



DATE: April 1, 2025
TO: STA Board
FROM: Daryl Halls, Executive Director
Ron Grassi, Director of Programs
RE: Status of Transit 2030 Implementation Recommendations

Background:

In February 2024, Board members from STA and SolTrans formed a joint policy committee with the initial purpose of developing of a countywide consensus among policy leaders on six key Transit Focus Areas identified in MTC's *Transit Transformation Action Plan*: Fare Integration, Mapping and Wayfinding, Connected Network Planning, Bus Transit Priority, Rail Network Management and Accessibility. Over the course of the next four months, staff from STA, its transit partners and MTC presented relevant information on each of these topic areas.

In addition, the Committee expanded the scope to address three additional areas:

- Water Transit connectivity (Ferry)
- Defining a Solano Vision for Transit
- Clarify interagency communication and partner roles and responsibilities to achieve greater collaboration.

At their April 10th, 2024 meeting, the Committee approved the following Vision Statement: *Forging a seamless Solano County transit mobility plan focusing on increasing ridership by enhancing rider experience through improving reliability, safety, accessibility and affordability.*

Due to the urgency of resolving impediments to transit partner collaboration, a Policy Subcommittee was appointed to research the problems and recommend actions to resolve them. The Subcommittee met on six occasions to review existing documents outlining the roles and responsibilities of STA and the operators, with a primary focus on the SolTrans contract to provide Intercity Transit services. Staff from STA, SolTrans, and several transit operators attended and participated in the final four meetings. The Subcommittee recommendations were presented to the Solano Transit 2030 Policy Committee at their November 20th meeting.

At that time, after comments from each of the Subcommittee members present, the full Committee discussed the recommendations, and voted to adopt them, with one revision. The Committee's ten adopted recommendations are provided as attachment A to this report.

Discussion:

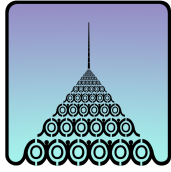
On December 10, 2024, the STA Board reviewed and approved the Solano Transit 2030 Policy Committee's Final Recommendations to clarify interagency communication and partner roles and responsibilities. Attachment B reflects the Solano Transit 2030 Policy Recommendations, and the actions STA is taking to implement them. The information was provided to the Solano County Intercity Transit Consortium and the STA TAC at their respective meetings on January 28, 2025, and January 29, 2025.

Recommendation:

Informational.

Attachments:

- A. Solano Transit 2030 Policy Committee's Final Recommendations
- B. Solano Transit 2030 Policy Recommendations and Status of Implementation



Transit 2030 Policy Committee Findings & Recommendations

December 10, 2024

Findings

- 1- Mutual distrust, loss of respect, and poor communication between STA and SolTrans has undermined meaningful collaboration on the planning, funding, and delivery of bus transit services in Solano County. Consortium meetings have been strained, with personal animosities often on display. Competing proposals for managing Intercity Transit services have remained unresolved for two years.
- 2- SolTrans considers that its evolution and growth over its 15 years warrants independence from STA. They propose designating their agency as the intercity transit operator for Solano County, defined in an MOU with their transit partners, who would also participate in an Advisory Committee that reports to the SolTrans Board. A separate funding MOU with STA would allocate a minimum of 50% of annual STAF funds and dedicate the current STAF Reserve balance to Solano Express.
- 3- STA considers its existing intercity transit authority and advisory structure as defined in the JPA to be warranted and worth continuing. Management expressed a willingness to consider allocating STAF funds beyond a one-year horizon, utilizing the Intercity Transit Funding Working Group (ITFWG) for developing a recommendation to the STA Board. They believe the Transit Consortium is the appropriate body to consider process changes.
- 4- SolTrans and FAST managers believe STA micromanages its budget approval and performance oversight. They seek modification of stipulated review and approval procedures they consider inefficient and duplicative. They deem STA's involvement in managing local and intercity transit services to reflect mission creep without sufficient professional experience, and they question the cost/benefit of using STAF funds to support Solano Mobility versus increasing distribution to local transit operators. They believe that the current voting structure of the Transit Consortium favors STA and should be revised.
- 5- Smaller service providers appreciate STA's assistance in managing their service contracts and regulatory reporting requirements.

Transit 2030 Policy Committee Recommendations

- **Intercity Transit**

- 1- STA should continue its current intercity transit services governance and advisory structure.
- 2- STA and SolTrans should execute a Solano Express Funding and Operating Agreement, following consultation with all funding partners.
- 3- Working with the Intercity Transit Funding Working Group (ITFWG), STA should develop a proposed multi-year funding plan for Solano Express.
- 4- STA should utilize the results of SolTrans' Comprehensive Operational Assessment (COA) and STA's Connected Mobility Plan to assess future Solano Express services during 2025.
- 5- The Transit Consortium should establish what Intercity Transit information is adequate to evaluate Solano Express performance and invite SolTrans to present its reports quarterly at the STA Board.
- 6- The Transit Consortium should agendize a review of its voting structure and explore opportunities to strengthen the working relationship between STA and SolTrans.

- **Solano Mobility**

- 1- All current Solano Mobility programs should continue unchanged during this fiscal year. Potential modifications to improve services or efficiency in subsequent budgets should be evaluated through STA's existing Review and approval framework: 1) Intercity Transit Consortium, 2) Paratransit Coordinating Council, 3) Technical Advisory Committee and finally 4) STA Board
- 2- STA's current year \$3M budget in STAF funds for Solano Mobility should remain in place and continue to be used in support of Solano Mobility programs. If future specific program efficiencies produce cost savings, those funds should be retained within the Solano Mobility budget for use on other improvements.
- 3- No change to STA's cost allocation practices is necessary to adequately evaluate the Solano Mobility Program.

- **Transit Agency Collaboration**

- 1- The STA and SolTrans Boards should publicly acknowledge the fractured working relationship between STA and SolTrans and commit to help re-build healthy, respectful collaboration by identifying staff behavior expectations and providing resources to support that.

Transit 2030 Policy Committee

April 2025 Update

Intercity Transit

Recommendation	Status
1- STA should continue its current intercity transit services governance and advisory structure.	STA will continue to utilize the current governance and advisory structure which includes the PCC, Intercity Transit Funding Working Group, the Solano County Intercity Transit Consortium, the STA TAC, and the STA Board.
2- STA and SolTrans should execute a Solano Express Funding and Operating Agreement, following consultation with all funding partners.	STA has developed a draft Solano Express Intercity Funding and cost sharing agreement which was shared with all the transit operators with comments due by January 21, 2025 and anticipated presentation to the Intercity Transit Consortium/STA TAC in April 2025 and the STA Board in May 2025.
3- Working with the Intercity Transit Funding Working Group (ITFWG), STA should develop a proposed multi-year funding plan for Solano Express.	STA is working with our financial consultant and the Intercity Funding Working Group to develop a multi year funding plan for Solano Express to be presented to the Solano County Intercity Transit Consortium/STA TAC in April 2025 and the STA Board in May 2025. STA is proposing to utilize \$3 million of State Transit Assistance Funds to replace the ARPA funds being fully expended in FY 2024/25.
4- STA should utilize the results of SolTrans' Comprehensive Operational Assessment (COA) and STA's Connected Mobility Plan to assess future Solano Express services during 2025.	STA is coordinating with SolTrans on their COA, which SolTrans will present to the Solano County Intercity Transit Consortium in January 2025 and the STA Board in February 2025. The SolTrans COA needs to be compatible with STA's Connected Mobility Plan and STA Comprehensive Transportation Plan
5- The Transit Consortium should establish what Intercity Transit information is adequate to evaluate Solano Express performance and invite SolTrans to present its reports quarterly at the STA Board.	The Solano County Transit Consortium will consider the Solano Express Performance Measures as part of the Solano Express Intercity Funding and Cost Sharing Agreement. SolTrans is also being asked to continue providing Solano Express Quarterly Reports. The next quarterly report will be presented to the Consortium on January 2025.
6- The Transit Consortium should agendaize a review of its voting structure and explore opportunities to strengthen the working relationship between STA and SolTrans.	STA has requested that the Cities of Rio Vista and Suisun City send representatives to represent their Cities at the Solano County Intercity Consortium to avoid the appearance of a conflict. SolTrans has been invited to provide quarterly reports to the Consortium and the STA Board.

Solano Mobility

Recommendation	Status
1- All current Solano Mobility programs should continue unchanged during this fiscal year. Potential modifications to improve services or efficiency in subsequent budgets should be evaluated through STA's existing Review and approval	STA continues to evaluate the Solano Mobility Programs with quarterly reports presented through the Solano County Intercity Transit Consortium, STA TAC, STA Board, and the Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) Advisory Committee.
2- STA's current year \$3M budget in STAF funds for Solano Mobility should remain in place and continue to be used in support of Solano Mobility programs. If future specific program efficiencies	STA will follow its board's direction on funding Solano Mobility Programs and will present an updated budget for FY 2025/26 and FY 2026/27 in July 2025.
3- No change to STA's cost allocation practices is necessary to adequately evaluate the Solano Mobility Program.	STA will follow its board's direction on funding Solano Mobility Programs and will present an updated budget for FY 2025/26 and FY 2026/27 in July 2025.

Transit Agency Collaboration

Recommendation	Status
1- The STA and SolTrans Boards should publicly acknowledge the fractured working relationship between STA and SolTrans and commit to help re-build healthy, respectful collaboration by identifying staff behavior expectations and providing resources to support that.	The STA Board approved the Transit 2030 Policy Committee recommendations on December 10, 2024. As of this writing, the SolTrans Board has not publicly discussed the Transit 2030 Policy Recommendations.