

Metropolitan Transportation Commission

March 23, 2022

Agenda Item 14b - 22-0417

SB 917 (Becker): Seamless Transit Transformation Act

Subject:

Requires MTC to develop a Connected Network Plan and requires transit agencies to meet various requirements related to integrated fares, mapping and wayfinding, and real-time transit information.

Background:

Senate Bill (SB) 917 builds on the work of MTC's Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force and prior legislation authored by Assemblymember David Chiu, including Assembly Bill (AB) 629 in 2021 and AB 2057 in 2022, to require Bay Area transit operators to meet various requirements related to transit fares, mapping and wayfinding, and real time transit information data standards and requires MTC to adopt a Connected Network Plan. The bill sets specific deadlines for compliance with the new requirements and provides that if the Commission finds an operator out of compliance with any of those requirements, then that operator shall be ineligible to receive State Transit Assistance (STA), including population-based and revenue-based funds. Attachment A summarizes the key provisions of SB 917.

Issues:

Staff presented an analysis and recommended a position of "support if amended," which the Legislation Committee approved. While the Committee approved the suggested amendments, staff received constructive feedback to emphasize in our communications with Senator Becker and others in Sacramento not just those items that we would like to see removed or modified, but also those that we support given the Commission remains committed to the goals of the Transit Transformation Action Plan and our reservations with the bill are largely pragmatic concerns related to deadlines and funding, rather than policy differences.

An important provision in the bill that we support is a requirement that operators implement a no-cost transfer policy for local to local and local to regional transit transfers across operators no later than July 1, 2024. Modeling conducted on this option as part of the Fare Coordination and Integration Study found that this option could result in almost a 2 percent increase in ridership, a not-incidental boost. This timeline should be doable given the current agreed upon date (included

within the Transit Fare Integration Policy Vision Statement which was adopted by the Fare Integration Task Force) for the policy to take effect is in 2023 in conjunction with the rollout of Next Generation Clipper. We also support all sections of the bill remaining, albeit with modest changes, to help us deliver an integrated mapping and wayfinding experience across all operators, provide reliable real-time transit information and a connected network plan.

Additionally, with regard to the common fare structure for regional transit and an all-transit agency pass, staff received feedback to consider amendments that would still mandate these fare policy changes but consult with operators and stakeholders on appropriate timeline to be included in the legislation and, importantly, make the requirement for their implementation conditional upon financial feasibility, including identifying and securing funding to cover their cost, as necessary.

On March 14, 2022 staff along with general managers of several of the region's large transit agencies had the opportunity to meet with Senator Becker and his staff to discuss the bill. The Senator appears amenable to the attached amendments as do the transit operators. We are committed to continuing to work in partnership with the operators and key stakeholders on this important legislation to help deliver a better transit experience for Bay Area riders.

Recommendations:

Staff requests MTC Commission adopt a "support if amended" position on SB 917 as outlined in Attachment A.

Attachments:

- Attachment A – Revised Proposed Amendments
- March 11, 2022 Legislation Committee materials



Therese W. McMillan

Revised: Summary of Proposed Amendments to Senate Bill 917 (Becker)

Background

Based on our review of SB 917 and after consultation with transit operators, stakeholders and Senator Becker’s office, staff recommends the following amendments:

Topic/Bill Section	Proposed Amendment
Fare Integration	<p>Eliminate <u>Revise</u> the requirement to implement a <u>common fare structure for regional services fare integration</u>, and an <u>all-agency transit pass for individuals and local fare equivalence so that it is conditional upon financial feasibility, including funding being identified to implement it, as necessary.</u></p> <p><u>Engage with transit operators and stakeholders on the appropriate timeline for these two fare policy changes to be required (subject to the financial feasibility noted above).</u></p> <p><u>Eliminate the requirement for local fare equivalence, which was not recommended in the Fare Coordination and Integration Study.</u></p> <p>Instead, require MTC and the transit operators to coordinate on the preparation of a report to the Legislature related to progress on regional fare integration and an individual pass no sooner than January 1, 2025, or within 18 months of the launch of Next Generation Clipper, whichever is later.</p>
Connected Network Plan	<p>Remove deadline references, to Allow MTC to determine appropriate timeline <u>for inclusion in the legislation</u> based on both available resources and coordination of Network Planning with other efforts such as findings from the Regional Rail Study and Network Management business case.</p>

	<p><u>Add requirement that Plan include provisions related to bus transit priority, including identification of priority roadways for transit priority consideration.</u></p> <p>Eliminate paragraph (5) related to governance and institutional reform.</p> <p>Revise other language defining scope of study for greater clarity.</p>
Mapping and Wayfinding	<p>Extend deadlines for system development and use of system by one year and clarify that operators are obligated to adhere to the <i>design guidelines</i> after specified date, not required to fully <i>implement and deploy</i> the new system, since such implementation depends on securing new funding.</p>
Real Time Transit Information	<p>Revise deadline to ensure date is feasible for operators within budgetary constraints and anticipated timeline to procure necessary equipment and software upgrades.</p>
State Transit Assistance (STA) Conditioning	<p>Adjust language to allow MTC to take extenuating circumstances into account and clarify that MTC may withhold an increment of STA funding (not necessarily the entire amount) and that operator will regain access to funds upon demonstration of compliance.</p>