

Communications and Outreach Plan for Realign Service Changes

AC Transit's new bus network goes live on Sunday, August 10. District staff and consultants are undertaking efforts to inform riders of the changes in advance so that bus riders will be able to continue using AC Transit for their transportation needs. Outreach activities focused on the service changes run from early July to the week after Labor Day.

Messaging

For this phase of the Realign Service Changes, messages will focus on the service changes in order to preserve AC Transit's ridership. Future marketing and communications efforts will highlight improvements and seek to gain new riders. The high-level messages for this phase are:

Primary Messaging

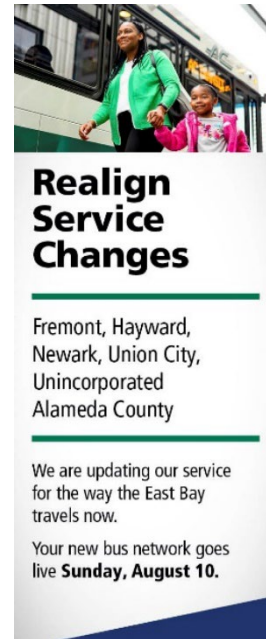
- AC Transit's new bus network launches August 10
- See how your line is changing

Secondary Messaging

- We're upgrading our bus network for a more reliable ride
- Learn how AC Transit works for you

Tertiary Messaging

- We are updating our service for the way the East Bay travels now. Your new bus network rolls out August 10.



Channels and Tactics

On-Bus and At-Stop

In mid-July, car cards and brochures will be placed on all District buses. The car card will alert riders to the upcoming changes. The brochures will contain the chart of line changes. Because

the number of changes is so large, the brochures will be divided by bus division, so there will be four different brochures (each available in three languages). The 1500 bus stops with changes will receive new flags or new decals for flags, bags over the signs that indicate the new and old lines that serve the stop and the changers that are coming, and a zip-tied sign with detailed information about the lines that are changing (from the service change chart). It is estimated that the pole crew will be able to update more than 85% of flags ahead of the service change. Additionally, information will be posted to digital signs controlled by the District, including Uptown Transit Center and the Salesforce Transit Center.

Electronic Media

AC Transit has published a web page with detailed information about the Realign Service Changes (at actransit.org/service-changes). A social media campaign will begin in mid-July to engage riders and raise awareness about upcoming changes. Riders who subscribe to eNews for specific lines will receive line-specific information via email or text, and other subscribers will receive high-level information and be directed to additional resources. This information will also be shared with cities, elected officials, other transit agencies, and community-based organizations. EasyPass site coordinators will receive customized information they can share with their communities.

Advertising Campaign

A robust paid advertising campaign was launched in June to raise awareness about the coming service changes, and to encourage riders to sign up for eNews for the lines they ride. The campaign will continue through August to urge riders to familiarize themselves with the upcoming changes. The advertising mix includes ads at 16 BART stations across our service area, special messaging on BART platform screens, traditional radio, streaming radio, podcast advertising, bus advertising, search engine marketing, digital banner/video displays and paid social media.



In-Person Outreach

District staff and contracted brand ambassadors will visit targeted bus stops to alert riders to upcoming changes and provide information. This will occur over a four-week period beginning three weeks ahead of the service change and concluding one week after. Bilingual staff and ambassadors will be assigned to specific areas as resources allow, and all ambassadors will have information in three languages, and refer riders with additional needs to the Customer Call Center. Additionally, staff work with many schools at the beginning of the school year to educate students and their families on the bus lines that serve schools, back-to-school outreach will

include Realign-specific information. In-person and electronic outreach will occur at UC Berkeley and other colleges in late August when those schools start their new school year. Finally, the week after Labor Day will include additional outreach as that is a time many are returning to the office from summer vacations.



Customer Service Center & Call Center

Visitors to the Clipper Customer Service Center at 1600 Franklin, will be greeted by electronic screens reminding them of the upcoming service changes. New timetables and the on-bus brochures will be available, and the clerks will have cards they can give customers directing them to web and phone-based information about the service changes. Staff are exploring other assets that can be placed at the Customer Service Center as well. Customer Call Center agents will be trained to use the District website to answer questions about the service changes.

External Stakeholder Outreach

District staff are using a variety of tactics to ensure that external stakeholders and partners are informed of the service changes and can help inform their communities. Staff will visit local City Council meetings to share service change information and distribute information via email to established stakeholder lists with an ask to include it in community newsletters. Community based organizations, including organizations that actively participated in the Realign planning process, will receive information that can be shared with their communities. Staff is also using regional transit agency meetings to request that agency partners amplify District messages to their own riders, who may also use AC Transit.