

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

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING – JUNE 1, 2011**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: A. Chow, L. Chow, T. Collette, M. Hall, S. Koya, P. Loranger, J. McKie, S. Price, P. Ratto (Chair), D. Wilcox

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: D. Cruz, S. Curry, K. Nobles

SAMTRANS STAFF PRESENT: C. Goodrich, J. Johnson, N. McKenna, C. Patton, E. Proctor

Chair Peter Ratto called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee (L. Chow/Wilcox) approved the minutes of May 4, 2011.

PRESENTATION: GRAND BOULEVARD INITIATIVE

Manager of Strategic Development, Corinne Goodrich made the following points:

- The El Camino Real Corridor is a great opportunity to leverage transit ridership.
- El Camino Real is also known as State Route 82. It is 43 miles and goes from Daly City to the San Jose Diridon Caltrain Station. This is the only major north-south arterial.
- All five BART stations and 10 Caltrain stations in San Mateo County are on the corridor or within a quarter-mile.
- The Grand Boulevard Task Force is comprised of 19 cities, two counties, transit agencies and representatives from labor, development and environment.
- The Multimodal Transportation Corridor Plan (Plan) was a partnership between SamTrans, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) and Caltrans.
- The Plan includes multimodal access strategy, context sensitive design guidelines, street prototypes, exception guidelines and an online toolbox.
- Plan findings include:
 - Synergies to changing land use and transit service together.
 - Enhanced land use and transit equaled lowest daily vehicle miles traveled per household.
 - Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) can effectively mitigate the traffic volume increases.
 - Highest land use intensification generates the greatest benefits.
- Plan recommendations include:
 - BRT along El Camino Real and the Alameda corridor in Santa Clara County.
 - BRT holds great promise in San Mateo County.
 - Continue to plan for streetscape, pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

- Continue to talk with decision-makers and the community about the potential for enhanced transit service.
- Corridor challenges and policy areas include:
 - Implementing a shared corridor vision.
 - The role of transit and the relationship to economic development.
- In December 2010, the Economic and Housing Opportunities Study-Phase 1 was completed. This study was funded by C/CAG, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Silicon Valley Community Foundation.
- The purpose of this study was to make the case for transforming the Corridor into a grand boulevard.
- The study showed that the Corridor has capacity to accommodate future growth.
- Other benefits of transforming the Corridor include revitalization and value enhancement, time and cost savings, more stable communities, provide a variety of housing types and access to skilled labor force
- Three grants were awarded for this project including Tiger II, MTC Initiatives and Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

Peter Loranger asked what BRT is. Ms. Goodrich said it is a bus that acts like a train. Director of Bus Transportation Chester Patton said it is a limited stop service stopping approximately every mile or at transit centers only.

Tom Collette asked if cities would eliminate strip mall developments. Ms. Goodrich said it is a matter of determining best usage of land.

Sondra Price thanked Ms. Goodrich for explaining the presentation and not just reading the slides. She said she hoped there was integration between the Grand Boulevard Initiative and the SamTrans Service Plan (SSP). Ms. Goodrich said transportation and land use are being integrated in the SSP.

David Wilcox said the Grand Boulevard is great for traveling north-south, but there is a lack of east-west transit. Ms. Goodrich said that is what the SSP is looking at. The Grand Boulevard Initiative is looking at the corridor and rail stations.

Andy Chow said there are certain locations on El Camino Real that are not pedestrian friendly and in the long term these locations should be looked at. He said, in San Mateo County, there are a lot of high density locations away from El Camino Real that do not have enough parking, but locations close to El Camino Real do. Mr. Chow said there is a lot of demand for high density living.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Ratto reported:

- Saundra Curry and Kim Nobles are both recovering from surgery and cards were passed around.
- Transit ridership is starting to rise throughout the country but all transit agencies are having financial issues.

SAMTRANS STAFF UPDATE

Mr. Patton reported:

- Followed-up on an item from the May meeting regarding schedules in a shelter at Norfolk Avenue and Hillsdale Boulevard. This is an old shelter and staff is trying to get a new shelter installed at this location so a schedule can be installed.
- Bus ridership was up 1.6 percent and on-time performance was 83.5 percent for April.

Ms. Price asked if staff has analyzed what has caused the decline in on-time performance.

Mr. Patton said there is a lot of data, but staff is able to run reports for worst performing routes and operators. Route 397, which operates in the middle of the night, was the worst performing route. Mr. Patton said this is a contractor route and staff has spoken to the operators and on-time performance has improved.

Ms. Chow commended staff for only six missed schedules in the month of April. She asked if there are people available to fill-in for these missed schedules. Mr. Patton said SamTrans is here to serve the customers and all missed schedules are investigated to see if all was done to recover the service. These are extraordinary figures with this type of performance record operating thousands of schedules a day. Service recovery is an art and very critical to SamTrans.

Mr. Patton said staff tries to save the next trip and there are stand-by buses and operators in place for these types of incidents.

Sonny Koya asked if the six missed runs are reported by passengers or drivers. Mr. Patton said by drivers and is captured by the radio controller operators. Mr. Koya said Route 292 is frequently late and doesn't know if it is driver related or a missed schedule.

CAC MEMBER COMMENTS/REQUESTS

Mr. Wilcox said Route 295 did a rerouting in San Mateo and the bus stop at San Mateo and Second avenues has a blank bus stop sign. He also said that drivers are not reading notices and changes should be addressed to drivers more frequently.

Mr. Collette said he recently took Route 359 from the Millbrae Station. He said it was great, but he got wet because rain falls from the shelter roof directly on the customers sitting on the benches. Mr. Patton said this is a BART facility and staff has complained about this issue to them.

Ms. Price said she was on either Route KX or 390 going to Palo Alto and the bus driver tried three times to get a wheelchair passenger on the bus and was unsuccessful. Mr. Patton said it has been a long standing practice that the operators are to contact the radio control operator if there is a lift failure. Buses with lifts usually perform quite well and the operators are required to cycle them before going out on their daily run.

Chair Ratto thanked staff for the stop at Second and San Mateo avenues. He said there is a sticker on the sign as of yesterday.

Mr. Chow said Director Omar Ahmad passed away suddenly last month and it will be a big loss to transit, SamTrans and Caltrain. He asked that the meeting be adjourned in his memory.

Mr. Chow would like to know about Routes KX, 390 and 391 charging segmented fares and how does the Clipper machine change the fares. Mr. Patton said the operators change the fares. Mr. Chow thinks some operators are inadvertently not changing the fares at the right times. He said, since the April timetable change, Route KX has been pushed back further and departs Palo Alto the same time as Route 390. Mr. Chow said he was on the bus on Highway 101 and the driver was driving 35 mph on the freeway and when the driver got to El Camino Real there was a Route 390 bus right in front of him. He thinks the driver was dragging and running slow on the freeway to avoid leapfrogging the Route 390 on El Camino Real. Mr. Chow said bus stop maps inside in the shelters are nice initially, but they fade and need to be replaced.

Ms. Chow said there was inadequate detour signage in San Francisco for the Route KX on the Saturday evening before the Bay to Breakers. She suggested placing placards on the bus with reroute information. She said the phone number 1-800-660-4bus should be discontinued as some cell phones don't have letters on the number keys. Ms. Chow said the website should have a program that passengers can look at every bus stop on a route.

Mr. Koya said overall SamTrans performance is very good. Route 292 is late at times, but recently there have been a lot of new drivers who are not familiar with the route and this could be why the bus is late. Mr. Koya said overcrowding happens when short buses are used during heavy commute hours. If possible, articulated buses should be used more during these times. Mr. Koya said cell phone usage is becoming a big problem on the bus and passengers encourage the drivers to play the automated message about cell phone usage on the bus. He said he is still noticing people not paying their fares. He can understand people don't have the money and drivers are being kind, but a couple of weeks ago he witnessed three passengers not pay a fare. Mr. Koya said some drivers have a tendency to be late because they are too busy chatting with passengers. He said there seems to be a lot of bus shelter vandalism in Brisbane and he has reported it. This morning he noticed someone dropped simulated blood on the floor and he would encourage staff to look at these shelters more frequently. Mr. Koya said senior contract driver Mr. Ford is very courteous and always eager to help passengers and has a lot of information he can share with passengers.

Judy McKie said there is an issue with the bus stop at Delaware and Peninsula avenues by Woodlake Shopping Center. She said while waiting at this location for the Route 292, the sprinklers came on and were not directed at the grass, but the sidewalk. She asked if the property owner could be contacted to have the sprinklers redirected.

Mr. Wilcox said the drivers leaving San Francisco act like God and are the rudest people he has ever seen when he tried to ask one of them a question recently. Mr. Patton said if the drivers are not on the bus they are on a break. He said they should always be courteous, but people need to understand when they are not on the bus they are not working.

Chair Ratto said MV Transportation drivers should be trained and held to the same high standards as SamTrans drivers.

Mr. Patton said there is a standard of courtesy and etiquette and he encouraged everyone to call customer service and put a complaint in if they see a problem. By placing a complaint, there will be an impact at MV Transportation as the contractor is held to a certain standard and if they are not being met they are assessed liquidated damages.

Mr. Patton said SamTrans uses a system called TransitSafe to track and follow-up on complaints. The 800-number is on every piece of collateral information and should be used if there are any issues instead of bringing the complaints to these meetings.

Mr. Wilcox said there needs to be a placard inside the bus with the 800-number for passengers to call if unhappy.

LIAISON REPORTS

a. SamTrans Board - Peter Ratto

- The new Art Takes a Bus Ride was unveiled.
- The Board proclaimed May as “Older Americans Month.”
- A presentation was given on fixed-route performance.
- The Board approved swapping Proposition 1B funds for capital funds with VTA.
- The preliminary Fiscal Year 2012 Operating and Capital budgets were presented.

b. SamTrans Accessibility Advisory Committee - Tom Collette

- David Chanel gave an update on the Regional Transit and Clipper cards.
- Senior clipper cards can be obtained here at the District office and at Walgreens.
- Next meeting is July 21.

c. Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee - Peter Loranger

- This was the first meeting since 2008 and there were representatives for every type of disability in attendance.
- A Clipper card presentation was given and people are having a lot of issues with the cards.
- There are no longer loud speaker announcements at the 4th & King Caltrain Station when there are boarding changes which presents a problem for people with disabilities.

d. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board - David Wilcox – no report.

e. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board Citizens Advisory Committee - Andy Chow – no report.

f. Senior Mobility Action Plan - vacant.

NEXT MEETING:

It was decided among the members to have a bye month in August.

The next meeting will be held July 6, 2011, at 6:30 p.m., 1250 San Carlos Avenue, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor, San Carlos, California 94070.

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m. in memory of Director Ahmad who was an advocate for transit and is a major loss to SamTrans.