

# BayPass Referendum

## Introduction

BayPass is a student-initiated fee referendum to provide UC Berkeley students with unlimited rides on all public transit services in the 9-county Bay Area that accept Clipper Cards<sup>1,2</sup>. The referendum was initiated as an expansion of the Clipper BayPass Pilot program, begun in 2022, which witnessed strong support amongst the student body and demonstrated an appetite for more streamlined access to public transit services.

## Background Information

In spring 2023, 91% of the UC Berkeley student survey respondents indicated that they strongly agreed with the following statement “*I support UC Berkeley making the Clipper BayPass available to all students after the conclusion of the Clipper BayPass pilot.*”. By continuing as a participant in BayPass, Berkeley would maintain its partnership with Bay Area public transit agencies in the 9-county Bay Area and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC).<sup>3</sup> This referendum proposes an expansion of the current pilot to provide the BayPass to all enrolled students in addition to their existing transit benefits (i.e., the BayPass would be an add-on to the existing services covered by the ClassPass Fee, which provides AC Transit EasyPass and Bear Transit campus shuttles). The current pilot is funded by regional transportation funding that began in August 2022, for which 12,000 randomly selected UC Berkeley students had their AC Transit EasyPass upgraded to a Clipper BayPass. The current pilot will expire in June 2024.

During the first year of the pilot program (i.e., August 15, 2022 – August 15, 2023), UC Berkeley students took more than 1.25 million rides on Bay Area transit operators (e.g., BART, AC Transit, SF Ferries, Muni, Caltrain, VTA, etc.). UC Berkeley students who received the Clipper BayPass have taken 37% more trips on public transit operators in the Bay Area than their peers who did not receive the Clipper BayPass (i.e., those students that only had the AC Transit EasyPass). This confirms that BayPass significantly increases public transportation use among UC Berkeley students. Choosing transit instead of driving reduces local and regional traffic congestion, local air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and demand for parking. Riding transit also saves students money and lowers personal living expenses versus the costs of driving and parking, and expands mobility access to a 90% car-less student body

The referendum covers the period from Fall 2025 through Summer 2027 (two years).

## Purpose of the fee

If approved, the fee will continue and expand the current BayPass program of unlimited rides all year long to all enrolled students (including the summer) on:

- All public transportation services that accept Clipper (BART, Caltrain, City Coach, County Connection, Dumbarton Express, FAST, Golden Gate Ferry, Golden Gate Transit, Marin Transit, Muni, Petaluma Transit, SamTrans, San Francisco Bay Ferry, Santa Rosa CityBus, SMART, SolTrans, Sonoma County Transit, Tri Delta Transit, Union City Transit, Vine, VTA, WestCAT and Wheels). This includes services across the 9 Bay Area Counties (i.e., Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma counties)

If the BayPass referendum is not approved:

- All students who currently have the BayPass will lose the BayPass but retain their existing access to AC Transit and Bear Transit.
- All students will lack unlimited access to Bay Area public transportation services accessed via Clipper Cards beyond their existing access to AC Transit and Bear Transit.

---

<sup>1</sup> Please note that the Clipper BayPass is not valid for trips on Muni Cable Cars.

<sup>2</sup> A list of the twenty-two transit agencies that accept Clipper Cards is here: [Where To Use | Clipper \(clippercard.com\)](https://www.clippercard.com/WhereToUse).

<sup>3</sup> The 9-county Bay Area is understood as Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma counties.

- All students will continue to access AC Transit and Bear Transit through the existing ClassPass Fee, as the BayPass fee is separate from ClassPass.

If the referendum is not approved, Berkeley students will forego the opportunity to access unlimited transit across the Bay Area.

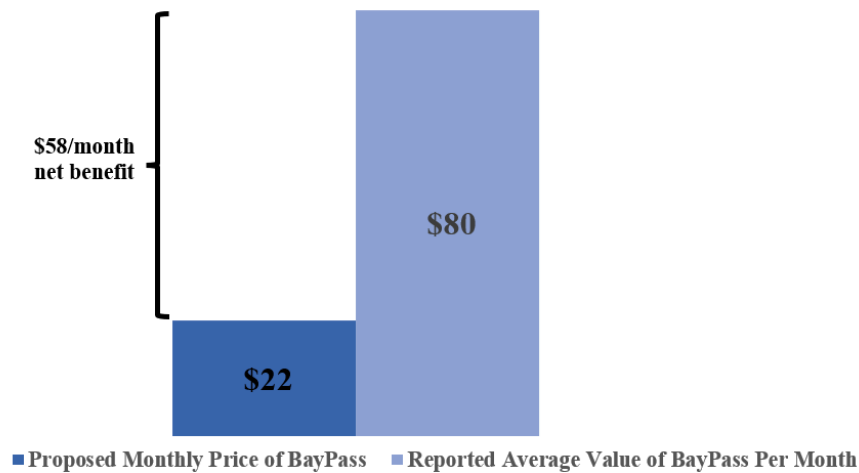
## Breakdown of the fee

The fee is subject to the following costs and conditions:

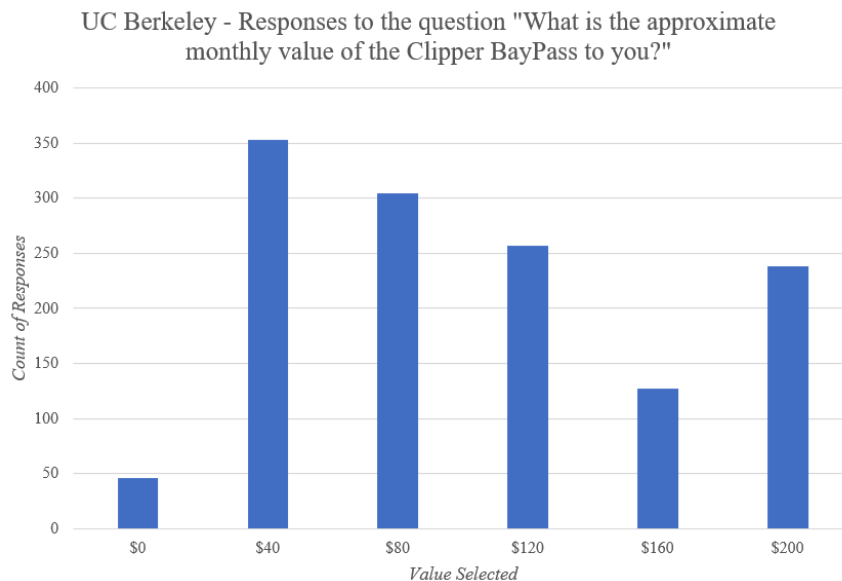
- Collection of the fee will begin in the Fall 2025 semester. It will be a \$124.00 charge per semester for all undergraduate and graduate students, including students in self-supporting degree programs.
- The following table shows proposed fees under the referendum.

Proposed Years 1 and 2				
FY 26 and FY 27				
	Fall	Spring	Total Annually	Summer Only
	Full Time Students	Full Time Students	Full Time Students	Summer Only
BayPass	\$ 82.67	\$ 82.67	\$ 165.34	\$ 41.34
Return to Financial Aid (33.33%)	\$ 41.33	\$ 41.33	\$ 82.66	\$ 20.66
Total Referendum Fee	<b>\$ 124.00</b>	<b>\$ 124.00</b>	<b>\$ 248.00</b>	<b>\$ 62.00</b>

The Spring BayPass remains valid for students who also enroll in Summer sessions; Summer session students who were not enrolled for the previous Spring semester will have a charge equal to half the previous semester's charge. For example, those 2024 summer session students who were not enrolled for spring 2024 will be charged \$62.00. In accordance with campus policy, one-third of all mandatory student-imposed fees are returned to financial aid to help offset the cost of this fee for students who are eligible for campus-based financial aid.



The above graphic compares the average monthly value of BayPass to UC Berkeley students who responded to the Spring 2023 Clipper BayPass survey (\$80) to the proposed monthly price of the BayPass (\$22). As displayed on the graphic, this results in an average monthly net benefit to survey respondents of \$58/month or \$696/year.



Additionally, the above graphic illustrates that nearly all the respondents to the Spring 2023 survey selected monthly values that exceeded the proposed \$22/month BayPass fee. Approximately half of survey respondents indicated that the monthly value of the BayPass to them would be \$120 or more. This suggests that for many UC Berkeley students the BayPass would provide more than approximately \$1,200/year of net benefit.

## Fund Disbursement

The Registrar disburses the funds in the following manner:

- According to UC Policy, 1/3 of the referendum fee is returned to Financial Aid (\$41 dollars semesterly as illustrated in the aforementioned fee breakdown).
- The BayPass portion of the referendum fee is transferred into a discrete liability account. This account is associated with Parking & Transportation.
  - This transfer happens as part of the monthly financial close process and usually goes through the third month of the semester. For example, for the fall semester of 2022, the Registrar transferred the first installment of the Referendum funds at the end of August with the final transfer happening in December.

## Payment to MTC

- The Registrar determines the final official student enrollment numbers by the third month of a semester.
- The Registrar sends notice to MTC indicating the official registration count.
- MTC creates an invoice based on the number provided by the Registrar and submits the invoice to P&T for payment.
- P&T works with campus procurement and disbursements to pay the invoice.
- The invoice is paid with the funds in the same discrete liability account originally established and funded by the Registrar.

## Oversight of the Fee

The Class Pass Program Advisory Committee, an independent committee consisting of representatives assigned by the sitting ASUC President or designee, and the sitting Graduate Assembly President or designee, the administration, students at-large, and MTC, who meet periodically to evaluate the program and ensure that fee monies are properly allocated.

## Ballot Language

The following language will be placed on the Spring 2025 ASUC ballot for a vote of the student body:

Following two years of piloting the Clipper BayPass program, this referendum would extend the Clipper BayPass to all UC Berkeley undergraduate and graduate students, including students in self-supporting degree programs allowing unlimited access to all public transit services in the 9 Bay Area Counties (i.e., Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma counties) that accept Clipper Cards (except San Francisco Muni cable cars), including but not limited to BART, SF Muni, Caltrain, and the San Francisco Bay Ferry. This program will be effective Fall 2025 through Summer 2027, with a \$124.00 per-semester fee and is in addition to the existing Class Pass fee that provides access to AC Transit and Bear Transit. If the BayPass referendum is not approved, undergraduate and graduate students will forego the ability to access unlimited public transit across the Bay Area. Do you approve of this fee?