

REGIONAL TRANSIT ISSUE PAPER

Agenda Item No.	Board Meeting Date	Open/Closed Session	Information/Action Item	Issue Date
9	08/28/17	Open	Information	08/22/17

Subject: Mobile Fare App and Connect Card Updates

ISSUE

Update on SacRT's mobile fare application (app) and Connect Card programs.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Information Item Only

FISCAL IMPACT

None. Information Only

DISCUSSION

Over the past 18 months, SacRT staff has been working on various ways to make significant improvements to operations. Many solutions involve creating efficiencies, improving customer service, and finding ways to reduce operational expense in order to increase services for the public. One such effort is transitioning riders from traditional paper forms of fare media to our new electronic fare collection methods: the mobile fare app and Connect Card. Electronic fare media provides customers with a more convenient and reliable way to purchase and store tickets and passes. SacRT also benefits from this transition as electronic fares reduces administrative costs associated with collecting and distributing fares, improves on-time performance (by speeding up boarding times), and provides more accurate, real-time ridership information useful in analyzing service and performance levels. These are just a few of the benefits available to SacRT and our riders with electronic fares.

Mobile Fare App

The RideSacRT mobile fare app was launched as a pilot to the public in January 2016, and usage of the mobile fare app has increased steadily since. In mid-2016, the process was started to select a vendor for a permanent mobile fare app, and in March 2017, a contract was signed with Bytemark Inc. to provide SacRT and potentially other transit partners in the Sacramento region with a new mobile fare app. The name ZipPass was chosen for the new mobile fare app so it would not be viewed as SacRT-only and have the potential to be regional electronic fare media, similar to the Connect Card.

Throughout the mobile fare app pilot period, SacRT has learned the needs of our customers. When selecting the new vendor, staff kept these needs in mind and the current vendor will have the ability to meet many of these needs over time. The first version of the ZipPass mobile fare app will be similar to the pilot, but over time SacRT will have the ability to increase the number of fare options and features.

Approved:

Presented:

Final 08/23/17

General Manager/CEO

VP, Finance/Chief Financial Officer

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Some examples of the new features include: customers will now have the option of using previously purchased tickets regardless of whether or not they have internet or cell connection at the time of activation. Also, customers that do not have a debit or credit card or bank account will have the ability to load tickets on their cell phone by paying with cash at the SacRT Customer Service Center.

ZipPass will be marketed to the public on September 1, 2017, and will offer Basic and Discount Single Fares and Daily Passes. A monthly Pass will be available in 1-2 months. The pilot mobile fare app, RideSacRT, will continue to be accepted through October 31, 2017, at which time customers with remaining tickets will receive a refund and be directed to use the new mobile fare app, ZipPass. Furthermore, SacRT and Bytemark have been in discussion with the regional transit partners, such as Yolo Bus, e-tran, and Folsom Stage Line, which have all expressed interest in becoming partners to make ZipPass a regional mobile fare app.

Connect Card

SacRT implemented a soft launch of the Connect Card on November 12, 2016. Since that time, SacRT staff has worked to improve the individual rider experience through system modifications, enhancements and fare changes. Feedback from Connect Card riders during the soft launch period was positive especially after the Board's decision to implement a Daily Best Fare on March 13 and a 90 minute ticket (free transfers) on April 24.

On June 15, 2017, the Connect Card system was officially rolled out to the public. SacRT staff has taken a number of measures to promote the Connect Card and ensure a smooth transition for our riders. Some of these measures include advertising on both buses and trains, hiring additional temporary support in Customer Service locations, and obtaining support from local retailers such as Raley's/Bel Air. In fact, Raley's/Bel Air has been one of our first adopters and strongest supporters of the transition from eliminating prepaid paper tickets and going directly to electronic fares.

One aspect of the Connect Card system that SacRT staff is especially excited about is the Connect Card Corporate Accounts program. The Corporate Accounts program is designed for businesses and other organizations (state agencies, non-profits, etc.) that support riders by providing transit subsidies. This program provides efficiencies that dramatically improve the buying and selling experience for Corporate Accounts. Staff recently met with and signed up multiple corporate accounts that have communicated that the old way of doing business with SacRT (paper fares) directly impacted their organizations ability to purchase fares resulting in loss of revenues and ridership. The Corporate Accounts program offers organizations the ability to purchase fares quickly and easily, which will allow SacRT to recover revenues and ridership lost due to inefficiencies in previous programs.

Summary

Staff believes that electronic fares such as the mobile fare app and Connect Card are the wave of the future for SacRT. These fare payment options provide enhanced benefits to our riders,

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making purchasing fares more convenient while making SacRT and its regional partners more efficient and passenger friendly.

Moving into the Future with Electronic Fares

- **Old way of doing business....Inconvenient purchasing options**
 - Ticket holders must travel to sales outlets to make purchases.
 - Riders must purchase prepaid tickets and passes in fixed amounts.
 - Customers are not able to recover lost or stolen paper fare media.
 - Slower boarding times.
 - Long lines at aging fare vending machines at peak times. Ticket validation issues can result in lost revenues for SacRT.
 - Paying with cash on the bus slows down boarding times.

Electronic Fares and the New Business Model



➤ Pros

- ✓ Regional Acceptance
- ✓ Easy to use
- ✓ No waiting in lines – Buy online
- ✓ Free transfers within 90 minutes
- ✓ Fast boarding
- ✓ Flexible Fare Options
- ✓ Autoloads

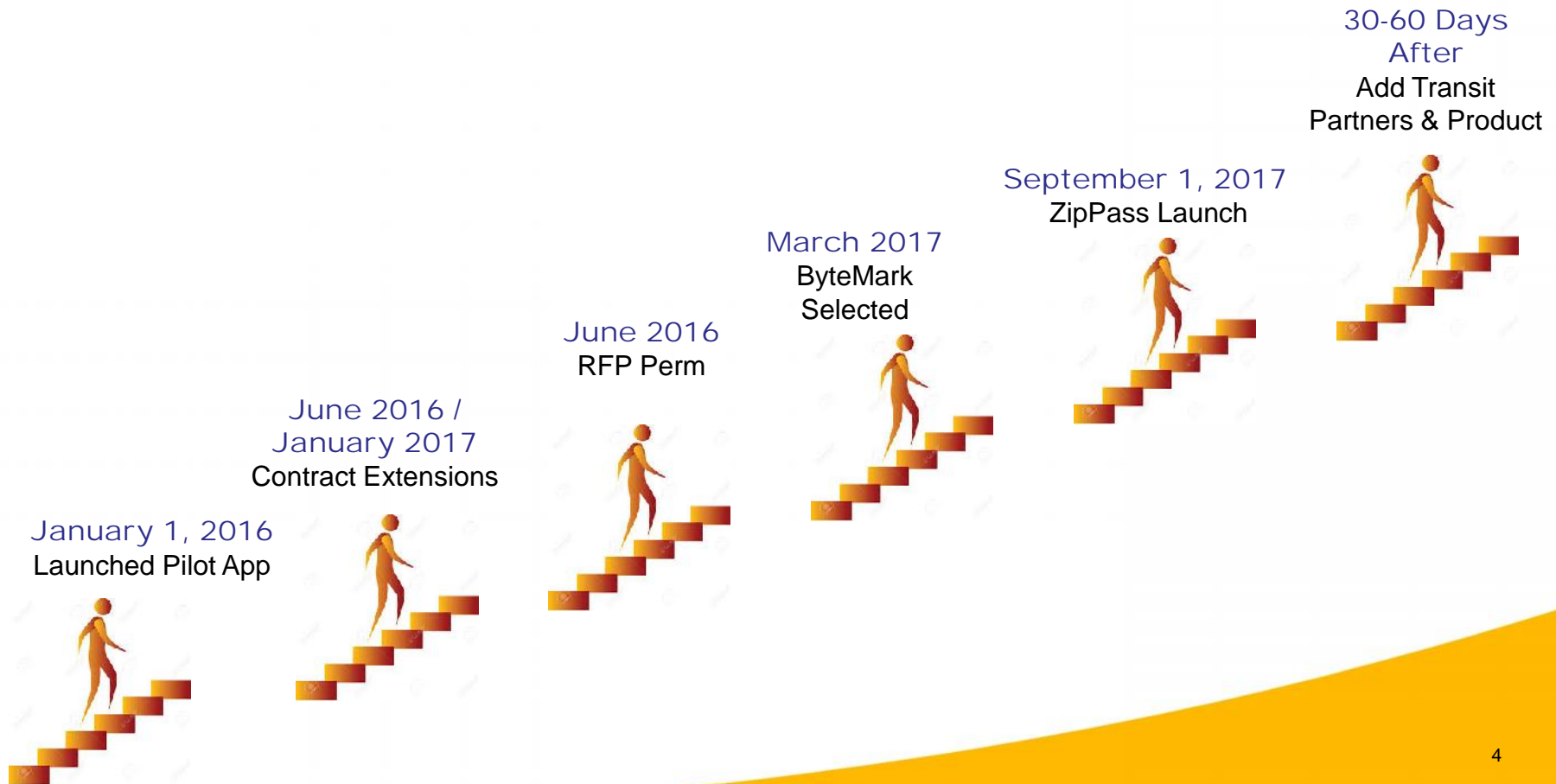
➤ Pros

- ✓ No media required - Proof of purchase displayed on phone
- ✓ Easy to use
- ✓ No waiting in lines
- ✓ Free transfers within 90 minutes of travel
- ✓ Fast Boarding
- ✓ Buy as many tickets/passes as needed
- ✓ No additional equipment required

Connect Card Update and Timeline



Mobile Fare App Update and Timeline



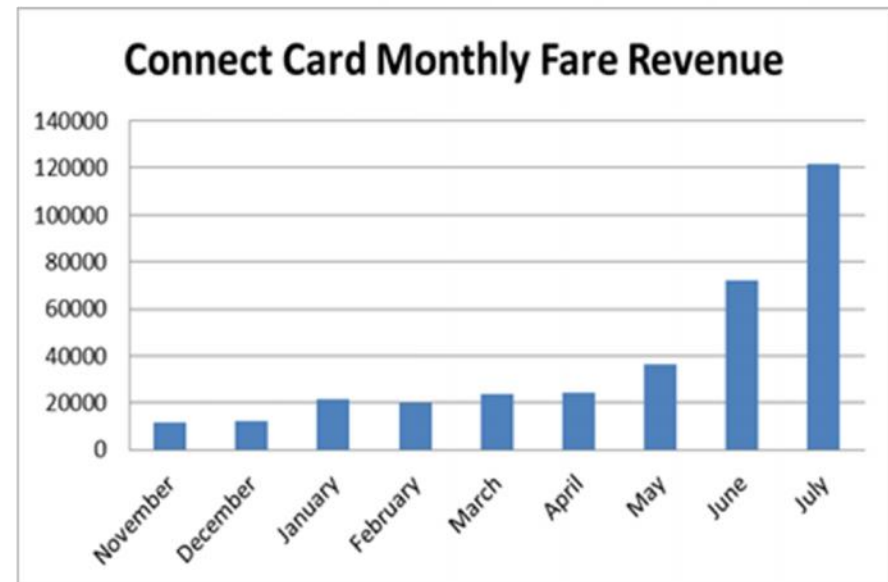
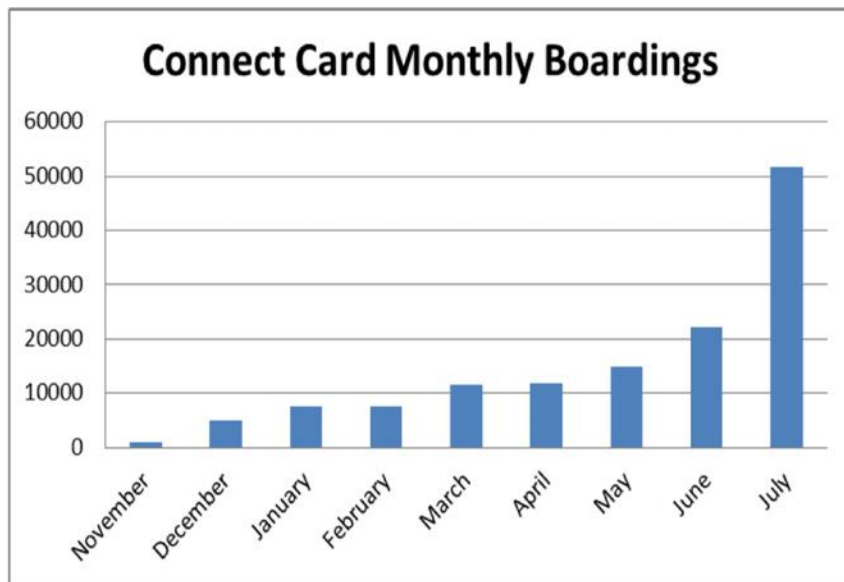
Daily Best Fare and 90 Minute Ticket

Video Presentation

Mobile Fare App

Video Presentation

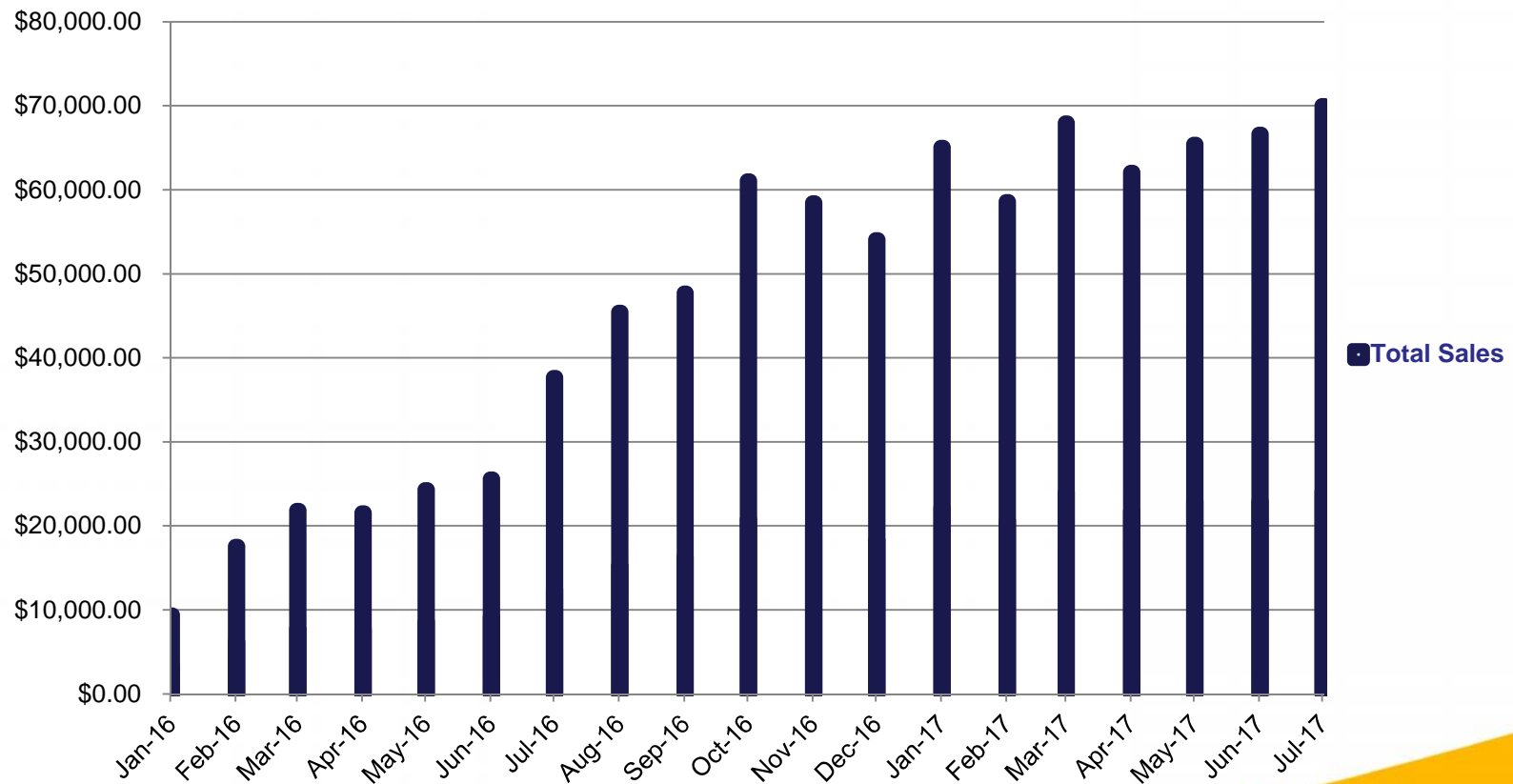
Connect Card Ridership and Fare Revenue



In past month, Staff has signed on multiple new corporate accounts that previously did not do business with SacRT.

Mobile App Monthly Sales

TOTAL SALES



Corporate Accounts and New Ridership Opportunities

➤ Corporate Accounts

- ✓ The Corporate Accounts program streamlines the purchasing process for our sales outlets.
- ✓ At 10% goal of transitioning 200 customers to Connect Card.

➤ New Ridership Opportunities

- ✓ In the past month, Staff has signed up 5 new multiple corporate accounts that previously did not do business with SacRT.