

BART
TransLink Fare Media Transition Plan
August 12, 2009

The TransLink Management Group (TMG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) in a letter from the TMG Chairperson dated June 12, 2009 requested BART to prepare a plan to transition existing pre-paid fare media to TransLink. In response to this direction, BART is submitting the plan described below.

For BART, the first pre-paid fare media to be transitioned to TransLink are the BART High Value Discount (HVD) product that is offered on the EZ Rider BART-only smart card and on magnetic stripe tickets. Riders get a 6.25% high value discount because they can pay \$60 and get \$64 worth of rides, or pay \$45 for \$48 in rides. HVD fare media will be transitioned first because they are used by BART's regular riders, who are considered a key market to meeting the goal of generating a high volume of TransLink system transactions.

The TransLink Fare Media Transition Plan for BART is proposed to have three phases: Phase 1 and Phase 2 involve transitioning the two HVD fare media to TransLink. Phase 3 will address transition of the remaining fare media, including discounted fare media for people with disabilities, seniors, and youth aged 5 to 12. These other fare media types, however, present particular challenges to transition, and transition planning for them will follow the successful transition of the two HVD fare media. Also, the transition of discounted fare media is outside the scope and schedule defined for the BART Fare Media Transition Plan in the April 27, 2009 TMG presentation on TransLink contract assignment and revisions, as confirmed via an email from MTC dated June 24, 2009.

The attached BART Fare Media Transition Plan is a summary of Phase 1 and Phase 2, the plans for transitioning the EZ Rider and magnetic stripe ticket HVD products, including the schedules for transition, a description of known constraints and facilitation strategies to overcome these constraints, and any action required by the BART Board of Directors to effect the transition. If staff determines that implementation of particular elements of the plan require Board approval, presentations for approval will be preceded by notices and public hearings as appropriate. Some of the issues presented by transitioning BART's fare media to TransLink are directly related to TransLink and will need to be addressed by the TransLink Service Bureau. Other transitioning issues are more closely related to BART's operations and procedures and can be addressed directly by BART.

Phase 1: Transition EZ Rider HVD Smart Cards to TransLink

Phase 1 converts the EZ Rider BART-only smart card, which is autoload-only from a credit card or debit card and is used to pay regular adult fares. It gives the 6.25% high-value discount by loading \$48 in value at a cost of \$45 to the rider. Since EZ Rider functions so much like TransLink, BART anticipates that transitioning riders away from EZ Rider should be relatively straightforward.

Key Issue:

Pay for Parking with TransLink. The EZ Rider card, in addition to being used to pay for fares, has a separate, undiscounted purse that patrons use to pay for parking at BART stations. It is anticipated that riders who now use their EZ Rider card to pay both their fares and parking fees may be resistant to a transition that means they must use two smart cards: TransLink to pay for their fares, and EZ Rider to pay for parking. To remove this constraint, the TransLink system will need to be modified so that riders can use it to pay for parking as well as fares.

Phase 2: Transition Magnetic Stripe HVD Tickets to TransLink

In Phase 2 of the transition plan, the TransLink HVD product will replace the magnetic stripe HVD ticket. High value discount magnetic stripe tickets are sold exclusively through BART's 3rd party ticket vendor network, which is also the sales network for discounted tickets used by youth and people with disabilities (red tickets) and seniors (green tickets).

Key Issues:

Develop Alternative Network to Sell Senior and Disabled Discounted Tickets. When sales of the HVD tickets are ended as part of the transition to TransLink, it is highly likely that most if not all 3rd party vendors will also stop selling red and green tickets because vendors are paid a percentage commission per ticket sold, and HVD ticket sales make up a substantial part of sales volume. This will leave customers with few options to buy red and green tickets. BART will need to establish an alternative network to serve these customers that is consistent with FTA requirements for making discount tickets available. In the event that an alternative third party network cannot be developed, the transition of magnetic stripe HVD tickets could be delayed until both TransLink-capable TVMs are installed systemwide for loading ecash, and an expanded distribution system of Ticket Office Terminals is created for TransLink discount card eligibility verification and card issuance. Establishment of an expanded TOT distribution system is considered a regional issue.

High Value Discount Available only using Auto-Load. Under the present system, a customer receives the high value discount on the purchase of a single high value ticket. The patron can use cash, check, or credit card for the purchase. After the transition to TransLink, the high value discount will be available only for those patrons using the auto-load function on TransLink. Patron resistance to the elimination of the discount on single ticket cash or check purchases will require an outreach and education effort for notification of the change. Also, for those who want TransLink ecash instead of auto-load only HVD, the integration of TransLink for BART TVMs would provide facilitation.

Integrate Pre-Tax Benefits. The fare medium transition will also be impacted by completion of MTC's project to integrate employer transit benefit programs into TransLink. This effort is designed to let customers use different forms of pre-tax benefits, including paper and e-vouchers, as payment sources for loading their TransLink cards. A significant portion of current magnetic stripe HVD ticket sales are made to customers who pay with a voucher or debit card from their pre-tax benefit provider. It is very likely these customers will not make the switch to TransLink until they can use their pre-tax benefits on TransLink, in combination with their credit card for HVD autoloads.

BART FARE MEDIA TRANSLINK TRANSITION PLAN

Fare Media Type	Schedule/Transition Steps	Constraints to Transition	Facilitation	Board Action Required
EZ Rider HVD	<p>8/2009: Memo to BART Board about transition of EZ Rider HVD to TransLink</p> <p>1/2010: Notify all customers that EZ Rider transit functionality will be terminated</p> <p>5/2010: Issue reminder of termination</p> <p>7/2010: Final notification of EZ Rider transit termination</p> <p>9/2010: Disable fare gates for EZ Rider transit payment</p>	<p>Customer resistance to carrying two cards if customer uses EZ Rider parking feature</p> <p>TransLink Service Bureau's capacity to handle demand for new cards</p>	<p>Implement TransLink parking functionality on BART</p> <p>Stagger notification of customers</p>	No action; inform only
HVD Magnetic Tickets	<p>8/2009: Memo to BART Board outlining proposed transition of HVD magnetic tickets to TransLink</p> <p>7/2010: Complete transition strategy for current 3rd party BART ticket vendor network and establish alternative distribution network for red (disabled and youth) and green tickets (senior) until youth and senior TransLink card distribution program implemented</p> <p>8/2010: Hold public hearing and request Board approval</p> <p>9/2010: Notify 3rd party vendors & customers that HVD ticket sales will end in 6 months & HVD will be <u>autoload</u> only</p> <p>9/2010: Notify red and green ticket users of alternative distribution network</p> <p>12/2010: Issue reminder to vendors & customers (including red and green)</p> <p>3/2011: End HVD magnetic ticket sales</p>	<p>Loss of sales locations for distribution of red and green tickets when HVD magnetic tickets no longer sold</p> <p>Customers without a credit card or bank account</p> <p>Customers who don't want to give account information to TransLink</p> <p>Customers with pre-tax benefits from variety of providers who have paper or e-vouchers</p> <p>TransLink Service Bureau's capacity to handle demand for new cards</p>	<p>Explore other options for distribution, which may delay the complete elimination of HVD magnetic ticket sales</p> <p>Program TVMs to be TransLink-compatible before HVD transition complete so patrons can load e-cash</p> <p>Program TVMs to be TransLink-compatible before HVD transition complete so patrons can load e-cash</p> <p>Complete employer transit benefit program integration for TransLink to accept payment from all providers and for multiple payment sources</p> <p>Expand capacity to match demand</p>	Public hearing and Board approval required to give HVD by autoload only on TransLink because it could be considered a fare increase for those unable or unwilling to use a credit card