
Authority Board **STAFF REPORT**

Meeting Date: October 29, 2024

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| Subject | Planning and Building a Multimodal Transportation System |
| Summary of Issues | <p>Transit takes us places – to people and places we love and rely on – but also to economic growth, opportunity, and cleaner air. As the countywide transportation planning agency, it is our role to plan and build a public transportation system to get people to where they need to go and how they want to get there. Your ride, your way. The Authority has been leading the development of the Integrated Transit Plan (ITP) for Contra Costa County in partnership with the transit operators. The ITP is a transit-first vision to connect our communities by transit on fast and frequent transit corridors and first- and last-mile access to transit provided through a network of shared mobility hubs improving the customer experience. The ITP will provide technical and planning guidance with a clear vision for guiding investments to implement a robust and cohesive transit network that connects all major activity centers and regional hubs in Contra Costa County. Staff will provide an update on the ITP Action Plans and policy recommendations and facilitate a discussion on mobility technologies and implementation of the plan.</p> |
| Recommendations | <p>Staff will seek input on the Action Plans elements and implementation including transit priority projects, access improvements, and customer experience. This is an informational item only; no staff recommendation at this time.</p> |
| Staff Contact | Ying Smith |

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| Financial Implications | None |
| Options | N/A |
| Attachments | None |
| Changes from Committee | N/A |

Background

Transit takes us places – to people and places we love and rely on – but also to economic growth, opportunity, and cleaner air. In Contra Costa County, our residents value transit and want to drive less – they’re open to mode shift – we just need to make it work for them. The question becomes how we change, or transform, transit so it can take more people to the places they need and want to go.

The Authority is far from alone in this challenge. Transit Transformation is an identified priority at both the state and regional levels. Efforts such as the state’s Transit Transformation Task Force and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission’s Transit Transformation Action Plan speak to the need to enhance our current system to be more user-friendly, efficient, and connected. Yet, while there seems to be consensus on the need to transform, there is less clarity around the vision for achieving these objectives.

In response, the Authority has been leading the ITP for Contra Costa County, a plan focused on attracting more riders and positioning the bus agencies to meet future challenges. The goals of this effort align with the state and regional initiatives and, like those efforts, our process has been rich with thoughtful discussion and learnings.

As we continue these endeavors and envision implementation of the strategies identified in the ITP it is imperative that we explore our vision for the future of transit – and transportation – in Contra Costa County. This vision will inform the Countywide Transportation Plan and provide guidance as we build consensus around how we will address the needs of our residents and community.

Our vision is for a transit system that is customer-focused and committed to addressing the first- and last-mile challenges in Contra Costa County. We foresee a system that expands on

traditional fixed-route bus systems and embraces the integration of emerging technologies, such as autonomous vehicle and Automated Transit Network (ATN). Autonomous shuttles, microtransit and other technologies have already been deployed in Contra Costa County and, at scale, have the potential to reduce wait times and improve access with more frequent, reliable service while reducing costs. This approach will allow us to attract new riders and ensure that those who are reliant on transit have more independence than ever before. Through demonstrations and strategic partnerships, we are committed to learning from industry leaders and leveraging cutting-edge technologies to create a more efficient and sustainable transit system for all.

This vision will require us to leverage technology and embrace new approaches to established challenges. We are committed to working with our labor partners and Contra Costa County's transit operators to deliver on this vision and are cognizant of the value of their expertise and experience.

The Authority has been tasked with planning for the future of transportation in Contra Costa County and our community is looking to us to improve their quality of life. To do so, we need to be clear in our vision and committed to actions that will truly take us places.

The ITP will serve as a countywide blueprint for a customer-centered approach to transit delivery in Contra Costa County in a post-pandemic environment. With multiple Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations, as well as Amtrak stations and a Water Emergency Transportation Authority ferry terminal in Contra Costa County, there are significant opportunities for bus and other mobility transfers and connections. The intent of the ITP is to identify opportunities for making public transit more attractive to the customer. In addition, the Bay Area region is looking at similar opportunities' region wide.

The Authority's ITP is a transit-first vision in which major destinations in Contra Costa County are connected by transit on fast and frequent transit corridors, and first-/last-mile access to transit is provided through a network of regional and local mobility hubs. Because transit is convenient, fast and provides an elevated customer experience, it reduces the need for car ownership and is frequented by people of all socioeconomic groups. The ITP is focused on the following areas:

- **Coordination:** Identify ways to improve coordination between transit services so

that riders have convenient and seamless travel.

- **Innovation:** Explore emerging technologies that can improve access to transit and prioritize the movement of public transit.
- **Equity:** Ensure recommendations enhance or maintain access and coverage for all communities and residents, including low-income communities, communities of color, and people with disabilities.

Action Plans

Action Plans focus on customer improvements through fast, frequent, and reliable transit service; transit access and coverage; and the customer experience. The three elements of the Action Plans are:

- **Transit Priority Corridor and Projects.** Nine proposed Transit Priority Corridors will provide customers with high-frequency transit service as well as infrastructure elements that support fast and frequent services. The infrastructure improvements will include safe and accessible stops and stations, transit signal priority infrastructure, dedicated transit lanes, identifiable service branding, real-time arrival information, and level passenger boarding. The Frequent Transit Network, without extensive added infrastructure, has also been identified for increased transit service level.
- **Access Improvement Projects.** Eighteen zones have been identified to be hubs for regional and local transit services, and considered for microtransit services, ATN, and active transportation access improvements to improve first-mile, last-mile options.
- **Customer Experience.** Going beyond the provision of new services, the overall customer experience will be improved with a focus on comfort, safety and support services. Technology can optimize the customer experience with accessible wayfinding, tailored trip planning, and enhanced safety, security and customer service.

Policy Recommendations

The ITP developed institutional and policy changes that include Transit Priority, Access to Transit, Land Use and Parking, Equity, Data Sharing and Customer Information, Fare Policy, and the two areas for focused Authority Board discussion and feedback – ITP Implementation and Mobility Innovation and Technology.

- **ITP Implementation.** The Authority will take an active role, in partnership with transit agencies, in the implementation of ITP recommendations and fund projects on performance-based outcomes. Policy recommendations include leveraging the Authority’s role as Contra Costa County’s transportation planning agency to develop the roadmap for ITP implementation and to lead incentive-based funding.
- **Mobility Innovation and Technology.** Where innovation and technology may offer more efficient and customer-attractive options, new transportation solutions will be piloted and deployed. Proposed policies define the Authority as the lead in transportation innovation projects, who would lead innovation financing, establish the metrics for success of emerging mobility projects, and implement structured mobility pilots aligned to goals.

Staff will seek input on the Action Plans elements and implementation including transit priority projects, access improvements, and customer experience. This is an informational item only; no staff recommendation at this time.

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