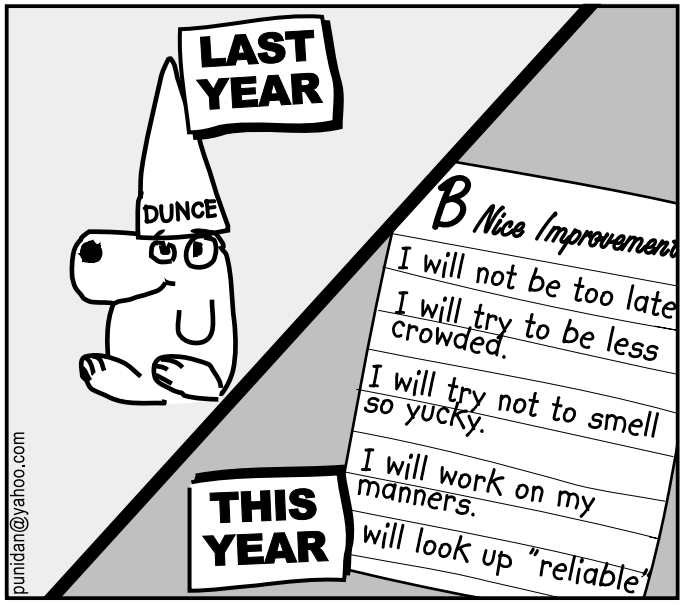
RESCUE MUNI
Transfer

No. 13, August 2000

2000 Riders' Survey Results



*Detailed report begins on **page 5.** Summary is on **page 11.***

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RESCUE MUNI
Candidates' Forum
Sept. 11 (Mon), 6 p.m.
Sierra Club, 85 Second St.

P.O. Box 190966
San Francisco, CA 94119-0966
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August 2000 *Transfer*
The Newsletter of RESCUE MUNI

Candidates' Forum
Riders' Survey Results
Service Standards Update
CA Transit Riders Unite
Operstors' MOU • Muni Haikus

California Transit Riders Unite for Better Service

***Eric Carlson** explains how RM is getting involved outside the 49 square miles.*

A new organization has recently been formed to promote better transit service throughout California. The California Transit Association, together with a wide variety of transit groups including Rescue Muni and the Bay Area Transit & Land Use Coalition, has formed **Odyssey 20/20** to advocate for the transit rider in Sacramento and statewide.

Transit funding, particularly **operating** funds, seems to get stuck "in the back of the bus" while highways continue to get billions of state dollars every year; Odyssey will tell our representatives that their constituents use transit and want it to be more reliable. Special attention will be paid to operating funds, which aren't as sexy as big BART extensions, but which are critical to reliable service. (And, of course, they will point out that transit use reduces traffic and pollution.)

A **rally** was held on May 22, 2000 at the State Capitol. Representatives from the SF Bay Area, Southern California and Central Valley were present. San Francisco transit riders were represented by Rescue Muni chair Andrew Sullivan, who addressed the crowd. Also speaking were State Senator John Burton, California Transit Association Director Joshua Shaw, San Diego Transit Executive Director Ron Yagura, Joyce Perkins of the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative, and many others.

Regionally, Rescue Muni has been asked to affiliate with the Bay Area Transit & Land Use Coalition, which wants to push for transit and transit funding regionally and stresses ecological and social justice (such as uselessness of freeway construction for those too poor to own a car, etc.) principles. The Steering Committee is studying our options. ★

Transfer

the newsletter of RESCUE MUNI
August 2000 - No. 13
Editor: Eric Carlson
Designer: Andrew Sullivan
Artist: Dan Siegler
Contributing writers: Howard Strassner, Joan Downey
Poets: Eric Carlson, Barbara Roos
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RESCUE MUNI (Riders for an Efficient, Safe, Consistent, Utilized, and Expeditious Muni), founded 1996, is a volunteer-run, not-for-profit transit riders' association.

Hot line: **415-273-1558**
www.rescuemuni.org
transit1@rescuemuni.org

Membership Form

We need YOU to help us Rescue Muni.
Join us by mailing this form to P.O. Box 190966, San Francisco, CA 94119-0966. You can also join online at *www.rescuemuni.org*.

Name:

Address:

Phone:
Fax:
Email:

Muni lines you ride:

 # riders in your household:

I would like to volunteer! Y N

Membership category:
__ $5 Student / Limited Income
__ $15 Basic
__ $40 Sustaining
__ $100 Contributing
__ Other: $_____

RESCUE MUNI may from time to time publish membership lists *with names only*. May we publish your name only as a member? Y N

Signature:
_____

Executive Committee
Chair: Vacant (Andrew Sullivan acting)
Vice-Chair: Richard Mlynarik
Membership Sec'y: Daniel Murphy
Recording Sec'y: Howard Strassner
Corresponding Sec'y: Eric Carlson
Treasurer: Joan Downey
Coordinators:
Charlotte Breckenridge, David Pilpel, Andrew Sullivan

Steering Committee
Chair: Andrew Sullivan
Vice-Chair: Daniel Murphy
Charlotte Breckenridge, Eric Carlson, Joan Downey, Richard Mlynarik, David Pilpel, Howard Strassner

Standing Committees
Muni Metro: addresses scheduling and reliability of Muni's light rail lines. Meets second Wed. of every month, 6 p.m., at SPUR, 312 Sutter, 5th floor (chair: Howard Strassner, 661-8786, ruthow@juno.com)
Service Expansion discusses ways Muni can add service. Meets fourth Thurs. of each month, approximately; contact the acting chair. (acting chair: Eric Carlson, 863-5578, pontneuf@earthlink.net)

Other Rescue Muni Initiatives
Membership (chair: Daniel Murphy, 665-4074, daniel@well.com)
Surveys (chair: Andrew Sullivan, 673-0626, andrew@sulli.org)

Any member may form a committee. If it meets at least four times per year, the committee may request appointment of a representative to the Steering Committee, the policy-making body of RESCUE MUNI.

RESCUE MUNI Calendar

Critical upcoming events. Don't miss 'em!

date	item	location
9/5, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, 1 Goodlett (Polk) St. Room 400
9/11, 6 PM	**RM General Membership Meeting and Candidates' Forum**	**Sierra Club, 85 Second St.**
9/13, 6 PM	RM Metro Committee	SPUR, 312 Sutter, 5th Floor
9/18, 6 PM	RM Executive & Steering Committees	SPUR
9/19, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, Rm. 400
9/21, 6:30 PM	RM Service Expansion Committee	SPUR
10/3, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, Rm. 400
10/11, 6 PM	RM Metro Committee	SPUR
10/16, 6 PM	RM Executive & Steering Committees	SPUR
10/17, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, Rm. 400
10/26, 6:30P	RM Service Expansion Committee	SPUR
Oct. TBA	**RM General Membership Meeting**	**TBA**
11/7	**Election Day - Don't forget to vote!**	
11/7, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, Rm. 400
11/8, 6 PM	RM Metro Committee	SPUR
11/20, 6 PM	RM Executive & Steering Committees	SPUR
11/21, 5 PM	Municipal Transportation Agency Board	City Hall, Rm. 400
Nov. TBA	RM Service Expansion Committee	SPUR
Nov. TBA	**RM General Meeting & Runoff Forum (if necessary)**	**TBA**

Please check the web site or Hotline for announcements of special meetings and other events - there will be many more. If you'd like to sponsor an event, please let us know as well - call us or fill out the Volunteer Form on the web site.

The Fashion Page

Cold summers got you down? Warm up with our stylish **long-sleeve t-shirt.** Order now at **www.rescuemuni.org.**

Board of Supervisors *Candidates' Forum*

September 11, 2000, 6 p.m.

Who's the best Supervisorial candidate in **your** district? Find out at our annual **Candidates' Forum** on Monday, September 11, at 6 p.m. We will quiz candidates on their Muni and transit policies and cast our ballots for endorsements that evening. Candidates will be invited based on their responses to the questionnaire below. (Some may be recommended by Steercom; to ask for a recommendation, please call 273-1558 or email **transit1@rescuemuni.org** as soon as possible.)

Candidates: To be considered for this event, please submit your questionnaire as soon as possible. Answer the following questions briefly but completely and email to **transit1@rescuemuni.org** (or fax to **415/673-0686**) by **September 1**.
Please include your Name, Address, Phone, Fax, E-mail, and Web Site.

1. How often do you ride Muni? Which lines? Do you own a Fast Pass?
2. The Board of Supervisors is responsible for confirming the mayor's nominees to the Municipal Transportation Agency Board. What criteria would you apply in evaluating those nominees?
3. Rescue Muni opposed the confirmation of H. Welton Flynn and the other nominees to the MTA Board. Would you have voted to confirm them? If you are an incumbent, how did you vote, and why?
4. Did you support Proposition E in November 1999, the Muni Reform Charter Amendment? Why or why not?
5. The Board of Supervisors will have a great deal of say in the future of the Transbay Terminal. What are your thoughts on the subject?
6. The Board of Supervisors will have a great deal of say about the construction of new parking structures in SF. How do you plan to balance the need of right-of-way for transit with demand for more parking?
7. The Board of Supervisors sits as the county Transportation Authority, which is central to major transit capital projects. What criteria will you use when deciding whether to allocate funds to one capital project or another?
8. Speaking of capital projects, what are your thoughts on the proposed Central Subway project and the proposed Geary Light Rail project?

Please feel free to attach supplemental material explaining why you're running for supervisor, who is supporting you, etc.

Steering Committee Digest

***Howard Strassner** reports on our governing body's decisions in July and August*

In accordance with RESCUE MUNI By laws none of the following are RM policy unless consented to by a majority of the RM Membership present at a General Membership Meeting. Endorsement of Candidates or Ballot Initiatives requires a two-thirds vote.

July meeting: Present, Both: Eric Carlson, Charlotte Breckenridge, Joan Downey, Richard Mlynarik, Dan Murphy, Howard Strassner and Andrew Sullivan.

Excom:

Finances: We have to use more email for Transfers to replace our discounted printing service.

General Membership Meeting set for **September 11**. Meeting will include Supervisor endorsements. Dan will draft questions and rules for pre-selection for meeting.

We canceled Summer Quarterly meeting bedcause there was no need for an election as there were fewer candidates than openings.

Transfer Deadline - Eric to start work on the Transfer.

Steercom:

MOU: We discussed Andrew's proposed letter to the MTA Board to correct the MOU and recommended some small changes and additions.

We voted to recommend endorsement of Saturday Closure of JFK Drive in Golden Gate Park because it would tend to induce more people to take transit to the Park.

August meeting: Present, Both: Breckenridge, Carlson, Downey, Mlynarik, Pilpel, Sullivan.

Excom:

We finalized the date for the Candidates' Forum and agreed to basic endorsement procedures: candidates will be invited to speak based on their answers to the questionnaire on page 3. We will only hold one meeting, as we don't have the resources to do meetings for each district. **Candidates interested in our endorsement MUST submit a questionnaire -** even if Steercom has recommended them!

Steercom:

Endorsements: We voted unanimously to recommend candidates **Ammiano, Magilavy, Newsom,** and **Yee**, and **Yes on F / No on G** (Golden Gate Park Saturday Closure) for member endorsement. We also approved candidate questions (page 4).

Advertising for Candidates: We decided that RM leaders could do fundraisers for candidates endorsed by RM, and create mailers / fliers for these candidates, but that RM would not itself contribute to candidates, as RM is not a registered PAC. (For reference, we created a separate PAC last year, San Franciscans for Muni Reform, to support the initiative that became Proposition E.)

MOU: We agreed to issue a press release expressing our concern about MOU drafts that don't include merit pay for meeting service standards.

Committee Reports: We heard reports from our two main Committees, Metro and Service Expansion. The latter committee is considering a wide range of service expansionprojects (light rail, bus, priority, technology, etc.) for possible RM advocacy; see the RM Calendar for the next meeting date. ★

4. Expenses: keep the cost of producing revenue service within budget.

Customer Service

1.Marketing plan: develop an annual marketing plan identifying specific programs and projects that will promote increased patronage.

2. Publish timetables: publish and distribute schedules for all trips taken by all vehicles which shall consist of specific arrival times at terminals and established intermediate points.

3. Passenger complaints: resolve 75% within 30 days and reduce PSRs by 30% annually.

4. Passenger surveys: conduct a rider survey to measure the satisfaction of transit riders. Use the results to implement improvements.

5. Passenger information: improve public information regarding vehicle delays during operation as well as general user information regarding system modification, route changes, and schedules. Measured by the Rider Survey.

6. Reduce accidents: improve driver training and reduce accidents by 5%

7. Crime: reduce incidents by 5%.

Standards have also been set for staffing performance and employee satisfaction, which indirectly effect rider satisfaction.

For more detailed information, see the Rescue Muni website at **www.rescuemuni.org**, or contact Muni at 554-4129 and request a copy of their Service Standards.

Once strong standards are established, Muni will have its best chance yet to improve, and customers will see the results in better service and reduced automobile traffic. ★

Where's that Streetcar (or Bus)?

Get real-time **Muni Metro (surface) location** updates at:

www.nextbus.com/muni-metro

Underground streetcar locations can be seen at:

www.sfmunicentral.com

22-Fillmore locations (pilot project only) are at:

www.nextbus.com/muni

Bay Area transit **schedules** are available at:

www.transitinfo.org

Service Standards Update

*Steering Committee and Muni CAC member **Joan Downey** reports on Muni's performance measures, as revised based on comments from Rescue Muni and others*

In accordance with Proposition E, the Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA) adopted service standards at the June 20, 2000 meeting with which Muni will be measured during the next year. The standards include a statement of the goals, definition of measurement, and milestones for the next 4 years. Muni will publish reports twice a year (in November and May) on the attainment of the standards and milestones.

Prop E established performance measurements and Muni staff added the goals and milestones. Because it was the first time setting these goals and milestones, it was difficult and all recognized that they might be changed after collecting data for a year or two.

Rescue Muni members reviewed the proposal and made recommendations for minor changes.

Milestones

The measurement most important to riders is ***System Reliability:***

1. On–time performance: percent of vehicles that run on time according to the published schedules (no more than one minute early or four minutes late) measured at terminals and established intermediate points on weekdays and weekends.

2000: **65%** 2004: **85%**

2. Service delivery: percent of scheduled service hours that are delivered and percentage of scheduled vehicles that begin service at the scheduled time. This measures service hours through available operators and available equipment with data coming from the online *Dispatching System*.

2000: **96.5%** 2004: **98.5%**

3. Level of crowding peak period passenger load factors: the combined seating and standing capacity.

2000 and 2004: **Less than 85%**

4. Pass-ups: percent of vehicles that pass stops because they are unable to pick up passengers due to crowding, and are not followed within 3 minutes by another vehicle with space.

2000 and 2004: **Less than 5%**

5. Headway: (the time between vehicles) percent of time routes operate within 30% or 10 minutes (whichever is less) of scheduled headway.

2000: **80%** 2004: **95%**

6.Availability: percent of vehicle availability and reliability (mean distance between failure). The *Vehicle Maintenance System* provides the data for this measurement.

2000 and 2004: **98.5%**

7. Unscheduled absences: percent reduction of time not scheduled in advance including sick pay, AWOL, Worker's Comp, SDI, and Assault.

2000 and 2004: **10% for Operations, 5% for others**

8.Miles between roadcalls: measurement of reliability through the miles a vehicle travels between failures.

2000 and 2004: **Increase miles**

System performance measurements are also important to riders:

1. Operating performance: 2 percent increase in passengers.

2. Fare revenue: $1.6M increase the fare revenue.

3. Hours and Miles: 1.2 percent increase in hours and miles operated.

2000 Riders' Survey Results

*At last, some real improvement! **Andrew Sullivan** explains.*

Since 1997, Rescue Muni has conducted an annual survey of the San Francisco Municipal Railway (Muni) to determine its on-time performance. In this time, the state of Muni has been a very high-profile issue in City politics, playing an important role in elections for Supervisor and Mayor, and leading to one successful ballot initiative (1999's Proposition E). In addition, Muni's budget has been increased substantially since 1996, after many years of small or zero increases.

Has all of this attention paid off? It appears that the answer is yes. Our 2000 **Muni Riders' Survey** has found a substantial improvement in Muni performance since 1999, with this improvement at a faster rate than in the previous year. On average, Muni riders were delayed **18.9%** of the time, earning the system a grade of **B-minus** and representing a 5.6 percentage point improvement from 1999. Other measures of Muni performance improved, but only slightly: average waiting time declined from seven to six minutes, and the average rider waited 74% of the posted frequency, down from 76 percent in 1999.

Improvement was **fairly consistent**: the reliability of most (but not all) measured lines improved, some quite substantially, and service was better for all modes except historic streetcar. Most improved was the **K-Ingleside,** which was graded "A" this year (4% of riders delayed) after being graded "F" (41% delayed) just two years ago. This year, only 4 of 24 lines with sufficient data[1] were graded "D" or "F", a lower ratio of failing grades (17%) than last year.

This survey, designed to measure Muni's performance from the rider's perspective, was conducted in the same way as in previous years. **74** volunteers recorded their experiences while using Muni in February 2000, recording how long they waited for their buses and streetcars, and how long their trips took. This year, our volunteers recorded **2,123** separate rides. We compared riders' actual experiences with the frequencies advertised in Muni's *Street and Transit Map*, posted at bus shelters and available widely in the city.

We have listed here Muni's five best and

Table 1: Best and worst lines; systemwide performance

route	% riders late	Grade	1999 % late	change 00-99	1998 % late	1997 % late	Total responses
Total	**18.86%**	**B-**	**25%**	**-6%**	**28%**	**25%**	**2123**
Best five lines:							
K	4%	**A**	32%	-28%	27%		53
9	5%	**A**	31%	-26%			20
28	8%	**A-**	21%	-13%			25
33	8%	**A-**	12%	-4%			49
44	10%	**B+**	25%	-15%	9%	31%	84
Worst five lines:							
L	28%	**C-**	26%	+2%	53%	22%	127
42	30%	**D+**	36%	-6%	25%		33
14	32%	**D+**	47%	-15%	51%		31
30	50%	**F**	26%	+24%	21%	33%	40
38	52%	**F**	33%	+19%	26%	27%	27

** Line has fewer than 20 responses; measurement is not as accurate.*

worst lines, and its systemwide score. (This table includes only lines with over 20 responses.) Later in this paper, we will provide a list of all measured routes and analyses by mode and time of day.

Methodology

This survey attempts to measure Muni's reliability from the rider's perspective, with a methodology that has not significantly changed since we began in 1997. For the entire month of February 2000, volunteers recorded how long they waited for the buses and streetcars that they used every day, and a few watched vehicles go by and recorded the headways. This year, **74** volunteers recorded **2,123** separate rides, or 73 per day; this was unfortunately a lower response rate than in 1999, when 3,995 data points were submitted.

For each ride, we calculated waiting time and compared it to the frequency advertised on Muni's *Street and Transit Map,* posted at most stops.[2] We calculated the percentage of riders delayed, the average waiting time, and the average *normalized waiting time* - waiting time over advertised frequency - for each line. For data collected by watching vehicles go by (329 observations, more than in 1999), we used a system of weighted averages to calculate these metrics for a hypothetical rider arriving at random.[3]

This year, because both bus and streetcar riders reported their destinations, we were able to measure trip times and draw some conclusions about the probability of delays. In addition, we were also able to assign riders to *groups* of lines, which more accurately reflects their experience; a rider from Powell Street to Haight and Masonic, for example, has a choice of four lines (6, 7, 66, 71). For riders who could choose from groups of lines, we calculated a "segment headway" reflecting the frequency of *all* vehicles passing the stop, assuming even distribution, subject to a minimum headway of three minutes.[4]

Based on these data, we calculated results for the system as a whole and the 39 lines for which we had 10 or more data points. (Due to the lower response rate, we are reporting results for lines with 10 or more data points, but we are marking those with fewer than 20 in the list of lines as "less accurate.") In addition, we calculated the results for each mode (streetcar, metro, diesel, electric) of service and for various times of day. We assigned our letter grades based on the percentage of riders delayed, and we compared these with survey results from previous years.

We also asked riders to record their destinations and the time they arrived there, and to measure maximum *crowding* on their ride based on a scale of 1 (empty) to 5 (crush-loaded). With the arrival data, we measured *travel times* for all trips taken and were able to do some basic analysis of the probability of enroute delays.

Key Findings

Systemwide Performance

Muni's systemwide performance improved significantly from 1999 to 2000. As noted above, **18.9% of riders experienced a delay** in the 2000 survey, an improvement of 5.6 percentage points from 1999. In addition, when compared to previous years, Muni's performance continues to improve; this year's score is almost 10 percentage points (a full letter grade) better than it was in 1998. This earned Muni a **B-minus** for overall performance, its first grade other than C in the history of the survey. (See chart on page 10 for results since 1997.)

Even with this level of performance, however, Muni riders can still expect to be late more than one time in six, and those who transfer will be delayed on average once every other day. While this is an improved reliability score, it does not yet come up to

Muni Haiku #1

Standing in the rain
Waiting for the #24
Will it come today?

Barbara Roos

Operator MOU Update

The drivers have rejected the contract twice. Now what? ***Andrew Sullivan*** *reports.*

Muni's long history of labor troubles took another turn for the worse this summer as a dispute simmered between the transit operators and Muni management over the new labor contract. Despite fairly generous raises and increases in several premiums paid for tasks such as night duty and training, Muni's operators have voted twice at this writing to reject the proposed MOU draft agreed to by their leadership (Transport Workers Union of America local 250A) and Director Michael Burns.

The reasons given for the rejection center mainly on tighter work rules in the draft agreement, mainly concerning accidents, overtime and holiday pay. Both contract drafts include provisions that prevent employees from collecting overtime pay for if they call in sick the same week, or holiday pay if they call in sick the day before or the day after the holiday. In addition, both drafts include provisions that may make it easier to discipline operators for accidents deemed "chargeable" by frontline managers.

Muni's management, led by Director Michael Burns, has stated publicly that the intent of the contract is not to "scapegoat" the drivers, but instead to bring Muni practices in line with the industry and reduce abuse. A lively discussion has taken place about this in the press and on the RM email list.

Rescue Muni expressed strong concerns about the contract drafts because they do not include merit pay based on the achievement of on-time performance and service delivery, two critical service standards voted into the Charter last year as part of Proposition E. (This is Charter section 8A.104 (m).) While other merit pay provisions based on reductions in complaints and accidents are still in the tentative agreement, the Steering Committee voted unanimously that this did not satisfy the intent of Proposition E.

Muni introduced its second Tentative Agreement to the MTA board for approval on August 25. Because the Charter requires that an agreement be reached by September 25, and also that all tentative agreements be publicized 30 days before approval. If the union members and the MTA board vote to approve the agreement, it will go into effect; if not, Muni will operate under the previous contract and the operators will not get a raise. At this time Rescue Muni has not taken a final position as to whether, if the rank-and-file vote to approve, the MTA board should as well. Stay tuned for further developments. ★

We are maintaining a fairly complete archive of MOU related documents on the RM website, ***www.rescuemuni.org****. If you have a MOU related document that should be posted, please email to* ***transit1@rescuemuni.org.***

Muni Haiku #2

we stand in the fog
who knows when the
bus will come
schedule's a secret

Eric Carlson

requirement that Muni run on time **85 percent** of the time by 2004.[7] Muni admits that it does not come close to this number today. With the establishment of pay for performance based on this standard, however, Muni employees from the car cleaner to the general manager will finally be held accountable for service delivered. We think that this will lead to more reliable service, as it has in other public-sector organizations such as the U.S. Postal Service.

Conclusions

The results of the 2000 Muni Riders' Survey, conducted by 74 volunteers in February 2000, are encouraging. While Muni is by no means running perfectly, service has improved; this year, it was graded **B-minus**, with riders experiencing delays on average **18.9 percent** of the time. This was 5.6 percentage points better than in 1999, and almost 10 percentage points better than Muni's worst score in 1998. Customers experienced fewer delays and waited on average shorter times for their buses or streetcars. However, crowding did not improve, as Muni struggled to meet increasing demand for service. Also, many heavily traveled lines such as the 38-Geary were graded poorly.

Muni is to be commended for improving service, but it still has a long way to go before we can declare it "rescued." While it is clear that increased funding, new equipment, and stronger accountability have helped, significant additional effort will be required to make Muni the world-class transit operator that it aspires to be. Last year's Proposition E has helped in important ways, but ultimately the responsibility is that of management and the Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors. Muni may have worked hard for its B-minus, but it should not rest until it earns a solid A. ★

Notes

[1] Only 24 lines had more than 20 responses to our survey this year, our standard. An additional 14 had between 10 and 20 responses; for these lines, three had failing grades.

[2] This map is the most widely distributed system guide for Muni, though it does not contain its most complete schedules. We used the 1999 version because it has not been updated since then.

[3] To accurately assess the probability that a rider arriving at random will be delayed, we weighted the probability that a rider would be delayed in a particular monitored interval by the length of the interval (or, more precisely, the ratio of the interval to the total time in which that bus or streetcar was monitored). This is the same method that we used in the spring and fall of 1997.

[4] This is different from the method used in 1999, but previous analyses of the data using the 1999 method found similar results; this method was chosen because it is more meaningful and easier to calculate.

[5] This survey was of Muni Metro (light rail) service only.

[6] This survey was of Muni Metro (light rail) service only.

[7] This is not equivalent to the system used for our survey; it measures buses late instead of riders delayed. If the bus is late 15 percent of the time, riders would be delayed less than that since they show up at random times in the interval; while the exact relationship depends on how late the bus is, the percentage of riders delayed would generally be less than half that number.

the level of a world-class transit system; however, if this pattern continues, it is now possible to envision a highly reliable Muni in only a few years.

Waiting times also decreased slightly. Riders waited on average six minutes, one minute less than in 1999, but more interesting is normalized waiting time. This score improved to **74%** of posted frequency this year, not an excellent score but much better than it was at Muni's worst point in1998, 85% of posted frequency.

Table 2: Crowding (systemwide)

crowding level	% total (2000)	% total (1999)
1 (empty)	15%	17%
2 (seats)	32%	31%
3 (SRO)	22%	23%
4 (crowded)	19%	15%
5 (crush loaded)	12%	14%

Systemwide **crowding,** however, did not improve since 1999. Muni's score for 2000, an average of **2.8** on a five-point scale, was essentially the same as its score in 1999. Slightly fewer vehicles were crush-loaded this year (12%), but as in 1999, over half of vehicles (53%) were standing-room only. (See chart on page 10.)

It appears that Muni is still having difficulty providing sufficient vehicles to meet demand, and this of course means that customers must endure crowded, uncomfortable conditions more often than necessary. As noted previously, customers currently experience unacceptable crowding more than one time in four, or every other day on a normal commute schedule.

Performance by mode and time of day

Muni's performance continued to vary by mode (route type) and time of day, but less than it had in previous years. This continues a trend that began last year of more consistent service; Muni is clearly less random in its performance than it has been. Motorcoach (diesel) lines showed the most improvement over 1999, with particularly strong improvements in express service (12 percentage points) and limited-stop service (26 percentage points, but small sample size). This may be a result of Muni's purchase of new motorcoaches, which should have much higher reliability than the 1980s-vintage buses being replaced.

Other modes improved as well. Although it did not quite get a B grade, the Muni Metro is clearly on a positive trajectory, with an improvement of four percentage points over 1999. Trolley (electric) coach service also improved, but the F-Market historic streetcar, was less reliable this year. However, this year at least, Muni riders would do well to take the bus for better service. (See chart on page 10 for results. We did not receive any cable car data this year.)

Customers are also getting more consistent performance from Muni regardless of the time of day. This year, only service in the evening rush was graded **C** (25% of riders delayed); all other service was graded **B** with chances of delays in the 13%-19% range. Significantly, performance in all

Table 3: Performance by mode

mode	Total resps	% late	**Grade**	change 00-99	Avg wait	Norm. wait	Avg crowd	1999 % late	1998 % late
diesel	441	15%	**B**	-7%	0:08	70%	2.43	22%	23%
electric	528	21%	**C+**	-7%	0:06	72%	2.59	27%	27%
express	79	9%	**A-**	-12%	0:03	42%	3.42	20%	28%
limited	15	13%	**B**	-26%	0:02	45%	4.00	40%	28%
metro	997	20%	**C+**	-4%	0:06	82%	3.03	25%	35%
streetcar	63	21%	**C+**	+10%	0:07	54%	2.13	11%	13%
Grand Total	2123	18.9%	**B-**	-6%	0:06	74%	2.81	24.5%	28%

Table 4: Performance by time of day

mode	Total resps	% late	Grade	change 00-99	Avg wait	Norm. wait	Avg crowd	1999 % late	1998 % late
AM rush	463	18%	B-	-8%	0:04	63%	3.10	26%	30%
evening	407	16%	B	-6%	0:06	58%	2.58	22%	21%
holiday	23	13%	B	-11%	0:07	57%	2.04	24%	
midday	590	19%	B-	-5%	0:08	82%	2.59	24%	22%
PM rush	345	25%	C	-3%	0:06	87%	3.10	28%	38%
weekend	293	18%	B-	-5%	0:09	86%	2.69	23%	22%

note: owl only had 2 responses, so it's not reported.

time slots improved over 1999, with all but PM rush service improving from a C to a B. Since 1998, rush-hour service in particular has improved: both AM and PM rush hours were graded D that year.

Performance of Specific Lines

Unlike in previous years, Muni's reliability improved across almost all lines surveyed. Only a small number of lines got worse; significantly, two of these lines (38-Geary and 30-Stockton) are candidates for subway or streetcar service in the coming years. Of the 24 lines for which we received over 20 responses, 20 lines got better and only 4 got worse. The most-improved line was the **K-Ingleside,** which was graded A this year (4% of riders delayed) after being graded D last year (32% delayed). Other improved lines include the **9-San Bruno** and **47-Van Ness,** each of which improved by 26 percentage points over 1999; the 9 was graded A and the 47 was graded B this year.

However, the **30-Stockton** was much worse than last year, despite the installation of transit-only lanes; it was graded F (50% delayed) after losing 24 percentage points. Close behind it was the **38-Geary,** which lost 19 percentage points from 1999 and was also graded F.

Many lines continued on their path toward improvement from 1997-98. The **N-Judah**, our most heavily reported line, showed a slight improvement from 1999 (2 percentage points), but this was after a major improvement from 1998 to 1999. Similarly, the **5-Fulton** improved from 21% to 18% delayed (earning a B grade), after improving significantly from 1998's 28% late. The **14-Mission,** still one of Muni's least reliable lines, has improved by 19 percentage points since 1998 but still has a long way to go (it was graded D).

Overall, however, Muni's performance became more consistent over the lines surveyed. The majority of lines surveyed had passing grades, and as noted only a small number declined significantly in reliability. This may be due to new equipment, better supervision, and better accountability systemwide (see discussion at end).

In Table 6, we provide a complete list of lines studied, ranked from best to worst performance. This table includes our standard measurements for each line and the percentage of riders delayed from all previous surveys.

Line Profiles

To understand how Muni is running, it is also useful to understand the performance of specific lines. The following are commonly used lines that are representative of Muni's overall reliability.

28-19th Avenue (Graded A): This is a line that has been mediocre over the years but is now performing very well. This year the line, which runs from the Golden Gate Bridge to Daly City on a crowded state highway, was graded A with only 8% of riders experiencing a delay; in 1999 it was much less reliable, earning a C with 21% of riders delayed. (This was in turn a decline in reliability from 1998, when 14% of riders were delayed.) It is not an extremely frequent line, as service runs only once every 10

service by the Municipal Railway.

Budget: Muni's budget has increased steadily over the past four years, and this year it appears that the increased funding is finally producing results. After many years of low or zero budget increases, some of which were reductions when adjusted for inflation, Mayor Brown and the Board of Supervisors began increasing Muni's budget substantially beginning in fiscal1997. It is quite clear that some of the improvement in reliability has resulted from these budget increases – though it's also worth noting that the budget has increased more quickly than has reliability. (See figure 3 for the growth in Muni's budget since 1990, and figure 4 to consider the impact of recent budget increased on reliability.)

While Muni's budget problems are by no means solved, the creation of a protected Municipal Transportation Fund in 1999's Proposition E will help reduce the severity of budget cuts that can occur during difficult economic times. Increased service will require new sources of funding, which Muni now has the power to seek under Proposition E.

Equipment: Since we began conducting this survey in 1997, Muni has replaced the majority of its light rail vehicles, and it has also ordered a series of new motor and trolley coaches. As one might expect, this new equipment seems to have improved reliability. Lines using new motorcoaches, such as the 43-Masonic and 108-Treasure Island, did fairly well in this year's survey; in contrast, lines using some of Muni's oldest motor and trolley coaches, such as the 38-Geary and 30-Stockton, did poorly. While new vehicles don't always do well (consider the trouble the Breda streetcars have had), the reduction in breakdowns from having new vehicles is certainly good for service.

One of the major benefits of Proposition E (1999) and the Municipal Transportation Fund is that Muni can now make more accurate long-term financial plans. This should help reduce the chance that the railway will be forced to keep its next round of buses as long as the current trolley coaches have been in service (24 years!) and should therefore improve fleet reliability.

Traffic: This problem has gotten worse, not better, over the years as San Francisco has become a high-tech boom town and the number of auto drivers has increased, particularly at rush hour. Many of the lines that did poorly are in heavy-traffic areas, including the 14-Mission, 38-Geary, 30-Stockton, 42-Downtown Loop, and others. Bus service can be helped by adding transit-only lanes, but what is really needed is *enforcement* of these lanes; all four of these lines have transit lanes, but these lanes are routinely blocked by cars ignoring the regulations.

Part of the problem is that transit lane violations are *moving* violations, enforceable only by the police; if parking control officers (or Muni drivers) could issue tickets to drivers blocking the lanes, we would see a rapid change in compliance. Alternatively, photo enforcement could be used.

Management: Muni has had its current director, Michael Burns, for just over a year, so this is his first Riders' Survey. While it is difficult to tie results to one person, it is worth pointing out that Mr. Burns has significantly more transit experience than did his predecessors. Thus far, his record is strong; we shall see whether his team is able to continue to improve service in the next couple of years – and how well his team does if the economy turns down and Muni's budget does not increase as rapidly.

An additional management issue worth noting is the problem of unscheduled and unexcused absences, a problem that has contributed significantly to unreliability. As part of Proposition E, Muni is required to develop programs to reduce unscheduled absences, and it is not allowed to tolerate "miss-outs," or unexcused absences. While we have not seen this year's numbers, a lower absentee rate would certainly make a difference for service.

Service Standards: A critical element in Proposition E was the establishment of enforceable service standards, including a

where near as bad as it was in 1998, when 53% of riders were delayed in February and 47% in October. Still, service is not where it needs to be, particularly given that a route like the K can earn an A with similar equipment and routing.

14-Mission (Graded D): This heavily-traveled line remains one of the least relich able in the City, though it too has improved in the past two years. Graded F in 1998 and 1999 with 51% and 47% of riders delayed (respectively), it has definitely improved to the point that "only" 32 percent of riders experience a delay. Normalized waiting time is much better than before: riders wait a near-perfect 47% of posted frequency on average, much improved from 121% in 1999, but of course this does not take into account bunching. Crowding is better than Muni's systemwide score (and slightly better than last year) at 2.45.

The 14 shares a corridor with the 49-Van Ness/Mission, and we adjusted posted headways to reflect the presence of these two bus lines for customers traveling on this segment. We did the same for the 47-Van Ness and 42-Downtown Loop, which share the Van Ness corridor with the 49; it is worth noting that the 47 line did much better, grading a strong B.

38-Geary (Graded F): The 38-Geary, one of the most heavily used motorcoach lines in the world, was a big disappointment, continuing its downward trend from 1998, when it was graded C. This year the 38 came in dead last, with 52 percent of riders experiencing a delay, up 19 percentage points from 1998. Customers waited well over the posted frequency on average (115 percent), a significant decline in reliability from last year when they waited only 78 percent. Crowding was a standing-room-only 3.0 on average.

This route shares a corridor with the 38L-Geary Limited, which did much better (13% of riders delayed). Perhaps the 38L is getting most of the attention of Muni's supervisors on the route, and the 38 is allowed to bunch; or the 38L is not dispatched properly to alternate with the 38. In any case, service on this route has gotten worse for several years, so it should be a top priority for improvements in fiscal 2001.

Rider Comments

As usual, survey participants were liberal with their comments on Muni performance. Riders commented on a wide range of issues, mainly concerning the reliability, crowding, and cleanliness of the buses and streetcars they took. Many riders commented on crowding:

Jammed; PACKED; dangerously packed; very crowded; etc. (25)

So crowded no one could breathe

It took three buses before I could board.

Muni is so overcrowded I've decided to bike to work, and my girlfriend has started to walk instead.

Some commented on the cleanliness of their vehicles:

Cigarette smoke

Got gum on pants!

Bus smelled like McDonald's restaurant..

Others commented on their peers on the bus:

The kids do misbehave and I have been on the receiving end of some rude behavior. One morning, I think Tuesday this week, there was a second Muni person at the back door checking fast passes and this presence kept the peace.

Noisy & Drunk!

Lots of wackos.

And others commented on overall service quality:

fast ride!

good ride; no problems; good trip; etc. (17)

Weekday service apparently better, weekend lousy as usual

Italian car. Quaint but very slow, uncomfortable and inappropriate for rush hour.

One wild ride!

Policy Implications

This survey clearly shows that Muni service has improved, though it has a long way to go before Muni can be considered a world-class transit system. The following are some factors that we think have contributed to Muni's increasing reliability, and also that may be in the way of truly reliable

minutes at the peak, but customers routinely wait only half this on average and only 41% of the posted frequency. Average crowding (2.4) is not severe; only rarely was it above 3 (standing room only).

43-Masonic (Graded B): This line is also doing better than Muni's systemwide average. Customers of the 43-Masonic, which passes by Presidio Division and Muni's Planning Department before running to West Portal, should expect a delay only 12 percent of the time. However, riders generally waited longer than on the 28; average waiting time was 83% of the posted frequency, suggesting that buses may run a few minutes late often, but will not run so late that the typical rider is delayed. This score was substantially better than the 1999 score (26% delayed) and scores from 1998 and 1997 (both 23% delayed). Muni often uses new motorcoaches on this route, which is almost certainly making service more reliable.

N-Judah (Graded C): If San Francisco is "Everyone's Favorite City," this must be "Everyone's Favorite Streetcar," at least to complain about. It was trouble on the N-Judah that began the Muni Meltdown in 1997; the N is the main line to Pacific Bell Park; and it has certainly gotten more press and attention than other LRV lines. So also with the survey; we received **386** responses for the N-Judah, more than any other line.

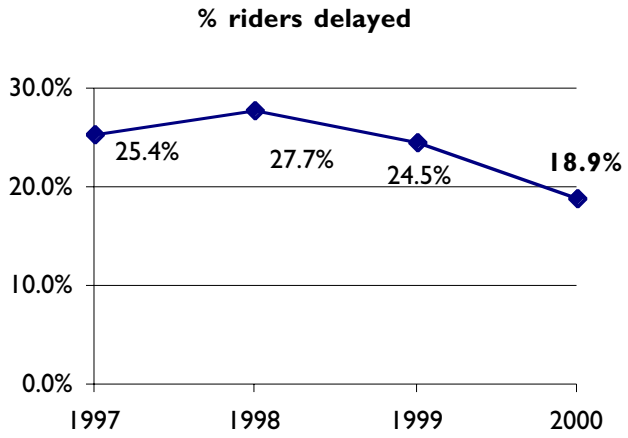
The N's performance is definitely improving, perhaps based on the high level of attention it has received. However, improvement has not been as dramatic as on other lines; on-time service only improved less than three percentage points this year (22% late to 20% late, after rounding). Customers still wait more than the Muni average for their streetcars, 88% of posted frequency, and this has actually worsened since last year (77%). Average crowding is slightly over 3 (standing room), worse than last year. However, the N is much more reliable now than it was in 1998, when 42% of riders were delayed and customers waited 123% posted frequency for every streetcar. So while it's mediocre now, it's not as dismal as it was a few years ago – and the cars are all air-conditioned.

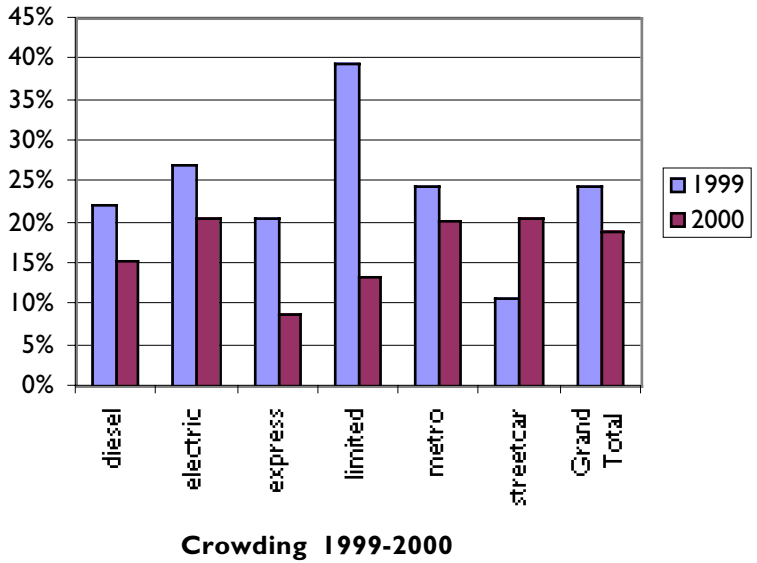
L-Taraval (Graded C): The "L-Terrible" may be reverting to old form, unfortunately. This year it got slightly worse, with 28% of riders delayed and normalized wait time at 88% posted frequency. (A perfectly running system would score 50% normalized wait time, because the typical passenger would wait half the posted headway at all times.) However, crowding is better (2.84 in 2000 vs. 3.25 in 1999 and 3.59 in fall 1998), so L customers are more likely to get a seat than before. On-time service is no-

Table 5: Most and least improved lines

route	% riders delayed	Grade	Change 00-99	1999 % late	Fall 98 % late	1998 % late	1997 % late	Total resps
Most improved:								
K	4%	**A**	**-28%**	32%	33%	41%	27%	53
9	5%	**A**	**-26%**	31%		27%		20
47	14%	**B**	**-26%**	40%				21
14	32%	**D+**	**-15%**	47%		51%		31
43	12%	**B+**	**-15%**	26%		23%	23%	100
Least improved:								
22	21%	**C+**	**-1%**	22%		29%	55%	33
L	28%	**C-**	**+2%**	26%	47%	53%	22%	127
F	21%	**C+**	**+10%**	11%		13%	39%	63
38	52%	**F**	**+19%**	33%		26%	27%	27
30	50%	**F**	**+24%**	26%		21%	33%	40

2000 Survey Results at a Glance





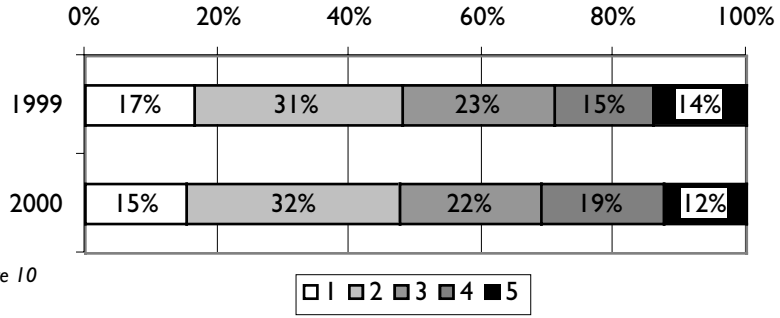


Table 6: Complete Results

route	*Total resps*	*% late*	*Grade*	*chg 00-99*	*Avg wait*	*Norm wait*	*Crowding†*	*1999 %late*	*Fall 98 % late*	*1998 % late*	*1997 % late*	*
38AX	*15*	*0%*	***A***		*0:02*	*17%*	*3.80*					*
108	*10*	*0%*	***A***		*0:04*	*9%*	*2.20*					*
30X	*10*	*0%*	***A***		*0:02*	*46%*	*1.60*			*20%*		*
K	53	4%	**A**	-28%	0:07	66%	2.92	32%	33%	41%	27%	
9	20	5%	**A**	-26%	0:03	36%	3.45	31%		27%		
16BX	*16*	*6%*	***A***	*-12%*	*0:04*	*40%*	*3.38*	*19%*				*
28	25	8%	**A-**	-13%	0:05	41%	2.36	21%		14%		
33	49	8%	**A-**	-4%	0:06	36%	2.25	12%				
71L	*12*	*8%*	***A-***		*0:03*	*38%*	*2.58*					*
31BX	*10*	*10%*	***A-***		*0:04*	*40%*	*4.10*					*
44	84	10%	**B+**	-15%	0:11	81%	2.72	25%		9%	31%	
18	*19*	*11%*	***B+***	*0%*	*0:09*	*54%*	*2.56*	*10%*				*
43	100	12%	**B+**	-15%	0:10	83%	1.73	26%		23%	23%	
5	66	12%	**B+**	-3%	0:04	53%	2.92	16%		28%	16%	
38L	*15*	*13%*	***B***	*-21%*	*0:02*	*45%*	*4.00*	*35%*		*29%*		*
21	35	14%	**B**	-11%	0:08	52%	2.29	26%		30%	22%	
47	21	14%	**B**	-26%	0:02	55%	2.75	40%				
JKLMN	55	15%	**B**	-5%	0:01	57%	2.92	20%	1%			
24	95	17%	**B-**	-5%	0:07	62%	2.73	22%		30%	23%	
KLM	222	18%	**B-**	-5%	0:03	69%	3.38	22%	22%	14%	7%	
6	73	18%	**B-**	-3%	0:11	103%	2.56	21%		21%	9%	
29	*11*	*18%*	***B-***	*-22%*	*0:13*	*81%*	*2.36*	*40%*				*
N	386	20%	**C+**	-2%	0:06	88%	3.03	23%	35%	42%	33%	
F	63	21%	**C+**	10%	0:07	54%	2.13	11%		13%	39%	
22	33	21%	**C+**	-1%	0:04	51%	2.50	22%		29%	55%	
1	33	24%	**C**	-3%	0:06	72%	2.13	28%		23%	43%	
M	72	25%	**C**	-1%	0:10	94%	2.79	26%	38%	31%	30%	
J	82	25%	**C**	-11%	0:10	90%	2.70	36%	33%	42%	22%	
L	127	28%	**C-**	2%	0:07	88%	2.84	26%	47%	53%	22%	
49	*14*	*29%*	***C-***	*6%*	*0:05*	*108%*	*2.29*	*23%*		*29%*		*
71	*17*	*29%*	***C-***	*7%*	*0:07*	*77%*	*2.71*	*23%*		*31%*	*25%*	*
42	33	30%	**D+**	-6%	0:07	91%	2.64	36%		25%		
14	31	32%	**D+**	-15%	0:03	89%	2.45	47%		51%		
45	*14*	*36%*	***D***	*12%*	*0:02*	*80%*	*3.31*	*23%*		*16%*		*
7	*13*	*38%*	***D-***	*-12%*	*0:04*	*107%*	*1.85*	*50%*		*19%*		*
19	*12*	*42%*	***F***	*27%*	*0:13*	*85%*	*2.00*	*15%*		*22%*	*42%*	*
30	40	50%	**F**	24%	0:06	135%	3.14	26%		21%	33%	
38	27	52%	**F**	19%	0:04	115%	3.00	33%		26%	27%	
Total	**2123**	**18.9%**	**B-**	**-6%**	**0:06**	**74%**	**2.81**	**25%**		**28%**	**25%**	

Note: Routes with an asterisk (*) in the right column had fewer than 20 responses; we are reporting them here for completeness, but these results should be considered less accurate than those in roman type.

† Crowding is on a scale of 1 (empty) to 5 (jammed).