

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

August 27, 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

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

Director Robert Raburn
Angie West (BART staff)
Brian Batista (BART staff)
Aleta Dupree (Guest)
Jerry Grace (Guest)

Sara Desumala (Guest)
Gabino Arredondo (Guest)
Bryce Maples (Guest)
Mussie Gabre (Guest)

2. Public Comments

Aleta Dupree introduced herself and shared that she took photos of the New York Subway signages to share with BATF members and members of the public. She mentioned she has gotten to know some of the BATF members and members of the public on a personal basis and presumes that they have interest other than BART but emphasize that BART is important to her. Aleta mentioned that we are like snowflakes - we are all different - and that she works to understand and recognize how to communicate effectively with different individuals.

Sara Desumala and Jerry Grace asked about BART's track maintenance schedule for the upcoming weekend.

Bryce Maples introduced himself and expressed in becoming an appointed BATF member.

3. Approval of the July 23, 2026 meeting minutes

Clarence R. Fischer motioned for approval of the July 23, 2026 meeting minutes. Sam Buman second the motion.

- Motion passed with nine (9) in favor, zero (0) against, and three (3) abstentions

4. BART Official App Update

Angie West presented on the agenda item with the presentation included in the BATF August 2026 agenda packet.

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

- Hillary Brown asked whether the updated BART Official App will include a speech function on smartphones for users who are blind or have low vision.

- Clarence R. Fischer shared three comments:
 - He suggested that train numbers be listed under train locations when navigating through BART stations.
 - He proposed that BATF members volunteer their time to provide feedback on the BART Official App.
 - He noted that BART's trip planner currently displays incorrect AC Transit connection fares for youth, seniors, and people with disabilities, who receive discounted rates. He expressed concern that the app may also show inaccurate fare information and emphasized the need to update BART's trip planner.
- Roland Wong mentioned that he regularly uses the BART Official App and had questions about the maintenance notice affecting the Berryessa/North San Jose–Daly City (Green) Line. He found the wording confusing and asked for clarification on which stations would be out of service. Roland also shared that he is looking forward to the revamped app.
- Esther Waltz asked whether the app will provide notifications when the BART Official App itself goes under maintenance.
- Shana Ray asked if the BART Official App will be able to connect with the East Bay Paratransit app.
- Joshua Saunders expressed interest in trying out the navigation assistance feature at the El Cerrito del Norte Station.
- Ryan Manriquez asked whether the BART Official App will remain usable during its maintenance period leading up to the rollout. He emphasized how valuable the elevator notifications are for members of his community and asked whether these alerts could be sent more quickly—ideally as systemwide notifications rather than station-specific ones. He also asked whether the fare calculator will include Clipper Access or Clipper Start discount options, which he believes would benefit riders.
- Sam Buman asked about the updates to the BART Official App. He asked if BART would be decommissioning the BART Watch App and integrating into the official app.
- Daveed Mandell expressed concern that BATF members were not more involved in testing the upgraded BART Official App, especially considering the needs of blind users. He encouraged BART to hire people with diverse disabilities to provide firsthand insight into making the system fully accessible.
- Danny Kodmur shared that he is looking forward to the updated version of the BART Official App.
- Herb Hastings stated that he would have liked to see a pilot program before the app's launch and wished BATF members had been involved in giving feedback. He also asked for more information on how other Bay Area paratransit providers will be integrated into the updated app.

Jerry Grace asked whether escalator alerts will be provided under the updated BART Official App.

Aleta Dupre shared that she does use the fare calculation on the BART Official App and acknowledge that she receives the discount fare. She expressed some of the fonts on the app are too small to read and added she does not use BART's trip planner. Bryce Maples said that he uses the BART Official a lot and stated that app does not tell which specific elevator is out of service. He would like to see which elevator is out of service; if the street elevator is out of service, or the concourse elevator is out of service.

5. One Seat Ride Paratransit Pilot Fare Structure

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

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

- Ryan Manriquez commented that the disability community is not confined to any single city or county, and that people with disabilities deserve the ability to travel freely throughout the Bay Area. He expressed appreciation for the one-seat-ride paratransit pilot program.
- Joshua Saunders asked whether similar one-seat-ride pilots will expand to additional cities and counties so riders can reach their destinations without transferring between services.
- Shana Ray asked whether Mountain View, in Santa Clara County, is included in the one-seat-ride pilot.
- Clarence R. Fischer requested clarification on whether East Bay Paratransit vouchers could be used to pay passenger fares with VTA paratransit or Contra Costa County paratransit service providers once the pilot begins.
- Clarence R. Fischer also noted that some towns and cities have changed their names and emphasized the importance of ensuring pick-up and drop-off locations are accurate.
- Clarence R. Fischer asked how paratransit riders will be notified once the one-seat-ride pilot goes live.
- Daveed Mandell noted that a proposed bill known as the Same-Day Paratransit Innovation Act was introduced in March 2026 and expressed concern that progress still feels like a step backward despite long-standing advocacy.

- Daveed Mandell also remarked that paratransit riders should not have to pay twice as much as riders using fixed-route public transit, as is permitted under the ADA.
- Herb Hastings agreed with Daveed, noting that paratransit rides remain more expensive than public transit trips.

Jerry Grace asked why WestCAT is not included in the one-seat-ride pilot program. Jerry Grace mentioned that he observed three brand-new East Bay Paratransit vans in the Oakland area.

6. Update to BART's Accessibility Overview Website

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

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

- Hillary Brown asked why accessibility-related claims were not included in the accessibility updates.
- Joshua Saunders clarified that BART does not process Clipper Access cards; he now understands that BART only initiates the Clipper Access application and forwards the completed form and photo to Clipper, who processes the card.
- Ryan Manriquez commented positively on the recent accessibility updates made to the BART website. He especially appreciated improvements to the Clipper Access section, the elevator sidebar, quick links for real-time updates, and increased visibility of the BATF for potential new members.
- Danny Kodmur asked whether completed web forms are sent to BART's Customer Service department.
- Herb Hastings expressed appreciation for the ability to locate agendas, minutes, and notices by year, rather than navigating through multiple links to find specific documents.

Elena Van Loo added that the Customer Access and Accessibility Department has created a dedicated email for accessibility-related questions, claims, and comments: accessibility@bart.gov

7. Fourth Quarter: BART's Compiled and Analyzed Customer Complaints Related to Accessibility

The Chair postponed this agenda item to be presented at a future BATF meeting.

8. Member Announcements

Esther Waltz noted that Santa Cruz is not as accessible as other vacation destinations.

Hillary Brown shared that on August 28, 2026, Move Bay Area will be hosting a summit in San Francisco.

Ryan Manriquez took a moment to recognize and commemorate August as Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) Awareness Month. He noted that many individuals in the SMA community are wheelchair users and depend on accessible transportation to reach their destinations.

9. Staff Announcements

Elena Van Loo informed the appointed BATF members that nominations and elections for the Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair positions will take place in September. She encouraged members to contact her with any questions.

Kevin McDonald announced that Ahmad Rassai will be retiring from BART and introduced Brian Batista, who will serve in his role within the Office of the District Architect until a permanent replacement is selected.

Brian Batista, BART staff, introduced himself and shared that he will be taking Ahmad Rassai's position as acting Project Manager, Accessibility within the Office of the District Architect.

Director Raburn saw the new elevator out-of-service signs at a BART stations and he wanted to make sure the new signs will be integrated with the BART Official app under elevator outages notices.

10. Chairperson Announcements

Herb Hastings shared that he has been selected as the Alameda County representative for a paratransit working group that will engage with various paratransit services across all nine counties.

He also expressed his gratitude to the BATF members and the public for the opportunity to serve as Chair over the past year. Herb noted that he will not be attending the September BATF meeting, when nominations and elections for the Chair, Vice-Chair, and 2nd Vice-Chair positions will take place.

11. Future Agenda Topics – Members Suggest Topics - Next Meeting Scheduled: September 24, 2026

- Proper fares from the BART's website
 - Including correct fares for people with disabilities and seniors
- Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)
 - Universal design – accessibility
- Clipper Card 2.0 update
- Bike, Scooter protocols
 - Different types of scooters that are allowed on the BART trains
 - What kinds of bikes are allowed on the BART trains
 - Large battery-powered bikes take up significant space in the elevators, which becomes challenging when wheelchairs, scooters, strollers, luggage, and other items also need to enter.

12. Adjournment

Sam Buman moved to adjourn the August 27, 2026 meeting. Clarence R. Fischer seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:17 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, September 24, 2026.