

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments  
Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee**

**January 10, 2025**

**Agenda Item 2d**

**Washington D.C. Legislative Update**

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**Subject:**

December 2024 Report from Washington, D.C. advocate.

**Issues:**

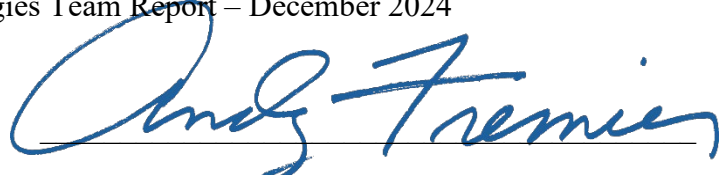
None identified.

**Recommendations:**

Information

**Attachments:**

- Attachment A: Summit Strategies Team Report – December 2024



Andrew B. Fremier



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**Summit Strategies Team Report – December 2024**

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**From: Summit Strategies Team**

**To: Andrew B. Fremier, Executive Director**

**Date: January 10, 2025**

**Subject: December 2024 Federal Policy Monthly Report**

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- **Graves Secures House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Gavel**
  - **Grant Announcements**
  - **Supporting MTC Priorities in Congress**
  - **National Transportation News Roundup**
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Below is a status update on issues of interest to MTC and the actions that we have taken to date.

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### **Graves Secures House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Gavel**

Representative Sam Graves (R-MO) is slated to serve a second term as Chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Graves secured the chairmanship when Representative Rick Crawford (R-AR), current Chair of the Highways and Transit Subcommittee and Graves's only competition for the gavel, dropped out of the race. To remain Chair, Graves needed to secure a waiver from the Republican Steering Committee to bypass GOP term-limits for committee leaders. On the Democratic side, Representative Rick Larsen (D-WA) was confirmed by the Democratic Caucus to continue to serve as the leading Democrat on the committee for the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Representatives Graves and Larsen will both look to build on the committee's bipartisan accomplishments from the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress, which included the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill, the Water Resources Development Act, and the first reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration in 20 years when they address reauthorization of federal surface transportation programs next year.

### **Grant Announcements**

#### **MTC Secures \$1.5 Million Grant for Innovative Transportation Technologies**

On Monday, December 16, 2024, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) announced over \$130 million in grant awards for 42 technology demonstration projects through the Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grants Program. The discretionary grant program provides \$500 million over five years to State, local, and Tribal governments to utilize technology to create safer, more efficient, and innovative transportation systems. The SMART Grants Program is a two-stage program: Stage One Planning and Prototyping Grants and Stage Two Implementation Grants. In the latest round of funding, MTC was awarded \$1.5 million for a Stage One grant to develop a mobility data platform using Open Street Maps (OSM) to integrate critical systems through the San Francisco Bay Area and address operational inefficiencies related to transportation improvement implementation.

Rural Surface Transportation Grants and Reconnecting Communities Grants Announced –  
Neither MTC’s State Route 37 Nor West Oakland Link Projects Received Awards

In early January, U.S. DOT shared with Congress the lists of Rural Surface Transportation Grant and Reconnecting Communities grant awards. Unfortunately, neither MTC’s grant request for \$130 million for State Route (SR) 37 Sears Point to Mare Island improvements nor the jointly sponsored Caltrans/MTC request for \$33 million for West Oakland Link received awards.

**Supporting MTC Priorities in Congress**

Your DC Team has communicated on your behalf with several congressional offices and agencies over the last month, as outlined below.

- The DC Team met with the Office of Senator Alex Padilla (D-CA) to discuss grants, including supporting Senator Padilla in placing a call to U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg on SR 37 for the Rural grant and for MTC’s Reconnecting Communities grant application related to the Bay Skyway’s West Oakland Link. During the call, Senator Padilla expressed his support for SR 37. The team also secured a letter from Senator Padilla for a West Oakland Link request for a Rebuilding America’s Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant award.
- The DC Team also met with the Office of Representative Mike Thompson (D-CA) to discuss SR 37. Representative Thompson also called Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg about the SR 37 grant application, expressing his support.
- The DC Team shared the congratulations letter from MTC leadership with Senator-elect Adam Schiff’s (D-CA) team. MTC staff also shared congratulations letters to the other new members of the Bay Area delegation, Representatives-elect Liccardo (D-CA) and Simon (D-CA).
- Joe Sheehy is the new Chief of Staff for Representative Jared Huffman (D-CA). Before joining Huffman’s office, Sheehy worked for Representative Grace Napolitano (D-CA) for two decades. The DC Team has a great relationship with Sheehy and will leverage that relationship to advocate for MTC’s priorities leading into the new Congress.

- The DC Team has regularly updated the Bay Area delegation on critical regional issues, including MTC's efforts to increase support for transit operations and the BATA toll increase for bridge rehabilitation. This month, we informed the delegation about the Commission's December action to approve a phased toll increase beginning in 2026, shared context with the offices, and offered briefings. To date, several offices have expressed their thanks and requested additional information, which we have shared.

**National Transportation News Roundup (links to articles)**

- [How the Resurrected Congestion Pricing Plan Could Die in the Courts \(The New York Times\)](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/12/nyregion/nyc-congestion-pricing-lawsuits.html)  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/12/nyregion/nyc-congestion-pricing-lawsuits.html>
- [MTC partners with Bay Area transit providers to implement Regional Mapping and Wayfinding project \(Mass Transit\)](https://www.masstransitmag.com/technology/passenger-info/signage-and-displays/press-release/55250157/metropolitan-transportation-commission-mtc-mtc-partners-with-bay-area-transit-providers-to-implement-regional-mapping-and-wayfinding-project)  
<https://www.masstransitmag.com/technology/passenger-info/signage-and-displays/press-release/55250157/metropolitan-transportation-commission-mtc-mtc-partners-with-bay-area-transit-providers-to-implement-regional-mapping-and-wayfinding-project>
- [New York City's Transit System Approves \\$20 Billion Budget \(Bloomberg\)](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-12-18/new-york-city-s-transit-system-approves-20-billion-budget)  
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-12-18/new-york-city-s-transit-system-approves-20-billion-budget>
- [New Amtrak OIG report reveals Amtrak's initial requirements for new long-distance trains led to delays in program's early stages \(Mass Transit\)](https://www.masstransitmag.com/rail/vehicles/press-release/55250494/amtrak-oig-new-amtrak-oig-report-reveals-amtraks-initial-requirements-for-new-long-distance-trains-led-to-delays-in-programs-early-stages)  
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