



Published February 20th, 2019

BART work will cause temporary pain to achieve long-term improvements

By Sora O'Doherty

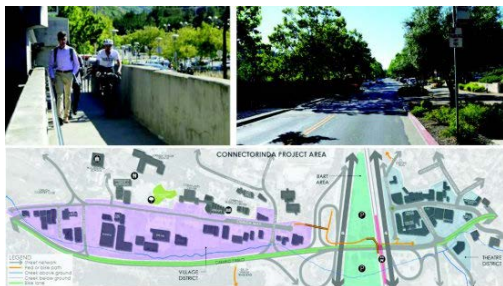


Image provided

New cars, smoother, safer rides and cleaner, safer stations are some of the improvements BART riders can look forward to in the near future. However, Lamorinda commuters will have to make some sacrifices while BART puts Measure RR money to use updating and improving its rail system. BART Director Rebecca Saltzman made a presentation to the Orinda City Council on Feb. 5 regarding new developments.

Measure RR was adopted by voters in three Bay Area counties in 2016. As the actual work begins, there will be some changes in service, and some workarounds. The most noticeable change will be that trains no longer start running at 4 a.m. but instead will start closer to 5 a.m. This means that the first train from Orinda to San Francisco will now depart from the Lafayette station at 5:11 a.m. and the Orinda station at 5:15 a.m. The early hour changes are expected to last for about three years.

To accommodate early commuters, BART will be providing an Early Bird Express alternative bus service with 15 new bus lines to run between 3:50 a.m. and 5:30 a.m. in both directions between stops. The service will include a Contra Costa County route. The bus network will serve 21 BART stations and the Temporary Transbay Terminal in San Francisco. There are special provisions for parking at BART stations before they open, and also for paying for parking because in the early morning hours riders will not be able to use their Clipper cards.

The updates will include replacing platform and street escalators in downtown San Francisco and adding new canopies; replacing 10 miles of worn track to make the ride quieter, safer and more reliable; beginning a seismic retrofit of the Transbay Tube and replacing cross-passage doors in the Transbay Tube, which are critical in an evacuation; seismic strengthening of track between Lake Merritt and the Coliseum; realigning trackway in the Caldecott BART Tunnel, needed due to Hayward Fault creep; waterproofing leaking tunnels and structures; Phase 2 expansion of the Hayward maintenance facility, which will serve as the new home of the 775 Fleet of the Future train cars; and new electrical substations in downtown San Francisco, Richmond, Pleasant Hill and Oakland.

Another big improvement will be the replacement of BART's fleet of cars, with 200 new cars to be delivered by the end of 2019. BART is trying to make sure that stations are cleaner, adding 15 new cleaners and nightly deep cleaning of stations. A new focus will be implemented on fare evasion, with more enforcement and higher barriers. For greater safety, BART will be hiring more officers and working on increased visibility. In addition, staff will try to connect homeless persons to services.

BART will be working with the city of Orinda on the ConnectOrinda Streetscape Project. Insofar as increasing housing on BART property goes, Orinda is not affected because new laws governing development on BART-owned property do not affect Orinda since the land is owned by Caltrans, not by BART. However, BART does own the land at the Lafayette BART Station.

Another new development is that BART will relaunch its carpool program next May through its new BART app. The program will be open to all carpools, including casual carpooling and rideshare matching. There will be dedicated parking spaces for carpool drivers. A minimum of two people per car will need to check in with the BART app. One passenger will pay for parking, and both passengers must enter the fare gates with Clipper cards. The carpool will be verified through the app and station entry data.

Reach the reporter at: sora@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA