

Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Access Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 2nd, 2022

6:00 PM

Virtual Presentation

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Committee Members: Betsy Greenberg, David Foster, Ephraim Taylor, Fangda Lu, Diana Wheeler,

CapMetro Employees: Tevin Lionel, Edna Parra, Robert Borowski, Martin Kareithi, Dave Kubicek, Daniella Madubuike, Rahul Nair, Jackie Nirenberg, Samantha Alexander, Christina Barbee, Hayley Pickett, Mike Gorse, Ruven Brooks, Glenda Born, Tom Wald

6:05 PM

Welcome / Introductions / Call to Order

Chair Taylor

Public Communications

Mike Gorse: The audible announcements for the stops on a bus was not working and he was informed by another passenger that there was a new visual display on board. Wants to make sure that audible announcements are turned on for individuals with a visual impairment

Martin Kareithi : Let the committee know that if they remember the time on the bus, please let CapMetro know so because that is not the intended use of the visual displays, they are to work in tandem with audible announcements. If you experience this again, please let me or customer service know.

Tom Wald: Raised the issue about the name of the Red Line and the racist connotations about the name “Red Line” in reference to the term “redlining”, policy decisions that have disenfranchised persons of color for decades.

David Foster & Ephraim Taylor: There's a lot to consider when changing the name of an already established line, but you do raise an excellent point about the name being problematic. Appreciate CapMetro looking into this issue to consider to change the name.

Edna Parra: Asked if there was anyone he was in contact with at CapMetro, and we will connect him with Cynthia Lucas, Sam Sargent and others that have been involved in this conversation, including Jaqueline Evans, who is our DEI officer.

Ruven Brooks: Inquired about the correlation between transit ridership and COVID-19 infections. The American Public Transit Association has done studies and noticed that there is low risk to riders in a bus for viral infections. One of the hypotheses is that buses have good enough air circulation to not pose a problem. I've also learned that CapMetro refreshes the air in busses every 2 ½ minutes, which is much more frequent as opposed to the industry standard of 12 minutes. This that this would be a CapMetro marketing initiative to attract riders onto the bus.

Edna Parra: I believe we have advertised this before, but maybe it is something we should bring up again. Response from communications: The CapMetro marketing team agrees the air purifiers are a compelling tool to show customers how we are keeping them safe, in particular as it relates to any COVID concerns. The purifiers have previously been featured in marketing materials and may be again in the future.

Edna Parra: Thanked everyone who showed up to the Meet and Greet, despite the weather, it was great to speak and meet everyone in person. And for anyone who missed it, we are hoping to have another one.

Ephraim Taylor: Now to approve February's Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve: four in favor. No opposition, no abstentions.

Light Rail Vehicles

Dave Kubicek, Austin Transit Partnership Senior Director of Systems & Vehicles

Rolling Stock Design

- 100 % Low-Floor Design
- Catenary Free Capabilities
- Batter & On-Board Energy Management
- Communications Based Train Control (CBTC)
- Customer Information systems & Technology
- Platform Screen Doors & Precision Stopping

- Application of European and Asian Equipment Technology
- Operation speed range up to 55 MPH (88 KPH) +/-

Accessibility Elements

- Passenger Doors
 - Fine Passenger Doorways per side
 - Illuminated Push Buttons/Staus Indicators
 - Door Annunciations

- Elderly and Disabled Accessibility
 - Height Control/Level Boarding
 - ADA Compliance
 - Wheelchair accommodations
 - Seating & Grab Handle Arrangement Options

- Designed for Space
 - Transverse Seating
 - Open gangway
 - Bike Storage

- Safety Elements
 - Emergency Intercoms
 - Public Address & Passenger Information Systems
 - Automatic Station Identification System
 - **Emergency Release – Interior & Exterior**

Rolling Stock Regulations & Standards Examples

- Federal Transit Administration
 - Regulations and Guidance
 - Americans with Disability Act (ADA)
 - Safety and Oversight
 - Buy America

- Industry Guidelines & Standards
 - American Public Transportation Association (ATPA)
 - American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM)
 - American Welding Society (AWS)
 - European Standards (EN Standards)
 - Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)
 - International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)

Tevin Lionel: Would the whole line use an overhead centenary system, or would there be cable free sections, while the tram runs on battery power?

Dave Kubicek: There would be section free of an overhead wire as to not be obtrusive to the general aesthetics of the city, and the tram would run on its battery.

Tevin Lionel: What is the battery range on the trams?

Dave Kubicek: I don't have an answer for that just yet, as we are still early on decisions of what tram to procure. The biggest drains on the battery though, would be the propulsion and the HVAC system.

Tevin Lionel: Have there been considerations for third rail electrification, or would this not be feasible due to the rail being at-grade there would be the risk of someone encountering the electric rail?

Dave Kubicek: Yes, absolutely. The third rail would be exposed so to avoid the chance of an incident, we prefer to use the overhead wire. There is also a technology called APS, which uses a third rail at-grade level [APS turns the electricity on and off automatically as the tram passes over it], though this option is quite more expensive.

Tevin Lionel: Where would the trams be manufactured? In the US or abroad, then shipped over to Austin?

Dave Kubicek: 75% of the tram would be built and manufactured in the US, so foreign firms will be manufacturing components of the tram, but 75% of the manufacturing will happen in the US.

Betsy Greenberg: Are all the tram cars going to be the same length, or will they vary?

Dave Kubicek: The trams would all be a uniform length as to be able to fit into the stations with platform screen doors.

David Foster: Will all the seating be parallel to the tram car, or will there perpendicular seating as well?

Dave Kubicek: The trams would have a varying seating configuration throughout, with some parallel and some perpendicular and also spaces for bikes, and wheelchair spaces.

Ephraim Taylor: Have there been estimates on the rider volumes you'd expect, and would the trams be able to accommodate many people all at once, and multi-modal commuters, who might have their bike with them? Would there be enough space for people and their other forms on transit?

Dave Kubicek: Formally right now, no. But this is a factor that will be addressed. Right now, we are showcasing the new line and what it offers to riders, but soon we can determine more data about how the line will be used by riders and where they are going and what accommodations need to be made on our part to give customers a pleasant experience.

Glenda Born: Be careful of contrasting colors in the design as it can make it difficult for people with vision impairments to use the service. Be wary of signs that are too visually busy as well, as it can make a sign become off-putting to even vision typical people.

Dave Kubicek: This is a major consideration we have. Making sure signs and visual elements are legible, clearly defined and accessible is one of our top priorities.

Tevin Lionel: Can the trams be linked together? If need be to fulfill demand at a station or for special events that would require more capacity for a limited time? Or would this be mitigated by having shorter headways?

Dave Kubicek: Yes, the trams are bi-directional and can be linked with other trams to increase capacity on a line.

Project Connect Upcoming Events & Updates

Christina Barbee, Project Connect & Christina Fortner, Project Connect

- **Goals**
 - Show the public they are being heard
 - Answer frequently asked questions, share information and speak to how the team has and will continue to address community feedback
 - Provide the opportunity to ask the project team questions face to face
 - Keep conversation going with the public to encourage community involvement

- **Content**
 - Program and project updates
 - Breakout discussion topics:
 - Traffic and transportation
 - System-wide connectivity
 - Environmental studies
 - Anti-displacement

- **Format**
 - Live Virtual Meetings with breakout groups
 - Tuesday, March 29, 5:30 – 7 p.m.
 - Thursday, March 31, 12 – 1:30 p.m.
 - On-Demand Virtual Open House
 - Tuesday, March 29 – Friday, April 29

Environmental Resources

- **Physical and Natural Environment**
 - Air Quality
 - Soils and Geology
 - Water Quality
 - Threatened and Endangered Species
 - Energy
 - Hazardous Materials
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Temporary Construction Impacts

- **Human Environment**
 - Environmental Justice (EJ)

- Safety and Security
- Land Use and Zoning
- Socioeconomic and Economic Development
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Land Acquisition and Displacements

- **Cultural Environment**
 - Cultural, Historic and Archeological
 - Parks and Recreational
 - Section 4(f) Evaluation
 - Visual and Aesthetic
 - Neighborhood and Community Resources

What is Transportation Analysis?

- Planning for the changes the Orange and Blue Line will bring to the city's transportation network requires us to consider the needs of all road users. To do this, we evaluate the network as four interconnected components.

\$300 Million Anti-Displacement Funding: Contract with Voters

- When voters approved Project Connect in November 2020, Proposition A included \$300 million for anti-displacement work.
- Project Connect Anti-Displacement funding will help prevent the displacement of people due to rising costs that may result from transit-oriented development.
- Anti-displacement initiatives will create long-term impact with focus on creating affordable housing units and asset-building opportunities that enhance people's economic mobility and prevent displacement.
- This funding will help affordable areas remain affordable to the people who want to stay.

Besty Greenberg: Regarding anti-displacement, is this being offered to local businesses as well or only residential zones?

Christina Barbee: It is specific to neighborhoods; we can have a separate discussion and breakout room for commercial anti-displacement in the future.

Edna Parra: Regarding anti-displacement, does the City of Austin present this action?

Christina Barbee: They will be the meeting; the live virtual meeting dates themselves will be March 29th and on March 31st, and there's also going to be a virtual Open House component and that is come and go as you please and that's going to start on the 29th of March and run through the 29th of April.

Glenda Born: What were the topic areas?

Christina Barbee: The four topic areas are *Transportation & Traffic, Systemwide Connectivity, Environmental Studies* and *Anti-Displacement*.

Service Change / Proposed Service Change

Daniella Madubuike, Transportation Planner I

Reminder of Spring 2022 Service Changes

- **Minor Adjustments of Service**
 - Adjust Running Times – Minor adjustments to schedules due to ridership / travel conditions

- **Reduced Service Levels**
 - MetroRail – Continued reduced levels of service
 - MetroExpress & Flyers – Continued reduced service levels
 - E-Bus – Continued suspension of service

Overview of Summer 2022 Service Changes

- **Minor Adjustments of Service**
 - Adjust Running Times – Minor adjustments to schedule to improve on-time performance
 - Summer Service Adjustments – Normal transition on UT routes, and on select route trips to summer service levels
 - Continued Service Suspension – MetroExpress (routes 981 and 987) and E-Bus service remain suspended
 - MetroRail – Minor schedule adjustments on Weekdays and / or Saturdays to ensure more efficient and reliable service. In addition, planned maintenance work is scheduled between July 2nd through 10th.

Suspended Services (Summer 2022)

- Express Routes
 - Routes 981 & 987

- E-Bus
 - Route 410 / 411 & 412

Betsy Greenberg: Is the service change also going to affect MetroAccess?

Daniella Madubuike: Yes, in ways. The pandemic affected many areas of service and with the labor shortage is complicates the issue further. We will still operate MetroAccess as efficiently as possible because it's demand-response and not fixed service, but yes, service, scheduling and frequency has been affected across the board.

Ephraim Taylor: Is CapMetro still anticipating the return of high-frequency routes returning to the regular 12–15 minute headway?

Daniella Madubiike: Long term, yes, we do plan on returning all services back to where they were prior to COVID and even more so as we experience more ridership growth. Right now, the service changes are meant to leverage our available resources in the most actionable ways we have at our disposal. That means mapping out routes that can carry the most people to key locations in reasonable timeframes, but there will still be shortcomings with this approach. Our plan is to get the service back to its full operational capacity in the long term.

Sustainability Vision Plan

Robert Borowski, Sustainability Officer

Sustainability Vision Plan

- CapMetro Strategic Plan
- FTA Sustainable Transit for a Healthy Planet Challenge
- American Public Transportation Associations Sustainability Commitment
- Austin Climate Equity Plan
- Envision: Framework for Sustainable Infrastructure
- Austin energy Building / LEED

Elements of the Plan

- **Sustainability Vision Plan**
 - Establish vision statement, goals, guiding principles, action areas
 - Align with CapMetro Strategic Plan and Project Connect Values; Provide a route map to APTA Sustainability Platinum Level; Align with FTA Sustainable Transit for a Healthy Planet Challenge
 - Transparent to the community

- **Internal Action Plans**
 - Set department-level sustainability goals and commitments; Aligned with budget cycle; Integrated with other plans –FMP, Fleet Transition; MetroBike Strategic Expansion
 - Identify strategies and track action items
 - Monitor and report metrics on GHG/Carbon, Air Emissions, Energy, Water, Waste/Reuse
 - Establish departmental leads and responsibilities

- **Annual Report**
 - Report metrics and key activities
 - Aligned with Strategic Plan (annual update and report; revisit and innovate 5-year cycle)
 - Track APTA Sustainability Commitment
 - Available to the community and stakeholders

Plan Implementation and Support

Proposed Leadership Structure

- **Sustainability Vision Plan (CapMetro Board)**
 - Adopt Sustainability Vision Policy Statement

- **Senior Management Team (Internal)**
 - Approve goals

- **Sustainability Leadership Committee**
 - Implement Sustainability Vision Plan and Action Plans
 - Approve Sustainability Fund Projects
 - Led by Sustainability Officer

- **Sustainability Advisory Group (External)**
 - Regional sustainability partners: ATP, Austin Energy, Office of Sustainability, PARD, Austin Resource Recovery, Austin Water, Watershed Protection; Austin Bergstrom, Austin Economic Development, Austin Fleet Management, Travis County, CAPCOG
 - Guide implementation, collaboration, exchange knowledge and experience

- **Green Team and Sustainability Contractor**
 - Support leadership staff committee in implementation and communication efforts
 - Assist the Sustainability Officer in developing and coordinating plans and tools for implementation

Regional Sustainability Efforts Guiding the Sustainability Vision Plan

- **Climate Equity Plan**
 - Community-wide net zero carbon by 2040
 - Support goal of 40% of total vehicle miles traveled electrified in Austin
 - Buildings:
 - All new buildings are net-zero carbon
 - 25% emissions reduction from existing buildings
 - 30% natural gas emissions reduction, if relevant to Cap Metro facilities
 - 40% reduction in embodied carbon footprint of building materials in construction
 - Strengthen sustainable purchasing program, encourage employee engagement in sustainability activities
 - 50% tree canopy cover achieved citywide by 2050

- **Austin Zero Waste Plan**
 - Zero Waste by 2040 – reduce the amount of trash sent to landfills by 90%

- **Water Forward**
- Continued focus on water conservation and water use efficiency
- Using resources that are technically, socially, economically feasible
- Continue to protect Austin’s natural environment

Sustainability Vision Plan Structure

- **Sustainability Vision Plan**
- Energy: Conservation, Efficiency, Renewable
- Sustainable and Zero Emission Fleet
- Zero Waste, Natural Resource Management
- Water and Natural World
- Active Transportation
- Green Building and Infrastructure
- Environmental and Sustainability Management

CapMetro's Sustainability Vision Plan Goals

- **GHG / Carbon Neutral Goal:**
- Carbon Neutral by 2040, consistent with Austin Climate Equity Plan

- **Zero Waste Goal:**
- 90% reduction of waste to landfills by 2040, consistent with Austin Zero Waste Plan

- **Water and Nature Goal:**
- Sustainably manage water resources and enhance nature and natural systems through conservation and green infrastructure

- **Sustainable Building and Infrastructure Goal:**
- Use sustainable design guideline ND RATING SYSTEMS (Envision, Austin Energy Green Building, LEED) to guide all capital projects.

- **Equity, Customer Experience, Sustainable Transit:**
- Transit as the equitable and sustainable solution to a livable community.

Proposed Sustainability Project Fund

Subject to approval

Description	A supplemental fund for capital and operational projects that support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The goals of the Sustainability Vision Plan;
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieving/maintaining APTA Sustainability Commitment (Platinum Level); ▪ The goals of the Austin’s Climate Equity Plan/Zero Waste Plan/ Water Forward Plan 	
Project Categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Energy and Climate ▪ Sustainable and Zero Emission Fleet ▪ Zero Waste ▪ Water and Natural World ▪ Active Transportation ▪ Green Building and Infrastructure ▪ Environmental and Sustainability Management 	
Examples of Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Zero emission vehicles or charging infrastructure ▪ Green building/Infrastructure design ▪ MetroBike equipment ▪ Urban forestry, sustainable landscaping, or habitat projects ▪ Public facility recycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Renewable energy projects or pilots ▪ Pollution prevention projects ▪ Third-party support for sustainability rating (AEGB, Envision, SITES) ▪ Energy conservation upgrades/retro-fits ▪ IT equipment and software for energy conservation
Process	Sustainability Leadership Committee will identify and select projects consistent with procurement guidelines; and based on sustainability impact and sustainability return on investment.	

Sustainability Action Area Summary

Energy: Conservation, Efficiency, Renewables

Path Forward

Reduce the energy used in our current facilities and operations through a comprehensive energy management program, conservation and energy upgrades. Apply Zero Energy design guidelines for all new facilities. Renewable energy is the first choice.

- **Where are we now (current strategies)?**
 - 100% Austin Energy Green Choice
 - Over 200 solar bus stop lighting systems, information displays
 - Energy upgrades such as LED lighting at park and rides
 - 34% reduction in energy, since 2014 (normalized to revenue miles traveled)
 - 32% reduction in carbon emissions/GHG since 2016

- **Where do we want to be (targets)?**
 - 100% renewable energy for all electric sources
 - Net zero carbon/energy buildings and facilities

Sustainability Action Area Summary

Sustainable/Zero Emission Fleet

Path Forward

Transition all revenue and non-revenue fleets to zero emission, as technology becomes available to meet the needs of our operation and benefits our customers. Guide our fleet conversion with a comprehensive zero emission vehicle transition plan.

- **Where are we now (current strategies)?**
 - North Ops Electric Bus Depot, electric-ready for 179 buses
 - Procurement of 197 new electric buses over the next 5 years
 - Adding 15 plug-in hybrid vehicles to current fleet of 8 electric Nissan Leaf staff fleet vehicles; and expanding charging infrastructure for NRV fleets and employees.
 - Powered by Green Choice renewable energy
 - 63% reduction in Criteria Air Pollutants (NOx) since 2016.

- Where do we want to be (targets)?
 - 100% zero emission revenue and non-revenue fleets
 - 100% zero emission light rail
 - Public charging infrastructure at public facilities for customers and the community

Next Steps

- Revise with staff, stakeholder and Board input for **vision, goals and guiding principles**
 - Customer Advisory Committee: ATP, PSEC, ATP EAC, CapMetro CSAC
 - Internal (CapMetro / ATP) Sustainability Leadership Committee
 - External (CoA, Travis County, CAPCOG) Sustainability Advisory Group
- Finalize Vision Plan
- Board Sustainability Vision Policy Statement adoption by April 15th
- Submit to FTA's Sustainable Transit for a Healthy Planet
- Finalize sustainable action plans

Glenda Born: How far out is the Sustainability effort planned for, also, how are you dealing with the issue of growth?

Robert Borowski: Sustainability has been part of CapMetro's strategic plan for a long time, it is one of the guiding principles of the agency. And as such, Sustainability will continue to be part of CapMetro's plan for the foreseeable future. We review and analyze findings year after year to see how we can improve further as time goes on to meet our goals of sustainability.