The Equation May Look Good on Paper

BART is running more trains for longer periods of time. That means that maintenance needs of the fleet are not just increasing, they're multiplying. The shops measure that by the "car count." This term refers to the number of cars available for service.

Car count is in the toilet, despite overtime being wide open – and getting worked. The shops can't keep up because there's simply not enough people to do the work.

Did management account for that in its equations? It might look good on paper, trying to attract riders back and apply for lots of Federal funding. But the reality is different.

Instead of increasing BART's workforce they actually decreased it during the pandemic. They say they're trying to hire more people but new hires are just trickling in.

Their equation isn't adding up and the riding public knows it. BART service is not reliable. For all the planners and managers this agency has, maybe they should get out on the lines and see how their equations are holding up.

The Face of BART

BART workers are on the front line - they ARE BART as far as the public knows. They are responsible for everything from fare evaders, people without basic hygiene riding trains, people without masks and on and on.

And then there is the Clipper card. Some riders have been away from the system for a while because of COVID-19 and only have paper tickets. But even those with a Clipper card can feel like they are trapped in a BART maze.

How many times a day are Station Agents confronted with a Clipper card malfunction? The card doesn’t work, but there is money on it. Or for some reason their cell phone app doesn’t work. They assume the Station Agent is supposed to be able to solve this. Isn’t that their job to fix things?

Then comes the patient explanation that Clipper isn’t really BART. And there’s a number on the back to resolve the problem.

That’s interesting but it’s not going to help the passenger get where they need to go. And they are supposed to buy another clipper card and load that one up?

Maybe BART and the MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission) should open a complaint line for passengers with this problem. No one asked the Station Agents about any of this. And it has been a headache from day one.

Clipper?

Clipper may be a cute name for those sitting in an MTC office. But what is behind this plastic card? In 2019 the MTC extended the contract with Cubic Transportation Systems to Nov. 2024. The contract is valued at approximately $25 million per year. It seems like there should be a better approach to customer service.

Come to an end of the year virtual celebration as we recognize the struggles across the world from the past year and prepare for those that lie ahead

Saturday, December 4, 4pm

https://tinyurl.com/sontownhall or go to /speakoutsocialists.org for information
Meeting ID: 821 5880 0683
Passcode: 340756