

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL and Introduction of Members and Guests

GMAC members present:

Kiran Agarwal	Erika Bruhns, Chair
Chonita Chew	Pamela Fadem
Shawn Fong, Vice Chair	Melissa Getz
Andrea Johnson	Roland Wong
Barbara Williams	

GMAC members absent:

Monique Chapman (excused)	Warren Cushman
Sandra Johnson (excused)	Daveed Mandell
James Robson (excused)	

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
David Berman, Senior Transportation Planner/Realign Project Manager
Diann Castleberry, External Affairs Representative
Nichele Laynes, Director of Marketing/Communications/Customer Services
Dan Talbott, Administrative Coordinator
Debora Garcia, Customer Service Manager
Chris Durant, Assistant Director of Maintenance
David Wilkins, Director of Bus Rapid Transit
Andrei Pasternak, Marketing Administrator

Guests:

Diane Shaw, Vice President, Board of Directors
H.E. Christian Peoples, Board of Directors
Lucky Maxwell, TheCIL

3. ORDER OF AGENDA

The order of agenda was approved.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Chew/Fadem approved the May 14, 2024, GMAC meeting minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES – 9: Agarwal, Bruhns, Chew, Fadem, Fong, Getz, A. Johnson, Williams, Wong
 ABSTENTIONS – 0
 ABSENT – 5: Chapman, Cushman, S. Johnson, Mandell, Robson,

5. REGULAR UPDATES

5.A. Service Planning Update.

Robert del Rosario, Director of Service Development and Planning, reported that there are limited resources, with both operators and funding, but the District is committed to providing service reliability improvements. One effort is meeting the schedules promised to the public, which includes making sure schedules are realistic for bus operators and the time points. With these limited resources, the District is unable to do large scale changes, unless there are service reductions, which is not what Staff is proposing. The biggest piece of the August sign up, which goes into effect August 11th, is the return of supplementary school service, which is always turned off in June for the summer break. Many schools don't allow access onto school property during the summertime, so that service, which are the 600 routes, is turned off until school returns in the fall. The remaining changes are reliability improvements for customers and operators by increasing running times and/or layover times. There were also some minor changes such as fixing the end of lines so that they're closer to restroom access for the bus operators.

Finally, Robert spoke about the issue of driver shortage and recruitment; stating that AC Transit, compared to many of the peer agencies, is doing a really good job of recruiting bus operators. The District has developed advertising campaigns for recruiting which can be seen on the buses, the website, social media, other media channels, and through job fairs. Though driver shortage is a worldwide issue, AC Transit is doing well in recruitment.

Shawn Fong asked Robert if there were statistics on how many routes are canceled in a month, and if its due to driver shortage or something else.

Robert responded that there are service key performance indicators. Even with limited resources, recent reports show about 96% service operated. That's still a significant chunk of service missing that can affect lines, but it has been an upward trend.

Diane Shaw, Board of Directors, stated that quite a few operators were hired recently. The challenge right now is that a lot of operators are retiring. There is a detailed report the Board of Directors receives, available on the website, that talks about how long operators are employed, when they retire, etc. There are also reports that go into specific data on which runs are not being fulfilled due to operator shortages. Diane encouraged the Committee to look at the Board agendas to get information on these types of issues and attend Board meetings in which they can ask questions of the Board and Staff.

5.B. Review August Service Changes.

This agenda item was combined with 5.A. (see above).

5.C. Realign Update.

David Berman, Senior Transportation Planner and Realign Project Manager, and Diane Castleberry, External Affairs Representative and Deputy Project Manager, gave a status update on the Realign

Project. David began by restating the Realign Project's equity goals which include protecting and supporting mobility for people of color, low-income people, and the disabled community. The network is changing because, due to the pandemic, travel patterns have changed, and ridership is still at about 74% of pre pandemic levels. There is also diminished revenue from fare boxes and sales tax returns. So ultimately this project will rearrange bus service based on today's ridership patterns.

In March, the AC Transit Board of Directors directed Staff to extend the process by 6 months, which would push implementation to March 2025. The Board also directed staff to refine the plan to bolster trunk service and service in equity priority communities, which is where people tend to ride transit more frequently, and review how feasible implementation timelines were. Staff analyzed all of the information and feedback and began by proposing adding back frequency to some lines, including Tempo, 6, 18, 20, 51, 97 and NI. The approach included improving reliability on both a customer and operator focused basis, which looked at line frequency and schedule adjustments.

Staff also provided a draft on the potential paratransit impacts. Paratransit coverage as the footprint of service was frozen in 2019; so, if that area was unfrozen, the coverage would correspond to the service AC Transit runs today. The impact on paratransit will be analyzed based the final realign plan and design. This information will be provided at a future GMAC meeting.

Diann Castleberry stated that Staff is going to the Board August 7th to set the public hearing dates, which are currently proposed for September 9, 10 and 11. Staff will also introduce a draft final plan, which will incorporate the kind of refinements this Committee saw back in May and June. There will also be a public comment period opening in August, and if approved, will close on September 11th. The Board is expected to vote on the final Realign plan in October. Diann concluded by stating that this information will be seen around the service area, including on buses, at community events, on the website and in newspaper ads. This next round of outreach will be the final opportunity to weigh in on the draft plan before it goes to a final plan to the Board in October.

Melissa Getz stated that if service is at 74% of the pre pandemic levels, that implies that it could get to 100%. She is part of the 26% that has not returned to ridership because there is no longer a bus on her street she can utilize. For those in the 26%, it's not that they have not returned because they don't want to ride the bus, it's because they can't.

Shawn Fong stated that she, too, is concerned about the paratransit impacts and is looking forward to the updates after the data is produced. She also stated that she is grateful AC Transit is looking at extending line 200, as a vastly developed area of Southern Alameda County currently has no bus service and no ADA Paratransit service. This is an area that the local city program has been backfilling for transportation needs for seniors and people with disabilities.

5.D. Overview of Accessibility and Traffic Safety on BRT.

Mallory Nestor-Brush, Accessible Service Manager, gave a brief background on the efforts that were taken to construct the BRT. When the project started, approximately 2012, Staff created a joint BRT Access and Functional Needs Subcommittee, in conjunction with AC Transit's Accessibility Advisory Committee, the City of Oakland's Mayor's Commission on Disabilities, and Alameda CTC's Paratransit Advisory Planning Committee. This was a large group that had the opportunity to review and comment on the 35%, 65%, and 100% design of the BRT stations, both curbside and

median stations, the vehicles, ticket vending machines and accessibility features on each item of the design. The disability community within Oakland, and throughout our service area, really did have an impact and ensured that we had the opportunity to make items accessible. AC Transit opened BRT in 2020.

David Wilkins, Director of Sustainability and BRT, gave an overview of the Bus Rapid Transit, now call Tempo; the service that runs along East 14th and International Boulevard from downtown Oakland to the San Leandro BART Station. David reviewed the key accessibility and safety improvements along the corridor and well as safety improvements at the stations. David also gave an overview of the accessible ticket vending machines (TVMs), the Tempo bus plan with accessibility features and the electronic bus arrival system. David also gave an overview of the non-standard tactile strip across sidewalks, and the directional and wayfinding signage. The signalized intersections and pedestrian crossings, which includes locating tone during “Don’t Walk” phase, vibro-tactile indication, raised arrows, which indicates the direction of crosswalks.

Chonita Chew stated that it is difficult to get to the platform due to potholes and people with mobility devices can’t even cross the street. Chonita also stated that she does not feel safe standing on the platform. David replied that he is not aware of any accident on the platform where any individuals got hurt, but the reality is that the safety measures for getting onto the platform are designed for accessibility and individuals with mobility challenges. Regarding the potholes, that is the jurisdiction of the City and Caltrans. When construction of the project was finished, AC Transit had repaved virtually the entire corridor. Once the project was complete, the streets were turned back over to the cities and Caltrans to maintain the roads. The committee thanked David for the presentation.

5.E. Review/Approve GMAC Top Priorities 2024.

Kim Ridgeway presented the GMAC Top Priorities and asked if there were any edits or questions. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the Top Priorities for 2024/2025.

MOTION: Fong/Getz & Agarwal approved the GMAC Top Priorities for 2024/2025. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES – 9: Agarwal, Bruhns, Chew, Fadem, Fong, Getz, A. Johnson, Williams, Wong

ABSTENTIONS – 0

ABSENT – 5: Chapman, Cushman, S. Johnson, Mandell, Robson,

5.F. Review Ramp Road Call Report.

The Committee reviewed the Road Call report for June 1 – June 30, 2024. There were a total of four (4) road calls; all were chargeable (meaning a mechanical failure) and all passed the pre-trip inspection.

Melissa Getz asked how many road calls there were the previous month since the June meeting was cancelled. Chris Durant, Assistant Director of Maintenance, responded that there were four for the month of May.

Pam Fadem thanked Chris and the Maintenance Department for their hard work to keep the number of road calls to a minimum.

5.G. Review of Graphics Refresh Project.

Andrei Pasternak, Marketing Administrator, presented the Graphics Refresh Project. He showed examples of graphics before the redesign, which illustrated some inconsistencies and the issues with accessibility standards. The goal is to update and refresh regularly used rider information and graphics. The Customer Service Satisfaction Survey also showed that Staff had room for improvement in terms of raising awareness about communication channels. The design updates highlighting the added consistency, color palettes and accessibility improvements. Design elements were simplified, color systems developed for brand consistency, and all elements were reviewed for accessible compliance. This refresh provides more white space for information, clearer layouts, and a consistent look across channels so that rider can more easily identify official district information, including accessibility standards with color contrast, fonts, type, size, and language translations.

Committee members were excited to see the changes, stating that the information is clear and easy to read.

6. STANDING REPORTS**6.A. Chair's Report**

None.

6.B. Board Liaison Report

None.

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

Chonita Chew reported that PAPCO conducted Elections of Officers; Sylvia Stadmire and Sandra J. Johnson were, once again, elected to Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. The Committee also received an update on the Alameda CTC San Pablo Avenue Bus Lanes and Bike Lanes Project and Approved the Program Plans for fiscal year 24/25.

6.D. East Bay Paratransit Access Committee (EBPAC) Report

Kim Ridgeway gave a brief report on behalf of Warren Cushman who was absent from today's meeting.

The EBPAC met Tuesday, July 2nd and received the Broker's Report from General Manager Cyndi Lopez, which consists of key performance indicators for 3rd quarter FY 23/24 compared to the same time period of the previous fiscal year. The Committee also received a very thorough review of the eligibility process from Quality Assurance Manager Jasher Nowland. The next EBPAC meeting is Tuesday, September 3rd at 12:30 and is also a hybrid meeting.

6.E. GMAC/Veteran Bus Operator Meet Up Report

Kim Ridgeway reported that the June 20th Meet up was cancelled due to lack of volunteers. There will be no July meet up. The next meet up is scheduled for Thursday, August 15th. Kim will email the Committee to request volunteers in late July.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

8. MEMBER/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chonita Chew announced that the USOAC Annual Healthy Living Festival will be Thursday, September 26th at the Oakland Zoo. She will send Tammy the save the date info, vendor and sponsorship information, and volunteer information to send to the committee.

Tammy Kylo reminded the Committee that there is no August GMAC meeting.

Erika Bruhns reported that there will be no service on Solano Avenue on September 8, 2024 from 10 am – 5 pm due to the annual Solano Stroll.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & NEXT MEETING DATE

The next GMAC Meeting will be held Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. This will be a hybrid meeting.

Future Agenda Items:

- Review of website access [Requested by Warren Cushman on December 12, 2023]
- Discussion on travel training/orientation and mobility [Requested by Warren Cushman on February 13, 2024]

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Tammy Kylo

Secretary to the Committee