



San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA)

Long-Range Multimodal Transportation Plan

Stakeholder Working Group Meeting 3

Thursday, March 21, 2023, 10:30 – 12:00 p.m.

**Agenda**

1. Introductions
2. Plan Progress
3. Priority Areas Discussion – Issues and Opportunities
  - a. Core Elements
  - b. Key Issues
4. Scenario Planning Update
5. Next Steps

**Attendees**

- Fredy Bonilla, City of Victorville
- Dennis Brooks, Amma Transit Planning
- Timothy Byrne, SBCTA
- Victor Cuate, Omnitrans
- JD Douglas, HDR
- Charles Duggan, City of Redlands City Manager
- Alejandro Gutierrez, Arts Connection Network
- Elizabeth Ha, HDR
- Rosemary Hoerning, City of Montclair
- Ginger Koblasz, SBCTA
- Marie Lewis Adams, HDR
- Vilma Lopez, El Sol Neighborhood Education Center
- Heather Menninger, Amma Transit Planning
- Brent Merideth, Community Member
- Jason Pack, Fehr and Peers
- Kathy Raasch, Interim Development Services Director City of Needles
- Mark Roberts, Caltrans District 8
- Steven Smith, SBCTA
- Nancy Strickert, SBCTA
- Nancy Verduzco, Arellano Associates
- Rena Vergara, Caltrans District 8



## Priority Areas Discussion – Issues and Opportunities

- **Transit**

- Nancy Strickert: I agree with the issues and opportunities presented for transit, especially challenges relating to growing ridership.
- Victor Cuate: I particularly like how accessibility to transit and safety is included. Safety and accessibility are the two biggest challenges for Omnitrans when planning for new services.
  - Marie Lewis Adams: Are there any particular safety concerns?
  - Victor Cuate: Omnitrans just completed some public outreach. There are safety concerns at Metrolink Transit centers. People would like to see on-board security, but funding is an issue to provide this service. Riders have also mentioned Metro’s ambassador program as an opportunity to increase security. Omnitrans is conducting a survey in the summer to assess riders’ perceptions and experiences of safety at bus stops. Omnitrans can share the results of the survey once completed.
  - Heather Menninger: Perception of safety is very important. Looking forward to reviewing the survey results from Omnitrans.
- Rena Vergara: In addition to safety, there are other key factors that encourage the mode shift to public transportation, such as first and last mile connections, the context of the surrounding land use (i.e. density, transit-oriented development), and location of routes and stops near employment and housing. If people have to use a car for a portion of their trip to access transit, they are likely to travel by car for the rest of the trip.
- Rena Vergara: We have to also consider the rider’s experience. An integrated fare system is very important. If riders are using Metrolink, local buses, BRT, having the convenience of using one application for fare payment will make a big difference to the rider experience.
  - Heather Menninger: Fare payment also addresses accessibility to the service. Access goes beyond physical accessibility.
- Mark Roberts: Is SBCTA still looking to add BRTs beyond SBx and the West Valley Connector?
  - Steve Smith: SBCTA and Omnitrans have had some informal discussions on what the next most logical investment might be.
- Brent Meredith: Signal priority should be considered for some bus routes, not just BRT. Signal priority can encourage ridership since it potentially decreases the number of times a bus needs to stop.

- **Active Transportation**

- Brent Meredith: There needs to be a more consistent funding source for active transportation in the County.

- **Highways**

- Rena Vergara: It’s a major challenge to plan for moving people and goods during peak periods. As we develop a reliable and frequent public transportation network, we need to encourage mode shift to public transportation to accommodate highway

capacity for goods movement. Since there are limited opportunities to add capacity on highways, we have to be innovative in how to accommodate for the growth in demand for goods movement. We need to focus on mode shift and push other travel options for those commuting.

- Alejandro Gutierrez: To encourage mode shift, there should be programs to bring awareness to different opportunities. Art and culture can also make active transportation and transit more attractive. It creates a sense of place, which also plays into the perception of safety for transit.
  - Rena Vergara: This is a good point and applies to active transportation and public transportation. We need to think about how we can make these infrastructures more attractive to create a mode shift.
- Rosemary Hoerning: Is there a way to schedule truck trips off the peak?
  - Marie Lewis Adams: Freight providers want to be as efficient as possible, so they will try to drive off peak. But they have to coordinate with distribution centers and other elements. Coordinated freight planning and understanding ways to facilitate more off-peak freight travel would help with managing capacity demands.

- **Goods Movement**

- Steve Smith: There are many funding opportunities, including the EPA Carbon Pollution Reduction grant, to implement zero-emissions technology for goods movement. SBCTA has been involved in applying for zero-emissions funding and it is a priority. We would love to see more hydrogen fueling, but it takes a while to get that critical mass going. Cost for hydrogen is a challenge.
- Rena Vergara: Community concerns include air quality and noise impacts from trucks. Local jurisdictions can encourage improvements to reduce/buffer noise; landscaping/vegetation can provide carbon sequestration, improve attractiveness, pedestrian scaled design, and noise suppression.
  - Mark Roberts: Agree on the importance of freight noise impacts on sensitive receptor land uses, such as residential areas.
- Rosemary Hoerning: What about the issue of Southern California Edison (SCE) not keeping up with the electric infrastructure as compared to the implementation mandates?
  - Marie Lewis Adams: Yes, there is an infrastructure issue. We will address the deployment of zero-emissions vehicles in the key issues section.
  - Steve Smith: This is an issue. The scale of providing electricity, especially for goods movement is enormous. SCE is working as fast as they can to keep up with demand, but there are limitations that effect their effort. Read somewhere that the Port of Long Beach requires as much power as an NFL stadium.

- **Safety**

- Mark Roberts: A disproportionate share of serious injuries and fatalities involve bicyclists and pedestrians.



- **Land Use**

- Mark Roberts: Inland Empire warehouses can create major sprawl issues, and large gaps (dead areas) in the urban fabric. This impacts walkability and bike-ability of a community.
- Alejandro Gutierrez: For communities that are burdened by warehouses, there could be potential to community hubs or community centers that provides access to resources, tools, and green space. This can also build climate resiliency; it can be a space for community members to gather during hot summers to potentially lower the usage of electricity in a household. Art and culture should be tied to the transportation system, it can act as a destination or a community focal point for travelers.
- Mark Roberts: The impacts on quality of life caused by low density and long commutes are a major issue facing the County.

- **Equity**

- Alejandro Gutierrez: San Bernardino, Colton, and Fontana face air quality, noise, and health impacts related to freight, especially in the urban areas. Lack of access to green spaces and active transportation connections to green space is also an equity issue. There are a lot of natural spaces in Fontana; however, there are limited opportunities for people to walk or bike to use these spaces.
- Steve Smith: Funding strategies are in the pipeline to address access to green spaces. SBCTA just hired a consultant to assist with this. There is a meeting April 16 to present on funding equity and inclusivity initiatives. This is one of SBCTA's priority areas.
- Victor Cuate: When Omnitrans introduces a microtransit program to a community, they host workshops at the senior center to teach older adults how to book trips using their phones or at reservation centers. There is an opportunity to host education programs to teach the public how to book and plan trips and where to find travel information.

## **Scenario Planning Update**

- Steve Smith: Overall, we were hoping to see more dramatic changes from the scenarios. But this shows us how difficult it is to move the needle on reducing VMT. There is no silver bullet to reduce VMT to meet the 25% reduction goal in the CARB scoping plan.
  - Mark Roberts: I agree, the modeling results seem reasonable, but a bit depressing how little can be done on VMT. Hopeful VMT won't matter as much going forward as we transition to EVs.
- Heather Menninger: Did modeling for transit capture increased frequency, especially for buses running 15 minutes headway in high density communities? Frequency is what attracts people to transit.
  - Marie Lewis Adams: The model includes what is in the baseline SBTAM network. We did not adjust any elements for this analysis, but that is something we can explore for the next phase. This model assumes projects that are expected to occur and included in the regional plan.



- Jason Pack: We incorporated what is already planned and what is funded in the foreseeable future. It includes planned new routes but does not include increased headways or frequencies. Would expect to see an increase ridership estimates if we were to model improved frequency.
- Heather Menninger: Modeling for other plans has shown that increased frequency on existing routes improves ridership estimates, and that is without adding new routes to the models.
- Marie Lewis Adams: By reallocating growth, we saw a 20% boost in ridership. If we included improved frequency to the model, we can expect ridership to increase. As a next step we can model different transit network scenarios and pricing strategies.
- Rena Vergara: The findings tell us that although transit ridership is increasing, other types of trips will fill roadway capacity. VMT isn't being reduced because recreation, goods movement, on-demand delivery and food services will keep the demand on the transportation network.