

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Policy Advisory Council**

October 12, 2022

Agenda Item 11

Staff Liaison Report

Subject:

Overview of recent MTC policy decisions and other activities.

Issues:

None identified.

Recommendations:

Information

Attachments:

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

Staff Liaison Report – October 2022

Legislative Updates:

The Governor took action on a number of bills supported by MTC on the last possible day to sign or veto bills. This included AB 2594 (Ting), which requires a variety of changes to toll violation policies applicable to toll bridges as well as toll roads and express lanes. The changes are aligned with the work MTC has already been doing as part of our Equity Action Plan but creates added urgency to implement a payment plan for unpaid toll penalties for low-income motorists, among other policies. In addition, the Governor signed SB 922 (Wiener) extending a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemption for clean transportation projects such as bicycle and pedestrian improvements and dedicated bus lanes. Finally, SB 942 (Newman) was signed, allowing funds known as the Low Carbon Transit Operations Program to be used beyond an initial trial period for fare reduction programs.

Executive Director's Report:

The following items are excerpts from the September 28, 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 [MTCs Legistar webpage](#)).

Key Updates

MTC-ABAG Executive Director Therese McMillan announces retirement: Therese W. McMillan, executive director of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) since 2019, notified the Commission that she will retire from both positions on January 31, 2023.

High-Speed Rail Update: In August, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) Board of Directors certified the Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIR/EIS) and approved the approximately 43-mile project for the San Francisco to San Jose section. This action completes the environmental clearance for high-speed rail in Northern California and extends environmental clearance to 420 miles of the project's 500-mile alignment from San Francisco to Los Angeles/Anaheim.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: In early August, the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) submitted a grant application to the competitive Bridge Improvement Program in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law seeking \$185M in grant funding for the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge West Span Restoration Project. At that time, MTC also provided support for the application for the Golden Gate Bridge Seismic Retrofit project. The Commission's March 2022 grant strategy included the two projects and identified the Golden Gate Bridge project as the first priority for this fund source. As part of BATA's application, the project received letters of support from the Bay Area Congressional Delegation, Caltrans, and business and labor partners, as well as partners in local and regional transportation and local government. Caltrans is the implementing agency for the project.

Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA) Update: Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA) in early August closed its first-ever transaction through its Welfare Tax Exemption Preservation Program to enable nonprofit Eden Housing to convert its recently acquired 24-unit De Anza Terrace apartment complex in Alameda County's unincorporated Ashland community to permanently affordable housing.

Clipper BayPass: On August 25th, MTC in partnership with BART and all other transit agencies that participate in the Clipper fare payment systems launched a two-year pilot program to study the impact of a single pass that will provide close to 50,000 Bay Area residents with free access to all bus, rail and ferry services in the nine-county region. The new passes initially will be distributed to participating students at San Francisco State University, San Jose State University, the University of California's Berkeley campus and Santa Rosa Junior College and then expanded to include residents of select affordable housing communities managed by MidPen Housing. <https://mtc.ca.gov/news/clipperr-baypass-sets-sail-unlimited-transit-access>

U.S. DOT Secretary Visit: Secretary Pete Buttigieg this month visited the San Francisco Bay Area to tour the region's infrastructure projects and see the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in practice. MTC Executive Director McMillan joined Secretary Buttigieg, Speaker Pelosi and others in San Francisco to celebrate the near completion of SFMTA's Central Subway project. The Secretary also visited other Bay Area projects, including the GoMentum Station in Contra Costa County. In Oakland, Commissioner Schaaf and Congresswoman Lee led him on a bus tour of "Reconnecting the Town" mobility improvements and rode down Interstate 980.

ITS World Congress: MTC was featured in a video produced for the ITS World Congress in Los Angeles last week. The video tells the story of how the Bay Area turned the COVID-19 crisis into an opportunity to rethink how the region's transit system operates and focus on rider experience. Watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5diGxDXSMA> .

Transit Month: In September MTC along with Bay Area transit agencies and others is celebrating Transit Month, a celebration of the role of public transit in the Bay Area's pandemic recovery. MTC is sponsoring the month-long event. On September 16, MTC Executive Director McMillan joined the General Managers/CEOs from 11 Bay Area transit agencies as they rode multiple modes of transit together, ending with a public happy hour in Oakland.

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART): On September 10th, MTC Executive Director McMillan along with Commissioner Worth and Commissioner Glover attended the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Bay Area Rapid Transit system. The celebration highlighted the changes over the last five decades that BART has been in service and showed how important this transportation system is to the Bay Area.

International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association: Deputy Executive Director Andrew Fremier, after serving a year as its Vice President, was appointed President of the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association on September 22, 2022.

Further News Updates:

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](#)