

City of Richmond – AC Transit ILC

July 27, 2023 Meeting Notes

1. Opening

a. Roll Call/Welcome and introductions

- i. Called to Order at 9:10
- ii. Attendees:, Mayor Eduardo Martinez, Director Beckles, and Director Peebles

b. Announcement/Public Comments - None

c. Notes from Previous Meeting

2. New Discussion Items

a. Transit Supportive Design Guidelines

Nathan Landau: I'm going to be talking about the transit supportive design guidelines project that we've kicked off. AC Transit approved multimodal design guidelines in 2018, these guidelines have done some good but also been misunderstood. Why do we need these guidelines? These are broader, they include paratransit, bus stop facilities, transit centers and layover space. This kind of shows what we're going to cover. this plan is happening in a multimodal context, and we understand that very deeply and we're always working with these things. Moving on to outreach, we'll be talking to ac transit staff, the advisory committee, also reaching out to disabled and senior representative groups, as well as bicycle and pedestrian advisory committees. There will be about 20 members and aiming to have the first meeting in early/mid-September. This is the timeline we've developed. We're pleased to be making these guidelines and hopefully creating a framework.

Mayor Martinez: I know in Downtown Oakland they have traffic light set up where traffic in one direction goes, then the other, and pedestrians go. I find that actually speeds up traffic because people don't wait and wait, so is something like that part of the design?

Nathan Landau: The signals are going to be a separate effort, the signal are very important and having them work for transit is very important. There will actually be a presentation to the Board about Transit Signal Priority next month. This project is more of an infrastructure project on roads and streets. It's surrounded by bus shelter work and signals but we're not trying to design rapid transit with this project specifically.

Mayor Martinez: Once you get this policy in place will it happen all at once or in sections?

Nathan Landau: The idea is to give an overarching framework for stops and for paratransit, which we haven't done in prior guidelines. It affects the whole district but we'll work with Richmond on specific street designs.

Mayor Martinez: Lina, is our planning department working with AC Transit?

Lina Velasco: We are working with AC Transit and keeping up to date.

Nathan Landau: Denee Evans will be Richmond's correspondent.

Director Peebles: We don't have the authority to impose any of these things, but we are presenting it as a good idea.

Mayor Martinez: So, for this to be implemented around the East Bay you'd have to have every city agree?

Nathan Landau: We're not asking cities to approve; we're just presenting our policy frameworks and once they're implemented we can come back and have further discussion. We want to let the city advisory committees know and give them a chance for input.

b. Grant Applications, AHSC Program

Lina Velasco: I'm here to share an update on the AHSC project the city has proposed. As folks may know, the Affordable Housing Sustainable Cities program was administered by the California Strategic Growth Council with the goal of putting affordable housing next to transit. We applied last round and were not selected so we have taken feedback, modified it, and resubmit. The first of the included projects would be the Hacienda safe routes, which would provide improved safety on the way to the Bart station. That will be achieved by installing ADA ramps at corners, enhancing pedestrian lighting at sidewalks leading to the station, and doing enhanced crossing at Marina Way and MacDonald Ave to connect the residential communities north of the Bart Station.

Director Beckles: When you say bike detection what do you mean by that?

Lina Velasco: It's usually a camera that detects a bicyclist and lets them pass. Another project is the TCC Neighborhood complete streets. This would include signal upgrades and going from 2 lanes to 1 lane in each direction. There's also the Richmond wellness trail. We have worked with ac transit to do Transit signal priority on MacDonald and we've leveraged 1.1 mil.

Traffic signal upgrades, bus stop improvement focused on the Richmond greenway. We've completed phase 1 of the wellness trail, which was adding a bicycle boulevard. The project also includes funding for BART project component. Improvements to the fare gates and using the new capacity trains. We submitted an application in April and announcements are anticipated August 30. We'll know in about 3 weeks if we are being offered funding for this specific project.

Mayor Martinez: Who are the strategic growth council? governs the entire state?

Lina Velasco: They're representatives from different agencies, including the California National Resources agencies, the state parks. I believe they're appointed by the governor's office. There are several programs they award under the way they were established.

c. Low and No Emissions Bus and Facilities Grant

Ryan Lau: AC transit was recently awarded a 2.5 million dollar grant. Its another big step forward. We currently have a fleet of 58 reduced emission vehicles and this grand will let us buy 25? More vehicles, moving us toward our goal of zero emissions by 2040. A new training enter is the next logical step for us, including a raised catwalk that assists with construction. It also implements augmented reality in training and helps our trainers leverage their skills all across the district without having to physically be all over.

Director Beckles: We as AC Transit are leading the country in terms of climate goals correct?

Ryan Lau: I'd say . use hydrogen to pass over the fuel cell, so its 30 hydrogen fuel cell and 28 battery electric.

Salvador Llamas: I'm happy to answer any questions about the zero emissions busses, we'll be getting more later this year.

Director Beckles: Is there a chance of lowering emissions even more because you know we don't have much time?

Salvador Llamas: Currently about 10% of our fleet is zero emissions, but we're still ahead of a lot of other transit agencies in the state so there is a possibility that we can reach this goal before 2040. We'd place approximately 50 buses per year, but we have to make sure to keep funding.

3. Update on Past Items

a. AC Transit Service Update

Carissa Lee: I'm giving an overview of our service planning and performance updates. The purpose of this presentation is to go through what routes go through the city of Richmond and ... The routes in red show routes that run every 12 minutes (72R), dark blue runs about every 30 minutes and light blue runs every 60 minutes. We also have some night service routes and Transbay routes that take people from contra costa county to the salesforce transit center in San Francisco. Note that the line 7 will have a change starting August 6. Taking a look at Ridership you'll observe that most routes have seen an increase in ridership, which reflects our overall ridership trends. This next graph shows

our overall ridership since December 2019, there have been a lot of bumps in the road, but we are slowly but steadily increasing.

Director Beckles: A rider from d3 asked about bringing back the H line as a trial. What was the H line? I guess it was one of the Transbay lines?

Michael Eshlemen: Yeah, the H was a Transbay line, it wasn't one of the high ridership lines and it overlaps a lot with the 7. I understand a lot of operators really love Transbay shifts because it lets them get higher pay. We're trying to figure out a balance of robust local service and Transbay service.

Mayor Martinez: I've noticed that Sunday service is the lowest, do you know why this is?

Michael Eshlemen: our weekend ridership rebound is a little bit different than weekdays in general. We don't run as many commuter lines. Every bus is equipped with an automatic passenger counter, so we know where and how many people are getting on and off.

b. Realign Update

David Berman: Right now, we are in phase 2 which is the guiding principles, which takes information from our research phase. We are trying to finalize these principles so we can move forward, shooting for a final board decision in April 2024 and implementing in August 2024. We took market analysis, survey information, origin-destination information and service assessment to create these guiding principles as well as feedback from our board. There have been fewer vehicle trips made through AC Transit overall, but Richmond is an exception to that, it's actually shown growth. In terms of travel patterns most trips starting in our service area end in our service area. Bus trips tend to be extra local and stay within a smaller geography. We also looked at productivity, and what you'll see is it generally follows density. When we deliver high quality service it is used well but we also see there is room for growth. Bus ridership is more peak focused than overall travel demand, partly because of the school day.

Ryan Lau: Realign depends a lot on reaching out with the community. Engagement phase 1 was the survey promotions, posted in a variety of ways. I'm pleased to report that we've collected over 15,000 survey responses. It was offered in various languages. The surveys collected roughly reflect our ridership by geography. I want to thank the Richmond community for promoting the survey

Director Beckles: Is Northern Alameda Berkeley?

David Berman: Berkeley, Oakland, and Emeryville.

Director Beckles: What's the 21% unknown?

David Berman: That's people who didn't provide their zip code. Providing some takeaways, people are taking the bus less compared to pre-pandemic but for the same reasons. People prefer midday service. We have seen the population change based on a declining population and an aging population. Customers value frequent service but we have to consider tradeoffs. This brings us to our 3 guiding principles that we will continue sharing with our community to make sure these are the right focuses. First is equity, with this principle were trying to provide the greatest network for the greatest number of people focusing on low-income households and areas. The next principle, in no particular order, is reliability. We are making progress with operator hiring so that we will be able to provide more reliable service and deliver more trips that we've promised. Our third principle is frequency, which was the number 1 thing people requested. However, not everyone lives near a frequent line and with our limited resources it takes a lot of balance. This could mean having a high frequency route in every area of our district not just where there is high ridership.

Ryan Lau: we're now on phase 2 of outreach. You'll see these ad cards on the bus. As David Berman mentioned we have these 3 guiding principles you can learn more about on our project website (actransit.org/realign). We're soliciting feedback from our community to see if there's anything else people would like to emphasize as we update our service. There are a lot of both in person and online events to collect feedback. We'll be in Richmond at the farmers market for a community pop up on August 18th.

Mayor Martinez: Was the slide with the guiding principles meant to be a Venn diagram?

David Berman: It wasn't meant to be a Venn diagram, there. There's nothing to overlap, good catch.

Tony Tamayo: Will these slides be made available?

Michael: They are available in the packet for this meeting but we can send them to you directly as well.

Mayor Martinez: Are you able to see how long people's trips are?

David Berman: With the automatic counter combined with the app we can estimate.

c. Update on Richmond Moves, On-demand Shuttle Pilot

Denee Evans: Some of this is a little bit of a repeat but it is an update. Richmond moves launched in April 2022 and as you can see we've exponentially increased our ridership. The demand is growing as a result, the average time from when a rider calls in to when the shuttle arrives is also increasing so we've applied for more funding for our shuttles. We'll be doing a public kickoff next week. This is a map of our current service area and where it would be expanded to with the grant.

Mayor Martinez: Can you explain the acronyms?

Denee Evans: Clean Mobilities Option is the CMO and that is funded by Carb. And TIRCP is the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program and that is administered by CalTrans.

Director Peebles: I'm a little confused about the software you've been using, can you explain that.

Denee Evans: The software I mentioned today is the via software which we use to help improve efficiencies for our transit.

- d. **Transit Shelter Update**
- e. **Richmond Development and Projects Update**
- 4. **Future Agenda Items**
 - a. Macdonald Avenue Transit and Streetscape Project
 - b. Transit Shelter Update
 - c. Richmond Development and Projects Update
- 5. **Committee Member Comments**
- 6. **Proposed Date and Time of Next Regular Meeting**
 - a. **October 26, 2023**
- 7. **Adjournment**
 - a. **Adjourned at 10:38**