

MINUTES of the BART Bicycle Advisory Task Force (BBATF)
February 3, 2025 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

BBATF Members: Jon Spangler (Chairperson), Jeremiah Maller (Vice Chair), Tyler Morris (Secretary), Maya Chaffee, Morris Gevirtz, Phoenix Mangrum.

Meeting called to order by Chair Jon Spangler at 6:01pm

Members in attendance:

Jon Spangler (Chairperson), Jeremiah Maller (Vice Chair), Tyler Morris (Secretary), Maya Chaffee, Morris Gevirtz, Phoenix Mangrum

BART Director: Robert Raburn, Barnali Ghosh
BART Liaison: Heath Maddox

Guests:

Alex Shu, Al, Bryan Culbertson, Bryan Redmond, Elena O'Curry, Estrella Sainburg, Ian Gaerlan, Ivan V, Jenn Koscielniak, Joe Wong, Johnny Lane, Jordan Moldow, Lynn Baer, Michael Sacks, Paul Valdez, Raul Maldonado, Sam Greenberg, Tyler Compton, William Z, Alexander Shu, Jonathan MacMillan, Al Park.

Absent: N/A

Agenda with minutes follows as is:

1. 6:02pm Self-Introductions of Members, Staff, and Guests: All. (For Information) 5min.
 - a) Members introduced themselves
2. 6:15pm General Discussion and Public Comment: Jon Spangler. (For Information) 5min.
 - a) Tyler applauded transit planning
 - b) Jon mentioned the upcoming Bike East Bay annual meeting coming up
3. 6:18pm Approval of December 2024 BBATF Minutes: Jon Spangler. (For action) 5min.
 - a) Jeremiah motioned to approved the minuets, and Jon seconded the motion
 - b) Unanimous consent approves the motion
4. 6:19pm BBATF Membership Update. (Information) 10min.
 - a) Heath shared the current roster of the BBATF and the open positions
 - b) 18 total positions with 6 currently filled and 12 vacant
 - c) Heath reiterates the requirements to join the BBATF
 - d) Jon reminds candidates that the BBATF bylaws allow you to represent the county where you live OR work
 - e) Michael Sacks removes his application
 - f) Tyler asked Jon to give a synopsis of BBATF commitments and duties
5. 6:32pm Approval of BBATF Member Applications. (Information/Action) 15min.
 - a) Jenn Koscielniak, Contra Costa County
 - b) Elena O'Curry, Alameda County
 - c) Jon motions to accept Jenn and Elena's application, and Morris second
 - d) Unanimous consent approves the motion
6. 6:37pm Election of 2025 BBATF Officers (Discussion/Action) 20min.
 1. Jon nominates Jeremiah for Chair, Jeremiah nominates Jon for Vice Chair, and Jon nominates Tyler for Secretary

- a) Morris seconds the motion of candidates slate
 - b) Motion is unanimously approved
 - c) Morris motioned to reapprove Jon's membership, and Tyler seconded the motion
 - d) Motion is approved unanimously
7. 6:44pm BART Bicycle Preferred Path of Travel Capital Plan Update (Information) 10min.
- a) Heath gives a verbal presentation on the background of the BART Bicycle Access plan for new members
 - b) Phase Two begins this year
 - c) Maya asked what the next round of stations will be
 - d) Heath says the next stations are Fremont, Glen Park, San Bruno, Union City, Colma, South Hayward, South San Francisco, Orinda, and Pleasant Hill
8. 6:57pm Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Pathway Update (Discussion/Action) 10min.
- a) MTC a year ago presented a plan to eliminate the bike path to 3 days a week
 - b) BCDC will hold a public hearing coming up to approve or deny the proposed changes
 - c) Heath mentions that bridge access for the public via foot or bicycle is critical during natural disasters
 - d) Jordans' blood is boiled at the thought of the bridge access being closed and is in full support of BBATF efforts to advocate for bridge path access
9. 7:11pm Coliseum Station Secure Bike Parking (Information) 10min.
- a) Heath gives an overview of bicycle access and parking at Coliseum Station
 - b) Bike lockers are becoming a target for theft
 - c) Heath is working on a plan to install bike lockers within the station's paid area
 - d) Tyler asked if old fare-gates can be removed to make room for new double-decker lockers in conjunction with installing "Next-Gen" fare-gates
 - e) Jeremiah had a similar thought and comment to the above
10. 7:33pm BART Next Generation Fare Gates—Proposed letter to BART Board of Directors on BBATF concerns with the new fare-gates (Discussion/Action) 15min.
- a) Tyler motioned to approve the letter and appendix with Maya seconding the motion
 - b) The motion to send the letter is unanimously consented to
- c) 11. 7:55pm BART Bike Program Updates (Information) 10min.
- d) Heath directs peoples' attention to the agenda packet for data updates
12. 7:57pm Future Agenda Items: All. (For Discussion) 5min.
- a) BART to Silicon Valley update
 - b) BART to Nature
 - c) BBATF action calendar
 - d) Coliseum BART Bay Trail Connector
 - e) Strategic Planning
 - f) Welcome new BART Board Directors

Thank you to Jon for his years of leadership in Chairing BBATF

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m. by Chairperson Jon Spangler
 Next meeting is called for by Chairperson Jon Spangler on April 7th, 2025 at 6:00p.m.

BART Bicycle Advisory Task Force

January 31, 2025

TO: President Mark Foley and Members of the BART Board of Directors

RE: BART's Next Generation Fare Gates Are Not Accessible Enough

FROM: BART Bicycle Task Advisory Force

The BART Bicycle Task Advisory Force (BBATF) supports effective and accessibility-sustaining means of reducing fare evasion, modernizing the BART system, and improving rider experience. Unfortunately, when compared to the legacy fare gates, the new Next Generation (NG) fare gates reduce timely access for fare-paying BART users with wheelchairs, walkers, bicycles, cargo bikes, e-bikes, luggage, shopping carts, baby strollers, scooters, and other mobility devices.

Although our members are aware of fare evasion, the BBATF usually addresses other priorities affecting BART station accessibility and bicycle facilities. (We also review new station designs, legacy station renovations, and BART car design.) The BBATF was not asked to field-test the NG gate designs prior to the prototype gates' installation. We were told that the new gates and gate arrays would provide safe, efficient, and timely access for fare-paying BART patrons with bikes. This has not been the case.

Not field-testing the NG fare gates and gate arrays with wheelchairs, cargo bikes, e-bikes, scooters, baby strollers, and large luggage — all of which require special access — before installation was, in hindsight, a major blind spot in the NG Fare Gate project. Whether or not the NG gates have reduced fare evasion, they have created access barriers to BART for those who have special access needs.

The BBATF has found that the NG gates (both standard and accessible) and arrays — as now configured — inhibit fast, safe, and equitable BART access for bicyclists and other users. Continuing to install NG gate arrays without fixing the current bike, mobility device user, and traveler access restrictions will only multiply the accessibility problems reported by users of the West Oakland and other NG fare gates — and make the implementation of solutions more expensive.

NEW FARE GATE ACCESS ISSUES AROSE IMMEDIATELY

Members of the BBATF began hearing reports from bicyclists about problems with the first NG gates at West Oakland soon after they were installed. We became concerned and asked cyclists to report their issues in detail to us and to Heath Maddox, our staff liaison and BART's Access Coordinator of Bicycle Programs.

Increasing reports of problems reached us throughout the spring and summer of 2024 about slowed and blocked access for travelers with luggage, parents with strollers, and people using walkers, wheelchairs, scooters, and bikes — especially cargo bikes, e-bikes, and bikes with baskets, panniers, and/or wide handlebars. In fact, most bicyclists with bikes other than light “road bikes” were having difficulty getting through the non-accessible NG gates or had to find a station agent to get through the emergency gate when the few accessible NG gates (one per gate array) failed. The BBATF then requested a detailed presentation from the Next Generation Fare Gate team.

BBATF MEETING: AUGUST 5, 2024

At our August 2024 meeting, Michael Gerbracht and Derry Moten of the NG team presented updates on the NG gates' design, upgrades, and installations. Task force members shared the problems bicyclists, wheelchair users, and other BART riders with special access needs had regularly experienced with the NG gates. Sadly, the NG team had not heard of most of these incidents. They asked the BBATF and staff to pass along any issues brought to us by the public, which we have done.

The NG team told the BBATF that the NG fare gates and arrays did not have a robust real-time monitoring and feedback system: NG gates were not being tracked 24/7 for incidents of slowed and/or blocked access. Since the Next Generation team's gate monitoring process had not been set up to capture slowed or blocked access that the new gates caused, the team remained unaware of many problems that BART riders had reported after using the NG gates — until the BBATF and staff informed them that NG gate and gate array access failures had prevented cyclists, parents with strollers, people with luggage, and users of mobility devices from using BART — especially when the lone wide/accessible NG gates in some arrays stopped working.

Worse yet, BART users slowed or blocked by inaccessible NG gates were expected to use BART's online feedback tool or file handwritten reports with the station agent. Many NG gate users were not aware of the options to report accessibility problems or get immediate help or know about contacting the BART Accessibility Task Force (BATF) or the BART Bicycle Advisory Task Force (BBATF).

BART'S LEGACY GATES OFFERED GREATER BICYCLE ACCESSIBILITY

The shorter legacy gates allowed many fare-paying bicyclists to roll their bikes through on the rear wheel so that the handlebars were not caught in the closing gate — or to simply lift their bikes (or their carry-on luggage) up and over a legacy fare gate.

The regular NG gates, however, are too tall and narrow to allow rolling bicycles with wider handlebars or bags through the gate like that. This forces many more cyclists to compete for the limited number of wider, accessible NG gates along with cargo bike and e-bike riders, people with walkers, scooters, wheelchairs, and luggage, or parents with baby strollers.

The NG gate design creates a *de facto* reduction in BART's accessibility for many BART users because more passengers are now forced to use the limited number of accessible gates. Since more BART passengers are forced to use the wider NG gates, when that single wider gate in each array fails — and they fail often — the entire array becomes inaccessible to more passengers than with the legacy gates. This leaves no other access to BART for such riders at that NG array — unless both a station agent and an emergency gate are present. Congestion is even worse when staff are not present to open the emergency exit gates and during peak travel times.

RECOMMENDATIONS: IMPROVE GATE & ARRAY EVALUATION AND DESIGN

First and foremost, the BBATF urges the BART Board and staff to strengthen their commitments to accessibility. *Please offer fare-paying riders with bicycles, strollers, wheelchairs, large luggage, e-bikes, cargo bikes, scooters, and mobility devices fare gate arrays that are at least as accessible overall as the legacy fare gate arrays.* Legitimate BART users should not suffer reduced access to BART as a result of efforts to reduce fare evasion. *Nor should BART be penalized by MTC for maintaining constant accessibility levels for fare-paying BART users with special accessibility needs.*

The following are the BBATF's more detailed recommendations on:

- 1) NG fare gate and gate array evaluation, design and reliability;
- 2) reporting and feedback options for BART users;
- 3) increasing access to more of the wider NG gates;
- 4) providing more NG gate information to BART patrons; and
- 5) meeting the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC's) fare-evasion gate deadlines as well as funding much-needed NG accessibility equity improvements.

1. EXPAND EVALUATION PROCESS FOR NEXT GENERATION FARE GATES

- A. Expand the scope of NG fare gate and array evaluation criteria to include all incidents of reduced access (slowing and/or blocking) for fare-paying BART passengers with wheelchairs, walkers, bicycles, baby strollers, large luggage, cargo and e-bikes, scooters, as well as others with special access needs.
- B. Continuously monitor every installed NG fare gate and array with 24/7/365 video, sensors, and/or in-person methods to ensure that every access problem is tracked.
- C. Set up alerts, measurement, and evaluation tools to capture the details of every NG gate failure/access delay (e.g., gate closure on cargo bikes, inadequate gate width for bike handlebars) to track when and how NG gate failures delay BART users.
- D. Implement new gate and array designs and improvements based on this new data. Continuously improve the NG gate designs, durability, hardware, sensors, timing, and software to offer consistent, reliable accessibility and keep the NG gates from injuring BART patrons, slowing access, or closing on BART's fare-paying wheelchair users, travelers with luggage, parents with strollers, or bike riders.

2. EXPAND GATE ALERT AND REPORTING OPTIONS FOR BART USERS

- A. Provide multiple easily-accessed ways — with signage — for BART users to report NG gate and array access problems immediately, including filing reports with onsite station agents. Offer digital and other options in multilingual formats.
- B. BART users whose bicycle, luggage, wheelchair, or stroller is jammed in or blocked by a fare gate should be able to immediately signal onsite BART staff for immediate assistance at any time — without leaving the fare gate.
- C. BART Director Janice Li suggested at the December 9, 2024, Board meeting that information on NG gate and array problems could be collected by: “(1) establishing a centralized email address, such as faregates@bart.gov, for riders to submit feedback and ideas; and (2) deploying QR codes at fare gate locations to provide information about the project and an easy way for riders to offer feedback.” We support this.
- D. Actively request feedback on the NG gates from patrons and groups whose members take strollers, walkers, wheelchairs, cargo and e-bikes, scooters, bikes, and luggage on BART. Offer multilingual focus groups, surveys, and online platforms.

3. PROVIDE ADDITIONAL ACCESSIBLE NEXT GENERATION FARE GATES

Provide BART's passengers with special access needs and who use wheeled devices efficient, safe, and equitable access at every NG gate array by:

A. Install at least two wider (wheelchair/bike/stroller accessible) NG fare gates in every array of NG gates. Where one wider gate is now installed, provide two, so that patrons who need them are not delayed or denied BART access because a lone wider (wheelchair/bicycle) gate is not working.

B. Increasing the number of accessible fare gate arrays so every station has the capacity to easily and quickly handle larger numbers of bikes and cargo bikes as well as users with wheelchairs, luggage, strollers, personal shopping carts, e-scooters, etc. (For example, 16th Street BART now has gates to the south but not by the eastern stairs and elevator.) *Every NG gate array should be an accessible array.*

4. PROVIDE MORE NG GATE AND ACCESS INFORMATION TO BART PATRONS

A. Produce instructional videos, signage, and/or flyers showing how BART passengers should use the NG gates — especially riders with e-bikes, cargo bikes, baby strollers, large luggage, etc.

B. Improve BART station wayfinding and signage to notify patrons who need accessible NG fare gates or emergency gates: a) where working and staffed accessible gates are available, and b) and by which escalators, stairs, or elevators they can be reached.

5. MTC DEADLINES AND ACCESSIBILITY AS A FUNDING PRIORITY

Despite the looming deadlines imposed by MTC, we urge the BART Board to pause the installation of the Next Generation Fare Gates until more reliable and accessible gate and array designs are developed, so that two of the wider (wheelchair-accessible) fare gates can be installed in every NG gate array. *Adequate and reliable accessibility for all BART patrons needs to be ensured at any new NG gate arrays that are installed.*

Making every Next Generation Fare Gate array more accessible will cost more than is currently budgeted for the project. However, additional work is needed to make the NG gates and arrays *at least* as accessible overall as the legacy fare gates and arrays.

Once the gates and arrays are more accessible, BART can seek grant funding for these necessary equitable-access improvements. The BBATF stands ready to help the BART Board make the case that adequately accessible fare-evasion gates and arrays are worth the additional cost and worth extending the design and installation deadlines.

CONCLUSION

The BART Bicycle Advisory Task Force fully supports effectively increasing BART fare revenues, modernizing its system, and improving rider experience. At the same time, fare-paying riders with bicycles, strollers, wheelchairs, walkers, large luggage, e-bikes,

scooters, cargo bikes, and mobility devices should not suffer decreased access to BART as a result of having new fare gates installed to reduce fare evasion.

Thank you very much for considering our concerns and recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon M. Spangler, Chair

BART Bicycle Advisory Task Force