UC Davis
Paratransit Efficiency Study

Strategic Planning, Development and Sustainability Committee
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Today’s Update

• Scope of UC Davis study

• Existing conditions

• Challenges and opportunities

• Alternatives

• Next steps and questions
Scope of Study

- UC Davis researchers conducted an efficiency analysis of SamTrans paratransit service

- Project objectives:
  - Address increasing demand for paratransit
  - Address increasing cost for services
  - Address declining revenues/low farebox recovery

- Existing conditions
- Peer review/innovative pilots
- Development of alternatives
- Final report
Existing Conditions

- Contracted operation
  - First Transit
  - Taxi Cab
- FY18 – Cost ~ $18.4M; Farebox ~ $750k
- SamTrans paratransit services goes above and beyond the ADA
  - Beyond the minimum ¾ mile required both spatially (distance) and temporally (time)
  - Fare is less than 2x of base bus fare ($4.25)
  - Lifeline fare is $1.75*

*SamTrans is unique in offering a reduced paratransit fare for low-income individuals.
Existing Conditions

- Ridership Trends – 12.4% increase in trips between 2015 and 2017
  - Lifeline fare assistance passengers take nearly 40% more trips per month than non-lifeline fare assistance passengers
  - Trips have somewhat stabilized or declined recently

- Low farebox recovery – 4% farebox recovery ratio

- Operator shortage has led to the increased use of taxis
  - On average, taxis cost more per hour than the contracted service
Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges:
• Increasing cost of services
• Operator shortages
• Aging population

UC Davis identified alternatives to:
• Reduce cost
• Increase revenues
• Manage demand for trips
• Address operator shortage

Study is starting point for further analysis
Alternatives – Reduce Costs

1) Align operating policy with the ADA (3/4 mile) spatially and/or temporally
   • Potential cost reduction of up to 5% ($700k)
2) Increase pick-up window to 30 minutes (currently 20)
   • Potential cost reduction of 2-3% (more efficient, reduced use of taxis)
3) Explore technology to improve efficiency and reduce contractor costs
   • Software modules for web booking, real time information
Alternatives – Increase Revenue

4) Consider a premium fare for trips outside the ¾ mile ADA requirement
   • Potential fare revenue increase of 40% ($250k)

5) Increase the base paratransit fare (regular and lifeline)
   • Revenue and ridership impacts are explored in the SamTrans Fare Study
Alternatives – Demand Management/Innovative Services

6) Improve access to fixed route services

7) Provide subsidized same-day services
   • Currently have a taxi pilot that will launch in 2019; consider adding TNCs

8) Explore increasing wheelchair accessible vehicles
   • Potentially necessary for partnerships with TNCs
9) Incentivize or coordinate volunteer driver programs

10) Potential opportunity to explore bringing in TNCs are a service provider for same day or regular paratransit service
   • Potential opportunity with next paratransit operating contract
Next Steps

1) Receive Board and Public Feedback
2) Finalize UC Davis Report
3) Identify alternatives for further exploration
Questions?