

**San Mateo County Transit District (District)
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, California**

**Minutes of Community Relations Committee Meeting /
Committee of the Whole**

September 6, 2023

Committee Members Present: M. Chuang (Committee Chair), R. Mueller, P. Ratto

Committee Members Absent: None

Other Board Members Present Constituting Committee of the Whole: D. Canepa, M. Fraser, J. Gee, R. Medina, J. Powell

Other Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: A. Chan, D. Olmeda, S. van Hoften, J. Cassman, J. Brook, D. Seamans

8.a.1. Call to Order

Committee Chair Marie Chuang called the meeting to order at 2:11 pm.

8.a.2. Approval of Minutes of the Community Relations Committee Meeting of August 2, 2023

Motion/Second: Medina/Ratto

Ayes: Canepa, Chuang, Fraser, Gee, Medina, Mueller, Powell, Ratto

Noes: None

Absent: None

8.a.3. Accessible Services Update

Tina Dubost, Manager, Accessible Services, said there would be a Senior Showcase they would be participating in later in September.

8.a.4. Paratransit Coordinating Council Update

Ben McMullan, PCC Chair, said their retreat would be Tuesday, September 12 and they would be participating in an information session on September 27.

8.a.5. Citizens Advisory Committee Update

John Baker, CAC Member, provided an update on the August 30 meeting, which included a presentation on the upcoming District strategic plan and the July ridership report.

Committee Chair Chuang asked if there would be any investigations on the complaint that the Route 61 schedule does not coordinate with the Carlmont High School bell schedule. Ms. Chan said that staff was aware and addressing the problem.

8.a.6. Mobility Management Report: Annual Summary

David Olmeda, Chief Operating Officer, Bus, provided the presentation, which consisted of a summary of key performance statistics by fixed route, paratransit, microtransit, shuttle and Caltrain service over the past year. He noted that the operator attrition rate is decreasing. In addition to fixed route service, paratransit ridership is also increasing despite a steady decline in ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) service registrants. He said that shuttle service usage has declined due to the increased number of riders working remotely.

Director David Canepa asked if the trend of reduced ridership affects farebox recovery. Mr. Olmeda said more passengers make for better farebox recovery. He said that based on the data and better connectivity with the community, ridership will continue to increase.

April Chan, General Manager/CEO, added that they do not have the full staffing of operators to implement Reimagine SamTrans. She said the farebox is still below pre-pandemic levels, but they have other revenue sources they can tap into.

Director Jeff Gee said that as the District improves service, we still need to improve ridership to avoid having empty buses. He asked if the need for ADA service changed since the pandemic, given the boom in telehealth and the increased use of delivery services for food and merchandise. Mr. Olmeda said the District strives to serve the community of people who may not use online services and other augmented services.

Chair Josh Powell commended the Reimagine SamTrans program for increasing the efficiency of service. Ms. Chan said the state is now looking at transit agencies' best practices and Reimagine SamTrans has allowed the District to get ahead of the game. Chair Powell asked about school service ridership recovery. Mr. Olmeda said he would get back to him with the data. Chair Powell asked if Caltrain ridership mirrored SamTrans ridership generally. Mr. Olmeda said staff would see what data they could provide. Regarding the buses, he said there was less traffic and that the District's investment in signal priority has reduced the travel time for buses.

Committee Member Ray Mueller said the efficiency metrics apply to the urban population but may fail in a more rural setting. He requested metrics that apply to rural areas. Mr. Olmeda said they track and can provide data on rural service, although they do not compare rural and urban service together.

Committee Member Peter Ratto said on-demand service is ideal for low-population-density areas, but the ridership will never equal that of urban areas. He suggested that District look at other areas' handling of service in low-density areas.

Committee Chair Chuang said she conferred with her colleagues on many of the questions that had been asked. She stressed the importance of continuing outreach to inform customers of their transit choices.

Public Comment:

Mike Levinson, PCC, suggested that the District obtain feedback from PCC and senior homes regarding ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) issues. He also advocated for enabling voice commands for 511 travel information calls.

Roland said potential riders between San Jose and San Francisco have multiple options for transit, including BART and Caltrain, and noted the success of Brightline rail service in Florida.

8.a.7 Monthly Performance Report | July 2023

Ana Rivas, Director of Bus Transportation, summarized the report from the agenda packet.

She noted the average weekday ridership increased 17.6 percent compared to July 2022, and total ridership increased 19 percent. She said they had no DNOs (Did Not Operate) for July and announced the employees of the month.

8.a.8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:59 pm.

An audio/video recording of this meeting is available online at <https://www.samtrans.com/about-samtrans/video-board-directors-cac-and-measure-w-coc>. Questions may be referred to the District Secretary's office by phone at 650-508-6242 or by email to board@samtrans.com.