

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

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

October 30, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: S. Appenrodt, J. Baker (arrived at 5:51 pm), A. Barnes (Vice Chair), I. Chan, B. Gomez, S. Johnston, S. Koya (Chair), N. Lacsamana, M. Lewis, D. Smith

MEMBERS ABSENT: M. Adler, A. Juarez

STAFF PRESENT: M. Ross, J. Epstein, C. Wegener, A. Lam, J. Castellanos, M. Louie, J. Burley, J. Brook

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sonny Koya called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

ROLL CALL

CAC Secretary Jean Brook called the roll. A quorum was present.

**ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION WITH PLANNING STAFF ON SUPPORTING THE SAMTRANS
COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS (COA)**

Christy Wegener, Director of Planning, asked the Committee members to introduce themselves and say the bus routes they ride.

Michelle Lewis, Daly City, said that she rides Route 292 to work four days, sometimes five days per week.

Nancy Lacsamana, Brisbane said that she rides Route 292 to work five mornings a week; in the afternoons, she said she either takes Route 292 or BART and the Commute.org shuttle home.

Doug Smith, Redwood City, said that he takes Route 274 to connect to the ECR and Routes 398, 260, 295, mostly for running errands.

Iris Chan, Belmont, said that she takes Route 295 to work five mornings and three evenings a week. She said that she takes the ECR or Route 260 to go to various appointments, and that she also likes to try out new routes.

Sonny Koya, South San Francisco, said that he rides Route 292 to work and has done so since the 1980s when it was called Route 7B.

Andrew Barnes, Menlo Park, said he takes the ECR twice a week.

Scott Johnston, San Carlos, said he works from home and uses the ECR and Route 275 to get around locally and has also taken Route 398.

Steve Appenrodt, Burlingame, said he mainly rides the ECR and occasionally Routes 292, 260, and 250.

Bob Gomez, East Palo Alto, said he rides the ECR and Routes 280, 281, and 296.

Ms. Wegener facilitated a focus group exercise using a survey where the Committee members ranked possible service changes that SamTrans may implement in the future. The members were given a sliding scale from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating "should not be a priority for SamTrans" and 5 indicating "should be a priority for SamTrans," plus a "don't know" option. She said that District wanted to learn how to attract new riders and get current riders to use the service more frequently.

Ms. Wegener asked what the participants had marked as a 5.

Ms. Lewis said better bus stop amenities such as lighted shelters should be a high priority. Chair Koya and Mr. Gomez agreed. Mr. Barnes disagreed and said that having a shelter would not influence him to ride transit more. Ms. Lacsamana, Mr. Appenrodt, and Mr. Smith said their responses were somewhere in between.

The majority of members, including Ms. Chan, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Smith, said they thought that reliable, real-time bus location tracking information was very important. Chair Koya said that he rated it as 4 rather than 5 since he thought that bus tracking technology might raise a budgetary concern.

Mr. Barnes said that he prioritized on-demand vans or shuttles. Ms. Lacsamana said that she rated on-demand service in the middle since she feels it does not apply to the majority of riders. Chair Koya said that he rated it a 4. Mr. Gomez said he rated it a 3.

Ms. Wegener asked about bus routes that make fewer stops for a faster trip or having additional stops to increase access.

John Baker arrived at 5:51 pm.

Mr. Smith said that the ECR Rapid is not measurably faster than the regular ECR.

Mr. Baker said he ranked buses making fewer stops as a high priority, particularly in trying to attract new riders who may be put off by long travel times. He suggested layering regular and rapid service.

Chair Koya said that he rated subsidized shared or pool rides using ride-hailing services as 1 (should not be a priority). Mr. Baker and others had similar responses. Chair Koya said that he would give some priority to taxicabs since the operators spend thousands of dollars on their medallions and taxis are a viable option for last-mile connections. Ms. Wegener noted that her other focus groups had come to the same conclusion: that transit companies do not need to subsidize rideshare companies such as Uber and Lyft.

Mr. Gomez said he thought that bike share at transit stops was a big priority.

Mr. Barnes said he thought that bus routes making fewer stops and having increased express bus service went hand in hand. He said he thought it was important to have dedicated bus routes and buses with signal priority to attract riders who may decide that a bus trip may be faster than the same trip by car. Ms. Lacsamana said that the FLX route was a prime example of this phenomenon.

Mr. Smith said that most people he talks to say they are concerned about the amount of time they spend getting to work. Mr. Baker said that shelters may be less of a priority if the wait time for the bus is lessened.

Ms. Wegener asked about trade-offs, such as having buses come more often with a longer walk to the stop versus buses coming less often with a shorter walk to the stop.

Mr. Johnston asked about the percentage of stops used on a typical ECR trip. Ms. Wegener said that Reimagine SamTrans was looking at bus stop utilization.

Ms. Chan said she felt that frequency was very important. She suggested that Route 295 run on weekends to Hillsdale Shopping Center for holiday shopping. Most of the members said that they preferred frequency of service over proximity of stops. Mr. Smith said that it depends on the category of rider, since many older riders prefer not walking a long way. Ms. Wegener said that accommodating older riders may take away potentially expensive Redi-Wheels trips.

Ms. Wegener asked the Committee about more frequent service on major arterials versus less frequent but more widespread service throughout the County. Mr. Barnes said that this was a social equity question since the widespread option would give access to more people.

Chair Koya said that frequency and bus shelters were the highest priority. He said that many groups of riders such as mothers with young children would always benefit from the availability of bus shelters, particularly in bad weather.

Ms. Wegener said that the CAC members can serve as ambassadors for Reimagine SamTrans and that they would be providing take-one brochures for them to hand out to riders on the buses. She added that the Reimagine SamTrans website would go live on November 1.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.