



SACOG Board of Directors

**Item #17-6-25
Receive & File**

June 8, 2017

Connect Card Project Status

The Connect Card project has reached another major milestone. On June 15, 2017, SACOG will host an event to initiate the full public launch of the Connect Card by the nine-agency Consortium implementing the project.

On November 16, 2016, the Connect Card was introduced in a soft launch to a limited number of volunteers to test the system and provide feedback on the user experience. The project team's goal was 1,000 users. Today, we have doubled that number to over 2,000 users. The full launch is the culmination of this technical deployment effort for the Connect Card. It has been a complex initiative involving the installation of equipment at 47 light rail stations and on over 500 buses of nine transit agencies to support seamless electronic fare payments throughout the Sacramento region.

There have been two user surveys conducted during the course of the soft launch. Via an email address, softlaunch@connecttransitcard.com, riders can send in their questions, concerns, and complaints. Generally, the comments were very positive, but the project team has taken all feedback into consideration and improved the system accordingly throughout the soft launch.

Following the full launch, the next big push for implementation and increasing Connect Card use will be through the Corporate Accounts feature. This will allow Employee Transportation Coordinators (ETC) to provide transit fares to their employees through an online account. An ETC can define the agency's subsidy and not-to-exceed amount in the agency's account. Through the Corporate Accounts feature employees can load their Connect Card transit fare online (or in person with their ETC), thereby increasing the efficiency and ease for riders to acquire their transit fare and subsidy. In recent months, SACOG staff has also been working to secure regional retailers including Raley's/Bel Air to sell and load fares on Connect Card media.

Led by the SACOG Project Management Team, all Connect Card implementation activities continue to be coordinated through monthly Connect Card Executive Committee Meetings and weekly briefings to discuss governance, standard operating procedures, and implementation planning. Implementation activities are also informed by input from the West Coast Peer Review Group that continues to meet monthly to discuss issues and share ideas for deployment and operation of smart card fare collection systems, including the Connect Card.

As the project transitions into the full launch, the participating agencies will be operating under the terms of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by July 1 that relieves SACOG of many implementation responsibilities. Staff will brief the Board in the coming months on the status of the Connect Card full launch, with a focus on SACOG's remaining roles and responsibilities for the project.

MM:MS:ds

Key Staff: Kirk E. Trost, Chief Operating Officer/General Counsel, (916) 340-6210
Matt Carpenter, Director of Transportation Services, (916) 340-6276
Maricela Salazar, Analyst II, (916) 319-5182