

BART/AC Transit Interagency Liaison Committee

Meeting Notes: November 23, 2023

Meeting notes are provided for convenience, may be incomplete, and should not be considered an official record or verbatim dialogue.

1. OPENING

A. Roll Call/Welcome and Introductions

BART: Director Raburn, Director Salzman, third position vacant

AC Transit: Director McCalley (chair), Director Shaw (participating remotely), Director Syed, Director Peeples (alternate)

Meeting chaired by Director McCalley.

B. Announcements/Public Comments

Raburn: Regarding Bay Fair Station, Phase 1 Access Improvements. Improvements to the bus bays began on October 16th, five lines that were diverted to other locations at the station. What really warms my heart about this project is it improves public access, particularly ADA, but it's funded through Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) funds. I applaud the meeting notes from May 10th this year and they accurately reflect a great discussion we've had regarding Clipper 2 with Jason Weinstein. We also had productive discussions on the fare integration. The ILC also encouraged reformation of the East Bay Paratransit Access Committee (SRAC) to allow hybrid meetings.

Peeples: I attended virtually the Senate Select Committee on Bay Area Transit. At least in that group, there seemed to be a great deal of interest in moving forward with some kind of regional funding measure, though its parameters are still being negotiated. There were representatives from all the major transit agencies. CCCTA represented all the small agencies.

C. Notes from Previous Meeting

No comments.

2. NEW DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Joint State Funding Advocacy. (VERBAL)

Presenters: Claudia Burgos, AC Transit and Alex Walker, BART

Burgos: California state budget: SB 125 directed CalSTA, the State Transportation Agency to develop guidelines for how the \$4 billion in TIRCP funds will be allocated over the next two years and how the \$1.1 billion in the new Zero Emission Transit Capital Program would be allocated over the next four years. MTC will be required to submit an initial allocation package to CalSTA by December 31st of this year, which needs to be approved by the MTC Commission first, which it has done. Funding from the state to MTC and then ultimately to the operators would be allocated no later than end of April of 2024. SB 125 also requires CalSTA to establish and convene the Transit

Transformation Task Force on or before January 1st of 2024. Applications for participation on that Task Force opened last week, the deadline to apply is today.

The Bay Area is expected to receive an estimated \$400 million from the newly created Zero Emission Transit Capital Program over the next four years and an additional \$770 million from the TIRCP capital program over the next two years. State action allows these funds to be used flexibly for capital and operating purposes. MTC has taken the following actions: 1. Prioritized completing the funding plans for BART to Silicon Valley Phase 2 and BART Core Capacity by using roughly \$725 million using the TIRCP funding for capital purposes. That leaves \$45 million in TIRCP and \$400 million in Zero Emission available for operating purposes. Over the last four months, MTC has collaborated with operator staff to estimate shortfalls under a set of standardized assumptions. While these differ from those used by individual operators for their own financial planning purposes, they allow for the needs to be compared across operators on a level playing field and contextualize the minimum funding level to keep transit afloat while more sustainable funding sources are identified.

Two weeks ago, the MTC Commission acted on allocation of available operating dollars, as follows: 40% to SFMTA, 45% to BART, 4% to AC Transit, 3% to Caltrain, 5% to Golden Gate Transit, 2% to other operators, and \$2 million have been set aside for Regional Network Management. In accordance with SB 125, MTC staff are proposing a set of accountability measures that are focused on customer experience and efficiency enhancement. All operators that receive these State Transit Assistance funds will be required to participate in ongoing Transit Transformation Action Plan initiatives, implementation schedule coordination and real-time transit data improvements. Other accountability measures are specific to individual operators and center around safety, security, fare evasion, and specifically for AC Transit, an update on our Comprehensive Service Operations Analysis, which is currently underway.

Walker: There's still a lot of work to do to find a sustainable funding path for transit moving forward in the Bay Area and statewide. We're looking at a regional funding measure for November 2026 across the region. According to MTC, Bay Area operators are projecting shortfalls exceeding \$700 million per year after the state funds run out, which for at least BART is the end of fiscal year (FY) 2026. MTC is in the process of engaging stakeholders, transit operators, advocates, and the public. They have developed a set of four funding categories: *Transit transformation*, that sustains and/or expands transit service levels for bus, rail, and ferry to serve current and potential future riders, and transforming our systems through network management, and all the action plan initiatives. *Safe Streets* to transform local roads, better address safety, and achieve climate goals, including expanding sidewalks and bike lanes, to encourage active transportation. *Connectivity*, to fund mobility improvements like grade separations. *Climate resilience* that would fund activities that protect transportation infrastructure from rising sea levels. Consensus has been reached on these categories, details are still being discussed, including how much flexibility there is between these categories.

There are two paths to get this measure on the ballot. The first is a legislatively determined expenditure plan – a state legislature bill that authorizes MTC to place this measure on the ballot for the counties that want it. This would require a 2/3 vote across the counties, a high threshold. Another option is via a signature gathering process, there are a lot of questions about how this would work, who the sponsoring organization would be and the expenditure plan for that. This path would require only a majority vote across the counties in which it would be placed. MTC has been polling and we should be hearing results of this at the December 8th Legislation Committee, and the whole commission later in December. Options being looked at include various forms of taxes, including sales, income, payroll, parcel, road usage, and corporate head taxes. Nine-county and five-county options are also being considered.

Peoples: My understanding is that MTC is assuming the base case of the service level that were present at the depth of the pandemic and this is what their allocations are based on, and this is part of SB 125. Burgos: For SB 125, they're based on 2022 service levels.

Peoples: In the list of costs you read out, I did not hear operating included.

Walker: That would be under *Transit Transformation*; it covers service, both current and possibly expansion of service using these funds. I think that using the term transformation shows public stakeholders that this will maintain and improve operations, rather than just maintaining the status quo.

Peoples: Our service is garbage compared to when I first moved here in the 70s and started riding trains extensively, and we desperately need more money to operate our service. We're doing a comprehensive analysis that's based on the idea of a 15% cut from what we had in 2019. Nobody will take transit unless we can improve our service level.

Walker: Absolutely. This is why we are moving to an external source to allow us to expand beyond our current service. There are MTC commissioners saying that this needs to be a vehicle for broader reforms to Bay Area transit.

Peoples: Well, this is the Seamless stuff, which is basically let's cut service for poor people and improve it for \$400,000 Google engineers who want to commute long distances at cheap prices. But that's my cynical view.

Raburn: I'd like to raise the regional housing measure, which is coming up before any regional transportation measure. In my view, if we don't change the direction that the Bay area is going in terms of where the activity centers are, we will continue to see new residents coming in who put the key in the ignition and that has to change. And I think we can change that with the regional housing measure which can then propel healthy transit systems. I would really like to be engaged as fully as possible in helping to shape the regional housing measure. I made some comments this morning about the sustainable communities funds at the state level. These are already greatly integrating housing and transit and I feel that we may be able to create more of a one-two punch rather than a "didn't we already vote on that?" sort of attitude. No, we have to address housing and transit and both bills should really focus on rewarding the good actors.

Walker: I have not heard much about what this measure is looking like. It will be on the ballot next year. I think there are opportunities to engage in that process around where transit can be part of the discussion about where we're building and how we're servicing the housing.

McCalley: The funding sources that you mentioned that they're looking at, I think there's a lot of fatigue around sales and sales tax, and Marin and some of the limitations with respect to sales tax. Given the housing prices, there's also an issue with the parcel tax in terms of the sentiment. I was looking at a basket of funding sources and particularly those that are funded by other folks. Things like rental car fees that would be paid by visitors rather than local citizens. I think that there's a real knee jerk reaction to parcel and sales taxes. If we could get a mix of that in there, it might help soften the blow.

Burgos: MTC is trying to generate \$1 billion a year through the revenue measure. For a parcel tax that equates to almost \$500 for a parcel.

McCalley: That's why I'm thinking if we can put together a basket of funding sources and say half of these are paid by visitors to the Bay Area, maybe that's an easier sell.

Peeples: I think it should be at least 2 billion a year.

Michael Hursh: Part of our challenge is who will lead this. Bay Area Council or the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, while they've been incredibly helpful to transit, we need more than this leadership. There is this tension between because their loyalty, business interests, I don't think they will fully take this basket approach.

Shaw: Regarding what McCalley just said about other taxes, I think it was Atlanta that put in a hotel tax, and they generated a lot of income from that and have found it to be very successful. Secondly, some of the things that BART is doing with housing near stations is perfect because that's housing and transportation all in one area. One of the concerns I've heard I can understand it is that some of these housing bills, the requirement of where to put housing is not necessarily in a good transit location. That's a problem going forward. If housing is not in a good location to be served by transit, then transit is forced to serve an area or corridor that is viable. This is not very helpful. I don't know how we make that clear; they really need to look at the two together and ensure that they're not just saying you must provide transit as part of this housing, but they're putting the housing in a place that makes sense for transit.

Syed: I wanted to comment on the TIRCP funding and inquire, are there any alternate sources of funding being pursued for BART core capacity and BART to San Jose. I don't think it was the intention when all that funding was restored for transit operations to get so little funding. I understand that funding is leveraging significant contributions and delays cost money.

Saltzman: On the Core Capacity BART would have to forfeit billions of federal dollars if we didn't get the TIRCP money. We can't do that, and we couldn't run our system without it. On the BART to Silicon Valley, we can't answer for that because that's a VTA project.

Syed: In terms of coordinating on other regional capital priorities, there's a near term opportunity with the Transit 2050 plan that MTC is leading, and I hope we will coordinate and bring that here to ensure that projects like Valley Link and other priorities are revisited. Now is not the time for us to continue to make the mistakes of the past with our capital funding while starving transit operations. I hope we can work together on what should really be capital priorities as we move forward. Thank you.

Raburn: How do we get from a \$700 a year operating shortfall to a \$1 billion ask. What would be included?

Walker: There is still flexibility in the broader funding pots. Looking beyond the operating shortfall, with more funding, we'll be able to implement both capital and service improvements. Safe streets, climate resilience, transit transformation, it's safe to say that we could do more than \$300 million or a year for these other things. But I think they're leaving it that way so we can make transit work into the future with the challenges and opportunities we'll have in the future.

Raburn: The *Transit Transformation* component would include the operating shortfalls.

Walker: And MTC is considering the flex between the categories, as changes may be needed over the years. It includes discussing the things we need to do with the other money that's not a threat to operations funding.

Raburn: If we go about this willy-nilly and don't have any geographic specifics, we'll see in-law units far from any transit service or in flood prone zones. I think the voters would end up saying, "how are you going to build sea walls to protect everything with only that amount of money?" If we address how development occurs from now, we're really getting at a sustainable future.

McCalley: Fare evasion is one of the requirements. How are they approaching that? Do we need to report fare evasion data?

Walker: That's specific to BART, we must deliver new fare gates by the end of 2025.

Burgos: For Muni, just report on fare collection procedures and opportunities for reducing evasion.

B. Regional Coordination Update.

Presenters: Robert Del Rosario, Andy Metz, Mika Miyasato, AC Transit, and Jumana Nabti, BART

Del Rosario: There are a number of folks around the table and on the Zoom call that are participating in the development and setting up the Regional Network Management structure. On Monday the 27th, we held our first RNM Council meeting at MTC. The agenda included the selection of the chair and vice chair: General Manager Bob Powers will be the chair of the Council, General Manager April Chan of SamTrans will be the vice chair. The meeting went on to discuss the charter and work plan. The work plan draws some elements from the Transformation Action Plan, and it must include visibly demonstrable regional transit improvements. It needs to correspond with transit operator performance metrics, measuring improvements under key categories in the action plan. In December, the work plan will go back to the council for potential approval. The next key step is the development of key performance indicators (KPIs) to support the work plan and Transformation Action.

Metz: for Transit 2050+ last month MTC completed their funding assumptions and needs for the period of FY 2025 to 2050. The amount of money that will be allocated for new transit projects, is not fully decided yet, but if we do a similar split as with Plan Bay Area 2050, we'd be looking at around \$70 billion available for new projects that go into the Transit 2050+ plan. Those projects are divided into three buckets. The first bucket are plans that were in Plan Bay Area 2050, which was adopted two years ago. The second bucket is for projects from local and subregional plans that were adopted between Plan Bay Area 2050 and now, for example SF connect. The third bucket is for projects that stem from the Transit 2050+ needs, gaps, and opportunities analysis. That analysis is underway right now and will be presented to our project management team (PMT), made up of operator representatives, and to stakeholders at large within the next few weeks. We'll likely present to committees in January and February on the existing conditions analysis. We also did our first round of public engagement which ended in September. We have some high-level results from that which we'll share with the PMT and the larger operator groups this week.

Miyasato: For Transit Priority, in year 2023 to 2024 we are working on Bus Accelerated Infrastructure Delivery (BusAID) and the Regional Transit Priority Policy. The BusAID program will facilitate planning and implementation of hotspots. These are quick build, short-term projects identified by transit operators. We are finalizing developmental evaluation criteria for the selection of projects. We'll take the draft criteria to the Regional Network Management Council in December. Soon after we'll start developing a draft project list and plan on presenting again to the RNM bodies starting in February. We intend to award funding in mid-2024. MTC has identified one-time funding of \$30 million total for this program. The Regional Transit Priority policy will establish a regional vision to support implementation of transit priority initiatives and address barriers such as agency coordination, data, and limited funding. We'll be kicking off this work at a December workshop that will be held in Oakland. We have invited transit operators, funding agencies, local jurisdictions, county congestion management agencies, CalTrans and other groups. After this workshop, we'll recruit working group members, and in early 2024 start developing the regional transit priority policy. We estimate that we'll take the first half of 2024 to develop the content of regional transit priority policy. We also are continuing to coordinate with CalTrans. They are working to release the Director's Policy on Transit Priority. We were originally expecting this policy to be released this last

summer, now we are looking at possibly early 2024. The timing will allow us to review the CalTrans policy and develop the Regional Transit Priority Policy to complement it. Finally, CalTrans District 4 kicked off the Bay Area Transit Plan this fall. We'll continue to work with CalTrans and transit agency staff in its development.

Raburn: In your negotiations, how much sway does Caltrans have on the Transit Priority Policy? Caltrans works with us at a state level on things like the Capitol Corridor funding. Aside from that, they more siphon off funds before we even see them.

Miyasato: This is the first ever CalTrans transit plan in California, and District 4 is setting the tone for these to happen elsewhere. We are cautiously optimistic. Transit agencies and congestion management agencies (CMAs) are in a working group. They will also have a public outreach component. We'll be working with them on developing this plan over the next 18 months.

Raburn: Who is the lead at CalTrans?

Miyasato: The project manager is Taylor Brown, and Sergio Ruiz is closely working on it as the chief of Active Transportation and Transit.

Raburn: This is a new initiative that's exciting. This is agenda item B, and I saw nothing on the Transit Priority Program on there. I feel like I'm walking down a dark hallway and just absorbing new information. One thing I did come back from looking at action 21 in the agenda. It noted that each county would have a mobility manager who would help set the transit priorities.

Del Rosario: In addition to what Mika Miyasato and Andy Metz presented, Drennan Shelton is the MTC liaison for all the accessibility actions in the Transformation Action plan. She couldn't attend today. But she will provide an update at our next ILC meeting and be able to present then. She provided at the request of some ILC members, some updates on the accessibility related actions and the one that you're identifying Director Raburn is a mobility manager for accessibility and paratransit service. We're looking at them managing paratransit and accessibility services so it's more centralized.

Shaw: Especially with the regional measure, we need to show a transformative transit plan going forward. Is the 2050 plan a place that we might show what the Bay Area Region would look like if we were to install things like bus only lanes everywhere that we really needed them? And how do we put that vision out on paper to show everybody including all the elected officials in these different cities and CalTrans? As Director Raburn was alluding to, this is what will be required if we want to transform transit. Is this the place for that visionary map that shows taking away highway, roadway lanes in order to provide bus only lanes, and show how you can really transform transit.

Metz: Transit 2050+ is a constrained vision, but within our very tight timeline for this, we have a supplemental report that is intended to provide that more unconstrained vision. Our intention is to work on that between Summer 2024 and Spring 2025. There may be some flexibility in our very tight timeline, our Transit 2050+ project management team has also asked if we can get to this visionary look a bit earlier.

Peeples: Bus only lanes are great. They're a great improvement, we cut the travel time on International Blvd in half. When we first talked about BRT on International, it was for 4-minute headways. We now have 7.5-minute headways. Today I tried to take it and the next BRT was coming in 19 minutes. It doesn't make sense to have bus only lanes unless there are buses to run in them, and operations funding to run at least 7.5-minute and probably four-minute headways. And I don't see anybody thinking about that kind of funding.

Metz: There are operations-focused projects that we're looking at, including for AC Transit. Every transit agency including BART and AC Transit have frequency-boost operations-focused projects that will be part of this plan or scored in this plan.

McCalley: Echoing Director Peeples' comment, I'm very skeptical about additional funding unless we can start talking about improved service. Unless we have some sort of visionary plan it's going to be a tough sell.

Nabti: In addition to my role at BART, I am the transit operator representative on the Regional Mapping and Wayfinding Project. I provided updates on it to this group before and have just a few additional project updates. MTC plans to present a high-level update on this project at the RNM Council and Customer Advisory Group in January and the RNM Committee in February. These will be the first public meetings where we plan to show images of the direction we're going with the project. We are also anticipating the first draft of the standards for staff review available in December. Once finalized, these standards will be used in the prototypes at El Cerrito del Norte and Santa Rosa Transit Mall and SMART Station. Due to the contracting timelines, we're anticipating prototype installations will now be implemented in late spring; a fabricator has been selected. Once installed, they will be open for the public and other stakeholders to try out and get their hands on and provide comments. We're currently developing the evaluation plan. My final update on this project now is that an accessibility consultant, Ron Brooks has been added to the project team to support and ensure that the recommendations and documentation are as accessible as possible.

C. Realign Scenarios. Presenter: Michael Eshelman, AC Transit

See presentation included in packet.

Salzman: Glad to see you doing this. I liked the interactive maps on your website though there were some frustrating aspects of the interface. I think most people here have heard this, but I'm very concerned about the potential elimination of the 72R. It's really important. It's an area that is not well served by BART, a lot of people connect from BART to that line and is the connection between several cities. There will be bus only lanes on parts of San Pablo, so why not use them more effectively. I understand that the plan is to remove some stops along the 72M. But we all know how hard moving stops is with the cities; sometimes it works, sometimes not. There are other options that could be looked at, like keeping the 72R and the 72M, and eliminating the 72. If I were going close, this doesn't really matter, but for longer distance trips I'll probably wouldn't use it without the 72R, and I'm guessing I'm not the only one.

I was excited to go look at the unconstrained scenario because I was expecting to see all these lines come back that used to operate and all the things we've always wanted to be in there. But it didn't feel unconstrained, it felt like the other versions put together. Regarding the discussion we had before about going out for funding, I want you to put forward a truly unconstrained proposal. What would you do if you had all the funds? If this is what you'd do, it doesn't feel great to me. From the BART perspective, none of the new lines suggested as part of the Berkeley El Cerrito Corridor Access Plan (BECCAP), in El Cerrito were there. If they're not even in the unconstrained version, that's telling me they will never happen. So, why did we do that study? I'd like to get feedback from AC Transit on why the unconstrained vision really isn't unconstrained at all.

Eshelman: That's a consistent line of feedback that we received about the unconstrained vision. The only thing I can really chalk it up to is that we put some artificial constraints on ourselves. We have a meeting with BART staff this afternoon to walk through what they'd like to see in their specific comments about some of these proposals. We've also heard directly from BART staff about what you just mentioned of the BECCAP study, that needs to be reflected in the unconstrained scenario. We can do a lot more to revise the unconstrained scenario to make sure

we're capturing everything. The main thing we looked at was the service levels needed on existing service. That will be in the next revision.

Saltzman: That's good to hear. I won't be on the BART board when the measure goes forward, but I will still be involved. I want to be able to get out there and talk to my neighbors and explain what this measure does for them. If I tell them, basically you'll get the same AC Transit service you get today, that's not very compelling. Let's tell them what they could get.

Raburn: As chair of the Capitol Core, we run Throughway buses, which are very expensive. We talked about substituting AC Transit's fleet for our Throughway buses from San Francisco, particularly to Emeryville. We don't park our Throughway buses in the Sales Force Transit Center because it's too costly. We're looking for other ways to cut our budgets at Capitol Corridor. I see some benefits in AC Transit's Transbay often services local communities before it hits the bridge. In some ways, you could keep some Transbay footprint alive by working on a partnership with the Capitol Corridor. The downside is your equipment doesn't necessarily have luggage space.

Hursh: We were on the same page. CalSTA had given us a partial grant to do exactly what you're asking about pre-pandemic and we had addressed essentially everything but the luggage issue. When I was at VTA, we had a bus line that had luggage racks, so it's solvable. The issue is the economics have changed drastically now. It was probably achievable, and we had a good amount of transbay service and the ridership, a win-win. The economics have drastically changed now. It would be a good future agenda item, there is a lot we can report out on what we looked at. It makes service better for Capital Corridor/ Amtrak. There are significant challenges, we will use union operators that make it difficult for us to bring the prices to less than the contract service that Capitol Corridor uses now.

Raburn: I would like to make sure that prior to bringing it to the ILC that you and Robert sit down. I would like to push it and because we're under pressure and while I think that there could be some economies and it fits within the general precepts of transformation. I think that's the direction we want to go because you do have a network from the Emeryville Station. Keep a placeholder on the Transbay service. Once you give that up, it will be very difficult to bring it back.

Del Rosario: The only thing I'll add is the operator resource. If we dedicate operators to this service, we have to take them from somewhere else.

Shaw: For the 72R, I think having a rapid bus along that corridor is good. We did the skip stop service at SamTrans overlaid with local stop service. You had to use the real time app to know when the bus was arriving to that stop. Are there opportunities to do a little bit of both in this corridor?

Eshelman: We're thinking about various options. Right now, if you live near a 72R stop, you get a bus every 6.5 minutes. If you live near a 72 local stop, you get a bus every 15 minutes. The idea is to give everyone a bus every 7.5 minutes- while the bus might take longer on board, and we'll try to speed that up, people will spend less time waiting at the stop. One might conceivably shave seven minutes off the wait time, which is savings on your overall trip time. That's cold comfort for folks that live near a 72R stop. We're discussing with our project team about whether there are overlay (skip stop over local stop) options or maybe the R operates during peak hours or peak directions? We're getting a lot of comments about the high ridership on the R. The reason we don't carry more people on the other line is we're only operating it every 30 minutes. We're not settled on whether the R should stay or go at this point. In a cost constrained environment, that's what we're considering.

Shaw: It might be helpful to show the travel time using a couple of key points- to say your trip that used to take you 22 minutes is now going to take 25 minutes – the end result isn't what you're picturing.

McCalley: I want to echo Director Salzman's comments with respect to visionary plan. I understand the need for identifying the frequency and balanced plans for now based on the resource constraints today. At some point, we need to home in on this visionary, flesh it out, because it will become a marketing document for us as we move towards 2026 and funding. It's important to not just talk about concepts but to show lines specifically. If we had the funding, we could provide these additional lines, so people can see what it means if they voted for the measure. What's some of the feedback that we're getting so far?

Eshelman: We'll have a summary of that feedback in the December 13th board report. The 72R is among the top. The Line 51 change, making it longer and running it the length of College Ave is popular with customers. It also raises major issues internally from operators about how do you keep it on time? There are a lot of memories from when the 51 was in one piece about 40-minute gaps and then three buses. There are also some Transbay routes, we've received the most comments about the G- if you are in the portion of Line G that still has service, you love it because you have a faster trip to the freeway. If you're anywhere else, you are very vocal about not wanting it. We've heard comments from Alameda about the changes to the 20 and losing the 21 in the Frequency scenario. People have done a good job of making their voices clear when they're losing service or are on the hard end of a trade-off. We've also received a lot of positive comments. We're sifting through them all now and will adjust the service plan. If we propose keeping something we receive negative comments on, we'll make sure to do a good job justifying it. The next iteration of the proposals isn't the last.

Syed: We have been hearing from transit advocates, operators, and significant point of discussion at our board, concerns about the project schedule so looking forward to staff bringing a revised schedule to our December meeting to consider for action. It's important that we're not putting out a new plan that doesn't give our drivers time to do test runs or is missing important pieces, like the BECCAP. Ensuring staff has time to incorporate the feedback is also important to not erode trust with our riders, that could lead to bigger problems when we go back to voters.

On the Transbay service, I want to share a compliment and a question. When the Bay Bridge was shut down, a couple weeks ago, I got some rider feedback that they were waiting for the Transbay bus. They got the alert and then their bus showed up less than five minutes after the alert. The bus driver said we're going to West Oakland BART. Do you want to go? The rider asked if it was local fare. The driver said yes, and they said their trip to San Francisco was quicker than normal. The question is, as we're looking at eliminating these Transbay routes, are we also looking at options that can get those riders to BART more quickly and perhaps improve their experience. I live right near one of the Transbay lines proposed for elimination and am hearing a lot as well. Some of those transbay routes, while they do not serve our equity communities, they are performing better than they did before the pandemic. They've been paired back significantly and some of them are standing room only. I'd like to hear about what we're looking at that could perhaps strengthen the connection and help build BART ridership.

Eshelman: You've illustrated a key dichotomy that we have standing loads on a lot of our Transbay buses. But we also want to make sure we're leveraging limited resources. Going back to 2019, the entire discussion with BART was that it was at capacity, and how can transbay service capture the folks having difficulty on a crowded BART. Now the conversation has changed and it's how can, and I think your West Oakland BART example is good – how can we make sure that we have a really high quality local fast frequent service that can get people to regional connections and leverage this fantastic network to make sure that regardless of the logo on the vehicle have the

ability to get where they're trying to go as fast and reliably as possible. Transbay service is treasured – those that have it, love it. It's a one seat ride. But with limited resources, how can we make sure we're doing the right thing.

Del Rosario: The regional fare policy, we'll start looking at transfers and making them simpler in terms fares. And Andy Metz is in the early stages of working with the operators on improving connections between operators in the region. Quick fixes on the regional side are also in the work.

Syed: In Emeryville they did a PBI (Property and Business Improvement District) to do a local assessment of parcel tax for their service. Can we provide options and begin that dialogue with communities that want service that we can't afford to pay for, to encourage them. Provide a menu of what kind of parcel tax might be needed or how to help us get a bill passed, some way to not be as bleak as it is.

Del Rosario: The product that we were putting out there was some kind of city-wide Easy Pass that could generate enough revenue to sustain a level service. We looked at the cost of that for Berkeley, Alameda, and San Pablo. That's a tangible way to get improved service levels, but logistically, we still need to wrap our heads around how it could work.

Peebles: When Tom Bates was mayor, there was a discussion about making transit free in Berkeley, and a lot of heated debate. When we looked at it, they had underestimated the cost by a factor of 10 and it would end up needing a \$200 parcel tax. They dropped the idea because they didn't think they could pass that.

Raburn: I just want to make a comment of support for the fare integration. Early as a BART director, I recall I was representing the City of Alameda. The separation of the 51 A and B was widely applauded because it became reliable. What's the status of the proposal to reunify the 51?

Peebles: It would go to downtown Berkeley rather than all the way down University Ave. University would be served by Line 6.

Raburn: I would applaud that.

McCalley: I know right now we need to focus on the plan to be implemented in 2024. The visionary plan is essentially a phase two of ReAlign, to provide more specificity for service in the future. I don't want you to be bogged down with the visionary plan in addition to the 2024 plan. But at the same time, recognize that's something we need to work on and return to the public with more granular information.

Eshelman: The unconstrained plan serves two roles. It's visionary and could potentially be used in discussions around the funding measure. It also serves as an a la carte menu that we can pull from as additional resources become available, through return of operator workforce and funding. Maybe we prioritize service within the unconstrained plan. Or if money falls out of the sky, we already have that in the plan and are ready to implement it.

Public Comment:

Warren Cushman: Warren Cushman at Community Resources for Independent living. I have three quick comments. First, I want to thank AC Transit for reaching out to the community. Community Resources for Independent Living has served as a community support for the ReAlign process. Perhaps AC Transit could present to the Municipal Advisory Councils in the unincorporated areas. Also, expectations and messaging to make sure the public is clear what we're talking about. If we are talking about a 15% cut or reducing service, or regarding the visionary scenario, that we're talking about one thing right now and perhaps something different when there is a

measure in 2026 or as someone said, when the money falls out of the sky. The expectations of the public needs to be clear.

Syed: I want to acknowledge your idea of separating these two parts of the plan. I also don't think we're ready for 2024 implementation of any of these plans. The board would need to vote by April. Given the issues that have come up. Our staff needs more time to do the excellent work that needs to be done, that we've committed to do. I hope we will be making the decision to extend the schedule soon. I also want to amplify Warren's comment. There's no easily accessible map of where service will be cut. We've got a lot of maps out there, but there's a need for more legibility of this information so people have a meaningful opportunity to digest it. It takes time for people to become aware and engage with it, and then provide feedback. I hope we can get those changes made on the website as well to make it accessible and easier to work with.

3. UPDATE ON PAST ITEMS

A. Service and Operations Updates- BART and AC Transit

Saltzman: Can you tell us more about your issues with hiring? I know you recently reduced service to have more reliable schedules. They still seem very unreliable. Is there any hope for the future? Is there anything we can do as a broader collective outside of just AC Transit?

Salvador Llamas: The issue was that earlier in 2023 getting enough applicants was a challenge. That has increased in the last quarter. We averaged about 60 students and certified, an average of around 50. When we started this process over a year ago, we needed around 300 operators to have service levels equal to pre-pandemic. We're now at about 190, so we're getting closer. We're starting classes now at around 22. Previously, classes would start with 12 to 15 students per class, and we have three classes that are currently running every month.

Saltzman: My understanding is that you had some issues, with people dropping out along the way or people getting to the end of the process and then failing the drug test. So how many of the 22 do you expect to get from each class?

Llamas: We realized there was an issue with people being ready to enter the workforce pass all the required certifications. So around early summer we started bringing in the new candidates a week before they started training. During that week they get all the orientation, we meet with them, screen them, offer services, anything they need to get them ready to start class. Class is competitive and very stringent and that has yielded amazing results.

Saltzman: Finally, I'm sure you're all aware there's a new drug test that's not fully approved because there aren't the labs certified to do it. It's an oral drug test that would solve some of the issues we have here in California because marijuana is legal, and often when people get tested, they fail. This new test only captures use within a few days instead of months. Are you all involved in advocacy on that? Some advocates from Move LA reached out to me. But I was wondering if AC Transit is involved.

Llamas: We are not advocating either way we follow whatever the guideline is.

Saltzman: Maybe you're not aware of this new drug test. The only thing holding it up is that they need to certify labs to do the test. It would still follow the guidelines. This is not ending drug tests. It's just changing it to a more specific drug test. Agencies around the country are having the same problem because marijuana is legal in so many places now. This is nationwide. I'm happy to connect you with the advocates who are working on it. If you

want to help advocate, I think you should. If I was AC Transit, I would, we're not having the same hiring problem at BART, but it seems like it could help, at least on that problem.

Syed: Yeah, that would be great. I think we have talked about it. And my understanding was we were doing everything to be ready as soon as the labs are available to transition to that.

Saltzman: Sounds like there needs to be more urgency so that's why they could start trying to push more.

Llamas: Yeah, we have a compliance director who is following up with the FTA to make sure that whatever is authorized, we're able to utilize with our clinics that we contract with.

B. Regional Mapping & Wayfinding - BART

No comments.

C. Paratransit Update - BART and AC Transit

Public Comment:

Cushman: I understand that MTC is moving forward with a one-seat ride paratransit proposal in Contra Costa County and other counties. I heard that there was some interest in AC Transit doing one-seat ride paratransit. I'd like to hear at some point more specificity around that and hopefully that AC Transit will be a part of that process. I would hate to see AC Transit left behind. Thank you.

Mario Valadez: Calling on behalf of Transform. I'm also commenting on my concern that East Bay Paratransit's involvement in the one-seat pilot has not been brought up. We would like to see the involvement of East Bay Paratransit in the one seat ride pilot project. Thank you.

Mark: I'm also commenting on East Bay Paratransit. I saw some preliminary data saying that the one-seat ride policy in Contra Costa and Alameda County with the four agencies has led to some decreases in dwell times and some other cost saving benefits. So, also advocating that East Bay Paratransit consider joining.

Mallory Rush: Accessible Services Manager, AC Transit: East Bay Paratransit is participating with MTC's program and all the agencies. We have met at least twice, and proposals are due to MTC by April. We are intending to submit a proposal on behalf of East Bay Paratransit.

Del Rosario: And just to clarify, I think what others are talking about is a separate Contra Costa program led by County Connection and Wheels right?

Raburn: For the existing service, there's a partnership with Alameda County and San Francisco and Golden Gate and there is some service, it's not extensive, there's no funding for an expansion of that service. If we see funding arise from MTC, there are other options that could be implemented.

Peeples: But the current system can get you to VA San Francisco, UC San Francisco. And I think it's got a cost sharing between East Bay Paratransit and San Francisco.

Raburn: San Francisco picks up half the bill on all trips to San Francisco. Is that correct?

Rush: We have a legacy agreement with San Francisco, and we transport into and out of San Francisco and are reimbursed on a per mile rate by San Francisco for those trips.

Peeples: There's also one that'll get you to stand for it to the medical center in Stanford and the V. Follow. What happened? I think you can do that. It's a one seat ride on the three.

McCalley: What's the status of the paratransit RFP?

Rush: We have three active solicitations. The software procurement RFP was released, and we received four proposals. We will begin oral interviews and demonstrations next week. The broker RFP was released on November 16th with proposals due on January 30th. That is for a five-year base with a five-year option. And the paratransit coordinator's office RFP will be released this week with proposals due in late January. We expect all three to come to both boards, probably in March of 2024.

4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

A. Clipper Bay Pass Pilot Update (Phase 1 & 2) - BART and MTC

B. Transit-Oriented Development Update. [Requested by Director McCalley] - BART

Salzman: Whenever there's the next version of the Realign Plan

Shaw: There are a lot of shuttle services that are available within each city. A lot of them are focused on BART, but some of them are just focused in the cities. It would be great to get a list of those resources in Alameda County so that both agencies can take advantage of them and make sure the public know what options are available to them.

Del Rosario: Jumana Nabti and Bob Franklin probably have some of that information and then we can also talk to the county.

Raburn: I would like to buttress Diane's suggestion. It's very frustrating when I see buses go to Bay Farm Island every morning and they don't appear on anybody's map or schedule. If we're going to truly have an integrated service, we can start there and bring everything under a big tent.

Nabti: Are you interested only in the services that are open to the public?

Shaw: Yes. I have seen a list once that came from the state, but I couldn't find it.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Raburn: I would just want to note that Laura Timothy, who has been BART's liaison to the Service Review Advisory Committee, now referred to as the State Paratransit Advisory Council, retired recently after tremendous service and Robert Franklin is the interim head for that until we hire someone else.

Bob Franklin: Hopefully we'll begin our interviews next week.

6. PROPOSED DATE AND TIME OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING

February 14th at 9 a.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT