

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

September 25, 2025

1. Roll Call of Members:

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

Quorum of seven (7) in-person appointed BATF members.

Five (5) appointed BATF members participated remotely under the Just Cause provision of Government Code Section 54953 (f):

1. Catherine Callahan used her second Just Cause
2. Daveed Mandell used his second Just Cause
3. Janice Armigo Brown used her second Just Cause
4. Joshua Saunders used his first Just Cause
5. Shana Ray used her first Just Cause

BART Customer Access and Accessibility Department Staff:

Elena Van Loo
Ryan Greene-Roesel
Kevin McDonald

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

Alex Walker (BART staff)
Susan Poliwka (BART staff)
Derik Calhoun (BART staff)
Ahmad Rassai (BART staff)
David Coggshall (BART staff)
Hannah Kanzell (ASL Interpreter)
Sankari Paisley (ASL Interpreter)
Aleta Dupree (Guest)
Sara Desumala (Guest)
Jerry Grace (Guest)
Mussie Gebri (Guest)
Valerie Buell (Guest)
Esther Waltz (Guest)
Jaimie San Nicolas (Guest)

2. Public Comments

Esther Wiltz and Jaimie San Nicolas each introduced themselves and expressed interest in joining the BATF.

Valerie Buell reported that smoking continues at the 12th St. BART Station and expressed concern that her previous complaints have not been addressed.

Aleta Dupree shared that she attended a recent BART Board of Directors meeting, where she learned about a pilot program for new faregate tones at selected stations. She expressed interest in testing the tones and providing feedback, noting their potential benefit for diverse communities.

Aleta Dupree also encouraged BATF members and the public to advocate for free elevator access for all individuals, regardless of disability status.

3. Approval of the July 24, 2025 meeting minutes

Clarence R. Fischer moved approval of the July 24, 2025, meeting minutes. Hillary Brown seconded the motion.

- Motion passes with twelve (12) in favor, zero (0) against, and zero (0) abstentions.

4. Senate Bill 63 Update

Alex Walker presented on the agenda item, with the full presentation included in the BATF September 2025 agenda packet.

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

- Clarence R. Fischer inquired about what would happen if Senate Bill 63 were vetoed.
- Clarence R. Fischer asked what percentage of this bill will go towards projects to improve conditions for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Clarence R. Fischer asked if this bill covers signal priority for bus services or emergency vehicles.
- Danny Kodmur asked how many previous funding measures similar to this have been in effect over the last few years.
- Danny Kodmur asked when Senate Bill 63 takes effect if it passes.
- Danny Kodmur asked how drastic the service cuts would be if the bill does not pass.
- Sam Buman asked if there would be a work plan for Senate Bill 63.
- Sam Buman asked why other counties were not part of the Senate Bill 63.
- Joshua Saunders emphasized the importance of passing this measure.
- Daveed Mandell expressed that the following counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco) will be part of Senate Bill 63 and mentioned that the sales tax may be too high.
- Daveed Mandell expressed concerns that the bill does not address accessibility within BART.
- Herb Hasting asked about why expenditures are not the same for the five counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco).

Aleta Dupree emphasized the importance of passing Senate Bill 63 and highlighted the critical role public transportation plays in the community.

5. Bay Fair Pedestrian Tunnel Accessible Ramp Concept

Susan Poliwka presented on the agenda item, with the full presentation included in the BATF September 2025 agenda packet. She also shared several design concepts for the new tunnel planned at Bay Fair BART Station.

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

- Danny Kodmur asked how the new tunnel, the Bay Fair BART Station and soon, TOD (Transit Oriented Development) will connect.
- Clarence R. Fischer asked about the ramp with switchbacks and wondered if there would be enough space for a variety of wheelchairs to use.
- Roland Wong voiced that it is important to have good wayfinding when the new tunnel is installed along with good lighting.
- Roland Wong asked if there would be benches in the tunnel for riders to sit down.
- Hillary Brown asked if this project's concept would be used at other BART Stations.
- Anita Ortega stated she would like to see this project completed.
- Joshua Saunders also stated that he did not know there was a tunnel at Bay Fair BART Station. He mentioned he can use the stairs to enter/exit the station.
- Daveed Mandell asked if there would be alternative ways to enter/exit Bay Fair BART Station for those who do not use wheelchairs.
- Roland Wong would like clarification on the location and design of the ramps, including whether the ramps would be zigzag-shaped. He also suggested incorporating seating areas or benches along the ramps for riders to rest.
- Herb Hastings agreed that the current tunnel is in a strange location and understands the confusion about the location.
- Herb Hasting expressed that the new tunnel ramps can be too steep and wanted to know what the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requires regarding ramp slope.
- Herb Hastings noted that the existing tunnel runs beneath the train tracks, connecting the Alameda County side to the San Leandro side of the Bay Fair BART Station.

Jerry Grace expressed concern that none of the proposed design diagrams may be suitable for the Bay Fair BART Station.

Esther Wiltz requested that adequate lighting be incorporated into the tunnel design to address safety concerns, particularly for elderly users.

Jaimie San Nicolas stated that the current tunnel is being used as a dumping area and recommended the inclusion of a ramp for bicyclists instead of stairs.

Aleta Dupree mentioned she has not visited the Bay Fair BART Station but emphasized the importance of good lighting and security cameras to ensure public safety.

6. Nominations and Elections for Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair

Elena Van Loo led the agenda item.

Chairperson nominations and elections:

Herb Hastings nominated himself.

Voting results for Chairperson:

Herb Hastings – eleven (11) in favor, zero (0) against, zero (0) abstentions

Vice-Chairperson nominations and elections:

Herb Hastings nominated Clarence R. Fischer and he declined.

Herb Hastings nominated Sam Buman and he declined.

Shana Ray nominated Joshua Saunders and he accepted.

Voting results for Vice-Chairperson:

Joshua Saunders – nine (9) in favor, zero (0) against, zero (0) abstentions

2nd Vice-Chairperson nominations and elections:

Hillary Brown nominated herself.

Voting results 2nd Vice-Chairperson:

Hillary Brown – nine (9) in favor, zero (0) against, one (1) abstention

Elena Van Loo announced the new BATF leadership appointments effective through September 2026:

- Herb Hastings will serve as Chairperson
- Joshua Saunders will serve as Vice-Chairperson
- Hillary Brown will serve as 2nd Vice-Chairperson

7. Member announcements

No member announcements

8. Staff announcements

Elena Van Loo announced the immediate resignations of Emily Witkin and Janien Harrison as appointed BATF members. As a result, there are now thirteen (13) appointed members, with five (5) vacancies remaining.

She also announced that third-quarter travel reimbursements will end effective September 30, 2025. Additionally, she reminded BATF members to contact her directly if they need to update their RTC card number.

Ryan Greene-Roesel informed the group that she will email BATF members with available dates and times to test the faregate tones. The pilot will take place at Civic Center/UN Plaza, Ashby, and Rockridge BART Stations.

Kevin McDonald reported that during the July 24, 2025, BATF meeting, members requested that “Accessibility” be added as a feedback type on the BART Customer Services contact form. After review, BART staff decided not to implement this change, explaining that the form is designed to capture the *type* of feedback (e.g., question, complaint, comment), not the subject. He added that Customer Services staff are trained to review the content of each submission and route accessibility-related feedback to the appropriate department.

9. Chairperson announcements

Herb Hastings shared that he continues to be involved with the new Clipper 2.0 project.

10. Future agenda items – member suggests topics

- Elevator and Restroom Attendants
 - San Francisco Downtown – Elevator attendants
 - 19th St. BART Station – Restroom attendants
- Reliability problems at enclosed faregates at downtown San Francisco Stations:
 - Embarcadero BART Station
 - Montgomery BART Station
 - Powell BART Station
 - Civic Center/UN Plaza BART Station
- Debrief on feedback regarding faregate tones

11. Adjournment

Clarence R. Fischer moved to adjourn the September 25, 2025, meeting. Hillary Brown seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:19 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, October 23, 2025.