

County Connection Advisory Committee Report to Board, October 2022

Our purpose is to bring feedback to the County Connection Board reflecting the voices of the community, riders, and stakeholders. This will help the Board more fully understand factors impacting the system's ridership and help inform its decisions.

Committee Discussion Points from Its September 2022 Meeting

- Annual Operational Calendar: We reviewed the operational calendar for the agency. This helped us understand the various work and planning cycles pursued during the agency's year. As appropriate, we ask to be included in the collaborative processes of both the staff and the Board. Including us early-on in those conversations allows us to bring the public's voice at each decision-gate to help inform the agency.
- New Travel Training Program: Through multiple conversations with staff, we have participated in the development of the Scope of Work documentation (SOW) for the new travel training program. Our feedback has augmented the original program vision and program design aspects. The program's potential is exciting, and we look forward to its successful launch. Eventually, we dream that it will receive additional funding so it may expand beyond serving seniors in only certain areas of the county. By including other stakeholder groups and county districts, the program can foster the adoption of transit by new users who would benefit the most from taking fixed route transit. Some of our insights for the SOW included:
 - a. How best to benchmark and monitor program impact
 - b. Ideas for tailoring the training so it meets the potential participants' varying skill levels, how to safely board/unboard, multi-modal aspects, technology, understanding of the system, safety, and transit/trip planning literacy. Doing so can help optimize an individual's existing skills and boost confidence in using transit, regardless of their start point. One idea was to recruit volunteer peer counselors to help with adoption by different types of stakeholders.
 - c. Advisory committee members would like to join sessions.
 - d. Ideas for training topics such as route planning techniques, and website utilization. Another idea was to provide trip planning assistance.
 - e. Clarifying instructional/training design and techniques that would be used
 - f. We held a common expectation that the training would address door-to-door scenarios typically faced by various stakeholders, e.g., the penultimate trip that requires transfers and multi-modal trips
- Agency Marketing: We are encouraged to hear about the appointment of a dedicated marketing professional to the agency's staff.
 - In a future meeting, we will learn about marketing tactics, the effectiveness of the current marketing mix, plan, strategy, and budgets. With that we can provide feedback and recommendations from our stakeholder perspectives.
 - We look forward to providing ideas and insights for approaches to outreach and marketing for both current and non-riders.
- Community Feedback: Through one-on-one conversations with riders and non-riders within our respective communities, we are continuing to receive feedback and develop our understanding of public sentiment about the factors, perceptions, and barriers that influence ridership in today's environment.

Requests of the Board

- Set a date for a joint meeting: At a recent board meeting, Director Worth suggested a joint meeting. We were encouraged by this idea and agree it would be beneficial. We will be asking staff to help us facilitate this for later this year.
- District Representation: While our group is becoming increasingly effective and gaining momentum, there are still empty seats at the table. Filling them continues to be important so our perspectives are balanced, especially for those outlying areas not nearby a BART station. Since these areas are most impacted by future

development in the county, voices from these districts will be important to future planning and strategic discussions.

The remaining four seats are:

- Clayton
- Lafayette
- Martinez
- San Ramon

When recruiting members, consider constituents who are local riders and who bring diverse perspectives such as students of all ages, commuters, intra-county travelers, veterans, disabled, seniors, parents, people whose incomes are below poverty thresholds, and other underrepresented or marginalized groups.

Our Next Meeting is Scheduled for November 8, 2022

Respectfully submitted,
Marjorie McWee, Chair

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Committee Discussion Points from Its November, 2022 Meeting

- Agency Marketing and Promotional Strategy: Ryan Jones and Melody Reeb provided a macro-level introduction to the agency's general marketing and promotional strategies. At our January 2023 meeting, our agenda will include a dialog about the specifics planned for 2023 (e.g., marketing tactics, the effectiveness of the current marketing mix, plan, strategy, and budgets). The committee will provide feedback from our respective stakeholder perspectives on how best to reach both riders and non-riders through a range of marketing, promotion, and communication tactics.
- Short Range Transit Plan- Public Comment Phase: The committee provided feedback to Pranjai Dixit on approaches to reaching non-riders during the survey and public comment phases of the planning process. The committee raised issues for participation by those who are not connected through social media, website visits, online surveys, and/or who may not be riding on buses. People not reached in this way are left out of the data gathering process. The committee provided ideas for gathering feedback in-person.
- Several strategic ideas were identified for corollary projects for the "One-seat-ride" concept, including taking the idea more broadly throughout the Bay Area (i.e., for paratransit), or even for other types of trips to popular destinations which require numerous transfers between fixed-route, multi-modal, or commuter trips.
- Elections: The committee's officers for 2023 were elected at this meeting. For the coming year, Marjorie McWee (county member at large) was elected to a second term as committee chair. She will be joined by Ian McLaughlin of the Walnut Creek District. The advisory committee is excited to be gaining momentum in its advisory role and collaboration with staff. It will continue to organizationally develop itself in 2023. This will include participating and engaging with the Board and its efforts.

Requests of the Board

- Set a date for a joint meeting: At a recent board meeting, Director Worth suggested a joint meeting. We were encouraged by this idea and agree it would be beneficial. Now that election season has passed, we look forward to such a meeting in 2023.
- Connect with your district's advisory committee member: The committee would like to collaborate more with the Board and the districts they represent. Please connect with your respective members to explore possible ways to do so.
- District Representation: While our group is gaining momentum, our remaining empty seats at the table means we don't have all the voices we require. We respectfully request continued recruitment in the following districts:
 - Clayton
 - Lafayette
 - Martinez
 - San Ramon

When recruiting members, consider constituents who are local riders and who bring diverse perspectives such as students of all ages, commuters, intra-county travelers, veterans, disabled, seniors, parents, people whose incomes are below poverty thresholds, and other underrepresented or marginalized groups.

Our Next Meeting is Scheduled for January 10, 2023

Respectfully submitted,
Marjorie McWee, Chair