

# ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



## STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 12/13/2023

**Staff Report No.** 23-558

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**TO:** AC Transit Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Michael A. Hursh, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer  
**SUBJECT:** BART Bus Bridge Service 2024 to 2026

### ACTION ITEM

**AGENDA PLANNING REQUEST:**

**RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Consider authorizing the General Manager to execute an agreement with the Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) to provide bus bridge services in response to the scheduled track maintenance and BART station closures from 2024 to 2026.

Staff Contact:  
Ramakrishna Pochiraju, Executive Director of Planning & Engineering

**STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:**

Goal - Financial Stability and Resiliency  
Initiative - Infrastructure Modernization

Partnering with BART allows them to modernize their system and promotes regional goals of preventative maintenance and service quality. Having strong, reliable partners benefits AC Transit and supporting BART generates coordination and redundancy in the region.

**BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:**

The bus bridge is free to passengers and AC Transit will charge BART for the actual service provided at the hourly rate of \$253.92. This rate reflects the District's fully-allocated cost including the operator, vehicle, maintenance, planning, scheduling, and supervision. The agreement contains a daily budget cap of \$200,000. For reference, AC Transit billed BART \$807,000 in FY 22-23 for planned bus bridge services at South Hayward-Union City and Rockridge-Orinda.

**BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:**

BART will be performing maintenance work which requires track closures for two separate projects between 2024 and 2026. The first, between Richmond and Lafayette for four weekends beginning in February 2024 and a portion of its track between 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Rockridge for 17 weekends beginning in June 2024 and lasting through 2026. These closures will require bus bridges on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays in order to shuttle passengers between stations.

### Description of Bus Bridge Service

Under this proposed agreement, AC Transit would operate bus bridges across 21 weekends to transport BART passengers between stations on either end of a scheduled track closure.

Staff will coordinate with BART to schedule the appropriate levels of service based on the ridership and projected demand for the specific weekends. BART will allow AC Transit to use the transit centers and other facilities for operations and layovers. This will allow for sufficient bus staging and layover to facilitate operation of the bus bridge.

BART will be responsible for all the public messaging, suggesting passengers travel only if necessary and to allow plenty of time for their journey. BART will ensure AC Transit receives credit for providing the bus bridge in announcements and notices related to the bus bridge.

Coordination between agencies is critical to ensure smooth operations and staff is currently organizing the logistics for each weekend of service. Staging, layover space and circulation at each station is a joint organizational effort between Planning and Supervision from both agencies. As with the previous bus bridges, road supervisors will be on hand at the stations directing operators and assisting passengers.

AC Transit is able to provide the resources for the scheduled bus bridges because they will occur over weekends and holidays. AC Transit will assign road supervisors and request operators to volunteer to operate the bus bridges in return for overtime and/or holiday pay compensation funded by BART.

BART and AC Transit staff will continuously coordinate to monitor and adjust the specifications of the service based on demand, operational challenges and other unforeseen issues that may arise.

### Agreement Terms

District and BART staff have drafted an agreement subject to legal review with the following key terms:

- Agreement Amount - based on the hourly rate described above:
  - AC Transit will only invoice BART for actual service provided.
  - AC Transit will invoice BART on a monthly basis or upon completion of the service
- AC Transit Responsibilities:
  - Provide operators, vehicles, road supervisors, mechanics and planning/scheduling staff, as needed.
    - Provide appropriate vehicles to meet the service demand, pending availability.
  - Provide support staff to deliver the service.
  - Develop schedules and plan operating logistics.
  - Coordinate operations at the affected stations.
- BART Responsibilities:

- Provide crowd control and customer service for the entire operations.
  - Provide public outreach and information for the bus bridges.
  - Provide clean operator restrooms with sufficient lighting and running water within close proximity of the layover point.
  - Receive all permissions from the cities for any layover space, bus stops, road closures and parking removals that facilitate bus operations.
  - Respond to all customer complaints not related to the operator or the mechanics of the vehicle.
  - Provide lunch for the operators and the supervisors.
- In the event of an operator shortage, AC Transit will prioritize filling regularly scheduled runs over the bus bridge runs.
  - Any adjustments to the plan must be made five days in advance of implementing the change.
  - Any disputes will be resolved in 3-5 working days given the nature of the service.

Staff from each of the agencies has negotiated terms related to indemnifications, liabilities, and insurance.

**ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:**

The service will introduce new riders to AC Transit service and offers the District an opportunity to assist a partner agency with a critical need that has lasting benefits for the region. However, it could place strain on operations and maintenance as this is service not typically operated on weekends so operators and maintenance employees will be working overtime and buses will be incurring mileage that they would not otherwise incur.

**ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:**

Staff considered an alternative to not enter into an agreement with BART to provide this service, but it does not recommend this alternative as it would require BART to contract with a private charter company that is not well equipped or structured to provide service that is universally accessible and actively managed in the field. In addition, compared to AC Transit, private charter companies do not have the same access to public transit infrastructure such as bus stops and layover space. Also, private charter companies may not have the same familiarity as AC Transit with the roads and intersections between stations. Ultimately, providing bus bridges is a good demonstration of regional coordination across the transit operators.

**PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:**

- SR 15-089a: BART Bus Bridge Agreement
- SR 16-058: BART Bus Bridge Agreement
- SR 17-099: BART Bus Bridge Approval 2017
- SR 18-161: BART Bus Bridge Service 2020
- SR 20-238: BART Bus Bridge Service 2020

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Draft Bus Bridge Agreement
2. Agreement Attachment A) Scope
3. Agreement Attachment B) Con Ops
4. Agreement Attachment C) Rate Schedule

**Prepared by:**

Michael Eshleman, Service Planning Manager

**Approved/Reviewed by:**

Robert del Rosario, Director of Service Development and Planning  
Ramakrishna Pochiraju, Executive Director of Planning & Engineering  
Dwain Crawley, Director of Transportation  
Cecil Blandon, Director of Maintenance  
Salvador Llamas, Chief Operating Officer  
Chris Andrichak, Chief Financial Officer  
Jill A. Sprague, General Counsel/Chief Legal Officer