

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Policy Advisory Council**

April 13, 2022

Agenda Item 9

Staff Liaison Report

Subject:

Relevant MTC policy decisions and other activities.

Issues:

None identified

Recommendations:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Attachment A: Staff Liaison Report – April 2022

Staff Liaison Report – April 2022

New Appointment

Terry Scott has been appointed to the open Napa County slot on the Policy Advisory Council, where he will represent older adults. Mr. Scott will attend the April 13, 2022, Council meeting.

The ABCs of MTC

You can now download “**The ABCs of MTC**,” a guidebook created by MTC staff specifically for onboarding members onto the Policy Advisory Council. The guidebook includes a glossary of acronyms and terms to help member decipher “MTC-speak.”

Legislative Updates:

Free or Reduced Transit Proposals & Other State Budget Updates:

- March was a big month in Sacramento for free or reduced transit proposals. Senate Bill 942 (Newman) – which would strengthen the long-term viability of free or reduced transit ridership programs offered by public transit operators – advanced through state Senate policy committees and is now awaiting action by the Senate Appropriations committee.
- MTC this month is bringing the bill to the Joint MTC and ABAG Legislation Committee with a “support and seek amendments” recommendation. The bill would permit transit agencies to use Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) revenues for free or reduced transit fare programs on an ongoing basis once they have shown program compliance with their initial application. MTC staff are recommending a friendly amendment to better align the bill with the Commission’s Blue Ribbon Task Force recommendations by expanding eligibility to also include “fare integration” programs.
- In addition, on March 23, 2022, Governor Newsom announced an \$11 billion budget proposal, including \$9 billion in tax refunds to California residents to offset high gasoline prices and \$500 million for the Active Transportation Program (ATP), doubling the General Fund augmentation for ATP proposed in the Governor’s January budget. The proposal also includes \$750 million for public transit agencies to subsidize three months of free transit. Although at the time this memo was finalized, the Administration had not yet released details on the proposal, MTC estimates that Bay Area transit operators would receive about 56 percent of the statewide total, or \$378 million. The proposal also continues to recommend a freezing of the anticipated gasoline and excise tax cost-of-living adjustments and a 4.75 percent cut in the diesel sales tax rate.

Federal Updates – Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grants:

- In March, the Commission unanimously endorsed a federal advocacy strategy to maximize the Bay Area’s share of the more than \$100 billion in competitive grants made available through the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Competition for these grants will be fierce, both within California and from around the country. This regional grant strategy will enable the Bay Area to unify our advocacy efforts (and those of our partners and members of Congress) behind a short list of regionally significant priority projects—developed in partnership with Bay Area transportation partners—for a select number of the new or expanded grant programs across modes. See attached for the final regional priority list.
- At the same time, the strategy leaves over \$25 billion spread across almost 20 other new federal grant programs “up for grabs” since they are oriented more towards local priorities.
- It turns out that the Commission’s approval of the regional project priority list was indeed timely. The US Department of Transportation [has announced \\$2.9 billion in funding availability](#) for three important Bipartisan Infrastructure Law grants targeting major infrastructure projects of regional and national significance (MEGA, INFRA, and the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program). MTC will be working with project sponsors for those projects identified for regional endorsement in those categories to put our best foot forward.
- For more information on this recent announcement and other federal grant opportunities, please visit the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law grants page](#) on MTC’s website.

Executive Director’s Report

The following items are excerpts from the March 2022 Executive Director’s Report to the Commission. To read this and past reports in their entirety check the agenda from a given Commission meeting (search for past meetings on [Legistar](#)).

Key Updates from Executive Director McMillan:

- **Mega Projects Workshop (May 25-26, 2021)** The agency is planning a 2-day workshop in May to coincide with the regularly scheduled Commission meeting. This will serve to update the Commission on the status of mega projects in progress in the region and plans to update the region’s transit mega project delivery strategy, known as Resolution 3434, with a multi-modal major project advancement policy (MAP).

- **The Bay Area received \$536 million in federal American Rescue Plan** (discretionary grant) relief funds – about 24% of the national total spread across seven operators in the region. Although this is good news for short range transit planning, it does also mean that Bay area operators are still struggling, more so than in other parts of the country.
- **Next-Generation Clipper (C2)** system equipment installation is well underway. The first two Muni light-rail vehicles with C2 readers installed went into service March 16. This milestone follows the commencement of installing C2 stand-alone readers at AC Transit and Golden Gate Ferry locations in late January
- The **BayREN Business Plan and Budget request** was filed at the CA Public Utilities Commission in early March. The Plan includes an expansion of the portfolio to include a new workforce program designed for low-income youth that provides training, paid internships and job placements in the clean economy, new public sector programs focused on support for decarbonizing municipal buildings, and a refrigerant replacement program for small food service establishments. The portfolio has a greater emphasis on equity programs. The budget request has increased to approximately \$38 – 45 mil during the Plan years of 2024-2031.

Other News Updates:

- [Agencies Team to Make Carpooling More Convenient](#): The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Commute.org (San Mateo County), the Napa Valley Transportation Authority (NVRTA), the Solano Transportation Authority (STA), the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA), and the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) today announced a new partnership to support customers looking to improve their commutes after two years of pandemic-induced disruption by providing seamless access to carpool and vanpool ride-matching and eligibility-based trip rewards.

- [MTC Leader Applauds Pelosi, New Relief Funding for Bay Area Transit Agencies:](#)
Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Chair and Napa County Supervisor Alfredo Pedroza today thanked House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the other members of the Bay Area’s congressional caucus for their leadership in securing an additional \$536 million in American Rescue Plan funds to help Bay Area transit agencies battered by two years of pandemic-related ridership and revenue losses sustain operations.
- [Joint MTC ABAG Committee Supports Seamless Transit Act, with Amendments:](#) The Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee on March 11, 2022 was highlighted by the members’ vote to support of state Sen. Josh Becker’s Seamless Transit Transformation Act, Senate Bill 17 (SB 917), if the Legislature makes a few key amendments. SB 917 builds on 14 months of work done by the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force convened by MTC in the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as previous legislation introduced by former state Assembly member and current San Francisco City Attorney David Chiu. The bill tackles the challenge of coordinating and integrating the Bay Area’s multimodal and multi-agency transit network. It would introduce requirements for fare integration, mapping and wayfinding, and real-time transit information. The bill would also tie State Transit Assistance funding to these standards and would require MTC to adopt a connected network plan.

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MTC offers a convenient [Daily News Headlines](#) subscription, delivering a curated list of stories about transportation, housing, development, the environment and more directly to your email inbox. The headlines are sent each weekday, arriving just in time to enjoy with your morning coffee.

The [Bay Link blog](#) offers a more in-depth look at these topics, often in the context of the work that the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and MTC are doing, along with other stories of interest to Bay Area residents and professionals. The Bay Link Blog E-Newsletter, with the top Bay Link features of the week, is distributed every Tuesday. You can find more newsletters to subscribe to at this [link](#).

Have a Question? Ask a Librarian

If you need assistance locating information or are having difficulty navigating the MTC-ABAG websites, please feel free to contact the MTC-ABAG head librarian. Reference assistance is available by telephone (415-778-5236), or email library@bayareametro.gov Information can also be found on the [MTC-ABAG library webpage](#).

For MTC and Plan Bay Area glossaries:

- [Glossary of Transportation Planning Acronyms & Terms](#)
- [Plan Bay Area Glossary](#)