

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
Policy Advisory Council Equity & Access Subcommittee**

February 5, 2021

Agenda Item 5

**MTC Internship Program Update**

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**Subject:** Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Internship Program Update.

**Background:** MTC Human Resource (HR) staff manage two annual summer internship programs. The High School Internship program focuses on providing a paid summer work experience for young people. This model has been very popular with students seeking to expand their professional horizons. The College Internship program is designed specifically for higher education students studying planning, urban design, transportation, and related fields that feed directly into associate-level positions at MTC. One of the primary goals of the program is to provide students from underrepresented backgrounds with opportunities to gain professional work experience in transportation, planning, and operational projects and to cultivate pathways for future careers in government. Both programs are critical to MTC's equity platform.

The high school and college Summer 2020 internship programs were paused due to budget and staffing constraints. The subsequent COVID-19 shelter-in-place restrictions further precluded any possibility of administering the programs.

The Internship Working Group, composed of representatives from MTC HR and Legislation and Public Affairs (LPA), the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and the Policy Advisory Council, was formed to propose a roadmap to reestablish the high school and college internship programs, determine the necessary budget and staff support in FY 20-21 and 21-22 to restart the programs, and identify ways to develop the programs in future years.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, high school interns are unable to work in an office setting this summer. Staff and budget constraints have placed additional limits on how MTC and our partner agencies can administer the high school internship program. Considering these challenges, staff has recommended that the high school internship program be suspended until Summer 2022, assuming that the shelter in place restrictions will be fully lifted by then.

**Next Steps:** The high school internship program is crucial for equity and educational purposes, and staff is proposing interim steps to bridge the high school program and emerge with an even stronger focus on advancing equity. HR is working with LPA and BAAQMD staff to develop virtual seminars for high school students to be held in Summer 2021. HR and LPA will work with Policy Advisory Council members to develop the program for the virtual seminars at the Internship Working Group meetings and through updates to this subcommittee.

In addition, HR and LPA will continue to work with BAAQMD staff and Policy Advisory Council members through the Internship Working Group to develop options for the Summer 2022 high school internship program, including ways to collaborate with the BAAQMD when high school students can once again safely get the experience of working collaboratively in an office environment with transportation professionals. Pausing the high school internship program will provide MTC with time to design an updated program that places high school students with non-traditional partners, such as housing & community development departments, Commissioner or ABAG Member offices, and non-profits in Summer 2022.

The college intern program will be reestablished in Summer 2021 with a maximum of ten undergraduate students. HR understands that participation from students in underserved communities was the goal of the original internship program proposed by the Minority Citizens Advisory Committee. To increase the number of students from underserved communities in the Summer 2021 college internship program, HR will partner with agencies such as Students Rising Above and the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) to reach students from local universities such as San Jose State, California State University East Bay and San Francisco State University and areas currently known as “communities of concern.”

HR will continue to explore how MTC can partner with BAAQMD on the high school engagements in Summer 2021, the high school internship program in Summer 2022, and the college internship programs in Summer 2021 and 2022. HR will also continue to work with the Internship Working Group for its input on internship engagements and programs and will provide updates to the Equity & Access Subcommittee.

**Recommendation:** This item is provided for information only.

**Attachments:** PowerPoint

# **MTC 2021**

# **Summer High School & College Internship Program**

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February 5, 2021



# Overview

- Program History & Highlights
- Planning and Partnerships
- Next Steps

# History & Highlights

- High school and college internship program highlights

# Planning & Partnerships

- Internship Working Group includes representatives from *MTC Human Resources and Public Affairs, Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Policy Advisory Council.*
- Outreach to key educational institutions and community groups

# Next Steps

- High School Program
  - Summer 2021: Remote Seminars for High School Students
  - Summer 2022: relaunch of the High School Internship Program
- College Program
  - Summer 2021 and 2022: Pilot MTC College Internship Program

# Questions

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