



Agenda Item No. (6)

To: Finance-Auditing Committee/Committee of the Whole  
Meeting of January 23, 2025

From: Ron Downing, Director of Planning  
Jennifer Mennucci, Auditor-Controller  
Denis J. Mulligan, General Manager

Subject: **AUTHORIZE THE SETTING OF A PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A PILOT PROGRAM FOR INTERAGENCY NO-COST OR REDUCED COST TRANSFER CREDIT ON GOLDEN GATE TRANSIT BUS AND GOLDEN GATE FERRY**

### **Recommendation**

The Finance-Auditing Committee recommends that the Board of Directors (Board) authorize the setting of a public hearing to receive public comment on the proposed establishment of a No-Cost or Reduced Cost Interagency Transfer Pilot Program (Pilot Program). The Pilot Program would provide a fare discount for riders transferring from any transit agency participating in the Clipper® 2.0 electronic fare collection system on Golden Gate Transit (GGT) regional bus routes and regular (non-special event) Golden Gate Ferry (GGF) service.

The public hearing would take place on Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room, Administration Building, Golden Gate Bridge Toll Plaza, San Francisco, CA. This matter will be presented to the Board of Directors at its January 24, 2025, meeting for appropriate action.

### **Summary**

In April 2024, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) approved implementation of a Pilot Program to offer No-Cost and Reduced Cost Interagency Transfer for passengers using electronic fare payment under the Clipper® 2.0 fare program. The Pilot Program would offer a more seamless and cost-effective experience for riders when making a fixed-route trip that requires transferring between agencies and will open up further transferring possibilities between connecting agencies, particularly where interagency transfer agreements do not currently exist.

Under the Clipper® 2.0 Pilot Program, passengers transferring to or from GGT Bus and GGF will pay the full fare for just the first transit agency that they board. Any transfer to a different agency within two hours will be discounted up to \$2.75 for adult fares and \$1.38 for discounted fares (Youth, Senior, Regional Transit Connection, and Clipper® START), or within three hours if the originating trip is on GGT, Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART), or Sonoma County Transit. This will provide free local bus-to-bus transfers for Clipper® 2 users or a fare credit when

transferring to regional bus, ferry or rail systems such as SolTrans long distance express buses, WETA, SMART, Caltrain, or BART. Should the highest local bus or light rail transit fare increase above \$2.75 during the Pilot Program, the amount of the discount offered will increase to match the new highest local transit fare. For passengers transferring to GGT bus, the transfer credit will be \$1.80 for travel within Marin County and \$2.75 for all other intercounty adult riders (and \$1.38 for discounted fares). Passengers transferring to GGF from other agencies will receive a credit of \$2.75 for adult riders (and \$1.38 for discounted fares).

The Pilot Program is expected to commence at the launch of Clipper® 2.0, currently scheduled for spring/summer of 2025. Implementation of this Pilot Program is anticipated to facilitate interagency transfers and increase transit ridership among the 22 Bay Area agencies who participate in Clipper®. Each agency's participation requires governing board approval.

### **Background**

MTC proposes to provide each agency with funds to offset foregone fare revenue. As stated in the MOU for the Pilot Program, MTC will allocate supplemental payments up to two times during the Pilot Program, at 18 months after the pilot program begins, and then at the conclusion of the Pilot Program, or no later than 24 months after program launch, whichever is sooner. A total of at least \$11 million across all 22 participating regional transit systems is being allocated by MTC to address total foregone fare revenue as a result of discounts given under the Pilot Program.

### **Public Comment Process**

Public comments on this proposal to can be submitted in several different ways:

1. Attend the public hearing;
2. E-mail [publichearing@goldengate.org](mailto:publichearing@goldengate.org); and/or,
3. Send written comments to the District Secretary.

All comments are considered equally without regard to the manner in which the comments are submitted. Therefore, individuals do not have to attend the public hearing and provide testimony in person if they have commented through e-mail or written forms. All comments received through the above methods will be considered in the final recommendation. Comments must be received by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, February 28, 2025.

### **Title VI Equity Analysis**

Any fare change is subject to an equity analysis under the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Final recommendation to the Board after the Public Hearing would include the results of that Title VI equity analysis. The analysis will be completed after the Public Hearing in order to reflect any public comments received on the proposal to implement this Pilot Program.

### **Public Notification**

If the proposal to hold this public hearing is approved by the Board, outreach on the proposal to establish the Pilot Program would begin immediately and continue into mid-February prior to the public hearing.

Public notification activities will include:

- A Notice of Public Hearing will be posted to the District's website;
- Public hearing notices will be published in local publications (*Marin Independent Journal*, *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *East Bay Times*, and *La Voz*);
- Posters advertising the public hearing will be placed onboard buses and ferries;
- Social media posts on Facebook and Twitter will promote the public hearing; and
- Email blasts will be sent to customers and community-based organizations.

Printed materials will be available in Spanish, per the District's Language Implementation Plan (LIP).

### **Next Steps**

Following the public hearing, staff will evaluate all comments received and determine whether changes or modifications need to be made to the proposal to participate in the Pilot Program. A final recommendation will be brought back to the Board of Directors at the March 27, 2025 Finance-Auditing Committee meeting and to the full Board on the following day. If approved by the Board on March 27, the Free or Reduced Cost Transfer credits would go into effect on April 1, 2025, or with the launch of Clipper® 2.0 in spring/summer 2025.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The fiscal impact of providing a Public Hearing and associated outreach is estimated at less than \$15,000 and will be covered by the existing Marketing and Communications Department and District Secretary's Office operating budgets.

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