

City of Alameda – AC Transit ILC

January 25, 2023 Meeting Notes

1. Roll Call/Welcome and Introductions

- a. Attendees – Tony Daysog, Tracy Jensen, Sarah Syed, Chris Peeples

2. Announcements/Public Comments

- a. No comments

3. Notes from the Previous ILC Meeting (October 12, 2022)

- a. No comments

4. AC Transit Lines Operating in Alameda with Ridership Trends

- a. Crystal Wang presents ridership trends in attached presentation.
- b. No public comment
- c. **Sarah Syed:** Are the highest boardings on Sunday or am I reading that wrong?
- d. **Crystal Wang:** Highest ridership is on weekdays, ridership is stacked in the graph

5. AC Transit Service Recovery and Redesign Update

- a. **Robert del Rosario:** We're at about 88% of pre-pandemic service and are working hard but with a workforce shortage we aren't able to get back to 100% in the near future. Board has instructed us to focus on service delivery and reliability and to ensure operators have proper break times. Working on improving schedules that should improve customer experience over the next few quarterly service changes.

Working on major new network initiative, just kicked off and are gathering information and will be doing extensive engagement in Alameda. Will have more of an update at next ILC.

- b. No comments or questions

6. Staff Recommendation for Clement Avenue/Tilden Way Project

- a. **Gail Payne:** Draft concept to the Transportation Commission this evening and this is a condensed version more oriented for AC Transit as audience. Full version is in Transportation Commission packet. Phase began last year with Kittelson. This study area is just a few minutes from Fruitvale BART on the bus and this part of the island has the best frequency in Alameda. There are five ways on/off island and this one has the most congestion. The goals are multimodal and focus on safety. Current truck route doesn't work for large trucks coming from the bridge onto Clement so they go on Blanding and Park and City would like them off Park and Lincoln because they aren't truck routes. Speeding is major issue in the study area and survey respondents aren't happy with the area. Only folks who are satisfied are transit riders. Have a Measure BB grant for \$10 million and have purchased key UP ROW to help close the gap.

Two rounds of outreach last year and are requesting concept approval now. Concept includes a roundabout that should reduce transit delay except a few times in peak hours. Have been coordinating with AC Transit staff and are improving a bus stop in the project area to make it more appealing and accessible.

- b. **Tony Daysog:** Thank you Ms. Payne. Are there any public comments?
- c. **Director Raburn:** Want to offer strong support for this project. This would be a very beneficial project, especially for those on bikes looking to access the Fruitvale BART station. Alamedans make up about 20% of riders at Fruitvale.
- d. **Tracy Jensen:** Agree with Director Raburn and hopefully the 20% number increases once its completed. For Alameda staff and AC Transit: Will speed be reduced on Tilden and will it impact AC Transit routes and schedules?
- e. **Gail Payne:** For the speed limit, are looking to reduce it from 35mph to 25mph, which is more in line with the rest of the city.
- f. **Tracy Jensen:** Any additional bus stops or infrastructure and the routing would stay the same for the buses?
- g. **Gail Payne:** Correct, very little would change and City staff worked with AC Transit staff to see if there were opportunities to make any changes and the current routing is doing what it's supposed to.
- h. **Sarah Syed:** For the new four-way stop at Clement, how would that operate for buses, trucks and others sharing the stop.
- i. **Gail Payne:** New feature. Heard a lot about that intersection being a safety/speeding issue. This will help folks using the Cross-Alameda trail who need to cross the intersection. It will have a slight increase in delay and it's minor because of the redistribution of traffic as part of the project.

7. Staff Recommendation for Lincoln/Marshall/Pacific Corridor Project

- a. **Gail Payne:** This is in a similar phase as the Tilden project. Will be bringing item to Transportation Commission and Council in April. Tier 1 high injury corridor in Alameda. Highest injury corridor. Looking to improve safety and mobility as well as pavement. Has 4-5 lanes and has much more capacity than is needed and doesn't need all the lanes. West end has bus service but nothing east of Webster. Most riders use Santa Clara, just south of the corridor, or Buena Vista to the north of the corridor. Will be one bus stop consolidation on Lincoln/6th and moving it to 5th a little further east. Improving stops on the west end.

Surveys revealed the community is not satisfied. Not statistically significant but 480 folks responded. Recommending three roundabouts – Central, 5th, and 8th. Also looking at locations for flashing beacons for pedestrians.

Have been working with AC Transit to design the corridor to not preclude future bus operations.

- b. **Tracy Jensen:** Question for AC Transit, has Lincoln had bus routes in the past or why were they eliminated?

- c. **Robert del Rosario:** Nothing in recent history and the biggest issue is no bus stops are there and it'd be really challenging to get them. Our buses operate smoothly on Santa Clara. It would be a significant move to go to Lincoln and we'd like to keep the option open but have no firm plans.
- d. **Tracy Jensen:** Is Lincoln a truck route?
- e. **Gail Payne:** Actually not a truck route and that's one of the issues the Clement/Tilden project is looking to solve with WB Tilden extension so trucks won't go on Lincoln. Trucks should be using Clement and Encinal and will be punching through Clement west of Grand to make that connection better.
- f. **Tracy Jensen:** Lincoln becomes one-way eastbound between Park St and Everett, will that change?
- g. **Gail Payne:** No it will stay one way
- h. **Sarah Syed:** Great project, just a couple questions about stop consolidation. There are schools/child development center around 5th. Has there been outreach about new stop location and would it impact folks crossing street?
- i. **Gail Payne:** Current stop has between 1- 4 boardings a day and the stop would move east in front of the park and might be a great place-making opportunity and the north side location would be near school. Used to be Island school, which moved, but is a daycare right now. This would be better because it's closer to school/park.
- j. **Susan Davis:** Clarify that there are a number of programs at the Longfellow campus. Island HS is back there now. Also have a daycare center and special ed preschool there.
- k. **Tony Daysog:** Thank you for the additional information. I remember in 1975 I was in 4th grade and at Linden and Lincoln a friend of theirs got hit by a car and always remember it and am grateful for the changes being contemplated there. As second question I would say this seems exciting. As a west-ender, Pacific, Marshall, and Lincoln west of Webster is a dividing line and there are working class people with homeowners south of Lincoln and multifamily north of it. This would link those together. The traffic circles are exciting.

8. Bench Installations at Bus Stops

- a. **Trey Hannula:** Climate Fellow – Been working on this project the last few months to improve the bus rider experience by documenting where amenities exist and add 20 new benches. Hopefully complete by summer 2023.

Criteria for site selection include ridership, pedestrian priority streets, proximity to goods and services, and equity. There are more than 250 total bus stops and about 35 percent have a bench or shelter and 80% that don't have a bench have the space for a bench.

For the schedule, right now staff is selecting and prioritizing sites then will contact vendors in March and install benches in the summer. Will also create a plan for future installations.

- b. **Geoffrey Johnson:** City of Alameda Transportation Commissioner - Who is responsible for maintenance?
- c. **Gail Payne:** City will own and maintain the benches because we can do that effectively. Community members can submit SeeClickFix for any issues that they see at the benches and generate a work order.

9. AC Transit Ridership and Complaints with Actual Missed Runs

- a. **Crystal Wang:** Overall ridership is trending upwards but not yet up to pre-pandemic levels. Attachment shows information about ridership. Transbay and Line 19 are the only lines not back at pre-pandemic service levels. Still have an operator shortage and working on hiring more to address shortages.
- b. **Tracy Jensen:** Is there still a mask mandate for AC Transit?
- c. **Robert del Rosario:** No mask mandate on the bus.
- d. **Mike Hursh:** No requirement on the bus, just encouraged. Required for employees in facilities and drivers on buses.

10. Update on Alameda Ferry Terminal Paid Parking Pricing Strategy

- a. **Lisa Foster:** Following the General Plan, Transportation Choices Plan we are working on implementing paid parking at the ferry terminals. Parking lots are getting full now as ridership recovers from the pandemic. AC Transit and WETA have both expressed support.

Aiming for late spring with Seaplane Lagoon with \$3 parking rate with Bay Farm following later. If lots are full the rate can increase and if they're empty it could decrease. Drivers can pay on mobile or at pay stations in the lot. Also looking at a low-income parking program in case the base rate needs to rise significantly. More information on the City's ferry parking web page.

11. Line 78 Update

- a. **Crystal Wang:** Line 78 implemented in August 2021 to coincide with the Seaplane Lagoon Ferry Terminal opening and has weekday-only peak-hour connections with ferry trips. Ridership is low but has been trending upwards. Recent comments have indicated that there should be more marketing to let folks know about the connections and marketing it more with a focus on the free ride to the ferry. Staff from the City, WETA, and AC Transit have been meeting to discuss marketing efforts to improve awareness. Pilot ends in the summer and staff is looking to extend the pilot to allow for results from the paid parking program.
- b. **Tony Daysog:** Thank you for extending the pilot once and considering another to accommodate parking program.

12. Free Bus Pass Program for Seniors and Peoples with Disabilities Update

- a. **Nichelle Laynes:** he program continues to see growth as enrollment increases. Now up to 840 participants and have seen a 53 percent increase in the number of tags on our buses and expect to see a continued increase in participation and ridership.

- b. **Public Comment:** What is the procedure for replacing lost EasyPasses?
- c. **Nichelle Laynes:** The number on the back of the card is the best way to replace a lost/stolen card. Or you can call AC Transit and we'll help you.
- d. **Katherine Kaldis:** Wanted to clarify that if a participant in the program loses their card they can reach out to my office and we'll replace it. Because it's a new program, sometimes Clipper customer service has trouble so it's better to reach out directly to me. Very successful program. Now ridership is up to 20k rides a month and have been able to translate response letter into Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Spanish. Wonderful partnership with AC Transit.
- e. **Sarah Syed:** What's the annual cost and since it's first come/first served are we near meeting the limit on the program?
- f. **Katherine Kaldis:** We are only about half way and can serve twice as many as today. No wait list and everyone that qualifies is getting in.
- g. **Sarah Syed:** Any additional outreach plans so others who are eligible and haven't heard about it can know?
- h. **Katherine Kaldis:** Doing outreach to seniors with independence plaza and the Chinese community has done its own outreach to get the word out. Came to us and asked for translation so they could get more participants. Reaching out to groups representing those with disabilities. Leisure Club through AARP and the transitional housing club. Plan is to continue reaching out to as many places as possible.
- i. **Tracy Jensen:** Great presentation, how does this program coordinate with paratransit programs? Is it part of the county program?
- j. **Katherine Kaldis:** This is a city program that replaces a shuttle that was eliminated and if someone is unable to take a regular bus then the city can work with East Bay Paratransit to get them into AIM program for on-demand rides.
- k. **Tracy Jensen:** Are you seeing folks who would normally take East Bay paratransit but this program allows them to take the bus?
- l. **Katherine Kaldis:** Some folks are comfortable taking a bus in Alameda but don't feel so about going into Oakland so they may take East Bay Paratransit for trips out of Alameda.

13. New Developments Update

- a. **Gail Payne:** Occupants of new developments are required to pay a TDM fee to the Alameda TMA that pays for bus passes and other transportation services. There is a new Executive Director of the Alameda TMA and this will be a great year working together to make TDM fees work for residents and community members and improve AC Transit services.
- b. **Sarah Syed:** Wanted to ask about the EasyPass and the Clipper BayPass program. Understand TMA is looking to transition from EasyPass to BayPass and wanted to know more about the process and timeline.

- c. **Gail Payne:** That is a separate Alameda TMA program and not clear on the timeline and specifics. With Kittelson doing the new AC Transit network there's an opportunity for working together on this.
- d. **Mike Hursh:** Lots of interest in BayPass and there's a funding constraint so stay tuned because MTC is looking at a sustainable funding mechanism for BayPass.
- e. **Sarah Syed:** So BayPass is already fully allocated so any expansion wouldn't happen right away?
- f. **Mike Hursh:** That's correct.

14. Street Project Update: Encinal, Grand, Mecartney/Island, Lincoln/Marshall/Pacific, Central, Clement/Tilden, and Otis/Doolittle/SR 61 and Commercial Street Program

- a. **Gail Payne:** Really covered this with items 6 and 7 and a reminder that Caltrans is out on Encinal doing construction and hopefully they're working with AC operations to coordinate this summer and fall. Central will start later this year and will be in touch to coordinate.

15. Next Meetings and Discuss Potential for Hybrid Meetings

- a. **Robert del Rosario:** In compliance with AB 2449 next meeting will be hybrid and will work with city staff to find facilities in the City. If committee members want to participate remotely we'll need to ensure compliance with AB 2449 but generally the hybrid option is more for the public. April 12 is next meeting date.

16. Agenda Planning Requests

- a. **Chris Peebles:** Robert, I think we're going to approve the fourth interim report on 5x5 report and would be useful to put on the agenda.

17. Announcements/Public Comments

- a. **Chris Peebles:** Wanted to apologize for being late, meeting invite was on Outlook calendar but not iPad calendar which is what I use to manage my life.

18. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 10:28am