

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
January 25, 2024

1. Roll Call of Members:

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

Quorum of eight (8) in-person BATF members. Emily Witkin used, “Just Cause,” for the first time.

BART Customer Access and Accessibility Department Staff:

Elena Van Loo
Matt West
Bob Franklin

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

Director Robert Raburn
Ahmad Rassai (BART Staff)

Patricia Nelson (BART Staff)
Sterling Routson-Thomas (BART Staff)
Shane Edwards (BART Staff)
Michael Lemon (BART Staff)
Jason Weinstein (MTC Staff)
Sara Hill (Captioner)
Mayra Perez (Captioner)
Herb Hastings (Guest)
Christine Arseneault (Guest)
Aleta Depree (Guest)
Andrea Johnson (Guest)
Natalie Maxwell (Guest)
Roger Acuna (Guest)
Helen Walsh (Guest)
Jerry Grace (Guest)
Sarah Desumala (Guest)
Sergio Valencia (Guest)

2. Public Comments

Aleta Dupree introduced herself. She cannot serve as an appointed member as she does not live within the BART's district. She stated the Bay Area has not been the kindest place and added she is a real disabled US Army Vet who served in Desert Storm. She asked to be accepted as part of the disabled community even being different and wearing a skirt. Aleta Dupree stated she has a reduced fare Clipper Card and supports reduced fares. Reduced fares are testimonies to the unique and essential needs. She asked to be willing to expand the message of the importance of reduced fares and mentioned if anyone is eligible to get it to access the system. Aleta Dupree appreciated coming to the meeting and speaking under the Brown Act protocols.

Herb Hastings introduced himself and mentioned he was a BATF member and is looking forward to coming back as a BATF member. He stated he witnessed fare evasions on his way to the BATF meeting. He also spoke about the next generation fare gates and encouraged people to go to West Oakland BART Station to try out the new fare gates.

Director Robert Raburn introduced himself and expressed his appreciation for BATF members' good deeds and wishes everyone a wonderful 2024.

3. Approval of December 13, 2023 meeting minutes

Clarence Fischer moved approval of the December 13, 2023. Janice Armigo Brown seconded the motion.

- Motion passes with ten (10) in favor, zero (0) against, and one (1) abstention

4. Clipper Card update:

- **Clipper Card next generation system 2.0**
- **Clipper Card Start update**

Jason Weinstein from Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) presented on Clipper Card update highlighting the Clipper Card Next Generation System and Clipper Start update.

He went over the backbone for regional network management. He mentioned Clipper Card services 22 transit operators, partners with mobile phones, supports regional and operator-specific fare initiatives, and the Clipper Executive Board provides program direction.

There are 4 million active accounts, \$24 million are spent on fares each month, and there are ten million total users.

He shared that mobile Clipper Card usage has increased since April 2021. He mentioned Clipper Card users are 95% satisfied and 97% Clipper Card users would recommend it to family and friends.

He mentioned the Clipper Card system needs modernizing and is stretching to meet all the customer needs which extends to transit benefit recipients, low-income (equity), youth and seniors, people with qualifying disabilities (accessibility), transit benefits companies, and employers, colleges, and residential developments.

He went over the new, next generation Clipper Card with the timeline of the project delivery from 2022 to 2024. He mentioned there will be new on-board card readers, Clipper Card faregate readers, platform stand-alone card readers, customer service terminal, and handheld retail. He added Clipper Card mobile payments goes through Apple Pay and Google Pay App at which you can check balance, travel costs, plan trips, and look into group travel.

He also mentioned in the near future, you will be able to use major contactless credit/debit cards known as, “open payment.”

He went over the Clipper Mobile App, sharing that you can instantly see current funds, the current balance, travel costs, and plan a trip. The Clipper Mobile App provides group travel guidelines.

He shared Clipper Card Customer Service will be better than ever. He mentioned there will be automated phone options that will allow customers to self-service, and that there is a live “chat” that will give customers another way to communicate with Clipper Card Customer Service.

Jason Weinstein went over the Clipper Card Start update.

He shared data on the current program and mentioned the data ran through October of 2023. He mentioned 29,000 applications was received, 2.7 million trips were taken, 25,000 applications were approved (roughly 12% of eligible population), and Clipper Card Start has gone up significantly after spring 2023 campaign.

To qualify for Clipper Card Start, people must be a resident of the San Francisco Bay Area, be 19-64 years old, do not have an RTC Clipper Card for people with disabilities, and have a household income of 200% of the federal poverty level or less.

He pointed out, “big wins,” with Clipper Start and continues to improve as this program grows. In the spring of 2023, marketing campaign with direct mail nearly doubled applications received, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) will join Clipper Start program in January of 2024, and starting on January 01, 2024, all participating agencies will offer a 50% discount.

Jason Weinstein mentioned there will be ongoing discounts, promotions and more in the coming weeks.

Hillary Brown asked how to sign up for the Clipper Card Start. Jason Weinstein mentioned to visit, clippercard.com, and there will be more details on what are the requirements. He added the Clipper Card Start application is available online.

Roland Wong thanked Jason Weinstein for the presentation and mentioned he serves on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) advisory committee. He had a couple of points to share:

1. How are the transactions linked to a credit card payment to Clipper Card number. Currently, we can view the transactions on Clipper Card Website and Clipper Card App. Will this process be pretty much the same?
2. Clipper BayPass was not part of the presentation but was a Clipper Card topic. He pointed out that he heard the Clipper BayPass program is successful. As the program expands to encourage more people to ride public transit in the Bay Area, I would like to see the Clipper BayPass include seniors and people with disabilities. Clipper RTC program does have a 62.5% discount which helps; however, this population of people have difficulty paying their daily living expenses and transit fares due to high cost in the Bay Area which discourages them from going out and thereby creating depression and self-isolation. Roland Wong has asked other committees to include seniors & people with disabilities to participate in Clipper BayPass, but this is not on the plan at this time. He mentioned bringing the Clipper BayPass Program to access transit and equity for all people.

Jason Weinstein expressed gratitude to Roland Wong for his support and valued his viewpoints. In the upcoming months, Jason Weinstein stated that further details regarding the [Clipper ByPass pilot program](#) will be available.

Clarence Fischer had a few suggestions. He suggested adding to the presentation an income amount that may qualify for the Clipper Card Start instead of the percentage due to not all can calculate amount from the percentage side. He suggested adding ads in the BART trains and throughout the BART System to get people to sign up to be transit riders and sign up for the Clipper Card Start program. He suggested with Clipper Card Start is to include seniors and people with disabilities because he thinks they can give good feedback. He also would like to get a better understanding of the new Clipper Card 2.0 being part of Paratransit. Jason Weinstein said he will look into Clipper Card 2.0 being part of Paratransit.

Herb Hastings questioned why you cannot use both plastic Clipper Card and smartphone Clipper Card at the same time and Jason Weinstein stated, at this time, this cannot be done due to identity theft concerns.

Jerry Grace asked what happens if you misplaced the plastic Clipper Card or misplaced the smartphone with the Clipper Card App on it. Jason Weinstein shared to call Clipper Card Customer Service as soon as you can and report a lost/stolen card or lost/stolen smartphone to set up a new account, if necessary.

Natalie Maxwell mentioned Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) website is archaic and needs updating. They would also like to know more about the group travel sales on the Clipper Card website.

Helen Walsh asked for clarification about what is the difference between the RTC discount cards (seniors and people with qualifying disabilities) vs. Clipper Card Start Program (low income based, live in the Bay Area). Jason Weinstein mentioned RTC discount card is at 62.5% discount and the Clipper Start Program is at 50% discount.

5. BART's improved access settlement agreement update

Sterling Routson-Thomas presented on, "BART's improved access settlement agreement update."

Shane Edwards, Assistant General Manager of Operations and Mike Lemon, BART's Assistant Chief Maintenance Officer, were available to answer any questions related to the access settlement.

He went over the history of why BART was sued for lack of accessibility throughout the BART System. Class action lawsuit was recorded on April 5, 2017, against BART and the complaint was the alleged claims under the Accessibility Law. The complaint was filed by, Senior and Disability Action, on behalf of its members and all others similarly situated and the complaint alleged that people with mobility disabilities were denied equal access to a critical component of the Bay Area's mass transit system.

Sterling Routson-Thomas went over the principal allegation of the complaint were:

- Elevators were regularly out of service in an unplanned fashion. Including more than 2,500 elevator outages occurring during BART's normal operating hours between October 2015 and the filing of the Complaint.
- BART did not provide effective, reliable, or well-publicized alternate accessible transportation options for passengers with mobility disabilities who are unable to enter or leave their chosen BART stations because of outages.
- The elevators were not suitably cleaned.
- Escalators out of service, accessible fare gates out of service, call boxes used to alert station agents to access problems were frequently out of service.
- BART's policies and practices create barriers to access.
- Inadequate communication and plan for emergency evacuation.

He went over multiple slides on, Negotiated Settlement, District Obligations in the Settlement, Terms of the Settlement Oversight, Elevator Requirements Renovation, Elevator Requirements (prompt repair, preventive maintenance, and preventative maintenance schedule), Escalator Upgrades (future work), Escalator Requirements (prompt maintenance and preventative maintenance), Elevator Attendants, System Service Worker Staffing, Staffing Cleanup, Communication Regarding Outages,

Access and Elevator Mitigation Plan, Elevator Helpline, Mitigation Shuttle Pilot, Emergency Preparedness Plan Station Agents and Train Operators, Emergency Preparedness Plan Training Police, Updated Print Materials and Website (regarding emergency evacuation plan), Evacuation Materials, Emergency Drills, Mobility Device Reunification, Alerts Mandated, Call Boxes, Signage and Path of Travel Obligations, Accessible Fare Gates, Locking Fare Gates, Training Requirements, Complaint Procedures Updates, Progress Monitoring Reports, Request for Information, Monitoring Fees, Dispute Resolution Governed by the Settlement Agreement, and Costs of Settlement.

Clarence Fischer stated he remembered about 20-30 years ago, there were public announcements in the station when elevator was either out of service or back in service from BART Train Operators and asked if this is still being done. Michael Lemon mentioned this is still ongoing but, announcement can be done with the Operating Center (OCC) and/or train operators. Michael Lemon mentioned it is required of any change of availability of elevators to be communicated within a few minutes through intercom public announcements.

Bruce Yow asked how often the elevator repairs are being done. Michael Lemon stated that technicians that repair the elevators are licensed technicians and said that there are 38 BART staff and BART is budget for 43 BART staff in total. He mentioned there are grave-yard shifts and elevators require certain amount of work and is the same process as for the escalators. Michael Lemon mentioned his department has an intern program pursuing a licensure as a technician through the apprenticeship program.

Danny Kodmur commented there was an Americans with Disabilities (ADA) class action lawsuit against BART about twenty years ago and wants to know why there is another one. Micheal Lemon mentioned technology is much more advance than it was about twenty years ago and with the current class action lawsuit to update with the current and future technology for people with disabilities.

Randall Glock would like to see members of the BATF participate in emergency preparedness exercises, training, and/or classes. Additionally, he mentioned that BATF members would like to assist in providing accessibility training to BART station operators and agents. Elena Van Loo expressed gratitude to the BATF members for their interest in being more involved in training with BART staff and emergency procedures within the BART System. She added that, for liability reasons, BART staff participates in emergency role plays and BART staff provides accessibility and sensitivity training to BART station agents but not to BART station operators at this time.

Daveed Mandell would like to see better accessible pathways for people who are visually impaired or people who are blind and mentioned he would like to be more involved in making this request happen.

Janice Armigo Brown mentioned she is hearing impaired and asked about texted alerts through smartphones instead of overhead. Michael Lemon mentioned BART does provide [text alerts](#) through the smartphones.

Herb Hastings asked with the Fleet of the Future (FOF) displays digital elevator status on the monitors and Michael Lemon mentioned, at this time, elevator status does not display digitally in the FOF and mentioned elevator status are announced.

BATF members and members of the public requested to provide the contact details and article regarding the "[Improved Access Settlement Agreement](#)" under BART.gov.

6. BART’s middle door marking update

Ahmad Rassai (AR) mentioned there was a presentation back in November 2023 updating BART’s middle door marking update and showed an example of the middle door marking decal. He mentioned only middle door markings decals will be installed with the blue edges on each end and marked as, “middle door.” Door markings with yellow edges on each end will come at a later date when funding are available.

Herb Hasting expressed how the door marking decals are going to be laid out with the three doors, Fleet of the Future (FOF), trains near the platform edge and asked if the decals will be in the way of the middle tactile tiles. AR stated the middle door decals will be laid down just as it was done with the two door legacy BART trains and tactile tiles for people who are blind or people with low vision, are guaranteed a train will be there, will not be effected.

Daveed Mandell mentioned he is blind and Don Queen is blind and wishes he and Don be more involved. He expressed how upset he was.

7. December 13, 2023, BATF Holiday Reception debrief

BATF members voted unanimously to move “December 13, 2023 BATF Holiday Reception,” debrief, discussion at a later BATF scheduled meeting.

8. Member announcements

Clarence Fischer stated he would like to see a greater level of involvement from BATF members in various activities, such as testing the next generation faregates at the West Oakland BART Station. He further mentioned that BATF members were not given the opportunity to test the faregates in the lab and provide feedback from people with diverse disabilities prior to the installation as a pilot project at the West Oakland BART Station.

9. Staff announcements

Elena Van Loo congratulated Danny Kodmur who is officially appointed BATF member by the BART Board of Directors on January 25, 2024.

Elena Van Loo announced BART Board of Directors will have their workshop on February 08, 2024, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Matthew West announced that he will be leaving BART as the Access Manager and will be returning to the job he had at SFMTA. He thanked everyone for welcoming him.

10. Chairperson announcements

Along with other BATF members, Randall Glock agreed BATF members should be more involved with BART's projects related to accessibility within the BART System and mentioned he will work with staff on how to proceed.

Randall Glock mentioned BATF members and members of the public could go to West Oakland BART Station to test the next generation fare gates.

11. Agenda Topics – Member Suggest Topics

- Next generation fare gate update
- Call boxes within the BART System update
- Braille within the BART System update
- Clipper Card 2.0 update

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:26 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 2pm.