Stop Praising Muni

Regarding the news story “Riders: Muni’s on a roll” (May 23): How much did Willie Brown pay your to run that article, especially its headline?
Your fallacious story (based on “Rescue Muni” survey findings) isn’t pulling the wool over anyone’s eyes. Muni is as bad as it’s ever been. In fact, a more appropriate headline would have read, “Riders: Muni as pathetic as ever.”

Allow me to cite a personal example. I live near the corner of 22nd Street and Castro in Noe Valley. I work near Levi’s Plaza on the other side of town. To get to work every day, I start my journey by walking from my apartment to the Castro Muni Metro station. Of course I could wait for the 24 bus to take me, but it runs so sporadically it’s usually faster to walk the half-mile. I’m always amazed when there’s been no sign of a 24 bus for 20 or 30 minutes, and then three show up at the same time. Nothing like efficiency!

Each morning I and the rest of the “cattle” attempt to board the Muni underground at Castro. One would think that perhaps at rush hour Muni would focus on sending out four-car trains in order to transport the maximum number of people possible during the busiest time of the day. Oh no – one-car trains packed to the rafters are the norm, making it impossible for anyone to board at Castro. Eventually, after 15, 20, or even 30 minutes, a three- or four-car train shows up with enough room for a few more herds.

But then the real fun begins. On average, at least once a week the Muni train I’m riding breaks down, or there’s some ridiculous but predictable problem in the tunnel that requires me and the rest of the cattle to get off the train, go above round, and scramble to find a Muni bus with enough room for a few more riders (not very likely given the fact that several hundred of us are trying to do the same thing). Ergo, I end up having to walk to the rest of the way to work.

This wouldn’t be as bad if I worked in the Financial District, but since I don’t I have to walk an additional mile from the Financial District to my office. I’ve heard rumors there’s a bus that serves that area, but I’ve never seen it.

To say “Muni’s on a roll” is nothing more than a bunch of bull.

- DAVID FRIEL
- San Francisco