

**Summary Minutes
Operations & Scheduling Committee
Wednesday, December 6, 8:00 a.m.**

Directors: Robert Storer, Jim Diaz, Dave Hudson

Staff: Bill Churchill, Melody Reeb, John Sanderson, Pranjal Dixit, Rosa Noya, Laura Corona

Public: None

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Director Storer.

1. Approval of Agenda

The Committee approved the agenda.

2. Public Communication

None.

3. Approval of Minutes of November 1, 2023

The Committee approved the minutes.

4. I-680 Express Bus & Hydrogen Fueling Station Update

Ms. Reeb updated the Committee on the \$36 million grant awarded to CCTA for a zero-emission express bus service along I-680, connecting Martinez Amtrak and Dublin/Pleasanton BART. While the pandemic's impact on ridership and operator shortage necessitates adjustments, she assured the Committee that progress is underway. \$600,000 is allocated to retrofit existing buses for immediate deployment, though funding and staffing constraints may require restructuring existing I-680 routes for a modified service.

The grant also included \$10 million for a Shared Mobility Hub, now shifting to Bishop Ranch 3 due to redevelopment plans near the Iron Horse Trail. Additionally, \$13 million is dedicated to hydrogen fueling stations and infrastructure, requiring an 11.47% local match and environmental clearance. County Connection plans to use existing facilities and funds for this match. Ms. Reeb emphasized that while the grant offers significant strides towards improved I-680 transit, adapting to the current landscape will require adjustments.

5. Choice in Aging MOU Extension

Mr. Sanderson delivered a report to the Committee, outlining the success of the Choice in Aging (CiA) pilot project. He emphasized its impact on vulnerable clients, highlighting the high on-time performance (above 90%) and significant reduction in no-shows due to late rides. This success, he noted, was particularly valuable amidst the ongoing driver shortage affecting traditional paratransit services.

While slower-than-expected ridership growth resulted in lower expenses than initially budgeted for FY 23, Mr. Sanderson presented a revised cost projection of \$250,000 through September 2024, with an average trip cost of \$36.95. Given the project's positive impact on both customer service and finances, he strongly recommended extending the Memorandum of Understanding with CiA and their contract with SilverRide. The Committee approved moving the extension request forward to the Board for consideration.

6. Spring Bid Update

Mr. Dixit reported encouraging ridership trends at County Connection. Weekend and school service surpass pre-pandemic levels, driven by fare promotions and program expansions. Weekday local routes reach 78% of pre-COVID ridership, while express routes lag at 54% due to the operator shortage.

He informed that with the Fall Bid, staff implemented route adjustments, based on data and operator feedback, boosting overall on-time performance by 2.3%. Further adjustments were made in the Winter Bid to address weekend dips caused by construction and traffic. The upcoming Spring Bid (starting January 14th) aligns with regional schedule changes and features optimizations guided by ridership data, passenger and operator input, and resource efficiency. Additionally, this extended bid aligns with the proposed FY 2024 budget and has no additional financial implications.

7. Monthly Ridership Reports

Despite October 2022's free fare promotion, Mr. Dixit reported a remarkable 6% year-over-year ridership increase in October 2023, demonstrating sustained ridership growth. Productivity also climbed towards pre-pandemic levels. However, he acknowledged the ongoing operator shortage remains a hurdle to full service restoration. Notably, County Connection carried 20,000 passengers across BART bridges in October, showcasing its role in regional connectivity.

Ms. Noya shared that ridership rebounded from September's dip, reaching 80% of pre-pandemic levels in October. She highlighted exceeding performance standards in both productivity and on-time performance, with cost reductions due to lower fuel costs. Furthermore, Ms. Noya reported over 150 commendations received, with timeliness being the primary focus of remaining complaints.

8. Committee Comments

None

9. Future Agenda Items

None

10. Next Scheduled Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for January 3 at 8:00 a.m. at Supervisor Andersen Office located at 309 Diablo Rd, Danville, CA

11. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 a.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by: Pranjali Dixit, Manager of Planning