

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments
Joint MTC Planning with the ABAG Administration Committee**

March 11, 2022

Agenda Item 6a

MTC Resolution No. 4493: MTC's Complete Streets Policy

Subject:

Adoption of revised Complete Streets (CS) Policy (MTC Resolution No. 4493) and update on the regional Active Transportation (AT) Network.

Background:

At the committee's December 2021 meeting, staff presented the draft update to MTC's CS Policy, which is a key component of the region's Active Transportation (AT) Plan. The update to MTC's CS Policy increases emphasis on safety, is explicit about making multi-modal connections with transit, and encourages low-stress trails and bike/pedestrian facilities to increase the comfort level of all users.

Alignment with Federal and State Policy

The proposed CS Policy is very much aligned with recent federal and state policy priorities. In January 2022, the U.S. Department of Transportation released its *National Roadway Safety Strategy*, which includes a Vision Zero (VZ) target and new Federal Highway Administration guidelines requiring the Highway Safety Improvement Program to invest proportionately in bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements relative to pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities to help reach the VZ target. In California, fatalities total over 15%, which means at least 15% of HSIP will need to be spent on bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements.

In December 2021, Caltrans released *Director's Policy 37*, which strengthens the state's Complete Streets Policy by striving to serve "All Ages and Abilities" on Caltrans-owned facilities and highlights equity, accessibility, and design flexibility to encourage and maximize walking, biking, and taking transit as a strategy to achieve state goals.

Engagement, Comments and Revisions

Over the past several months staff has collected input on the draft CS Policy from numerous stakeholders, including the AT Plan Technical Advisory Committee, County Transportation Agency (CTA) Executive and Planning Directors, the regional Active Transportation Working Group and MTC's Policy Advisory Council. The CS policy has been revised in response to Committee and stakeholder comments, which are summarized in Attachment B.

While stakeholders were generally supportive of the updated policy direction, some commenters requested increased flexibility for potential conditions in which policy requirements may not be able to be met, such as fire and safety specifications or other spatial conflicts on the roadway (transit/lane width or topological constraints).

These and other comments have been incorporated in the revised CS Policy in three main ways. MTC/ABAG staff have:

1. Updated the reference to All Ages and Abilities (AAA) Design Guidelines to focus on the principles behind the guidelines, which are meant to effectively serve the mobility needs of children, older adults, and people with disabilities (and in doing so, all other users), by either slowing speeds or separating users, and allow other design standards to accompany these leading principles in project design.
2. Expanded the exemption categories to provide more flexibility and context-sensitivity.
3. Included a recommendation for a regular assessment of the CS Policy to evaluate policy effectiveness, proposing a four-year cycle consistent with updates to Plan Bay Area and the One Bay Area Grant program.

Active Transportation Network

The development of an AT Network is a key element related to the CS Policy, as well the Plan Bay Area 2050 (PBA 2050) strategy to build a complete streets network. Focusing on the criteria of equity, safety and mode shift, it was developed from existing network data provided by CTAs (based on local plans), San Francisco, San Jose and Oakland. Projects located on the AT Network and seeking regional discretionary funds will be subject to the CS Policy.

Staff released the draft network in late December and has been collecting stakeholder feedback. Input has centered largely around local data updates, the need for flexibility in how the network will be used for project funding, and how the network should connect to areas outside of PBA 2050 geographies, such as Priority Development Areas (PDA) and Equity Priority Communities (EPC), and other relevant destinations. Based on these comments, staff direction is to define complete corridors, or one-mile-wide buffers, between PBA-defined geographies. Any bicycle or pedestrian project falling within these corridors or the PBA-defined geography would be considered part of the regional AT Network. Additional criteria may be applied at the time of project review to prioritize projects that most align the objectives outlined in the CS Policy (i.e. location along a local High Injury Network, in an EPC, etc.).

Staff will continue to refine the Network based on feedback and will include a final draft in the AT Plan to be completed later this spring.

Next Steps

Staff is seeking approval of the CS Policy and requests referral of MTC Resolution 4493 to the Commission for approval. Approval of the CS Policy is aligned with the timing of the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) 3 call for projects anticipated later this spring.

To implement the CS Policy, staff will continue working with stakeholders to update MTC's existing CS Checklist to be consistent with the updated Policy. Project sponsors complete the checklist at the time they apply for regional discretionary funding or project endorsement.

Staff will return to the Committee later this spring with the draft AT Plan, which will include a five-year implementation plan, and considerations for a technical assistance program to support implementation of the AT Network.

Issues

None identified

Recommendations:

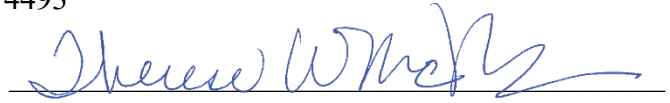
Refer MTC Resolution No. 4493, MTC's Complete Streets Policy, to the Commission for approval.

March 11, 2022

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Attachments:

- Attachment A: PowerPoint Complete Streets Policy and AT Plan
- Attachment B: Summary of CS Policy Comments
- Attachment C: MTC Resolution No. 4493



Therese W. McMillan

Summary of Complete Streets (CS) Policy Comments

Subject:

Comments Received from Jurisdictions, County Transportation Agencies (CTA), the Active Transportation Working Group and the Active Transportation (AT) Plan Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

CS Policy Policy-at-Large Comments	How Addressed
Seeking more flexibility specifically with local plan implementation	Incorporated by expanding exception categories to allow for local context-sensitive conditions, added 1-mile wide “Complete Corridors” for implementation of the Active Transportation (AT) Network, and modified incorporating “All Ages and Abilities” (AAA) design principles over standards
Seeking CS Policy and Active Transportation (AT) Network relationship clarity	Included additional process detail in Resolution (Design Principles and Standards, Implementation sections). If a project is on the Network it should close Network gaps and incorporate AAA design principles
Seeking more clarity on All Ages and Abilities contextual design guidance and pedestrian/accessibility design	Moved from AAA standards to principles and included Proposed <i>Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines</i> by U.S. Access Board
Seeking clarity on Local Streets & Roads applicability	Projects over \$250k must complete a Complete Streets (CS) Checklist, including or Local Streets and Roads funding
Support for policy overall & more protected bike lanes	No action required - already included
Exceptions	
Seeking clarity on exception process	Added details about exception process in Resolution (Exceptions section); Local Public Works or Dept. of Transportation Director (or designee) to sign off on exceptions.

Wants environmental impacts as an exception and contextual implementation	Added Exception #4 in the Resolution to address this
Seeking clarity on current "alternate plan to implement CS" and "excessively disproportionate cost" exceptions	This is clarified in the Exceptions section of the Resolution
Wants public health/safety exception (i.e. Fire Department)	Added Exception #4 in the Resolution to address this
Wants Maintenance and Pavement exception Include full project lifecycle (operations/maintenance)	There were comments to both include the full project life cycle in the Policy (a key theme heard during engagement), as well as comments to exclude it. Caltrans CS Policy includes maintenance. Maintenance and pavement are not included as an exception in the Policy.
Complete Streets Checklist	
Seeking higher project minimum threshold than \$100,000 for submitting Checklist	Incorporated by increasing to \$250,000, in line with OBAG minimum grant size
Seeking CS checklist process clarity, especially on the review process for local Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and the transit agency sign-off	Clarified in Implementation section of the Resolution. Staff will continue to work with jurisdictions, the AT Plan TAC, and CTA staff on CS checklist implementation
Other	
Consider bike parking guidelines to be included	Propose to address in the 5-Year Implementation Plan of AT Plan
Seeking information about Technical Assistance that will be available to jurisdictions for implementation	Developing recommended technical assistance to be included in the 5-Year Implementation Plan of the AT Plan

MTC Policy Advisory Council Comments

Concern about over-representation of communities of color and low-income residents in crashes and fatalities	The CS Policy is proposing funding priority for EPC & local High Injury Network projects. AAA design principles are rooted in reducing and avoiding fatalities and severe injuries.
Concern over the unintended consequences for people who are visually impaired (e.g., separated bike lanes & pedestrian scrambles can be challenging to navigate if detectable warning surfaces aren't included)	Addressed by adding (Proposed) <i>Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines</i> by U.S. Access Board

Date: February 23, 2022

W.I.: 1125

Referred by: PLNG

ABSTRACT

MTC Resolution No. 4493

This Resolution sets forth MTC's regional policy for provision of Complete Streets, which are transportation facilities that provide safe mobility and improved connectivity to community destinations for all road users, and especially for people biking, walking, rolling and taking transit. The policy applies to transportation project planning, design, funding, construction, reconstruction, and maintenance activities, and supersedes Resolution 3765.

Date: February 23, 2022

W.I.: 1125

Referred by: PLNG

Re: Adoption of revised Complete Streets (CS) Policy and update on the regional Active Transportation (AT) Network.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 4493

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the regional transportation planning agency for the San Francisco Bay Area pursuant to Government Code Section 66500 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, MTC adopted Resolution No. 3765 in 2006, which states that agencies applying for regional discretionary funds shall consider bicycle and pedestrian facilities during project planning, design, funding and construction; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 3765 established the Routine Accommodation checklist and the role of Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committees (BPACs) in reviewing projects for compliance; and

WHEREAS, many law and adopted policies, including the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375), and Plan BayArea 2050 requires significant increases in travel by public transit, bicycling, and walking to meet emissions, VMT and other metrics, and

WHEREAS, in 2015, MTC approved Resolution No. 4402, which required that jurisdictions demonstrate their Complete Streets compliance to be eligible for One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG), Cycle 2 grant funding; and all 109 local Bay Area jurisdictions are required to demonstrate compliance through resolutions, general plan compliance or ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the State of California continues to elevate the importance of Complete Streets since by enacting the California Complete Streets Act of 2008 and Caltrans Director's Policy 37 (2021), and in state budget priorities and other policies and plans such as the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, California law governing gas tax revenue (CA Streets and Highways Code Section 2030(f): Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation) was adopted to encourage integration of Complete Streets by Caltrans and cities and counties receiving funds; and

WHEREAS, federal legislation currently requires that bicycle and pedestrian needs must be given due consideration under Federal Surface Transportation law (23 U.S.C. 217(g)(1)), and this should include, at a minimum, a presumption that bicyclists, pedestrians, and persons with disabilities will be accommodated in the design of new and improved transportation facilities. In the planning, design, and operation of transportation facilities, bicyclists, pedestrians, and persons with disabilities should be included as a matter of routine, and the decision to not accommodate them should be the exception rather than the rule; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, MTC Resolution 4400 established the Regional Safety/ Vision Zero (VZ) Policy to encourage and support actions towards eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries in the Bay Area by 2030; and

WHEREAS, “Vision Zero (VZ)” is defined as a strategy to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. Effective VZ strategies must be data-driven, and must consider equity and community concerns in all stages; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, MTC unanimously adopted Plan Bay Area 2050, which contains a strategy to develop a Complete Streets Network to help meet regional mode shift, safety, equity, health, resilience and climate goals; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that coordinated development of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure offers cost savings in the long term and opportunities to create safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian travel; and

WHEREAS, integrating safety and accessibility into all stages of transportation infrastructure, from planning and construction, and onwards in operations and maintenance, including access to transit facilities improves access to and from transit; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that MTC adopts the 2022 Complete Streets Policy, developed, as detailed in Attachment; A, attached hereto and incorporated herein as though set forth at length.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Alfredo Pedroza, Chair

The above resolution was entered into by the
Metropolitan Transportation Commission at a
duly called and noticed meeting held in
San Francisco, California and at other remote
locations, on February 23, 2022

Attachment A

Date: February 23, 2022

W.I.: 1125

Referred by: PLNG

Attachment A

MTC Resolution No. 4493

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

GOAL

The goal of MTC's Complete Streets (CS) Policy is to ensure people biking, walking, rolling and taking transit are safely accommodated within the transportation network. This policy works to advance regional Plan Bay Area policies including mode shift, safety, equity, VMT and greenhouse gas emission reductions, as well as support local compliance with applicable CS-related laws, policies and standards. This is primarily accomplished by requiring a Complete Streets checklist from projects seeking discretionary funding or funding endorsements from MTC. MTC regional discretionary funds include, but are not limited to, federal, state, and regionally administered programs such as Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) funding, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funding, Transportation Alternatives (TA) set-aside/Active Transportation Program (ATP) funding, regional bridge tolls and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) funding.

DEFINITION

Complete Streets are planned, designed, constructed, reconstructed, operated, and maintained to be safe and comfortable for everyone, regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, race, sex, income, disability or chosen transportation mode. Complete Streets provide safe mobility and improved connectivity to community destinations for all users, and especially for people walking, rolling, biking and riding transit, while maximizing the use of the existing public right-of-way by prioritizing space-efficient forms of mobility (walking, cycling, shared mobility and public transit) over space intensive modes (single occupancy auto travel).

Plan Bay Area 2050 Strategy *T8* calls for development of a Complete Streets Network, enhancing streets to promote walking, biking and other micro-mobility options through sidewalk improvements, car-free slow streets, and 10,000 miles of bike lanes or multi-use paths. MTC's Active Transportation Plan (AT Plan) defines an Active Transportation Network (AT Network), made up of regionally significant segments of local active transportation networks and regional trails, based on traffic safety, user comfort, equity and connectivity to transit, Priority Development Areas, Equity Priority Communities, and Mobility Hubs. To acknowledge and allow for context-sensitive implementation at the local level, jurisdictions can determine how best to advance AT Network implementation, such as choice of roadway(s), trail alignment, and facility type within AT Network corridors.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES & STANDARDS

Projects on the AT Network shall incorporate design principles based on designing for “All Ages and Abilities¹,” contextual guidance provided by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), and consistent with state and national best practices. A facility that serves “all ages and abilities” is one that effectively serves the mobility needs of children, older adults, and people with disabilities and in doing so, works for everyone else. The all ages and abilities approach also strives to serve all users, regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, race, sex, income, or disability, by embodying national and international best practices related to traffic calming, speed reduction, and roadway design to increase user safety and comfort. This approach also includes the use of traffic calming elements or facilities separated from motor vehicle traffic, both of which can offer a greater feeling of safety and appeal to a wider spectrum of the public. Using the “All Ages and Abilities” design principles on the AT Network, projects should optimize comfort and safety, acknowledge context sensitivity, prioritize safety and regional connectivity, and encourage access to transit. Design best practices for safe street crossings, pedestrian and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility at transit stops, and

¹ Designing for All Ages & Abilities: https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NACTO_Designing-for-All-Ages-Abilities.pdf

bicycle/micromobility² facilities on the AT Network should be incorporated throughout the entirety of the project. The Proposed Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG)³ by the U.S. Access Board should also be referenced during design.

SAFETY

Safety shall be prioritized for all modes, especially the safety of vulnerable road users, that includes people biking, walking and rolling. The safety of vulnerable roadway users should not be compromised to achieve improved level of service for people driving personal automobiles. Projects are encouraged to utilize MTC's Vision Zero safety analyses, High-Injury Network (HIN) and Bay Area Vision Zero tools, as completed, and to include traffic calming or speed management features as needed to reduce drivers' vehicle speed through physical design, and encourage safe vehicle speeds along roadways, particularly on local, state and MTC identified HINs.

EQUITY

Projects enhancing active transportation in Equity Priority Communities (EPC) and/or implementing recommendations from Community-Based Transportation Plans shall be given priority consideration in applicable regional discretionary funding programs. Projects located in EPCs should document the meaningful community engagement that has occurred within the community to advance the project.

RESILIENCE

To the extent practicable, local agencies should integrate green infrastructure into planned public road right-of-way improvements to manage flooding of transportation facilities, stormwater/urban runoff, protect watershed health, improve water quality, and foster climate resilience.

² Micromobility encompasses small fully or partially human-powered vehicles (both personal and shared-use fleets) such as bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters, as well as specialized vehicle types such as cargo bikes, mobility-assistance devices, wheelchairs, accessible bikes and scooters.

³ "(Proposed) Public Rights-of-Way *Accessibility Guidelines*." U.S. Access Board, <https://www.access-board.gov/prowag/>

FUNDING

Projects funded all or in part with regional discretionary funding or receiving MTC endorsements shall adhere to this policy. All projects must implement CS as recommended in recently adopted local or countywide plans, such as bicycle, pedestrian, active transportation, Vision Zero or other systemic safety plan, Community Based Transportation Plans, or transit plan. If a project is on the regional Active Transportation Network, it should incorporate design principles based on “All Ages and Abilities,” contextual guidance issued by NACTO, as well as PROWAG issued by the U.S Access Board. Projects not located in the AT Network or included in a local plan should utilize federal, state, and local guidelines to determine appropriate CS accommodations.

Projects funded all or in part with regional discretionary funding or receiving MTC endorsements for state or federal funding programs shall not degrade or remove existing bicycle or pedestrian access, including bicycle parking or storage, within the project. Bicycle or pedestrian enhancements associated with new roadway or transit construction projects shall be included in project funding submittals. Bicycle and pedestrian enhancements shall be completed within a timeframe consistent with other mode enhancements.

COORDINATION

When designing a project that serves a destination point, including but not limited to a school, recreation facility, shopping center, hospital, office complex, or transit facility, the project shall facilitate safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access to the destination in coordination with the property owner. A project is considered to “serve” a destination if that destination directly abuts the project limits. Bicycle parking or storage is also strongly encouraged to be included in this access planning and implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION

The CS Policy shall be implemented by requiring submittal of a Complete Streets Checklist as projects request MTC discretionary funding or endorsement. The CS Checklist helps to ensure that CS elements have been sufficiently incorporated and that coordination with appropriate stakeholders has occurred. All projects in the public right-of-way and seeking \$250,000 or more in regional discretionary funding or endorsement must complete a Complete Streets Checklist. Project sponsors shall coordinate with their respective County Transportation Agency (CTA) and its Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) (or equivalent) to complete and review the CS Checklist. Checklists must be reviewed by the county BPAC (or equivalent) prior to submittal to MTC. If a project includes a transit stop/station or is located along a transit route, the checklist must be signed by the transit agency(ies) to confirm transit agency coordination and acknowledgement of the project.

After the Complete Streets Checklist is completed, submitted online and reviewed, it will be made available to the public through MTC website and possibly the CTA websites. Project sponsors shall retain maintenance, operations and (where they control the Public Right-of-Way) ultimate control over the property or facilities related to or resulting from projects funded by MTC subject to the CS Policy.

CONSTRUCTION, OPERATIONS and MAINTENANCE

Active transportation access and safety shall be addressed throughout the entire life cycle of a project, including planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance. This includes providing accommodations for people using all modes of transportation to continue to use roadways safely and efficiently during any construction or repair work that infringes on the public right-of-way and/or sidewalk. The AT Network will be included in MTC's StreetSaver software to aid planning and cost estimation to prioritize maintenance on bikeways and trails. Implementing agencies will also be able to incorporate local active transportation assets into StreetSaver Plus.

EXCEPTIONS

The CS policy shall apply to all phases of project development except under one or more of the following conditions:

1. Bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway, in which case a greater effort shall be made to accommodate those specified users elsewhere, including parallel or intersecting routes; or
2. The costs of providing accommodation are excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use. Excessively disproportionate is defined by FHWA⁴ as bicycle and pedestrian facilities together exceeding twenty percent of the cost of the larger transportation project. If the cost of preferred accommodation is considered excessively disproportionate, project sponsors shall consider alternatives that represent a feasible share of the total project cost but still provide for safe accommodation of vulnerable road users.
3. There is an alternate plan to implement Complete Streets elements of a project, either during a subsequent implementation phase of the project or within a close parallel route.
4. Conditions exist in which policy requirements may not be able to be met, such as fire and safety specifications, spatial conflicts on the roadway with transit or environmental concerns, defined as abutting conservation land or severe topological constraints.

To receive an exception, project sponsors must provide documentation in the Complete Streets Checklist detailing how the project meets one or more of the exception conditions above.

Exceptions must be documented and signed by the agency's Director of Public Works, Transportation Department (or equivalent), or their designee, and not the Project Manager. A Complete Streets Checklist seeking an exception follows the same BPAC review process as stated above.

⁴ "Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach," FHWA, https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/design.cfm

TRACKING AND EVALUATION

MTC, in coordination with CTAs, will develop project evaluation metrics to routinely track progress toward closing gaps and completing projects on the AT Network and in the AT Plan generally, as well as meeting Vision Zero and equity goals. MTC staff will produce a report every 4 years, in coordination with CTAs, to summarize funded projects, provide key performance indicators, and make recommended changes to the CS Policy, if any.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

MTC will provide tools to project sponsors and implementing agencies, such as Complete Streets design principles and standards, to provide guidance for determining appropriate Complete Streets treatments based on roadway conditions, completing the Complete Streets Checklist, and other topics as resources allow.