

**MINUTES  
HYBRID MEETING OF THE  
GENERAL MANAGER’S ACCESS COMMITTEE (GMAC)  
JANUARY 9, 2024**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL and Introduction of Members and Guests**

**GMAC members present:**

|                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Kiran Agarwal (1:37)   | Erika Bruhns, Chair |
| Monique Chapman        | Chonita Chew        |
| Warren Cushman         | Pamela Fadem        |
| Shawn Fong, Vice Chair | Melissa Getz        |
| Sandra Johnson (1:14)  | Daveed Mandell      |
| Jim Robson             | Tanya Washington    |
| Barbara Williams       | Roland Wong         |

**GMAC members absent:**

None.

**Staff:**

Tammy Kylo, Administrative Coordinator  
Mallory Nestor-Brush, Accessible Services Manager  
Kim Ridgeway, Senior Program Specialist  
Robert del Rosario, Director of Service Development and Planning  
Ramakrishna Pochiraju, Executive Director of Planning & Engineering  
Michael Eshleman, Service Planning Manager  
Crystal Wang, Transportation Planner  
Claudia Burgos, Director of Legislative Affairs and Community Relations  
Diann Castleberry, External Affairs Representative  
Nichele Laynes, Marketing & Communications Director  
Beverly Greene, Executive Director of External Affairs, Marketing & Communications  
Debora Garcia, Customer Service Manager  
Dan Talbott, Customer Service  
Chris Durant, Assistant Director of Maintenance

**Guests:**

Vice President Diann Shaw, Board of Directors  
Allison Quach, Transit Transformation Coordinator, MTC  
Natalie Maxwell, TheCIL  
Bob Holloway

**3. ORDER OF AGENDA**

The order of agenda was approved.

#### 4. CONSENT CALENDAR

##### 4.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Getz/Fong approved the December 12, 2023, GMAC meeting minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES – 12: Agarwal, Bruhns, Chapman, Chew, Cushman, Fong, Getz, Johnson, Mandell, Robson, Washington, Williams

ABSTENTIONS – 2: Fadem, Wong

ABSENT – 0

#### 5. REGULAR UPDATES

##### 5.A. Service Planning and Realign Update.

Michael Eshleman, Service Planning Manager, reported that staff is still focusing on preparing for the Realign Project and will have a fuller presentation for Realign at the committee's next meeting. The next round of recommendations will be brought to the Board of Directors on January 24, 2024, and include a call for a public hearing to be held on March 13, 2024. This will be the engagement period that Staff will seek input on, based on feedback received between November 1<sup>st</sup> and December 13<sup>th</sup>. Staff will then bring the proposal to the Board for consideration and approval in April 2024, with implementation in August 2024.

Staff is also engaging with various commissions and bodies that are specifically tailored for people with disabilities, including a meeting with the Oakland Mayor's Commission on Disabilities.

**Public Comment:** Natalie Maxwell, Center for Independent Living, asked how the changes to AC Transit routes will affect paratransit, since they have to be in  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of a fixed route bus for riders to utilize paratransit. Michael replied that the analysis will be performed in the next stage of the Realign project.

**Public Comment:** – Bob Holloway, Berkeley resident who is blind, needs weekend bus service to the Berkeley hills. He is requesting bus service for the Berkeley hills 7 days a week and restoring service as it was before the pandemic.

Daveed Mandell commented that it would be helpful to the blind community to have verbal description (turn-by-turn) of the routes and stop changes. Regarding the tradeoffs of service coverage versus frequency, many people want both and feel they deserve both. They pay tax dollars, and they feel that AC Transit service has been less than acceptable. There are too many transfers and headways are too long, and they spend hours waiting for buses that never come. Bus stops are too far apart for people with disabilities to walk. Daveed is also asking if the Realign team is going to meet with the Berkeley Commission on Disability. Mallory Nestor-Brush, Accessible Service Manager responded that Michael Eshelman provided a draft of the turn-by-turn directions for staff to review. Outreach has also been scheduled with the Berkeley chapter of the California Council for the Blind on February 10, 2024.

##### 5.B. Fixed Route Regional Coordination.

Allison Quach, MTC, gave an update of the regional coordination work that MTC is leading related to transit and transit transformation. The Transit Transformation Action Plan (TAP) was developed

back in 2020 and 2021 by the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force, which MTC convened in the spring and summer of 2020 to assist in the development of a regional response to address the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on transit systems in the Bay area. In 2023 MTC adopted the Regional Network Management (RNM) Framework to achieve near-term and longer-range transit mobility goals. The update today focuses on where MTC is in terms of implementing this action plan. The TAP has 5 desired outcomes in these categories: Fares and Payment, Customer Information, Transit Network, Accessibility and Funding. Ms. Quach summarized the ongoing activities below:

- Fares & Payments
  - Clipper BayPass
  - No-Cost and Reduced Cost Interagency Transfer Pilot
- Customer Information
  - Regional Mapping & Wayfinding Standards Development
  - Regional Mapping & Wayfinding Standard and Implementation
- Bus Transit Priority
  - Transit Priority on Arterials: Bus Accelerated Infrastructure Delivery (BusAID)
  - Near-Term Transit Priority on I-80: Bay Bridge Forward
- Transit Planning
  - Setting up Regional Network Management
  - Rail Partnership & Governance Assessment
  - Sub-Regional Transit Integration Efficiency Studies
  - Transit 2050+ Connected Network Planning
  - Transit Equity
  - Improve Real-Time Transit Data
- Accessibility
  - Regional paratransit trips
  - Integrate ADA-paratransit services on Next Generation Clipper
  - Standardize eligibility practices for Clipper RTC and ADA-paratransit.
- Funding
  - Initial funding identified for dedicated RNM staff
  - Efforts underway to identify new funding for transit

Warren Cushman commented that it is important to think about how these processes impact transportation at a local level, including fares, clipper, paratransit and scheduling. Warren also commented on State legislation that would implement sweeping changes, including an idea to consolidate transportation agencies. Warren suggested adding this item to the GMAC agenda twice a year for updates.

Roland Wong asked if MTC considered the Bay Pass for the disabled. Allison Quach, MTC, replied, at this time Bay Pass is a pilot program that is being evaluated. Phase one is for university programs, students and affordable housing residents and is being analyzed for the effectiveness of the Bay Pass for populations in terms of supporting transit trips and mobility in the Bay Area. The Bay Pass for other populations is something that will be discussed and evaluated as part of the program in the future. Allison also added that the no cost and reduce cost transfer pilot, which will be launching later this year with next generation Clipper, is something that will benefit all transit riders in terms of

making transfer policies between agencies in the region more consistent. It would reduce costs for riders taking combined trips between, for example, a local bus agency and rail.

Jim Robson asked if there are future meeting dates at MTC that the public can attend. Allison responded in the positive and stated that the meeting dates are on the MTC website: <https://mtc.ca.gov/meetings-events>.

### **5.C. Transit Supportive Design Guidelines.**

Crystal Wang, Transportation Planner, gave an overview of the Transit Supportive Design Guidelines. AC Transit is currently in the process of developing Transit Supportive Design Guidelines which are intended to help cities and jurisdictions understand the operational needs of fixed route transit and paratransit, especially in coordination with other street state projects, like bike lane and pedestrian safety projects. Ultimately, this is meant to be a reference document and guide for planners and engineers to use when designing projects on the streets where fixed route buses and paratransit operate. This current effort is an update to AC Transit's 2018 Multimodal Design Guidelines which provided guidance on designs that would both support safe bus operations and reduce bus/bike conflicts. These updates will address the following:

- Guidelines that accommodate Paratransit Service
- Facilities for passenger comfort and safety at bus stops
- Transit operations improvements; Bus/bike separation
- Other design features that promote transit service (i.e., layover space, transit centers, transit lanes)

Staff has given this same introductory presentation at interagency liaison meetings with various cities and at a few different bike and pedestrian advisory committees, and will continue presenting at and getting feedback from those groups and a variety of other advisory bodies. The first technical advisory committee was held about a month ago and consisted of representatives from all local jurisdictions and counties. During that meeting, Staff gathered feedback on some different bus stop and bike lane configurations. The example provided includes a bus stop with physical separation between the bus and the bikeway. Since everything is sidewalk level, it's more accessible and easier to navigate for people using mobility devices.

Warren Cushman commented that he would like to see robust outreach to the disability and senior communities. Crystal replied that Staff intends on doing that, as well as come back to the GMAC for feedback and input.

Daveed Mandell voiced concern about the shared space and raised plot sidewalk at bus stops. Shared streets where you have bike lanes and pedestrian lanes close together with car lanes, should use raised trapezoidal markers to distinguish the bike lanes from the pedestrian pathway, so that a blind person will know not to go into the bike lane.

### **5.D. Customer Service Quarterly Report.**

Nichele Laynes, Marketing Communications Director, introduced Debora Garcia, Customer Service Manager. Debora presented the Customer Service Update for October through December 2023, which highlighted the following:

- Call volumes and Service level returned to normal levels, and remained steady throughout the end of the year.
- Top 5 Call Disposition:
  - Travel information continues to be the main reason for customers contacting the Call Center.
  - Trip planning calls averaged 441 per month.
  - Complaint/Commendations average 230 per month
  - No Answered average 192 calls per month
  - Fare info and questions remained small with only 49 per month.
- RTC Applications
  - 515 RTC applications were processed this quarter.
  - Outreach events were held at OUSD Young Adult Program and Career Transition Services Faire, and the California School of the Deaf.

Daveed Mandell commented that he is happy that there is an effort being made to train customer service agents regarding wayfinding especially for people who are blind or have low vision. Using Google Maps to give directions is really a great step forward. Daveed has volunteered to assist with the training if needed.

#### **5.E. Review of Quarterly ADA Complaints.**

The Committee reviewed the Quarterly ADA Complaints, which compared ADA Complaints in 2nd Quarter 22/23 to 2nd Quarter 23/24. Tammy reminded the committee that all complaints are answered within 5 business days. If there is a driver related ADA complaint, the Superintendent pulls the video and a conference with the operator is requested.

#### **5.E. Review Ramp Road Call Report.**

The Committee reviewed the Road Call report for December 1 – December 31, 2023. There were a total of five (5) road calls; all chargeable (meaning is was a mechanical failure) and all passed the pre-trip inspection.

Pam Fadem commented that this is not a lot road calls, and thanked the bus operators for cycling ramps. Pam also stated that although they have been trained, sometimes drivers don't always manually deploy ramps.

## **6. STANDING REPORTS**

### **6.A. Chair's Report**

None.

### **6.B. Board Liaison Report**

Diane Shaw, Board President, stated that the next Board of Director's meeting is Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>.

**6.C. Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) PAPCO Report**

None.

**6.D. Service Review Advisory Committee (SRAC) Report**

None.

**6.E. GMAC/Veteran Bus Operator Meeting Report**

Kim Ridgeway, Senior Program Specialist, reported that the December GMAC/Veteran Bus Operator meeting was cancelled due to lack of volunteers. She stated that the next meet up is Thursday, January 18th, and she has 2 volunteers, Jim and Erica, who will report back to the Committee in February.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**8. MEMBER/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Erica asked when Committee Members will know if they were reappointed. Tammy replied they will be notified via email in mid-February and any new appointments will start in March.

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next GMAC Meeting will be held Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. This will be a hybrid meeting.

Future Agenda Items:

- BRT Project Traffic Safety Features [Requested by Daveed Mandell on March 8, 2022]
- Update on Accessibility on Tempo (BRT) [Requested by Warren Cushman on July 11, 2023]
- Review “Ride with Kindness” and “Riders Guide” brochures [Requested by Pam Fadem on October 10, 2023]
- Review of website access [Requested by Warren Cushman on December 12, 2023]

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Tammy Kylo

Secretary to the Committee