

## SacRT High Capacity Bus Service Study Outreach Summary

Between December 2019 and December 2020, WALKSacramento, in partnership with Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT), completed three major outreach efforts: a series of stakeholder interviews, an online survey focused on high capacity bus service strategies, and a virtual public workshop. Community members were also invited to submit comments via email at any point throughout the study period. Outreach efforts generally sought to engage the public in the planning process, share project information, and gather feedback on high capacity bus service priorities and opportunities. A brief summary of each of the outreach efforts is included below.

### I. Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviews were conducted in two rounds and targeted a variety of stakeholders located along the five study corridors (Arden Way, Florin Road, Stockton Boulevard, Sunrise Boulevard, and Watt Avenue). The questions sought to gather more detailed information on preferences, opportunities, concerns, and other considerations for high capacity bus service.

The first round of interviews was held from mid-December 2019 through March 2020 and focused on engaging neighborhood associations, business associations, and community-based organizations. A total of 11 interviews were conducted, including two neighborhood associations, three business associations, and six community-based organizations.

The second round of interviews were held during December 2020 and primarily focused on engaging additional neighborhood associations and transportation staff from school districts whose jurisdictions included a portion of at least one of the five corridors. A total of six additional interviews were conducted, including three neighborhood associations and three school districts.

#### Key Takeaways

- Overall, major themes included transit reliability, system connectivity, safety, improved bus stop amenities, and accessibility for people with disabilities and older adults.
- Corridor-Specific Opportunities
  - On Arden Way, major priorities included improved pedestrian and cyclist access to stops, connected sidewalk networks, and expanded transit services.
  - On Florin Road, major priorities included alleviating traffic congestion, bus stop maintenance and amenities, improved pedestrian and cyclist access to stops, and expanded infrastructure for microtransit.
  - On Stockton Boulevard, major priorities included access to fresh food and employment centers, decreased trip times, expanded evening service, and enhanced bicycle facilities.

- On Sunrise Boulevard, major priorities included higher frequency bus service to alleviate congestion, improved access to fresh food, and closing first and last mile gaps.
- On Watt Avenue, major priorities included improved multimodal connections (particularly bus and light rail), bus stop maintenance, and smoother bus loading and layovers.

## **II. Online Survey**

An online survey was developed in the fall of 2020 with the goal of identifying opportunities to improve bus service along congested corridors. The survey included a series of 14 questions focused on understanding priorities for improved bus service, existing challenges with bus routes along congested corridors, and preferences for different types of high capacity strategies. The survey was distributed through the project website, e-newsletters, and email communications to community partners along the five study corridors. In total, 120 responses were collected during the survey period, which began October 7, 2020 and ended November 20, 2020.

### **Key Takeaways:**

- Top priorities included higher frequency bus service, reliable schedules, and improving travel times while on the bus.
- Preferred types of improvements included dedicated bus lanes, traffic signal priority and short bus lanes, and route alignment/straightening.
- Additional comments included a desire for direct access to popular destinations (i.e. medical facilities, shopping, entertainment), accessibility for people with disabilities and older adults, improved service in low-income and Environmental Justice communities, and improved system connectivity.

## **III. Virtual Public Workshop**

A public workshop for SacRT's High Capacity Bus Service Study was held via Zoom on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 facilitated by project team members from WALKSacramento, SacRT, WSP, and Nelson/Nygaard. The workshop was intended to increase knowledge and understanding of high capacity bus service strategies; understand current barriers for using bus service and the types of improvements that would make it more attractive; and understand priority corridors and priority segments along those corridors. In total, there were 46 participants who represented a wide range of interests, including SacRT riders, local government agencies, and community organizations.

### Key Takeaways:

- Out of the five corridors, Watt Avenue and Stockton Boulevard received the most interest for high capacity bus service improvements.
- Top considerations for improving bus service included frequency, reliability, and pedestrian access.
- Top priorities for improving the overall transit experience included bus shelters; separate, clearly designated high capacity bus service stops; and accessibility, particularly for riders who have mobility disabilities or are blind or low-vision.

### **IV. Email Submissions**

Two community members submitted comments via email during the study period. The two comments were generally concerned with improving the study's process and methods, including consulting past studies by SacRT and conducting origin-destination survey research to improve route planning.

## SacRT High Capacity Corridor Study Stakeholder Interview Executive Summary

A series of initial Phase 1 stakeholder interviews were held for the Sacramento Regional Transit High Capacity Bus Service Study from mid-December 2019 through March 2020 with 11 community-based organizations (CBO's), business associations, and neighborhood associations. A second round of interviews was conducted from December 2020 through January 2021 with three school districts and three additional neighborhood associations. These interviews were a critical component of the public engagement, as they provided an opportunity to introduce the project to key stakeholders, identify goals and outcomes, and gather important information on existing challenges and priorities. The list of stakeholders interviewed is below. Feedback from each organization has been compiled into stakeholder profiles further in this report, which are organized alphabetically.

Neighborhood Associations	Business Associations	Community-Based Organizations	School Districts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anatolia Neighborhood Association</li> <li>• Golf Course Terrace Estates</li> <li>• Meadowview Neighborhood Association</li> <li>• Rosemont Community Association</li> <li>• Sunrise Oaks Neighborhood Association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80-Watt Improvement District</li> <li>• McClellan Park Transportation Management Authority</li> <li>• Florin Road Partnership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asian Resources</li> <li>• Mutual Housing</li> <li>• Resources for Independent Living</li> <li>• Ridership for the Masses</li> <li>• Sacramento Transit Riders Union</li> <li>• Society for the Blind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elk Grove Unified School District</li> <li>• Sacramento City Unified School District</li> <li>• Twin Rivers Unified School District</li> </ul>

The interviews were generally 30 to 45 minutes long, and to ensure consistency 9 questions were developed to be asked of all participants. The questions sought to gather more detailed information on preferences, opportunities, concerns, and other considerations around the five corridors being studied (Arden Way, Florin Road, Stockton Boulevard, Sunrise Boulevard, and Watt Avenue). Although most organizations focused their comments on one or two specific corridors, some organizations were able to speak on broader factors shared across the five corridors. A number of themes arose as priorities for this project to address, including:

**Reliability:**

- Buses don't always have frequent service and riders may have to wait 30 minutes or longer for another bus.
- Operational hours aren't convenient for school, weekend and evening work schedules, or social activities. There is a greater transit need during off-peak hours, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic when many essential workers have experienced shifts in normal work schedules.
- Public transit trips along congested corridors take 2 or 3 times longer than if traveled on a vehicle due to frequent stops for on/off-boarding.
- There are some bus only lanes, yet the segments are too short to notice a change in travel time.

### **Connectivity:**

- The five corridors provide great connections to the different light rail lines (Blue, Gold, Green), interstate highways (I-80, I-50, I-5 and Highway 99), and provide access to essential goods and services, as well as employment centers along their routes.
- Residents are being displaced from their homes due to rising housing costs and frequently find themselves moving into areas that have limited access to public transit services.
- Access to jobs, shopping centers, schools, and medical facilities are a high priority for high capacity bus service.

### **Amenities:**

- A lack of shelters systemwide creates an uncomfortable transit experience as people often have to wait for long periods of times at stops while exposed to the elements, especially during hotter months.
- People who are blind and low vision need bus stops to be distinguishable through strategies such as large print, scannable audio, digital readers, brail, and universal signs (shapes identification similar to triangle/circle for restrooms) that signal to an individual that they are at a transit stop.
- Placement of real time route signs, similar to those found at light rail stations with departure and arrival time would help riders plan their trips better. More people own electronic devices that require Wi-Fi access and charging ports.

### **Accessibility:**

- Access to bus stops is often limited, especially for people with mobility disabilities. Sidewalks are narrow, lack curb cuts, are nonexistent along some segments, and have blockages such as utility poles that limit access for people using wheelchairs and mobility devices.
- Bus stops are difficult to access by foot or bike due to unsafe pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including sidewalk gaps, lack of bike lanes, and lack of secure bike parking.
- Overcrowding on buses is an issue, particularly on congested corridors and during school commute times.

### **Safety:**

- Many students rely on SacRT to get to and from school and primarily travel alone. Parents are concerned for their children's safety at stops and on the bus, especially when routes require several transfers and there is an increased likelihood of their child getting lost.
- Riders do not feel safe when accessing stops located at major intersections and along corridors due to high traffic volumes, aggressive drivers, and lack of adequate pedestrian facilities.
- Threats to personal safety at bus stops, such as harassment and theft, is a concern for riders, particularly when there are prolonged wait times during off-peak hours.
- Lack of hand sanitizer dispensers on buses, manual doors, and front-boarding have created health concerns on buses and at stops for riders, particularly during COVID-19.

## **Corridor-Specific Priorities and Opportunities**

### **Arden Way:**

Residents along the Arden Way corridor don't use transit very often even though this corridor provides connections to a lot of retail centers. Many households only have one car, but rather than taking the bus residents adjust their schedules and coordinate around the one car. Arden Way is a high-speed arterial where residents need to cross 11 lanes of traffic, which discourages individuals from walking, biking, or using public transit. Transit services need to be expanded, connectivity to bus stops require enhancements, and the amount of sidewalk gaps along the route need to be eliminated.

### **Florin Road:**

People drive to the Florin light rail station, Highway 99, Southgate Plaza and Florin Towne Center, and Luther Burbank High School, creating congestion for commuters along Florin Road on a daily basis. Besides traffic congestion, Florin Road has poor pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit stops, with minimal pedestrian crossing facilities and bike facilities that feel unsafe next to high speed traffic. There is a high need for microtransit to be extended to the 65th Street transfer station at Florin Mall. Bus stop vandalism is frequent and bus stops often lack adequate facilities such as seating or are placed in areas that are difficult for the elderly and people with disabilities to access. Improvements to support traffic calming, access to bus stops, and safe and well-maintained bus shelters are recommended.

### **Stockton Boulevard:**

Accessing fresh food and employment centers are a priority for those traveling along Stockton Boulevard, yet the length of transit rides, as well as limited evening hours, play a significant barrier that limits the ability of residents to rely on public transit. Improving the corridor by enhancing bike facilities to feel safer, placing bus only lanes, and incorporating Bus Rapid Transit or increased bus frequencies would be desirable.

### **Sunrise Boulevard:**

There is interest in increased bus service along Sunrise Boulevard to alleviate vehicle congestion for motorists traveling north to access key retail destinations. Access to fresh food locations is a key destination for many pedestrians, yet there are noticeable first mile and last mile accessibility gaps, particularly in the Fair Oaks and Citrus Heights areas. Prioritizing high capacity improvements at the Sunrise Mall Transit Center Greenback Lane and Arcadia Drive provides a tremendous opportunity for improving multimodal connectivity throughout the County.

### **Watt Avenue:**

The Watt/I-80 station is a major transit connection for people traveling by both bus and light rail. Watt Avenue is seen as an important transportation corridor, with potential to increase multi-modal functionality and improve access for residents and visitors traveling to the corridor or elsewhere along the corridor. Furthermore, affordable housing development and industry growth along the corridor have potential to create new demand for public transit service. Concerns about crime and human trafficking create a perception that using transit is unsafe, with poor maintenance of bus stops contributing to these personal safety concerns. Bus loading and layovers are another concern, as buses do not have dedicated pull-outs along Watt Avenue and currently block traffic and driveways.

# Stakeholder Profile: 80 Watt Improvement District

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Watt Avenue

## Who They Are

The 80 Watt Improvement District is a Property and Business Improvement District with the goal of improving quality of life along the Watt Avenue corridor in the North Highlands community. Currently, the district's boundaries encompass the area between Watt Avenue, Roseville Road, and Longview Drive. The district provides services including maintenance, capital improvements, marketing and advocacy, and security for properties and businesses. Since 2015, the district has helped reduce crime by 41%. In addition to these services, the district focuses on economic development, beautification, and ensuring that businesses are accessible, clean, and safe for employees and customers.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Watt Avenue is a heavily traveled commuter corridor, with the district estimating approximately 1.4 million vehicles traveling along the corridor per year. Additionally, the Watt/I-80 station is a major transit connection for people traveling by both bus and light rail. Major transit stops along Watt Avenue include the Watt/I-80 station, the bus stop at Safe Credit Union, and the bus stop at Walmart. Transit users tend to walk from nearby residential areas or come to the corridor from elsewhere by bus or light rail transfers. Personal safety is one of the biggest barriers for people using transit on Watt Avenue. Concerns about crime and human trafficking create a perception that using transit is unsafe. Lack of maintenance of bus stops contributes to these personal safety concerns. Bus loading and layovers are another concern, as buses do not have dedicated pull-outs along Watt Avenue and currently block traffic and driveways. Pedestrians often cross outside of crosswalks on Watt Avenue due to long distances between crosswalks, however recent installation of fencing in medians has helped address this issue.

## Priorities and Opportunities

Watt Avenue is seen as an important transportation corridor, with potential to increase multi-modal functionality and improve access for residents and visitors traveling to the corridor or elsewhere along the corridor. Major destinations on Watt Avenue include restaurants near the Watt/I-80 station (such as Starbucks, Wendy's, and Chinese food restaurants), Walmart, and the Safe Credit Union. While there is not a lot of current retail along Watt Avenue, there are opportunities for transit to better serve employment centers and provide access to jobs and health services, such as dentist offices and the Department of Human Assistance. Additionally, Mercy Housing is in the process of developing an affordable housing complex on Watt Avenue which will provide future residents with access to nearby transit stops and other walkable destinations. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments also recently allocated funding for a bike path project to Roseville Road, which is both an opportunity for bike access to transit as well as an important consideration for safety between buses and bicyclists. Other considerations for increasing transit ridership include amenities such as lighting, trash cans, bike racks, and art or other placemaking elements. Benches and shade are important, but when implemented incorrectly or are unmaintained can attract negative activity. Education and improved perception of transit through marketing and transportation demand management campaigns can help incentivize ridership as well, particularly for businesses and employees.

# Stakeholder Profile: Anatolia Neighborhood Association

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Sunrise Boulevard

## Who They Are

The Anatolia Neighborhood Association represents the Anatolia neighborhood, a community in Rancho Cordova, CA. The neighborhood is located in the southern part of Rancho Cordova, between Sunrise Boulevard on the west and the Rancho Cordova Parkway on the east; and from Douglas Road on the north to the greenbelt on the south. Approximately 2,000 single-family detached homes, two elementary schools, and four community parks are located within the neighborhood boundaries.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Currently, the neighborhood is situated in a location where it is difficult to access amenities and errands without a vehicle. While some residents do use Paratransit, the trip planning and time spent waiting is currently longer than using a personal vehicle. Most residents all have personal vehicles. Bus routes 175 and 176 do run through the neighborhood. The neighborhood association did express interest in increased service along Sunrise Boulevard to alleviate vehicle congestion for motorists traveling north to access key retail destinations along Sunrise Boulevard. In addition to businesses along Sunrise Boulevard, other popular destinations include Downtown Sacramento, the Sacramento International Airport, and the shopping centers at Folsom Boulevard and Blue Ravine Road.

## Priorities and Opportunities

The Neighborhood Association expressed interest in increase service to employment centers as the highest priorities, followed by shopping centers and education centers. Improvements to bus stops such as shelters, WiFi, interactive scheduling maps, and bike parking are also desired.



# Stakeholder Profile: Asian Resources

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Stockton Boulevard
- Sunrise Boulevard
- Watt Avenue

## Who They Are

Asian Resources was founded in 1980 with the purpose of assisting Southeast Asian refugees with English language services and job training. Asian Resources has since grown to support low income households, youth, and individuals with limited English proficiency to gain self-sufficiency. The organization has offices in Citrus Heights, Oak Park, and South Sacramento, and serves diverse communities with high Slavic, Middle Eastern, African American, Latinx, and Asian populations. Many of their clients rely on transit to access jobs and language development classes.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Customers of Asian Resources primarily live in the neighborhoods around Stockton Boulevard in South Sacramento, Sunrise Boulevard in Citrus Heights, and Watt Avenue in North Highlands. Transit along Sunrise Boulevard and Watt Avenue is primarily used for getting to and from work, whereas transit along Stockton Boulevard is primarily used for accessing grocery stores and medical services such as the UC Davis hospital and other doctor's offices.

Transportation generally is often a challenge for customers trying to attend Asian Resources' classes. Many clients do not have access to a personal vehicle and rely on transit to get to class. However, one trip often takes a long time due to the need for bus transfers, with some trips necessitating three or four different bus routes. The amount of time it takes to use transit, as well as limited evening hours, are a significant barrier that limits the ability of residents to access employment opportunities and Asian Resources' language classes and job training services.

Lack of personal and traffic safety is another major concern, both when walking to a bus stop and waiting at the bus stop. Sidewalks along each of these corridors are narrow, and while bike lanes are present they do not feel safe to use. Drivers often use the bike lanes as turning lanes and do not yield to pedestrians, creating unsafe situations and near-misses.

## Priorities and Opportunities

Asian Resources' clients have expressed interest in using transit more often if there were more routes, if routes ran more often and had extended evening hours, and if it was safer to access transit. Access to fresh food locations is a priority, especially for people traveling along Stockton Boulevard and Sunrise Boulevard. Other amenities and opportunities that would benefit the communities Asian Resources serves include converting to a clean bus fleet in order to improve air quality and increasing general education about how to use the transit system. Lowering fare costs would help improve access as well, as Asian Resources saw an increase of youth using the system when SacRT introduced free rides for students.

# Stakeholder Profile: Elk Grove Unified School District

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Florin Road
- Stockton Boulevard

## Who They Are

Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD) covers the Southeast portion of Sacramento County and is the fifth largest school district in California, with 67 schools and an average annual enrollment of 63,000 students. While EGUSD offers transportation services directly to schools within the district, SacRT has become an integral transportation option for EGUSD students to get to school and other key destinations, such as shopping centers and work programs. SacRT's free student bus pass program has been highly successful in terms of making transit financially accessible and more familiar, as the program encourages students to get comfortable using transit from an earlier age.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Due to budget policies under county guidelines, special education busing is the only type of busing that is required to receive funding. With projected budget cuts due to COVID-19, general education busing may not receive virtually any funding in the coming school years, making high capacity bus service critical for transporting students to and from school. There are two bus agencies within EGUSD: SacRT and E-Tran (the public transit system for the City of Elk Grove). Different bus service areas have resulted in a disconnected network for students and thus, coordination between the two agencies would be highly beneficial for overall system connectivity.

Students who live in the Anatolia neighborhood in Rancho Cordova as well as rural areas in the school district face the greatest transportation challenges as they have the longest commutes and the fewest transportation options. Additionally, students who live within walking and biking distance from schools in EGUSD face dangerous conditions related to unsafe pedestrian and cyclist facilities. Another major challenge for the district is chronic staffing shortages among school bus drivers due to stringent requirements for application, high level of responsibility, and comparatively low wages. Staffing shortages have contributed to unreliable bus service for students, causing great frustration for parents. However, EGUSD was able to create a mobile app for students and parents to track buses in real time, which helped improve trip planning.

## Priorities and Opportunities

Due to the significant challenges EGUSD is facing related to reduced system capacity, SacRT has tremendous potential to address current and future gaps in service by closely collaborating with school district transportation staff and E-Tran to ensure students are able to safely and easily get to and from school and other destinations. Continuing to incentivize transit through free bus passes will be key to reducing barriers to accessing transit. SacRT can also address current and projected gaps in service by prioritizing access to students who live in Anatolia and rural areas within the district. Additional locations that would benefit students include shopping centers, work programs, community colleges, and continued education programs. Improving timeliness and reliability is most important for encouraging students and families to use transit.

# Stakeholder Profile: Florin Road Partnership

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Florin Road
- Stockton Boulevard

## Who They Are

Florin Road Partnership was established in 1997 to revitalize the struggling shopping corridor along Florin Road. Florin Road Partnership (FRP) is one of the oldest PBID's in the Sacramento area. The FRP spans approximately 24.1 million square feet, encompasses more than 215 property owners, and over 400 merchants.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

The area within Florin Road Partnership currently has a few high capacity locations – Florin Station, Micro transit from Franklin Boulevard that extends to Florin Road, 65<sup>th</sup> Street transfer station. Riders within the FRP are frequently travel to Luther Burbank High School, Florin Road Bingo Hall, Florin Mall, social services, and the Farmers Market.

Traffic levels are the largest challenge for mobility within the FRP. There are minimal pedestrian crossing facilities, bike facilities, and there is a high need for microtransit to be extended to the 65<sup>th</sup> street transfer station at Florin Mall. Secondly, bus shelters require a high amount of maintenance. FRP maintains bus sites but vandalism is frequent and bus stops lack adequate facilities such as seating or are placed in areas where accessibility is a physical barrier for the elderly.

## Priorities and Opportunities

Public safety is a top priority for riders and the FRP. FRP welcomes the exploration of a high capacity transit system but also identified many needed safety improvements that would better support bus passengers and encourage residents who currently drive to take the bus instead. Key improvements requested included 24-hour security and maintenance plans, WiFi and USB charging, physical improvements to support traffic calming and access to bus stops, safe and well-maintained bus shelters using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, and pedestrian and bicycle access with 8-80 design approaches in mind as critical improvements for a high capacity corridor.

# Stakeholder Profile: Golf Course Terrace Estates Neighborhood Association

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Florin Road

## Who They Are

Founded in 1991, the Golf Course Terrace Estate Neighborhood Association's (GCTENA) mission is to "enhance the livability and quality of the area by establishing and maintaining an open line of communication between the neighborhood, government agencies and other neighborhoods." Golf Course Terrace Estates is located in southwest Sacramento, bordered on the north by Executive Airport/47th Avenue and on the south by Florin Road. The neighborhood is adjacent to light rail and SacRT services, however, there is no longer service that directly enters the neighborhood. Transit is primarily utilized by lower-income residents of Golf Course Terrace Estates to access jobs.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

SacRT is currently not a convenient option for older adults and people with disabilities because bus stops are not located directly in the neighborhood and thus, are more difficult to access. In addition, bus stop conditions including lack of lighting, uneven pavement, floating bus stops, and vandalized/overtaken benches contribute to an unsafe and unwelcoming environment. SmaRT Ride is frequently used by people who have challenges getting to bus or light rail stops, however, inconsistent pick-up locations make this service difficult to access. While greater SmaRT Ride van capacity is appreciated, especially during social distancing, some people have concerns surrounding cost effectiveness and carbon emissions when there are often only a few riders in the fleet's large vans. SacRT is also not a convenient option for people who work nontraditional hours (which has become more common during the COVID-19 pandemic) due to lack of service during off-peak periods or evenings and lack of proximity to stops. Workers may be able to use transit to get to work, however, existing schedules do not allow them to get back home and many have to pay for rideshare services. Health and safety concerns related to COVID-19 and crime pose additional barriers to accessing SacRT services. During the pandemic, lack of hand sanitizing dispensers on buses, front-boarding, and manual doors increase exposure to germs. In terms of personal safety, many riders feel unsafe when waiting at stops due to lack of lighting and security personnel.

## Priorities and Opportunities

Improving connections between neighborhoods and stops via Paratransit and SmaRT Ride services and offering higher frequency service during evenings and off-peak hours are top priorities. There are additional opportunities for SmaRT ride in terms of diversifying (i.e. smaller cars) and electrifying the fleet to increase cost and energy efficiency. Service can also be improved by prioritizing key destinations in the area, including hospitals, grocery stores, community colleges, downtown, and other major corridors. Addressing health and safety concerns is another top priority and can be addressed through a variety of infrastructural improvements (i.e. increased lighting at stops) and amenities (i.e. onboard hand sanitizer dispensers). Bus stops can also be improved by offering amenities such as WiFi and charging ports, especially considering mobile phones and smart phones are required to access many of SacRT's services. Lastly, people enjoy the convenience of the Connect Card in terms of being able to easily reload it online and use it for various SacRT services, however, more options for people who do not have computer access to reload their cards are recommended, such as partnerships with local grocery stores.

# Stakeholder Profile: McClellan Park TMA

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Watt Avenue

## Who They Are

McClellan Business Park is comprised of 3,000 acres and is located on the former McClellan Air Force Base and now operates as a corporate community with 230 tenants including private companies, and state, federal, and local government agencies. The business park is located in North Sacramento. Within the business park is the McClellan Park Transportation Management Authority (TMA). The TMA provides alternative commute options including subsidies for transit passes and aims to increase employee transit ridership, carpool and vanpool use, bicycling, and walking for McClellan Park employees and employers.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Route 26 current serves a large audience of riders access the business park. While route 26 does run through parts of the business park, over half of the 3,000-acre business park is not being served by transit. Additionally, the Watt I-80 and Roseville Station are major transit hubs for employees, however, walkability to the station is challenging and continuing concerns for public safety and cleanliness make transit use less desirable. Employees have requested instead for uber service to Roseville which is an added cost in addition to the \$55.00 transit subsidy already provided. Overall, the TMA consistently hears that convenience and extended time it takes to use the transit system is serving as a disincentive.

## Priorities and Opportunities

McClellan Park is a major job center and expected to increase the number of employees working there. Providing High Capacity Transit opportunities along Watt Ave as well as more frequent service and connections to nearby light rail stations are major desires. Secondly, since Route 26 has changed routes through the business park, there are two shelters that are no longer in use. The TMA is working to request that these shelters be moved to current bus stops along with identifying additional shelter coverage needed at stops.

# Stakeholder Profile: Meadowview Neighborhood Association

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Florin Road

## Who They Are

The Meadowview Neighborhood Association was formed to provide residents of the Meadowview neighborhood in South Sacramento with updates on relevant information such as crime, safety, traffic, neighborhood beautification, youth activities, employment development, educational opportunities, vocational training, home ownership, and social services. Many Meadowview residents use buses to connect to light rail in order to access the downtown area and employment centers. Residents also use the new SmartRide service to circulate throughout the community.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

The Meadowview neighborhood is located approximately 10 miles south of the Sacramento downtown core, and residents often travel along main north/south corridors such as Stockton Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, and Highway 99 to get to and from downtown. Florin Road is used to connect to these corridors as well as to light rail. Major transit destinations along Florin Road include retail shopping centers at Franklin Boulevard and Stockton Boulevard.

One of the challenges with using public transit is that it takes too long, so people choose to drive instead. Oftentimes, people will be waiting a long time at bus stops and can't tell how long their trip will take due to lack of real-time signage. Personal safety is another concern, especially for students. While SacRT recently made fares free for students, many parents do not feel comfortable letting their students ride without adult supervision, especially for children in elementary and middle school. Pedestrian safety and comfort is another challenge for accessing transit on Florin Road. Lack of tree canopy makes walking uncomfortable in hot weather, and poor maintenance of overgrown landscaping blocks bus signage and visibility of pedestrians approaching crosswalks. New mobility devices such as e-bikes and scooters, while beneficial, often block sidewalks and make it difficult for older adults and people with mobility disabilities to safely navigate already narrow sidewalks.

## Priorities and Opportunities

Bus-only lanes may help encourage more people to ride the bus because it would provide a faster alternative to the high amounts of car traffic on Florin Road, Stockton Boulevard, and Franklin Boulevard. Bus-only lanes may also help improve onboarding safety for riders and reduce congestion that is caused by cars waiting for buses to load. In tandem with bus only lanes, increasing the frequency of routes would be desired, even if they are only increased during rush hour traffic. Amenities such as bus shelters would help improve comfort while waiting for buses, particularly in hot summers and wet winters. Real time signage at bus stops would be beneficial for riders who cannot afford internet access. Additionally, there are more people with smart devices or with equipment like mobility chairs who are in need of charging, so power outlets and USB charging stations would be other great amenities. Continuing to provide incentives such as discounted and free fares for older adults and young populations can help promote ridership as well. Greater education and messaging around climate change can further demonstrate to community members about how riding public transit reduces climate emissions and improves air quality.

# Stakeholder Profile: Mutual Housing

## **What Corridor(s) They Represent**

- Arden Way
- Florin Road
- Stockton Boulevard
- Watt Avenue

## **Who They Are**

Mutual Housing develops and operates housing sites in Sacramento and Yolo counties, with a focus on sustainable, affordable housing. In total, Mutual Housing sites include over 1,100 households with over 3,600 residents, about half of whom are children. Beyond housing development, Mutual Housing also focuses on leadership development, community advocacy, community-building, and program delivery. Many residents don't have access to reliable transportation and need to use transit to access jobs, healthcare, and other services. For this reason, Mutual Housing recognizes the importance of pairing affordable housing near transit and considers transit access when developing proposals and seeking funding.

## **Existing Conditions and Challenges**

In general, limited frequency of bus service, long trip times, and cleanliness and personal safety perceptions are barriers for Mutual Housing residents when using transit. Narrow sidewalks make walking to bus stops a challenge, especially for families, and crossings near bus stops are unsafe. Residents often have to walk far distances in order to access the nearest bus stop.

In South Sacramento, residents often use transit along Florin Road or Stockton Boulevard to access the Walmart on Florin and other large shopping centers. In North Highlands, Walmart and the light rail stations are key destinations along Watt Avenue. Bus service has very long one-hour headways, which limits access to necessary destinations such as grocery stores. Residents in the Arden neighborhood don't use transit very often even though many households only have one car. Rather than taking the bus, residents adjust their schedules and coordinate around the one car.

## **Priorities and Opportunities**

Higher frequency service was highlighted as a key opportunity for high capacity transit. Residents want to be able to access major daily destinations such as grocery stores, restaurants, parks, and doctors' appointments and hospitals. In particular, Kaiser in South Sacramento and Elk Grove were identified as medical centers that many residents currently access. Amenities such as bus shelters and seating would improve comfort for people using transit. Restrooms, especially at light rail stations, is another amenity that would improve the transit experience for riders making longer trips.

# Stakeholder Profile: Resources for Independent Living

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Systemwide

## Who They Are

Resources for Independent Living (RIL) is a nonprofit organization that serves people with disabilities by assisting them to live independently. The primary services that they provide include peer counseling, housing assistance, advocacy, and connecting customers to assistive technology resources. Many of their customers don't own or possess a vehicle due to the economic cost or because they can't physically drive a vehicle, and therefore rely heavily on the current transit network to connect them to their desired destinations.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Each of the five corridors serve as origin points for people accessing downtown Sacramento or other destinations by transit. There are many residential neighborhoods along those corridors that provide opportunities for ridership. People often use public transit along these corridors to travel to local restaurants, retail centers, places of worship, schools, employment, and hospitals.

RIL identified service frequency and fares as the largest challenges for people with disabilities. With the current housing crisis many of RIL's customers are being pushed to areas where they can afford to live, which are primarily less dense suburban areas with poor transit connections. This means that the amount of time it takes to complete a transit trip is two to three times longer than driving due to the need to make numerous transfers. Additionally, physical access to transit stops is a barrier. Sidewalks are narrow and inconsistent along these corridors, with barriers such as utility poles that made sidewalks almost inaccessible for individuals in wheelchairs and other mobility devices. While curb cuts exist at most intersections, there are still some gaps, particularly along Sunrise Boulevard. Walk push buttons are also difficult to access in many cases, as they are often set back out of arm distance.

## Priorities and Opportunities

Overall, high capacity transit should aim to improve access to economic and educational opportunities. Higher frequencies and extended hours of operation are ideal to ensure that no route has less than a 30-minute headway and that late-night service is provided to accommodate jobs, education, and social activities. Destinations that RIL customers would like to access by transit include medical facilities such as Kaiser on Arden Way, grocery stores, and retail centers such as Arden Mall, Sunrise Mall, and shopping centers along Florin Road and Stockton Boulevard. Stockton Boulevard is a great candidate for Bus Rapid Transit, as it provides an opportunity to connect Elk Grove to downtown Sacramento. Along Watt Avenue, connections to the light rail stations at Watt/I-80 and Marconi provide the biggest opportunity for high capacity transit. Lowering fares is critical as costs are a prohibitive barrier for many riders. Greater reliability and frequency of service can help improve perception of transit and incentivize ridership. Other desirable amenities include bus shelters, real time arrival signage, bike parking, USB charging stations, and maps that are customized to reflect major destinations around bus stops.



# Stakeholder Profile: Ridership for the Masses

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Systemwide
- Watt Avenue

## Who They Are

Ridership for the Masses focuses on providing transit information to riders, with emphasis on low-income residents, seniors, students, and people who rely on transit and active transportation rather than driving. In addition to keeping their members informed on transit-related issues, Ridership for the Masses advocates for on-time, affordable, safe, integrated and accessible public transportation for all in the Sacramento Region. Through their monthly newsletter, Ridership for the Masses has been able to engage with more than 3,000 families around transit concerns and priorities across the SacRT system, particularly along Watt Avenue.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

The Watt Avenue corridor generally serves as a starting point for many riders, with connections to the Gold and Blue light rail lines, Highway 50 and I-80, and McClellan Airport. People tend to use transit along Watt Avenue to connect to retail centers, schools, employment centers, and health care needs. A new Mercy Housing development is in progress along Watt Avenue, which will provide over 135 units for low-income households. Access to transit will be critical for tenants who may rely on public transit to commute to work.

Many of the current challenges for transit along Watt Avenue are related to accessing bus stops and light rail, including dysfunctional elevators at the Watt/I-80 station, narrow sidewalks, lack of sidewalks, and poorly maintained sidewalks. Additionally, lack of shelters at bus stops is a major concern. Poorly lit routes to bus stops along with litter and poor maintenance at bus stops contribute to personal safety concerns when using transit along Watt Avenue. While the current SmART Ride service has been beneficial for riders, it only covers a two mile stretch of Watt Avenue and provides limited connectivity to shopping and employment centers further west to Fulton Avenue or to Arden Fair Mall.

## Priorities and Opportunities

As traffic along Watt Avenue increases, investment in transit will be critical to encourage mode shift away from single-occupancy vehicles. Expanding the current bus-only lane farther north and south on Watt Avenue would be beneficial to this effort. Additionally, Ridership for the Masses indicated that having more bus stops and shorter walks to bus stops would be preferable, especially for older adults who may have mobility challenges or who may be carrying heavy bags from shopping.

Other desired amenities at bus stops include shelters for protection from weather, charging ports that provide an opportunity for riders to charge their electronics devices, and real-time rider information to help with trip planning. Wider sidewalks along routes to bus stops and other pedestrian facilities such as curb extensions are priorities in order to accommodate riders who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices.

# Stakeholder Profile: Rosemont Community Association

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Watt Avenue

## Who They Are

The Rosemont Community Association has played an active role in the community since 1959. Rosemont is located between the City of Sacramento and the City of Rancho Cordova and it is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Sacramento. As Rosemont is home to many blue-collar workers, SacRT plays a crucial role in connecting residents to jobs. However, ridership has appeared to decline since the advent of COVID-19. The community is also landlocked by rivers, so transit along the major corridors provides essential access to the rest of the county and greater Sacramento area.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Convenience and reliability are the top barriers to accessing transit for residents. Long wait times, frequent transfers, and traffic congestion along Watt Avenue (especially south on Watt Avenue towards Jackson Boulevard where the lanes are reduced from three to two) contribute to unrealistic travel times for people to get to their destinations. Congestion is an issue in Rosemont especially because commuters avoid the freeways on their way from South Sacramento to access jobs in the northern parts of the county, primarily in Arden Arcade. Traffic safety when accessing bus stops is also a major concern. Aggressive drivers intentionally running red lights and speeding (particularly at the intersections of Watt Avenue, Kiefer Boulevard and Jackson Boulevard), unsafe crossings across major intersections, and sidewalk gaps create dangerous conditions for pedestrians when accessing bus stops. Lastly, a lack of bus shelters is a major deterrent to using transit, especially during periods of inclement weather such as extreme heat and rain.

## Priorities and Opportunities

Riders and residents in the Rosemont area are generally interested in using transit more often due to the various health and environmental benefits, but face significant barriers to safety and convenience. To address concerns related to convenience and reliability, a system-wide goal of 15-minute wait times is recommended. This could be achieved through a variety of strategies, such as bus-only lanes, higher frequency of buses, and signal priority at intersections. When there are delays, timely alerts through a mobile app would be a valuable resource for riders. Successful examples of high-capacity transit in Europe and South America can be used as models for inspiration. Promoting safety of riders is another top priority. Traffic calming measures such as speed bumps and improved pedestrian infrastructure such as continuous sidewalks and high-visibility crosswalks will be key to ensuring riders can safely access stops. Transit use can be further encouraged by providing direct access to key destinations along the corridors, such as jobs in Arden Arcade and Rancho Cordova, shopping centers, and medical facilities. Improved bus stop amenities, including shelters, WiFi, and charging stations are desired to improve the overall transit experience.

# Stakeholder Profile: Sacramento City Unified School District

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Florin Road
- Stockton Boulevard

## Who They Are

Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) is a school district within the City of Sacramento, primarily serving neighborhoods south of the American River. SCUSD is the eleventh largest school district in California, with an annual average of 47,900 students across 81 schools. SacRT plays a crucial role in addressing students' transportation needs in SCUSD, particularly for general education students, as district bus service is reserved primarily for special education students.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Aside from getting to school, students use SacRT to access jobs (particularly in the retail corridors along Florin Road), community centers where after school activities are provided, and the Arden Fair Mall, which is the only major shopping center in the area. However, required transfers within the SacRT system and across other modes such as light rail make it challenging to access these destinations. Personal safety is another major barrier for students. Students often encounter dangerous conditions when accessing transit, particularly when crossing major intersections, railroad tracks, or divided highways. Those who use the bus are often intimidated by strangers at and along routes to bus stops. This is particularly concerning for parents as the majority of students ride the bus by themselves. Aside from safety, variations in schedules throughout the week make it difficult for students to get to school on time or on a consistent basis. Service is also impacted by high levels of traffic, especially along Florin Road, which can become very congested and results in crowded buses. Crowding not only causes students to wait for less crowded buses, but it also presents a significant challenge for students with accessibility needs because there are a limited number of wheelchair accessible seats on each bus. For this reason, SacRT is not typically a viable option for most students who use mobility devices to get to school.

## Priorities and Opportunities

Continuing to provide free bus passes to students will be key to ensuring transit is financially accessible. Without such incentives, RT is not a possibility for many students. To improve school commuting, potential programming to group students together at stops and on buses could alleviate concerns related to safety. As reliability is a top priority, bus schedules, particularly for routes that stop at schools, should have consistent departure times during weekday mornings to ensure students get to school on time. High capacity improvements should be prioritized along Florin Road, where congestion is greatest, as well as at major connection points such as Florin Road and 65<sup>th</sup> Street, where many students transfer from bus to light rail. Lastly, bus stops should be sited as close as possible to school campuses as longer distances between stops and schools causes safety issues for students who must cross busy pick-up/drop-off zones to access transit. This is a particular issue at Hiram Johnson High School.

# Stakeholder Profile: Sacramento Transit Riders Union

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Systemwide

## Who They Are

The Sacramento Transit Riders Union (SacTRU) is a community coalition of public transit riders, transit workers, neighborhood leaders, and other partners to mobilize and advocate around transit issues in Sacramento. SacTRU believes that public transit is a right and that everyone should have access to it. The coalition was originally formed when SacRT began raising fares at a time when Sacramento's transit costs were already at the highest in the nation. Some of SacTRU's initiatives include advocating for lower fares and improved transit service, supporting outreach for the SacRT Forward network study, and facilitating a media challenge for local agency staff to use and experience public transit firsthand.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Cost of transit fares is one of the biggest barriers that discourage people from using transit. While SacRT recently provided free rides for students, the cost of fares for low- and middle-income users are still prohibitively expensive. More funding is needed to support transit expansion and operations such as maintenance of vehicles and conversion to electric fleets. SacTRU is advocating for a fare-free system in conjunction with locally dedicated and external transit funding sources to address these challenges.

Specific to the five corridors in the High Capacity Corridors study, SacTRU identified Arden Way and Florin Road as corridors in need of expanded transit service to better serve the needs of the communities. Both corridors also have poor pedestrian connectivity to bus stops, with sidewalk gaps and personal safety concerns posing challenges for accessing transit.

## Priorities and Opportunities

The types of destinations that would benefit from high capacity transit service include supermarkets and grocery stores, schools, and job centers, both in the downtown core and along the five corridors. Bus stop infrastructure must be visible and have basic amenities such as benches and shelters. Beyond infrastructure implementation, transit should also be central to all planning processes, especially in comprehensive transportation plans. Planning efforts at the City and County levels such as Complete Streets, Vision Zero, and active transportation plans need to incorporate transit in addition to pedestrian and bicycle considerations.

# Stakeholder Profile: Society for the Blind

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Systemwide

## Who They Are

The Society for the Blind provides services including job skills training, mentorship, youth programming, and tools to maintain independence for youth, adults, and seniors who are blind or have low vision. The nonprofit has been in operation since 1954 and serves residents in 27 counties and 3,000 people annually. The Society for the Blind's office is located at 13<sup>th</sup> and S Streets in Midtown, Sacramento. In addition to programming at their midtown location, staff also conducts in-home training and community workshops. Their mission is *to empower individuals living with low vision or blindness to discover, develop and achieve their full potential.*

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

Because the Society for the Blind serves so many people from diverse backgrounds, all forms of transportation are utilized. A large percentage of people use light rail, specifically on the Gold Line to access their office building, while the other half take paratransit. Many of their youth use Regional Transit connections at Arden and Watt Ave to access medical appointments, Arden Mall, Los Rios College, CSUS, and Sacramento City College.

The Society for the Blind works with those who are newly blind and those who have been blind or have low vision for most of their lives. Often times, they must teach them how to ride transit, feel safe doing so, and teach them how to trip plan. Getting people to the right appointments is a big barrier. Additionally, physical markers that clearly indicate bus stops and routes are needed for rides who are visually impaired. Not having a consistent recognition system adds to the barrier of learning to navigate transit.

For folks that live farther out in the county, transit becomes a larger barrier as service is not as regular or for our 23 counties, it may require people to make multiple transfers to/from their destination. For the Society for the Blind's older population, having door to door service is imperative. While light rail is convenient to their office, bus routes are not.

## Priorities and Opportunities

The Society for the Blind expressed support for bus stop and light rail improvements to aid people who are visually impaired to more easily navigate the system. Improvements of interest include: bus stop shelters, WiFi, benches, and consistent signage at all stops with large print and brail, and audio feedback at stops and while on transit.

# Stakeholder Profile: Sunrise Oaks Neighborhood Association

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Sunrise Boulevard

## Who They Are

The Sunrise Oaks Neighborhood Association (SONA) represents the residents of Citrus Heights' Area 9. Sunrise Oaks community members have a wide range of transit choices, including the Sunrise Mall Transit Center Greenback Lane and Arcadia Drive, one of two major transit centers in the city, and a light rail station. While the stops along Sunrise are not reported to be frequently used, many residents use a combination of the Transit Center and light rail to access jobs downtown, American River College, and Sierra College.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

SONA is bounded by two major corridors—Fair Oaks Boulevard on the east and Sunrise Boulevard on the west. In addition to the heavy traffic from these two major corridors, the Sunrise Mall Transit Center brings lots of bus activity that frequently results in bus bunching, particularly on the north side of Arcadia Drive. This has implications for air quality, traffic, travel times, and wait times (which also can make riders feel unsafe if waiting for longer periods of time). Furthermore, while there may be ample choices for transit in the community, trips to downtown and other key destinations require several transfers between modes (i.e. bus to light rail to bus), which contributes to longer trip times. Additionally, bus stop maintenance is a major complaint, especially from the local business community, as accumulation of trash and graffiti appear to be persistent issues.

## Priorities and Opportunities

With the conjunction of several transit modes, the Sunrise Oaks community has great potential to become a highly integrated, efficient transit hub, and thus should be a top priority for targeting future improvements. To mitigate the pinch point at the Sunrise Mall Transit Center, bus pick-up/drop-off zones could be extended to accommodate more buses. Bus routes departing from the Transit Center could also be re-routed to provide direct service to downtown and higher education institutions in the surrounding area, thereby decreasing the amount of transfers needed. SacRT might consider extending service from this area directly to Folsom, where many residents travel to access jobs and Folsom College. In addition to these improvements, residents would be further incentivized to take transit if bus shelters were provided to protect from the elements and properly maintained to ensure cleanliness and general appearance. Secure bike parking at stops would also reduce fear of theft and ease access to the Transit Center by addressing first/last mile gaps.

# Stakeholder Profile: Twin Rivers Unified School District

## What Corridor(s) They Represent

- Arden Way
- Watt Avenue

## Who They Are

Twin Rivers Unified School District (TRUSD) serves the greater Rio Linda Area and Del Paso Heights, which covers 127 square miles and 52 schools. The district is a Title I school, meaning it has a large concentration of low-income students. As TRUSD is such a large geographic area and serves low-income populations, SacRT has played a pivotal role in ensuring students can get to school. The free bus pass program has been especially crucial for the district's students who are experiencing homelessness, students in the foster care system, and students who attend the district's trade schools. The free bus pass program has also been beneficial in terms of providing young people the opportunity to get comfortable using transit from an early age. In the face of budget cuts and chronic bus driver staffing shortages, TRUSD transportation staff are hopeful that SacRT can play an even greater role in getting students to school in the future.

## Existing Conditions and Challenges

With existing schedules, SacRT service does not begin early enough in the mornings for students to be able to arrive to school on time, particularly on the early feeder routes. Furthermore, lack of service in certain areas such as Rio Linda, make it difficult, if not impossible, for many students to use SacRT to get to school. In areas where SacRT routes do extend, students often have to transfer several times on their way to school. The district recommends a maximum of two transfers per trip as this can help reduce travel times and safety concerns (i.e., students getting lost), especially considering the fact that the majority of the students travel by themselves. Additional safety concerns include unsafe crossing conditions for students accessing bus stops as SacRT buses and stops do not have the same level of safety precautions that school buses and stops often do (i.e., cars are legally required to stop when a bus is loading or unloading).

## Priorities and Opportunities

The top priority for TRUSD is ensuring service begins early enough for students to be able to get to school on time. SacRT might consider pairing schedule adjustments with higher frequency service during these timeframes to strive towards 15-minute wait times for students. SacRT may also consider designating a specific staff person to act as a liaison between the agency and the school district to identify where routes are needed most to improve access to schools. To supplement these efforts, there are potential opportunities for data collection to better understand where students are traveling to and from. TRUSD recognizes the integral role SacRT plays in the district and hopes to better integrate SacRT information on its websites so that students and families can more easily plan trips and find out which bus stops are closest. Additional priorities for high capacity improvements include improving bus stop amenities (especially the provision of shelters) and alleviating high levels of congestion on Watt Avenue through strategies such as bus-only lanes or signal priority at stoplights.

## **SacrRT High Capacity Transit Virtual Public Workshop Summary**

### **Workshop Overview**

A public workshop for SacRT's High Capacity Transit Study was held on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 from 4:00pm to 5:30pm. Due to public health measures related to COVID-19, the workshop was held virtually via Zoom and facilitated by project team members from WALKSacramento, SacRT, WSP, and Nelson/Nygaard. The workshop was intended to (1) increase knowledge and understanding of High Capacity Transit strategies, (2) understand current barriers for using bus service and the types of improvements that would make it more attractive, and (3) understand priority corridors and priority segments along those corridors. The presentation included an overview of the project, a summary of outreach, definition of key terms and concepts, and a review of the recommended corridors. Participants were able to engage with the project team and fellow stakeholders through the chat box, polling questions, discussion sections, and a final Question & Answer period. In total, there were 46 participants, who represented a wide range of interests, including SacRT riders, local government agencies, and community organizations (Appendix B). However, a few participants mentioned school districts and parents of young families as groups missing from the conversation and recommended they be included in future targeted outreach. A recording of the meeting will also be posted to SacRT's website for further engagement.

### **Summary of Feedback**

Out of the five corridors, Watt Avenue and Stockton Boulevard received the most support. Comments in favor of the Watt Avenue corridor included its unique function of serving two counties (Placer and Sacramento) as well as two light rail stations. Another participant mentioned a transit supportive land use plan called the North Watt Special Planning Area, which would pair well with high capacity bus service. Those who supported the Stockton Boulevard corridor brought up its high levels of ridership and the up-coming Aggie Square project, which will provide opportunities for mixed use development and housing. Several participants mentioned a desire for high capacity bus service to extend along the Sunrise Boulevard corridor up to the northern terminus at the Sutter medical facility in Roseville as well as portions of Placer County. System-wide, participants wanted assurance that the corridors would connect with other modes, particularly parallel neighborhood bike networks, as well as with fixed-route predictable bus lines that connect to key facilities, especially medical. In addition, there were a number of other corridors and destinations participants felt should be considered for future study, namely the Elkhorn/Greenback corridor with service to the Sacramento International Airport, Fair Oaks Boulevard, and American River College.

According to a Zoom poll (Appendix B), the top three considerations participants felt were most important to improving bus service were frequency, reliability, and pedestrian access. Furthermore, in terms of improving overall transit experience and encouraging more frequent use, the top issues that participants discussed were building and siting shelters to better protect from sun and rainfall; creating separate, clearly designated high capacity bus service stops; and ensuring accessibility, particularly for riders who have mobility disabilities or are blind or low-vision. Several participants also noted that personal vehicles illegally parked in front of stops prevents buses from pulling up to the curb, thereby impacting bus timing. Suggestions for how to improve accessibility included locating stops adjacent to existing sidewalks (as opposed to "floating" stops) and installing ground treatments to signify to



blind/low-vision riders where high capacity bus stops are located. Concern was also voiced regarding queue-jumping treatment options due to potential confusion of blind/low-vision pedestrians at signalized intersections.

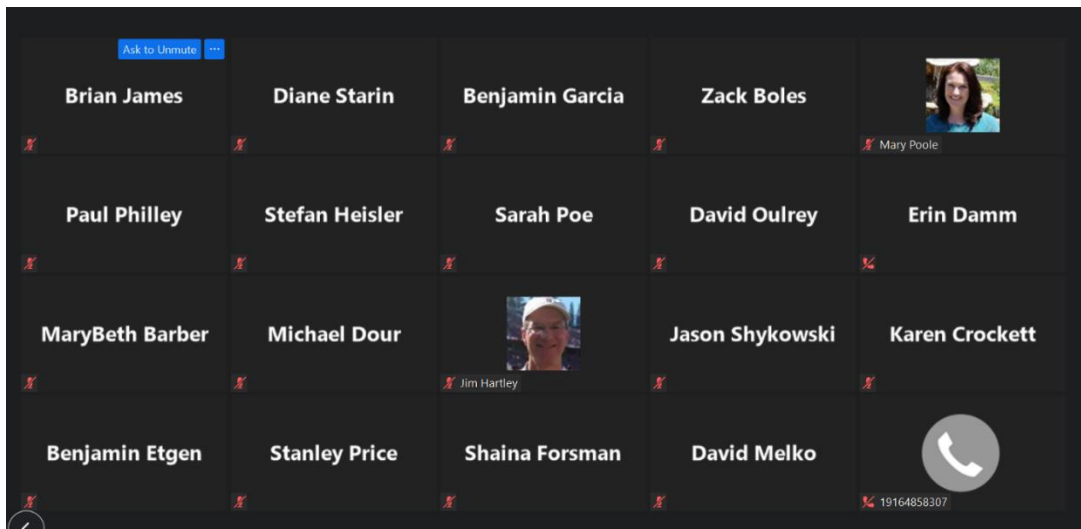
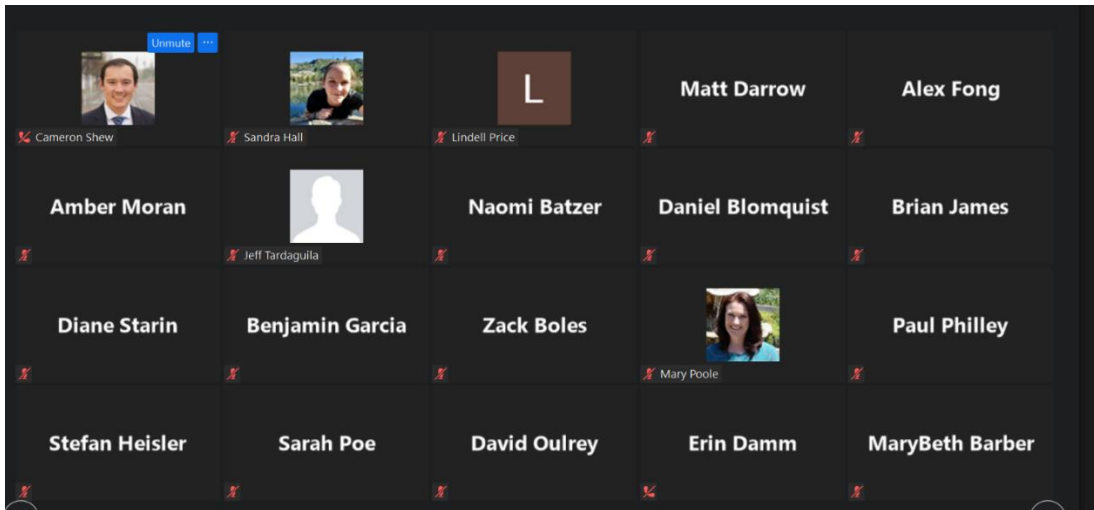
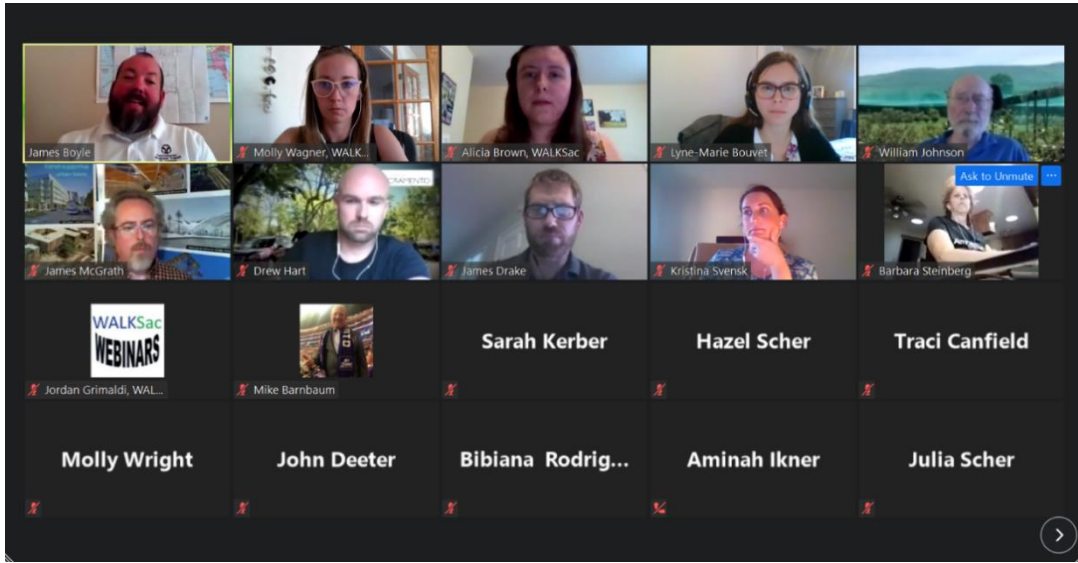
### **Frequently Asked Questions**

1. What were the criteria used to select the five corridors?
2. Will high capacity bus service be extended to the airport?

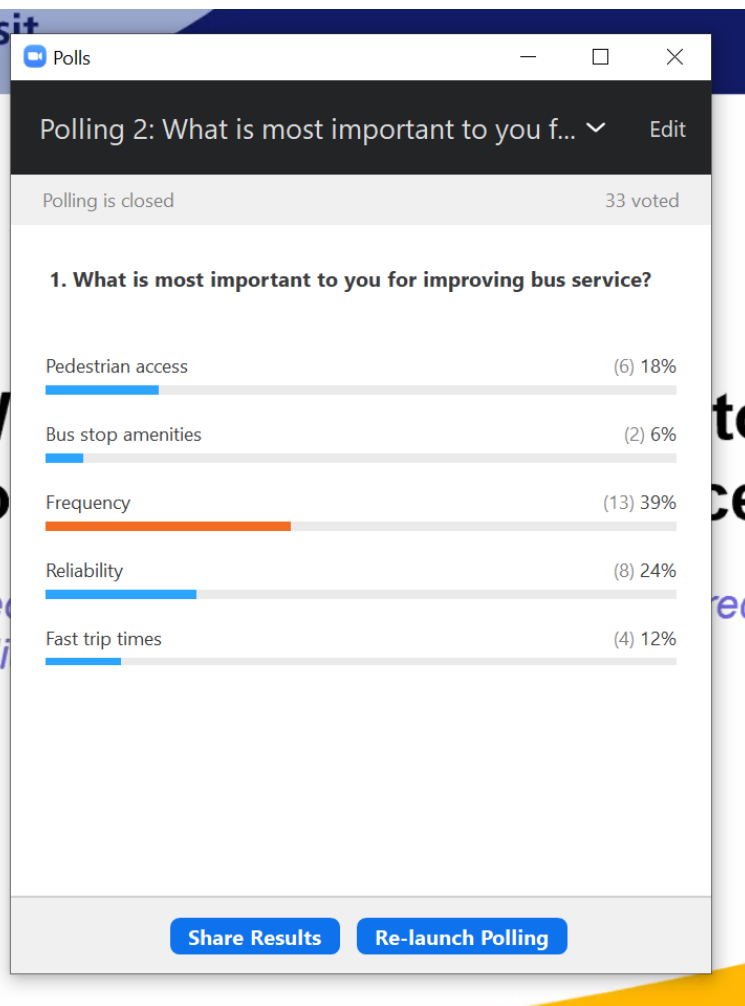
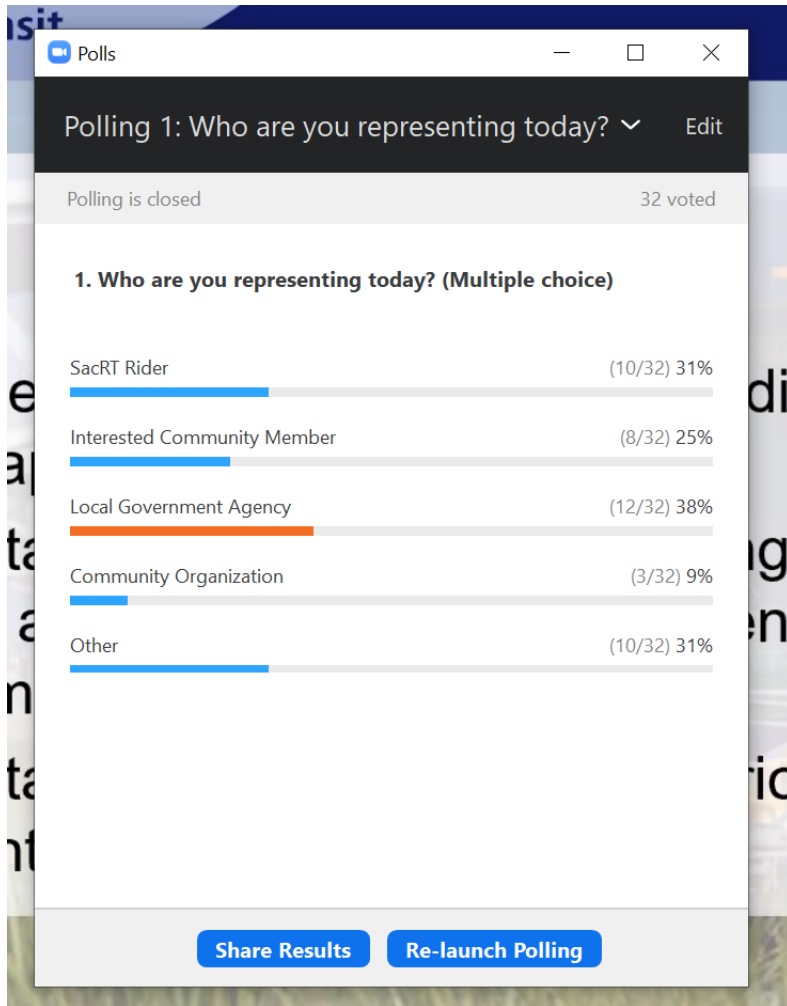
### **Unaddressed Questions from the Workshop:**

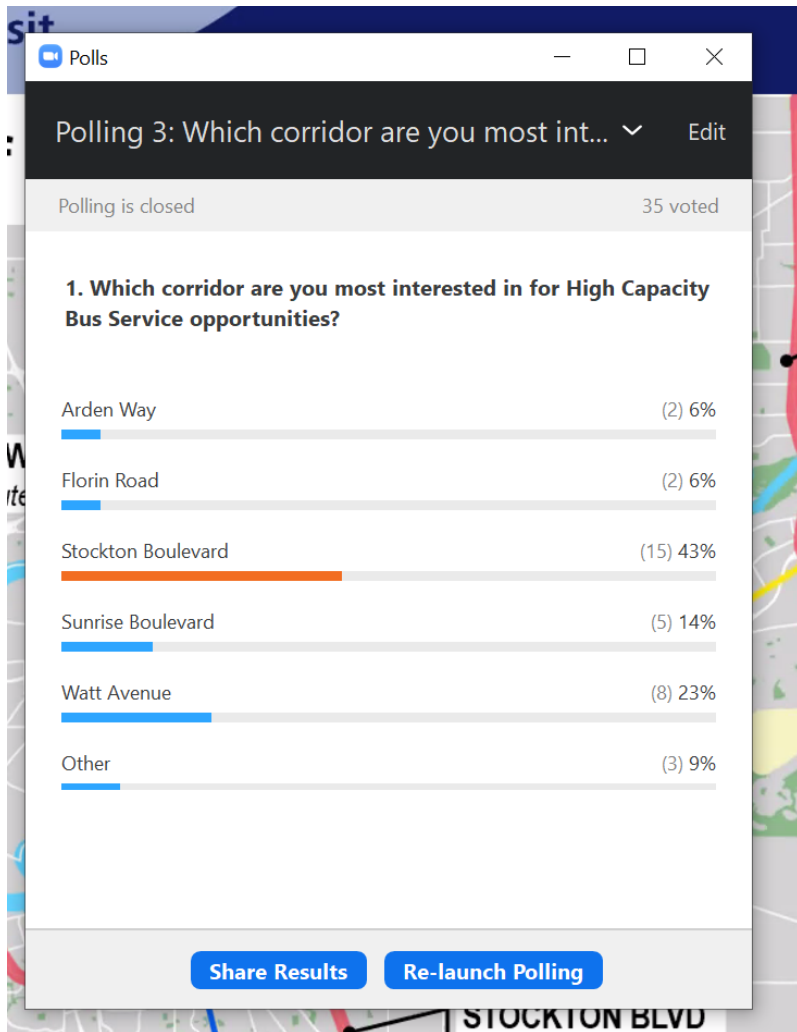
1. Will the goals of realigning routes result in a recommendation for bus stop relocation or removal?
2. Will the report include a review of RT's previous BRT attempts?
3. Because Greenback Road (in Citrus Heights) already has the bus #1 line which has 15-minute service, is it not part of the conversation anymore?
4. What is SacRT doing to promote public interest and support for high capacity systems? Also, what efforts are being made to show the public that the high capacity bus system will be a viable alternative to get around the Sac Metro area instead of using automobiles?

## Appendix A: Zoom Participants Screenshots



## Appendix B: Zoom Poll Screenshots





# SacRT High Capacity Bus Service Survey Results

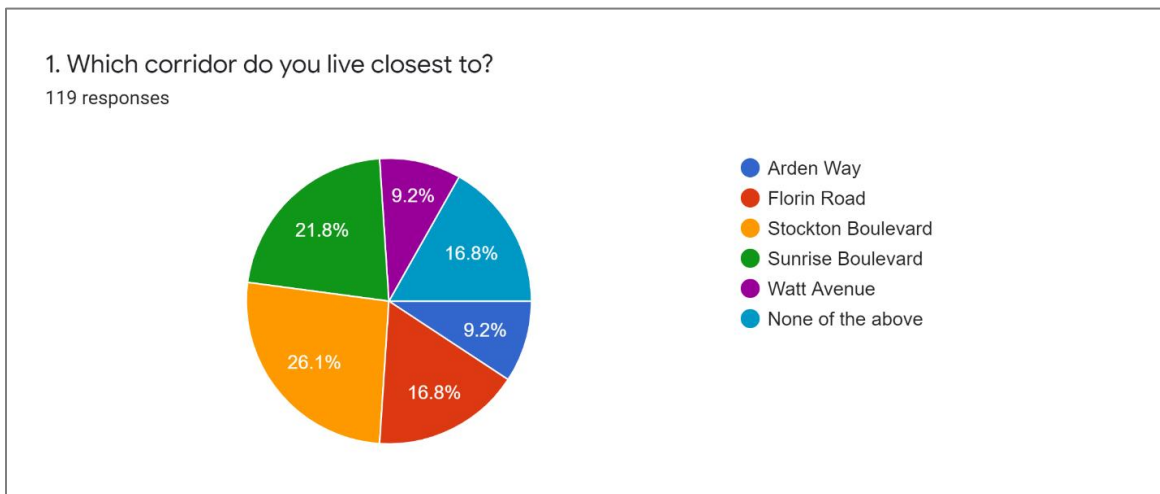
Sacramento Regional Transit (SacRT) developed an online survey as part of the High Capacity Bus Service study, with the goal of identifying opportunities to improve bus service along congested corridors. The survey included a series of 14 questions focused on understanding priorities for improved bus service, existing challenges with bus routes along congested corridors, and preferences for different types of high capacity strategies.

The survey was distributed through the project website, e-newsletters, and email communications throughout the community. In total, 120 responses were collected during the survey period, which began October 7<sup>th</sup> and ended November 20<sup>th</sup> 2020.

Key takeaways from the survey include priorities for improving riders' transit experience (higher frequency of buses, reliable schedules, and faster travel times); current challenges and barriers (wait times at stops, traffic, and congestion at stop lights); and priorities for high capacity bus service improvements (dedicated bus lanes, improving pedestrian access, and traffic signal priority at stoplights).

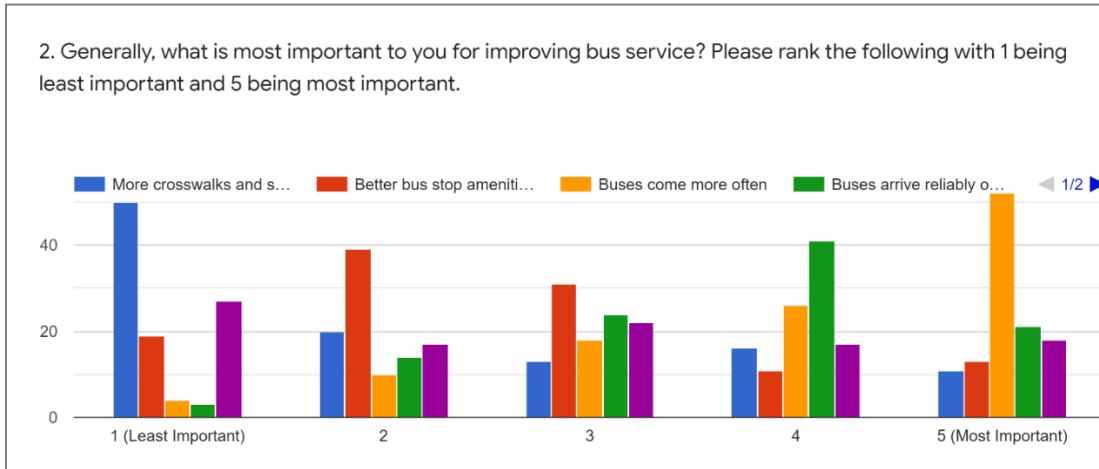
## I. General Information

To gain a better understanding of where riders are located along or around the five corridors, the survey began by asking respondents to identify which corridor they live closest to. Most respondents reported living closest to Stockton Boulevard (26.1%), Sunrise Boulevard (21.8%), and Florin Road (16.8%), and Arden Way (9.2%).



Respondents were then asked to rank five factors for improving bus service, including more crosswalks and sidewalks to get to bus stops, better bus stop amenities, buses coming more often, buses arriving reliably on schedule, and faster trips while onboard the bus. Of the factors respondents ranked as "most important," the top three responses were "Buses come more often" (52 respondents), "Buses arrive reliably on schedule" (21 respondents), and "Faster trips

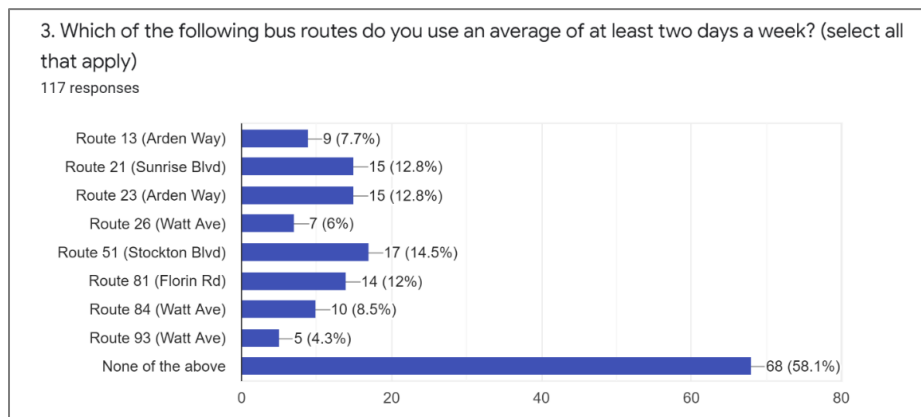
while onboard the bus” (18 respondents). Of the factors that respondents ranked as “least important,” the top three responses were “More crosswalks and sidewalks to get to bus stops” (50 respondents), “Faster trips while onboard the bus” (27 respondents), and “Better bus stop amenities (shelters, bench, lighting, trees, etc.)” (19 respondents). Thus, “Faster trips while onboard the bus” appears to be somewhat of a polarizing factor, with some riders viewing it as most important and other riders viewing it as least important. Overall, focusing on reducing total trip time (including wait time and travel time) appear to be of higher priority than investing in infrastructure improvements (i.e., pedestrian facilities and amenities).



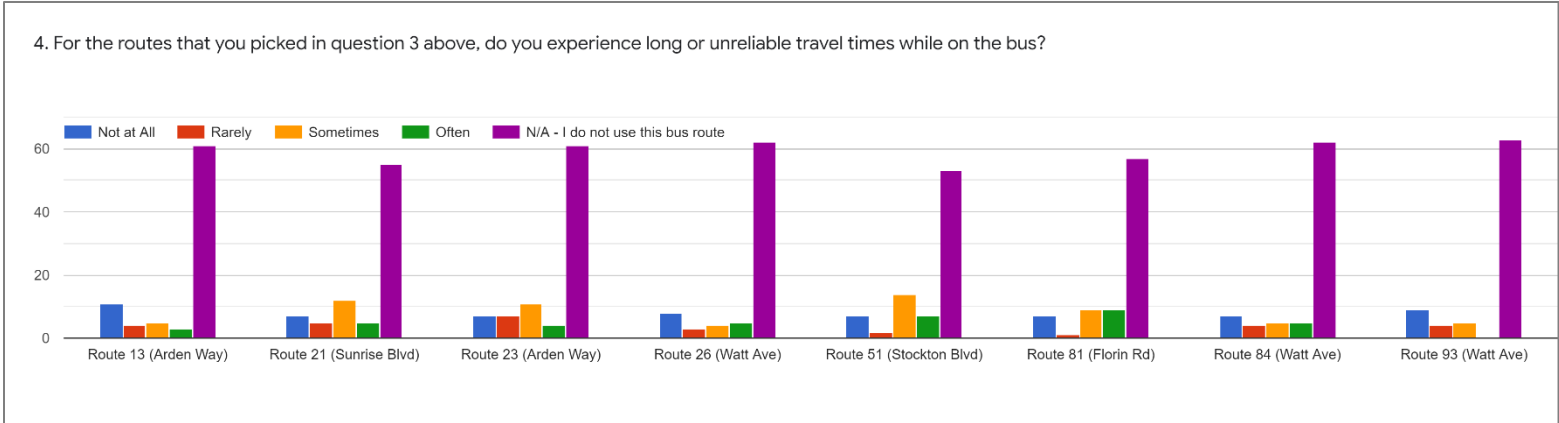
## II. Bus Route Travel Time

The next set of questions sought to gain a better understanding of how often are riders using the bus, which routes are they primarily using, and how their experience is in terms of travel time.

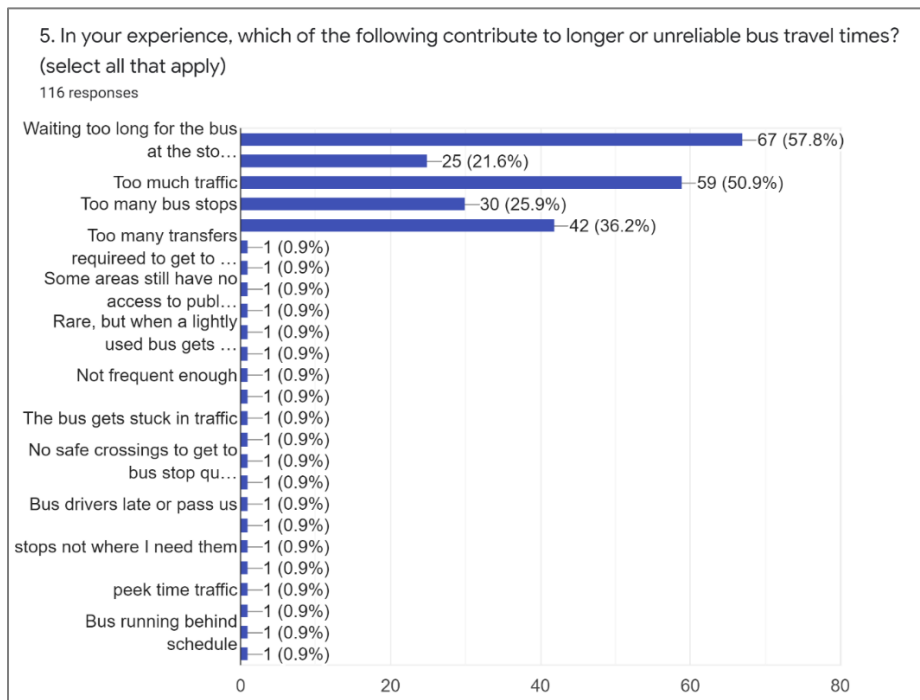
To begin, respondents selected which bus routes they use on an average of at least two days a week. The majority of respondents selected “None of the above” (68 respondents), indicating they either use bus routes that were not listed or they use the listed bus routes less frequently than two days a week. Of the options provided, the top three routes most frequently used were Route 51 (Stockton Boulevard) and a tie between Route 21 (Sunrise Boulevard) and Route 23 (Arden Way).



As a follow up, respondents were asked if they experience long or unreliable travel times while on any of the bus routes. The majority of the routes received “Sometimes” (Routes 21, 23, and 51) or “Not at all” (Routes 13, 26, 84, and 93) as the highest response—with the exception of Route 81 (Florin Road), which was tied between “Sometimes” and “Often.”



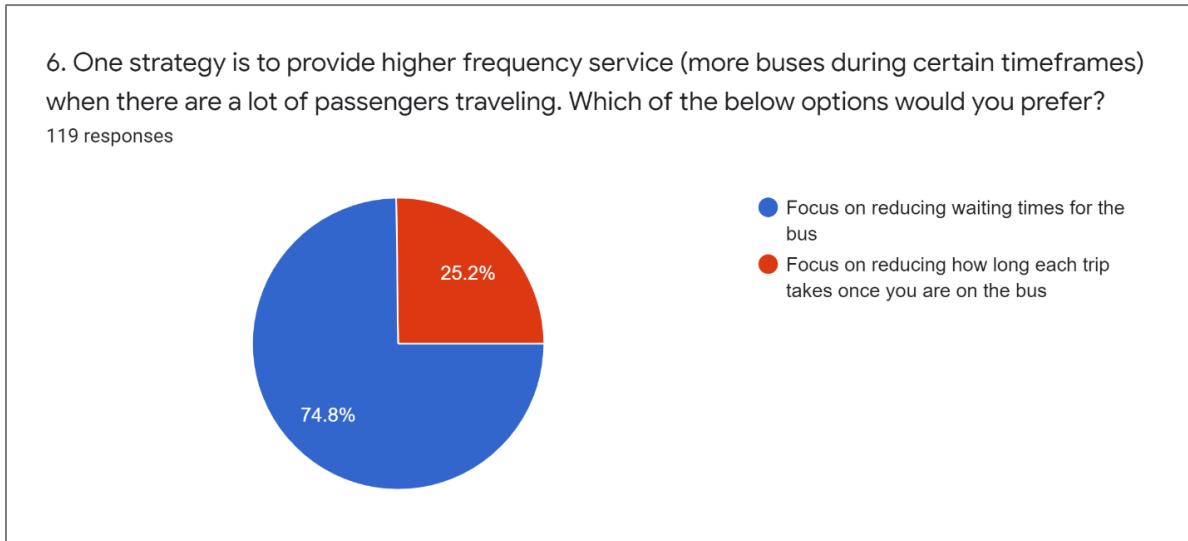
Lastly for this section of the survey, respondents were asked to reflect upon their experience riding the bus to indicate which of factors contributed to longer or unreliable bus travel times. The vast majority of respondents identified “Waiting too long for the bus at the stops” (57.8%) as the greatest contributing factor. The second and third highest factors were “Too much traffic” (50.9%) and “It takes too long to get through the stoplight at intersections” (36.2%). High capacity improvements such as increasing frequency of buses and traffic signal priority are potential strategies to mitigate these top concerns. Questions 8, 9, and 12 below provide more insight into preferred timeframes, frequency, and other improvements that can help inform these strategies.



### III. Service Span and Frequency

This section of the survey focused on higher frequency service as one potential strategy for high capacity bus service. The goal was to understand priorities for higher frequency bus service, including desired timeframes and how often buses arrive.

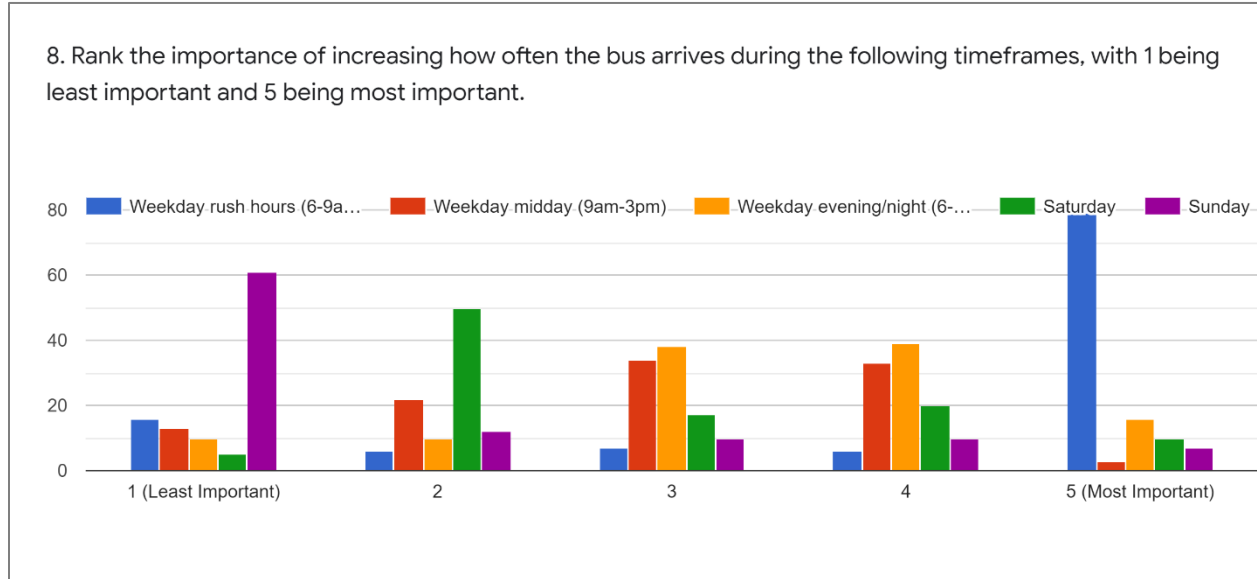
Respondents were asked to choose between focusing on reducing wait times or reducing travel times. The vast majority of respondents (74.8%) indicated reducing wait times for the bus as a higher priority than reducing how long each trip takes while on the bus.



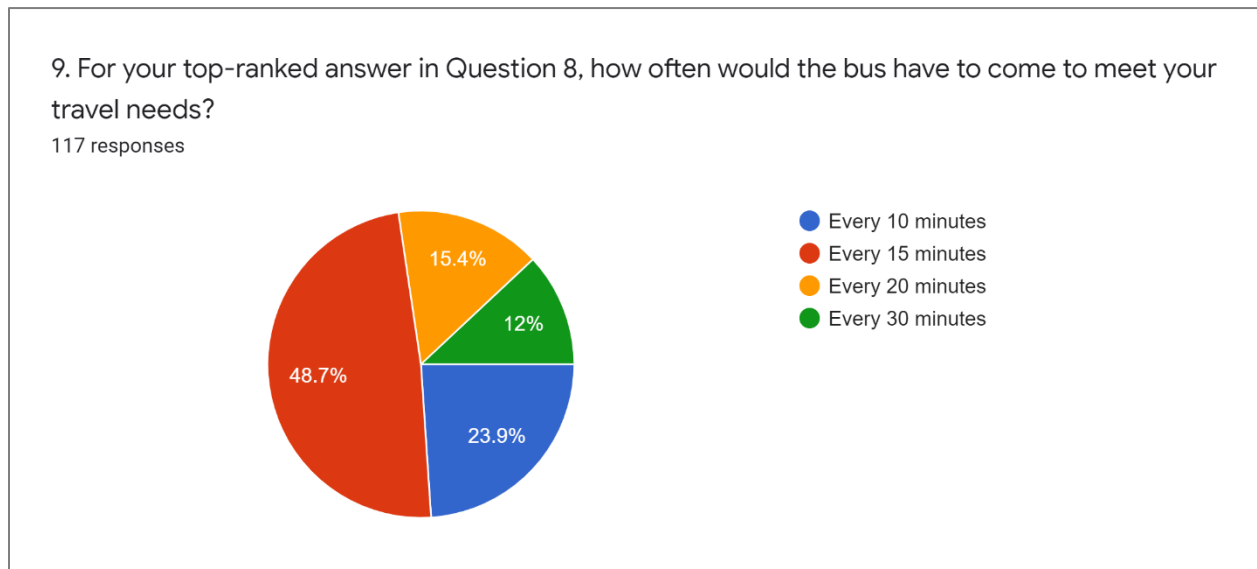
As a follow up, respondents were given the opportunity to expand upon their previous answer. The responses were overwhelmingly in favor of focusing on reducing wait times over onboard travel times, which is consistent with the response breakdown from question six. Those who were in favor of reducing wait times primarily discussed how this would help reduce exposure to the elements (especially at stops without shelters) and potential safety threats (i.e., robbery, harassment, etc.). Several respondents mentioned how higher bus frequency (resulting from shortened wait times) was more important to them than faster travel times because more frequent buses could reduce crowding and mitigate the need for trip planning according to unpredictable schedules. However, even though the majority of respondents were in favor of reducing wait times, several people expressed that both options should be emphasized because riders consider both wait times *and* travel times when planning trips.



Expanding upon the topic of bus frequency, respondents were asked to rank the following timeframes in terms of when to target higher frequency service. Of the timeframes that were ranked “Most important,” the top three options selected were “Weekday rush hours” (79 respondents), “Weekday evening/night” (16 respondents), and “Saturday” (10 respondents).



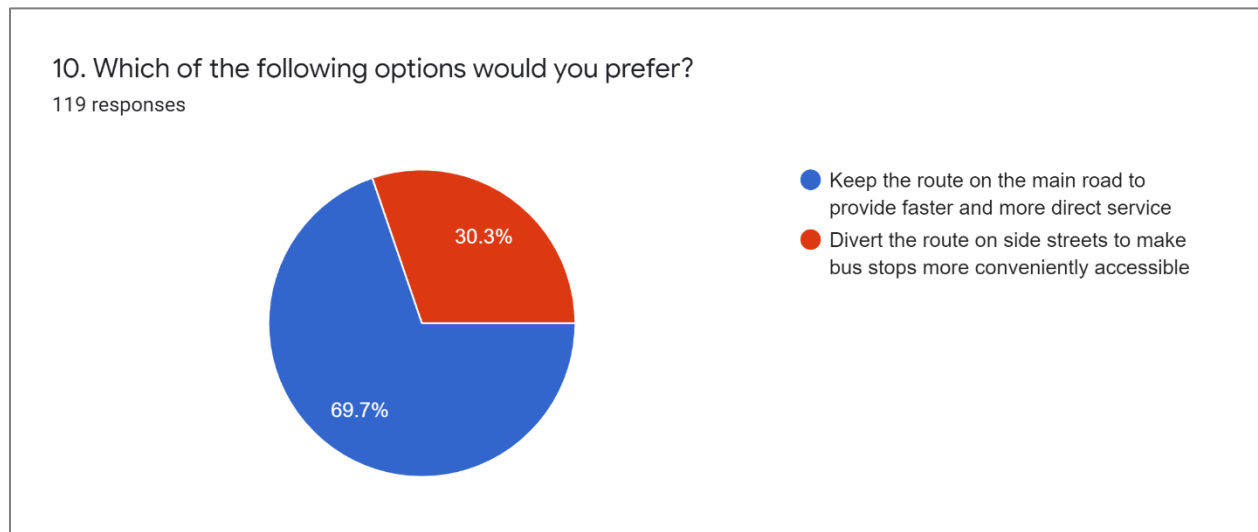
As a follow up to question eight, respondents were asked to expand upon their answer by indicating how often the bus would have to come to meet their travel needs. Nearly half of respondents (47.8%) selected “Every 15 minutes.” The second two most popular choices were “Every 10 minutes” (23.9%) and “Every 20 minutes” (15.4%).



#### IV. Route Alignment

The second strategy of focus for this study is route alignment/straightening (keeping routes along main roads, as opposed to diverting routes to side streets). This strategy has the potential to reduce travel times by making routes more direct, however, it could also lead to increased distances for walking, biking, or rolling to stops.

Respondents were asked to choose whether they prefer keeping routes on main roads or diverting routes to side streets. The overwhelming majority of respondents (69.7%) were in favor of keeping routes on main roads, while 30.3% of respondents were in favor of diverting routes to side streets.



Respondents were then asked to share any additional thoughts they had regarding question ten above. Those who were in favor of keeping routes on main roads voiced potential benefits of this strategy, including reduced travel times, promotion of active transportation to access stops from neighborhoods, and increased perception of personal safety. However, several of these respondents qualified their comments by requesting routes be paired with additional improvements, including proper lighting and bus-only lanes, to ensure safety and efficiency. On the other hand, proponents of diverting routes to side streets cited improved accessibility for older adults and people with disabilities as well as shortened distances to stops (which also helps to reduce exposure to the elements, especially heat) as potential benefits of this method.

Regardless of the type of route alignment, respondents shared general concerns related to system connectivity, including safe and seamless integration with bicycle and pedestrian facilities (i.e., no shared lanes between buses and bikes, bike racks on buses, secure bike parking at stops, consistent sidewalk networks), direct access to key destinations (i.e. shopping, entertainment, schools, medical centers), and longer-term planning for transit-oriented development along corridors.

## V. Priority Improvements

In order to ensure resources are used efficiently and improvements align with riders' topmost needs, respondents were asked to rank five possible high capacity bus service improvements from lowest priority to highest priority. Options included improving sidewalks and crosswalks to access bus stops, improving bus stop amenities, traffic signal priority and short bus lanes, dedicated bus lanes to bypass traffic stopped at red lights, and route alignment/straightening. Of the improvements that were ranked the highest, "Dedicated bus lanes" received the most votes (49). The second and third highest priority improvements—"Traffic signal priority and short bus lanes" and "Route alignment/straightening"—were nearly tied with 19 and 17 votes respectively. The factors that were ranked as lowest priority were "Improving sidewalks and crosswalks" (36 votes), "Route alignment/straightening" (34 votes), and "Improving bus stop amenities" (28 votes). Again, "route alignment/straightening" appears to be somewhat of a polarizing factor as it was ranked as both lowest and highest priority by respondents. However, Question 10 above provides more nuance in terms of perceived benefits and drawbacks of this strategy. Overall, the responses indicate that reducing wait and travel times are highest priority for high capacity bus service, which is consistent with the factors ranked as "most important" to improving riders' transit experience from Question 2.



## **VI. Additional Comments**

The final question of the survey gave participants the opportunity to provide any additional comments they may have related to high capacity bus service in Sacramento. Responses generally fell under the following key themes and were consistent with many of the comments regarding route alignment.

### Enthusiastic Support

Overall, respondents were very excited at the prospect of high capacity bus service coming to Sacramento. Several survey participants mentioned that, if done effectively, they would be more inclined to use the bus if there was a reliable high capacity bus network. Many respondents see this project as an opportunity not only to improve bus service but also as a way to improve multimodal connectivity throughout the region.

### Reliability

Frequent and reliable connections, with minimal transfers, was mentioned as a top priority for high capacity bus service.

### Direct Access to Key Destinations

Many riders feel existing bus and light rail networks do not provide direct or efficient access to key destinations, including shopping, medical facilities, entertainment, job centers, etc.

### Accessibility

Floating bus stops were strongly opposed as a potential improvement due to concerns surrounding accessibility for those with disabilities and safety of pedestrians in general by increasing exposure to vehicular traffic. Sidewalks and street-level boarding were mentioned as more favorable methods for promoting accessibility.

### Equity

Future service should prioritize access to and from underserved and low-income neighborhoods, particularly south of Highway 50 in Rancho Cordova.

### Technological Advancements

Investing in technological advancements such as a SacRT app with real-time bus tracking capabilities as well as an electric bus fleet will help improve the rider experience and promote climate resilience throughout the region.

### Additional Corridors for Future Study

Marconi Avenue, Freeport Boulevard, Franklin Boulevard, Laguna Boulevard, Fair Oaks Boulevard, and the region's freeways, were recommended as additional corridors for future study.



# HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT

Sacramento Regional Transit is assessing opportunities for high capacity bus service and bus rapid transit along congested corridors, including Stockton Boulevard, Florin Road, Sunrise Boulevard, Arden Way, and Watt Avenue.

## WHAT IS HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT?

The goal of high capacity transit is to provide faster, more convenient, and more reliable service to a larger number of passengers. High capacity transit improvements may include strategies such as:

### BUS-ONLY LANES

### SIGNAL PRIORITY

### STATION AMENITIES



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## SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS!

## VIRTUAL PUBLIC WORKSHOP

Wednesday, October 21st  
4:00 - 5:30 PM

RSVP at: [bit.ly/SacRT-HCT-Workshop](https://bit.ly/SacRT-HCT-Workshop)

TAKE THE SURVEY: [bit.ly/SacRT-HCT-Survey](https://bit.ly/SacRT-HCT-Survey)

### Questions or Comments?

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For SacRT Customer Service visit [www.sacrt.com](http://www.sacrt.com) or call 916-321-BUSS (2877)