

Frequently Asked Questions



What is Reimagine SamTrans?

In July 2019, SamTrans launched *Reimagine SamTrans*, a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA). COAs are in-depth studies that analyze transit agency services. *Reimagine SamTrans* will pinpoint the strengths and challenges in the current system while utilizing data and public input to identify ways to improve SamTrans service. *Reimagine SamTrans* has three goals:

- **Improve the experience** for existing SamTrans customers
- **Grow new and more frequent ridership** on SamTrans
- **Build SamTrans' efficiency and effectiveness** as a mobility provider

Why is SamTrans conducting an analysis of its bus system?

Like many other public transit agencies SamTrans ridership is declining. Transit agencies across the country are embarking on comprehensive studies to better address declining ridership, improve the customer experience, and adjust to changing market trends.

In San Mateo County, demographic, growth and technology patterns have changed significantly over the past five years. With new emerging mobility companies proliferating, San Mateo County residents have more options than ever when making a trip. *Reimagine SamTrans* will make recommendations that allow SamTrans to stay relevant and become a first choice for customers and community members alike.

Finally, with the passage of Measure W in 2018, SamTrans has a unique opportunity to reimagine and reshape its bus system to meet the changing needs of San Mateo County and ensure we are providing the best bus system possible.

What happens when the analysis has been completed?

Following three rounds of public input, a preferred alternative – or new bus system – will be identified. The preferred SamTrans bus system will go to the SamTrans Board of Directors for adoption. Staff will then work toward implementation of the new system while minimizing disruption to service for current customers.

When can I expect to see improvements to transit service in the county?

SamTrans staff will continue to pilot new services and service improvements while *Reimagine SamTrans* is ongoing, including new express bus service, as well as make regular updates to schedules to improve reliability of current routes. You can learn about other SamTrans services at www.samtrans.com.

The recommendations from *Reimagine SamTrans* are slated to be implemented in 2021.

Will Reimagine SamTrans result in changes to bus routes and bus stops?

Reimagine SamTrans will evaluate each route individually, as well as the way the routes interact to form a cohesive transportation network. For each route, we will be considering the route's purpose, the key destinations it serves, the ridership at different points in the route, and the route's frequency and hours of operation. Based on input from riders and potential riders of the route, we may recommend changes to the route's design to better meet the route's purpose. We encourage you to participate in the process so you have a say about if/when a route is changed.



How can I get involved or learn more?

SamTrans welcomes comments throughout the *Reimagine SamTrans* project via our comment form. In addition, we invite you to participate through:

- **Public outreach and events** - We are planning three rounds of community outreach over the course of this project. The first phase will occur in November - December 2019. Event dates will be posted here as they become available.
www.reimaginesamtrans.com/get-involved
- **Community survey** - Take our survey and make your voice heard! Share your vision for a future SamTrans network.
www.reimaginesamtrans.com/survey

Why should I participate in Reimagine SamTrans?

This project presents a real opportunity to help shape the future bus and mobility network of San Mateo County. *Reimagine SamTrans* is much like its name suggests – it’s a true reimagining of a bus network that has served an important role in this community but needs a refresh. Redesigning a bus network allows SamTrans to make some choices that will lead the agency into the future. Join us to inform how we make those choices.

How will Reimagine SamTrans help the environment?

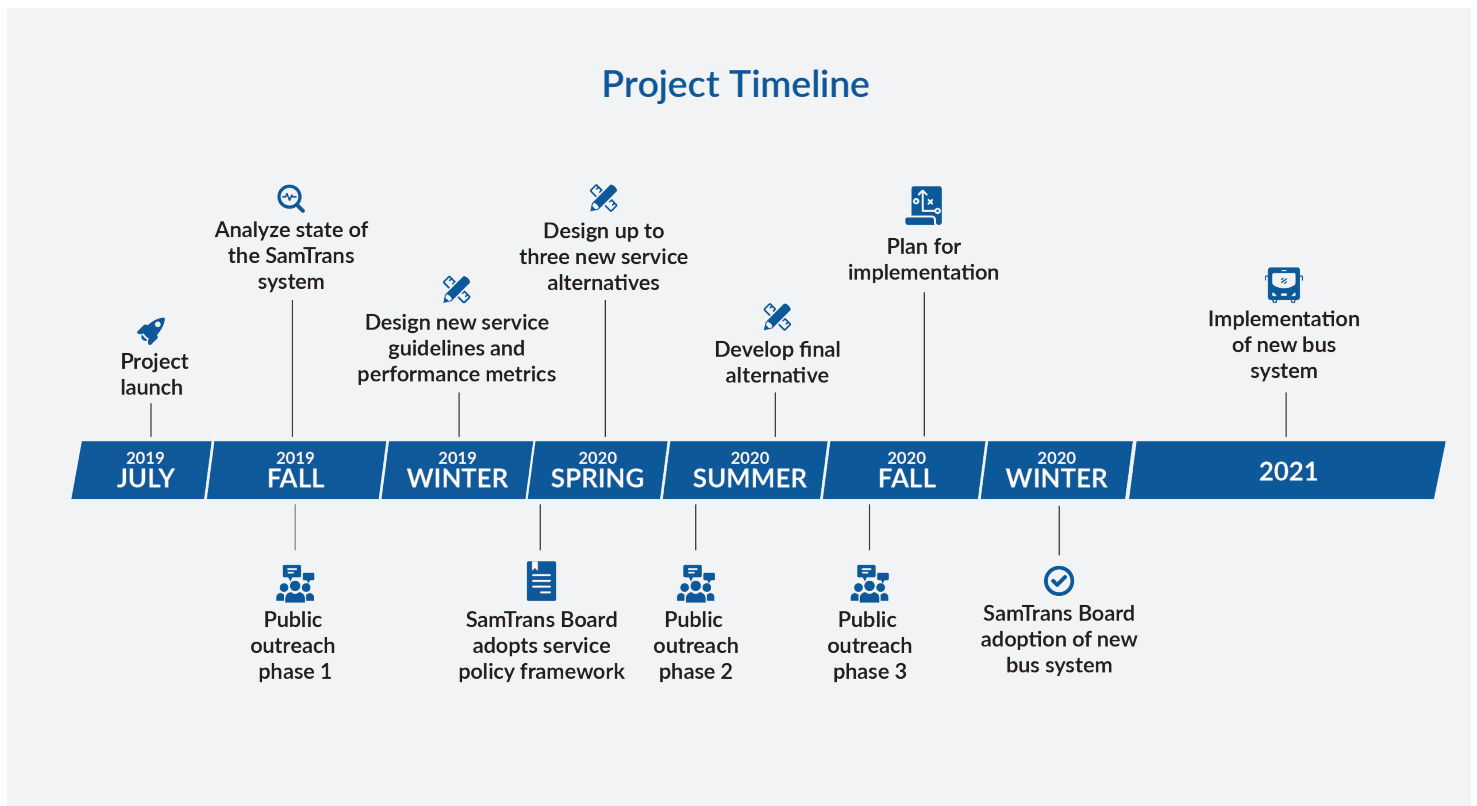
Public transit is a key part of the solution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Using public transit helps keep cars off the road, resulting in lower emissions. This, coupled with the ongoing electrification of the SamTrans fleet, will help reduce San Mateo County’s carbon footprint and keep SamTrans compliant with state regulations.

Will this lead to fare changes?

No fare changes are anticipated beyond those approved by the SamTrans Board of Directors in August 2019 and slated to take effect throughout 2020. For more information, visit www.samtrans.com/fares/farechanges.

Will SamTrans service be affected during the project?

No service interruptions are anticipated in coordination with *Reimagine SamTrans* project work. However, riders may see SamTrans employees at bus stops doing outreach to inform the process.



Will Reimagine SamTrans improve SamTrans transfer connectivity to adjacent transit services such as Caltrain and BART?

One of the many goals of *Reimagine SamTrans* is to improve SamTrans connections with other transit systems. The SamTrans team will be analyzing data and seeking to hear from the community about how they use SamTrans and other nearby transit services, and will take these trip patterns into account when designing a new SamTrans bus system.

What data and information will SamTrans use to build a better bus system?

SamTrans will gather information on the specific needs of the customers and communities that we serve, analyze it to find gaps or opportunities in our current system, determine new standards for how we measure the success of the system, and implement new practices to make the system more efficient.

Here are just some of the data and information that will be used in *Reimagine SamTrans*:

- Public outreach exercises and surveys
- Market research focus groups
- Current SamTrans route information, including ridership, on-time performance, and scheduling practices
- GPS trip data showing trip-making patterns in San Mateo County
- Demographic trends and trips-to-work data from the US Census
- Development patterns and changes
- Recent, complementary planning studies
- Input from SamTrans bus operators, dispatchers and other field staff

Through *Reimagine SamTrans*, local transit officials, community leaders, bus riders and residents will help build a public transit system for San Mateo County that functions more efficiently and effectively for trips to work, school or play.

Is Reimagine SamTrans about new riders or current riders?

Reimagine SamTrans seeks to both improve the experience and service we provide to our current customers and attract new riders. SamTrans wants to hear from current riders about how we can improve and also from potential riders who can be introduced to our system. SamTrans will accomplish this by studying demographic changes, conducting public outreach, and determining what needs to be improved in order to encourage people to try SamTrans.

How will Reimagine SamTrans build on other planning studies?

Reimagine SamTrans will utilize data and key findings from recent transportation studies in the area, including the US-101 Express Bus Feasibility Study, Coastside Transit Study, SamTrans Service Plan (2014) and the Caltrain Business Plan. The team will also seek to learn from the work of private partners such as the San Francisco International Airport, among others.

Who will advise the SamTrans team during the Reimagine Samtrans Project?

In addition to conducting three rounds of public outreach throughout the county, SamTrans will convene two advisory groups regularly over the course of the project. The project's Technical Advisory Committee is comprised of city and county representatives, nearby transit service operators, and other technical advisors.

The project's Stakeholder Advisory Committee includes representatives from advocacy and social services, businesses and major employers, active transportation and new mobility companies, and more.

Do you have additional questions?

Write to us at reimagine@samtrans.com or use our comment form. The *Reimagine SamTrans* team will add frequently asked questions to the website throughout the project.

SamTrans is the mobility manager for San Mateo County, which requires the agency to adapt to change and explore new ways of providing mobility. Reimagine SamTrans will evaluate and may recommend anything from new app-based service models (like microtransit) to improved real-time information for bus arrivals. SamTrans is already experimenting with new forms of mobility beyond traditional bus service, and we will look to riders and stakeholders to tell us which technology elements are right for this community. If it becomes clear that a particular community or need isn't met by traditional bus service, this presents the opportunity to try something new. To learn more about current SamTrans projects go to www.samtrans.com.

