

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

May 28, 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
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
Ryan Greene-Roesel

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

Director Robert Raburn
Michael Gerbracht (BART staff)
Ahmad Rassai (BART staff)
Aleta Dupree (Guest)
Vi Ibarra (Guest)

Jerry Grace (Guest)
Sarah Desumula (Guest)
Mussie Gebre (Guest)
Masooma Afgan (Guest)

2. Public Comments

Sarah Desumula announced that on June 17, 2026, there will be a Bay Area People First (BAPF) discussion held via Zoom. She invited BATF members and members of the public to join the meeting.

Aleta Dupree introduced herself and expressed her hope that the work of the BATF members will continue, emphasizing the importance of maintaining broad perspectives. She urged BART to help educate the public about discount cards available to seniors and people with disabilities, including those with hidden disabilities.

Vi Ibarra introduced herself and thanked Kevin McDonald for attending a Contra Costa Developmental Disabilities Council meeting and providing an overview of BART's accessibility features, fares, discounts, and ways the public can participate in BATF meetings.

Vi Ibarra also emphasized that train operators need to be aware that some riders, especially those using walkers, require extra time to board, exit, and get settled before the train begins moving, so they do not risk falling once the train is in motion.

3. Approval of the April 23, 2026 meeting minutes

Clarence R. Fischer motioned for approval of the April 23, 2026 meeting minutes. Esther Waltz second the motion.

- Motion passed with thirteen (13) in favor, zero (0) against, and one (1) abstention

4. BART's Email and Text Alerts

Elena Van Loo presented on the agenda item with the presentation included in the BATF May 2026 agenda packet.

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

- Roland Wong mentioned that he uses BART's email and text alerts and said this helps him when planning his travel within the BART system.
- Ryan Manriquez shared that he immediately signed up for BART's email and text alerts after seeing the presentation. He stated that one of the most gut-wrenching experiences is unexpectedly encountering an accessibility barrier, and emphasized the importance of proactive communication about outages so riders can plan ahead. He also asked whether there is a way to find out how many people have signed up for BART's email and text alerts. Ryan Manriquez asked if there are alerts letting riders know that the elevator is now in service or how long the elevator will be out of service.
- Clarence R. Fischer suggested adding elevator out of service notices to the trip planning section under bart.gov and exploring the possibility of including elevator mitigation information there as well. He acknowledged that this may be a significant request but noted it would be a positive step forward.
- Hillary Brown mentioned that she plans to sign up for BART's email and text alerts.
- Herb Hastings asked about the response time when elevators or escalators go out of service and noted that you can also use BART's official smartphone app to check the status of elevators and escalators.
- Roland Wong recommended indicating whether an elevator outage affects the concourse level, platform level, or street-to-concourse level.

Sara Desumula shared that she plans to sign up for BART's email and text alerts because she rides BART regularly.

5. BART's Elevator Modernization Program

Michael Gerbracht and Ryan Greene-Roesel presented on the agenda item with the presentation included in the BATF May 2026 agenda packet.

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

- Hillary Brown asked how elevator mitigation would be handled during large events in San Francisco, noting that heavy crowds could affect access when paratransit services are being requested.
- Clarence R. Fischer commented that some phases should be completed in a single effort rather than being broken into multiple parts. For example, he felt that the Embarcadero work should be done as one phase instead of several, while acknowledging that this might mean not all elevators would remain in service.

- Ryan Manriquez said he is excited that the elevators will become more reliable and faster for riders to depend on. He also noted that BART will need to prepare the community, especially people with disabilities, for the upcoming elevator modernization work.
- Ryan Manriquez had comments to share:
 - He asked if there was a deep dive into the design within the elevators and asked for feedback on the new design.
 - He asked if BART is evaluating the speed of the elevators.
 - He inquired about the placement of interior elevator buttons to ensure they are more accessible.
- Joshua Saunders asked whether BART has conducted elevator modernization projects in the past and inquired about the funding sources being used for the elevator modernization whether coming from capital or operating funds.
- Sam Buman said that the situation at the Downtown Berkeley BART Station is concerning because many BART riders, including himself, have disabilities. He asked whether riders would be rerouted to the Ashby BART Station and noted that careful planning will be needed as stations undergo elevator modernization.
- Roland Wong said he would like to see a presentation on the elevator designs, particularly the diameter. He asked whether some stations will receive larger elevators or if they will remain the same size. He also asked how the modernization will affect the elevator attendants at the four San Francisco stations: Embarcadero BART Station, Montgomery BART Station, Powell BART Station, and Civic Center/UN Plaza BART Station. He noted that the elevator attendants already take a lot of space in the elevators and would like to see more space available.
- Catherine Callahan had a few comments about elevator mitigation:
 - She mentioned there are alternatives by taking the public bus service but takes a long time to get from one BART Station to another BART Station that can double one's commute, especially from Bay Fair BART Station to Hayward BART Station.
 - She stated when it comes to Embarcadero BART Station, it can be tricky to determine the appropriate bus station to use if paratransit is being used during elevator modernization. She stated that she opted to use Muni bus service since it is more convenient.
- Danny Kodmur had several questions along with comments:
 - He asked whether BATF members will have an opportunity to discuss relocating call buttons to make them more accessible for individuals who cannot easily reach them. He noted that some call buttons are currently placed in locations that are not convenient or accessible.
 - He asked whether elevator sensors are functioning properly, especially in elevators without attendants. He expressed interest in having these

elevators operate in automatic mode so riders would not need to contact a Station Agent through the call box.

- He asked whether cameras will be installed as part of the elevator modernization program. He would like Station Agents to have access to these cameras to assist when issues arise. He also suggested installing cameras near the accessible faregates, including in the enclosure areas.
- Herb Hastings asked whether the Oakland International Airport (OAK) airport connector will be affected during the elevator modernization program. He also requested more information about the elevator mitigation plans.
- Daveed Mandell expressed concern that the elevator modernization program may significantly disrupt people's lives, especially when elevators are out of service or when alternative wayfinding is challenging for individuals who use wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility devices. He shared his personal frustration with not being able to reach his destination when accessibility is limited. Daveed Mandell strongly urged that all local paratransit services be notified in advance about the elevator mitigation program so they can ensure adequate staffing and support, emphasizing that this level of coordination is essential.
- Anita Ortega asked whether all fifty BART station elevators will be upgraded.

Jerry Grace expressed concern about the high noise levels expected during the elevator modernization work and noted that he is sensitive to loud sounds. He requested that updated wayfinding information be provided in advance for each project so that riders are aware of what to expect.

6. Third Quarter Compiled and Analyzed Customer Complaints Related to Accessibility

Kevin McDonald presented on the agenda item with the presentation included in the BATF May 2026 agenda packet.

- Hillary Brown stated that she appreciated seeing the comparison of claims for each quarter that was presented and thanked Customer Service for tracking accessibility related claims.
- Clarence R. Fischer asked for clarification on whether escalators automatically stop if there is an issue involving a scooter or another object on the escalator.
- Esther Waltz stated that she has seen larger scooters with big wheels being taken onto escalators and asked whether there is a weight limit for the escalators.
- Ryan Manriquez had questions and comments:
 - He asked whether the number of elevator-related claims reflected repeat issues at the same station, multiple complaints about a single elevator

being out of service, or if the claims were spread across individual stations.

- He shared that it is really promising to see the decrease in faregate issues. He thinks this shows that as BART rolled out new technology, riders are becoming more familiar with them and how to navigate them.
- He asked about disabled riders who are still having accessibility issues with the accessible faregates are being received and communicated to BART's faregate team for resolution. He acknowledged that the new faregate technology closes more quickly but has been proven safe, and he asked how many issues may be related to Clipper or tap-to-pay not working on the first attempt. He requested clarification on this topic.
- Joshua Saunders is glad the number of claims has decreased.
- Shana Ray also expressed that she is happy to hear the number of claims has decreased.
- Herb Hastings stated that it is good the number of claims is going down but voiced concern that the numbers may increase again once the elevator modernization project begins.

Aleta Dupree expressed concerns about people being prejudged. She explained that she does not have visible signs of a disability and worries that she may be accused of not being disabled when using priority seating. Although this has not happened to her, she wondered whether it has happened to others and asked if there are ways to address this issue.

7. Member Announcements

Hillary Brown shared on May 29, 2026; Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is hosting "Move Bay Area East Bay Summit" in Lafayette.

Ryan Manriquez echoed Hillary Browns sentiments of attending "Move Bay Area East Bay Summit." He mentioned it is a great opportunity to connect with transit leaders across the East Bay. He mentioned that Director Rayburn will be there and added that he will part of the panel.

8. Staff Announcements

Elena Van Loo congratulated Ryan Greene-Roesel on her promotion to Director of Customer Access and Accessibility.

Kevin McDonald shared that East Bay Paratransit has implemented new software that launched on May 1, 2026.

Kevin McDonald shared that East Bay Paratransit website, eastbayparatransit.org, has undergone a major improvements, updates to make it more user-friendly.

9. Chairperson Announcements

No Chairperson announcements

10. Future Agenda Topics – Members Suggest Topics

Next Meeting Scheduled: June 25, 2026

- What happens if the Regional Transit ballot measure does not pass in November of 2026
- 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.
- Wayfinding for people who are visually impaired or people who are blind updates
- ADA access from inside the paid area at split platforms stations

11. Adjournment

Hillary Brown moved to adjourn the May 28, 2026, meeting. Clarence R. Fischer seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:18 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, June 25, 2026.