



San Francisco  
Bay Area Rapid Transit

## 2016 Report To Congress



# To Build a Better BART

## Federal and Local Partnerships Must Lead the Way

**June 19, 2015, was a day to remember for Bay Area residents** – especially for those on their way to the Golden State Warriors NBA Championship Victory parade in Oakland. It was a day that resulted in 548,078 riders on BART, the second busiest day in BART history! This was only one of several record breaking days of late for BART. But as good as accolades are, a growing concern exists that BART’s ridership numbers have created a capacity dilemma. The challenge continues to grow as the typical weekday ridership in the Bay Area now moves beyond 440,000 – or more people than now drive across the Bay Bridge. This is up almost 25% in the past five years!

After almost 44 years of operation, BART is in need of major system reinvestment. The *Better BART Better Bay Area* program is the District’s ongoing plan to repair and replace the deteriorating tracks, train control equipment and other aging infrastructure. This all-encompassing effort will not only help to maintain BART’s excellent safety record and increase train reliability, but also reduce traffic and protect our environment by keeping hundreds of thousands of cars off the road in the decades to come.

The price tag is high to increase BART capacity and reinvest in needed repairs. BART’s Asset Management Program (AMP) provides a detailed look at the age and condition of each and every one of the 200,000 pieces of equipment and assets in the BART system. Based on data generated from the AMP, it is estimated that it will cost \$9.6 billion to build a better BART and ensure a “state of good repair” (SOGR).

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### FAST Act is Welcomed – But Nation’s Passenger Rail Needs Long Term Funding

Even though at the end of last year Congress was able to finally pass a \$305 billion five-year surface transportation authorization bill, the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), the inability to secure a long term and reliable funding source to finance public transit into the future remains troublesome.

This is important because there continues to be two divergent paths in this country involving improving public transportation. The first path is the dramatic growth in recent years of Americans using public transit in major metropolitan areas – which is good! The second path is less positive. The large metropolitan rail systems in the nation, like BART, provide more than half of the nation’s passenger trips, but are finding it extremely difficult to keep up with this growth and are experiencing severe deterioration of their transit assets and state of good repair.

The slight funding level increases in the FAST Act are indeed an achievement in the present political environment. But the uncertainty of long term and consistent federal funding for surface transportation has put into question whether the valuable transit assets of our riders can be maintained. Last October, a survey and report released by the Metropolitan Rail Discussion Group (MRDG), which represents twelve of the largest urban transit agencies,

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### CA State Audit Verifies BART High Capital Needs

During BART contract negotiations in 2013, several state legislators sought, and the legislature agreed, that a state audit of BART’s financial status and workers’ compensation practices should be conducted. In spring 2015, the California State Auditor issued her report which found that BART needs billions of dollars in funding to “repair and replace infrastructure,” but that the “availability of funding is uncertain.” No significant issues were identified with how BART administers workers’ compensation processes or claims filed by employees.

Among the other findings were:

- BART’s past financial projections “have generally proved accurate” because it uses modest financial growth assumptions.
- BART’s rail car funding efforts face funding shortfalls.
- No evidence was found that union employees were being replaced with contract labor or not allowed to return to their original positions following an injury.
- With BART facing cash-flow challenges for other projects, and capital needs projected to cost over \$9.6 billion, the transit agency will need to seek voter approval for additional capital funding.

The State Auditor’s report confirmed the financial planning and stewardship of BART, but raised concerns about the agency’s effort to secure critically needed capital funding going forward.



## Partnerships are Key to Rebuilding BART in the Bay Area

Members of Congress and Staff:

This year's Report to Congress highlights critical partnerships for BART.

If we expect to succeed in rebuilding our 44 year old system to meet the growing demands of an increasing ridership it will take many partnerships at the local, state and federal levels. Looking ahead, I am optimistic that we will succeed because I have seen real and effective partnerships forged out of necessity to help make our system safer, more reliable and accessible for all of our riders. Three specific examples stand out:

The first important partnership was on display last year when BART undertook two critical maintenance jobs requiring the Bay Bridge to be closed on two busy weekends with riders needing to cross the Bay via bus bridge. It was quite an experience, and the article on page 3 highlights the importance of BART working with all our regional transit agencies for the benefit of all Bay Area citizens.

Second, our work on those dates also demonstrated the core ongoing partnership between BART management and its workers. And it showed that working together we could get it right! Nearly 19,000 total feet of rail in the Transbay Tube and on the aerial section between West Oakland Station and the downtown Oakland tunnel was replaced by our dedicated track workers. And thanks also goes to the Station Agents, Train Operators, cleaning crews and others who worked almost 600 shifts totaling 3,000 hours. BART Police and other local law enforcement helped keep everyone safe. We will continue to draw upon the shared commitment by workers and management to keep BART safe and reliable for years to come.

Finally, as we move forward on our *Better BART Better Bay Area* campaign, and a potential local ballot measure in 2016 to fund infrastructure improvements, we look forward to a potential federal partnership with FTA that would help build greater capacity into our system. Through our Core Capacity grant application and with congressional support, we are doing just that – and hope we can advance projects that will provide at least a 10 percent increase in capacity to help relieve crowding on the overcrowded BART system.

By partnering with our regional transit systems, increasing collaboration between management and workers, and maintaining close relationships with federal funding partners, BART can continue to “get it right” for travelling Bay Area residents long into the future.

*Joe Crunician*

## Coming to BART in 2016!

### Seeking More Public Input

Building on several new public outreach strategies implemented last year to better engage and educate Bay Area riders, BART plans to continue a variety of new outreach efforts in 2016. The 2015 methods included a Q & A Twitter town hall on BART operations with then Board President Thomas Blalock and maintenance engineers, a telephone town hall on BART's FY16 Budget priorities with over 400 participants, and a live web forum on the summer Transbay Tube shutdown and service disruption. In the coming year, BART will engage the public with additional new and innovative web, mobile, and app based strategies.

### Warm Springs Expected Opening

The Warm Springs/South Fremont Station will be BART's 46th station and add 5.4 miles of new track from the existing Fremont Station. It will feature an at-grade island platform with an overhead concourse, access to Valley Transit Authority (VTA) and Alameda-Contra Costa Transit (AC Transit) buses,

as well as taxi and “kiss and ride” passenger drop off areas all via Warm Springs Boulevard. The new station will also provide approximately 2,000 parking spaces. As with all BART stations, the Warm Springs/South Fremont Station will be fully accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists, and will include bike lockers, elevators and escalators, Braille signs and a tactile sight path to aid riders with disabilities.

When open for passenger service the extension will mark a major milestone in the Bay Area's collective effort to extend BART service to Santa Clara County/Silicon Valley. Currently under construction by VTA, the Silicon Valley Berryessa Extension project will extend BART 10 additional miles with two new stations. Expected completion is 2018.



### Fleet of the Future

In 2016, BART's first 10 pilot cars are scheduled to be delivered for comprehensive testing on the BART system. During this project phase, BART and its car builder, Bombardier, will verify and validate train car performance prior to full scale manufacturing.

Upon successful completion of initial testing, these pilot cars will be put into revenue service at the end of 2016 and delivery of production cars begins in mid-2017. Total cost for 1,000 rail cars is estimated at \$3.3 billion.



# Working to Keep the Bay Area Moving



## Rust, Dust, and Rails—BART’s Two Biggest Maintenance Projects to Date

Last year, BART temporarily shut down service to conduct vital repair work. Over several weekends through April and June, BART closed a section of aerial track between Fruitvale and Coliseum Stations – known as (track area) A-25. And again for one weekend in August and over the Labor Day weekend, BART stopped service at West Oakland Station and through the Transbay Tube, undertaking BART’s biggest maintenance project to date, referred to as (track area) M-15.

During the weekend closures, BART provided a “bus bridge” for customers without other transit options. This effort required a tremendous amount of coordination to minimize the inconvenience to the riding public. The Transbay Tube closure was truly a regional effort and could not have been a success without our partner agencies. AC Transit, SFMTA, Golden Gate Transit and SamTrans all provided buses and drivers. SF Bay Ferry provided additional ferry service and CalTrans kept freeways and BART traffic moving.



### A-25 (April through June)

- 1,000 wooden ties were replaced and 3,000 feet of worn rail within the seven-mile affected zone. The new track will provide a smoother, safer, softer and swifter ride for our passengers.
- Switches and interlockings under the greatest operational stress were repaired. These are critically important as they allow trains to rapidly change direction and location as passenger demand increases or decreases.

### M-15 (August & September)

- A total of 18,500 feet of rail was replaced in the Transbay Tube and on the aerial section between West Oakland Station and the downtown Oakland tunnel.
- All rail in the Tube on both tracks was ground down for a quieter ride.
- 300 third-rail insulators were cleaned to prevent arcing, a potential fire hazard.
- 25 ties were installed and the track bed ballast was replaced for a smoother ride into Oakland.
- BART continued to refresh the West Oakland Station including painting, tile repair, installation of pigeon abatement, and tree trimming.

Additional BART staffing was also on hand during these efforts, including extra customer phone representatives, Station Agents, BART Police, local law enforcement, and hundreds of personnel not usually in the field, who blitzed key stations wearing yellow vests to give a personal touch to travelers navigating the shutdown.



# BART Pushes for Greater Renewable Energy Use

At the same time that new stricter state and federal goals were being implemented to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, BART sponsored legislation to allow the District greater access to direct sales of renewable energy for its transit energy needs.

Authored by State Senator Mark Leno (SF) and signed into law by Governor Brown, SB 502 allows BART to increase its use of renewable energy by purchasing wholesale electricity directly from renewable sources and thus reduce the carbon footprint of hundreds of thousands of Bay Area commuters.

“Our trains are 100% electric with more than half the power coming from clean hydroelectric and solar power – but there is more we should do,” said then BART Board President Thomas M. Blalock. “This new law will allow us to seek new sources of clean renewable energy and encourage suppliers to offer it to BART at better prices.”

## FAST Act from page 1

made significant findings with respect to BART and the other passenger rail SOGR long term needs. The MRDG coalition used this information on Capitol Hill during consideration of the FAST Act seeking higher levels of SOGR grant funding. The report concluded that:

- The growth of ridership on these systems and the severe deterioration of their physical assets are trends that are not sustainable over the long run.
- The state of good repair backlog for these agencies is **\$102 billion** and the annual replacement need is **\$13 billion**, which is driven by the capital intensive needs of the rail systems.
- This dilemma is of national significance because these systems are key to economic growth in their areas.
- A federal commitment to substantial investment is needed to bring America’s major transit systems into a state of good repair and then sustain them.

# Transit Must Mean Opportunities and Jobs

## BART Works to Encourage a New Generation of Transit Workers

Increasingly, in this age when young professional are seeking jobs in the booming high tech industry, the public transit sector often gets overlooked for potential employment opportunities. Yet, creating careers in transit remains a priority for BART – as its aging system and growing regional population present new maintenance, engineering and operational challenges.

In August 2015, BART was chosen to receive a \$750,000 Department of Transportation grant through the Transit Career Ladders Training (TCLT) Program, to help create direct and accessible employment pathways for students to more easily enter the transit industry. In order to foster a culture of innovation, BART will partner with Workforce Investment Boards and community colleges in the Bay Area. The TCLT program will primarily promote transportation careers in low income areas, communities with high unemployed and underemployed populations, and among minorities, veterans, and women. The TCLT program will also support and enhance existing technical programs at local colleges through real-work interaction with BART.

The federal grant will allow BART to reach out to potential candidates and train them over 23 months with the goal of attaining certificates as electricians, electrical engineers, and train

control electronic technicians. Young people in the Bay Area will now have more opportunities to enter into a career in a growing transit industry and BART looks forwards to promoting new talent and increasing expertise in its workforce.

Congressional support from Bay Area Representatives Speier, Lee, Honda, Swalwell and DeSaulnier helped bring this employment effort to the BART counties.

## BART Promotes College and Career Readiness through Summer Internship Program

BART’s 2015 Summer Internship Program hosted more than 30 interns from the Oakland and San Francisco Mayors’ offices and other local community organizations. The goal and mission of the program is to provide Bay Area youth with real life career experience, promote the completion of high school and college, and introduce diverse career opportunities and paths available through public transit and at BART. Staff from over 15 BART departments served as mentors and gave interns a glimpse into daily BART operations and the skills needed to be an effective employee. In addition to their department placement, interns had the opportunity to attend career readiness workshops on such topics as time management, interviewing, and public speaking.

### 2015 Summer Interns

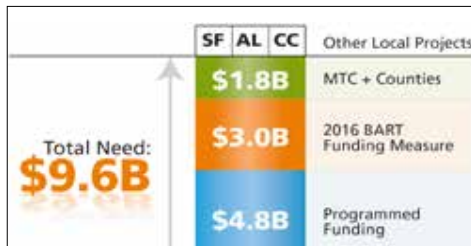




BART is making progress on funding these improvements, but has only identified half of the amount needed. With funding for transit infrastructure always in short supply, BART must work on two key fronts to build strong local and federal partnerships to help fund its significant reinvestment needs.

Local partnerships must be where BART looks first for support, and has taken actions including asking the MTC and local counties to be partners to help fund additional train cars, local stations, and access projects.

BART may also seek a multi-billion dollar local bond measure for the November 2016 election to support these critical capital projects. But this local support and resources won't just automatically come. BART must first prove our worth and value and that means educating the public about BART's reinvestment needs and assuring the public that our goals and plans are the right ones. Reaching out to civic, business, environmental and senior organizations as well as city and county agencies, BART has



The "fix it first" bond will address:

- SAFETY**  
Maintain BART's record of safe operations
- RELIABILITY**  
Improve BART's performance reliability
- CROWDING & TRAFFIC RELIEF**  
Strategically increase capacity to relieve crowding, reduce traffic, increase system redundancy and resiliency, and accommodate growth

now conducted hundreds of community presentations to educate attendees on the importance of BART to the Bay Area and what investments are needed to maintain and improve the regional rail system. This outreach has allowed scores of groups and communities to share their perspective and provide input on what they prioritize to help BART improve its system.

Federal partnerships are also important to BART's goals to shore up its critical infrastructure. The potential partnership with the FTA to participate in the Capital Investment Program as a "Core Capacity" project is one such priority. To increase rider capacity, BART has applied for a grant that would expand its rail car fleet, help attain a new train control system, add traction power, expand the Hayward Maintenance Complex (HMC), make specific station improvements to enhance capacity, and prioritize track improvements

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## Building Better Rider/Station Relationships

Aside from wanting to make sure the trains are reliable and run on time, regular BART riders usually agree that the system's 45 stations are what they most care about. Riders know their stations. The most common rider/station relationship begins at the station nearest his or her home and includes the routine destination station. In the bi-annual Customer Satisfaction Survey, BART riders voiced their strong opinions about station cleanliness, station state of good repair, graffiti, landscaping and safety.

BART is moving forward with a long term program that will eventually improve many aging stations in the BART system. Now in the second round of its "Station Modernization Program," BART will invest resources into existing core stations and surrounding areas to help advance the transit ridership experience and enhance the quality of life around the stations. As part of this effort, BART is now progressing with design and construction estimates for three important "gateway" stations in three counties: **El Cerrito del Norte** in El Cerrito, **19th St.** in Oakland, and **Powell St.** in San Francisco.

Estimated to be under construction beginning in summer 2016, and ending in late 2017, the goal is to upgrade and modernize the stations' function, safety, capacity, sustainability, appearance, and ultimately improve important rider/station relationships.



