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## Clipper Exec Bd Meeting 20260126

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From aleta dupree <[REDACTED]>  
Date Fri 1/23/2026 11:55 AM  
To MTC-ABAG Info <info@bayareametro.gov>

\*External Email\*

Greetings Commission Secretary, please forward this message to the Clipper Executive Board for the General Meeting of 26 January, 2026.

Good afternoon Chair Bob Powers and Members.

Aleta Dupree for the record, she, her, with Team Folds.

I bring you my comments in pertinence to the work and mission of the Clipper Executive Board.

I recognize that my letter to you might be premature, given that the Meeting Agenda has not yet been posted. I do not know if I will be at your upcoming Meeting in person. I have not been to the Bay Area since early October of last year. I acknowledge my comments might be very well be conjectural. Yet I seek to share on the things of Clipper 2, even given my lack on hands on experience at this time.

I have read various news reports pertaining to Clipper 2 over time. The program opened to much fanfare on 10 December, 2025. I had considered coming to our beloved Bay Area at the time but that trip did not come to pass. And there was a flurry of reporting on the events of opening day. And news travels fast, especially given that the opening of Clipper had many fast moving developments.

I did have some trouble accessing the Clipper website on the first day. I put that aside, given that I did not have anything urgent to take care of. I did access the website on 11 December, 2025. I noticed that my card was upgraded to the new 19 digit format. Given that I am a Clipper Access user (formerly RTC, not to be confused with RTC in Las Vegas), my card was in an early batch of upgrades. This is reflected in the Clipper mobile application that I use for my fare payment when I am in the Bay Area. I did not seek to call the Clipper customer service department, given that I didn't any particular reason to do so at the time.

I have seen various news reports of people having problems using Clipper. Yet these reports seem to be cursory in nature. And problems people could be having with Clipper 2 can take on many forms. Yet I am not hearing them articulated to inform the public. And that leaves me wanting, in seeking to be prepared, including for possibilities that I would hope would never come to pass. To be honest, I never really foresaw having any problems using Clipper 2 upon returning to the Bay Area. I admit that if I had any problems, I would have been quite surprised.

I am aware of some challenges with vending machines on BART and MUNI. I rarely use vending machines, except when I have small change, other than pennies, that I have found along the way. And in the last few months I have found about a dollar in small change. I was saving that for my return to the Bay Area, and adding Clipper value in using the BART vending machines. Yet over time I realized that my bag of small change was like a small pouch filled with pebbles, not doing me any good, and just taking up space. I decided to spend it in a supermarket instead.

And there are many who have issues with Clipper, and yet how do we know what those issues are? There are very few that will prepare a letter, or speak at one of your Meetings. And people rightly contact customer service, but how well do people articulate the details of the challenges they are having? That can take on many different forms, and the end results remain to be seen.

It was in November of last year, I think, that a close family member of mine was having problems with OMNY in New York. And this individual in using open payments with reduced fare, was finding their payment attempts for the Subway rejected, despite their being in good standing with the bank. This problem came about from a software update that was loaded in order for OMNY to be ready for changes effective in the new year. I raised the issue in

general terms in a Meeting of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, headquartered at Number Two Broadway, New York, NY, 10004, by way of Zoom. And eventually I recommended my family member to visit the customer service center at Penn Station (1, 2, 3, services, A Division, IRT). And my close family member has not any problems paying for the bus system and the Subway after that. I am sure that behind the scenes the issues were being worked on as well. It is not easy navigating New York without the Subway. There are many in New York who get around in various ways, walking, cycling, buses, and in cars. Yet it is that legendary and historic transportation system that is the Subway that truly brings New York together, for residents and visitors alike. For me, a visit to New York would feel incomplete without the Subway, which I pay for by using OMNY with reduced fare.

I really have not heard much about performance values on Clipper 2 lately, it seems like transit boards aren't sharing much about that in their Meetings. I think that they should, in order for the Public to be more informed. It is at Meetings that I obtain the information that I need to move forward. I firmly believe in the importance of going to the source. And this will help to inform the trends going forward. You see, I believe that we are in an era of sea changes, even profoundly so, in which things will be done differently than before. And I am always learning new things, and I share of that as I go along the way.

And yet very few seem to engage deeply on matters of Clipper and fare payment systems in general. And I have used Clipper since the brand's inception in 2010. I did not know about the preceding Translink system, at the time I didn't really see outreach for that. I grew up in the days of the Subway using brass tokens. And I come from four or five generations of users of that historic transportation system that is the Subway. Perhaps some of them might have used the Subway on the opening day of 27 October, 1904, and the fare at the time was five cents. I remember paying tolls on highways with cash, and some of those systems were distance based, and tickets were dispensed.

And how do we get more people interested in using Clipper? Such requires various forms of outreach. Certainly we can practice innovation in our outreach. Recently I was watching some short videos depicting excerpts of a television program called the Soul Train, hosted by Mr Don Cornelius. I was riding on a bus to the laundromat, and I listened to The Sound of Philadelphia (TSOP), by MFSB (1974). At times TSOP was the opening and closing theme of The Soul Train. I vaguely remember the first time I heard TSOP on the radio. It was in early 1974, and I was in the car, and we were driving in Brooklyn. And we passed under an elevated section of the Subway, there might have been a train going over it at the time. If only I could bring in a large group of people, and in the style of the Soul Train dancers, they would pay their way through the new BART fare gates. I would have TSOP playing on a large speaker. You see, when everyone was listening to rock and roll, I was listening to disco and soul. I expound more on matters of the Soul Train in my letter to the BART Board for the General Meeting of 22 January, 2025. This letter can be found in the Meeting Details, under Public Comment, on the BART Legistar calendar. In the letter I share of other things, including a scene from National Lampoon's Animal House (1978), where a deeply philosophical conversation about vegetables takes place. Then again I often share of Mr Gerry Rafferty, who was surely thinking of New York City in working on his songs as well. And more so I refer to BART having the unique distinction of being The Peoples System.

And I hope to be in the Bay Area soon, and then I will have hands on experience in using Clipper 2 in its various forms. Then I will be able to articulate my experiences to you in speaking in your Meetings and in the preparation of letters. Yet most of all I am appreciative of the team, both our MTC group led by Jason Weinstein, and our vendor partners as well. And in this time of challenges I ask that no one "pick on the help", but give the fullest of support to the help instead. I admit I am not surprised that there are problems. This is not a negative reflection on anyone but instead is an acknowledgement of the complexity of the work, that even the best laid plans might not work out as expected. Yet I have found the team leading and performing this work always rising to the occasion, and working through the challenges as they appear. And the extraordinary work being done to solve these challenges does not surprise me in the least. I continue to support the ongoing work of Clipper 2 and I ask of you to share bread with me in that as well. I always try buy bread with crust that is not too hard. I look forward your Meeting where I will have my chance to hear this most important information directly from the source, and to respectfully share my thoughts with you in Public Comment as well.

Thank you.