

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

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING – JANUARY 29, 2014**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: K. Gilbert, M. Hall, K. Heatley, S. Koya, P. Loranger, B. Lock, J. McKie, T. Miller, H. Plischke, M. Pye, P. Ratto (Chair)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None

SAMTRANS STAFF PRESENT: W. Draper, T. Dumandan (MV Transportation), S. El-Khatib, B. Emerson, M. Eshleman, N. McKenna, C. Patton, A. Rivas, E. Silvas, B. Tietjen

Chair Peter Ratto called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Sonny Koya said the nominating committee of Judy McKie, Heinz Plischke and himself met and are recommending Chair Ratto be reappointed as chair.

A motion (Koya/Heatley) to reappoint Chair Peter Ratto for chair for 2014 was unanimous.

Mr. Koya said the nominating committee is recommending Margaret Pye for vice chair.

A motion (Koya/Heatley) to nominate Ms. Pye as vice chair was unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roger Valdez, San Mateo, said Route 250 was discontinued and Route 252 was created. He said Route 252 goes past his house on Rand Street and the neighbors do not want the bus going down their street. Mr. Valdez said the neighborhood never received any information from SamTrans on this change. He said home values will decline and crime will increase with the bus operating on their street. Mr. Valdez said the neighbors want this route changed so the bus does not travel down their street.

Chair Ratto said the CAC will notify staff of this complaint, but the CAC cannot make any decisions. He said SamTrans is very responsive to customer complaints. Staff will evaluate this issue and if there is a possibility to correct it, it will be done.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Ms. Pye said she was in attendance at the December 4 meeting, but the minutes reflect her being absent. She said on page 2 her comment was about Sequoia Station, not Sequoia Avenue.

The Committee (Pye/Tryn) unanimously approved the amended minutes of December 4, 2013.

UPDATE ON EL CAMINO REAL REAL BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) PHASING STUDY

Barrow Emerson, Principal Planner, said:

- There are 29,000 average daily car trips along El Camino Real.
- One-third of boardings of the SamTrans routes is along El Camino Real.
- Purpose of study:
 - Develop a phasing plan
 - Determine how to provide faster and more cost-effective bus service in corridor
 - Incorporate BRT-type characteristics in the short and long term
 - Accommodate population and employment densities, as well as ridership demand
- Phasing Plan:
 - Short-term operating and phasing plan focused on Rapid Service
 - Long-term operating and phasing plan focused on intensive "Full BRT" service
- Rapid versus full BRT:
 - Rapid: Mixed-flow operations with skip-stop service and some signal and street priority
 - Full BRT: Dedicated lanes with enhanced stations and rail-like operations and requires high-capital outlay
- Goals and objectives:
 - Increase ridership
 - Promote livability, commercial vitality
 - Minimize cost increases, operational impacts
 - Minimize traffic, parking impacts
- Existing conditions:
 - State owned by California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
 - Roadway widths vary
 - Irregular bus stop locations
 - Through buses allowed in two right-turn lanes
 - Few bulb outs
 - Signals to be upgraded as part of the Smart Corridor Program
- Optimizing a service plan considerations:
 - Considerations
 - Ridership and travel demand
 - Congestion levels and bottlenecks
 - Intermodal connections
 - Impacts to local transit service
 - Key options
 - Traffic signal priority
 - Right-turn lane exemptions
 - Bulb outs
 - Queue jumpers
 - Branding
- Case studies of BRTs include Los Angeles Metro Rapid, AC Transit Rapid, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Rapid 522, and Lake Transit District EmX BRT in Eugene, Oregon.

- Lessons learned
 - Packages of features or treatments are most effective in improving travel time
 - Longer stop spacing is the most effective single strategy
 - Significant benefits from minimal investment
 - Traffic Signal Priority over continuous stretches maximizes benefit
 - Consider conditional Traffic Signal Priority
- Next steps
 - Identify preferred service concepts and operating/capital costs
 - Develop operating and infrastructure plan
 - Continue coordination with Caltrans, City/County Association of Governments and Grand Boulevard Initiative (GBI)
 - Update SamTrans Board
 - Present recommendations in spring/summer 2014

Mr. Barrow said he will now discuss where staff is with this study:

- Service Plan Development
 - Phase 1 – initial screening is a qualitative screen of service concepts to identify candidates for more detailed development
 - Phase 2 – detailed analysis using patronage forecasting, travel time and operating costs
- Service concept alternatives include Full Rapid, Split Rapid, Overlap Rapid, Truncated Rapid or Hybrid Rapid.
- Currently there are 105 stops for Route ECR in each direction and is a two hour trip.
- Goal for Rapid is to decrease travel time while serving important destinations.
- Criteria for Rapid stop selection include volume of daily boardings on existing Route ECR, important trip generators, and coverage.
- Service concept evaluation modeling
 - Test 15-minute headways on both Route ECR and Rapid for all alternatives
 - Determine best service concept in terms of ridership and cost effectiveness
 - Within budget realities test EXCR/Rapid headway combinations
 - Propose preferred operating plan based on budget availability

Kathy Gilbert asked if signal priority has been started. Mr. Emerson said staff is in early discussions with Caltrans.

Ms. Gilbert asked if staff has a cost estimate. Mr. Emerson said not yet.

Mr. Koya said he attended the South San Francisco meeting. He said the Rapid would be competing with those riding Route ECR and may confuse passengers as to which bus to board. He said a lot of people travel short distances and if a stop is missed by the Rapid it could be a problem. Mr. Emerson said that could happen and sometimes a great idea doesn't work. He said right now this is just a plan.

Bill Lock said there is a certain number of passengers who take longer trips on SamTrans. He has some familiarity with limited service as he has ridden it in San Francisco.

Judy McKie said if this program is implemented would more bus operators be hired and more buses purchased. Mr. Emerson said staff is not sure yet.

Ms. McKie asked what size would the bus be for this service. Mr. Emerson said it depends on the ridership.

Katie Heatley said the fastest growing population is senior citizens. She said there is a lot of grumbling at VTA by the senior community on the BRT. She said all transit agencies should take baby steps and think through the idea of BRT. Mr. Barrow said staff's analysis shows how far and fast people like before moving to Highways 101 or 280.

Chester Patton, Director, Bus Transportation, said BRT is a proven model in some places such as Brazil. The challenge is identifying if it applies to the locations being served.

Peter Loranger said whenever he travels he always looks for limited buses.

Mr. Plischke asked what this does for the GBI. Mr. Barrow said more public transit can make GBI more successful in its land strategies.

Mr. Plischke asked if the buses would look different. Mr. Barrow said yes as the service will be branded.

Ms. Pye said BRT would be very attractive for bicyclists and would be great to hold more bikes. Mr. Barrow said there are some certain California Highway Patrol regulations with having bike racks that hold three bikes.

Ms. Pye asked what queue jumping is. Mr. Barrow said the bus gets to go in front of all the other traffic.

Tryn Miller asked what the difference is between Rapid and BRT. Mr. Barrow said Rapid is service and BRT has more infrastructure investment such as its own lanes and jumping ahead of traffic at lights.

Chair Ratto said the special branding is quite effective to differentiate the two types of service and staff should even consider branding the shelters. He said speed sells and will attract ridership.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Ratto said Caltrain celebrated its 150th Anniversary on January 18 at the Santa Clara Station.

SAMTRANS STAFF UPDATE

Mr. Patton reported:

- December performance:
 - Average weekday ridership was 39,190, a 2.5 percent increase.
 - On-time performance (OTP) was 79 percent.
 - Complaints were low at 139.
 - Miles between road calls was 33,000.

- Tokens continue to be very popular.
- There were four missed schedules.

Michael Eshleman, Planner, reported on the SamTrans Service Plan (SSP) Phase II:

- Launched on January 26.
- Staff spent three years developing the SSP.
- Every route in the system had a change.
- He was stationed in the Customer Service Center on January 26 and 27. There were 1,500 customer calls on Monday versus the normal 1,000.
- Approximately 2,000 stops were changed in the system.
- The Flex service in Pacifica and San Carlos was also launched. The Pacifica service carried 14 riders per hour. Flex San Carlos demand ridership is popular.
- Not all new bus stop signs have been installed and will be completed by March.
- There were sixteen new operators in place for the roll out.
- It is too early to report OTP and ridership.
- The Route ECR service is now up 4.5 percent over the old Routes 390/391 service on a daily basis.

Mr. Patton said Mr. Eshleman was the project manager for the SSP leading staff for the successful launch.

Ms. Pye said the new signs look like a traffic camera. She took Route ECR on Sunday morning and it was running late. She called 511 and the instructions on the sign may be missing a step as she didn't state SamTrans before the stop ID.

Ms. Miller said she originally was concerned about the SSP. She said Route 140 doesn't seem to be stopping by the flower shop on El Camino Real now and is stopping by the Vallero Gas Station on El Camino Real. Mr. Eshleman said he will look into.

Ms. Heatley congratulated staff on the successful launch of the SSP.

Mr. Lock said he rides Route 292 to the airport and there were some passengers not aware of the Route KX changes.

Ms. Gilbert said in reference to tonight's public speaker is there protocol in notifying the neighborhoods. Mr. Eshelman said not the neighborhood, but the stops affected have notices posted.

Ms. Gilbert asked how soon could a change be made. Mr. Patton said staff doesn't seek permission to operate on streets. Staff will look at the speaker's concern, but can't guarantee a change. Having a bus in a neighborhood does not lower properties or bring in crime. Mr. Patton said staff is very diligent about where a stop is located and where a bus dwells, but as far as driving down a street no permission is sought.

Mr. Koya said the new bus stop signs are a big hit with the drivers. Route 292 riders continue to be very grateful that the service was preserved. The new schedule has lots of pluses and some things need to be tweaked. The departure times are perfect, but there is an additional 19 minutes added to the arrival time in San Francisco and

San Mateo County. He said this is too much and people feel 10 minutes would be fine. Mr. Koya said there is too much dwelling at stops in San Francisco going northbound and southbound. He asked why buses are dwelling in San Francisco when buses only are dropping off.

Mr. Patton announced the CAC recruitment will begin on February 7 and applications are due March 7. Mr. Loranger, Mr. Koya and Chair Ratto are eligible to reapply and unfortunately, Maureen Hall is termed out and cannot reapply.

CAC MEMBER COMMENTS/REQUESTS

Mr. Koya said the shelters at Bayshore and Geneva and Bayshore and Guadalupe do not have lights. He asked if there are solar power lights available for installation at these shelters. Mr. Patton said if these are the new shelters they should have lights and will have staff look into this issue.

Ms. McKie said the southbound Route 292 stop at South Delaware and B Street has a trash can that has helped the area for garbage. She has noticed the container is quite often full and wondered how often they are emptied. She said she has noticed a lot of the buses did not have timetables. Mr. Eshleman said there was a production issue and they had to be phased in because of all the service changes.

Ms. Heatley said she would like to hear an update on the reduced Day Pass.

Mr. Loranger said he was in Peru for the holidays and was on the bus that took one hour go four blocks. He said long-term planning is really important.

Mr. Plischke said he received the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report link. He asked what farebox recovery is. Mr. Patton said those are the fares from customers and the ratio percentage that is not subsidized by other grants.

Ms. Pye said the northbound stop at El Camino Real and Brittan in San Carlos has no sidewalk, bench or shelter and is a very unpleasant location to wait for a bus. She said the city of San Carlos will be applying for a grant to improve the east side of El Camino Real from Arroyo to Brittan and this might be a good time for SamTrans to upgrade the bus stop. Mr. Patton said the stop is an embarrassment and was grandfathered. He said there are extensive plans in the works to improve that stop.

Ms. Pye said when busses stop southbound at Arroyo the bus blocks the signal sign for pedestrians to cross and it is very dangerous.

Ms. Miller said the bus operator today at 4:30 p.m. on Route 140 at Sneath Lane and Monterey Boulevard waited for her as she was rushing to the bus.

Chair Ratto said having the bus headsigns indicating the SSP changes was very good.

LIAISON REPORTS

a. SamTrans Board - Peter Ratto

- Presentations on Americans with Disabilities Act Paratransit and SSP implementation.

- Board awarded a contract to Gillig for up to 60 buses to replace the 2003 buses.
- b. SamTrans Accessibility Advisory Committee – Judy McKie**
- Presentation on Daly City, San Carlos and Pacifica shuttles.
 - Discussed Clipper Cards for seniors and the committee feels there needs to be more outreach to seniors.
 - Discussion on cars parked too close to bus stops or blocking bus stops on Route 250.
- c. Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee - Peter Loranger**
- Boarding a train is challenging for a disabled person and using Clipper is much easier on the buses than having to tag on the platform.
 - Discussed electrification, level boarding, the new San Bruno Station, real-time visual and audio announcements.
- d. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board -vacant**
- e. Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board CAC - vacant**
- f. Senior Mobility Action Plan - vacant**

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held February 26, 2014, at 6:30 p.m., 1250 San Carlos Avenue, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor, San Carlos, California 94070.

Adjourned at 8:33 p.m.