

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 10/8/2025

Staff Report No. 25-469

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Salvador Llamas, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer
SUBJECT: Employee and Non-Employee Out-of-State Travel

BRIEFING ITEM

AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST: ☐

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving the Semi-Annual Employee and Non-Employee Out-of-State Travel Report for the second half of FY 2024-25.

Staff Contact:
Chris Andrichak, Chief Financial Officer

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - High-Performing Workforce
Initiative - Employee Recruitment, Training and Retention

Employee travel is necessary and/or useful for both employees and the District. Having employees travel to attend in-person training enhances their knowledge and work performance, and conferences and industry events benefit both the employee and the District's business and profile.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

The travel activity shown was included in the FY 2024-25 Operating Budget.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

This report details travel that occurred during the period of January 1, 2025, to June 30, 2025, and a summary of the conferences/workshops, attendees, purposes, and costs:

Several employees had travel occurrences during October and December 2024. These events were not reflected in the previous report due to the delayed submission of expenses. Accordingly, they have been incorporated into the current report.

APTA International Rodeo - Austin, Texas

AC Transit participated in the APTA International Bus Rodeo held in Austin, Texas. The Rodeo is both a spirited competition and a valuable learning experience, bringing together bus operators and maintenance

teams from across the country. Participants have the opportunity to showcase their skills, engage in training sessions, and connect with other transit professionals in a collaborative setting.

AC Transit was proudly represented by eight employees: Sean Burr, Marvin DeLeon, Moises Frias, Ronald Lee, Shubo Liu, Alvin Tan, Ricardo Vega, and William Tonis. Each employee took on a distinct role at the event. Ricardo Vega served as Team Manager, coordinating and supporting the team. Sean Burr, Shubo Liu and Alvin Tan demonstrated their technical expertise as competitors in the Maintenance Team event, while Marvin DeLeon contributed as a coach and supervisor to Moises Frias. In addition to supporting the competition, William Tonis attended conference sessions on cutting-edge topics, including AI-driven safety initiatives that are already showing promise in reducing collisions and overall risk. This year's Rodeo provided both a platform to highlight AC Transit's talent and an opportunity for employees to bring back new insights and best practices to the District. The total cost of participation was \$29,231.

APTA Mobility Conference - Austin, Texas

The APTA Mobility Conference in Austin, Texas, brought together transit professionals to explore the evolving challenges and opportunities facing bus and paratransit systems. The event featured specialty workshops, the APTA Bus Display, the Products and Services Showcase, and technical tours designed to highlight innovative practices across the industry. AC Transit was represented by two employees, Sal Llamas as chair of the APTA bus operations committee and Manjit Sooch, who participated as a speaker, and brought back valuable insights for the District. The total cost of attendance was \$5,266.

APTA Legal Conference - Phoenix, Arizona

AC Transit was represented at the APTA Legal Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, where industry leaders and legal professionals gathered to share insights on emerging issues affecting transit. Aimee Steele served as a panelist, speaking on Legal Operations and contributing her expertise to discussions with peers from across the country. The total cost of attendance was \$2,350.

APTA Safety & Risk Conference - Atlanta, Georgia

The APTA Safety & Risk Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, provided a valuable opportunity for transit professionals to learn directly from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on newly implemented safety rules and regulations. The event also highlighted advancements in safety-related technologies, industry standards, and technical assistance programs designed to strengthen transit operations. AC Transit was represented by Marla Blagg, who served as a presenter and shared her expertise on critical safety issues with peers and industry leaders. The total cost of attendance was \$3,502.

ARCHES Symposium - Ontario, Canada

The ARCHES Symposium in Ontario, Canada, focused on California's emerging hydrogen hub and the role of zero-emission technology in advancing sustainable transit. The event highlighted opportunities for collaboration and innovation in clean energy adoption across the industry.

AC Transit was represented by Ryan Lau, who attended on behalf of the District. The total cost of attendance

was \$806.

Mandatory TSI SMS Principles Training - Austin, Texas

The Mandatory TSI SMS Principles training, offered by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Transportation Safety Institute, provides transit professionals with instruction on federal regulations and safety management systems under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). AC Transit was represented by Marla Blagg, who completed the training to enhance the District's safety management practices. The total cost of attendance was \$1,492.

MPact Transit Conference - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The MPact Transit Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, focused on the integration of transit, connected mobility options, land use, and development to create more livable and accessible communities. The conference also explored how effective wayfinding and communication strategies can enhance and encourage transit usage. AC Transit was represented by David Rossman-Robinson, who participated in sessions and workshops to gather insights for improving the District's transit operations. The total cost of attendance was \$2,269.

Smartsheet Conference - Seattle, Washington

The Smartsheet Conference in Seattle, Washington, provided training and insights on effectively utilizing the Smartsheet application, with a focus on improving workflows within the Payroll Department. AC Transit was represented by Carol Askew-Sanders, who attended to gain knowledge and strategies for optimizing Smartsheet use within the District. The total cost of attendance was \$4,341.

TRB Annual Conference - Washington, D.C.

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., is a premier event covering all transportation modes. The conference attracts policymakers, administrators, practitioners, researchers, and representatives from government, industry, and academia to discuss emerging trends, research, and best practices in transportation. AC Transit was represented by Michelle Schurig and William Tonis, who participated in sessions and workshops to gather insights applicable to the District's operations and strategic planning. The total cost of attendance was \$7,550.

2025 P-Card Conference - New Orleans, Louisiana

The 2025 P-Card Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, focused on procurement best practices, research, and presentations on topics related to procurement card programs. AC Transit was represented by Maria Young, who served as a presenter, sharing her expertise with peers from other transit agencies. The total cost of attendance was \$2,319.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

There are no notable advantages or disadvantages to this report.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

This report does not recommend an action.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

Employee Out-of-State Travel, FY 2024-25 (July - December)

ATTACHMENTS:

Employee Out-of-State Travel, FY 2024-25 (January-June)

Prepared by:

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Approved/Reviewed by:

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