Real-Time Customer Information Improvements:
Business Items 2020-12 & 2020-9

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Customer Information Vision

It is easy for diverse customers to understand where and when transit service operates because Metro Transit provides information that is accurate, customer-friendly, accessible, robust, and professional.

Today: Focus on meeting customers’ expectations by improving real-time information
Customers Depend on Real-Time Information

• **NexTrip**
  - 80 million unique, trackable requests per year
  - Plus, over 200 real-time signs and annunciators, other apps and tools

• **Rider Alerts**
  - Over 34,000 subscribers
  - Over 21,000 unique alerts sent out in 2019
Real-time Information Challenges

• Major sources of customer complaints about information
  – Missing detour/disruption information
  – Inaccurate and incomplete NexTrip predictions

• Second lowest rated item in 2018 customer survey: “I can find the information I need about detours”

• Alerts and real-time info are not available in most popular customer information tool: Google Maps
Business Items

• 2020-12
  – **Real-Time Prediction Engine**: Improve the accuracy, reliability, and availability of NexTrip predictions for bus service and Northstar

• 2020-9
  – **Alerts Manager**: Streamline process for creating alerts; allow customers to receive more relevant, customized alerts; publish alerts in industry standard format
  – **Real-Time Concentrator**: Reconcile service alerts and real-time predictions so information is accurate and complete
2020-12: Real-time Prediction Engine

NexTrip Background

• 2008: Metro Transit on leading edge
• Customer expectations and technology have changed
• Prediction accuracy ~65-75% “acceptable” – deteriorates when there are delays, when customers need it most
• Not in industry standard format, not available in Google
2020-12: Real-time Prediction Engine

Approach

• Pilot two prediction engines
• Evaluate predictions alongside current system
• Identify best source for accurate predictions
2020-12: Real-time Prediction Engine

Benefits

• Improved prediction accuracy
• More robust system – eliminates and mitigates conditions that lead to bad predictions currently
• Includes maintenance and support for critical tool
• Industry standard, Google-ready data feed – information available in most popular customer tool
• Foundational to roadmap for ongoing improvements

Cost: Not to exceed $972,000 for 4 years

Request: Authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with Cambridge Systematics
Business Item #2020-9
Alerts Manager & Real-Time Concentrator
Rider Alerts Program Background

• Based on customer feedback, Metro Transit launched initiative in 2014
  – Originally supported planned detours & disruptions during business hours only

• Leveraged existing email and text contract and internally built tools

• Program expansion
  – 2017: Communications Specialist position established in Transit Control Center
    • Added ability to send out alerts for cancelled trips
  – 2019: More staff, expanded coverage for sending out alerts (longer weekday and added weekend hours)
Current Gaps

- Manual processes to update alerts through multiple channels
- Alerts not reflected in NexTrip
- Alerts not reflected in Google and other third-party apps
- Trip planning tools do not reflect real-time trip cancellations
- Alerts sent at route level
Alerts Manager Benefits

• Streamlines process for creating and distributing alerts
• Allow customers to choose more relevant alert options
• Alerts available in industry standard format (Google Maps and other tools)

Real-Time Concentrator Benefits

• Reconciles data from Alerts Manager and NexTrip, so customer information is accurate and complete

Cost: Not to exceed $800,000 for 3 years

Request: Authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a contract with IBI Group