



Reimagine SamTrans: The DRAFT Preferred SamTrans Network

SamTrans Board of Directors Workshop
August 24, 2021





Agenda

- Project Goals and Timeline
- Policy Guidance and Assumptions
 - Guiding principles
 - Route categories and resource allocation
 - Equity and productivity
- Refresh: Three Alternatives
 - Phase 2 public input received
- Designing the Preferred Network
 - Overview of draft network
 - Trade-offs and desired outcomes
 - Phasing and risks
- Looking Ahead: Phase 3 Outreach



Revisiting Our Project Goals

The goals of Reimagine SamTrans are to ...

Improve the experience for existing SamTrans customers

Grow new and more frequent ridership on SamTrans

Build SamTrans' efficiency and effectiveness as a mobility provider

How does Covid-19 impact our project purpose?



More important than ever

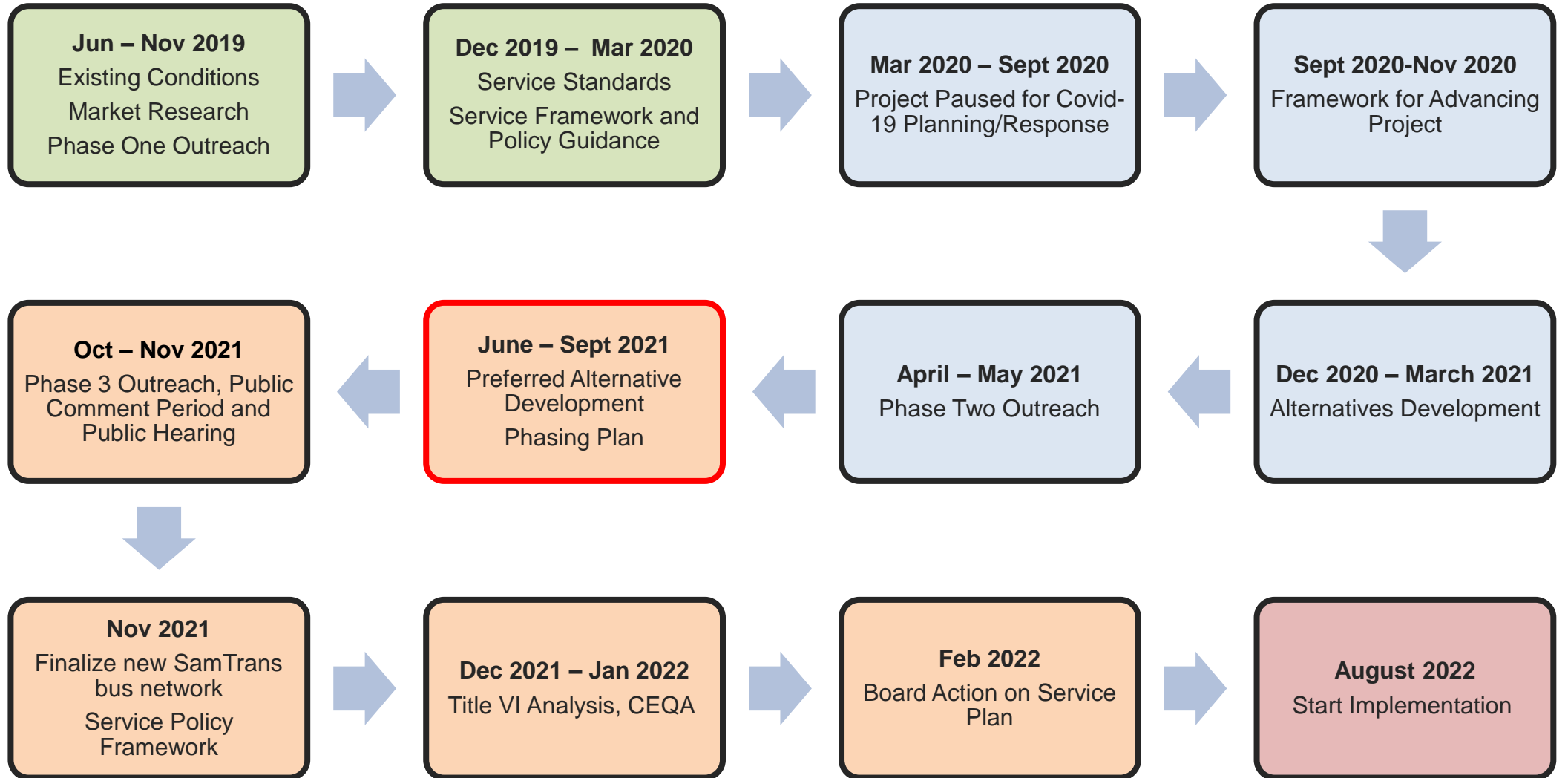
New is harder than before — uncertainty around this market

More frequent still possible

More important to be efficient and effective with resources — has effectiveness changed?



Project Timeline





POLICY GUIDANCE AND ASSUMPTIONS

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Assumptions for August 2022

- **Passenger max load – returned to pre-Covid or higher**
- **Resources – recruiting to fill FY20 authorized bus operator positions (348 District FTEs)**
 - This would represent about 10% increase in District operator FTEs compared to current staffing levels
- **Schools – full-time, in-person learning**
- **Fleet – connected via cellular, better real-time info**
- **Remote working trends – continue to monitor, do not expect full 100% return to office**



Our Guiding Principles



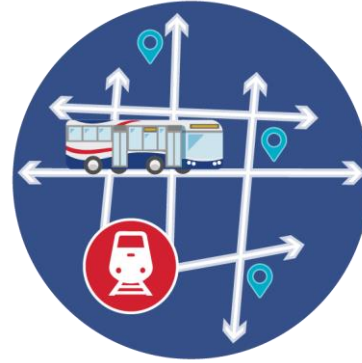
Customer Focus

Employ customer-focused decision-making



Workforce Delivery

Design service that can be reasonably delivered by our workforce



Effective Mobility

Be an effective mobility provider



Social Equity

Provide transportation services that support principles of social equity



Why Adopt a Service Policy Framework?

- Sets the values and principles from which we make decisions
- Supports staff in making day-to-day decisions and in emergency or crisis response
- Consistency and Board-approved rationale for how decisions are applied to each route or community
- Rooted in best practices and reflective of community input



Route Categories

Proposed policy: Adjust categories to be more intuitive

Current SamTrans	Proposed SamTrans
	Express
Multi-City	<i>(Becomes local or frequent depending on frequency)</i>
Mainline	Frequent
Community (School) <i>(two-digit routes)</i>	School-Oriented
Local	Local
Coastal	<i>(Becomes local or lifeline)</i>
	Special
	Lifeline/Owl



Focus on School-Oriented Service

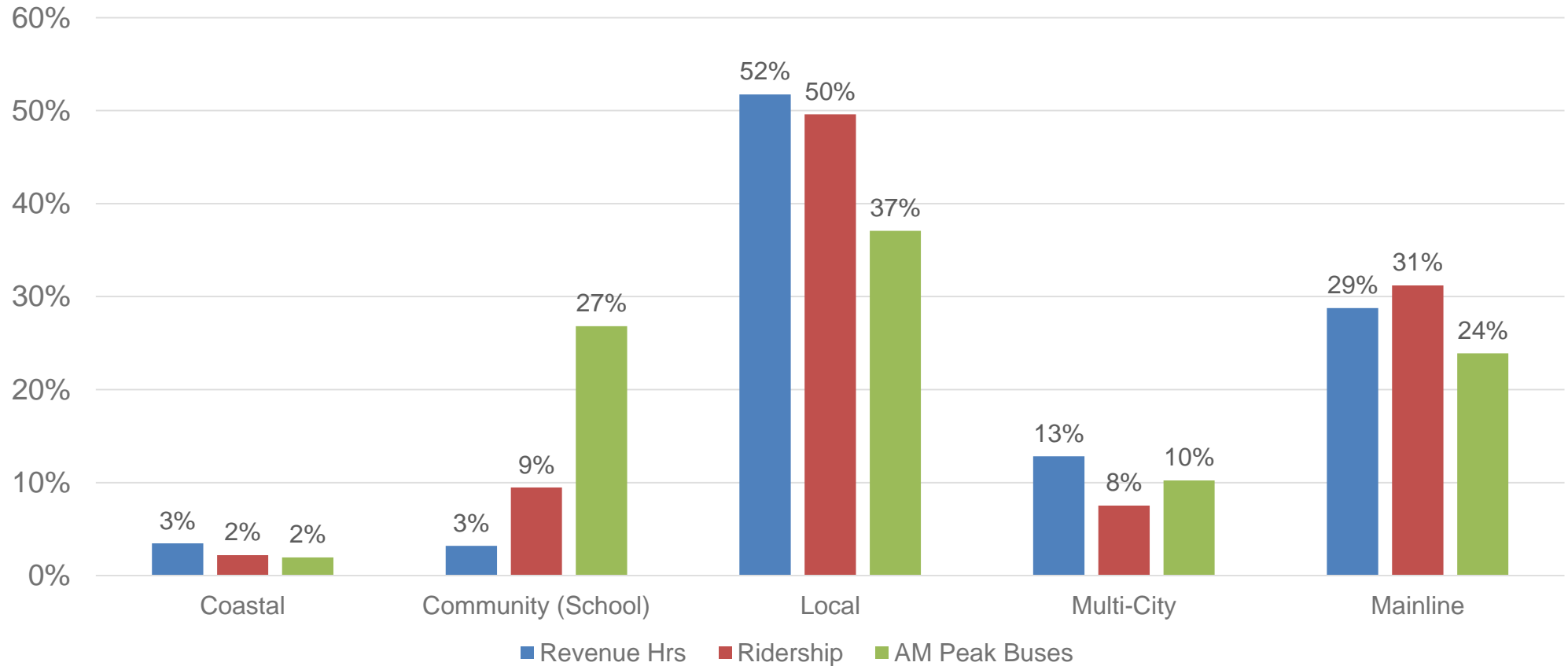
- School service requires bus operators during our most constrained, peak periods
 - Tension with other peak-oriented service like express
- School service will become harder to provide as the state mandates standard bell times
 - Easier to plan for
 - Harder to deliver
- **Proposed policy:** commit to consistently serving our existing customers before we expand our school service program



Service Allocation Choices

Proposed policy: seek to allocate resources to route categories in consideration of ridership generated and equity

Resources and Ridership by Route Category (April 2019)





Vehicle On-Board Max Loads

Proposed policy: Higher passenger loads/more crowding accepted on almost all routes at all times, including school-oriented routes

- Only exception – freeway-based routes like the FCX

Existing Category	Peak	Off-Peak
Coastal	1.25	1.00
Community	1.5	N/A
Local	1.25	1.00
Multi-City	1.25	1.00
Mainline	1.5	1.25

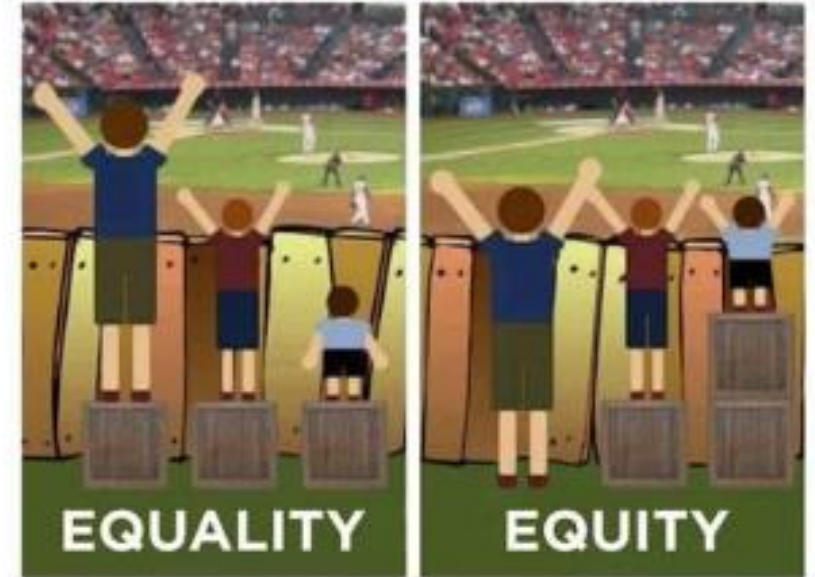
Proposed New Categories	Proposed Max Load
Frequent/Local/School-Oriented/Lifeline	1.5 (150% of seated capacity)
Express	1.0 (100% of seated capacity)



Equity Priority Areas

What does it look like to prioritize equity in real-life?

- Prioritize allocation of service to requests from these areas
- Prioritize infrastructure improvements and pilot projects in equity areas
- Reduce or say no to service requests in non-equity priority areas, especially while resources are constrained
- Accept lower ridership/productivity for routes serving equity zones





Productivity

- Retain baseline thresholds for productivity
- Incorporate a ranking system that compares similar routes to each other and triggers review of low-performing routes for adjustments
 - Lowest 10-15% of routes in each category are reviewed
 - Highest 85-90% are generally meeting standard



THE NETWORK ALTERNATIVES

- Overview of themes
- Phase 2: Public input received

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What were the themes of our **three alternatives**?

- **Alternative 1:** Emphasize direct, high frequency access to places within the county
 - Removed service into SF, reinvested resources into improved frequency within San Mateo County
- **Alternative 2:** Improve connections to rail and the region
 - Additional express bus service
- **Alternative 3:** Retain coverage of service within the county
 - On-demand zones to provide coverage
 - Expanded midday and weekend service



Phase 2 Outreach: April-May 2021



80 separate events, which included:

15 **different presentations/briefings**
with elected officials and staff at various cities and government agencies within San Mateo County



4 **multi-lingual virtual public meetings**
one each in North County, Mid County, South County, and Coastside



25 **separate meetings to community groups**
such as chambers of commerce, school districts, major employers, and advocacy groups



21 **different pop-up events at various sites**
that included bus stops/transit centers, shopping malls, farmers markets, food distribution sites, and health clinics



5 **meetings with SamTrans advisory groups**
Citizens Advisory Committee, Paratransit Coordinating Council, Accessibility Committee, SSF Youth Ambassadors, Stakeholder Advisory Group, and Technical Advisory Group



10 **meetings and outreach events**
with SamTrans operators and staff



Partnerships with 4 Community Based Organizations (CBOs)
for targeted multi-lingual outreach in historically underserved communities. The CBOs helped in reviewing outreach materials, organizing pop-up events, and staffing events with SamTrans staff



Phase 2 Outreach: The Numbers

125,000 mailers sent to equity priority communities as well as text blasts in English and Spanish



9,000 unique users accessed the website and there were **2,008** survey respondents



1,300+ members of the community participated in outreach events

See Appendix A for full list



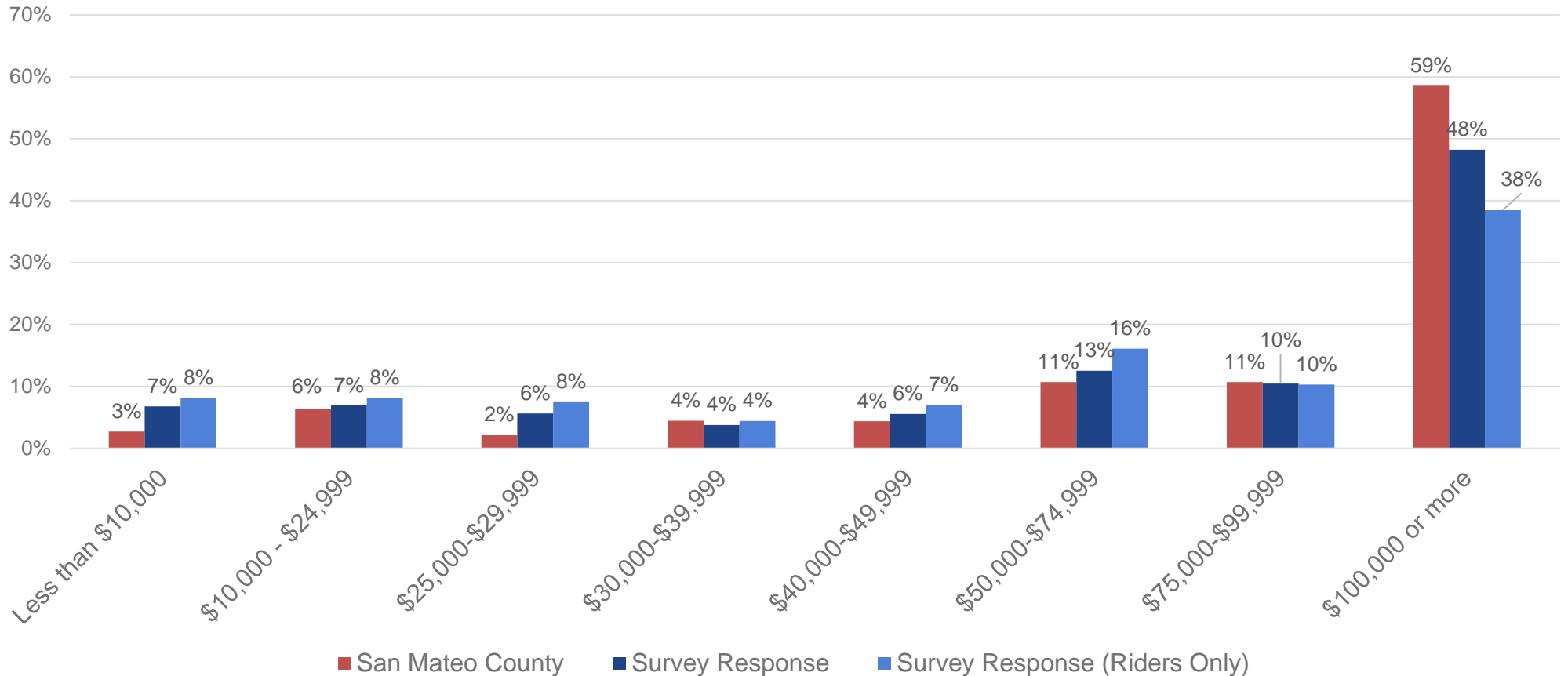
42 responses from SamTrans bus operators





Phase 2 Outreach: Who we heard from

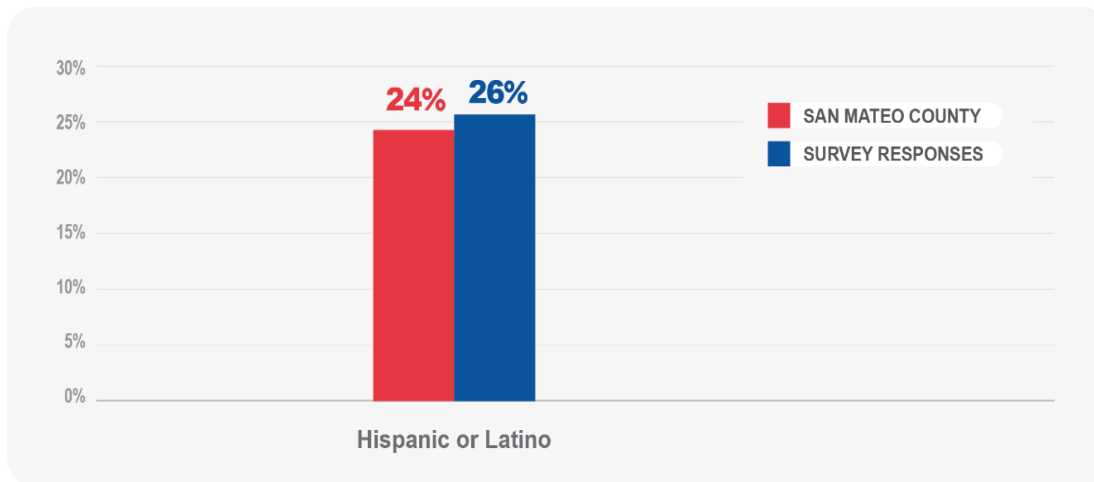
Survey respondents represented county ethnic/racial and income demographics.



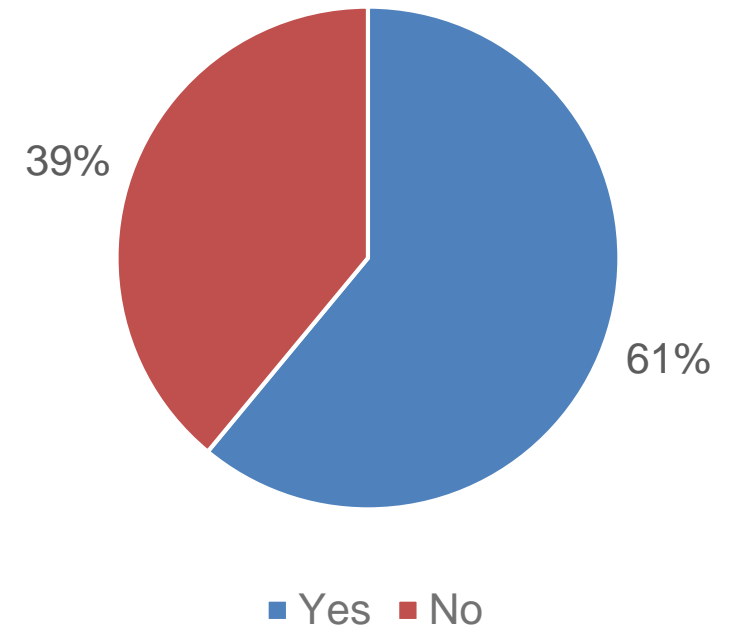


Phase 2 Outreach: Who we heard from

26% of survey respondents self-reported as Hispanic or Latino.



Have you been a regular SamTrans rider at some point in the last two years?

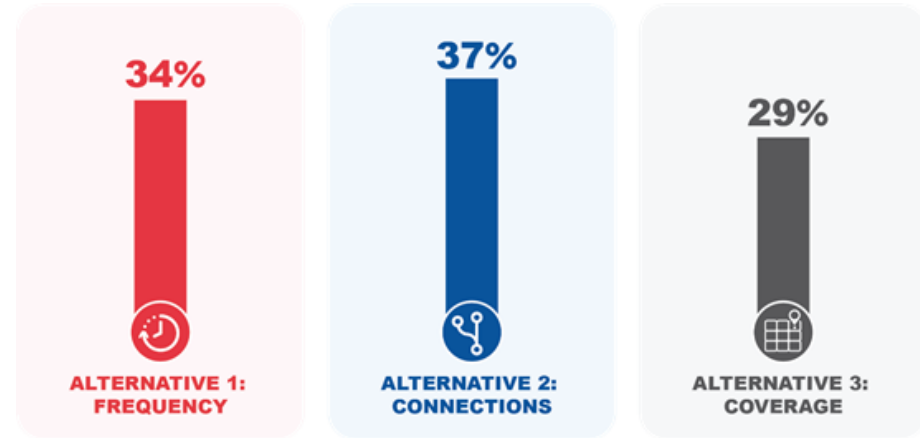




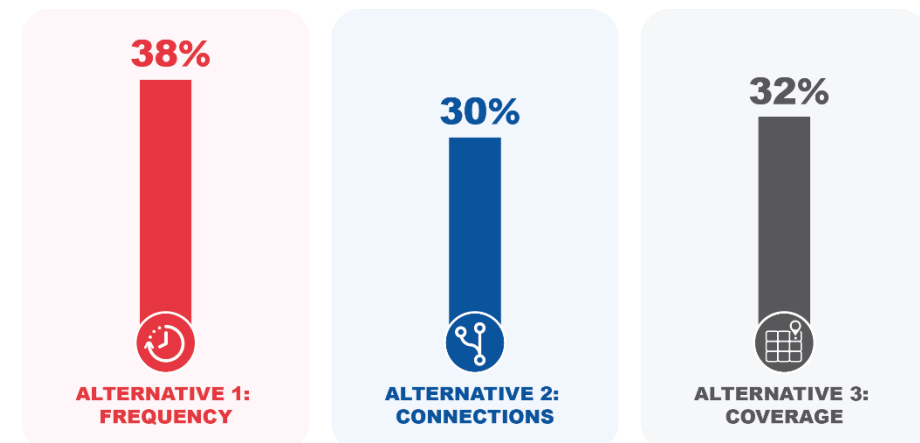
Phase 2 Outreach: What we heard

- **Respondents want:**
 - More frequency/less waiting
 - Improved connections to other routes/services
 - More evening and weekend service
 - Better reliability

All Respondents First Choice Network



Riders First Choice Network





Input on Local Routes

- Assessed public input on each route
- Asked respondents which alternative they preferred:
 - Green: >50% selected
 - Yellow: 10-50% selected
 - Red: <10% selected

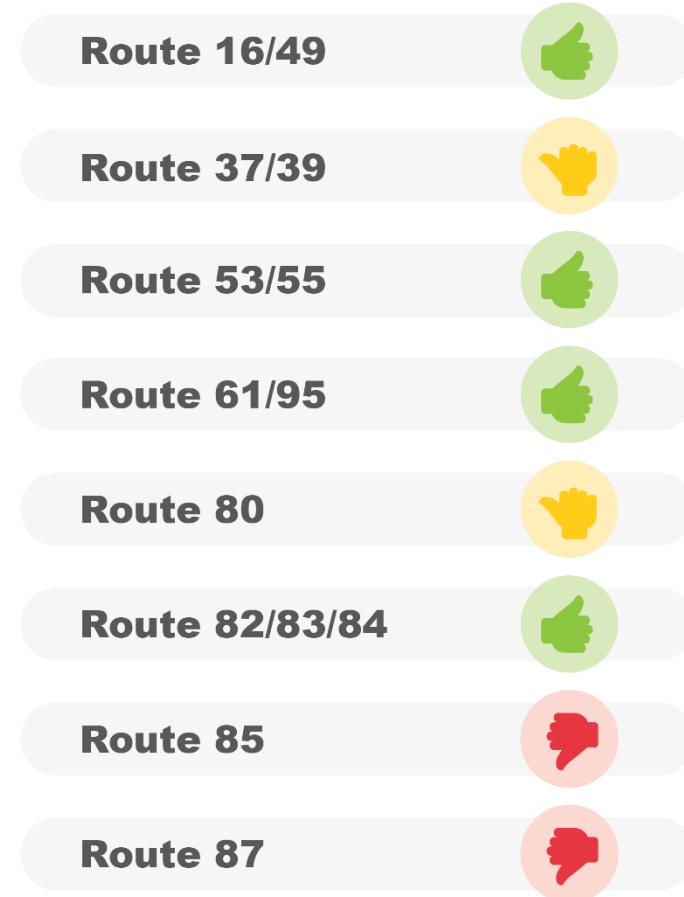
	ALTERNATIVE 1 FREQUENCY	ALTERNATIVE 2 CONNECTIONS	ALTERNATIVE 3 COVERAGE
COASTSIDE ROUTES			
Route 110	Green thumbs up	Red thumbs down	Yellow hand
Route 112	Yellow hand	Green thumbs up	Yellow hand
Route 118	Yellow hand	Green thumbs up	Yellow hand
Route 294	Green thumbs up	Red thumbs down	Yellow hand
Route 17	Yellow hand	Yellow hand	Yellow hand



Input on School-oriented Route Changes

- Asked respondents whether, with the changes, the service would still work for their family
 - Green: >50% yes
 - Yellow: 10-50% yes
 - Red: <10% yes

SCHOOL ROUTES





High-interest Routes

- 292: retain service into San Francisco
- 85: preference for keeping some service to Ormondale Elementary in Portola Valley
- ECR: concern about transfers and fare penalties if route was split; interest in improved reliability and increased frequency, especially on weekends
- 296: excitement about high-frequency service seven days a week



BREAK

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THE DRAFT PREFERRED NETWORK

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As we review, please consider...

- What do you like about the preferred network?
- What makes you nervous?
- What trade-offs can we pursue?
- What are the most important outcomes?



Inputs for the Draft Preferred Network



Ridership
and
Productivity



Equity
Need
Analysis



Guiding
Principles

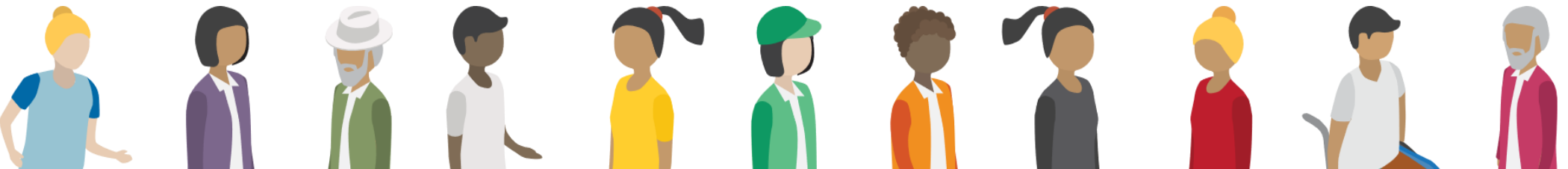


Market
Research



Market
Analysis

Community Engagement





Preferred Network: Overall Objectives

Improved scheduling and reliability

- Route ECR stop consolidation and TSP
- Analysis of run times system-wide

Improved efficiency

- Removal of low ridership deviations
- Consolidation of 10 school-oriented routes into five saves eight buses during peak periods

Equity

- Moving resources to equity priority areas from underutilized or duplicative routes

Connections

- Better, more frequent service to Caltrain and BART
- New route from EPA – San Bruno BART via SFO
- Emphasis on timed transfers at key points within SamTrans system

Less duplication of service

- Routes SFO, 398 eliminated
- One school-oriented route eliminated
- Consolidation of five routes into other services (140, 256, FLXP, 280, 274)





Preferred Network: Highlights

From Alternative 1

- Four (of seven potential) high-frequency, 15-min all day routes
 - Routes ECR, 120, 130, 296
- Better peak or midday frequency on four routes
 - Routes 110, 250, 276, 275

From Alternative 2

- FCX fully-restored
- New EPA-San Bruno route
- Direct connections to Skyline College and CSM
- Service extended into Oyster Point

From Alternative 3

- Two (of four potential) on-demand zones
- Improved weekend or evening service on five routes
 - Routes 121, 130, 270, 276, and 295
- Service extended from EPA to Stanford



Weekday Frequency Improvements





Weekend Service Improvements



- All but one regular route operates 7 days a week
- Earlier/later service in SSF, Redwood City, EPA
- New weekend service on Woodside Road (route 275), Alameda de las Pulgas (route 295)
- Frequency improvements on eight routes, including ECR



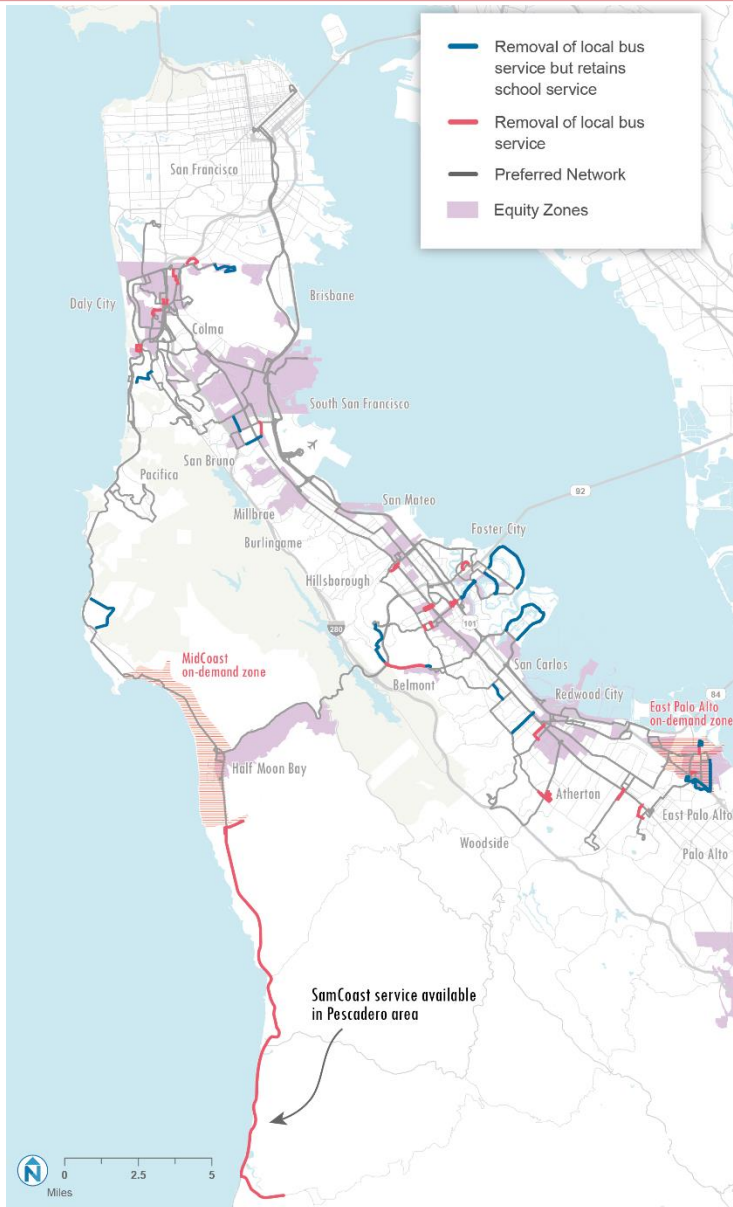
Added Local Bus Service



- New service to:
 - Oyster Point
 - East Palo Alto – Redwood City – Redwood Shores – SFO – San Bruno BART
 - Skyline College and College of San Mateo
 - On demand in East Palo Alto and Half Moon Bay



Reduction in Local, Fixed-route Service



- **Daly City / San Bruno**
 - Some route straightening efforts
 - Almost all riders are still within quarter-mile/5-minute walk
- **Belmont / Redwood Shores / Foster City**
 - Low ridership, non-equity areas
 - School services remain
- **East Palo Alto and Coastside**
 - School services remain
 - Replaced by on-demand service or SamCoast service



Route ECR

- Alternative 2 - Stop Consolidation selected
 - ECR Bus Speed and Reliability Study to determine specific stop consolidation list; outreach to occur in 2022
- No split: Maintains single route end-to-end
 - Look for longer-term solutions to enable a future splitting of the route at Millbrae
- Frequency improvement to every 15-minutes on weekends
- Continue to pursue travel time and reliability improvements through capital investments and TSP system
- No reinstatement of the Rapid at this time



Overall Outcomes

- Increased number of people within a quarter-mile of high-frequency routes
 - 125,000 more jobs
 - 185,000 more residents
- Improved access from equity zones to key places
 - East Palo Alto to Stanford area jobs, SFO, Redwood City, and BART
 - South San Francisco to Oyster Point and Skyline College



North County – Benefits & Trade-offs

Service enhancements:

- Three frequent, all-day routes:
 - Routes ECR, 120, and 130
- Later and more frequent service in South San Francisco (route 130)
- New connection into Oyster Point
- New service between Skyline College and Daly City BART
- New direct connection from San Bruno to Redwood City and East Palo Alto via 101

Service reallocation:

- Routes SFO and 398 deleted
- Simplified alignment in San Bruno, some riders may need to transfer or walk further (up to 5-7 minutes) (route 140)
- Direct connections to Muni Route 14 may require a longer walk (up to 6 minutes)



Mid-County – Benefits & Trade-offs

Service enhancements:

- Increased frequency on Route ECR on weekends
- FCX fully reinstated
- Simplified Foster City local service
- More frequent service through San Mateo and Hillsdale to CSM (route 250)
- New direct downtown San Mateo to CSM connection
- New weekend service between San Mateo and RWC (route 295)

Service reallocation:

- Routes 256 (Foster City) and 398 (RWC-SF) deleted due to duplicative service
- Less coverage in low ridership/low density Foster City, San Mateo, and Redwood Shores



South County – Benefits & Trade-offs

Service enhancements:

- Two frequent, all-day routes:
 - Routes ECR and 296 (Redwood City to East Palo Alto)
- Direct access to Stanford Oval from East Palo Alto
- More frequent service to Redwood City jobs
- More consistent and later evening service to Cañada College from RWC (route 275)
- New service between East Palo Alto, Redwood City, SFO, and San Bruno BART
- New weekend service between San Mateo and Redwood City (route 295)
- On-demand service in East Palo Alto

Service reallocation:

- Routes 280 (EPA) and 398 (RWC-SF) deleted due to duplicative service
- Slightly longer trips to Cañada College due to consolidation of Route 274 into Route 275
- Service removed from low ridership/density parts of Redwood Shores
- Removed deviation to Cordilleras Center (route 295)



Coastside – Benefits & Trade-offs

Service enhancements:

- More frequent midday and evening service between HMB and Hillsdale (route 294)
- More frequent weekend service between HMB and Linda Mar (route 17)
- More frequent express service between Linda Mar and Daly City BART (route 118)
- Linda Mar neighborhood connected directly to Daly City and improved frequency on weekends (110)
- New on-demand service in HMB

Service reallocation:





- Fewer deviations on Route 17; remove low ridership extension to Pescadero (covered by SamCoast)
- No direct service to College of San Mateo on Route 294; transfer at Hillsdale required
- Some riders in Pacifica (Edgemar) may need to make additional transfer
- No Linda Mar to Serramonte or Colma BART service due to a shortening of Route 112
- Elimination of FLX P (covered by Route 110)



Matching our Guiding Principles

To what extent does the Preferred Alternative ...

Pref
Alt

	Customer Focus	Address key themes of rider feedback	● ● ●
		Add more midday and weekend service	● ● ●
		Add frequency	● ● ●
	Workforce Delivery	Reduce pressure on peak service delivery	● ● ●
		Reduce split shifts	● ● ●
	Effective Mobility	Have the potential to increase ridership	● ● ●
		Leverage other transportation investments (101 Managed Lanes, BART, Caltrain)	● ● ●
		Add faster routes with fewer stops	● ● ●
		Provide service to new areas	● ● ●
	Social Equity	Increase access to places within 45 minutes on transit from equity zones	● ● ●
		Increase share of residents in equity zones with high frequency service	● ● ●
		Increase percentage of people with access to high-frequency bus service	● ● ●



Implement in Phases

- Strategically align changes, avoid gaps in service
- Phase 1: August 2022 – implement initial network changes, assuming pre-Covid levels of service and workforce
- Phase 2: Jan 2023 and beyond – implement additional service as bus operators are recruited and trained
 - Staffing up to 348 District FTE operators
 - Phase 2 will likely include new service types like on-demand zones and express service
- Overall goals: avoid DNOs, maintain reliability, implement as we can



Project Risks

- Operator retention/recruitment
 - Phase 1 plan depends on pre-Covid workforce levels
 - Phase 2 plan assumes 10% in growth to 348 FTE
 - Operator attrition spiked in April and May 2021
 - Looking at recruitment and training opportunities
- Gathering support for moving resources to high-need communities (equity lens) from underutilized or duplicative routes



LOOKING AHEAD

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Phase 3 Outreach Approach

- Phase 3 outreach will occur in October and early November 2021
- More targeted than other outreach efforts
 - Focused on SamTrans riders and areas of significant change
- Align with Title VI plan
 - Focused outreach to low-income and non-English speaking riders, partner with CBOs again



Looking Ahead

- Presentation of preferred network at October 2021 Board meeting, kicking off final outreach
- Seek Board adoption of new SamTrans bus network and Service Policy Framework in February 2022