

To: Marketing, Planning, & Legislative Committee

Date: 06/21/2023

From: Melody Reeb, Director of Planning, Marketing, & Innovation

Reviewed by: *RF*

SUBJECT: Onboard Passenger Survey

Background:

County Connection has historically conducted an onboard passenger survey about every three years. These surveys are used to inform planning decisions and for triennial Title VI program updates and equity analyses. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) manages a regional transit passenger survey program and conducts surveys on each of the fixed-route transit operators in the Bay Area on a rotating schedule. However, those surveys are only conducted for each operator every five to seven years, so County Connection staff have led additional survey efforts to supplement the regional program.

The last onboard survey of County Connection's passengers was completed by MTC in fall of 2019, but the pandemic has delayed MTC's surveying schedule such that the next survey on County Connection will not be until 2027. Given the significant shifts in travel patterns as a result of the pandemic as well as a Title VI program update due in March, staff will be utilizing the on-call planning contract with Transportation Management & Design (TMD) to conduct an onboard survey this fall.

Fall Survey:

Staff are planning to conduct the survey in October when ridership tends to be the most regular because of the lack of holidays and other seasonal variations. The survey will include standard questions, including origin and destination information, trip purpose, fare payment method, demographics, and customer satisfaction. Staff will also be including questions regarding remote work and commute patterns.

The survey will be administered using traditional paper survey instruments, which will also be translated into Spanish. In the past, surveys have been administered using tablets and/or online. While tablets result in more accurate data, response rates tend to be lower since they take longer to complete, and online surveys can generate more responses but are less accurate when collecting trip-specific information.

A sampling plan will be developed in order to capture a representative sample of riders, with a goal of surveying about 10% of passenger boardings. Whereas previous survey efforts focused on weekday ridership, this one will include weekend routes as well, given their faster rate of post-pandemic ridership recovery. A final report of the survey results will be presented to the Committee and Board once completed.

Financial Implications:

The cost to conduct the survey will be about \$50,000, which has been included in the Service Development budget for FY 2024.

Recommendation:

None, for information only.

Action Requested:

None, for information only.

Attachments:

None