

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Policy Advisory Council**

May 10, 2023

Agenda Item 10

Staff Liaison Report

Subject:

Overview of recent MTC policy decisions and other activities.

Issues:

None identified.

Recommendations:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Staff Liaison Report – May 2023

Staff Liaison Report – May 2022

Follow up from April 12, 2023 Policy Advisory Council Meeting

- A recent [San Francisco Chronicle article](#) on the prospect of additional tolls (part of the Next Generation Freeway Study) included quotes from Council Chair Kinman, Councilmember Welte, and Councilmember Deutsch-Gross.
- The Summer Academy application period ended on April 17 with a record of over 150 applicants. Sessions will be held on Thursdays in July, with a final in-person session on Friday, July 28, which Councilmembers are invited to attend.

Executive Director's Report:

The following items are excerpts from the April 2023, Executive Director's Report to the Commission. To read this and past reports in their entirety, check the agenda from a given Commission meeting (search for past meetings on [MTCs Legistar webpage](#)).

Key Updates:

- The California Transportation Commission (CTC) hosted a hybrid public hearing in Vallejo on April 24 on proposed tolling for state Route 37.
- Bay Area local governments are invited to nominate Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Priority Sites. All PDAs and Priority Sites nominated by the program deadlines will be included in Plan Bay Area 2050+ and will be eligible for future planning, infrastructure or housing funds dedicated to these programs. Download the applications and learn more about deadlines at <https://mtc.ca.gov/news/nominate-priority-sites-priority-development-areas>.
- ABAG-MTC's Regional Housing Technical Assistance (RHTA) Program has won a 2023 APA California - Northern Section Award of Excellence in the Planning Agency (public sector) division in recognition of the collaborative model of the RHTA Program, which offers a large volume of technical assistance, high-quality resources, and visionary leadership as an innovative solution to the complex set of requirements and housing policies in California.

- In the latest award announcements for the state budget augmentation of the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), the Bay Area was awarded six distinct projects for approximately \$160 million total, about 60% of the amount available outside Southern California. This includes project development awards of \$60 million to DTX/The Portal and \$25 million to Valley Link – both projects that the Commission pushed forward as part of the Major Project Advancement Policy – and a \$47 million award to VTA for construction on the Eastridge to BART Regional Connector.

Items to Note

- On April 21 in celebration of Earth Day, I participated in “All Aboard with Transit CEOs,” a multi-modal ride-along and social event in Contra Costa County that gave the public a chance to ride with and meet regional transit leaders.
- Commissioner Jim Spring participated in a Northern California Megaregion Advocacy Day in Sacramento on April 19.
- Kate Hartley (BAHFA) and Rebecca Long (LPA) provided an informational presentation to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors on BAHFA and a general obligation housing bond on April 18. Commissioner David Rabbitt facilitated the presentation’s inclusion on the Board’s agenda and was in attendance. The item was well received by Board members and public participants.
- On April 18 Commissioner Hillary Ronen joined transit advocates and San Francisco Supervisor Dean Preston at the Rally for Transit Funding in San Francisco.
- On April 15 I attended the opening event for San Mateo 101 express lanes with Commissioners David Canepa and Gina Papan.
- Earlier this month Georgia Gann Dohrmann, Assistant Director of Legislation and Public Affairs, spoke at a Chicago Federal Reserve event focused on transit recovery in a post-COVID world. She was joined by business, advocacy and planning leaders from Washington, D.C., and Chicago to discuss building a financially stable, equitable and accessible mass transit system in Chicago and beyond.

- MTC's sister agency, the Bay Area Infrastructure Finance Authority (BAIFA), launched the Express Lanes START Pilot program on Friday, April 7 to advance equity on express lanes. Nationally, this first-of-its-kind 18-month pilot will provide qualified low-income drivers who enroll in the program at least a 50% discount on I-880 Express Lanes tolls. This program only applies to the I-880 Express Lanes while staff evaluate the Pilot's impact. A media availability event featuring staff from MTC's Legislation & Public Affairs and Electronic Payments sections was held April 11 at the Bay Area Metro Center and was well attended by print and broadcast reporters from English, Spanish and Chinese language outlets. The Policy Advisory Council's Equity and Access Subcommittee influenced the program significantly, engaging with BAIFA staff seven times on project planning, design and delivery since June 2020. Staff would like to acknowledge Anne Olivia Eldred's contributions, through her service as a member of both the Equity and Access Subcommittee as well as a separate Advisory Group for the project. Project staff will return with a progress update in the fall. In the meantime, please encourage potential Express Lanes START customers to learn more and apply for Express Lanes START at the website: www.ExpressLanesSTART.org

News Headlines from [The Bay Link Blog](#):

[MTC mourns the loss of Senior Planner Jay Stagi](#): Jay Stagi, a Senior Planner who joined the MTC staff in 2007, died unexpectedly March 17. Through his work on initiatives such as the [Transit Connectivity Plan](#), the [Regional Hub Signage Program](#), [Bike-to-Work Day](#), and the [Ferry Building flap sign](#), Jay thrived on collaboration building partnerships — and friendships — with transit agency and city staff, transit advocates, industry experts, and other stakeholders throughout the Bay Area.

[ABAG-MTC win top award for Regional Housing Technical Assistance Program](#): The technical assistance on housing planning and best practices to advance the 3Ps of production, protection and preservation earned ABAG/MTC a top award from the California Chapter – Northern Section – of the American Planning Association.

[Play Ball! Many ways to take transit to Bay Area baseball:](#) With the baseball season underway, the San Francisco Giants and Oakland A's are reminding fans that there are many ways to get to the ballpark without driving.

[Bay Area Bike to Wherever Days and Bike to Work Day coming in May:](#) May is Bike Month in the Bay Area, and since hybrid work is part of the new normal, “Bike to Wherever Days” (BTWD) are continuing across the nine counties and includes Bike to Work Day on May 18.

[2023 Bike Champion of the Year Winners announced:](#) Bay Area Bike to Wherever Days (BTWD) organizers have named the winners of the 2023 Bike Champion of the Year (BCOY) awards. Given to individuals for inspiring bicycling in their Bay Area communities, this award recognizes riders in the nine San Francisco Bay Area counties for their commitment to cycling as the primary mode of transport.

[Bay Trail equity strategy released:](#) A new San Francisco Bay Trail equity strategy has been created to look at how to develop a trail that is accessible and welcoming to all people in the Bay Area. The [Bay Trail Equity Strategy Phase I History and Existing Conditions Study](#) is intended to help Bay Trail decision-makers understand and address historic and present-day inequities. The Bay Trail, a joint project of MTC and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), is a series of connected walking and cycling paths that ring the San Francisco and San Pablo bays.

[Nominate Priority Sites and Priority Development Areas:](#) Bay Area local governments are invited to nominate Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Priority Sites. All PDAs and Priority Sites nominated by the program deadlines listed below will be included in Plan Bay Area 2050+ and will be eligible for future planning, infrastructure or housing funds dedicated to these programs.

Further News Updates:

The [Bay Link blog](#) offers a more in-depth look at these topics, often in the context of the work that the ABAG and MTC are doing, along with other stories of interest to Bay Area residents and professionals. The Bay Link Blog E-Newsletter, with the top Bay Link features of the week, is distributed every Tuesday. You can find more newsletters to subscribe to at this [link](#).

Have a Question? Ask a Librarian

If you need assistance locating information or are having difficulty navigating the MTC-ABAG websites, please feel free to contact the MTC-ABAG head librarian. Reference assistance is available by telephone (415-778-5236), or email library@bayareametro.gov Information can also be found on the [MTC-ABAG library webpage](#).

For MTC and Plan Bay Area Glossaries:

- [Glossary of Transportation Planning Acronyms & Terms](#)
- [Plan Bay Area Glossary](#)