

Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Customer Satisfaction Advisory Committee (CSAC) Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 8, 2021
Virtual Presentation
6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Attendance: Yannis Banks, James Bush, David Foster, David Shapiro, Jacqueline Evans, Fangda Lu, Kathrine Gonzales, Betsy Greenberg, Daniella Madubuike, Tangee Mobley, JoAnne Ortiz, Edna Parra, Brooks Ruven, Ephraim Taylor

Welcome / Introductions / Call to Order

Public Communications

Brooks Ruven: Does CapMetro have a Chief Medical Officer? And in relation with the [eight] deaths within the Agency, is it tied to exposure from work?

- **Joanne Ortiz:** We do not have a CMO, Gardner Tabon (Risk Management & Safety Director) has taken on the role of COVID – 19 safety and prevention within the Agency. We cannot determine if their deaths were in relation to their work. We do have provisions and protocols in place to suppress the spread of the virus within our control. Like air filtration in the buses and cleaning surfaces regularly.
- **Edna Parra:** We have a program manager who does report on Health & Wellness, if there's information that he can provide, I can share that with the group.

Ephraim Taylor: I have a question regarding the September Service Changes. Are the changes going to be permanent or are they reactionary to COVID and staffing?

- **Tangee Mobley:** They are mostly due to staffing shortages; we are hiring immediately with a lot of incentives for new drivers including a \$3,500 sign on bonus. This is a nationwide shortage. When we have more human resources, we can then re-assess the service.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy Updates

Jaqueline Evans; Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Jaquelin Evans: This has already been presented to the Board of Directors, these stats will be updated in January [2022]. This is based on our current Fiscal Year [10/01/2020 - 03/31/2021]

Diversity Updates

- We have a total workforce of 2,047 employees
- Gender Demographic
 - 68% Male workforce
 - 32% Female workforce
- Race Demographic
 - 26% White
 - 42% African American
 - 26% Hispanic
 - 03% Asian Pacific
 - 03% Two or More Races

These numbers reflect the combined total of CMTA employees and Service Providers Operators

Promotion Demographics

- There has been a total of 32 Promotions & Reclassifications for the current Fiscal Year
- By Race

- 56% white
- 25% African American
- 09% Hispanic
- 06% Asian
- 04% Two or More Races
- By Gender
 - 59% Male
 - 41% Female

New Hire Demographics

- There has been a total of 36 New Hires for the current Fiscal Year
- By Race
 - 61% White
 - 17%Hispanic
 - 14% African American
 - 03% Asian Pacific
 - 05% Not Specified
- By Gender
 - 53% Male
 - 47% Female

Fiscal Year 2020 DBE Goal: 19%			
	DBE Achievement	Total Contract Amount	Total DBE commitment Amount
Annual Goal	18.7%	\$13,886,945	\$2,599,759

Fiscal Year 2021 SBE Goal: 21%			
	SBE Achievement	Total Contract Amount	Total SBE commitment Amount
10/01/2020 - 03/31/2021	66%	\$2,645,733	\$1,747,935

Definitions

- *Diversity*
 - The range of human differences, including but not limited to Race, Ethnicity, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Age, Social Group, Physical or Mental Disability or Functional Ability, Religion, National Origin, Language, Spoken or Political Belief.
- *Equity*
 - Fairness in process distribution of resources, opportunity, and provision of varying levels of support to achieve greater fairness of outcomes.
- *Racial Equity*
 - In acknowledgement of historical inequality based on race, where race no longer determines one’s outcomes and when everyone has what they need to thrive.
- *Inclusion*
 - Involvement and empowerment, where everyone feels welcomed, respected, supported, and valued.

Equity Initiative

- Pick-up Zones added
- Norwood Bus Stop Improvement Project
- Bus Stop Lighting and Accessibility Improvements

- Fare Capping Pilot
- Free Transit to Vaccines
- Weekends Free (June – July 4th)
- Juneteenth Holiday Observation

David Foster: Will the demos be broken down into separate categories of Job type? Do these numbers also include CapMetro employees and operators? How well are people of color doing in Administrative CapMetro work as well as Operation workers?

- **Jaqueline Evans:** Yes, Service Operators refers to Bus drivers, train drivers and other transit operates. The CapMetro category refers to Administration.
- **Kathrine Gonzles:** Looking at the number and stats, it shows we are more diverse than the actual population of Austin, which is great to see!

Ephraim Taylor: Does the hiring number [32 new employees] refer to both Operators and CapMetro?

- **Jaqueline Evans:** That number only reflects CapMetro employees, excluding Operator new hires.

Betsy Greenberg: Do these numbers also reflect the ridership demographics as well?

- **Jaqueline Evans:** We currently don't collect that data on ridership demographics.
- **JoAnne Ortiz:** We do have zip code data, but that's about it that we collect on riders.

Brooks Ruven: There was a survey for demographics during 2020, but that was skewed due to the Pandemic to people who needed to use metro services verses the overall ridership data.

Project Connect Update

Yannis Banks, Community Engagement Manager

- Just finished the open houses for **Orange & Blue** line.
- We do have virtual community meetings for the **Red** line and **MetroRapid**
- We will be having some design workshops for the station design for Pleasant Valley, Riverside, Norwood Transit Center, 29th Street and stations along the **Blue & Orange** line corridors, all of which will be available to view online.
- We have launched new Pickup Zones this month.
- We are having open conversations with people and businesses that would be affected by the building of the Lines.

David Foster: How is CapMetro engaging with business owners along the Project Connect corridors that would be affected by the construction of the new lines?

- **Yannis Banks:** We are reaching out to business owners who are along the corridor and informing them of plans to make sure they are engaged with the Project Connect line information, through direct communication and letters. We are currently at 15% design so not much information has been dispelled out until we have more concrete plans on where the line specifically will be and who will be impacted. We won't be at 30% design until next summer [2022].

Metro Rapid Update

Katherine Gonzalez; Project Manager

MetroRapid Service Update:

- 10-minute peak service; limited stops
- Corridor based BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) in mixed traffic
- Transit Signal priority treatment

- All new vehicles will be zero emissions
- Currently working on 2 Project Connect projects. MetroRapid Expo and Pleasant Valley line.
- Expo Line Objectives
 - Establish high-quality transit service east of IH35
 - Provide service from northeast Austin to Downtown
 - Connect and improve access to major developments and destinations
- Pleasant Valley Objectives
 - Establish high-quality transit service east of IH35
 - Provide service to Southeast Austin, a growth area for new development and redevelopment
 - Connect and improve access to major developments and destinations
 - Transfer opportunities with future Blue and Green lines
- MetroRapid Service Amenities
 - In conception, there are 2 new Station Selter designs. Full & Neighborhood sized. We plan to implement solar panels wherever possible and add CCTV cameras for added security. To aid in service information Dynamic Message Screen will relay real time arrival information and other relevant data to passengers at the stop. Ticket vending machines are also planned to be added hasten the boarding procedure. With larger shelters, there is the potential to add public art, community information panels and greenery to liven up the scene.

Betsy Greenburg: How do we address stops that are across the street from each other, making it difficult for people to catch their transfers?

- **Kathrine Gonzales:** We have tried to combine stations wherever possible to alleviate that concern. There are some stations that make it difficult to connect and consolidate them, but we do the best we can to connect them easier for passengers.

Betsy Greenburg: How long are the Expo and Pleasant Valley Lines?

- **Kathrine Gonzales:** Expo line is 26 miles. Pleasant Valley line is 32 miles

Betsy Greenburg: When are they expected to be operational?

- **Kathrine Gonzales:** Mid 2023

Kathrine Gonzales: We have heard people don't want massive stations, so we are designing neighborhood sized stations wherever possible.

Betsy Greenburg: will the stops be separated from other lines? The Rapid stop is typically not connected to the street well enough for a transfer passenger.

- **Kathrine Gonzales:** We are trying to design stations to not impede traffic flow and be accessible, so transfers are made easier.

Expo & Pleasant Valley Budget

- Half of the funding is expected to come from Federal Grants.
- Expo Line: \$44.6 Million (Mid 2023 Launch)
- Pleasant Valley: \$48.9 Million (Mid 2023 Launch)
 - Expo and Pleasant Valley Lines Federal Transit Administration grant funding included in President's budget (May 2021)
 - The environmental approval process is complete with the groundbreaking expected for December 2021 and January 2022. The lines are expected to launch service in mid 2023.

MetroRapid Outreach

- We have had virtual Open houses to engage with the public and Community Meetings, that have happened in February and April of 2021. Community groups and Homeowners' Associations have been updated on status of the line. In the past week, there has been an Access Committee Meeting (09/01/2021).

Brooks Ruven: Does any look at these routes and consider how future upgrades would be implemented?

- **Kathrine Gonzales:** As of right now, this is how we are considering the future of the lines, being served by MetroRapid. Typically, light rail follows along after a BRT route after having shown increased demand in the route.
- **Danniella Madubuike:** We have not had any form of conversation about upgrading the route that far into the future. Though it is an excellent point to bring up about expanded growth.

David Foster: The Expo line is projected to intersect with the Gold line, is the plan to allow one to lead to the other or will the Expo line eventually be phased out?

- **Kathrine Gonzales:** the two lines are meant to supplement each other and the wider Transit network, currently we do not have any plans of phasing our lines out of service.

David Foster: What is the status of Manchaca rapid express line?

- **Kathrine Gonzales:** We plan to extend a line down to Manchaca and Tanglewood and Slaughter. We are awaiting TXDOT to complete some of their projects before extending that line. Reason being, as to not clutter and further close the streets for more construction. TXDOT plans on being completed with their project in 2026. Manchaca will receive service by late 2023 or early 2024.

David Foster: the Manchaca and Oak Hill Line split into two, does this mean service on those lines would be cut in half?

- **Kathrine Gonzales:** It means they will be twice as frequent.

Service Changes for September

Danniella Madubuike; Transportation Planner

CapMetro is suffering from a driver shortage, so to compensate with that there are going to be service changes happening on Sunday September 19th, 2021.

Conditions Influencing Service:

- COVID – 19 and the Pandemic.
- Reverted to stage 5 several weeks after reaching Stage 2
- Services currently operating on adjusted August 202 COVID levels
- Labor shortages and illness impacting daily delivery of services
- Temporary changes to services to ensure consistency to meet demands
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Danniella Madubuike: We need to continue monitoring COVID status, the labor shortage and adjust accordingly to keep service running.

Staffing Shortage:

- 80 operators short each day
- 10% of service not operating each day

- Operators do not have the capacity for overtime work – impacting special events such as Austin FC
- Some operators have also opted to retire, so that further our complicates our staffing shortage.

Temporary Solution:

- Adjust service levels to match the number of available operators
 - o Remove enhanced frequency improvement on routes 1, 2, 10, 20 & 300
 - o Temporarily reduce Weekday frequency on Routes 18, 217, & 335
 - o Temporarily reduce Saturday/Sunday frequency on routes 2, 4, 17, 18, 217, 311, 325, 333, 335 & 337
 - o For more details: <https://www.capmetro.org/september2021>

High – Frequency Routes

- Routes 1, 2, 10, 20 & 300
 - o 10-12 minutes to 15 minutes
- Routes 2, 4, 17, 18, 217, 311, 325, 333, 335 & 337
 - o Route 311 from 15 minutes to 20 minutes
 - o All others 15 minutes to 30 minutes
- Routes 18, 217, & 335
 - o 15 minutes to 30 minutes

MetroRapid Service Change:

- Temporarily Suspend Late Night Thursday – Saturday service
 - o Service ends at 12 AM instead of 3 AM
- Temporarily Reduce Evenings (8 PM – 10 PM) Frequency
 - o 15 minutes to 20 minutes

Regular Service:

- Return to Pre-Covid Frequency – Route 1
 - o 20-30 minutes to 30 minutes
- Other Routes: No Changes
 - o Express
 - o Flyers
 - o MetroRail
- Routes 981 & 987 remain suspended

Specials:

- Suspend E-Bus (as of 08/26/2021)
- No Changes to:
 - o UT Service
 - o Night Owls
 - o Rail Connectors
 - o Senior Routes

Holiday	Current Schedule	Future Schedule
Thanksgiving	Reduced Sunday	No Change

Black Friday	Modified Saturday	New Sunday
Christmas Day	Reduced Sunday	No Change
New Year's Day	Regular Sunday	New Sunday
MLK Day	Saturday	New Saturday

Taylor Ephraim: When can we expect service to return to normal?

- **Daniella Madubuiké:** We cannot put a date on it, but only monitor closely the evolving situation as adjust accordingly.

Meeting Systems Update

Edna Parra; Community Engagement & Outreach Manager

Update on members

Any questions from the recent changes to the meeting recordings

Also, Outlook invite will be resent with the new link, and that same link will be on the webpage, and I will also send that through email, along with the agenda and minutes before each meeting.

Chair Taylor – Edna Parra will follow up with Chair Prentice to set up a meeting to discuss what the board update will look like, and make sure he has the invite and information on how to log on.

Next Meeting October 13th, 2021 @ 6:00PM

Approval of the minutes