

Once a detour or service disruption has been operationalized by the Transportation department and given to Communications staff, there are several available tactics and channels that can be used to communicate those disruptions to the public depending on the types of detours, detour length and timing, and location. The tactics used to communicate detours include:

Service alert: The primary tool for communicating disruptions is the service alert. Service alerts are posted to the AC Transit website, sent as an email to subscribers of the relevant line via the eNews content management system, posted to the semi-automated RideACTAlerts account on X, and published to the Realtime/GTFS feed and on our digital signs through the BusTimeAdministration system that manages service bulletins.

At-stop signage: Information at the bus stop can take several forms, including a laminated sign zip-tied to the pole that follows a format similar to a service alert, a bag over the bus stop flag that covers the existing information and communicates alternative information, or a custom sign either zip-tied to the pole or added to the at-stop schedule case. A recent example of a custom at-stop sign for disruptions is a map showing temporary stop locations along Bancroft Avenue near the UC campus during street construction in 2023-2024.

Mobile app push notification: A “push notification” delivered to mobile phones using the AC Transit Official App. Due to the technological limitations of the current platform, posting alerts to the mobile app is limited to disruptions that have a wide breadth of effects for a limited duration.

Social media posts: In addition to the RideACTAlerts account on X, AC Transit has accounts on the following platforms that can be used for disruption notifications, all with the handle RideACT: Instagram, Facebook, and X.

The below table offers an overview of the typical tactics deployed based on the detour category. Tactics marked with an “x” are almost always utilized, while those marked with a “–” are context-dependent and deployed as needed and as feasible. Note that short-term detours when the District is not given advance notification are communicated on an ad-hoc basis in cooperation with road supervisors, using as many communication tools as possible, given the time and resource constraints associated with these types of disruptions.

	Service Alert	Social media post	Mobile app push notification	Zip-tied pole sign	Stop bag	Flag decal ¹	Stops map ²	Additional wayfinding signage ³
Small-scale, short-term	x	-		x				
Large-scale, short-term	x	x	x	x	- ⁴		-	-
Small-scale, long-term	x	-		x	x	-	-	-
Large-scale, long-term	x	x		x	x	-	-	-

¹ For longer-term disruptions, zip-tied signs and stops bags may be used at the outset to announce the detour, but the flag may be manipulated for a more permanent message to riders.

² Due to the time needed to produce a stops map, this is dependent on the nature of the detour. Stops map may represent only a temporary transit center or a small portion of the affected area.

³ Directional signage can be deployed when a disruption results in the relocation of service and requires a rider to navigate unfamiliar pathways. The building of Tempo Line 1T in Downtown Oakland is an example of this, which resulted in the rerouting of service on Broadway to Franklin St.

⁴ Depends on the nature of the detour. Large-scale detours sometimes require temporary stops or transit centers, which requires the bagging of stops or the installation of temporary hubs. However, short-term stop closures usually do not warrant a stop bag as the tactic is resource intensive, requiring additional staff time and materials.