

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

August 2021

New Text Alerts for Routes Serving Schools

Most of our routes to middle and high schools offer a single trip in the morning and a single trip in the afternoon. As a result, when one of the buses on those routes is running late due to traffic, road construction or heavy loads, parents and students wonder if the bus has already passed or is just running late. Starting this weekend, we will be offering parents and students the opportunity to receive text alerts when the bus they are waiting for is running more than five minutes late. Sign up can be for a single route or multiple routes. Details are available on our website at:

<https://www.wheelsbus.com/school-routes/>



MTC Approves \$5 Million in Federal COVID Emergency Relief to LAVTA

On July 28, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) programmed over \$5 million to LAVTA in federal emergency relief funding authorized by Congress in March under the American Rescue Plan Act. This is the third and likely final round of federal stimulus relief aimed at assisting public transit agencies facing revenue shortfalls due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds were programmed to the region's transit operators principally on the basis of actual revenue losses since the start of the pandemic and funding received to date in the previous two rounds of federal stimulus funding. LAVTA will use the funding to continue to maintain existing and restore previously reduced service as ridership returns throughout FY22.

SAV Phase 2 Deployment Project Slated to Receive \$2.7 million in Regional Funding

This month LAVTA staff learned that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) intends to allocate \$150,000 in Regional Measure 2 Bridge Toll funds for design-engineering work to advance the Phase 2 Deployment of the Shared Autonomous Vehicle Project, putting it in line to receive a subsequent allocation of over \$2.5 million toward the construction phase, including the



acquisition of three next-generation SAVs similar to the type shown, which are capable of traveling up to 25 mph. The SAV Phase 2 Deployment will extend the current SAV route to the Ross Headquarters Business Park and enable timed transfers to BART trains every 15 minutes from 7am to 7pm. The Alameda County Transportation Commission is scheduled to formalize their sponsorship of the project at their September 13 Programs and Projects Committee meeting in advance of their September 23 Commission meeting. MTC will then consider the allocation request in October.

Zero-Emission Bus Study

The Zero-Emission Bus (ZEB) Transition Master Plan is complete. Staff will provide an update of the plan and seek input and direction on the ZEB Rollout Plan in an informational agenda item at the September board meeting.

Paratransit Services Update

The pilot program with Central Contra Costa Transit Authority (CCCTA) was launched on April 1. The Joint Ad-Hoc Committee has been formed to review and monitor the program goals and objectives and is scheduled to meet in September.

In terms of service performance, on-time performance and productivity have improved from the previous contractor. Additionally, the new My Transit Manager app, which allows customers to monitor their trip and see real-time location of their vehicle, has been well-received.

U.S. Senate Passes Historic Infrastructure Bill Including Reauthorization of Federal Transit Programs

Following the House of Representatives' passage of the INVEST in America Act in July, on August 10, the Senate passed their bipartisan version of a \$1 trillion investment in the nation's infrastructure known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs (IIJ) Act, which includes a comprehensive five-year surface-transportation reauthorization package to replace the FAST Act, which expires September 30. Notably within the transportation reauthorization sections are increases of 35-37% in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula and competitive grant funds that LAVTA uses for capital needs and maintaining a state of good repair. The House is expected to take up the reconciliation process with the Senate bill sometime after they return from recess August 23.

American Public Transit Association (APTA) Conference

Each year, the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) holds the TRANSform Conference. This is the premier APTA Conference of the year. Once every three years, the conference also includes an EXPO, where thousands of vendors and suppliers of transit related goods and services display their products and answer questions for attendees in a convention center setting. Attendance during EXPO years is typically around 15,000, including transit agency staff, Board members and vendors.

The TRANSform Conference is also where APTA presents its annual awards. Last year's conference was held virtually due to COVID. As a result, we received our Transit Agency of the Year Award in a "Zoom ceremony". This year, the conference/expo is an in-person event and will be held in Orlando at the Orange County Convention Center from November 7-10. We have been told by APTA that this year's awards ceremony will honor winners from this year as well as last year, which means we will formally receive our Agency of the Year Award at that ceremony. In addition, our Marketing staff was named as a winner of a Grand Prize AdWheel Award, which will be presented at the same event.

You can learn more about the conference on APTA's website at:

<https://www.aptaexpo.com/apta2021/public/enter.aspx>

Please let staff know as soon as possible if you have a desire to attend the conference. The FY 2021-22 LAVTA Budget includes funding for a couple Board members to attend.