

BART – AC Transit Interagency Liaison Committee

Meeting Notes: August 7, 2024

Opening

A. Roll Call/Welcome and Introductions

- a. Meeting chaired by Director Raburn
- b. BART: Director Robert Raburn, Director Rebecca Saltzman, Director Melissa Hernandez (not present)
- c. AC Transit: Director Murphy McCalley, Vice President Diane Shaw, Director Sarah Syed
- d. Meeting started 9:02am

B. Announcements/Public Comments

- a. **Director Saltzman:** I just want to put on the record that my guess is that Director Hernandez was not aware of the meeting. It looks like we only got an email early this morning, because I'm sure she would have been here otherwise
- b. **Director Raburn:** At the May meeting of the ILC, I made comments about BART's K line disruption and very complicated bus bridge. The initial review was very favorable, it presented to BART's accessibility task force in June. Both the bus bridge and paratransit service received high marks. The schedule for the July disruption work was delayed and August is going to move forward at an upcoming weekend date this month.

C. Notes from Previous ILC Meeting

- a. The notes are very inclusive of prior activities, no comments.

New Discussion Items

A. Legislative Update

Presenters: Alex Walker (BART) and Maria Henderson (AC Transit)

Walker: Alex Walker, Manager of Government Relations and Legislative Affairs at BART, giving the state legislative update. On May 31, the bill's authors and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) announced a pause on SB 1031. SB 1031 faced opposition from several transit agencies with core concerns including expenditure plan's structure, duration, funding sources, and extent and distribution of transit operating funding. Senators committed to building consensus and new bill in 2025 to authorize a regional funding and reform measure.

MTC stood up a Revenue Measure Select Committee, chaired by MTC Commissioner Jim Spering; membership includes commissioners and stakeholders from labor, business, and transit advocacy groups, as well as staff for Senators Wiener and Wahab. Select Committee has had two meetings so far, will continue monthly until October. Executive group of agency GMs and leaders of county transportation authorities will play an advisory role. So far work has been done to review transit funding landscape/processes and polling about attitudes towards transit and potential structures for regional measure. It is a tax averse climate, but voters recognize the important of transit; potential measure polling in the 50s but needs 2/3 vote to get to legislation. Possible sales tax or parcel tax, push back against corporate head tax. The three remaining meetings will be used to lay out, refine, and approve an expenditure framework by late October.

Monday saw the return of state legislators to the capital. We may see additional action on the budget via trailer bills, but not expecting much in the transportation space currently. August 16 is the deadline for fiscal committees (Appropriations) to pass bills, August 31 is the deadline to pass bills, and September 30 is the last day for the Governor to sign or veto. In the federal case around PEPRA, pension structure, the 9th Circuit ruled Eastern District of CA doesn't have standing as issue isn't "ripe;" essentially, an operator will have to have an FTA grant application denied and a suit brought for them to have standing.

Henderson: External Affairs Representative providing update on the federal side. AC Transit GM Michael Hursh is on the transportation revenue measure executive group. On July 10, the US House Appropriations Committee approved the FY2025 Transportation Housing and Urban Development (THUD) bill providing discretionary total of \$25.1B to DOT, which is below FY2024 and the president's budget request. July 25, Senate Appropriations Committee approved FY2025 THUD bill and passed all its appropriation bills in a bipartisan fashion. The Senate Bill provides \$28.7B in new appropriations for USDOT, a 13% increase over House Bill. Both bills provide \$14.27B for transit formula grants as authorized in the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act.

Both House and Senate committees have recessed for August break until September 9. While both approved appropriations bills, further action is unlikely until after the election in November. The new federal fiscal year begins October 1. One AC Transit related federal update: receiving a \$15M low/no emissions grant from FTA, which will be used to buy hydrogen fuel cell buses to replace diesel, expand hydrogen facilities, and fund new workforce development program to train staff on zero emission technologies.

Public Comment: None.

Committee Comments:

Director Shaw: I have two comments. First: when we were with a bunch of transit Board members a couple weeks ago, another state had implemented a beer tax that was providing funding for transportation. This was in Birmingham, so smaller, but an interesting, out of the box strategy. Other states using new and different taxes. I'm wondering if you have heard about any new/different and out of the box ways to get funding.

Walker: In the context of the committee looking at options – beyond sales tax, parcel tax, corporate head tax, payroll tax – there has been talk about a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) tax. But there's not currently the infrastructure to set that up, and it would require a lot of state action. It's great to have conversations about other revenue generation options. Staff is always open for additional suggestions.

Director Shaw: At session with Senator Wahab and Congressman Khanna, Senator Wahab brought up 1031 and made a comment about a technology component of the bill that inspired pushback. Do you know anything about a technology component that got pushed back within 1031?

Walker: Trying to recall the bill, I don't want to speculate. I know there have been discussions in bills in the legislature around autonomous vehicles and job displacement. I can't recall if there is

language about that in 1031, but I know conversations about bills with new technologies and AVs have been noticing labor. I can go back to that.

Director McCalley: For the regional measure, it sounds like herculean task to get that to the finish line. What's the timeline on when that legislation would have to be reintroduced? January next year?

Walker: Yes, the session begins in December so it will be around January when they can put in bills. Mid-February is the deadline to introduce bills. Can always amend but would want to be introduced by February.

Director McCalley: I would echo Director Shaw's comments to think out of the box for funding, beyond just the sales tax. We have to do something more palatable to public. In Pennsylvania, statewide using a bunch of different small taxes (rental cars, tires, TOT), which may be more sellable.

Henderson: Yes, the concern is how we are going to get to over a billion dollars of funding that is needed to continue operations at transit agencies. And that's the hardest part.

Walker: I believe the stakeholders on Select Committee and advisory group want input. Set up to make sure stakeholders had that input.

Henderson: I'll add that tonight at the AC Transit Board Meeting, Director of LACR Claudia Burgos will be presenting a state and federal update on the transportation revenue measure that will go more in depth.

Director Syed: Have any revenue mechanisms been ruled out at this point? And what is the general sentiment about what should be advanced?

Walker: No formal decisions have been made, but in the last meeting there was push back on a payroll tax or a corporate head tax led by business and labor. Moving forward, focusing on a parcel tax and sales tax, with sales tax at the top of the ledger. They're coming around to those two to study further thinking about the political viability of the tax. We still have to see potentially additional polling, questions about regressivity.

Director Syed: Also, I heard a bit of the Committee meeting, and I was disappointed to hear a leader on that committee speaking negatively about bus operator simply for taking their break. There is a lot of work to be done to ensure the committee understands what our bus operators are going through and that they are entitled to a regular break too. It was disappointing to see that framed as anti-transit. Concerns me to see the faith we're putting into this committee.

Director Raburn: My concern is that the geographic scope is dangerously low and would not create the funding necessary. I hope the upcoming framework will address that.

Walker: Proposal of four counties, three BART counties and San Mateo, and want to have an opt-in provision for additional counties. The Senator's staff have been clear that they want to keep looking at a nine-county option. Part of the charge of the committee is to see what can be a politically viable scope. There are issues, questions from Santa Clara County, that's the biggest revenue generator for a sales tax. Conversations will have to be had to see if there's a way to

alleviate those concerns by bringing more folks in to make it a bigger measure. Right now, looking at four-county, but keeping options open for more.

Director Raburn: What about the prospect of a voter initiative that would reduce the threshold needed to 50%?

Walker: That has not been discussed at this committee. Conversations about the mechanism, besides a bill, have been happening with operators and MTC staff. The work of the committee is to shape what would go in a bill, the folks getting signatures dictate what's in it.

Director Raburn: Would a voter initiative have to be from each of counties that are participating?

Walker: I'm not sure, but we can look into that and follow up.

B. Realign Update

Presenters: [Michael Eshleman](#), [Maria Henderson \(AC Transit\)](#)

Eshleman: Service Planning Manager here to give an update on Realign. There's going to be much more information in the AC Transit Board Meeting tonight, but this is a preview. We're in Phase 4 and we've done a lot of work leading up to this point. The last time the public saw plan was in May, we got a significant amount of feedback from the public, operators, advocates, and the communities we serve. We've taken all that feedback and made adjustments to the plan.

Henderson: External affairs representative talking about public engagement. I'd like to review some of the engagement metric highlights from the outreach that ran from May 5 to June 5, promoting the review and comments on Realign draft plan. We received 23,000+ website views, 45,000+ social media impressions, 500+ responses to online survey, and 200+ community outreach events; connected with more than 5700 people through process. Feedback on routes and schedules was high, also feedback on route changes. Community members were generally grateful for transit connections, more direct routes, increased service to specific neighborhoods, and outreach. Negative sentiments included frustration with reduction of frequency (7, 72R, 65, 6, 7, 19), concern with consolidation of certain lines like 51A and 51B, lack of weekend service, and concern with level of hill service. Full report available in Board packet that will be presented tonight.

Eshleman: After the June 5 Board workshop, the project team reviewed all comments. That was the fourth planned proposal we've put forth and each time we've made some significant adjustments, and nothing is locked in stone yet. This proposal is going to the Board to call for public hearings and no decision is going to be made about the plan at the meeting. We're still listening and hearing to adjust before bringing it to the Board for adoption in October, so these are some of the changes we've made so far since June. Adjustments: No longer changing 6, 51A, or 51B due to reliability challenges; moving Line 7 terminal to Emeryville Public Market; no longer need to extend Line 19 due to retaining 51A; extending Line 20 deeper into Alameda Point; Line 21 is now every other trip to Skyline High School and Chabot Space and Science Center. Excited to provide educational and recreational opportunities for folks in Fruitvale corridor. Also going to adjust Line 29 to Downtown Berkeley to reduce the amount of buses

laying over at Rockridge BART; proved to be a successful strategy for Ashby service. Finally, a lot of bus testing on Line 73 behind Coliseum BART to find the most effective routing in the face of difficult parking behavior and speed humps. Made some adjustments on the exact streets it will run on.

What the new network means in comparison to current network. New network has improved access to 15-minute service, job access, zero-vehicle household access. For paratransit impacts, the pandemic kept paratransit zone the same as it was 2019. Even if the normal line is not running, community will still have access to existing East Bay Paratransit. 6,000 people would've lost service if paratransit zone had been restricted to what the current service network is. The draft plan plus the current network would remove about 17,000 people from the service area: not paratransit users but people living in that census tract. Finally, we have Realign plus. Realign+ is the plan to invest in the primary route network, getting back to 100% of pre-pandemic service levels if we get those operators. We will be asking the Board to approve this as part of Realign. We have prioritized where we have the most need, largest number of disadvantaged communities, and most ridership. First, the current 72R proposal is to decrease frequency from 12 minutes to 30 minutes but restoring that to at least 15 minutes is the highest priority if we get those operators. Similar going down the list, with weekday and weekend span minimums.

Here is the package we are looking to request a public hearing on. Realign (operator neutral, as soon as March 2025) and Realign+ (implemented as we get more operators). Beyond pre-pandemic service levels, we are working on the vision plan. Preparing a more visionary unconstrained plan to bring back that reflects various regional efforts to improve service. Next steps: draft final plan requesting Board to set public hearings this evening, public comment period until September 11 with hearings on the 9-11th if the Board approves, bringing service standards that will guide future network development, and then planning to request a final Board decision on October 9.

Public Comment: None.

Committee Comments:

Director Syed: Great to see the significant changes in the plan, particularly since June the increase in zero-vehicle households getting access to 15-minute service. Could you comment on the key changes that are driving that?

Eshleman: We took some important lines and made them come more often. Added a bunch of lines to the frequent network. Example is Line 10, a big line that serves a lot of people from San Leandro BART to Union City BART, and there are a lot of people living on that corridor, so service is really complementing BART. Also Line 57, Line 18, long lines serving disadvantages communities driving the change in metrics.

Director Syed: Wonderful. For clarity on the schedule, you said the changes would be implemented beginning March 2025? What magnitude of changes are we expecting then versus after March 2025?

Eshleman: We're talking about as soon as March 2025, but we're still in discussion about phasing in particular. Implementation plan will be included Board packet in October final plan.

Director Syed: If the schedule is farther out, I would love to see another update to the Board after public hearings, before we are asked to take action on the final plan. So that we can have an opportunity for staff to present what we've heard to the meetings, hear from operators, and have schedules with runtimes. So that it doesn't happen a do or die meeting to approve the plan.

Director Saltzman: There are a lot of great improvements compared to the initial plan. For 72R, happy to hear at least 15-minute. The 72 series is very crowded, especially when it's unreliable. Do you think you will get better reliability with this plan? At what point does crowding become too much?

Eshleman: Line 72R plays a key point in the reliability goal of Realign as a program. The reason for reduced frequency is to improve reliability. The 72 routes, by virtue of length and ridership, are difficult to keep on time, so the goal is to improve run times to make it more reliable and help with crowding. Preventing a cycle of less reliable, longer runtimes, more crowding. The goal with Realign+ to improve frequency on the 72R to serve as a sweeper so that the local service 72 lines can move more freely. A lot of this hinges on operator shortage, making sure we're only adding service as we get operators. We've seen some positive operator recruitment and retention in the last couple of months, so hopefully we can see improved operator headcount and start Realign+ sooner rather than later.

Director Saltzman: Great to hear, I would love to hear an update about operator recruitment and retention at our next meeting. On more thing long term, I was at several national night out events in El Cerrito and I heard from multiple people how they don't ride the bus because it doesn't come near them. Just want to put in a plug, especially with what we're doing at El Cerrito Plaza BART, a lot of parking is going to be taken away, so this is an opportunity to extend some of the existing lines besides the 72 series. It will be critical to solving BART's issues as well as increasing AC Transit ridership.

Eshleman: I've been the AC Transit staff member that's been coordinating with BCAP, so the BART program for coordinating all that future development in Berkeley and El Cerrito. We're including a lot of that in the unconstrained scenario.

Director Shaw: Paratransit slide is hard to explain because it's people, not necessarily people who are impacted. Since we haven't changed the overall area, it hadn't impacted anybody. We haven't changed the area since 2019 and as far as I know we have no plans to do that.

Eshleman: That's a policy decision for the Board.

Director Shaw: Yes, but we haven't changed it yet and if we don't change that then nothing changes. It stays the same and I wanted to make that clear because, while we've taken some away, we've also added some, like extending the 200. Also, one thing within this plan that will eventually be implemented is micro transit. In Fremont around BART, wanted to mention connecting people from Warm Springs to jobs area.

Director Raburn: Very supportive of 51A and 51B retention. When it was implemented a decade ago, it solved a reliability problem. Concerned about changes to the 73. What exact street on the upland side of the Coliseum will that be?

David Berman: In the Eastmont Transit Center direction, there are no changes proposed. Our Oakland planner Owen spent four hours out there with transportation and safety staff identifying constrained operating environment. In the Oakland airport direction, we'll see changes. We'll come down 73rd as we do today, then across down to Holly, right on Holly, left on 71st, and a right on Snell. One fewer turn, fewer opportunities for buses to have to sneak by each other. Minor change to streamline but given the infrastructure constraints we're hoping it can be a meaningful change for our operators and service reliability.

Director Raburn: Thank you. What is the justification for line 7 terminating at Emeryville Public Market and not Emeryville Amtrak?

Eshleman: Space. There is a transit center just north of the train center. Amtrak runs its through way bus service and it is completely full of through way buses. Our plan was to try and fit there but it's way too constrained. Operating Line 7 currently out of Emeryville Amtrak in historic turnaround area, but now putting the 27 bus there so there's not enough space. It'll just come down Stanford, stay on Powell over the tracks, turn right and go down to Emeryville public market. We have a solid bathroom situation there as well.

C. Regional Mapping and Wayfinding Update

Presenter: Jumana Nabti (BART)

Nabti: BART Manager of Access programs giving an update on Regional Mapping and Wayfinding project. I coordinate with the transit operators in the region and bring the perspective of transit operators to the MTC core project team discussions. Overview: project context and status, prototype design and evaluation, pilot projects, and next steps. The goal of the project is to provide better information to customers and improve rider experience. Currently in phase three, about to implement prototype standards; we also have a prototype light at Powell Street looking at some key issues for complex stations. We will move on with evaluation and incorporating that learning into standards as part of iterative design process.

The prototype standards are based on regional network identity elements; includes colors, consolidated set of modal icons. The hierarchy of these symbols has modal icons at the top, above transit agencies. Location overview of the prototype sites: Santa Rosa Transit Mall and SMART station, El Cerrito del Norte BART, Powell Street BART and Muni (temporary prototype light). Sign types that are going to be implemented at El Cerrito del Norte: threshold and entrance signs (images are close but not final), bus stops with new coordinated signage, specific signage for paratransit and shuttles, new elevator information signs, tactile information for blind and low vision, system information units (display cases) with new headers. Evaluation objectives include effectiveness of the design, understanding how the customer feels about the signs (functional, accessible), travelers' benefits, and operator experience. We're going to be doing several different types of engagement including on site, especially with groups challenged by navigation, subject matter experts, advocates, officials, operators, etc.

Finally, talking about updated approach to pilot projects taking place after the prototypes. The first type is testing passenger experience at complex transfer stations, with one pilot transfer hub per county. Discussed different locations and the considerations for each. Second set of

pilots looking at end to end routes focused on Sonoma and Solano County. Third, agency-led projects. Several agencies waiting for this project to provide standards for signage projects that they already have funding for. They will be prioritizing finalizing the signs and providing support to interpret the standards for these projects. Next steps: presenting to RNM Council likely in September, prototype pre-installation, planning process for regional coordination around communication.

Public Comment: None.

Committee Comments:

Director Shaw: On regional coordination, things like elevators and directions are pretty standards but when we have specific stop information like a bus route that changes, who is going to be in charge of updating that on a regional level?

Nabti: Currently bus stops are updated by the transit agencies themselves and this will still be the case. But for the prototypes, we're still working some of that out. Not very many cases where there are shared stops.

Director Shaw: Did you look at Santa Clara Transit Center?

Nabti: No, we looked at three locations in Santa Clara. We had rigorous process of selection, starting by choosing locations with the highest ridership, multimodal, and at least three operators. Santa Clara did not make that. Looked at Milpitas, Diridon (chosen), and Palto Alto.

Director Shaw: The have so many special events because of Levi's Stadium. There are lots of shuttle buses and one-time riders.

Nabti: All the locations will be selected eventually, just not for the pilots.

D. Transit-oriented Development Update

Presenters: Carli Paine (BART)

Paine: Manager of BART's Transit Oriented Development team and program, giving a high-level overview of BART's TOD program and portfolio. TOD is a great strategy to build ridership; BART has been doing this for a while but now more than ever it's important to the portfolio to increase ridership. Also core to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and lowering cost of living in Bay Area. Fundamentals of approach: in early years BART would sell or swap land, but now BART retains ownership of land and enters long term leases with partners. In residential development, at least 20% of all units must be affordable to low or very low-income residents, and across the entire portfolio 35% must be affordable. Financial return framework discounts land to developers up to 30%. We look for land uses that deliver significant ridership benefits. It's important to distinguish transit adjacent (near transit) vs. transit oriented (densities, trip-making, low parking, access that make it transit-oriented). Generally looking to align with BART's access policy to support more access to BART stations. Board has adopted TOD policy with goals across six areas, and then we work with local jurisdictions on their specific objectives.

Snapshot of BART's portfolio has 15 stations with built BART TODs and developers on board for eight more stations. We have performance targets with 2040 targets and midterm 2025 targets.

We've made progress towards midterm goal but are not going to get there by 2025 due to cost and funding constraints. Affordable housing needs to stack up many sources of funding, very competitive, oversubscribed programs. Been coordinating with BAFA to position our projects to be competitive should the housing bond be approved by voters in the fall. Reviewed simplified six step model of the BART TOD process. Wanted to show this because once we have a developer on board, they need to fund an access plan, and this is the part of the planning process where we start working closely with AC Transit. We're working closely on access plans and implementation with AC Transit, maintaining bus access and coordinating as designs evolve. Jumana is our main point of contact for that.

Showed current project summary of status with various projects in different places of approvals and negotiations. I'll note that North Berkeley, Ashby, and El Cerrito all fell under our Berkeley El Cerrito Corridor Access project, so the recommendations from that process are coming in. BART updates work plan every four years to determine which sites are the readiest for development the soonest.

Public Comment: None.

Committee Comments:

Director McCalley: How is this effort dovetailing with the RHNA requirements that local jurisdictions are facing with respect to housing?

Paine: Every local jurisdiction had to update its housing element as we were developing our TOD work plans. Some jurisdictions really wanted BART in housing development, very popular. Took a data driven approach to identifying what is near ready. Pointed out what BART, jurisdictions, and other agencies do to get the site ready. Ultimately up to local jurisdiction to decide if the site should stay in their housing element or not.

Director McCalley: What are some of those things that the locals need to do?

Paine: At Bay Fair, one of the key issues is ADA access from the county side of the station. That has to be solved for us to develop that site. We said we need to work with you to do that before moving forward. They already had some grant funding to advance that work, so we can move forward. There are things like infrastructure barriers at Lafayette where a key issue is parking. They're very eager to have the Lafayette site developed and want a lot of replacement parking. BART used to take a lot of land value in the form of parking structure but now prefer money for general operating fund. Lafayette has grant funding to work on that to accommodate.

Director McCalley: In effect, BART is establishing new criteria in respect to parking that is ridership based. In Castro Valley, if you don't get to the parking lot very early, you can't get a spot. How does it mesh to remove parking for the development? In the context of Castro valley updating their specific plan, this has been a topic of the discussion.

Paine: Figuring out how much BART parking to provide at these sites is more of an art than a science. Now we have more data about how utilized our parking lots are. I don't have Castro Valley in my head, but lots of stations are only 10-30% utilized, so there's a lot of opportunity to build. We work with local jurisdictions to address local concerns including curb management and

regulation, to retain access for those who live on adjacent streets and potential BART riders. There are lots of tools to better manage the finite resources we have besides expensive structure parking structures.

Director McCalley: From a revenue standpoint, assuming total build out, what would TOD represent to BART?

Paine: We get revenue in multiple ways. Ground leases, participation like percentage of net operating income, transit benefit fee with older projects. Also, ridership from new residents. Estimate over a 30-year horizon is about 600 million dollars. The challenge for BART right now is that this is a long-term revenue strategy, so it's important to do the work now but it doesn't solve our current problems.

Director Raburn: We are at a pivot point from automobile parking to 28 thousand homes on BART property, a considerable population that will be transit dependent.

Director Shaw: Are you requiring these developments to have Clipper Pass or something like that to ensure a certain number of riders can take BART?

Paine: One thing we do is have a maximum parking ratio of 0.5 spaces per unit at most sites. Parking is a driving generating use. Second, parking must be unbundled from units, so people must pay separately which supports affordability and internalizes the cost of parking. Travel demand management requirement where different measures have point values and developers must select from a menu to get a certain point total. For example, preloaded Clipper card or something like that. A few developments have already said they want to get BayPass.

Director Shaw: Is any of this transitional housing? Are you going to work with any developers to do transitional housing?

Paine: I'm trying to remember, so we can get back to you. We definitely have affordable, but not sure about transitional.

Director Raburn: Want to thank everyone for presentations.

Update on Past Items

Director Raburn: Regarding past items, there are materials in packets.

A. Paratransit Update

Director Shaw had asked about the ShareLab software update, I'll note that it'll launch on the week of August 26.

B. Service and Operations Updates

Schedule change on August 12, which will be significant for seamless changes to Millbrae and the Blue line coming in from Tri-Valley area will connect without lengthy transfer.

C. Regional Coordination Update

Future Agenda Items

A. One-seat Ride Pilot Update – BART and AC Transit

Director Saltzman’s request, update on the pilot coordination with Contra Costa County, particularly with smaller operators.

B. AC Transit Operator Restroom Update – BART and AC Transit

C. Clipper Bay Pass Pilot Update – BART and MTC

D. Director Saltzman also requested an update on operator recruitment and retention at AC Transit during the meeting.

Committee Member Comments

A. None.

Proposed Date and Time of Next Regular Meeting

A. November 13, 2024, at 9am.

Adjournment

A. 10:43am adjourned.