

**SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT
1250 SAN CARLOS AVENUE, SAN CARLOS, CALIFORNIA**

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING – DECEMBER 10, 2014**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: N. Ballator, B. Gomez, S. Koya, C. Laughon, B. Lock, P. Loranger, T. Miller, H. Plischke, M. Pye, P. Ratto (Chair)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: K. Gilbert, K. Heatley, J. Manalo, J. McKie

SAMTRANS STAFF PRESENT: S. El-Khatib, B. Emerson, M. Eshleman, D. Kim, N. McKenna, C. Patton, A. Rivas, A. Sayong (MV Transportation)

Prior to the meeting a reception was held and Director Rose Guilbault and Mark Simon, Executive Officer, Public Affairs, thanked the CAC for their service.

Chair Peter Ratto called the meeting to order at 6:51 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Ratto read holiday wishes from Directors Karyl Matsumoto and Adrienne Tissier.

PUBLIC COMMENT
None

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 29, 2014

Motion/Second: Miller/Koya

Ayes: Ballator, Gomez, Koya, Laughon, Lock, Loranger, Miller, Plischke, Pye, Ratto

Absent: Gilbert, Heatley, Manalo, McKie

PRESENTATION: UPDATE ON 2015-2019 SAMTRANS STRATEGIC PLAN

Doug Kim, Director, Planning, reported:

- The Board approved the Plan at their December 3 meeting.
- This is a five-year update to the Plan. It initiates a five-year implementation process that will help shape future budgets.
- The Plan focuses on the three priorities:
 - Become a more effective organization
 - Strengthen fiscal health
 - Expand mobility options
- Progress will be measured by five goals by 2019:
 - Increase fixed-route bus ridership by 15 percent
 - Increase fixed-route passenger fare revenue by 20 percent
 - Reduce annual debt service by \$1.5 million
 - Improve organizational performance
 - Manage workforce change
- Public comment on the Plan was accepted from October 1 through October 31 and over 150 comments were received.

- Public meetings were held in Pacifica, Menlo Park, San Carlos, Half Moon Bay, and South San Francisco.
- Public comments included expanding service, improve customer service, promote public health and sustainability.
- Public comments were incorporated into the final version.
- Next steps:
 - Internal committee meetings
 - Prioritized action plan
 - Integrate into upcoming Fiscal Year 2016 budget
 - Annual update to the Board in December 2015

Sonny Koya said he hopes when the subject of reducing the \$1.5 million debt is discussed it doesn't result in service cuts.

Bill Lock asked about the fare increase of 20 percent versus increase in ridership of 15 percent. Mr. Kim said it is not a fare increase it is increase in revenue by 20 percent. He staff said staff will look at the fare structure and there may be modest increases.

Charlotte Laughon asked if there is a way to get shelters without advertising or with green advertising. Mr. Kim said staff looks at all those things and the San Mateo County Transit District (District) needs revenue sources, but doesn't want to contribute to visual pollution.

Nada Ballator said there is a definite need for shelters on the Coast. She said she hopes staff looks at Flex service and more expanded service in Redwood City and other places that are not serviced well. Mr. Kim said staff is looking at low-density areas for alternative solutions.

Tryn Miller asked about fare increases. Mr. Kim said staff will look at the fare policy over the next five years.

Ms. Miller asked if the mobility ambassadors can help. Mr. Kim said yes and that it is a big focus for the District for increasing ridership.

Margaret Pye asked what type of comments were received on public health. Mr. Kim said it is about educating people on the benefits of public transportation as an alternative to driving.

Heinz Plischke asked if there is one person responsible for the success of the Plan. Mr. Kim said all employees at the District own the Plan, but successes is the responsibility of the General Manager. He said accountability is very important in the success of the Plan.

Peter Loranger asked for more clarification in reducing the debt service by \$1.5 million. Mr. Kim said the District has an annual debt obligation, but it can lowered it by refinancing to reduce the annual payments.

Mr. Loranger asked if the budget takes into consideration the drop in fuel prices. Mr. Kim said staff forecasts, but cannot predict changes in the market.

Bob Gomez asked why there wasn't a public meeting held in East Palo Alto. Mr. Kim said a lot of outreach was done in East Palo Alto for the SamTrans Service Plan so staff decided to change the venue to Menlo Park. He said staff did reach out to East Palo Alto and will be working with them on service concepts.

Mr. Gomez said he would like to see something in writing on improving communication in East Palo Alto. Mr. Kim said East Palo Alto is one of the key focus areas and will be working with city staff on key ideas.

PRESENTATION: OVERVIEW OF DRAFT EL CAMINO REAL RAPID TRANSIT PHASING STUDY

Barrow Emerson, Principal Planner presented:

- Rapid bus is a mixed-flow operations that includes skip-stop service with signal/street priority.
- Full Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) has dedicated lanes, enhanced stations, rail-like operations and high- capital outlay.
- Background:
 - The California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) gave the District a 2013 planning grant to focus on long-term BRT implementation, look at short-term rapid bus service opportunities and build off the SamTrans Service Plan and the Grand Boulevard Initiative (GBI).
 - The study was an opportunity to improve the experience for current customers, attract new riders, and support planned growth per the GBI.
- Phasing Plan:
 - Short-term operating plan focused on rapid service.
 - Potential long-term operating plan focused on intensive full BRT service.
- Study Goals:
 - Essential system components
 - Impacts to customers
 - Ridership forecasts
 - Capital and operating costs
 - Funding strategy
- Rapid Bus Alternatives:
 - Route ECR has over 100 stops in each direction.
 - Service concepts
 - Overlay Rapid over current Route ECR.
 - Hybrid route would be Route ECR with fewer stops.
- Rapid Alternatives Performance:
 - Route ECR ridership in 2020 will be about 16,600 daily boardings with \$14.5 million annual operating cost.
 - The impact of Rapid Bus overlay would mean an increase in ridership of 19 percent to 34 percent, and an increase in operating costs of from 34 percent to 59 percent; capital costs are potentially minimal.

- Rapid Hybrid Replaces Route ECR:
 - Hybrid bus ridership would mean an increase of 6 percent to 35 percent, and operating costs an increase of 8 percent to 51 percent; capital costs are potentially minimal.
 - Operating costs for Rapid Overlay could be 18 percent to 77 percent lower.
- Optional Rapid Bus capital costs include enhanced stops and transit signal priority.
- Full BRT concept:
 - Potential long-term option with exclusive bus lanes in each direction, queue jumps, transit signal priority, 37 stops, and maintain 15-minute frequency for both Route ECR and BRT.
 - Ridership grows 27 percent.
 - Operating costs increase \$6.9 million annually.
 - Capital costs would be \$100 million for bus lanes and \$47 million for 74 enhanced stops.
 - A number of engineering, political, and other challenges with having a dedicated bus lane.
- Next steps:
 - Public meetings were held in South San Francisco and at District offices in San Carlos.
 - Presentations to the GBI Task Force, SamTrans CAC, cities and others upon request.
 - Ongoing coordination with Caltrans and the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County.
 - Monitor system performance and consider within the context of the District's Strategic Plan.

Mr. Loranger asked if police and fire have the ability for signal priority. Mr. Emerson said yes, they have a higher level of authority.

Mr. Loranger said he likes the full BRT, but doesn't know how it can work on El Camino Real without exercising eminent domain. Mr. Emerson said there are many challenges and it couldn't be done through the entire corridor. He said maybe 10 miles of corridor could be viable for a dedicated lane.

Mr. Loranger asked if there are any plans for light rail. Mr. Emerson said BRT is often considered a precursor to light rail.

Ms. Pye said she heard with designated BRT lanes bikes could use them too. Mr. Emerson said it does work and is a safer scenario.

Ms. Miller asked if the fewer stops would be in San Bruno. Mr. Emerson said each community had a few less stops. He said the top stops in each community were kept. He will provide a list of possible BRT stops.

Ms. Ballatar asked why it will take two years for the signal priority. Mr. Emerson said money has to be found, there are some signal box modifications, design work and

seeking consensus with Caltrans and municipalities. He said it would take two years to install the equipment.

Mr. Lock asked how the overlay accounts for 19 percent. Mr. Emerson said through research the average passenger rides four miles, but on El Camino Real it is 10-mile trips.

Mr. Lock asked how this folds into the Strategic Plan. Mr. Emerson said it will help grow ridership.

Mr. Koya said the Plan looks good, but asked how much money this is going to cost in the end. He said El Camino Real is not the same width throughout the entire peninsula and Burlingame has the large eucalyptus trees.

Chair Ratto said there are a lot of Route ECR passengers who only ride SamTrans for very short distances. He said the full BRT will pull passengers from Caltrain and could be an enhancement for both systems.

Public Comment

Andy Chow, Redwood City, said Route 398 ridership is pretty low and should be eliminated and use the resources for a weekday pilot along El Camino Real.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Appointment of Nominating Committee for 2015 Chair and Vice Chair

Chair Ratto appointed Mr. Koya, Ms. Miller and Mr. Plischke to the nominating committee.

Chair Ratto said the SamTrans Holiday Bus was in the Redwood City Hometown Holidays parade on December 6. He said the reindeer looked great on the bike rack. The Caltrain Holiday Train was also on December 6 and 7 and is one of the largest sources of toys for the Salvation Army and Marines Toys for Tots.

SAMTRANS STAFF UPDATE

Chester Patton, Director, Bus Transportation, reported:

- October performance:
 - Average weekday ridership was 47,350, up 2.8 percent.
 - On-time performance was 83 percent.
 - Complaints were low at 176.
 - Miles between road calls was 25,710.
 - Tokens continue to be popular.
 - There were 13 missed schedules.

CAC MEMBER COMMENTS/REQUESTS

Mr. Koya said the South San Francisco shuttle service launched last month. He said he was invited to participate in the ribbon cutting and was able to take the first ride on the shuttle. Mr. Koya said the shuttle is popular and the only thing that may need to be corrected is the schedule. He said Route 292 is running very well.

Mr. Lock asked if the South San Francisco shuttle is taking passengers from Route 131. Michael Eshleman, Planner, said the route was designed to not take passengers from Route 131, but more for where cuts were made along Route 132.

Ms. Laughon asked if the Clipper installation in Half Moon Bay has occurred. Mr. Patton said the system is up and running at Hasset Hardware in Half Moon Bay.

Ms. Ballator said the San Carlos Flex should be marketed more.

Ms. Miller said this evening she was on Route ECR and the rear door kept saying "rear door open" and the operator had to fix the door from the outside. She said there were a lot of issues with the farebox on the bus too. Ms. Miller said buses still remain punctual.

Ms. Pye said she recently got a flat tire on her way to work and the Route ECR immediately came and rescued her. She said she has seen a lot of wrong information on Route 398 bus headers. Mr. Patton said there is a code the operator inputs that displays the destination. He said this will now be a new automatically set feature.

Mr. Plischke asked if staff has given any thought to the bus stop at 37th Avenue and El Camino Real. Mr. Patton said he has gone and looked at the stop and staff is looking at options.

LIAISON REPORTS

a. SamTrans Board - Peter Ratto

- Presentation was given on paratransit.
- Dave Daley, General Manager, First Transit was introduced.
- SamTrans Strategic Plan was approved.
- Zoe Kersteen-Tucker was reappointed to the Board representing the Coast.
- Resolution of Appreciation was presented to David Miller, Legal Counsel, who retired.

b. SamTrans Accessibility Advisory Committee – Judy McKie –absent

c. Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee - Peter Loranger – no meeting

d. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board – Bill Lock

- Two new CAC members were appointed.
- Ridership for Giants increased 20 percent.
- Baby Bullet service celebrated its 10th anniversary.

e. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board CAC - vacant

f. Senior Mobility Action Plan - vacant

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held January 28, 2015, at 6:30 p.m., 1250 San Carlos Avenue, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor, San Carlos, California 94070.

Adjourned at 8:19 p.m.