



Travel Report

Jean Walsh, AC Transit Board Director, Ward 2
California Transit Association (CTA) Annual Conference
Long Beach, CA
November 5-7, 2025

I joined Board President Diane Shaw, VP Murphy McCalley, Director Curtis Silva and staff at the California Transit Association conference in Long Beach, CA.

Conference Session Highlights

- Keynote Presentation by Pete Buttigieg
- Keynote Presentation by Lynda Tran, Senator Lena Gonzales, and Dani Simons.
 - Speakers touched on changes to the US Department of Transportation Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program
- Performance Management & Succession Planning session with transit agency CEOs.
 - Panelists emphasized that performance should be measured based on criteria that align with the organization's strategic priorities, which ultimately should be providing reliable service to the customer. One panelist emphasized the importance of distributed performance ratings (ie, not everyone should receive top ratings, but that there should be a bell curve.)
- Cutting Costs Without Cutting Service.
 - Panelists presented on the usage of AI for dispatching and subsidizing Uber rides for areas with low ridership.
- Under the Dome: 2025 State Legislative Update with Streets for All, Transform, SPUR and CalSTA
 - Speakers discussed the regional measure, SB 63, SB 445, the state bridge loan, and how a broad coalition of transit, housing and environmental justice advocates came together to support SB 79
- Winning Hearts and Headlines: Selling Public Transit Success Stories
 - CEOs from San Diego, Caltrain, LA Metro and WETA focused on the importance of building relationships with reporters, encouraging staff to use the system (be "secret shoppers"), and working with influencers and supporters.

Other notes

- Long Beach Transit has a Bus Stop Amenities Coordinator position that's responsible for coordinating with cities to improve bus stops

- LA Metro distributes media clips to board members
- BART Board members meet with their General Counsel on a regular basis to discuss legal matters

Transportation notes

- Long Beach has a lot of microtransit: Lyft, Bird and VeoRide. I used the Lyft gliders to get around town - super convenient!
- I took a tour on the Long Beach Transit Water Taxi
- I attempted to take a Long Beach Transit bus from the hotel to the airport. Headways were one hour. Many bus stops were closed due to road construction and the bus passed right by my stop without letting me off. No communication was provided about the closed stops. I ended up having to take a Lyft the rest of the way...

