

Transportation Solutions Defense and Education Fund

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April 25, 2015
By E-Mail

James Spering, Chair
The Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority
300 Lakeside Drive, 14th Floor, East
Oakland, CA 94612

Thomas Blalock, President
Bay Area Rapid Transit District
P.O. Box 12688
Oakland, CA 94604

Re: Richmond Station Mismanagement

Dear Chair Spering and President Blalock:

The Transportation Solutions Defense and Education Fund, TRANSDEF, is a Bay Area-based environmental non-profit working to reduce the impacts of transportation on climate change. We offer these comments on behalf of your passengers:

Recent BART construction at the Richmond station has been badly mismanaged, creating unnecessary impacts on all passengers using the station. There are no signs posted in the station to explain what is being done. BART police on-site told me that they had not been informed about the construction project. It was a big surprise to them when the fencing contractor showed up to block off the Amtrak lot and bus platforms. Despite being generally informed about transit construction projects, we had not heard of anything planned for the Richmond station.

A check of the BART website produced a news article dated 4/16/15 (attached) announcing the closing of the "intermodal" area and the Amtrak parking area on the **previous** day. This after-the-fact notification process marks a new low in service to transit patrons. It's obvious that informing the public was an afterthought.

Despite BART's close relationship to CCJPA as its contractor, it is clear that BART has adamantly refused to integrate CCJPA/Amtrak passengers into plans for its new parking structure. When surface parking was replaced by structured parking, BART employees told CCJPA/Amtrak passengers that they could not enter the BART fare-paid area to use the fare machine to pay for a parking space.

Instead, they were to use a free surface parking area. However, there was no signage erected to inform first time CCJPA/Amtrak passengers arriving at the station of their options. (Free parking is wholly unexpected in an otherwise 100%-paid parking facility. Someone unaware of the free area would never look to find the signs in the free area.)

Clearly, this was a poorly thought-through plan. The project now in-progress has eliminated the free parking area. Given that some element at BART must have been aware that it would be building this project, it is clear that the earlier free-area plan must be viewed as professional malpractice, from a project design standpoint, an intra-agency coordination standpoint, an inter-agency coordination standpoint and a customer service standpoint. We think reprimand letters should be given to all BART managers that signed project approvals. They need to remember this episode.

The cycle of building and demolishing could have been eliminated had BART treated CCJPA/Amtrak passengers as its passengers and made provision for them to pay for parking. This could have been as low-tech as creating a procedure for BART staff to allow CCJPA/Amtrak passengers to enter the fare-paid area, or could have been more expensively implemented, with a fare machine on the Amtrak platform and signage about it in the garage.

This question has come back again, as the CCJPA website news article (attached) lays out the most convoluted and difficult-to-use parking procedure we've ever seen. It will severely impact ridership, if allowed to go into operation. We dare BART to provide an example of required advance online purchase of parking-- anywhere in the world. The problem here is that the rigidity of BART staff members made them inconsiderate. They should be reprimanded for grievously harming the convenience of CCJPA passengers.

We strenuously object to the procedures identified therein, and demand the CCJPA pressure BART to come with a solution that is as convenient for CCJPA/Amtrak passengers as it is for BART passengers. We urge CCJPA to stand up for its passengers and not allow BART to treat them as second-class citizens.

Finally, we object to the elimination of overnight parking. What possible justification is there for this limitation on the travel flexibility of not only CCJPA/Amtrak customers, but BART patrons too? This appears to be yet another example of BART staff's rigidity.

The purpose of both of your agencies is to reduce driving by carrying as many passengers as possible. Please continually remind your staffs of that priority.

Sincerely,

/s/ DAVID SCHONBRUNN

David Schonbrunn,
President
David@Schonbrunn.org

04.16.2015

Richmond Station changes to bus, taxi, car pick up/drop off locations

Starting on Wednesday, April 15, we will close the existing “intermodal” area and the Amtrak parking area. All buses, paratransit, taxis, etc. will be relocated to other areas near the station.

The work will include improvements to passenger access and traffic flow as well as the addition of special landscaping areas that will act as filters for any rain runoff to process out harmful materials (such as oil or gasoline, heavy metals, etc.) before the water goes into the storm drain system.

The work will be completed in September 2015.

[en Español.](#)

[Please see the map which shows the new locations for services.](#) Below is a description of the new locations.

1. Kaiser Shuttle and San Pablo Senior Transportation will move to the intersection of 15th Street and Nevin Plaza. All other paratransit services have been moved to El Cerrito del Norte Station.
2. AC Transit Bus Stop: north side of MacDonald Avenue near 16th Street.
3. Taxi services are moved to the west side of 15th Street between MacDonald Ave. and Village Lane
4. Golden Gate Transit bus stop is moved to the south side of MacDonald Ave. between 15th and 16th Streets.
5. Passenger pick up/drop off area located at the sidewalk near the parking garage.
6. ADA pick up/drop off area will be inside the garage on the first floor.

We apologize for the inconvenience this will cause you and appreciate your patience.

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Parking Changes at Richmond Station

 **April 7, 2015**

Effective Wednesday, April 15, the free outdoor Capitol Corridor and Amtrak parking lot at the Richmond Station will be permanently closed. The 35 spaces for Capitol Corridor and Amtrak passengers will be moved to the second level of the Richmond BART parking garage at this time.

The designated Capitol Corridor and Amtrak spaces in the BART parking garage will remain **free of charge** until the beginning of May, 2015. You must leave a duplicate copy of your train ticket on the dashboard of your car in order to avoid receiving a parking citation.

At the beginning of May, the parking spaces will require a daily permit at the rate of \$2 per day. Since passengers will not have access to the pay parking machines in the BART station, daily permits must be purchased online in advance. You must print your daily permit and display it prominently on your dashboard. A link to the website to purchase permits will be provided as soon as it becomes available.

Please be aware that there will no longer be overnight parking at the Richmond BART parking facility. If you are planning a trip that would require you to leave your car overnight, you should go to the Emeryville Station and inquire with the ticket office staff about overnight parking.

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