

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT
2150 Webster Street, P.O. Box 12688, Oakland, CA 94604-2688

BART ACCESSIBILITY TASK FORCE
Committee Meeting Minutes
April 25, 2024

1. Roll Call of Members:

1. Anita Ortega
2. Annie Koruga (Vice-Chair) -ABSENT
3. Bruce Yow
4. Catherine Callahan
5. Christine Arsenault
6. Clarence R. Fischer
7. Danny Kodmur
8. Daveed Mandell
9. Don Queen
10. Emily Witkin
11. Herb Hastings
12. Hillary Brown
13. Janice Armigo Brown (2nd Vice-Chair)
14. Roland Wong (Chair)
15. VACANT
16. VACANT
17. VACANT
18. VACANT

Quorum of seven (7) in-person BATF members. Christine Arsenault and Herb Hastings attended their first appointed meeting. Roland Wong and Janice Armigo Brown used their first out of two, “Just Cause.”

BART Customer Access and Accessibility Department Staff:

Elena Van Loo
Ryan Greene-Roesel
Bob Franklin

BART Director (s), BART Staff, Speakers, and members of the public:

Director Robert Raburn
Leonardo Pica (BART Staff)

Brian Bentley (BART Staff)
Jumana Nabti (BART Staff)
Josephine Mitchell (Captioner)
Sarah Hill (Captioner)
Jerry Grace (Guest)
Sara Desumala (Guest)
Sam Buman (Guest)
Roger Acuna (Guest)

2. Public Comments

Sara Desumala mentioned she was sorry she was not able to attend “Ride to History, the Final Run of the First Fleet BART Train.”

Sam Buman introduced himself and expressed his interest in becoming a BATF member.

3. Approval of March 28, 2024 meeting minutes

Herb Hastings moved approval of the March 28, 2024 meeting minutes. Hillary Brown second the motion.

- Motion passes with ten (10) in favor, zero (0) against, and zero (0) abstention

4. New color priority seat pilot program in the BART trains

Leonardo Pica and Brian Bentley presented on the agenda item.

Leonardo Pica showed previous BART seat colors in the Legacy Fleet trains which were originally brown and then changed to a dark blue color. He mentioned BART seats used be all in one color throughout the train. In 2018 the seats to the left of each door were changed to a mustard yellow color to differentiate these seats as priority seats to remind riders that these seats are for those who need them.

He showed a couple of pictures of the current chartreuse colored priority seats in the Fleet of Future (FOF).

He addressed some issues with the current seats:

- Easily dirtied
- Difficult to clean

- High replacement rate due to appearance
- Manufacturer difficulties keeping up with maintenance rates

He shared that BART will test six (6) cars with the new color priority seats and will look forward to hearing feedback from BATF members and the public from surveys and other criteria.

He went over the how the pilot priority seats will look like. The seatback color will be the same blue as non-priority seats but will contain the same imagery as the priority seat signage (icons of passengers with wheelchairs, people with canes, and pregnant women).

Leonardo Pica mentioned the bottom seats will be the same solid blue color as the non-priority seats.

He went over the benefits of the new pilot priority seats:

- Redundant imagery of priority seat decal reinforcing that these are priority seats
- Imagery is printed onto the fabric and is permanent
- Reduction in inventory, leading to easier replacement of damaged seats.

Leonardo Pica listed the pilot evaluation criteria:

- Do passengers understand the differentiation of these seats, to indicate priority for seniors and people with disabilities?
- Are the seats easier to clean?
- Is the long-term appearance better?

Herb Hastings asked if the priority seats should have the same contracting images for the back seat and the bottom of the seat. Leonardo Pica mentioned it will be costly to have the same imagery for the back and bottom of the seat. He also mentioned that having the bottom seat be the same blue colors as non-priority seats will be easier to maintain. He also mentioned the bottom seats tends to get dirtier and vandalized faster than the back seats.

Clarence R. Fischer was pleased with the contrast color in the Fleet of the Future (FOF) and with the pilot priority seats. He liked the contrast seatback with the white logo images compared to the lighter blue logo images. He thought the blue logo images blend with the darker blue and looks more like the non-priority seats.

Emily Witkin would like to keep the light lime-green colored seats. She thinks the current seats are more visible and thinks the pilot seats are not.

Catherine Callahan asked what line will the pilot priority seats be on. Leonardo Pica mentioned he will email Elena Van Loo when there is a confirmed date when the pilot priority seats will be installed.

Jerry Grace asked if the pilot priority seats will be the same vinyl seats as the non-priority seats and Leonardo Pica confirmed all seats, including priority seats, are the same vinyl seats.

Leonardo Pica added the priority seating signs behind the priority seats will remain the same.

5. Regional mapping and wayfinding project update

Jumana Nabti presented on the agenda item:

- What is wayfinding
 - Project context, schedule, and status: accessibility & equity
- Core project elements
 - New regional network identity, signage, and digital wayfinding
- Next steps
 - Prototype installation and public evaluation plan

She mentioned wayfinding includes identity, directional signage, accessibility, maps, information, schedules, and digital tools.

Part of the transit transformation action plan is what is wayfinding:

1. Fares and payment
 - Simpler, consistent, and equitable fare and payment options
2. Customer Information
 - Make transit easier to navigate and more convenient
3. Transit Network
 - Transit services managed as a unified, efficient, and reliable network
4. Accessibility
 - Transit services for older adults, people with disabilities, and those with lower income are coordinated efficiently
5. Funding
 - Use existing resources more effectively and secure new, dedicated revenue to meet fundings needs

Project goals & schedule is part of what is wayfinding:

- Make transit journeys easier to understand to retain existing and attract new riders
 - Better information for customers

- Dependable, predictable, and familiar
- Better operations for transit providers
 - Standard wayfinding parts, applications, and guidelines
- Better outcomes for the region
 - Health, equity, sustainability, and economic vitality

Jumana Nabti went over the four (4) different phases:

- Phase 1 & 2 (has been completed)
 - Project development, harmonization, business case
 - User research and outreach, regional map prototype, business case, map examples and tier development
- Phase 3 (funded and current phase)
 - System development
 - Regional standards, prototype, pilot projects, new mapping database
- Phase 4 (unfunded)
 - Full implementation
 - Expand new wayfinding system regionwide

Jumana Nabti focused on accessibility and equity, saying, “Accessibility is a cornerstone of the new wayfinding system.”

- Project engagement with Equity Priority Communities (EPCs)
 - Four “co-creation,” workshops held in spring of 2023 including
 - Individuals with travel-limiting disabilities
 - People of color
 - Seniors
 - Individuals with low income
 - Individuals with proficiency in English

She identified the key needs:

- Better path directions to help riders find stops and destination nearby
- More prominent bus route numbers and braille/tactile information at stops
- Information on available services at facilities such as restroom and elevators
- Digital should not replace print information

She went over the different types of color palettes, modal icons (trains, buses, ferries), hierarchy of information, new types of signages, and extended digital wayfinding, like a QR code.

She went over the next step with prototype installation and evaluation, as well as the schedule for 2024.

Herb Hasting requested that Jumana bring in some of the wayfinding signs for BATF members and members of the public to experience. Jumana Nabti mentioned she will look into this.

Daveed Mandell asked how wayfinding works for people who have low vision or are blind. Jumani Nabti mentioned they are working on tactile signs, QR codes that will link to wayfinding assistance, and tactile guideways.

Daveed Mandell was a bit confused why the prototype installation is in Santa Rosa instead in San Francisco or the South Bay, San Jose area.

6. Discuss applications for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Regional Mapping and Wayfinding Project Accessibility Working Group

Jumana Nabti announced that MTC is looking for applicants to join a new advisory committee, Accessibility Working Group for Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Regional Mapping and Wayfinding Project.

She mentioned the purpose of this new advisory committee is to provide a space for transit customers with disabilities to share their lived experience with the project team and to help evaluate prototype and pilot wayfinding signage/materials through an accessibility lens.

7. Discuss potential changes to the BATF By-Laws

Roland Wong led the agenda item.

Roland read out loud, Potential changes to the BATF By-Laws:

1. Reduce New Membership Requirements

- Current Requirement: Attend 3 of 4 consecutive meetings
- Proposed Requirement: Attend 2 of 3 consecutive meetings
 - Goal: Speed up new membership process

2. Reduce Member Attendance Requirements

- Current Rule: Members may miss 4 meetings per year
- Proposed Change: Increase number of allowable absences, if excused for illness or other valid reasons
 - Goal: To avoid long process of becoming a member again if terminated for absences

3. Term Limits for Officers

- Current Role: No term limits on Officer positions
- Proposed Change: Place a limit on term for Officer roles
 - Goal: Gives more members an opportunity to serve as committee leaders

4. Placing Items on Agendas

- Current Role: The Chair shall schedule items on the agenda in consultation with the staff liaison
- Proposed Change: Clarify how items are placed on the agenda
 - Goal: Clarify how Chair, Members, and Staff place items on the agenda

Members agreed to have rough draft of the BATF By-Laws with the proposal changes for review and potentially approving the changes. Members expressed it will be easier to see the changes and have better understanding.

8. Debrief of the accessible Next Generation Fare Gate at West Oakland BART Station from March 28, 2024 open house

Roland Wong led the agenda item.

Herb Hastings mentioned the open house was successful. He mentioned he liked that the Next Generation Faregates are nice and tall and added the accessible faregates may be a concern with the sensors and may welcome piggyback riders.

Bruce Yow expressed concerns with fare evasion with the new Next Generation Faregates.

Clarence R. Fischer stated he was not at the open-house and suggested having another open-house.

Daveed Mandell was concerned that the Next Generation Faregates are not friendly for people who are blind or have low vision.

Roland Wong asked which prototype faregate will be used as new Next Generation Faregates are being installed. Director Robert Raburn confirmed the plexiglass with the metal framing.

9. Member announcements

No member announcements.

10. Staff announcements

Elena Van Loo congratulated Christine Arseneault and Herb Hastings on being appointed by the BART Board of Directors.

11. Chairperson announcements

Roland Wong was thankful that he was able to officiate the meeting via hybrid.

12. Agenda Topics – Member Suggest Topics

- South Hayward BART Station repairs – Update
- Restrooms Closures
 - Weekends
 - Members want to know why
- BART brochures update
 - Online only
 - needs updating, out of date
- Update on printed train schedules
 - At platform level
 - Trains scheduled are not up-to-date
- Tactile path
 - Braille
 - near elevators, escalators, etc.
- Next Generation Faregate
 - Focused on the sensors

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:21 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, May 23, 2024 at 2pm.