

# CONNECTING US

NOVEMBER 20-22, 2024  
SAN JOSE CONVENTION CENTER

## AGENDA

### TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19

8:30 am - 4:00 pm      Jim Ditch Golf Tournament

### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

10:00 am - 11:00 am      IT Committee

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm      IDEA Task Force Meeting

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm      Pre-Conference Session

#### TRANSIT TRANSFORMATION TASK FORCE UPDATE

**Chad Edison**, Chief Deputy Secretary for Rail and Transit, California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA)

**Michael Pimentel**, Executive Director, California Transit Association

- Hear the latest from CalSTA on the ongoing work of the Transit Transformation Task Force
- Learn more about the Association's efforts to inform the Task Force's report of recommendations
- Receive an update on SB 125 funding and steps necessary to receive the latest allocation of this critical funding

4:30 pm - 6:00 pm      Opening General Session

Keynote Address

#### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Summer Sanders: Olympic Gold Medalist**

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm      Welcome Reception and Expo



### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

7:00 am - 8:00 am      Maintenance Committee Meeting

8:00 am - 9:00 am      Operations Committee Meeting

9:00 am - 10:30 am      General Session

#### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Jarrett Walker: World-renowned transit-network consultant and author**

10:30 am - 11:30 am      Coffee and Expo



*The Expo Hall will be open during conference hours on Wednesday and Thursday, with dedicated time on both days.*

11:45 am – 1:00 pm

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS I

### **Grow Ridership with Innovative Mobility Solutions for All (E)**

- **Dr. Susie Pike**, Director, UC Davis Transit Research Center [Moderator]
- **William Bacon**, Assistant Director, Strategic Policy and Partnerships, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
- **Asher Butnik**, Senior Transit Planner, Marin Transit
- **Sean Kennedy**, Chief Planning and Implementation Officer, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
- **Vanessa Rauschenberger**, General Manager, Gold Coast Transit District

Transit agencies increase ridership and successfully carry out their missions when they ensure that a wide range of community members can access and use transit. Hear from transit professionals who have successfully implemented projects and services to make it easier for vulnerable populations to make transit a more comfortable, more affordable, and simpler part of their day.


### **The Do's and Don'ts of Hydrogen Deployment**

- **Rashidi Barnes**, CEO, Tri-Delta Transit [Moderator]
- **Kim Okafor**, General Manager, Zero Emissions Division, Trillium Energy Solutions & Love's Travel Stops
- **Sydney Kruger**, President, KTC Consulting
- **Roland Cordero**, Director of Maintenance & Vehicle Technology, Foothill Transit
- **Nicole Witt**, Deputy Counsel to San Joaquin Regional Transit District and Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District, Hanson Bridgett
- **Salvador Llamas**, Chief Operating Officer, Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District

Hydrogen fuel cell bus technology is gaining momentum for transit agencies looking for an alternative or complement to battery-electric bus technology. Despite the growing demand for this technology, the baseline requirements and characteristics of successful deployments are not widely understood. This panel will bring together leading voices on hydrogen deployment for a far-reaching discussion on infrastructure development best practices, hydrogen fuel procurement considerations, workforce needs, and more to support success with hydrogen.

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 **Proven Strategies for Developing and Sustaining Relationships with Your Legislative Delegation**

- **Matt Robinson**, Legislative Advocate, California Transit Association
- **Delaney Hunter**, Managing Partner, California Advisors
- **Mary Dover**, Chief of Staff, North County Transit District

Developing and sustaining relationships with state and federal legislators is critical for advancing your agency's policy priorities and securing funding for projects and services that support the communities you serve. This panel brings together Sacramento advocates, agency representatives, and legislative staff for an exploration of best practices and strategies for forming meaningful relationships with lawmakers.

 **Activating Public Spaces: Stops, Stations, and Surroundings**

- **Margaret Cederoth**, Director of Planning and Sustainability, California High Speed Rail Authority [Moderator]
- **Kathleen Podrasky**, Community Engagement Supervisor, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
- **Christopher Flores**, Chief of Staff / Vice President of Real Estate, Sacramento Regional Transit District
- **Mark Olson**, Director of Marketing & Communications, San Diego Metropolitan Transit System
- **Jennifer Easton**, Art Program Manager, San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit

Stops and stations are an important part of the overall transit experience. Facilities that are clean, safe, comfortable, beautiful, and central gathering points can attract new riders and keep them coming back. Hear from transit agencies and experts who are rethinking stops and stations in the communities they serve.

 **Protect Frontline Workers: Safety Strategies, Rider Conduct, and Rule Enforcement (S)**

- **Ruby Horta**, Assistant General Manager, County Connection [Moderator]
- **Mike Tobin**, Director of Operations, Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority
- **David C. Casarrubias-González**, Senior Counsel, Hanson Bridgett
- **Curtis Boyd**, Senior Consultant, Insight Strategies

For transit agency leaders concerned about the safety of their frontline workers, this panel is for you! Learn from experts about best practices and successful experiences with implementing rider codes of conduct, options for operators that do not maintain their own police force, designing and implementing de-escalation training programs, and more. **This panel focuses on enforcement and intervention strategies for advancing public safety.**

1:00 pm – 2:15 pm

Lunch and Expo

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2:30 pm – 3:45 pm

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS II

### **Microgrids: ZEV Benefits, Resiliency, and More**

- **Bryan Lee**, Lead Project Manager-Bus Initiative, CALSTART [Moderator]
- **Tim Victor**, Associate Director, eMobility, Scale Microgrids
- **Diana Kotler**, CEO, Anaheim Transportation Network
- **Aditya Kushwah**, Technical Project Manager, CALSTART
- **Sasha Pejdic**, Managing Partner - North America, BetterFleet

Battery electric buses are fundamentally reliant on grid electricity as their source of fuel. To ensure that they can power their fleet during a grid outage, many transit agencies have begun to plan for, or deploy, microgrids to provide resiliency. This panel includes a discussion on early microgrid feasibility studies and deployments, as well as a discussion on resilient microgrids that leverage solar and battery storage to reduce lifecycle emissions and electricity costs. This panel includes lessons learned and case studies from organizations who have experience with microgrids.

### **Status Update on Implementation of California's Zero-Emission Regulations**

- **John Drayton**, Zero-Emission Mobility National Practice Lead, Burns Engineering [Moderator]
- **Dr. Yachun Chow**, Manager, Zero Emission Truck & Bus Section, California Air Resources Board

California has long been at the forefront of emission regulations, and the state has built a reputation for adopting some of the strictest emission regulations in the world. CARB adopted the Innovative Clean Transit (ICT) rule in 2018, which requires all transit agencies to start implementation of zero emission bus transition fleet plans. This session will focus on how the ZE transition programs have been progressing these last five years – from the quantities and types of transit equipment agencies are purchasing, to progress on building support facilities, to staff training, to the challenges agencies are facing with implementing their ZE programs.

### **Selling Public Transit as a Career (E)**

- **Dr. Beverly Scott**, Beverly Scott & Associates [Moderator]
- **Carolyn Gonot**, GM/CEO, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
- **Ken McDonald**, President and CEO, Long Beach Transit
- **Sharon Cooney**, CEO, San Diego Metro Transit System
- **Michelle Bouchard**, Executive Director, Caltrain

With a hot labor market and increasing skepticism for public sector service, how can transit agencies attract new talent to this career? Hear from transit leaders from across the state on their efforts to reach new career-seekers.


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 **Labor Relations & Employee Engagement in a Post-Covid World (S)**

- **Jenica Maldonado**, Partner, Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo [Moderator / Panelist]
- **Jeff Guidry**, General Manager, Keolis North America Inc. for Victor Valley Transit Authority
- **Elizabeth Brown**, Executive Director/Vice President, Organizational Development and Administration, Long Beach Transit
- **Michael Laredo**, General Counsel, Monterey-Salinas Transit

While navigating the new post-covid employment landscape, transit industry leaders need to know about the landscape of new laws and new worker expectations. Hear from experts about recent major changes to labor and employment law, and successful experiences with building trust during union contract negotiations.

 **Innovative Ideas to Mitigate Operator Shortages and Enhance Operator Well-Being (E)**

- **Margo Ross**, Chief Operations Officer, Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District [Moderator]
- **Martha Chavez**, Product Manager - Workforce Management, Trapeze Group
- **Kevin Catlin**, President & Managing Partner, Insight Strategies
- **Francis Bouvrette**, Team Lead, CSched

Maintaining employee well-being and satisfaction on a variety of measures - from scheduling, to safety, to training and more - is crucial to recruiting and retaining qualified, diverse operators. Hear from experts about strategies to ensure your transit agency retains satisfied, long-term transit operators.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 (Continued)**

**3:45 pm - 5:45 pm**

**Tech Tours**

**CALTRAIN TOUR**

Join the Caltrain and VTA teams for a round-trip, revenue-service ride on one of the new American-built Stadler electric trains from the historic San Jose Diridon station to Mountain View. Onboard, you will hear about how this \$2.44 billion project came together, how it is benefiting customers and corridor communities alike, and see one of the important Caltrain-VTA connection points.

**MILPITAS TRANSIT CENTER**

The Milpitas Transit Center is a central hub in the City of Milpitas' Transit Area Specific Plan, serving as a key gateway to Silicon Valley via the BART system. This strategic location provides essential connections to both local and regional transportation networks, linking Silicon Valley's high-tech hubs and job centers in northwestern Santa Clara County. As part of this tour, you will explore how multi-agency partnerships with the City of Milpitas, BART, Caltrain, San Jose and the California High-Speed Rail Authority are driving transit-oriented development and fleet modernization.

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3:45 pm – 5:45 pm  
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

Expo  
Thursday Evening Reception

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22**

8:30 am – 10:00 am

**Small Operators Awards Breakfast**

**FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION UPDATE**

**Ray Tellis**, Regional IX Administrator, Federal Transit Administration

- Learn more about FTA's implementation of the IIJA and the benefits of its investments to small transit agencies
- Gain insights on FTA's General Director on transit worker safety

10:15 am – 11:30 am

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS III**

 **Innovation in Safety and Security Using Cutting Edge Technology (S)**

- **Dan Katz**, Vice President of Public Policy, Hayden AI [Moderator]
- **Lisa Hinz**, Vice President of Safety, Security and Customer Satisfaction, Sacramento Regional Transit District
- **Ting Chou**, CEO, OmniEyes

This panel focuses on reducing collisions, pedestrian incidents, and other traffic- or movement-related transit safety concerns. Hear from agencies and tech providers who are reducing accidents and increasing rider and pedestrian safety.

 **ZEV Safety Protocols and Strategies**

- **Mike Wygant**, Chief Operating Officer, San Diego Metropolitan Transit System [Moderator]
- **Adam Jakubowski**, Consultant, Energy Safety Response Group
- **Victoria Hutchison**, Research Project Manager, Fire Protection Research Foundation
- **Dalan Zartman**, Chief Operations Officer, Energy Security Agency

While rare, several zero-emission bus deployments in the United States have resulted in thermal events that introduce new safety considerations into transit operations and maintenance. This panel will provide guidance on establishing policies and protocols to prevent thermal events related to zero-emission bus deployments and strategies for addressing such events when they arise.

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 **Recruitment, Retention and Reinvention: Build a Diverse, Durable Transit Workforce (E)**

- **Dr. Karen Philbrick**, Executive Director, Mineta Transportation Institute [Moderator]
- **Jeff Morales**, Partner, Infrastrategies
- **Teri Fisher**, Founder, CEO, and Managing Partner, Insight Strategies
- **Shannon Arms**, Women Innovating Transit Ambassador, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
- **Vanessa Lowe**, HR Business Partner, Rail, Caltrain


Join thought leaders from across the transit industry for a moderated discussion about the evolving challenges of employee retention in the transit environment, shaped by the post-COVID landscape and the influx of a new generation into the workforce. Explore the shifting expectations of employees, negotiables within the union environment, the impact of hybrid work models, and retaining a diverse workforce. This panel will equip leaders with tools to adapt retention strategies to meet the demands of a diverse and dynamic workforce.

 **Creating Effective Access Advisory Committees and Community Workshops (E)**

- **Claudia Burgos**, Director of Legislative Affairs and Community Relations, Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District [Moderator]
- **Naomi Armenta**, Principal, Nelson/Nygaard
- **Ron Brooks**, Senior Director of Policy and Stakeholder Engagement, UZURV
- **Dr. Joshua Schank**, Research Associate, Mineta Transportation Institute
- **John Sanderson**, Director of ADA and Specialized Services, County Connection

How do you empower transit riders and community stakeholders to provide effective input to your Board, all while running accessible, respectful, advisory committees and community workshops that comply with Brown Act meetings? Hear from experts about best practices for running citizen-input groups and providing critical feedback to transit leadership.

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 **Mastering the CHP Biannual Terminal Inspection: Compliance and Success Strategies**

- **Norm Tuitavuki**, Chief Operating Officer, Monterey-Salinas Transit [Moderator]
- **Kelly Halcon**, Chief Human Resources Officer, Monterey-Salinas Transit
- **Officer Dan Urias**, Commercial Industry Program Coordinator, CHP Golden Gate Division
- **Simon DeCasas**, Motor Carrier Specialist, CHP Golden Division
- **Stuart Hoffman**, Technical Services Manager, AC Transit


This session will feature a California Highway Patrol (CHP) inspector and representatives from public transit agencies who have successfully navigated the Basic Inspection of Terminal (BIT) process. The panel will provide valuable insights into the key areas of focus during inspections, sharing best practices and strategies for compliance. Attendees will gain practical knowledge and actionable steps to ensure their operations meet CHP standards and pass inspections with confidence.

11:30 am – 12:00 pm

**Networking Break**

12:00 pm – 1:15 pm

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS IV**

 **The Customer Experience Starts at the Stop**

- **Uriel Fojas**, Branch Chief, Mobility Data Standards Engineering, Caltrans [Moderator]
- **Patrick Merrick**, Executive Vice President, Tolar Manufacturing
- **Eben Lindsey**, President, Urban Solar
- **Jessica Roberts**, Partnerships, Transit.app
- **Hillary Blackerby**, Planning and Marketing Manager, Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District

Join experts to workshop transit shelters on (and off) the State Highway network, Real Time GTFS digital signage, and turning customer feedback into action. We will use digital surveys during the session, so bring your phone or iPad.

 **Actions to Increase Demographic Diversity in Transit Maintenance (E)**

- **Alva Carrasco**, Director, Rail & Transit, Burns Engineering [Moderator]
- **Connie Raya**, Director of Maintenance, Omnitrans
- **Lilia Montoya**, Chief Operations Officer, Bus, North County Transit District
- **Derik Calhoun**, Chief Operating Officer, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

Studies show that, while women make up 47 percent of the U.S. workforce, almost three quarters of the transit workforce is comprised of men. Among technicians, skilled craft workers, technicians, and service and maintenance workers, the gender disparity is more severe, with men comprising 95%, 76%, and 71% of these job categories, respectively. Though less pronounced, these same jobs categories continue to suffer from a lack of ethnic diversity, particularly among people of Hispanic, Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander origin. Learn about agency-level outreach initiatives to bring women and people of color into the maintenance field.

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### Difficult Conversations: Ethics Complaints Against Employees And Board Members (Lecture Format)

- **Steven D. Miller**, Partner, Hanson Bridgett

Few issues are as sensitive and potentially disruptive to an agency and its culture as an ethics complaint against a transit agency, whether levied against a Board Member or an employee. Unfortunately, guidance on responding to such complaints appropriately and effectively and establishing a culture that ensures ethical behavior is underdeveloped. This panel will help transit professionals navigate this difficult territory by working through real-life examples with expert counsel.



### Homegrown Solutions and Innovations for a Safer Transit System (S)

- **Robin Van Valkenburgh**, Transit Services Manager, Nevada County [Moderator]
- **Marzette Henderson**, Transportation Manager, Monterey-Salinas Transit
- **Bethany Berube**, Transit Manager, City of Clovis
- **Aston Greene**, Chief of Safety and Security Systems, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

This panel will include several case studies for how individual transit agencies are working to improve the perceived and experience of safety and comfort of all riders, with regard to the impact of the *Grants Pass* decision on transit agency operations.



### Creating a Safer System Without More Enforcement (S)

- **Dr. Hilary Nixon**, Deputy Director, Mineta Transportation Institute [Moderator]
- **Eli Lipmen**, Executive Director, MoveLA
- **Haleema Bharoocha**, Senior Engagement Manager, Winter Consulting Group

Public safety is one of the top issues of concern for transit riders and transit agencies, and enforcement isn't the only strategy that agencies can use to address the issue. Learn from riders and agencies on ways to create safer stations, rail, and bus routes through alternatives to policing from ambassadors, station design, activating public spaces, operator protections, and other alternatives from experts, practitioners, and advocates. **This panel focuses on alternative strategies for advancing public safety.**

1:15 pm

Conference Adjourns

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