

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 2/9/2022

Staff Report No. 22-106

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager
SUBJECT: Bicyclist and Bus Operator Roadway Safety Training

BRIEFING ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving an update on the bicyclist and bus operator safety training program. [Requested by Director Peeples - 6/9/21]

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:

Goal - Safe and Secure Operations
Initiative - Service Quality

The bicyclist and bus operator safety training program is focused on how AC Transit buses and Bay Area bicyclists can safely share roadways, which is aligned with the following Strategic Plan Goals and Initiatives: Safe & Secure Operations, Service Quality, and High Performing Workforce.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There are no budgetary or fiscal impacts related to this report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

January 2022 launched the beginning of an enhanced bus and bicyclist safety training program by AC Transit's Training and Education Department staff entitled *Sharing the Roadways: Buses and Bikes Working Together*. This one-hour class is designed to fit well into the annual required Commercial Driver License (CDL) class, often commonly referred to as a "refresher" or VTT (Verification of Transit Training) class.

It is important to note that the CDL class is a requirement of the Department of Education (Education Code §40085.5) for drivers as identified by California Vehicle Code 642 (drivers of a transit bus [which is] any bus owned or operated by a publicly owned or operated transit system ... used to provide to the general public, regularly scheduled transportation for which a fare is charged). Topics required encompass a wide array of choices to include bike safety. This class is also scheduled twice weekly throughout each calendar year providing sufficient enrollment opportunities to train all bus operators and comply with the law.

Enhancing bus and bike safety was a direct result from the June 9, 2021, City of Emeryville and AC Transit Interagency Liaison Committee (ILC) meeting and as requested by Director Peeples. Training and Education

Department (TED) staff collaborated with Emeryville Councilmember John Bauters, Bike East Bay's Education Director Robert Prinz, and Cycles for Change's Adult Urban Bike Educator, Phoenix Mangum. Working together, in the bus training yard, it was apparent how to strengthen the program moving forward.

Using a forty-foot AC Transit bus, several bicyclists, and top-notch trainers, each participant was able to observe best practices and opportunities for safety training improvements. The take-away plan: Operations would team with Bike East Bay to run a pilot one-hour bus and bike safety program prior end of calendar year 2021 for bus operators during their annual CDL refresher class.

To that end, Lead Instructor for Bike East Bay, Dan Hernandez, presented a new, condensed one-hour *Drive Smart* workshop in December 2021. Staff and bus operators attended. Content included specific vehicle codes pertaining to sharing roadways, understanding awareness of bicyclists and operating behaviors. The program and presentation enabled training staff to develop an enhanced safety training entitled, *Sharing the Roadways: Buses and Bikes Working Together*. Content is similar and includes the importance of key vehicle codes to impart that sharing roadways is more than a courtesy; it is the law. Additionally, the presentation includes how to safely share roadways and focuses on the importance of clearances, set up for turning, lane positioning, understanding bicyclists' intentions or signaling, bike lane usage, importance of slowing in speed, when or not to pass, and the awareness other hazardous actions to anticipate such as car door openings.

Staff plan to provide this enhanced safety training topic throughout the 2022 calendar year ensuring that all bus operators are afforded the opportunities to benefit from this program. Staff will re-evaluate program enhancements along the way. Finally, staff will determine what if any changes might be necessary to further upgrade this program for the following calendar year. Staff will meet with Bike East Bay and Cycles for Change bi-annually to determine what, if any, adjustments to the program may be necessary.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

This report does not recommend a course of action with notable advantages or disadvantages.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

This report does not recommend an alternative analysis.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

There are no prior relevant Board actions/policies.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

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