



NEWS

March 23, 2020

Media Contacts:

AC Transit: Robert Lyles, (510) 919-9754

BART: Alicia Trost, (510) 464-6154

Contra Costa County Connection: Rick Ramacier, (925) 676-7500

Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District: Paolo Cosulich-Schwartz, (415) 629-9999

SamTrans/Caltrain: Tasha Bartholomew, (650) 339-5257

SFMTA: Erica Kato, (415) 271-7177

VTA: Brandi Childress, (408) 464-7877

Bay Area Transit Agency Statement: Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

In light of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Bay Area transit agencies are making a coordinated effort to keep essential transportation services available to the communities we serve. Due to severe ridership declines as a result of the public health order, our transit agencies are now experiencing serious financial hardships that will require much consideration and support from our local legislators. It is critical that State and Federal COVID relief packages include funding for public transportation, we continue to advocate with our elected officials for this aid. With our agencies operating at a revenue loss in the range of 70-90%, our operating costs remain high to provide essential service and to keep our workforce whole. But even the best funded agencies have reserves only equivalent to two months of payroll. Our need for both state and federal support could not be any more urgent. We encourage Congress to move swiftly in passing a COVID-19 relief funding package, and are thankful to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senator Dianne Feinstein, and Senator Kamala Harris for the leadership in supporting public transportation and these urgent funding requests.

Severe ridership declines are forcing some cutbacks and service limitations. These are not decisions that are being made lightly. Transit agencies exist primarily to help people get around their communities and access essential services. Hundreds

of thousands of people depend on the services we provide every day, and any reduction in service limits the public's ability to move freely throughout the region.

Under the region's shelter-in-place order, public health officials have identified public transportation as an essential service. Bay Area transit agencies are working together to ensure that the lifeline services that many of our transit-dependent riders count on will continue to operate, including paratransit service for the most vulnerable in our communities, which is an unfunded government mandate. It is our shared goal to ensure that the Bay Area's large population of vulnerable and transit dependent persons have their needs met during this crisis, especially for those who are providing essential services or traveling for essential shopping and medical needs. Without our agencies operating at our current capacities, access to often critical functions during this public health crisis would suffer. Ridership will continue to be monitored closely to ensure there is enough service for riders to practice social distancing in accordance with Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.

Bay Area residents that depend on these services can feel confident that public transit will continue to operate, but dramatic declines in ridership and the uncertainty over the duration of the shelter-in-place order mean that we are experiencing a substantial loss of revenue and as a result we cannot sustain our services at their previous levels. Our agencies need financial support to continue.

As we continue to coordinate across agencies, we will communicate any service changes to the public. Below are resources available to the public we serve, as we continuously adjust to the rapidly changing developments surrounding the statewide shelter-in-place order:

AC Transit:

AC Transit is committed to delivering our trusted service during the coronavirus pandemic. The latest [COVID-19 updates](#), maps for [AC Transit Bus Lines to free school lunch sites](#), and [Trip Planning](#) are a click away. Real time service updates and rider communication are available, weekdays, on our Twitter [@rideact](#). To speak with a representative, Monday-Friday 6 am – 7 pm, Saturday-Sunday 9 am – 5 pm, **call 510-891-4777**, select option 2. We encourage AC Transit riders to follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) and sign up for [line-specific alerts](#).

BART:

BART will provide continuous updates on [service changes](#) and [other COVID-19 impacts](#) at [bart.gov](#). All service advisories are posted on the homepage, our [advisory](#) page, on the [Official BART App](#) and on Twitter at [@SFBARTalert](#). Sign up for News Alerts sent by email or text. Phone operators are available at [\(510\) 464-6000](#) from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm from Monday to Friday.

Caltrain:

Caltrain will provide continuous [service change](#) updates on our dedicated [web page](#). Service information and real-time updates are also available on our Twitter account [@Caltrain](#). Our Customer Service call center will also remain staffed during regular business hours (Weekdays from 7 AM to 7 PM; Weekends/Holidays from 8 AM to 5 PM) and can be reached by phone at (800) 660-4287.

Contra Costa County Connection:

County Connection will continue to post pertinent information in response to the emergency on our [website](#). Our Customer Service call center will also remain staffed during regular hours (Monday – Friday, 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM) and can be reached by phone at (925) 676-7500 or email at help@countyconnection.com.

Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District:

Golden Gate Transit and Ferry will provide continuous updates on [service changes](#) on our [website](#) and social media. Service information and real-time updates are available on our Twitter accounts, [@GoldenGateBus](#) and [@GoldenGateFerry](#), and via [Transit](#) app seven days a week. Trip planning assistance is available on our website homepage, by calling 511, and through our [Customer Service Center](#).

SFMTA/Muni:

SFMTA will provide continuous updates on [service changes](#) and [parking enforcement](#) policy on our [webpage](#). Service information and real-time communications is offered on our Twitter [@SFMTA_Muni](#), seven days a week. [SF311](#) is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via phone, web, mobile, and Twitter for information on Muni and [City and County of San Francisco](#) services at this time.

SamTrans:

SamTrans will continue to post pertinent information in response to COVID-19 on its [website](#), as well as its social media accounts on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Our Customer Service call center will also remain staffed during regular business hours (Weekdays from 7 AM to 7 PM; Weekends/Holidays from 8 AM to 5 PM) and can be reached by phone at (800) 660-4287.

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA):

VTA has an online [COVID-19 Information Center](#) (www.vta.org/covid-19) for service. Updates are also shared on Twitter: [@VTA](#). Customers can [view and subscribe to alerts on the Transit app](#). Customer Service representatives are available at (408) 321-2300, and customer.service@vta.org weekdays: 6 a.m. – 7 p.m. and Saturday: 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Our public transit agencies will continue to maintain daily onboard cleaning and sanitation protocols in compliance with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines.

Additionally, all of our agencies are monitoring the situation and maintaining regular contact with local public health agencies, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the CDC. We want to remind passengers about CDC-recommended precautions everyone should take onboard public transit to prevent the spread of illnesses:

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after riding public transit. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid eating while onboard.
- Do not cough into your hands. Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow.
- Stay home if you are sick.

This is a challenging time for all of us, and we are all adapting under extenuating circumstances. Our agencies are working hard to continue to provide for those who depend on us, and we look forward to the day when we can fully restore our services. Until then, we ask that everyone be safe and we hope to see you onboard again soon.

###