

Date: March 19, 2020

## **BART to Temporarily Reduce Service Hours Based on Ridership Data**

BART is taking swift action to reduce operating costs as ridership levels have declined by 90% as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and shelter in place orders. BART has done an exhaustive review of ridership and train car loads this week and will make the following changes to service until further notice:

- Starting Monday, March 23, 2020, BART will provide service Monday-Friday from 5am-9pm (currently service is 5am-midnight). Current weekday train frequency will remain.
- Starting Saturday March 28, 2020, Saturday and Sunday service will be from 8am-9pm (currently Saturday service is 6am-midnight and Sunday is 8am-midnight). Current weekend train frequency will remain.

All riders must be in the system by 8:45pm to have a guaranteed ride to their destination.

BART will monitor ridership data each day to determine how long these service hours will be in effect.

### **Data based decision**

Ridership after 9pm has dropped substantially and now represents only 3% of total daily ridership. Closing early is a better option than running less frequently or running shorter trains after 9pm because BART will realize immediate costs savings to its operating budget by being able to reassign a significant number of operating staff to capital projects. These are projects that will accelerate our system reinvestment work.

“This decision is being made now because all 9 counties in the Bay Area have shelter in place orders and our ridership has plummeted 90%,” said BART General Manager Bob Powers. “We are taking a data-driven approach to these decisions to ensure as few people as possible are impacted. These are extraordinary times and we did not take this decision lightly. Our system operates using public dollars and we have an obligation to make financially sound decisions about service levels.”

### **Other steps taken to reduce operating costs**

General Manager Bob Powers is closely monitoring revenues and expenses daily, adjusting while also balancing our obligation to provide public transit to essential

workers in the region. The immediate loss of fare revenue has a devastating impact on BART's operating budget as 60% of our budget to provide service is from fare dollars.

BART's General Manager has implemented the following cost reduction measures:

- An immediate District-wide hiring freeze except for BART Police. All other vacancies funded through the operating budget will remain vacant until further notice.
- All overtime funded by the operating budget has been cancelled unless required for critical operating and maintenance functions, staffing requirements outlined in our Collective Bargaining Agreements, or legal requirements such as employee rest laws. Overtime funded by the Capital budget is being approved on a case by case basis.
- Some positions funded by the operating budget have been shifted to capital funded work. For example, as BART runs few trains on the yellow line in response to lower ridership, train mechanics have been shifted to Fleet of the Future related work.
- All employee travel for conferences and other work-related travel has been suspended until further notice.

BART is seeking emergency funds from all levels of government during this crisis. A sustained ridership loss of 90% and a 50% reduction of economic activity impacting other revenue sources could reduce BART's monthly revenues by approximately \$60M.