

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

BART ACCESSIBILITY TASK FORCE

DRAFT Committee Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2026

1. Roll Call of Members:

1. Herb Hastings, **Chair**
2. Joshua Saunders, **Vice Chair**
3. Hillary Brown, **2nd Vice Chair**
4. Anita Ortega
5. Bruce Yow
6. Catherine Callahan
7. Clarence R. Fischer
8. Danny Kodmur
9. Daveed Mandell
10. Esther Waltz
11. Janice Armigo Brown
12. Roland Wong - ABSENT
13. Ryan Manriquez
14. Sam Buman
15. Shana Ray
16. VACANT
17. VACANT
18. VACANT

BART Customer Access and Accessibility Department Staff:

Elena Van Loo
Kevin McDonald

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

Director Robert Raburn
Ahmad Rassai (BART staff)
Alan Chew (BART staff)
Hang Nguyen (BART staff)
Aleta Dupree (Guest)
Vi Ibarra (Guest)
Jerry Grace (Guest)

Trisha Nguyen (Guest)
Faustina Fischer (Guest)

2. Public Comments

Trisha Nguyen introduced herself and expressed interest in joining the BATF Advisory Committee.

Aleta Dupree expressed that she wants to be greeted when she arrives at a BATF meeting and emphasized the importance of everyone being treated equally.

3. Approval of the March 26, 2026 meeting minutes

Esther Waltz motioned for approval of the March 26, 2026 meeting minutes. Sam Buman second the motion.

- Motion passed with fourteen (14) in favor, zero (0) against, and one (1) abstention

4. BART's Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget Operating Budget Overview.

Alan Chew and Hang Nguyen presented on the agenda item with the presentation included in the BATF April 2026 agenda packet.

The BATF committee discussed the item. A few comments, concerns, and suggestions were provided:

- Hillary Brown asked whether the Fiscal Year 2027 preliminary budget overview will have any impact on BART Police hiring.
- Ryan Manriquez asked whether any of the deferred capital funding affects accessibility-related infrastructure projects, such as elevator replacements or maintenance, accessible fare gates, or tactile paving, and for how long those deferrals would last.
- Ryan Manriquez also asked about the potential elimination of 63 full-time positions and how many of those roles directly support disabled riders, station agents, the Customer Service Department, accessibility programs, or staff who interact with the disability community. He emphasized the importance of understanding how these reductions could affect the disability community, especially if service levels were reduced or suspended.
- Sam Buman asked how BART would achieve a balanced budget if the Bay Area Transit Funding Measure (California Senate Bill 63) does not pass in November, and what actions would be required.

- Clarence R. Fischer asked why BART is projecting an increase in sales tax revenue despite widespread layoffs occurring at large companies around the Bay Area.
- Joshua Saunders asked whether Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) has an effect on the Fiscal Year 2027 preliminary budget overview.
- Joshua Saunders also noted BART’s revenue challenges due to reduced ridership during COVID and asked what percentage of revenue BART has regained since the pandemic ended.
- Danny Kodmur asked about long-term vacancies—positions unfilled for five or more years—compared to positions vacant for only a few months to thirty-six months, within the Fiscal Year 2027 preliminary budget overview. He also asked whether staff have reported increased workloads due to these vacancies or if they feel the workload is manageable.
- Esther Waltz suggested that BART host more events to promote riding the system and increase ridership.

Jerry Grace asked what would happen to BART stations if the Transit Funding Measure in the Bay Area does not pass in November and what the implications would be for the new BART stations currently under construction in the Santa Clara County.

Aleta Dupree asked whether discounts for Clipper Access (formerly Regional Transit Connect, RTC) would be affected under the new Fiscal Year 2027 preliminary budget overview.

5. Regional Mapping and Wayfinding Project Update

Jumana Nabti presented on the agenda item with the presentation included in the BATF April 2026 agenda packet.

The BATF committee discussed the item. A few comments, concerns, and suggestions were provided:

- Esther Waltz noted that not everyone can read braille and emphasized that the wording on the new wayfinding is especially important.
- Danny Kodmur asked where the visual panels will be installed—whether they are intended to be placed at the top of the pole or lower on the pole. He also asked whether smartphone apps exist that can read braille through a phone camera, similar to scanning a QR code, and suggested the idea of an app that could speak aloud while reading braille.
- Anita Ortega expressed that she liked the iterative designs for the bus stop braille/tactile panels.

- Joshua Saunders emphasized the importance of clearly communicating the location of the QR code on the panels so riders can easily align their smartphones instead of searching for it.
- Shana Ray also stated that she liked the bus stop braille/tactile panel iterative designs.
- Clarence R. Fischer stated that the bus stop identifier should be placed toward the top of the panel so it is immediately clear that the sign indicates a bus stop. He also asked whether the QR code would provide information for multiple transit agencies that serve the same stop, such as AC Transit, SFMTA, or Contra Costa County services.
- Sam Buman asked why one of the panel designs was not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and cautioned staff to ensure they do not create a design that violates ADA requirements.
- Ryan Manriquez shared that it has been an incredible experience watching this project develop over the past two years through his work on the Accessibility Working Group, and that it provides a glimpse of what accessibility improvements could look like throughout the system. He also encouraged giving BATF members the opportunity to participate in user testing once the signs are installed, noting that members are eager to support continued progress. Additionally, he emphasized that wayfinding is one of the most essential accessibility tools being developed, as it ensures no one—especially disabled riders—feels lost in the BART system.
- Hillary Brown mentioned that she provided feedback on the four different bus stop braille/tactile panel designs during the Blind and Low-Vision Sensory Orientation event at the 19th Street BART Station on March 25, 2026.
- Daveed Mandell stated that the panels should incorporate texture, though he also said that texture can sometimes take up unnecessary space. He expressed a desire for standardized bus stop poles across all stops. He also recommended using American National Standards Institute (ANSI) guidelines rather than relying solely on ADA requirements when designing the signs. He noted that there are smartphone apps that can read signs aloud for people who are blind or have low vision, and he asked whether the Bus Stop ID number would include route numbers.
- Herb Hastings said he would like to be involved in testing the bus stop braille/tactile panels once installed. He also asked whether the panels would be integrated into the BART app and expressed a desire to see bus numbers included on the signs, especially at locations where multiple stops are clustered together.

Jerry Grace shared that he is not a big fan of the QR code.

Aleta Dupree shared that she is pleased to see this project moving forward and appreciates that BART is continuing its work on it. She noted that she has seen similar efforts at other transit agencies.

Aleta Dupree asked that when the new signs are installed, they preserve the historical character of the original signage and station structures.

6. BART's Keep Up to Date Service Notification

At the direction of the Chair, this agenda item was tabled. The agenda item will be presented at a future BATF scheduled meeting.

7. Member Announcements

Hillary Brown expressed interest in having a representative from the SFMTA Accessibility Advisory Committee attend future BATF meetings.

Sam Buman noted that April is Autism Awareness Month. He shared that he did not appreciate the word “special” announcement issued by BART’s Marketing Department and stated that he disliked the use of the word “special” in the message.

8. Staff Announcements

Elena Van Loo made a couple of announcements:

- Ethics Training AB1234 is scheduled for May 6, 2026. Travel reimbursement will be provided for those attending in person
- Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) will host free weekly virtual during office hours every Wednesday from 5:30-6:30 pm via Zoom starting on April 15, 2026

Kevin McDonald shared East Bay Paratransit is implementing a new software that will launch on May 1, 2026.

9. Chairperson Announcements

Herb Hastings shared that he continues to do BATF recruitment and he shared there is a One Seat Regional Ride program that spans from Livermore to WestCAT’s service area.

10. Future Agenda Topics – Members Suggest Topics

Next Meeting Scheduled: May 28, 2026

- What happens if the Regional Transit ballot measure does not pass
- How does the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) plan incorporate accessibility components
- Lafayette BART Station construction update
 - Related to accessible access
- BART's trip planner
 - Why regional transfer discounts are not included in the trip planner's estimate of how much a trip will cost.

11. Adjournment

Esther Waltz moved to adjourn the April 23, 2026, meeting. Sam Buman seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:23 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, May 28, 2026.