

ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 1/9/2019

Staff Report No. 19-002

TO: AC Transit Board of Directors

FROM: Michael A. Hursh, General Manager

SUBJECT: Service to Priority Development Areas

BRIEFING ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Consider receiving report on the cost of providing service to Priority Development Areas (PDA) at standard service level required by the Plan Bay Area 2040.

BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this informational report.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

Overview

Under Plan Bay Area, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission set 20 minute service as minimum PDA service standard during peak hour. In response to the Board request, staff estimates the annual cost to upgrade the current service in nine (9) PDAs to meet the PDA minimum service standard of 20 minutes frequency would be approximately \$20,000,000.

Priority Development Areas--Background

The PDA program was initiated by ABAG in 2012. ABAG asked cities and counties to name and map transit-served areas that the cities and counties deemed appropriate for housing and (later) job growth. Plan Bay Area 2040 projects that most new jobs and housing in the East Bay and the Bay Area will be developed within PDAs. The One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) program from MTC is focused on 200 PDAs across the nine County Bay Area. MTC and ABAG have indicated that they plan to review the PDA program as part of the next Plan Bay Area process.

PDAs within the AC Transit District

Jurisdictions in the AC Transit service area have designated 44 PDAs. Twelve of the thirteen cities in the District (all except Piedmont) named at least one PDA, while Alameda and Contra Costa County named PDAs within the unincorporated areas. In addition, every BART station in the District has been nominated as a PDA (except North Berkeley, which is adjacent to the University Avenue PDA). Newark nominated a site for PDA that currently has no AC Transit service; however, the PDA is planned for future transit service (Dumbarton rail). Table 1 shows transit service and projected growth for the 44 PDAs in the AC Transit service area. The PDAs vary greatly in land area, density, and current growth rate.

Table 1: Priority Development Areas Served by AC Transit-Service Levels & Projected Growth

| | Service exceeds PDA minimum (service is more frequent than every 20 minutes in peak) | Service meets ABAG PDA minimum (20 minute service) | Service less than ABAG PDA minimum | No AC Transit service |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| High Growth (10,000 or greater combined household + job growth per PDA projected by 2040) | Downtown Berkeley Emeryville Mixed Use Core <u>Oakland</u> : Macarthur Transit Village West Oakland Downtown Oakland/Jack London Square Fruitvale/Diamond Coliseum BART | None | Central Richmond South Richmond Alameda Point Warm Springs, Fremont | None |
| Moderate Growth (2,000-10,000 combined household and job growth projected per PDA) | San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley Eastmont Town Center, Oakland Alameda Northern Waterfront Downtown San Leandro East 14 th St., San Leandro Bayfair BART, San Leandro East 14 th / Mission; Ashland Downtown Hayward; Centerville, Fremont Irvington District, Fremont | Mission Blvd, Hayward South Hayward BART; Fremont City Center | North Richmond | Dumbarton Transit Oriented Development Area, Newark |
| Low Growth (less than 2,000 combined household and job growth projected) | <u>San Pablo Avenue</u> : San Pablo Avenue, Richmond San Pablo & 23 rd St., San Pablo San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito San Pablo & Solano, Albany University Avenue, Berkeley Southside, Berkeley South Shattuck Ave., Berkeley Adeline St., Berkeley | Hesperian Boulevard, Ashland Cannery, Hayward | Downtown El Sobrante Meekland Avenue, Ashland Castro Valley BART; Old Town, Newark | None |
| No Growth Projection Made | Golden Gate/North Oakland; TOD Corridors San Antonio/Central Estuary International Boulevard | None | None | None |

The PDAs were designated by cities and counties for their growth potential, not necessarily their current growth activity. Table 1 shows the projected growth potential for new households and jobs combined. Some PDAs are already growing quickly, others are not. This table shows absolute (projected) growth, not percentage growth, as it is a better indicator of transit need, demand, and impact.

AC Transit Service to the PDAs

The target level of transit service for PDAs is at least once every 20 minutes during peak hour. Most AC Transit service to PDAs meets or exceeds this modest standard, as is shown in Table 1. As of September 2018, Twenty Nine (29) PDAs have (generally trunk line) service which is more frequent than this level. San Pablo Avenue PDAs, Berkeley PDAs, Oakland PDAs, and San Leandro PDAs exceed this target. This in part reflects the fact

that cities designated many of their PDAs along major AC Transit routes such as lines 51, 57, and 72. In some cases, qualifying service is provided by overlapping service-two or more lines which run along the same route for one mile or more (e.g. lines 20 and 21 on Fruitvale Avenue in Oakland).

Ten (10) PDAs in the AC Transit District have less frequent AC Transit service than the PDA standard. These areas have service every 30 minutes, peak and off-peak. With the exception of Central Richmond (which lies along MacDonald Avenue and Line 72M) as these areas are located away from AC Transit's major routes. The low level of transportation sales tax funding in Contra Costa County is one reason for lower service levels there.

Newark's Dumbarton Transit Oriented Development (TOD) area, which centers on Enterprise Drive near the western edge of developed Newark, is the one PDA, which AC Transit does not serve at all. At present, it is a low-density industrial area, with almost no residents. However, the City of Newark plans for more jobs and many more residents if high capacity transit is developed across the Dumbarton Bridge corridor.

Projected Growth in underserved PDAs

The Richmond PDAs with low service-Central Richmond, South Richmond, and (unincorporated) North Richmond are projected (by ABAG and MTC) to experience moderate-high growth by 2040. The number of households in North Richmond is projected to roughly quadruple by 2040-from approximately 1,000 to over 4,000. Alameda Point and the Warm Springs BART PDAs are also projected to experience high growth. Generally, more growth is projected for PDAs which are larger in area. However, Downtown Berkeley is a high growth PDA and is relatively small in area, while Hesperian Boulevard in Ashland is a low growth PDA with a relatively large area. Significant growth is already occurring in South Richmond, Alameda Point, and Warm Springs. AC Transit is already working with the cities of Alameda and Fremont to plan service for Alameda Point and Warm Springs areas. Additional service to South Richmond would be contingent upon future funding such as a Contra Costa County sales tax measure.

Cost of Upgrading AC Transit Service to the PDAs

The estimated current annual cost of upgrading service to the nine PDAs with substandard service would be approximately \$20,000,000. This figure is based on adding 323 platform hours per weekday and 263 platform hours each on Saturday and Sunday. This estimate uses a fully loaded cost of \$180 per hour. This cost would be reduced by fare box recovery. In addition, this plan provides new service on existing lines, which can be somewhat cheaper to implement.

This estimate does not include the currently unserved Dumbarton TOD area because of the unknown future. There is little development there at present and any major transit station will not be developed for years, if at all.

The estimate assumes that qualifying service to these PDAs will be provided by increasing the frequency of an existing route. Service would be upgraded from every 30 minutes to every 20 minutes for the line's existing hours of operations (peak and non-peak). The only exception would be Line 72M, where new service would be truncated at El Cerrito Del Norte BART. Given the geographic spread of the PDAs, this would require increased frequency on 8 routes: 28, 34, 72M, 74 (which serves both South Richmond and Downtown El Sobrante), 76, 96, 200 and 217. This approach would also provide coincidental service improvements to segments of these lines, which are outside of PDAs.

ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:

There are no advantages or disadvantages associated with this information report.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:

No alternatives considered, as it is for informational only.

PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:

None

ATTACHMENTS:

None

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