

Regional Network Management Committee

December 13, 2024

Agenda Item 4b

Mapping & Wayfinding – Prototype Implementation Update

Subject:

Update on El Cerrito del Norte and Santa Rosa Transit Mall and SMART station Prototypes and the Pilot Projects.

Background:

The Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force recommended a regionally harmonized mapping and wayfinding system as a key action item in the Task Force’s Transformation Action Plan. The Regional Mapping and Wayfinding Project (RMWP) will redesign and harmonize maps and signage across all nine Bay Area counties to help people navigate transit more easily. Staff has achieved several project milestones in the last two years:

- 2022: Brought aboard Applied Wayfinding, Inc. (Applied), to design and support implementation of the new wayfinding system.
- 2023: Conducted initial round of public outreach, development of draft design guidelines, and identified the two prototype locations.
- 2024: Introduced draft guidelines in January, confirmed nine Pilot locations, and began Prototype installations.

Wayfinding Prototypes and Pilot Projects

The RMWP will deliver a set of regional wayfinding design guidelines for use at Bay Area transit facilities, including bus stops and complex transfer hubs. In collaboration with transit agencies, staff are developing the guidelines by testing new signs and maps at increasing geographic scales. The Prototype wayfinding materials installed at El Cerrito del Norte BART station and the Santa Rosa Transit Mall and SMART station will test the January 2024 draft designs.

Incorporating public, stakeholder, and transit agency feedback from the design tests, the wayfinding guidelines will be updated and the revised designs implemented in more locations around the region via the Pilot Projects. These projects will test the production, installation, and maintenance of the new wayfinding system with more operators and in additional environments to make further refinements before full regionwide expansion. Pilot Projects include:

1. New wayfinding at nine multimodal transit hubs around the region, starting in 2025; and
2. New wayfinding on a selection of bus lines in Sonoma and Solano Counties, starting in 2026.

Testing New Maps and Sign Designs

The RMWP consists of two distinct but closely coordinated visual elements: first, customer information and navigational **signs**, which were shared this spring; and second, a set of transit service **maps**, which were introduced in September. Since January, MTC and transit agency staff have been collaborating on the new maps, as well as upgraded bus stop signs and other map-based signs that are being tested at the El Cerrito del Norte and Santa Rosa locations.

The maps and map-based signs include:

- **Regional transit map**, which shows all public transit service areas and key connections within the 130-mile north-south extent of the nine-county Bay Area in a style consistent with the new regional network identity.
- **Local transit maps**, which inform riders of transit options within 5-10 miles of a station and how often they operate.
- **Neighborhood maps**, which provide points of interest within 0.5 to 1 mile of a station.
- **Transit facility maps**, which show riders where to board their connecting transit route and access amenities within approximately 500-1,000 feet of a station.
- **Line diagrams**, which are map-based signs that guide riders to the correct train platform and display stations served down the line.
- **Pedestrian wayfinding signs**, which are map-based signs that guide people as they walk or roll between transit facilities.

- **Bus stop signs**, which inform riders of their current location, route destination, and key service characteristics using standardized colors and font sizes.

New maps are installed adjacent to one another so they can be used in tandem for trip planning purposes. Not all transit services, points of interest, or amenities can or should be shown on every map, so maps must balance legibility and the amount of information shown at each scale.

Additionally, the new bus stop signs and suite of maps were designed together to emphasize service frequency, a key driver of transit ridership, using a standardized set of colors and line thicknesses on maps, bus route labels, and bus stop signs. They also highlight enhanced frequency where schedules of overlapping routes are coordinated to provide more service.

These new signs and maps are considered *drafts*, as they have yet to be experienced by members of the transit riding public. MTC's outreach includes an online survey and virtual focus groups, and onsite engagement via site tours, accompanied test journeys, and intercept surveys.

Moving forward, the production of some maps, including the Local transit, Neighborhood, and Transit facility maps may be able to be automated using the MTC 511 team's Regional Mapping Data Services (RMDS) platform. The RMDS will integrate OpenStreetMap data and transit routes and schedule data to produce a map.

Real-Time Info Demonstration at El Cerrito del Norte

MTC is testing a "proof of concept" (i.e., demonstration) of mobile device friendly real-time transit information at the El Cerrito del Norte Prototype site and on Golden Gate Transit (GGT) Routes 580 and 580X, which connect El Cerrito del Norte with the San Rafael Transit Center.

New signs with QR codes are installed at all El Cerrito del Norte and GGT Route 580/580X bus stops. Customers who scan a code will be brought to a mobile optimized web site that provides scheduled and real-time departure information at that stop. At El Cerrito del Norte transit hub bus stops, departure information is also available for BART trains serving that station.

Santa Clara County Pilot Project Update

Due to potential construction conflicts of the BART Silicon Valley Phase II project around San Jose Diridon Station, the location of the Santa Clara County Pilot Project has been changed to Palo Alto Transit Center. MTC project team staff will continue to work with VTA, BART and the City of San Jose to identify future opportunities at Diridon Station. The revised list of Pilot Project locations is included as Attachment B.

Next Steps:

The anticipated next steps and project schedule are:

- Winter 2025: Synthesize public feedback on the maps and sign designs being tested at El Cerrito del Norte and Santa Rosa Prototype locations.
- Spring 2025: Release Version 1 of Regional Wayfinding Design Guidelines.
- Spring-Fall 2025: Conduct planning, design, and permitting for installation of new wayfinding at nine regional transit hubs as part of Pilot Projects.
- By end of 2025: Begin installation of new wayfinding at nine regional transit hubs.

Issues:

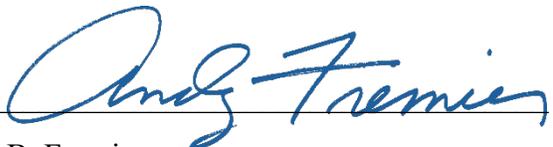
None identified.

Recommendations:

Information.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Presentation
- Attachment B: Revised Pilot Project Locations



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