

»»»» Next Gen Freeways



PLAN BAY AREA 2050



STRATEGY T5  
FREEWAY TOLLING



METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION

# Next Generation Bay Area Freeways Study

*Equity Framework and Engagement Plan*

Policy Advisory Council Equity and Access Subcommittee

May 2022



# Today's Objectives

Clarify goals and outcomes of the study

Discuss how equity can be central to the study process

Review engagement plan for the summer



# Background: Strategy T5 in Plan Bay Area 2050

## Implement Per-Mile Tolling on Congested Freeways with Transit Alternatives

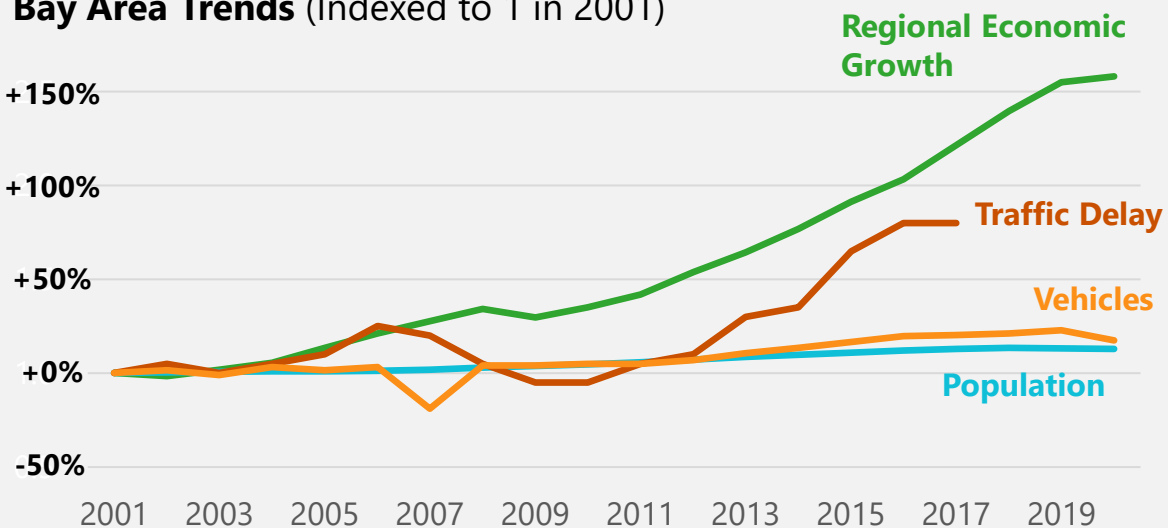
- Forecasted strategy impacts:
  - Prevent a 20% to 30% rise in travel times on freeways
  - Reduce GHG emissions by more than all of plan's transit projects combined, totaling more than \$100 billion
- Recommended across congested corridors with robust current or planned transit alternatives, with means-based discounts for drivers with low incomes and revenues reinvested into improving transportation services
- Acknowledges challenges with traffic diversion to local streets
- Recommendation for a more detailed study as an early implementation action to work through challenges

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# Recognizing that the status quo is neither sustainable nor equitable

Bay Area Trends (Indexed to 1 in 2001)



- Traffic delay has increased consistently, and our strategies have not kept up with the demands of our growing economy and population
- Bay Area drivers lost about 97 hours each in 2019 due to congested traffic
- Various existing inequities to grapple with, including:
  - Freeway peak-period users are skewed toward higher-income users
  - Gas tax penalizes lower-income drivers who are more likely to drive older vehicles
  - Communities of color divided by freeway barriers have faced historical disinvestment and must continue to live with unsightly and noisy barriers
  - Transit dependent users lack high-quality options
  - Transit access to opportunity is significantly lower than driving access



# Exploring pricing strategies as a tool to advance a shared equitable vision

- The goal of the study is not to price the freeway network, but identify if pricing strategies can play a role in enabling the shared vision of a next generation freeway network
- If equitable “pathways” with pricing strategies are found, potential outcomes of the study may include:
  - One or more pathways prioritized for the region
  - A corridor with most promising potential recommended for further studies and pilot implementation
  - Ten-year roadmap for implementation across the region’s congested corridors
- **Key framing components to review today to ensure study process is equitable:**
  - **Equity Framework**
  - **Engagement Plan**

## A next generation freeway network is \_\_\_\_\_

*Overcome barriers for adjacent communities*

*Accessible and Reliable*

*Flexible – serve as option*

*A subset of the Bay Area transportation system*

*Means-based*

*Multimodal*

*Freeways that support side streets and adjacent communities*

*Provide choices*

*Clean but equitable*

\* Initial feedback gathered from preliminary visioning exercise during the Next Generation Freeways Study Advisory Group during April 28<sup>th</sup> 2022 Meeting



# Centering equity begins with acknowledging past harms

Many past land-use and transportation decisions, rooted in racism and classism, have had profound negative impacts on communities.

An equity framework for this study is intended to consciously prioritize equity as we shape new policy.

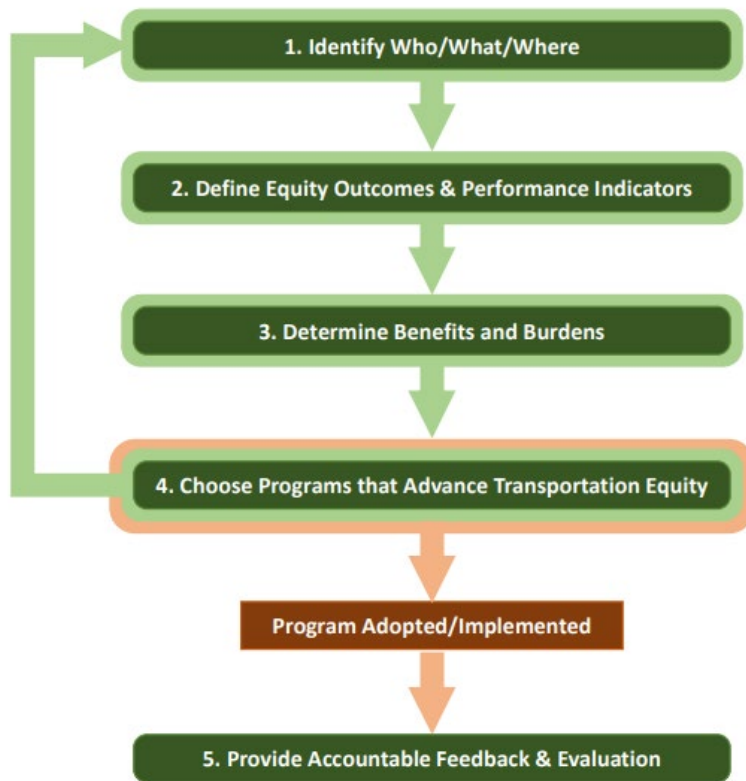
See MTC's Equity Platform [here](#)





# Comparative transportation equity frameworks were reviewed to inform our study

**TransForm** Pricing Roads, Advancing Equity: [Equity Toolkit](#) for Pricing Program Development



**National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP)**

[Assessing the Environmental Justice Effects of Toll Implementation or Rate Changes](#)



**Greenlining Institute**

[Mobility Equity Framework](#) – How To Make Transportation Work For People



Staff reviewed key themes from these frameworks and identified potential preliminary principles for this study.



# 1. Identify priority populations

## Priority Population Subgroups for this Study

- MTC [Equity Priority Communities](#)
- Workers with low incomes (janitorial, retail, food service, domestic services, other)
- Middle-income workers (construction/building service workers with vans/trucks, teachers who commute, health service workers, other)
- Super commuters/commuters from outside the region
- Working parents with school-aged children, with a focus on single mothers
- Students who commute via automobile to school
- Small business owners
- Rural residents

\*[Equity Priority Communities](#): People of color, people with low incomes, people with disabilities, older adults, single parent families, people with limited English proficiency, zero vehicle households, rent-burdened households

## Geographic Scope

- Bay Area residents + commuters from outside the region
- Freeways being studied: Staff recommends this be guided by Plan Bay Area 2050 — Freeway corridors with transit alternatives
- Geographic scope of populations would be narrowed when corridors are prioritized for second round of analysis

Are there other groups that should be prioritized/considered?





## 2. Articulate clear goals and measurable outcomes that affirmatively address inequities (racial, social, etc.)



# 3. Co-create pathways that a) avoid/redress past harms, and b) proactively address potential burdens

## Recap: What is a Pathway?

### Complementary Strategies



# 4. Determine benefits and burdens with criteria/guiding questions, including consideration of unintended consequences

**Quantitative analysis using MTC's Travel Demand Model** to determine benefits and burdens on different population subgroups.

Important to acknowledge strengths, weaknesses and limitations of the model.

**Criteria/guiding questions to assess benefits and burdens** where quantitative analysis is insufficient.

**Examples of benefits and burdens to consider:**

- What reasonable alternative transportation choices (roads, transit, etc.) will be available to those who cannot afford the toll?
- If pricing produces travel-time savings, are they experienced by all users?
- Will the project divert a substantial amount of traffic through a vulnerable community? What are related impacts?



# Proposed Equity Framework Principles

## Principles for Consideration in Equity Framework (Iterative Process)

1. Identify priority populations

2. Articulate clear goals, measurable outcomes and metrics that affirmatively address racial and social inequities

3. Co-create pathways toward goals that:  
a) avoid/redress past harms  
b) proactively address potential burdens of pricing strategies

4. Determine benefits and burdens with criteria/guiding questions, including consideration of unintended consequences

5. Recommend pathways that advance equitable outcomes

**How can we ensure that equity is central in the process of developing pathways for the next generation network?**

Do the principles resonate with you?

Are there other steps that are missing?



# Community Engagement Plan



# Ongoing Engagement: Preliminary List of Organizations

## Community Based Organizations

- Amigos de Guadalupe Center for Justice & Empowerment
- Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Oakland Chinatown Coalition
- Planting Justice
- Prescott Community Council
- Sacred Heart Community Service
- South Hayward Parish
- The Hayward Collective
- Union City Family Center
- West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project
- West Oakland Neighbors

## Business/Labor

- Bay Area Council
- East Bay Leadership Council
- North Bay Leadership Council
- SEIU 1021

## Other Organizations

- 6 Wins Coalition
- Greenbelt Alliance
- League of Women Voters of the Bay Area
- TOGETHER Bay Area





# Community Engagement Objectives

## **Round 1A** **Focused**

Nuanced and focused conversations to help better understand concerns and formulate policy ideas

Elevate voices of priority populations

## **Round 1B** **General**

Discussion of more well-formulated policy ideas with the wider public through webinars and pop-up shops

## **Round 2**

In-depth conversations with analysis findings

Focus on prioritized corridors

- Understand the communities' vision of a next generation of our freeways
- Gain a more nuanced understanding of the perceptions and concerns with road pricing
- Learn about complementary strategies that can make pricing more equitable

- Gather further feedback on goals
- Refine pathways for further analysis

- Review analysis findings, including impact on adjacent communities
- Refine complementary strategies to address adverse impacts with a better understanding of potential revenues from pricing



# Planning for Successful Engagement

**Goals:** 1) ensure historically underrepresented communities can meaningfully influence decision-making; and 2) ensure an open and transparent process with ample opportunity for engagement.

## Defining Success

- Are the right stakeholders at the table?  
Who is missing?
- Does the process allow for all voices to be heard?
- Does the process increase opportunity?
- Does the process shift decision-making power?
- Do the policies and solutions address the needs of those most affected?

## Metrics to Determine Success

- Demographics
- Quality of content and materials
- Engagement activities
- Access
- Participation
- Others?

# Feedback Requested Today

## Equity Framework

**Do the principles resonate with you?**

**Are there any missing elements in implementation?**

## Engagement Plan

**Do you have feedback on the timing and nature of planned activities?**

**How best can staff define and measure success for the engagement process?**



## Next Gen Freeways



## What's Next?

Review Equity Framework & Preliminary Goals

Spring 2022

Pathways Concept Development

Spring/Summer 2022

Community Engagement Round 1

Summer 2022

Thank You.

## Questions?

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