

## Appendix B: Fare Analysis

Fare policy affects all aspects of transit, including ridership levels, service reliability, and operational revenues. This chapter looks at Marin Transit’s current fare structure and proposes changes to the structure in response to the following:

- Implementation of Clipper on all Marin Transit fixed route services
- The desire to simplify transfer policies between GGBHTD and Marin Transit;
- Consideration of regional proposed fare policies;
- Consideration of neighboring peer fare policies and actions;
- Anticipation of SMART service start-up and needed fare coordination;
- Rider response to new and emerging mobility management programs; and
- Funding shortfalls in the Marin Access paratransit program

Much of the analysis below draws on the *2012 Marin Transit Fare Policy Evaluation* prepared under a Caltrans 5304 Planning Internship Grant.

### Current Fare Products and Policies

A summary of current fare products and policies can be found in Chapter 1 of this report.

### Peer Agency Comparison

For Marin Transit riders traveling outside of Marin County having a fare structure that is compatible with neighboring agencies can ease the transfer between operators. Additionally, there is value in looking at neighboring transit agencies fare policies to set benchmarks and generate ideas for fare structure changes. The following transit agencies were chosen to for this peer comparison based on the likelihood that a Marin Transit rider would make a connecting trip on the other agencies’ system.

- Sonoma County Transit
- Santa Rosa City Bus
- Petaluma Transit
- VINE (Napa County)
- AC Transit
- Muni

The final column of Tables B-1, B-2, and B-3 shows the average of cash fare and monthly pass cost for all Bay Area bus systems that use a flat fare structure. Note that Golden Gate Transit is not included in this matrix because their local fares match those charged by Marin Transit and transfers are free between the two agencies.

**Table B-1: Adult Fare Comparison (October 2014)**

Category	Marin Transit	Sonoma County Transit <sup>(1)</sup>	Santa Rosa City Bus	Petaluma Transit	VINE (Napa County)	AC Transit	Muni <sup>(2)</sup>	Avg All Bay Area Operators <sup>(3)</sup>
Cash	\$2.00	\$1.25-3.65	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$2.10	\$2.25	\$1.83
1-Day Pass	\$5.00	-	\$4.00	-	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$15.00	
7-Day Pass	\$20.00	-	-	-	-	-	\$29.00	
31-Day or Monthly Pass	\$80.00	\$62.50	\$50.00	\$30.00	\$48.00	\$75.00	\$68.00	\$54.00
Value Card / Pass or Ticket Book <sup>(4)</sup>	\$1.80	\$1.25-3.65	\$1.45	\$1.50	\$1.38	-	-	
Clipper (single ride)	\$1.80	-	-	-	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$2.00	

**Notes:**

- (1) Sonoma County Transit has a zone based fare structure
- (2) Muni also offers a 3-day pass
- (3) Avg All Bay Area Operators with "flat fare" structure
- (4) Stored Value Cards were eliminated on July 1, 2015 due to low usage and duplication with Clipper Card discount

**Table B-2: Senior and Disabled Fixed Route Fare Comparison**

Category	Marin Transit	Sonoma County Transit <sup>(1)</sup>	Santa Rosa City Bus	Petaluma Transit	VINE (Napa County)	AC Transit	Muni <sup>(2)</sup>	Avg All Bay Area Operators <sup>(3)</sup>
Cash	\$1.00	\$0.60-1.80	\$0.75	\$0.75	\$0.75	\$1.05	\$0.75	\$0.87
1-Day Pass	\$2.50	-	\$2.00	-	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$15.00	
7-Day Pass	\$10.00	-	-	-	-	-	\$29.00	
31-Day or Monthly Pass	\$25.00	\$31.25	\$25.00	\$15.00	\$24.00	\$20.00	\$23.00	\$23.00
Value Card / Pass or Ticket Book	\$1.00	\$0.60-1.80	\$0.70	\$0.75	\$0.65	-	-	
Clipper (single ride)	\$1.00	-	-	-	\$0.75	\$1.00	\$0.75	

**Notes:**

- (1) Sonoma County Transit has a zone based fare structure
- (2) Muni also offers a 3-day pass
- (3) Avg All Bay Area Operators with "flat fare" structure
- (4) 20 ride passes are sold at reduced price

**Table B-3: Youth Fare Comparison**

Category	Marin Transit	Sonoma County Transit <sup>(1)</sup>	Santa Rosa City Bus	Petaluma Transit	VINE (Napa County)	AC Transit	Muni <sup>(2)</sup>	Avg All Bay Area Operators <sup>(3)</sup>
Cash	\$1.00	\$1.05-3.25	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.05	\$0.75	\$1.39
1-Day Pass	\$2.50	-	\$3.00	-	\$3.00	\$2.50	\$23.00	
7-Day Pass	\$10.00	-	-	-	-	-	\$29.00	
31-Day or Monthly Pass	\$40.00	\$47.00	\$35.00	\$20.00	\$33.00	\$20.00	\$23.00	\$39.00
Value Card / Pass or Ticket Book	\$1.00	\$1.05-3.25	\$1.20	\$1.00	\$1.00	-	-	
Clipper (single ride)	\$1.00	-	-	-	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$0.75	

**Notes:**

(1) Sonoma County Transit has a zone based fare structure

(2) Muni also offers a 3-day pass

(3) Avg All Bay Area Operators with "flat fare" structure

With the exception of Sonoma County Transit, all of the peer transit agencies charge a flat fare regardless of the distance travelled. AC Transit has a separate fare structure for its Transbay service and VINE has premium charges for its routes that operate outside the County that are not included in this analysis.

There is a wide range of pricing among Marin Transit's peer agencies, and among Bay Area Transit operators in general. The most frequently seen adult cash fare in the Bay Area is \$2.00 so that the Marin Transit fare is comparable to other agencies, if not to the peer agencies. Marin Transit's youth fare is in line with its peers and the average of all Bay Area operators, however, it is worth noting that many suburban operators in the Bay Area have chosen not to discount youth fares, or to provide only minimal discounts. This decision is based on the fact that most youth ridership is on school tripper routes that tend to be expensive to operate. Senior/disabled cash fares are consistently set at 50% of the adult fare.

Of the peer transit agencies, Marin Transit offers the most diverse fare options. Marin Transit and Muni are the only agencies to offer weekly passes; Muni's weekly and three day pass are aimed at the tourist market. All transit agencies offer some type of month-long period pass.

A comparison of the six agencies' fare policies reveals that Marin Transit has the most expensive monthly passes for adults at \$80, which is considerably higher than the Bay Area average of \$56. Marin Transit's Monthly Youth Pass is generally higher than that of neighboring operators but consistent with the Bay Area average. Marin Transit's senior month pass is generally priced consistent with the peer agencies and the Bay Area.

Some transit agencies offer some type of discount for prepaid fares through either a value card or multi-ride ticket book. Marin Transit previously had stored value cards. These have been replaced by the Regional Clipper Card that offers a ten percent discount on fares. Santa Rosa City Bus offers ticket books that never

expire. Tickets are available in 40 ticket and 10 ticket packs and provide a three percent discount off regular fare. Napa VINE offers a 20 ride pass with an eight percent discount. Petaluma Transit offers a 10-Ride Transit Pass with no pre-paid discount. AC Transit offers a five percent discount with Clipper.

**Table B-4: Transfers between Agencies**

Transit Agency	Within Agency	Between Agencies
Marin Transit	Free transfers on all services within Marin County (see restriction above)	Accept transfers from Golden Gate and Petaluma as full fare
Sonoma County Transit	Free transfers for one-way trips. Transfers good for two hours	Accept transfers from Santa Rosa City Bus, Petaluma Transit and Golden Gate Transit for a first boarding zone fare credit. Additional fees beyond first boarding zones (Sonoma County has a zone based fare system). Transfers from other systems worth \$0.25 toward Sonoma County fare.
Santa Rosa City Bus	Free transfers valid for 90 minutes and/or two transfers after the time of issue	Accept free transfers from Sonoma County Transit and Golden Gate Transit
Petaluma Transit	Free transfers for one-way bus trip. Valid for one hour after issuance	Accept free transfers from Sonoma County Transit, Marin Transit (route 65) and Golden Gate Transit
Napa VINE	One free transfer valid for 60 minutes after time of issue. Transfers between Express or Intercity routes and Routes 10/11 (countywide routes) require additional payment	
AC Transit	No free transfers. Encourage transferring riders to purchase a day pass for unlimited rides	Accept free transfers from all connecting agencies with a reciprocal agreement.
Muni	Free transfers valid for 90 minutes of travel	Provides \$0.50 discount off single ride when using clipper card from Alameda/Oakland Ferry, Harbor Bay Ferry, Golden Gate Transit, BART
SolTrans	No free transfers. Encourage transferring riders to purchase a day pass for unlimited rides	

Aside from Sonoma County’s youth summer pass, Marin Transit is the only agency among the peer agencies to offer a youth flash pass. In addition to its day, weekly, and monthly passes, Marin Transit works with local schools to provide a six month or one year youth flash pass. One other agency in the Bay Area, VTA, provides an annual youth pass. The pass is priced at \$495 (compared to Marin Transit’s annual price of \$360) and is valid for 11 months.

All agencies are part of a larger transportation network, with differing transfer policies. Marin Transit offers free transfers on all services within Marin County. Sonoma County Transit offers free transfers for one-way trips when transferring within the Sonoma County system. Sonoma County also accepts transfers from Santa Rosa City Bus, Petaluma Transit and Golden Gate Transit for a first boarding zone fare credit and then charges an additional amount for boarding zones beyond the first zone (Sonoma County has a zone based fare system).

**Table B-5: Paratransit Fare Comparison**

Category	Marin Transit	Sonoma County Transit	Santa Rosa City Bus	Petaluma Transit	VINE (Napa County)	AC Transit/ BART	Muni	SolTrans
Paratransit Fare	\$2.00 <sup>1</sup>	\$2.50-7.10	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$4.00-7.00 <sup>2</sup>	\$2.25	\$3.00
Adult Fare	\$2.00	\$1.25-3.65	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$2.10	\$2.25	\$1.75

**Notes:**

(1) Fare for non-ADA mandated service is \$2.50

(2) AC Transit and BART jointly fund East Bay Paratransit

### Clipper Assessment

Due to its longstanding relationship with Golden Gate Transit (GGT), Marin Transit is a unique situation within MTC’s regional electronic fare payment system, Clipper. In 2007, TransLink (now Clipper) was launched on Golden Gate Transit bus and ferry services, including the local bus service operated by Golden Gate Transit on behalf of Marin Transit. The implementation was done based on the Golden Gate regional fare structure and included a zone-based, tag-on/tag-off operation whereby passengers are required to “tag” their card on the Clipper unit at the front of the bus both when they are boarding and when they are alighting. The tag-off requirement allows Clipper to calculate the appropriate zone fare for the ride. Failure to tag-off results in the rider being charged the highest zone fare. Since local routes operated by GGT for Marin Transit were included as part of the initial implementation, Clipper was available to local passengers using Marin Transit services operated by GGT, but not the local service operated by Marin Transit’s other contractors. This arrangement was confusing and inefficient for local passengers and resulted in frequent requests from riders for Marin Transit to implement Clipper on all the local Marin County services.

To respond to rider concerns, Marin Transit worked with the MTC to identify resources needed to implement Clipper on all of its services. In February of 2012, Marin Transit and MTC agreed to an implementation plan that would prioritize the Transit District in the schedule for implementing Clipper at new transit agencies. To receive priority implementation, Marin Transit agreed to contribute \$100,000 toward the project and to continue to operate under the GGT umbrella that included the zonal fare structure and the tag-on/tag-off operation. Recognizing that Marin Transit’s pass products are not part of the GGT fare structure, MTC agreed to allow the District to continue to offer paper passes for monthly, weekly, and day-passes.

On May 10, 2013, after over a year of discussions between MTC, Cubic, and Marin Transit, the MTC Operations Committee approved funding for Clipper expansion to Marin Transit and installation of the Clipper equipment on the remaining Marin Transit services concluded in August of 2014.

The District has monitored Clipper use on Marin Transit routes since 2007 and has observed a very low rate of participation by riders. As opposed to the regional services, where usage rates are nearly 90% by bus riders and 100% by ferry riders, usage on Marin Transit routes averages 12%. Understanding differences in rider demographics is important when discussing differences in fare payment preferences and Clipper usage rates. Local Marin Transit passengers differ significantly from the regional bus or ferry passenger and the “typical” Marin County resident. Over 40% of local riders are Hispanic/Latino and a similar percentage identify Spanish as the language spoken at home. Over 75% of riders earn less than \$50,000 annually. Language and income levels are likely factors that impact fare media selection.

A number of reasons have been identified by riders and operators for the low usage rates of Clipper on local services, including:

- Tag-on/tag-off operation creates an unnecessary risk for local riders that they will be charged a significantly higher fare if they forget to tag-off or if the system fails. Local riders should never be charged more than \$1.80 (adult) or \$1.00 (youth/senior/ADA) for a single trip but failure to complete a tag-off can result in a charge of up to \$7.00 (adults) and \$4.25 (youth/senior/ADA). Although potential refunds are available, it requires a call to customer service and a lengthy wait period before funds are restored. Cash fares do not have this embedded risk.
- Tag-on/tag-off operation presents a “black-box” charge to the rider that is challenging to understand, especially for non-English speaking riders. Devices onboard local vehicles show the maximum regional fare before the user tags off, not the actual local fare. When tagged, the system deducts this maximum fare and then generates a refund back to the local fare at the time of exit (tag-off). This is not-intuitive to the local rider who is only expecting to be charged the local fare.
- Transfer restrictions in the regional fare structure do not allow a free transfer to occur if a rider wants to travel in the opposite direction. While this may make sense for directional regional travel, many local passengers have to travel one direction to get to a transfer hub, and then travel the opposite direction on another route to get to their final destination. Riders are double charged in the Clipper system. The District’s ability to move to a non-directional transfer policy is not possible under the regional business rules within Clipper.
- Due to the tag-on/tag-off operation and the fear of fare evasion on the regional services, Clipper patrons are forced to use the front door for entry and exit. This operational limitation increases dwell times for the District and ultimately increases costs. Clipper patrons are penalized by waiting to exit the front door at high ridership stops such as the San Rafael Transit Center. Often time passengers want to quickly exit (back door) to catch a transfer bus. A passenger who is seated at the rear of an articulated bus has to bypass two open doors at the rear to wait for an opening at the front door, significantly increasing the alighting time.

- Aside from the ferry terminals and main bus depot in San Rafael, there are only 12 retail outlets in all of Marin County for passengers to purchase or load value on Clipper cards. Further, there are no outlets in the Canal area of San Rafael or Marin City, and only one outlet north of San Rafael. These areas represent the highest transit ridership and highest concentration of minorities in the County.
- Language and income barriers further complicate the legibility of the system and a customer's willingness to pre-load large amounts of money to the card or set-up an auto load service. (Auto load requires a credit card and vending machines only allow value to be added in \$20 increments.) Consequently, routes that serve minority communities such as Routes 35 and 36 have the lowest usage Clipper rates at around 5%, below half the system-wide average.

In addition to the bullets listed above, the District is also unable to expand Clipper use to current pass holders and partner agencies using “flash-pass” products. Approximately 25% of all current local riders use some type of pass product including the Month/Week/Day pass, the Countywide Youth Pass, and the Homeward Bound social service pass. Further, deployment of Clipper on new partnerships with College of Marin or employers is also not available under the current Clipper deployment.

### Areas for Consideration in Making Fare Changes

Historically Marin Transit has determined fare policy to achieve the following objectives:

- Maintain cost effectiveness targets (subsidy per passenger) by service typology
- Offer fare media that encourages ridership and simplifies fare payment
- Keep Marin Transit's fares in line with peer systems in the Bay Area

Although not a stated objective, Marin Transit also seeks to maximize social equity by providing mobility for all within the county. To do so, the District provides a variety of options for free or discounted fares to low income populations.

Other considerations that are relevant to determining a fare structure are:

#### Operational Efficiency

Cash is the most used form of payment and is often preferred by riders because it is viewed as the most convenient option. However, cash payments slow boarding and are consequently the most operationally inefficient form of fare payment. Consequently, from an operational standpoint, it is to Marin Transit's advantage for riders to switch to the many non-cash options available. Clipper and flash pass media has the least impact on operations since the rider does not have to interact with the farebox or the driver. Other non-cash media such as period passes or transfers require interaction with the driver.

Marin Transit offers the most fare options compared to its peer agencies. The fact that Marin Transit offers so many fare products may make it difficult to effectively communicate all the options to its users. Additionally,

some products have overlapping functions and benefits. Any change to the fare structure should include a reevaluation and streamlining of the current pass programs.

### **Seamless Regional Travel**

Clipper provides the District with a universal fare media product that can be used across nearly all transit operators in the Bay Area. This media provides local transit users transferring to and from the regional transit systems to “seamless” transfer and reduces the friction of transferring and obtaining multiple forms of transit media. Continued support and participation in the Clipper program by local riders will benefit both the user and District.

### **Balancing Competing Goals**

In setting fares transit agencies need to find the balance between encouraging ridership and generating revenue. If fares are set too high then they become a barrier to ridership. This is particularly true for Marin Transit where 57% of riders earn less than \$25,000 per year. However, setting fares too low can promote ridership increases beyond the District’s capacity to accommodate future growth.

### **Encouraging Targeted Ridership**

Marin Transit, like most transit agencies, provides discounts to specific segments of the population. These discounts are sometimes mandated, as in the case of the federal requirement that transit agencies provide Senior and Disabled fares equal to no more than half the standard adult fare during off-peak periods. In other cases reduced fares are set to encourage ridership in a population that might not otherwise ride. Marin Transit currently favors youth with additional programs for low-income youth, seniors and the disabled with additional programs for low-income seniors and disabled, and clients of Homeward Bound.

Marin Transit’s current fare structure was evaluated against these objectives and considerations. The section below provides recommended fare structure changes that better align the structure with the above objectives and considerations.

### **Recommended Changes to Clipper Operations**

Increasing use of Clipper is a shared goal of the MTC and Marin Transit. The District has outlined a number of actions to increase the use of Clipper in Marin County and simplify the system maintenance for MTC and its vendor, Cubic. The District must achieve these changes before any changes can be considered related to the structure (zonal vs flat fare, directional transfer, time duration of transfers, etc.) of the fare policies. These actions will give the Marin Transit rider more confidence in the system and provide the rider clarity when transferring to the regional GGT system and future SMART system.

1. Transition the current transfer rules for Marin Transit service away from a time and direction rule to a simple time-based rule. Current rules double charge trips that require transfer on routes traveling in opposite direction. This change will not only simplify the transfer process and avoid double payment but it also simplify the round-trip transfer matrix within Clipper that takes significant time and resources to update.

2. Establish Marin Transit as its own operator or add Marin Transit as one of the operators in the North Bay operator group. Under this strategy, all Marin Transit riders would be charged a flat fare and only a single tag would be required. Single tag operation would allow the local riders to use the rear doors for alighting, increasing operational performance and allowing the District to pursue further policy to reduce vehicle dwell times such as all door boarding.
3. Establish a \$2.00 transfer credit to Golden Gate routes (free local transfer) and a \$1.50 transfer credit to SMART rail service.
4. Provide the District with a similar number of pass products (month and week) as the other small operators on Clipper or allow the District to take advantage of the accumulator functionality.
5. Increase the network of Clipper retail outlets and ticket vending machines with particular focus on increasing the availability of locations to load value in the Canal, Marin City, and Novato. To further encourage Clipper use among low income riders value should be allowed to be added in an amount less than \$20.

The MTC is currently scoping out the future of the Clipper program through the C2 steering committee. Marin Transit's General Manager is a member of this committee and the District needs will be considered as part of this future planning effort. However, it is uncertain how long the C2 process will take and opportunities to prioritize these needs though the North Bay Operators implementation of SMART should be considered.

### Recommended Fare Structure Changes

#### Decrease Price of Adult Monthly Passes

Marin Transit's adult monthly pass is the highest compared to monthly passes of peer agencies. Additionally, the price gap among Marin Transit's adult, youth, and senior monthly passes is quite significant; adult passes are twice as expensive as youth passes, and more than three times as expensive as senior passes.

Marin Transit should consider decreasing the price of the monthly pass to \$60 to better align it with peer agencies and the regional average. This price decrease may also incentivize certain adults to buy a monthly pass over a weekly pass, since the monthly pass would offer more value per trip. At this time, the weekly and monthly passes offer similar value per trip; both passes benefit adults who ride more than 10 times per week.

#### Increase Price of Senior Monthly Passes

The senior monthly pass is one of the most popular fare payment options on Marin Transit services. The senior monthly pass has been priced low to encourage as many seniors to take the fixed-route services or shuttles, as opposed to using dial-a-ride or paratransit services. Unfortunately, the low price point of the senior monthly pass has been reported by drivers and customer service staff to encourage fraudulent behavior among other users.

The Senior Monthly Pass should be raised from \$25 to \$30, which would be half the price of the Adult Monthly pass and consistent with the discount offered on single ride cash fares. The slight increase still offers

a good value for seniors. Additionally, the decreased gap among the monthly passes may decrease fraudulent behavior.

### **Reevaluate Price of Youth Transit Pass**

Marin Transit currently offers an annual and six-month Youth Transit Pass as well as day, week and monthly youth passes, and with the advent of Clipper a discounted single ride price. Even with this variety of fare options, an estimated 40% of students still pay for their rides in cash. The Youth Transit Pass enjoys high usage primarily because it is distributed free to low-income students. Only 10% of Youth Pass usage is from paid purchases. Marin Transit is currently undertaking a Countywide Student Transportation Study that will consider, among other recommendations, increasing access to Yellow Bus services, shifting some Public Transit student ridership to these services as appropriate based on the students age and location, and the optimum pricing for both Yellow Bus and Youth public transit service. One possible outcome of this study could be a Youth Pass good on all public transit services and also accepting yellow bus passes as valid payment on Marin Transit's local routes.

### **Consider Phasing Out Low Usage Pass Types**

The senior 7-day pass and the student 7-day and 31-day passes all have low sales volumes. Senior 7-day passes account for only 2% of all senior passes sold; student 7-day passes and 31-day passes together account for less than 1% of all student passes sold. This is probably the result of more cost effective alternatives and limited locations to purchase this media. If these passes continue to have low sales volumes after implementation of the pricing changes described above, all 7-day (adult, senior, and youth) and the youth 31-day passes should be phased out to avoid unnecessary printing and handling costs.

### **Formalize Partnerships With Social Service Agencies**

To maximize social equity and ensure mobility for all, Marin Transit has worked with social service agencies to provide discounted or free rides to communities of concern. Specifically, Marin Transit has long partnered with Homeward Bound to offer free tickets and more recently provided discounted passes to the Department of Health and Human Services. In FY2013/14 Marin Transit provided 53,587 free rides valued at \$96,457 to Homeward Bound clients. The Department of Health and Human Services current purchases 50 adult monthly passes each month with a face value of \$4,000 for the discounted price of \$3,000.

These partnerships have risen on a case-by-case basis, typically with the social service agency approaching the District. Alongside these discounted programs, many non-profit organizations purchase \$2.00 tickets with no discount to distribute to their clients. Marin Transit should consider adopting one consistent program that could be accessed by all social service agencies that allows for a consistent discount and requires some contribution from the agency receiving the tickets.

### **Simplify Fare Payment Structure and Transfer Rules with Golden Gate**

Currently, Marin Transit supports Golden Gate Transit's zone based fare structure by allowing passengers who are transferring to or from a regional route to pay their fare on the first vehicle they board and receive a

transfer to continue their trip. This requires Marin Transit fareboxes and Clipper units to be programmed to support zone based fares. While zone payment makes sense for a regional provider, the local services are based on a flat fare and the zone designations add confusion and uncertainty to the local rider. The zone structure also presents operational delays as drivers need to make adjustments to the farebox to ensure passenger are charged the correct fare and their transfer functions as expected.

As outlined earlier in this Appendix, the zonal fare structure is also a barrier to expanding use of the Clipper system and operational issues associated with Clipper. Clipper patrons riding locally currently have to tag-on when boarding and tag-off when exiting the bus. This is necessary to appropriately calculate the zone-based fare. If patrons forget to tag-off, the Clipper system assumes the patron will ride to the furthest zone in the system. Since the furthest zone is either San Francisco or Santa Rosa, the normal \$1.80 charge to the adult increases to \$7.00. The tag-off process also forces patrons to use the front door when exiting, which increases dwell time at stops and adds to operational costs.

To remedy many of the issues related to operating a flat fare payment in a zone structure, the District should continue to pursue a new organizational arrangement with the Clipper program that provides users with a single tag, flat fare payment option. This would give local riders more transparency and confidence in the electronic media and allow Clipper patrons to use the rear door during exiting.<sup>3</sup> It would also eliminate the need for drivers to manually assign origin and destination fare zones in the farebox and take away the potential for invalid transfers.

## SMART

SMART and the connecting bus operators in the North Bay recently agreed to a unified transfer policy between the rail and bus. A transfer credit of \$1.50 for passengers transferring between the two modes was the agreed upon amount. Effectively, this means that riders transferring to a Marin Transit bus from the SMART train would pay \$0.50 for their bus trip. Since SMART is only intending to accept payment through Clipper Cards, the additional Marin Transit fare would be deducted from the rider's card allowing the rider to make the transfer without having a cash transaction.

## Group Pass Programs

Marin Transit should continue to explore partnerships with other agencies and local employers; universal pass programs with certain local employers may be an option. Marin Transit is currently in discussions with College of Marin regarding a student pass program that would require contributions from all students as part of the semester fees and would in turn allow unlimited rides with the student ID as a flash pass. Group pass programs offer opportunities for attracting new transit riders and improving operational efficiency of the service. If Marin Transit was successful in obtaining the single tag operation and the stand alone operator status in Clipper, the District could use the Clipper card for future group pass programs.

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<sup>3</sup> Marin Transit would need to be added to the Clipper program as a separate operator instead of part of the Golden Gate System. This change to the Clipper system would need to be approved by MTC, the program manager for the regional fare collection program.

**Increase in Paratransit Fare**

The Americans with Disabilities Act allows transit agencies to charge up to twice the base fare for rides on paratransit services. Marin Transit has historically charged the same base fare for both fixed route and paratransit (with a premium of \$0.50 for non-mandated trips). However, paratransit services are significantly more expensive to provide than fixed route services and Marin Transit is currently facing financial challenges aligning the provision of service with the growing demand. To help support the added costs of paratransit Marin Transit should gradually increase paratransit fares to achieve the maximum fare allowed under the ADA of twice the local fare. To ease the impact of increasing the paratransit fare the increase could come in two annual \$1 increases. To ensure that low income riders are not unduly disadvantaged by this increase Marin Transit should consider an increase to the low income paratransit scholarship program.

**Increase in Novato Dial-A-Ride Fare**

The Novato Dial-A-Ride provides a more personalized curb-to-curb service for Novato residents and the program regularly falls below the subsidy per passenger target. Fares on this service are the same as fixed route, offering riders little incentive to use these services. As Catch-A-Ride and paratransit fares are proposed to increase, the Dial-A-Ride should follow. A one-time fare increase on the regular adult rate from \$2.00 to \$4.00 and an increase on the senior/ADA rate from \$1.00 to \$2.00 is proposed for FY2016/17. The change would also eliminate the free transfer from the fixed route service and require riders to pay the difference in fares between the fixed route and Dial-A-Ride.

**Impose a Minimum Fare for Catch-A-Ride**

Currently the Catch-A-Ride program is structured such that there is no minimum fare and consequently customers pay only if the cost of the taxi ride is greater than the subsidy provided by Marin Transit. As with many of Marin Transit's Mobility Management programs, Catch-A-Ride use is beginning to exceed available funding. By having riders pay a portion of the cab fare the funding can be extended. As Catch-A-Ride is a less expensive method for providing service to senior and disabled clients than paratransit, the minimum should be set less than the paratransit fare to encourage ridership on this mode.

**Increase Marketing and Distribution of Clipper**

Increasing the use of Clipper on local routes has great potential to improve operational efficiency and add convenience for passengers. The District must first work with MTC and Golden Gate Transit to overcome some barriers related to the current system (mentioned above). Investing in marketing and distribution of Clipper is one way to increase usage and awareness.

**Evaluate Muir Wood Shuttle Pricing**

Marin Transit partners with the National Park Service to provide a seasonal shuttle to Muir Woods from several off-site locations. Each partner agency pays 50% of the net cost of the service. In advance of the 2013 season the fare for this service was increased from \$3.00 per adult round trip to \$5.00 per adult round trip with other fare discounts applied to youth and seniors. The National Park Service is currently evaluating the implementation of a reservation system to manage parking and congestion at Muir Woods National Park.

That implementation will likely include the imposition of parking fees for those travelling to Muir Woods in private vehicles. As the Muir Woods Shuttle is an integral part congestion management in and around the Muir Woods National Park shuttle pricing should be evaluated in concert with the upcoming implementation of a reservation system and the imposition of parking fees.

**Table B-6: Summary of Proposed Fare Changes**

Category	Current Fare	Proposed Change	Proposed Timing of Change
Adult Monthly Pass	\$80.00	\$60.00	Next scheduled fare increase
Senior Monthly Pass	\$25.00	\$30.00	Next scheduled fare increase
Student Annual Pass	\$325.00	TBD	Based on School Transportation Study
Low usage passes	Various	Eliminate	Next scheduled fare increase
Discounts for Social Service Agencies	Various	Unify	FY2015/16
GGBHTD Transfers	Free	Simplify	FY2015/16
SMART Transfers	N/A	\$1.50 Credit	FY2016/17
Group Pass Programs	N/A	TBD	FY2015/16 and beyond
Paratransit Fare	\$2.00	\$3.00/\$4.00	FY2015/16 to FY2016/17
Novato Dial-A-Ride	\$2.00 (\$1.00 Senior/Youth/ ADA)	\$4.00 (\$2.00 Senior/Youth/ADA)	FY2016/17
Catch-A-Ride Fare	No base fare	\$2.00 base fare	FY2015/16
Muir Woods Shuttle	\$5.00 RT	TBD	Align with implementation of NPS reservation system

Adoption of any fare recommendations that result from this fare analysis will not be implemented until the public has been notified and given an opportunity to comment on the proposals and staff has prepared a Title VI fare equity analysis.