

City of Alameda – AC Transit ILC

April 17, 2025 Meeting Notes

1. Roll Call/Welcome and Introductions

Attendees: Vice Mayor Michele Pryor (chair), Director Sarah Syed, Director Joel Young

Meeting started at 9:09 a.m.

2. Announcements/Public Comments

None

3. Notes from Previous Meeting

None

4. Annual Transportation Report

Lisa Foster: Brief highlights from the City's 2024 Transportation Report. Achievements from 2024 included: additional of 1.4 miles of all ages and abilities bikeways, 395 sidewalk trip hazards were repaired, 51.4k passengers on the water shuttle (launched July 2024, free, ADA-accessible, operates 5 days per week), 92 curb ramps upgraded, improved safety at 89 intersections, and 205.8k rides with the Free Bus Program. Ridership on bus lines serving Alameda grew 8% since 2023 and has grown 36% since 2021. Ferry ridership from Seaplane Lagoon and Harbor Bay grew by 6% from 2023, total of 570k boardings in 2024. The Cross-Alameda Trail is nearly complete, two final segments are coming in 2025. Construction on the Central Ave Safety Improvements is underway, including a road diet and bus stop improvements. Grand Street Project construction is expected to start in 2025, including bus stop improvements. There is regular coordination with AC Transit for construction projects that impact bus operations.

Vice Mayor Pryor: Is there bus service to Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal?

Crystal Wang: Yes, with Line 21, and Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal will continue to be served when Realign launches in August 2025.

Lisa Foster: There was chatter online about what is going to happen with Line 21, but it's a misunderstanding. Line 21 will no longer serve OAK Airport but will still be serving Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal.

Director Syed: The report only shows overall 2024 ferry ridership - do we have average weekday ridership on the ferry?

Lisa Foster: Can get back to you with that information.

Vice Mayor Pryor: Do we have plans for the Oakland-Alameda Water Shuttle to go to 7 days per week?

Lisa Foster: No but we do have plans to add a day (to 6 days per week) starting this summer. To get to 7 days of service we'd need another boat.

5. Free Bus Pass Program for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

Lisa Foster: The City's overall Paratransit program has two pilots – the free AC Transit Bus Pass program and the Alameda Independent Mobility program (subsidized Uber/Lyft). The free AC Transit bus pass program serves low-income senior residents of Alameda (must have Mastick Senior Center membership (free)) as well as low-income residents aged 18-64 with a certified disability. There are currently 970 program members and there is a waitlist. The number of people enrolled fluctuates a

lot, and the program is growing. In December 2024 there were over 18,000 rides taken by over 600 unique users. On average, active users are riding as often as 29 times per month. However, with the popularity of the program, the City is currently at the top of the Measure BB paratransit budget and hitting the limit of what we can afford with the available funding (which is why there's a waitlist). AC Transit's upcoming fare increase (+\$0.25) has implications – 230k rides x \$0.25 = \$57,500. In response, the City will try to prioritize budget for the Free Bus Pass Program and also require additional documentation of proof of low-income status as part of the enrollment renewal, to make sure we have the right people in the program. Should be able to clear the waitlist after this. With the current contract ending in July, the City is also looking at how to extend the program. Program alternatives with the rate increase: 1) limit the program within existing Paratransit Measure BB funding (reduce enrollment through renewal and stricter income verification), 2) maintain the existing program size (allow new participants to enroll after renewal and income verification) with a moderate general fund budget addition, 3) expand the program with a larger general fund addition, and 4) convert the program to EasyPass instead of the current pay-as-you-go system (feasibility and fiscal impact are TBD). Liz Escobar is the Paratransit Coordinator.

Director Syed: Do you have a sense of how many current program participants might not meet the income requirement?

Lisa Foster: Everyone in the program needs to attest to the low-income status and we believe that we have the right people in the program, but given the financial limits it seems like we should check to be sure.

Vice Mayor Pryor: The waitlist is due to the funds we have available? And how long is the expected time for getting off the waitlist?

Lisa Foster: After program enrollment renewal we should have new spots we can fill.

Vice Mayor Pryor: Is the cost to manage the program a big burden on staff?

Lisa Foster: Yes there's an administrative burden, Liz Escobar is part-time. The ramifications of spending more time on this program means less time for outreach at senior housing, running training programs, etc.

Vice Mayor Pryor: Would it be a more seasonal burden since enrollment is just once at certain time of year?

Lisa Foster: There is the seasonal crunch time but there are other administrative needs throughout the year.

Vice Mayor Pryor: Can we hear more about the option to convert to EasyPass?

Debora Garcia: The program structure of EasyPass doesn't seem like the right fit for the City's program. There are other options to explore, but the structure of the City's program doesn't quite work for EasyPass. EasyPass is built for employers, housing developments, and universities, not the membership structure of the City's program. It's something we can explore with a later iteration of EasyPass, and we will continue to work with the City.

Director Syed: It's intended to be a deep discount/universal pass for all (ex: all seniors, as opposed to just the members interested in signing up).

Director Syed: The sole source of funding is just Measure BB? So this would be new for the program to have to consider general funds?

Lisa Foster: Yes it'd be a first

Vice Mayor Pryor: Do we have a projections of how many people we can serve and if it's going to increase based on demographics?

Lisa Foster: All depends on the general fund ask and how many rides the participants are taking. Tricky to plan the budget when you don't know how many rides people are going to take.

6. ILC Proposed Consolidations Update

Howard Der: The plan to restructure ILCs is an effort to lessen the burden on everyone since each ILC meeting takes a lot of staff time. One of the proposals is to merge several ILCs together. At this stage we're still gathering feedback from the various ILCs then we will come back to the Board with feedback. We're also still waiting to hear back from Oakland.

Lisa Foster: Can you clarify what the proposal for the Alameda ILC is?

Director Syed: The last proposal was to combine Alameda with Oakland and Piedmont.

Director Peeples: Aware of the burden on staff, but the ILCs are very important. It would be unfortunate to combine Alameda with Oakland. Combining smaller cities with Oakland would be a mistake. I'd have concerns that Alameda's concerns would get lost. It's very important for us to be able to communicate regularly with the City.

Director Syed: The other issue is with AC Transit redistricting - it's more difficult for the Board to staff the ILCs after 2026 since Alameda will only have 1 representative from the AC Transit Board.

7. AC Transit Realign Update

Howard Der: In October 2024 the AC Transit Board approved the final Realign plan which we'll be implementing in August 2025. We're also continuing to work on the service standards, which are the framework for how we prioritize new service and measure how we're doing.

Director Peeples: Realign is a service cut. I am eagerly awaiting the next step/opportunity to bring service recovery back to 2019 levels, and also Realign+, which is what service could look like if we had all the money we need.

8. New Developments/Transportation Management Association Update

Lisa Foster: Updates on behalf off Lucy Gigli. The Clipper BayPass program is in its 2nd year, 1,200 participants. 58% of total participants are residential. For EasyPass, ridership has increased (to 348 unique riders). Total annual boardings have increased by over 50% (to 71,000 boardings). There are an average of 17 rides per month taken by active users. The Alameda Landing Express free shuttle program (from Alameda Landing to 12th St BART) is ending in June 2025 due to low ridership. As an alternative, Alameda Landing residents and employees of Safeway and Michaels will be eligible for EasyPass.

Vice Mayor Pryor: Is the increase due to the increased population or due to access to the Clipper BayPass?

Lisa Foster: Probably both – the BayPass has really helped with ferry ridership as well.

9. Oakland Alameda Access Project (OAAP)

Crystal Wang: The OAAP project is led by ACTC and is a major roadway project to improve access between I-880, Downtown Oakland, and Alameda. Construction will impact the Webster and Posey Tubes. Staff from AC Transit and the City have been attending monthly technical meetings and monthly outreach meetings regarding the project. Construction is expected to start later this year and last 3.5 years. Our biggest concern is impacts to transit service during the tube closures. Thanks to City staff for also helping to reiterate that and stress the importance of minimizing bus

delay. There isn't much more that can be done on the Alameda side to help minimize transit impacts during OAAP construction since the City has already implemented improvements like the bus queue jump on Webster to help the bus move more reliably, so we've been trying to work with the OAAP project team to see what can be done on the Oakland side. The good news is we recently heard that the City of Oakland is preliminarily open to moving forward with a proposal for a bus only lane on 7th St between Broadway and Webster and a dedicated bus only left turn lane from Broadway onto eastbound 7th St. That's something that we'll be discussing with ACTC, Oakland staff, and Alameda staff in a workshop later this month.

Lisa Foster: City staff continues to be in active communications with the OAAP project team. Also, ACTC is hosting a series of public workshops on this effort, including locations in Alameda.

10. AC Transit Ridership and Complaints with Actual Missed Runs

Crystal Wang: The agenda packet includes an attachment with the performance summary for lines operating in Alameda, for November 2024 through February 2025. Ridership has stayed consistent and generally most of these lines are around where they should be in terms of productivity. The OX and 19 are low and should be closer to 20-30 passengers per revenue hour. For on-time performance (OTP), our OTP standard is 72% so some of these lines haven't been meeting that standard during this timeframe, like Lines 96 and the transbay lines. So that means trips were either more than 5 minutes late or more than 1 minute early. For Line 96 in particular, there have been ongoing road closures in the Alameda Point area due to the City's RESHAP project. Line 96 continues to be on detour and we have a meeting scheduled with City staff to discuss potential changes to the detour in Alameda Point and make sure that everyone who needs bus access has access during the construction and road closures. On customer feedback, most of the complaints we received are related to no shows, passups, and buses running late.

Christy Cannon (CASA): Early arrivals are much worse than late arrivals. In Alameda, when you're going towards Fruitvale, the AC Transit RealTime app isn't helpful. What kind of training do the bus drivers have when they're running early?

Director Syed: Agree with the caller that early service is worse than late service. Follow up on the next meeting to learn more about what Supervision does to manage on-time performance.

Director Syed: We have a new pilot program on our trunk routes, will that benefit the 51A?

Howard Der: 51A is part of the pilot. The pilot is an attempt to enhance the reliability of our service via a bonus to operators who operate the more stressful lines (heaviest trunk lines).

Director Syed: It's a \$2/hour bonus/incentive pay for operators. We will also be monitoring what kind of impact this has on reliability.

Vice Mayor Pryor: Was curious about how the improvements (i.e., decrease in complaints) came about? What's driving it?

Howard Der: The biggest reason is staffing up our workforce and operator availability.

Director Syed: It could also be factors such as light, weather, and greater efforts by our Supervision team.

11. Next Meetings

Thursday, July 17, 2025 at 9 a.m.

Thursday, October 16, 2025 at 9 a.m.

12. Agenda Planning Requests

13. Announcements/Public Comments

Director Syed: AC Transit's Ward 3 breakfast briefing will be happening in May.

Maria Henderson: Invitations for the breakfast briefing will be sent out in the coming weeks.

Meeting adjourned 10:10am