

# **BUS PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)**

*Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, November 16, 2022*



**Committee Members Present:** Brian Bailey-Gates, Dan Bell, Mike Combs, Dave Troup, Fredi Bloom

**Committee Members Absent:** Scott Kempf, Jon Horinek

**District Staff Present:** Mike Abegg, Director of Schedules and Service Development; Carlena Natouf, Customer Relations Supervisor; Emily DelRoss, Senior Planner; Bill Middleton, Safety and Training Superintendent; Francis Tremblay, Marketing and Communications Specialist; Jamos Yeager, Operations Control Center Manager; David Davenport, Principal Planner

**Guests Present:** Director James Mastin; Mohamed Osman, Marin Transit (MT); David Pilpel

1. **Roll Call:** Brian Bailey-Gates opened the meeting at 5:40 p.m. Five members were present, representing a quorum.
2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** BPAC members approved the May 18, 2022, meeting minutes.
3. **Bus Stoppers:**
  - a. Dan Bell reported that real-time departure information for commute routes was not being displayed at Salesforce Transit Center. Staff reported that MTC fixed the issue, and the real-time sign inside Salesforce Transit Center now displays departures for all Golden Gate Transit (GGT) buses boarding at Bay A and Fremont & Mission.
  - b. Mr. Bell reported inconvenient wait times when transferring from SMART train to GGT bus service at San Rafael Transit Center (SRTC). Staff reported being unable to fix the problem via scheduling due to SMART's irregular headways and the need to maintain bus spacing. Recommended use of Route 132 from SRTC during peak service for best connections.
  - c. Mike Combs reported confusing "Mission & Fremont" destination signage on southbound trips going to Salesforce Transit Center and recommended using "Salesforce Transit Center" instead. Staff reported use of the "Mission & Fremont" text to differentiate the stop from the starting point for northbound (NB) buses at Bay A. This concern will be added to the list of discussion topics for GGT staff's next headsign meeting.
  - d. Mr. Combs reported inconsistent departure frequencies on NB trips leaving San Francisco. Staff explained that schedules are timed to accommodate pulsed transfers at the SRTC, which prevents a pulse from occurring at the San Francisco end-of-line. MT schedule changes in March may yield minor improvements.
  - e. Mr. Combs reported inaccurate and confusing bus stop pin placement along Van Ness Avenue in Google Maps and Apple Maps. Stop pins appear on the sidewalk, although stops are actually located at the median to align with BRT lanes. Staff will explore impacts of relocating stop pins in scheduling software.

- f. Mr. Combs reported possible over-charging on the Route 150 when using a Clipper card. Staff discussed possible coding issue on route. Staff will investigate further. The deployment of Clipper 2.0, scheduled for late 2023-early 2024, will address this concern as riders will be charged only at tag-off.

#### 4. Ongoing Business:

- a. COVID-19 Update: David Davenport reported that the mask policy has been revised, no longer requiring District staff to wear masks on GGT vehicles. Passengers continue to not be required to wear masks. Bridge traffic and bus and ferry ridership trends have remained unchanged since last report to the committee and remain far below pre-pandemic levels.
- b. Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP): Mr. Davenport presented an overview of the District's SRTP update, which will be presented to the Board for review and approval in December. The SRTP process occurs every two to three years, with a plan horizon of five years, and is a requirement for receiving funding from MTC and the FTA. The plan includes a system overview, performance assessment, current snapshot of the system, budget projections, and service plans for four planning scenarios. Each scenario indicates a projected financial deficit if pre-pandemic service levels were reinstated.
- c. Bus Stop Information Sign Redesign: Francis Tremblay presented an overview of the District's bus stop signage improvement project that aims to redesign GGT bus stops to be more user-friendly, informative, and to strengthen GGT's brand identity. Improved designs are in full color and include direction of travel, accessibility icons, GGT's website, and additional rider resources. Select stops have linear maps with major timepoints and transit connections indicated. BPAC members provided feedback supporting a design that promotes Transit App as a preferred resource, includes instructions for downloading the app, and lists alternative resources.

#### 5. New Business:

- a. September and December 2022 Service Changes: Mr. Davenport presented service changes effective September 11, including the addition of early morning trips on Route 132 and additional weekend evening service on Route 580. On December 11, a new service schedule will go into effect. Service changes will include an added trip on Route 154 in response to high ridership volume, as well as the reactivation of an additional bus stop at Fremont & Mission to better accommodate bus congestion.
- b. San Rafael Transit Center Relocation FEIR: Mr. Davenport reported that the FEIR identifies the "New Whistlestop Alternative" as the preferred option for the location of the new transit center, reflecting the preference of the Committee. Final review and approval of the EIR is anticipated for the December Board meeting. The FEIR is posted on the District's website. Next steps will include securing funding, site design, land acquisition, and construction.
- c. Marin Transit Contract: Mr. Davenport reported on a new interagency agreement effective October 1, 2022, between GGT and MT. The contract term runs through June 2026, with two optional additional one-year extensions. GGT will continue to operate six of MT's bus routes and calls for coordination between the two agencies in conducting a joint study on bus electrification. Changes to the paratransit portion of the service contract were included, with no impacts to riders.
- d. BPAC Chairperson/Vice Chairperson Election: Members voted to continue current chair roles for the 2023 term with Scott Kempf as Chair and Brian Bailey-Gates as Vice Chair.

The committee will have another opportunity to reevaluate chair roles should committee membership change at any point over the next year.

- e. 2023 Meeting Schedule: The committee meets bi-monthly on the third Wednesday of the month, excluding the summer months or when holidays conflict. The proposed committee meeting schedule for 2023 will be:

- January 18, 2023
- March 15, 2023
- May 17, 2023
- September 20, 2023
- November 15, 2023

The January 18 meeting will be held virtually at 5:30 P.M. Future meetings may return to an in-person format in 2023. At that time, meeting start time and location will be determined, as the former Whistlestop building may be unavailable.

**6. Announcements:**

- a. Mohamed Osman provided an update on MT service changes that will go into effect in December. Changes include minor time adjustments on select morning trips of the Route 71 and 17 to improve on-time performance. The Muir Woods shuttle will continue to operate out of the Larkspur Landing Ferry Terminal. Holiday and weekend service for the Muir Woods shuttle will operate out of Sausalito.

**7. Members' Forum:**

- a. Dan Bell inquired about bus operators driving in mixed-traffic lanes where diamond bus lanes are available, particularly on Mission Street. Staff noted this concern and will discuss with operations staff.
- b. Mr. Bell inquired about the possibility of a new bus shuttle providing service from Larkspur SMART station to San Francisco. Staff expressed concern regarding SMART station design limitations preventing safe bus service, funding, and traffic congestion impacts at the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard Interchange. Staff suggested that shuttle service out of SRTC may be more feasible. Staff plans to meet with regional planning staff to discuss this and other regional transit needs.
- c. Mr. Combs requested an update on the Tamalpais Drive freeway interchange redesign project. Staff reported that no new project developments have taken place since the last update to the Committee.

**8. Public Comment:** None.

**9. Adjournment:** Brian Bailey-Gates adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Members were advised that the next meeting is scheduled to take place Wednesday, January 18, 2023, via Zoom at 5:30 P.M.