



Annual Report of the
West San Leandro Shuttle (LINKS)
Business Improvement District
For Fiscal Year 2024-25





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Background

In 2000, the City of San Leandro evaluated the feasibility of implementing a commuter shuttle service connecting west San Leandro employment sites with the San Leandro BART station. Based on the results of that study, the San Leandro Transportation Management Organization (SLTMO) and a Business Improvement District (BID) were formed to provide management and funding for the LINKS Shuttle program.

The SLTMO is a 501(C)4 non-profit corporation governed by a Board of Directors that includes representation from businesses included in the BID and the City of San Leandro. The SLTMO administers the LINKS Shuttle program.

Oversight of the BID is conducted by the West San Leandro Shuttle Business Improvement District Advisory Board (Advisory Board). The five-to-seven-member Advisory Board includes two City staff designees and three to five business representatives. The Advisory Board's duties include annual review of the LINKS performance for submission to the City Council. The Ordinance authorizing the BID also provides that the City Council may increase the annual BID assessment in an amount not to exceed the increase of the Consumer Price Index as part of its review of the annual report.

LINKS Shuttle Service

The LINKS Shuttle provides free transportation from the San Leandro BART station to the industrial area west of I-880 and Marina Blvd., a major employment center of the City and the region. LINKS operates Monday – Friday during peak commute hours (5:45 – 9:45 am and 3:00 – 7:00 pm).

LINKS provides critical “first and last mile” connection between transit and employers in West San Leandro, serving major employers including Amazon, Walmart and Costco, as well as small employers. There are over 600 businesses and almost 15,000 employees in the LINKS service area. LINKS also provides transportation to commercial nodes including Marina Square Shopping Center and community services such as Davis Street Family Resource Center which serves 10,000 low-income people each year.

Participation in the LINKS BID service area helps businesses comply with the BAAQMD Commuter Benefit requirements. In 2014, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) implemented the Commuter Benefits Program that requires all employers with 50 or more full-time employees to provide commuter benefits to their employees. To comply with the Program, employers must select one (or more) of four commuter benefit options and register with BAAQMD. Participation in the LINKS BID satisfies Option 3 (“Employer Provided Transit”) under the requirements, allowing businesses to save time and money.

Historically, LINKS provided 200,000 rides per year with an average of 770 rides per day. Like all public transportation services, the number of rides has dropped since the COVID-19 Pandemic. In response to the reduced ridership levels and reduction in grant funding, in July 2022 the LINKS shuttle program implemented a Dual Interlaced Loop service, reducing the number of buses from four to two. Since the implementation of this new service configuration, LINKS has provided an average 90,000 per year with an average 346 rides per day. This represents a 45% pre-pandemic recovery, a trend consistent with BART's recovery levels.



BID Renewal

In 2015, the Business Improvement District was re-authorized for 15-years. When the BID was renewed, the service area was expanded providing more frequent service, shorter round-trip rides and connections to businesses that previously could not access LINKS. BID fees are collected through the City's business license process.

Summary of Annual Activities

FY 2015-16 – The SLTMO focused on getting the expanded service up and running smoothly and updating the LINKS branding with new signage, brochure and website. Bus benches and new signs were installed.

FY 2016-17 – The SLTMO focused on stabilizing LINKS funding by applying for grants and renewing service contracts with Kaiser Permanente and Marina Square Shopping Center. LINKS received a five year Measure BB grant which helped to stabilize funding for the next several years.

FY 2017-18 – The SLTMO focused on further enhancing the service through the installation of NextBus technology. Using a mobile app, NextBus allows riders to find real time arrival predictions for nearby stops instantly, find stops and vehicles on a map, get walking directions and set alerts for favorite stops and times. NextBus also provides useful administrative reports including on-time performance and passenger count information. Google translate and transportation resources were also added to the website further increasing accessibility to riders.

FY 2018-19 – The SLTMO continued its focus on improved performance and rider experience, replacing the LINKS fleet with four new buses. The exterior bus branding was updated, signage on the bus exterior was improved and information racks added to the bus interior. Each bus was fitted with a drive cam which can record the interior and exterior of the bus in the event of an incident.

FY 2019-20 - The SLTMO focused on continuing service reliability, securing grants and responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. The SLTMO implemented a variety of safety protocols allowing the shuttle to continue to operate on its normal schedule during the uncertainty of the pandemic.

FY 2020-21 – The SLTMO continued to focus on providing reliable transportation to LINKS riders during the Covid-19 pandemic. Although ridership dropped, LINKS ridership rebounded much more quickly than larger transportation providers. As part of the reconfiguration of the San Leandro BART Station, the LINKS shuttle stops were permanently moved to a convenient location on San Leandro Blvd with access to cross walk and benches.

FY 2021-22 - The SLTMO identified a projected budget shortfall beginning FY 2022-23 resulting from funding decreases and cost increases. As a result the SLTMO contracted with a transit consulting firm to review the LINKS service and develop service options that would maximize service levels while reducing service costs.

FY 2022-23 – In response to the transit consulting firm's recommendations, on July 1, 2022, the LINKS shuttle program implemented a Dual Interlaced Loop service, reducing the number of buses from four to two. The Dual Loop configuration maintained the existing North and South loops with the central stop at the San Leandro BART Station, where both routes meet.



2023-24 Activities

Over the last year, the SLTMO provided reliable transportation to LINKS riders. The service continued the Dual Interlaced Loop service that was implemented July 1, 2022, which provides two buses alternating between the North and South loops. The configuration allows for a one-seat ride from any stop to any stop on either route for customers without having to transfer between vehicles.

Historically LINKS provided an average ridership of 770 per day. Like all public transportation services, the number of rides dropped significantly during the COVID-19 Pandemic, reaching a low of 200 in April 2020. In response to the reduced ridership levels and reduction in grant funding, in July 2022 the LINKS shuttle program implemented a Dual Interlaced Loop service, reducing the number of buses from four to two. At the end of FY 23-24, LINKS ridership was averaging 339 rides per day, with an annual total of 88,280. This represents 45% pre-pandemic recovery, a trend consistent with BART's recovery levels.

Throughout the year, the SLTMO began implementing new digital marketing strategies to spread information about the program as well as provide service alerts.

- A Twitter (X) account was established in order to provide up-to-date service alerts.
- In partnership with the City of San Leandro, a 1-minute YouTube video was created to draw attention to the program and was hosted on the City's YouTube account, which has roughly 8,000 subscribers.
- Route and schedule information was published to Google Maps, Apple Maps, as well as the Transit and Moovit apps.

2024-25 Planned Activities

Following is a summary of planned activities for FY 2024-25:

Dual Interlaced Loop

Continue to monitor and modify the service as needed to meet rider needs.

Outreach

SLTMO Management will increase outreach to employers and employees to promote LINKS ridership now that riders are coming back to public transportation. Management will continue to develop the SLTMO's social media and digital presence to spread the word about LINKS.

Budget Stabilization

Grants

Aggressively seek local, state, and federal grant and other funding opportunities. The Board will continue to work with the City of San Leandro and Alameda County Transportation Commission to secure critical funding. Historically, the City of San Leandro has served as the financial administrator and sponsor for grants, which are typically awarded to transit agencies and cities.

Revenue Diversification

Continue to diversify revenue sources by maintaining current contract with Marina Square (advertising) and seek other revenue generating opportunities.



Request for Proposal for Operations

In an effort to ensure LINKS is operating with fiscal efficiency, the SLTMO will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for shuttle operations for service beginning January 1, 2026.

Strategic Planning

The SLTMO is currently in a strategic planning phase in which we are exploring what the SLTMO and LINKS will look like in the next 5-10 years.

LINKS Budget

Funding for LINKS comes from the BID, grants, the City of San Leandro and advertising revenue from Marina Square Shopping Center, in which they purchase advertising space on the LINKS buses.

2022 Alameda CTC CIP Grant (Vehicle Registration Fees & TFCA)- \$1,180,088

The SLTMO received a 2022 Alameda CTC CIP grant for the periods FY 2021-22 through FY 2025-26 in the amount of \$1,180,088. Although the full grant request was allocated, the matching requirement for this grant cycle went from 50% to 75% reducing the allowable request and significantly impacting the LINKS budget for the next five years.

2024 Alameda CTC CIP Grant (Measure BB & TFCA)- \$331,000

In May 2023, the Alameda CTC the SLTMO's application for FY 2026-27 and 2027-28 CIP grant funds (Measure BB & TFCA) was approved in the amount of \$331,000.

Business Improvement District Revenue

BID revenue over the last four years (20/21 – 23/24) has averaged roughly \$410,000 per fiscal year.

Budget Deficit

The SLTMO projected a budget deficit beginning in FY 2022-23 as a result of:

- New Alameda CTC matching requirements that limit the allowable grant request.
- Unpredictable drop in BID revenue.
- Projected transportation cost increases.

Budget Reduction – Service Modification

Implementation of the Dual Loop configuration in FY 22/23 provided the most service under projected funding levels and reduces operational costs by approximately 50% with the goal of stabilizing LINKS funding for the next five years.

Business Improvement District Authorization

The BID is a levied benefit assessment on businesses within the BID Area, the proceeds of which shall be used for the public purpose benefit of the businesses in the BID, pursuant to the Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1989 Section 36500 et seq. of Division 18 of the California Streets and Highways Code. All of the assessments imposed by the BID Ordinance shall be reviewed by the City Council annually based upon the annual report prepared by the advisory board appointed pursuant to Sections 36530 and 36533 of the California Streets and Highways Code. Pursuant to Section 36533(c), the City Council may



approve the report as filed by the advisory board or may modify any particular contained in the report and approve it as modified.

The ordinance defines the boundaries of the BID, the amount of the annual assessment, the approved use of the assessment funds, and the effective period of the assessment. The Ordinance requires that an Advisory Board annually review the performance of LINKS for submission to the City Council. In addition, the Ordinance provides that the City Council may increase the annual assessment in an amount not to exceed the increase of the Consumer Price Index (San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose), as part of its review of the annual report.

Annual BID Rate Recommendation – 2025 Business Improvement District Assessment

In order to ensure that funding for LINKS stays current with operating costs, it is recommended that the 2025 BID rate be adjusted by the applicable Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Per the approved Ordinance, the BID per employee rate may be increased annually by the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). For 2025 the applicable CPI factor is 3.0 percent. This would result in the BID per employee rate increasing from \$28.79 to \$29.65. Businesses with three or fewer owner/employees, landlords, and non-profits will continue to be exempt from the BID assessment. The CPI adjustment will raise approximately \$13,576.

Exhibit A: Ridership Statistics

Years of Service: 23

Total # of Rides Provided: 3,473,720

	Monthly Total Ridership				
	Pre-COVID Total FY 19	Previous FY Total FY 23	Previous FY Total FY 24	+/- from Previous Year	% Pre-COVID Baseline (FY 19)
July	15,733	7957	7047	-11%	45%
August	17,585	9288	8492	-9%	48%
September	15,506	7950	7479	-6%	48%
October	18,931	8565	8584	0%	45%
November	15,963	7278	6989	-4%	44%
December	14,787	6653	5560	-16%	38%
January	17,779	6611	6512	-1%	37%
February	15,329	6697	6446	-4%	42%
March	16,188	7715	7026	-9%	43%
April	17,420	6779	8229	21%	47%
May	17,327	8061	8540	6%	49%
June	15,532	7580	7376	-3%	47%
FY Total	198,080	91134	88280	-3%	45%

	Daily Average Ridership				
	Pre-COVID Average FY 19	Previous FY Average FY 23	Previous FY Average FY 24	+/- from Previous Year	% Pre-COVID Baseline (FY 19)
July	749	379	336	-11%	45%
August	765	404	369	-9%	48%
September	775	361	356	-1%	46%
October	823	408	390	-4%	47%
November	760	347	318	-8%	42%
December	739	317	265	-16%	36%
January	773	315	283	-10%	37%
February	766	335	307	-8%	40%
March	771	335	335	0%	43%
April	792	339	374	10%	47%
May	753	350	371	6%	49%
June	777	345	369	7%	47%
FY Ave.	770	353	339	-4%	44%

Fiscal Year	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total	Avg/Mo	Avg/Day
FY 17	16,272	18,573	9,117	8,169	16,455	15,329	15,585	15,389	18,292	16,667	17,815	16,354	204,017	17,001	791
FY 18	16,582	18,746	17,134	18,642	16,732	14,136	15,381	14,519	15,491	15,046	15,777	15,681	193,867	16,156	757
FY 19	15,733	17,585	15,506	18,931	15,963	14,787	17,779	15,329	16,188	17,420	17,327	15,532	198,080	16,507	771
FY 20	16,811	17,344	16,817	19,463	14,465	14,501	15,593	14,633	9,918	4,506	4,888	5,575	154,514	12,876	647
FY 21	6,113	6,374	6,778	7,650	7,129	7,833	6,261	6,531	7,880	7,875	7,252	8,099	85,775	7,148	332
FY 22	7,983	8,537	8,682	8,626	8,651	8,425	8,282	9,131	10,454	10,634	11,838	11,645	112,888	9,407	439
FY 23	7,957	9,288	7,950	8,565	7,278	6,653	6,611	6,697	7,715	6,779	8,061	7,580	91,134	7,595	353
FY 24	7,047	8,492	7,479	8,584	6,989	5,560	6,512	6,446	7,026	8,229	8,540	7,376	88,280	7,357	339

COVID Shelter in Place Order - March 16, 2020

Dual Interlaced Loop Service Started - July 1, 2022

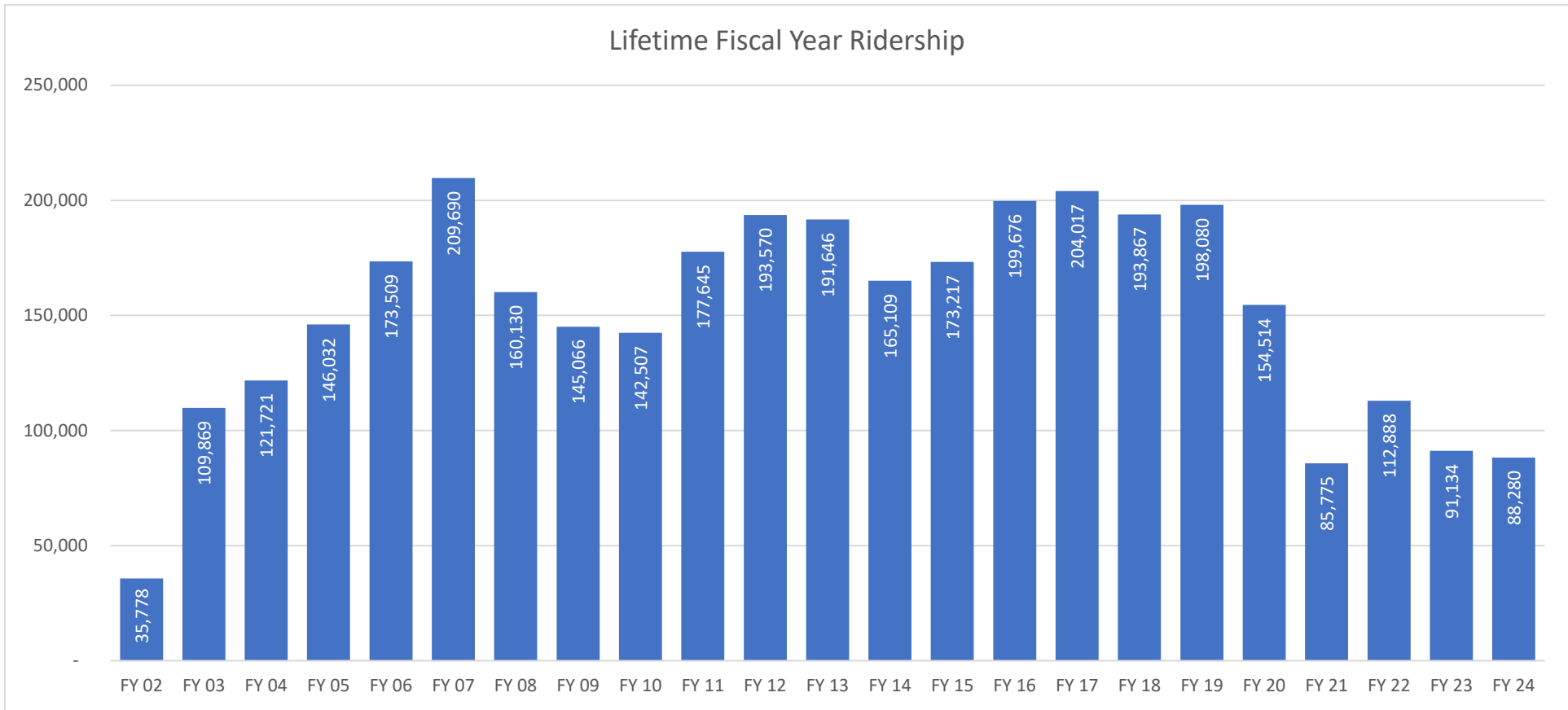


Exhibit B: LINKS Shuttle Map

SHUTTLE ROUTE MAP

SHUTTLE STOPS

NORTH LOOP

EVERY 20 MINUTES

- 19 FIRSTSTOP - BART
- 20 MARINA @ ALVARADO
- 21 MARINA @ TEAGARDEN
- 22 MERCED @ MARINA
- 23 WILLIAMS @ WESTGATE
- 24 WILLIAMS @ 21ST AMENDMENT BREWERY
- 25 WILLIAMS @ DOOLITTLE
- 26 DOOLITTLE @ POLYOROSA
- 27 DAVIS @ DOOLITTLE
- 28 DAVIS @ TIMOTHY (WESTGATE)
- 29 DAVIS @ PIERCE
- 30 DAVIS @ ORCHARD (THRASHER PARK)

SOUTH LOOP

EVERY 20 MINUTES

- 1 FIRSTSTOP - BART
- 2 ALVARADO @ MARINA
- 3 ALVARADO @ MONTAGUE
- 4 ALVARADO @ TEAGARDEN
- 5 TEAGARDEN BEFORE ALADDIN
- 6 FAIRWAY @ MILLER (KASER)
- 7 MERCED @ FAIRWAY
- 8 WICKS @ BURROUGHS
- 9 WICKS @ PIKE
- 10 WICKS @ FARALLON
- 11 FARALLON BEFORE GRIFFITH
- 12 FARALLON @ CATALINA
- 13 DOOLITTLE @ BERMUDA
- 14 DOOLITTLE @ FAIRWAY
- 15 DOOLITTLE @ MARINA
- 16 MARINA @ VERNA COURT
- 17 MARINA @ TEAGARDEN (MARINA SQUARE)
- 18 ALVARADO @ MARINA



Exhibit C: Budget

	FY2020-21	FY2021-22	FY2022-23	FY2023-24	FY2024-25	FY2025-26
REVENUE	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget
BID Revenue	407,501	404,182	373,546	453,827	422,097	435,978
City Contribution	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Grant Revenue	382,000	324,989	107,106	109,750	131,606	138,222
Other - Shuttle Services, Advertising	7,500	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Misc./Interest	2,656	1,914	-	-	4,436	7,680
Kaiser Shuttle & TDM Mgmt	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	849,657	787,085	536,652	619,577	614,139	637,879

EXPENDITURES	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget
LINKS Shuttle Operations	711,128	741,527	453,533	478,593	542,474	591,061
NextBus/Real-Time Tracking	6,000	19,089	6,000	6,162	6,200	6,200
Management	59,760	59,860	74,331	76,602	79,020	81,391
Survey		29,505		4,500	-	5,000
Marketing, Advertising, Misc. Operations	7,192	680	2,160	-	5,000	5,000
Information Systems/Technology		270	630	731	700	700
Bank Charges, Non-Profit Fees, Misc. Admin	476	733	490	1,235	1,000	1,000
Insurance	2,260	2,412	2,346	2,366	2,500	2,500
Accounting/Tax Services	825	1,100	1,000	1,100	1,200	1,200
Legal	-	-	-	-	2,000	2,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	787,641	855,177	540,491	571,290	640,094	696,051

Beginning of Year Fund Balance	580,012	642,028	573,937	570,098	618,385	606,855
Balance	62,016	(68,092)	(3,839)	48,287	(11,530)	(22,946)
End of Year Fund Balance	642,028	573,937	570,098	618,385	606,855	583,909

2021-22 - Deficit result of increased transportation costs, transit study and Nextbus upgrade to 4G.

2022-23 - Modified service to Dual Interlaced Loop and went from 4 buses to 2 buses reducing transportation costs.

2022-26 - 2022 CIP Grant revenue based on projected reimbursement not full grant allocation.

2023-25 – For the 2024 calendar year, MV implemented a 20% increase to transportation costs.



West San Leandro LINKS Shuttle 2025 Business Improvement District (BID) Fee & Service Explanation

The LINKS shuttle serves businesses in West San Leandro by providing a free transportation link between places of employment and the Downtown San Leandro BART Station. With 23 years of service to the community, LINKS has provided over 3 million rides.

Funding for LINKS comes from grants, the City of San Leandro, business and property-owner partnerships, and the Business Improvement District (BID). The BID funds approximately 70% of the total LINKS budget.

Following are answers to some frequently asked questions about the BID. If you have questions about how to fill out your business license form, contact the Finance Department at cashiers@sanleandro.org or 510-577-3378. If you have additional questions about the BID, please contact Lars Halle at lhalle@sanleandro.org or 510-577-3311.

- **Purpose:** All fees collected from the assessment will partially fund the operation of the LINKS shuttle service to and from the downtown San Leandro BART Station. The shuttle service is free to riders.
- **Type of Assessment:** The BID assessment is levied only on businesses in the affected service area, within ¼ mile of the shuttle route (see attached map.)
- **Who is Exempt:** Businesses with three or fewer owners and employees, rental property owners, home businesses, and nonprofit businesses are exempt from the fees.
- **How the Assessment Is Collected:** The annual assessment is levied and collected each year in January as part of the Business License Tax renewal process. The fee is levied on a calendar year basis (January 1 to December 31).
- **Amount of the BID Assessment:** \$29.65 per owner and number of employees per year, effective January 1, 2025. In future years, the annual assessment may be increased in an amount up to the increase, if any, of the Bay Area Consumer Price Index.
- **Find your bus with Nextbus:** The LINKS Shuttle is now easier to use than ever! You can now use your mobile device to find your bus and see how soon it will arrive, finds stops, get walking directions, save favorites and set alerts for your stop. Go to www.nextbus.com or download the NextBus app. LINKS is listed as San Leandro Links.
- **Service Alerts:** Get up-to-date service alerts and notifications by following us on Twitter, twitter.com/sanleandrolinks
- **Businesses with 50+ employees will comply with 2014 Air Quality rules:** Participation in the LINKS Business Improvement District satisfies Option 3 ("Employer Provided Transit") under the Bay Area Air Quality Management District program which requires all employers with 50 or more full-time employees to provide commuter benefits to their employees.