit agency in the Bay Area to equip all fixed route buses with Computer Aided Dispatch & Automated Vehicle Location (CAD/AVL) with built in schedule adherence. This system was later integrated with Automatic Voice Annunciation (AVA) providing audible announcements of bus stops for the seeing impaired. Automated passenger counting was also incorporated in the system making County Connection one of the first in the nation to count all passengers rather than using statistical modeling to estimate ridership. This integrated system later added automated head-sign control alleviating the operator from constantly changing the signage on the bus and radio management making it one of the most advanced systems in the nation.
- County Connection designed, developed and implemented a software application to manage the maintenance and inventory of parts buses. This system allows mechanics to view diagrams of all major vehicle components, issue work orders and order parts using iPads.

- County Connection developed, implemented and currently manages the regional eligibility database (RED) for paratransit services. All transit agencies in the nine county bay area uses this system to manage paratransit eligibility for their paratransit riders.

Enhancements for the Rider

To enhance the rider experience the Authority added the following technologies for increased accessibility:

- All fixed route vehicles have been equipped with Wi-Fi allowing passengers to access the internet from any route in the system
- Bus Tracker & Transit App were developed and made available to passengers allowing them to track County Connection buses and access real-time schedule information.
- County Connection added the Clipper system to all fixed route buses allowing customers to pay for their rides with an electronic payment system.

Use of Alternative Fuels

- County Connection was the first transit authority to equip the entire bus fleet with Cleare traps that filter both particulates and Nox from diesel emissions exceeding the standard set by the California Air resource board (CARB). This program was so successful that County Connection staff provided support to AC Transit, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans, VTA and others to implement the system yielding a massive emissions reduction for the entire Bay Area.
- County Connection is responsible for bringing Gillig, BAE Systems and WAVE together in a partnership to create the first ever Gillig Electric buses. As a result, County Connection became the first public transit authority in the Bay area to implement electric buses and the first in the nation to implement a fleet of in-route inductively charged electric buses.

Current Projects

- County Connection has provided in kind staff support in the form of project management to LAVTA's Autonomous Vehicle (AV) project. Tis project has begun testing between the Dublin BART station and a nearby location.
- County Connection is conducting a microtransit pilot project on the Alamo Creek Shuttle that allows passengers to hail the shuttle using an app on their phones. This pilot will provide information necessary to determine the viability of similar deployments in other communities within County Connection's service area.

These examples highlight the initiatives the Authority has led over the last thirty years and provides a sense of how innovation has been used to enhance service and operational efficiencies. County Connection is committed to a continued support of innovative transportation choices in our communities.