

Is Sacramento Regional Transit Ignoring Riders with Disabilities?

June 30, 2026



SUMMARY

The 2025-2026 Sacramento County Grand Jury received a complaint from a caregiver of a registered rider that, without effective notice, the Sacramento Regional Transit District (District) cancelled an app that had allowed paratransit users to track the rides they had reserved. This change occurred with very little advance knowledge and no apparent input from paratransit riders, their advocates or the disability advisors to the District.

Paratransit vans do not have fixed routes, but pick up riders upon request. Often, the vans pick up multiple riders, making it difficult for a customer to know exactly when a van will arrive. Without the District app showing the riders the van's location at any given time, riders may wait lengthy and unknowable periods of time for a requested ride.

When the District launched new software in April 2025, the app that allowed riders to book and track their rides ended. The new software was intended to have a companion app to allow riders to book and later track rides however that companion app for the

riders failed to function. Thus, potential riders had to call the dispatch center to schedule rides and track the van's location. During this investigation, the Grand Jury found that the District fails to provide effective paratransit for riders with disabilities in the Sacramento region, due in part to a failure to involve the riders in decisions that affect them, despite the statement in the District website that "SacRT's Board of Directors and staff greatly value the advisory consultation with the MAC on service issues affecting the disabled and senior community."

Consequently, the District negatively affects riders with disabilities and incurs unnecessary expenditures. In addition, the Grand Jury uncovered irregularities in the District's contract payment system.

GLOSSARY

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) -- A federal law enacted in 1990 that provides civil rights protections to individuals with physical and mental disabilities, and guarantees them equal opportunity in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.
- Paratransit -- A type of public transport service that supplements fixed-route mass transit by providing individualized rides without fixed routes or timetables for persons with disabilities.
- Request for Proposal (RFP) -- The process for soliciting vendor responses for products or services used by the District.
- SacRT GO -- A transit service of the District that provides shared door-to-door rides to qualified riders
- UZURV -- A transit service that supplements the services provided by SacRT GO.

BACKGROUND

When the District transitioned to its new dispatching software, individuals with disabilities not only lost the ability to book and later track rides with a mobile app. They also waited long periods of time for their rides that sometimes arrived late, were cancelled at the last minute, or otherwise never arrived leaving them stranded, adding to the stress of daily living. After the old app was no longer available, wait times for calls to the District's customer service increased significantly. This was because riders not only had to call to schedule rides, but now also had to call to check when their vehicle would arrive.

System failures prevent the independence that such individuals seek and deserve. Reliable transportation connects individuals with disabilities to the communities in which they live, to the jobs upon which they rely, to the classes through which they learn, and the appointments that keep them healthy and connected to social events.

Reliable public transportation is critical, particularly to prevent missed medical appointments that may be difficult to reschedule. A reliable public transit system benefits everyone in the community, including healthcare facilities, educational institutions, businesses, and the region at large.

The Sacramento Regional Transit District

The California Legislature authorized the creation of the Sacramento Regional Transit District in 1971 and it was established in 1973. Today, the District's buses cover 80-plus routes within a 449 square mile service area that includes the unincorporated area of Sacramento County and five of the County's seven cities. Only Galt and Isleton are not served by the District. The District also operates 43 miles of light rail service with 53 stations in their service area.

An 11-member Board of Directors (Board) governs the District. The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors appoints three members. The Sacramento City Council appoints three members. The Elk Grove City Council appoints two. Rancho Cordova, Folsom and Citrus Heights appoint one member each from their city councils.

The Rise of Transit Services for People with Disabilities

From its inception, the District's goals included transportation for people with disabilities, but the goal of seamless service remains unrealized. Furthermore, due to the region's aging population, the need for transportation for people with disabilities continues to grow in numbers and complexity.

The 1990 federal Americans with Disabilities Act required public agencies that offered fixed routes to offer additional services through paratransit, to which the District adheres. This may include door-to-door service or pickups within three-quarters of a mile of a bus or light rail line. Paratransit vehicles include cars and minivans that do not run on a fixed route. Instead, riders reserve a vehicle in advance. These vehicles offer more services to riders than standard buses equipped with wheelchair lifts can provide for those with greater physical challenges. Caregivers may accompany riders on paratransit to assist them with their needs.

In addition, pursuant to federal requirements, the District established a Mobility Advisory Council (MAC). Its function is to advise the District on system accessibility features and improvements, to facilitate communication between the District and key stakeholders and to advocate for the public transportation interests of these groups.

Regional Transit Services for People with Disabilities

This report discusses two specialized paratransit services offered by Regional Transit:

- **SacRT GO:** provides shared rides using a fleet of 120 small buses that run from 4:30 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. everyday. The District employs SacRT GO drivers; and
- **UZURV:** a third-party contractor that uses standard passenger vehicles to supplement the service provided by SacRT Go. To use this service, riders must meet ADA requirements, but do not require a wheelchair lift.

Disabled riders applying for use of either of the services must submit an application which takes up to 21 days to process and requires a letter from a doctor confirming the disability.

METHODOLOGY

In the course of its investigation, the Grand Jury interviewed the complainant, District paratransit riders and District staff. The Grand Jury also reviewed websites, Board agendas and minutes, MAC agendas and minutes, District software procurement documents, media reports, internal District correspondence, communication materials and relevant state and federal laws and regulations.

DISCUSSION

Implementing New Software for SacRT GO Created Chaos for Passengers

From 2020, when the District assumed paratransit services from Paratransit, Inc., a nonprofit organization, to the end of 2024, the District used a software program called Ecolane. Ecolane managed the District's dispatching system and enabled SacRT GO riders to book rides and track the location of a reserved vehicle on a mobile app. The District claims that although the Ecolane program was designed to allow riders to schedule rides, this process was unreliable, and riders often preferred to call the District to confirm that a reservation for a ride on SacRT GO had been completed. In late 2024, as the contract with Ecolane was expiring, the District initiated a procurement

process to replace the existing software with the goal of improving its dispatching capability, and enabling riders to use an online app to schedule rides and to track the location of the scheduled vehicle.

Riders with disabilities depend on the District to provide them with transportation. Despite the District's knowledge of this critical dependence on its services, it did not secure any input from its riders with disabilities or members of the MAC before the September 2024 release of a Request for Proposal (RFP) to procure the new software. The District explained its decision to not seek input was to avoid what they perceive as conflicts of interest and to ensure a fair competitive procurement process. Federal paratransit regulations, however, require that "[t]he (District) shall create an ongoing mechanism for the participation of individuals with disabilities in the continued development and assessment of services to persons with disabilities." (49 CFR Part 37 Section 37.137(c)).

The District's failure to solicit input was not only inconsistent with the intent of federal law, it deprived the District of a meaningful review process before the publication of the RFP. After the RFP was released, the District amended the proposal to reflect MAC-generated recommendations, including allowing the dispatch system to assign a trip to the supplemental service. The District's initial disregard for the disability community's input and the community's dependence on these critical District services, as well as for the importance of the MAC contributions, resulted in the need to amend the RFP which delayed the procurement process.

The District signed a contract with HBSS Connect Corp. (HBSS) on January 5, 2025, to implement system upgrades with the goal of improving its dispatching capability, and enabling riders to use an online app to schedule rides and to track the location of the scheduled vehicle. Under the terms of the contract, HBSS could not submit an invoice for "Initial Setup Costs" until the District approved a "Final Signoff." However, on January 13, 2025, HBSS submitted such an invoice without the final approval, and, according to correspondence from the District to HBSS, the District paid the requested amount, in violation of the contract terms. The District did not recover the payment, but instead credited it against future payments. This payment process constitutes a failure of the District to adhere to contractual obligations.

HBSS submitted another invoice on April 22, 2025 for the initial annual Software-as-a-Service fee again without a Final Signoff, also in violation of the contract terms. However, the District did not pay the second premature invoice at that time.

In April 2025, the District implemented the new HBSS software platform, known as QRyde. Although QRyde provided the dispatching capability that the District required, HBSS did not provide an adequate mobile app for reserving and tracking rides, as required by the contract. Consequently, the initial version of the QRyde app was not made available to the ridership. As a result, riders could not schedule rides without calling the District. Riders also lost the ability to track the location of vehicles, a capability that existed with the previous app.

Interviews with District staff indicate that, even though the District knew the user app did not function properly, it implemented the new platform because the contract with Ecolane was expiring. In addition, the District preferred the dispatching capability offered by HBSS. But SacRT GO riders could no longer track the location of scheduled rides themselves, so they had to call District customer service to determine when their vehicle would arrive. This overwhelmed customer service, requiring them to add additional staff. Along with inquiries on vehicle location, the riders also lodged a significant volume of late pick-up complaints.

Due to HBSS's failure to provide contractually required services, the District served HBSS with a written notice of default on June 11, 2025. However, HBSS continued to work on developing a functioning app for the riders, with testing of the app. The District finally launched the app for SacRT GO riders in May 2026, 13 months after the District launched the platform.

The District Did Not Prioritize Adequate Communication

The Grand Jury interviewed multiple riders with disabilities who complained about the inadequate warning prior to the termination of the Ecolane tracking app. For riders unaware of the change, the app suddenly ceased to function. However, the District did provide some communication to the ridership about the changes to the tracking app. It sent out an email to its ridership notifying them of the new app. In addition, it put up posters on buses for the sighted passengers. Additionally, according to District officials, callers to the dispatch phone number who listened to the entire introductory message, would have also heard the announcement that the old app would no longer be available. However, by providing an option to bypass the announcement, callers could, and did, easily bypass the notifications when they scheduled a ride.

Although the Grand Jury requested a copy of a written communications plan designed to alert riders of the impending changes to the tracking app, the District did not provide any such plan. The District also failed to provide confirmation that they used any other communication channels, such as social media, direct mail or automated calls to notify

registered riders or their caregivers. District staff told the Grand Jury the District considers the MAC the channel of communication to the disabled community. Whether or not the MAC serves in that role, the District should not offload its responsibilities to inform passengers of impending changes to its services.

Neither social media platforms nor the District web page contained any updates. In fact, the Grand Jury learned that the District did not inform senior communication officials of the changes until after the fact, and the District failed to provide instructions to the communication officials on how to address questions related to the problems caused by termination of the app.

Regional Transit Needs Proactive Consultations with Members of the Disabled Community

As discussed earlier, the District prepared the RFP for a dispatch/reservation/tracking system for SacRT GO without consulting disabled riders or the MAC. The District has also executed other changes in services affecting the disabled community without receiving their input in advance. For example, in 2025, the District installed safety barriers in standard buses to protect operators from assault. The District did not consult with the MAC or solicit input from other stakeholders, nor did it test the barriers ahead of the installation to ensure that the barrier would not impede passengers with wheelchairs.

Although the barriers generally did not affect standard-sized wheelchairs, larger, electric wheelchairs required the user to raise and lower the wheelchair's height to enter the bus. A video documented the difficulty some wheelchair users had getting around the barriers. Furthermore, the time spent navigating entry increased the length of time the bus stood idle. This increased the length of time spent in transit for all passengers. Current efforts to modify the barriers to accommodate larger wheelchairs will require the District to incur additional, avoidable costs.

Another example of the District's failure to obtain proactive consultation is seen in its handling of a contract with the secondary paratransit service that supplements SacRT GO. The current contract with UZURV, which provides this service, expires soon. The District has released an RFP for the replacement of the expiring contract. Although District staff sought input from the MAC while it developed the RFP, the MAC members had no opportunity to review the completed RFP prior to its release, despite the MAC members specifically requesting the opportunity to do so.

In February 2026, the District sent a survey, “Shape the Future of SacRT: Take Our Survey Today!” to its ridership. The MAC members found a number of problems with the survey, including the failure to include SacRT GO as a specific District service for comment and response. The survey also lacked accessibility features for the vision and hearing impaired. The District did not provide the MAC with a copy of the survey prior to its release. Several MAC members said the problems with the survey made them feel like “second class citizens.” Prior consultation with the MAC could have addressed accessibility concerns and may have helped the District avoid these problems.

Mystery Rider Program and Paratransit

The District has implemented a “mystery rider” program for measuring its performance and customer satisfaction. A third-party contractor, A Customer’s Point of View or ACPView, administers the program with the goal of obtaining impartial feedback on the passenger experience. A “mystery rider,” after receiving training from the company, takes anonymous rides on the transit system. The person then reports on specific aspects of the experience, including making the reservation, driver assistance and cordiality, on-time performance, cleanliness, ease of payment and overall accessibility. The District has contracted with this firm for 25 rides per month over the entire Regional Transit network, at a cost of approximately \$140 per ride.

The Grand Jury learned that mystery riders on SacRT Go are not required to be disabled, despite their responsibility to assess the SacRT GO and UZURV service. Using non-disabled “mystery riders” to evaluate these SacRT Go services may impede the District’s ability to truly understand and assess the user experience and quality of service for many of its riders, including those with physical, emotional, cognitive, or sensory challenges. Other transit systems, such as the Valley Transit Authority in Santa Clara County, actively recruit paratransit riders as “mystery riders” to evaluate their paratransit service, and get a more accurate assessment of a disabled rider’s actual experience.

The Regional Transit Board Receives Filtered Information

The MAC was established in 2005 to provide input to the District concerning services affecting riders with disabilities. To make fully-informed policy decisions, the Board must hear directly from the MAC. However, the Board currently does not receive information directly from the MAC. MAC publishes an agenda of its meetings ahead of time and the meetings are attended by District staff, not Board members. The meetings are documented through minutes taken at the MAC meetings. These minutes include details on what was said at the MAC meeting, and are posted on the District website.

However, it is unclear whether Board members review these minutes after they are posted.

The Board's agenda, prepared by the District staff, provides a summary of the MAC meetings, and only includes what District staff told the MAC, rather than detailed discussion or concerns raised by the MAC members. The attached Appendix provides examples of minutes from MAC meetings and the summaries prepared by District staff that appeared in the Board agenda. This process fails to provide the Board with a full understanding of the concerns of the disabled community. While the meeting summary includes a link to the actual MAC minutes, there is no evidence to show that Board members take the additional step to view them.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

F1. The Grand Jury finds the District paid HBSS prematurely, which demonstrates a failure to properly manage the contract. (R1)

R1. The Grand Jury recommends the District immediately and continuously ensure compliance with their financial controls and procurement oversight. (F1)

F2. The Grand Jury finds the District fails to obtain valuable insight from riders with disabilities on a timely basis, despite the District's assertion that "established public procurement practices allow staff to gather input from stakeholders," resulting in wasteful expenditures and damaged relationships with members of the disability community. (R2)

R2. The Grand Jury recommends the District establish a formal procedure by December 31, 2026, to incorporate input from the MAC when developing proposals to procure equipment or services that may impact riders with disabilities, and solicit input from the MAC during the RFP preparation, including the process of awarding the contract. (F2)

F3. The Grand Jury finds SacRT GO riders lost access to the Ecolane tracking app for an extended period of time, without clear and effective communication from the District, including the use of all available communication channels, resulting in a frustrating experience for ridership, significant impairment of daily activities and increased expenditures by the District. (R3)

- R3.** The Grand Jury recommends the District implement a consistent communication plan by December 31, 2026, that includes all available communication channels and proactive outreach to callers. The District should make sure dispatchers are informed and are informing callers of upcoming changes. The MAC should also be informed of service changes, but it should not be considered a responsible platform for communicating changes to the entire SacRT GO ridership. (F3)
- F4.** The Grand Jury finds “mystery riders” assessing the District’s paratransit service are not required to be riders with a disability, reducing the accuracy of reporting on the paratransit experience for riders with disabilities. (R4)
- R4.** The Grand Jury recommends the District use actual SacRT GO and UZURV riders as “mystery riders” at the beginning of the next Mystery Rider contract term. (F4)
- F5.** The Grand Jury finds the District Board receives filtered information from the MAC, leaving the Board with incomplete information about issues affecting the disabled ridership. (R5)
- R5.** The Grand Jury recommends, beginning the next Board meeting after September 30, 2026, the Board agenda packet include the actual minutes of the MAC meetings, rather than a summary of the meetings prepared by District staff. (F5)

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code sections 933(a) and (c) and 933.05, the Grand Jury requests responses from the following “governing body” as specified in Penal Code section 933(c) within 90 days, for all Findings and Recommendations:

- Sacramento Regional Transit District Board of Directors
c/o Bobbie Singh-Allen, Chair
1102 Q Street
Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95811

Mail or deliver a hard copy response to:
The Honorable Lawrence G. Brown
500 G Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Email the response to:

TapiaE@saccourt.ca.gov

Erendira Tapia-Bouthillier

Sacramento County Grand Jury Coordinator

INVITED RESPONSES

- Henry Li, District General Manager/CEO for all findings and recommendations
Sacramento Regional Transit District
1102 Q Street
Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95811
- Blanca Araujo, District Vice President, Operations for all findings and recommendations
Sacramento Regional Transit District
1102 Q Street
Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95811
- Priscilla Vargas, District ADA Compliance Officer (R2, R3, R4, R5)
Sacramento Regional Transit District
1102 Q Street
Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95811
- Charles Johnson, Chair, District Mobility Advisory Committee (R2, R3, R4, R5)
Sacramento Regional Transit District
1102 Q Street
Suite 3000
Sacramento, CA 95811
wcharles.johnson@gmail.com

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

RECUSALS

One member of the Grand Jury was recused from all consideration, discussions, reviews, investigation, interviews and research, report writing and report approval pertaining to this matter due to a familial connection with Sacramento Regional Transit.

APPENDIX

The Appendix provides two examples of the difference between the minutes of the MAC meetings produced by the MAC, and the summary of the MAC minutes provides to the Board in its agenda.



**SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT
MOBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
March 20, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

ATTACHMENT 1

The in-person/Zoom meeting was called to order at **2:30 p.m.**

Introduction of Council Members and Staff: Jeff Thom, Gene Lozano, Charles Johnson, Helen O'Connell, Frank Trujillo, Melissa Bachrach Pam Flohr, Joseph Wilson, Jacob Miller, German Ayon, Dyanne Olafson

Absent: None.

SacRT Staff: Priscilla Vargas, Kathy Sachen, Austin Greiner, Henry Li, Chris Flores, George Kirbyson, Vincent Beatty, Charity Oakley, James Drake, Gregg Fishman

Guests: Jeffery Tardaguila, Regina Brink, Margie Donovan, Doris Hernandez-Morales

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Chair Thom called for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2025, meeting. Mr. Johnson motioned. Mr. Lozano seconded. The motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Donovan requested a discussion on same-day rides for SacRT Flex. Chair Thom said this will be noted. Mr. Tardaguila asked why the MAC does not track the number of electric wheelchairs that are unable to board and requested more discussion on disembarking challenges on low-floor trains. He also asked about payment verification on light rail and on vandalism of tap-to-pay devices.

CHAIR REPORT

Mr. Li reported on the Light Rail Modernization project. SacRT has received 22 new train cars and has secured funding for 59 vehicles. 66 cars are needed to operate the entire system. Gold Line stations modifications are completed and works has begun to renovate the Blue Line. Construction on the Dos Rios station has begun, and double-track was added to Folsom to support increased frequency on the Gold Line, which launched in January. Mr. Li reported that SacRT Flex has launched and is an 18 months pilot program funded through Sacramento County Measure A. SacRT Flex has fulfilled about 94% of requested rides. Mr. Li reported that the SacRT Board ratified a new 3-year Collective Bargaining Agreement for SacRT GO last year, which has increased total compensation. SacRT GO is also transitioning to a new scheduling app, which will launch in mid-April 2025, and will integrate fare payment. Tap2Ride devices have been installed on all buses including SacRT GO vehicles and automatically integrate discount fare. Over \$43 million has been raised for the Dos Rios Station, including \$9.6 million from the US DOT, though a US DOT memo has called for

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grants to be reviewed. The City of Sacramento now issues \$100 fines to vehicles parked illegally in SacRT bus stops. SacRT has a \$2 billion capital budget for this fiscal year, has secured \$1.1 billion, and has a \$270 million operating budget. Ms. O'Connell asked how much of the \$100 fines would go to SacRT. Mr. Li said SacRT would get 25%. Mr. Johnson asked how SacRT will accommodate increased ridership from state workers. Mr. Li said SacRT is discussing this with the state Department of General Services, which may be able to subsidize rides for state workers. Mr. Lozano asked how much single-track rail SacRT has and when they will double-track the whole system. Mr. Beatty reported that less than 10% of the system is single-track.

OLD BUSINESS

A. S700 LRV Post Launch Update (Vincent Beatty, AVP, Operations)

Mr. Beatty said that all stations for S700 vehicles have detectable tiles. A software update is being worked on regarding late ramp deployment, and will be included in Amendment 11, to be approved by the Board. This will include an equipment alert to operators. Mr. Kirbyson said that he visited the Siemens facility and demonstrated the planned software and firmware: when the ADA tape switch is pressed, there will be a chime in the cabin for the operator, and a green light will flash by the door, until the train stops; then the ramp will deploy. New software also allows the train departing announcement to sound as soon as the doors close. The speaker for the ramp deployment tone is being moved lower, and the gong sound has been changed to match the legacy gong. The CPUC will likely approve two more S700 train cars next week.

Mr. Lozano asked if Siemens plans to bring on an advisory board or to implement these changes in other transit systems around the country. Mr. Kirbyson said no, but SacRT is part of a light rail users' group that shares information about light rail usage experiences. He answered a question from Ms. Bachrach and said that staff are working to get real-time stop information for those who cannot see platform signs from in the train. Mr. Lozano asked if the RFP includes tactile route destination signs at each platform. Mr. Kirbyson said it does, and that he will meet tomorrow with that group to discuss this. Mr. Lozano requested that this be discussed with the A&I Committee, and Ms. O'Connell requested it for the TC&P Committee. Mr. Tardaguila asked if the priority seating tape switch and the jam button had priority over the external button. Mr. Kirbyson said yes, there are three buttons that can be pressed from inside the train to deploy the ramp.

B. SacRT Accessible Format Update (Priscilla Vargas, ADA Compliance Officer)

Ms. Vargas said she will discuss an accessible format policy draft proposal at the next TC&P Committee meeting. She has researched accessible format policies used by other agencies, which cover formats such as large print, braille, CD, and auxiliary aids as requested, including ASL interpreting. Ms. Vargas has shared a draft document with the SacRT legal department. This will be presented either at the next TC&P meeting or at the next MAC meeting.

Ms. Olafson requested changing "hearing impaired" to "deaf and hard of hearing." Mr. Lozano asked if this policy would include the development of videos with audio description, captioning, and ASL. Ms. Vargas said yes. Ms. Donovan asked about tactile maps for train stations. Ms. Vargas will include it.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Scheduling, Dispatching, & Eligibility Software Update (Charity Oakley, Director, Bus Operations)

Ms. Oakley said SacRT will transition to the QRyde scheduling software on April 19, 2025. During the transition period, the SacRT GO app will be unavailable on April 17, and the last day to book on the app will be April 16. There may be a gap in the availability of a mobile app, but reservations will continue

with the SacRT GO reservations department. Chair Thom asked if end users were involved in testing the app. Ms. Oakley said staff were reaching out to the MAC for testing. Ms. Vargas said that QRyde has worked with end users across the country, but not yet on the SacRT GO app. Ms. O'Connell said it was important to test this app thoroughly to avoid the problems experienced with Ecolane and to inform users in advance about what features the app will have. Mr. Johnson said that on the Ecolane app, voice activation could not be used and asked about availability on iPhone and Android. Ms. Oakley said the app is available on iPhone and Android and voice activation should work. Ms. Bachrach said voice activation also does not work on the main SacRT app. Ms. Oakley will follow up. Ms. Vargas said that staff are hoping to also offer booking online. Ms. Donovan asked if QRyde had experience developing apps for accessibility other than for blind and low-vision people. Ms. Vargas said yes.

B. Access & Infrastructure Committee Update (Gene Lozano, A&I Chair)

This item was tabled.

OTHER BUSINESS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Vargas said the Website Accessibility Project is in process and the website accessibility changes may be available in April. Mr. Tardaguila shared that the Pannell Meadowview Community Center is hosting the Sweet Potato Festival and that the Capitol Air Show will take place at Mather.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm.



STAFF REPORT

DATE: April 28, 2025
TO: Sacramento Regional Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Blanca Araujo, VP, Operations
SUBJ: MOBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY –
MARCH 20, 2025

RECOMMENDATION

No Recommendation - For Information Only.

SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the Mobility Advisory Council Meeting (MAC) held on March 20, 2025. Full Meeting Minutes and previous MAC Meeting Minutes can be found at www.sacrt.com/sacramento-regional-transit-mobility-advisory-council/

Item 1. Call to Order

Item 2. Introduction of Council Members and Staff

Item 3. Approval of Minutes

Item 4. Public Comment

- Ms. Donovan requested a discussion on same-day rides for SacRT Flex.
- Mr. Tardaguila asked about payment verification on light rail and vandalism of tap-to-pay devices.

Item 5. Chair Report

GM Update: Henry Li, General Manager, provided an update on the Light Rail Modernization project, Dos Rios station construction, and SacRT Flex. Mr. Li also reported on the new SacRT GO Collective Bargaining Agreement, fares changes, including Tap2Ride, federal funding, funding for new fines by the City of Sacramento, and on SacRT's budget.

Item 6. Old Business

A. S700 Light Rail Vehicle Post Launch Update: Vincent Beatty, AVP Operations, said that all stations for S700 vehicles have detectable tiles. A software update will address late ramp deployment and will include an equipment alert to operators. Mr. Kirbyson said that staff are working to get real-time stop information for those who cannot see platform signs when on the train.

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B. Accessible Format Policy Update: Ms. Vargas said she will present an accessible format policy draft proposal at the next TC&P Committee meeting.

Item 7. New Business

A. Scheduling, Dispatching, & Eligibility Software Update: Charity Oakley, Acting, Director Bus Operations, said SacRT will transition to HBSS/QRyde scheduling software on April 19, 2025. During the transition, the SacRT GO app will be unavailable beginning on April 17, and the last day to book on the app will be April 16. Chair Thom asked if end users were involved in testing the app. Ms. Oakley said staff will be reaching out to the MAC for testing feedback.

B. Access & Infrastructure Committee Update: This item was tabled.

Item 8. Other Business

Item 9. Announcements/Council Members Request for Information

Item 10. Adjournment

The next MAC meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2025, from 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. and will be held at the Q Street Auditorium.

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SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT
MOBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
May 15, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

ATTACHMENT 1

The in-person/Zoom meeting was called to order at **2:30 p.m.**

Introduction of Council Members and Staff: Jeff Thom, Gene Lozano, Charles Johnson, Helen O'Connell, Frank Trujillo, Melissa Bachrach Pam Flohr, Joseph Wilson, German Ayon, Dyanne Olafson, Doris Hernandez-Morales

Absent: Jacob Miller.

SacRT Staff: Priscilla Vargas, Blanca Araujo, Alberta DeAnda, Austin Greiner, Chris Flores, George Kirbyson, Vincent Beatty, Charity Oakley, James Drake, Holly Martinez, Jamie Poole-Canavari

Guests: Vinod Pabba, Federico Raimondo, Jaci Tatro, Dan Alison, Jeffery Tardaguila, Regina Brink, Margie Donovan, Roger Oberholzer, Stephanie Jones, CIT interpreters

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION: Chair Thom called for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2025, meeting. Ms. O'Connell motioned. Mr. Lozano seconded. The motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Oberholzer asked about who oversees operations and can be approached now that Ms. Sachen is gone? Ms. Donovan acknowledged staff for delivery of the agenda packet in Braille. Mr. Tardaguila said there was an issue notifying riders about bus schedule changes and shared that next Tuesday Sacramento City Hall will deal with budget matters. Ms. Tatro shared a negative experience with a SacRT GO operator and treatment of her service dog. Ms. Araujo said Ms. Poole-Canavari will investigate this.

CHAIR REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

A. S700 LRV Post Launch Update (Vincent Beatty, AVP, Operations)

Mr. Kirbyson, Light Rail Maintenance Director, reported that Amendment 10 with Siemens was recently approved by the Board, and pertains to updates on sounds including the gong. Next month Amendment 11 will go before the Board regarding the tape switch function and door sequencing. There is an upgraded monitor for vehicle operators to see from side view cameras, and for announcements inside the train, a change will be made to allow a momentary press-to-talk switch to avoid interference with automatic announcements. There are 24 vehicles on site and two more will be added in the next two weeks. The Folsom 15 service has been adjusted to improve timing with the signaling system and crossing arm in the passing track area at Glen Crossing.

Mr. Lozano requested an update on the visual and auditory signage of all vehicles. Mr. Kirbyson said that the marketing team has worked to document decal placement so it can be standardized.

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Engineering staff have the files for audio announcements, and he can work with them to put this in a format that can be shared with MAC members. Mr. Lozano said a presentation may be given to the MAC meeting where visual and auditory announcements can be demonstrated. Mr. Kirbyson said the file format may make this difficult, but staff have worked with marketing to develop videos that could provide a review of the announcements. He will follow up with marketing and Ms. Vargas. Ms. O'Connell said the video should include descriptive audio.

a. Website Accessibility Post Launch Update (Federico Raimondo, Exemplifi)

Mr. Pabba, Founder and CEO with Exemplifi, provided a website accessibility post launch update. Exemplifi are now working with SacRT to stabilize the site and obtain feedback. Mr. Lozano asked if Exemplifi addressed getting more direct links to items, and if the fixed route schedule feature gave more than one option, and what options there are for navigation other than maps. Mr. Pabba said that the most used pages have been brought to the front, the new trip planner does give multiple routes as requested, and there is some screen reader description of maps but that he will look further into full map narration. Ms. Vargas also said this will be investigated through review of other transit agencies.

Mr. Oberholzer said riders were not notified that they would get phone calls rather than texts when SacRT GO buses arrive, and asked who riders should talk to about similar issues. Chair Thom said this issue would be addressed in a later item. Mr. Tardaguila and Mr. Alison said the mobile app did not show all transit alert notifications visible on the website. Mr. Pabba said the rider app is managed separately from the website. Ms. Vargas suggested contacting Customer Service to file a complaint. Ms. Martinez clarified that the issue was with the website viewed on a mobile phone, not the SacRT app.

c. SacRT GO Scheduling and Dispatching Post Launch Update (Charity Oakley, Director, Bus Operations)

Ms. Araujo said SacRT recently transitioned to QRyde for scheduling dispatching and eligibility software. SacRT GO ridership has grown to 120% of pre-pandemic levels, leading to the need to improve GO services. QRyde was selected to address gaps in scheduling flexibility, trip optimization, and app functionality. After the full launch of this software, there were challenges such as on-time performance drops, longer call wait times, and data syncing. SacRT addressed this by enlisting additional staff and operators. On-time performance has improved from 71% to 83%, 60-minute delays dropped by 75%, the no-show rate dropped from 8% to 4%, and call wait time in peak hours now averages under 15 minutes, but staff are continuing to work to improve by meeting frequently with QRyde and providing more training to dispatchers and operators. The new rider app is preparing to be launched, and once implemented, it is expected to reduce phone calls. There should be a launch date for the new app next week. Ms. Araujo also said that for riders to escalate issues that cannot be resolved by operators or dispatchers, they should contact Customer Service, which helps to investigate complaints. Ms. DeAnda introduced herself, said that she would be assisting with dispatch. Ms. Araujo said that staff are working to address concerns about shared rides and drop-off orders. Staff will also do more to inform riders that they can specify text or call ride notifications when booking rides.

Chair Thom asked when SacRT would resolve issues including duplicate rides and UZURV not letting drivers start some rides or collect coupons. Ms. Oakley said staff met with UZURV and QRyde to resolve this, and it should be fixed by Monday May 19. Mr. Johnson asked the difference between reservationists, dispatchers, and operators. Ms. Araujo clarified the differences. Mr. Trujillo said that some UZURV drivers have not been providing door to door service or accepting ZipPass. Ms. Araujo said staff will continue to work with UZURV to enforce rules for drivers. Mr. Trujillo also said he heard UZURV may not be in service next year. Ms. Araujo said this is the final year of the contract for UZURV which ends February 2026. An RFP will be released in the coming months. Mr. Lozano also said the MAC should get to comment on the draft RFP and suggested that the RFP includes accessible vehicles for wheelchairs and walkers. Ms. Araujo said that accessible vehicles will be part of the RFP. Ms. Vargas also said the MAC will be included.

Ms. Jones asked if the RFP would be available for the public and suggested emailing it to all MAC guests. Ms. Araujo will follow up. Mr. Lozano said the RFP should be public.

d. SacRT Accessible Format Update (Priscilla Vargas, ADA Compliance Officer)

Ms. Vargas shared the draft for "Notice Under the ADA: Effective Communication" which will be finalized and sent to the Board for approval. Some MAC members have already provided feedback. Chair Thom suggested Ms. Vargas present a final policy at the next MAC meeting Mr. Johnson agreed. Ms. Vargas said she also presented this item to the TC&P Committee in early May.

NEW BUSINESS

2025-2026 Grand Jury Investigative Report Is Sacramento Regional Transit Ignoring Riders with Disabilities?

A. Comprehensive Operational Analysis Project Overview (James Drake, Senior Manager, Planning)

Mr. Drake reported on the Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) project, which updates short and long-range plans. The short-range transit plan (SRTP) update has a horizon of 0 to 5 years and focuses on the first 1 or 2 years. A consulting team is helping to develop this plan update this year. A draft SRTP will be ready for review in August, and the long-range transit plan (LRTP) will follow. Staff will hold a public webinar on this project in June 2025. Staff are seeking feedback and can conduct presentations on the COA to groups as requested. Marketing will hold a public meeting on this project on May 28.

Ms. Bachrach asked if this project would address signage at stations, given visibility issues. Mr. Drake said that would be addressed by Engineering. Ms. Vargas said this was addressed at the A&I Committee meeting. Chair Thom asked if fare increases or service cuts are on the table. Mr. Drake said there is an interest in streamlining or consolidating fares in Elk Grove, and staff are also giving feedback on other areas where efficiency could be improved. Ms. O'Connell mentioned the proposed Bus Rapid Transit project in Elk Grove and was concerned about SacRT expanding services while resources are already limited in providing existing services. Mr. Tardaguila asked about the West Sacramento project and how comprehensive this study would be. Mr. Drake said the City of Sacramento and other local sources may offer funds and that consultants are considering the overall network.

B. Access & Infrastructure (A&I) Committee Update (Gene Lozano, A&I Chair)

Mr. Lozano reported on the A&I Committee Meeting of April 15, 2025, in which Mr. Wilson was elected as Vice Chair of the A&I Committee. Mr. Norman discussed the design and location of the Dos Rios Station. The approach to the station will be single track, the station itself will be double track. The fence and barriers were described. The station will be completed by 2026. Phase three was planned to be completed in May 2025 allowing all Blue Line platforms to accommodate two-car trains. The next phase will extend Blue Line platforms to accommodate three-car trains by 2027. All stations on the Gold Line will accommodate three-car trains by 2029. The A&I Committee also asked about signage. Phase three is supposed to cover installation of new signage and card readers, but station sign visibility for low-floor cars will be addressed separately. The A&I Committee also asked about installing tactile route destination signs on low-floor platforms, and Mr. Norman said he would investigate.

OTHER BUSINESS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. O'Connell requested a hard copy of the two-page summary of the last Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

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STAFF REPORT

DATE: June 9, 2025
TO: Sacramento Regional Transit Board of Directors
FROM: Blanca Araujo, VP, Operations
SUBJ: MOBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY – MAY 15, 2025

RECOMMENDATION

No Recommendation - For Information Only.

SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the Mobility Advisory Council Meeting (MAC) held on May 15, 2025. Full Meeting Minutes and previous MAC Meeting Minutes can be found at www.sacrt.com/sacramento-regional-transit-mobility-advisory-council/

Item 1. Call to Order

Item 2. Introduction of Council Members and Staff

Item 3. Approval of Minutes

Item 4. Public Comment

- Mr. Oberholzer
- Ms. Donovan
- Mr. Tardaguila
- Ms. Tatro

Item 5. Chair Report

Item 6. Old Business

- A.** S700 Light Rail Vehicle Post Launch Update: George Kirbyson, Director Rail Maintenance reported that Amendment 10 with Siemens was approved by the Board, which pertains to updates on sound including the gong. Next month, Amendment 11 will go before the Board for tape switch function and door sequencing approval.
- B.** Website Accessibility Post Launch Update: Vinod Pabba, Founder and CEO of Exemplifi and SacRT's contractor for application development and website support services reported that the SacRT website launched a few weeks ago and was a great success. Exemplifi is continuing to work with SacRT staff to stabilize the site and obtain feedback.

- C. SacRT GO Scheduling and Dispatching Post Launch Update: Blanca Araujo, VP Operations discussed the recent launch of QRyde for scheduling, dispatching and eligibility software to support the SacRT GO. ADA paratransit ridership has grown to 120% of pre-pandemic levels, leading to need to improve. QRyde was selected to address gaps in scheduling flexibility, trip optimization, and app functionality.
- D. Accessible Format Draft Policy Update: Priscilla Vargas, ADA Compliance Officer shared the "Notice Under the ADA: Effective Communication" draft which will be finalized and sent to the Board for approval. Some MAC members have provided feedback. Chair Thom suggested presenting a final version at the next MAC meeting.

Item 7. New Business

- A. Comprehensive Operational Analysis Project Overview: James Drake, Planning, Senior Planner reported on the Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA) project, which updates short and long-range plans.
- B. Access & Infrastructure (A&I) Committee, Gené Lozano, Chair MAC A&I Committee provided the April 15, 2025, meeting update. Mr. Wilson was elected as Vice Chair of the A&I Committee. Craig Norman, Director Engineering discussed the design and location of the Dos Rios Station. The approach to the station will be single track, the station itself will be double track. The fence and barriers were described. The station will be completed by 2026.

Item 8. Other Business

Item 9. Announcements/Council Members Request for Information

- Ms. O'Connell requested a hard copy of the two-page summary of the last Board meeting.

Item 10. Adjournment

The next MAC meeting is scheduled for June 19, 2025, from 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. and will be held at the Q Street Auditorium.