



ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT

Master Minute Order

File Number: 21-372

Report ID: 21-372

Type: Regular - Board
Administrative Matters

Status: Informational

Agenda
Section:

Meeting Body: Board of
Directors/Board
Officers Retreat

Report Created: 07/19/2021

Final Action:

ded Action: Strategic Plan Update Process.

Sponsors:

Enactment Date:

Attachments: STAFF REPORT, Presentation: Strategic Plan Update

Enactment Number:

Hearing Date:

Effective Date:

History of Legislative File

Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
Board of Directors/Board Officers Retreat	09/29/2021	The report was presented for information only.				
Action Text: The report was presented for information only.						
Notes: Executive Director of Planning & Engineering Ramakrishna Pochiraju opened the discussion of the Strategic Plan update and introduced Director of Service Development and Planning Robert del Rosario who gave the presentation.						
Public Comment: No comments were offered.						
Board Discussion:						
General: President Ortiz believed Paratransit service and the necessary funding needed to be acknowledged in the Strategic Plan. Director Williams concurred. Vice President Young questioned the timing of changes to the Strategic Plan given the rapidly changing environment. Mr. del Rosario advised that climate change would continue to evolve as would the issue of diversity and inclusion. He added						

that the changes allow the District to be nimble and flexible in light of the pandemic.

With regard to Innovation and Transportation, Vice President Young believed the Strategic Plan should include non-transportation innovations.

Director Beckles suggested that the District address the negative stigma in terms of who rides the bus through marketing the District's role in the greater community to fight climate change (to get people out of cars) and provide bus service for everyone. Mr. del Rosario commented on the customer experience, not only for people who use transit as a safety net or to commute, but every rider and how to get more people out of their cars.

Director Williams asked about outreach to the unions about the Strategic Plan. Mr. del Rosario advised that the addendum to the plan would also be provided to them for review.

Proposed Goal/Initiatives: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility:

Director Peeples commented that AC Transit seemed to be farther ahead than most agencies in the area of equity and inclusion due to the diverse composition of the workforce and the diverse nature of the communities served by AC Transit.

Director Walsh commented that diversity and inclusion seemed to be workforce-focused and suggested that it potentially be merged with the workforce goal. Mr. del Rosario advised that diversity and inclusion could be part of the workforce goal; however, staff believed that calling it out separately would highlight its importance to the District.

Director Peeples believed that the plan should address income inequality, saying that part of AC Transit's problem is that operators and mechanics in the 1960s made about the same as blue collar workers; but now make far more than the average rider and this difference should be acknowledged in the plan. Director Peeples further believed that a regional solution to have a mobility manager would mean that AC Transit was buying into the slave labor system of the Transportation Network Companies (TNC) indicating that he would never support the concept of working with them or using public monies to support them. He firmly believed that the Strategic Plan should address this.

Vice President Young shared Director Peeples' comments concerning race, equity and inclusion and wondered how impactful the District could be in this area. General Manager Michael Hursh advised that while he agreed with the comments, he felt that disadvantaged communities needed more of a voice and supported the addition of this goal.

With regard to comments about TNCs, Director Shaw offered that the District needs to focus on the service it can provide respective of the cost and collaborate with

cities in areas where it is not cost-effective to provide bus service. She also supported the idea of collaborating with community-based organizations.

Director Shaw expressed the importance of representing those who could not speak for themselves, but also noted that there were people who did not fall within the definition of “low income” who don’t have a car because they want to use public transit. She wanted to know how they fit in to make sure they get the service they need so they don’t have to drive a car. Director Shaw also acknowledged the student population that rides public transit and would likely use it as adults and how upper class white students do not have access to public transit because it is assumed that someone can drive them to school. She felt these circumstances would hurt the District in the future if unaddressed. She also noted that a lot of people use bus service for their daily activities, not just commuting, and needed to be considered. She added that the District needed to figure out how to address its labor shortage by collaborating with other services, saying that she did not agree with Director Peeples’ comments about TNCs. She further commented on city shuttle services, saying that perhaps we could design service around city shuttle routes. Mr. del Rosario advised that the addendum to the Strategic Plan was limited to specific issues, and that some of the other feedback provided by the Board warranted a deeper discussion.

President Ortiz was glad staff included equity in the plan as funding agencies are focused on equity in transportation. She added that it was important to have input from all riders about service changes.

Director Walsh asked why staff was specifically calling out diversity, equity and inclusion, but not doing the same with regard to environmental improvement, saying that the District’s environmental stance needed strengthening in the Plan. Mr. del Rosario advised that while the plan’s goals and initiatives do address the District’s environmental improvement, staff would update the environmental narrative in the goals and initiatives to be more aggressive. He added staff would bring the changes back to the Board in January.

Director Walsh agreed that while low income riders needed to be heard, they should not be pitted against other riders who may be able to drive, may be wealthier or have more resources. She added that the bus isn’t just for poor people, the disabled or people who can’t drive, but for anyone who wants to ride regardless of their economic status, adding that we should not denigrate those who come to Board meetings and ask for bus service. She urged the Board to provide a service that welcomes people of all income levels as well as those that want to get out of their cars and help solve the climate crisis. Mr. del Rosario responded that this is done by tying service to land use and that the issue was not about not wanting to serve wealthy people, but about providing service to low density areas that are difficult to serve where there is not a lot of ridership. He added that if the District focuses on trunk lines and expands Bus Rapid Transit to every corridor, more people are going to ride the bus.

Update Goal: Environmental Improvement:

Director Walsh expressed a need to strengthen the Strategic Plan in regard to environmental improvement, saying there needed to be greater focus on non-revenue vehicle use and internal activities to advance environmental stewardship (waste, recycling, paper use). Mr. del Rosario commented that staff is working on an environmental sustainability plan that would report on all of the District's efforts. Director Peebles commented on the environmental sustainability reports produced several years ago, saying they were quite extensive and included all of the internal efforts the District was undertaking.

Other Issues (Finances/Service)

President Ortiz asked about a bill that was recently signed into law that requires a nexus between housing and public transit and asked staff to review it and advise how the District might be impacted in addition to what local cities might expect from the District. She also commented that the financial obligations to the Transbay Joint Powers Authority were a concern as was Transbay ridership, which currently stands at 9%, because of how employers feel about the transmission of Covid on public transit. Director Williams offered that perhaps a tour and demonstration of safety protocols be considered. Director Shaw concurred that negative perceptions about contracting Covid while riding public transit needed to be addressed.

President Ortiz also shared her belief that as vehicle automation advances, many cities would automated vehicles to transport residents because it would likely be cheaper than the service provided by the District.

Director Walsh asked staff to explain what is meant by the Focused Improvement to provide a collaborative model, what it means and who the District is collaborating with. Mr. del Rosario advised that collaborative efforts are focused on local jurisdictions and ensuring that the trunk service operates like a commuter service (transit priority).

Director Williams requested more conversations about Flex service, how to fund it and expand it.

Vice President Young asked about the need to redesign the service network and plans for service in South County. Mr. del Rosario explained that there are components of the existing network that do not work because of the pandemic, such as Transbay, and that South County is not as commute-based as other areas. He added that staff's pre-pandemic recommendations are still relevant and would improve service in south county. Staff is still reviewing the timeline.