

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Policy Advisory Council**

September 11, 2019

Agenda Item 8

Staff Liaison Report – September 2019

Subject: Relevant MTC policy decisions and other activities.

Recommendation: Information

Attachments: Attachment A: Staff Liaison Report – September 2019



- Google Trip planner
- Real-time transit departure times (*NOTE: This feature remains available on the 511 Phone service*)
- Transit agency schedules
- Transit Tracker
- Real-time parking information (*NOTE: This feature was already discontinued from the 511.org website and the 511 Phone service*)

Why were 511 web features discontinued?

MTC has always been, and will continue to be, committed to providing a flexible 511 system that evolves with changes in technology as well as user needs and expectations. Usage trends and recent surveys show that Bay Area travelers are turning to a variety of sources to get around. Depending on their travel needs, they are increasingly using transit agency or private sector websites and apps for trip planning, real-time transit information, and transit schedules.

What is staying on 511.org?

Going forward, 511 will continue to provide core elements of the website, including the following:

- Traveler alerts;
- An interactive map, with traffic, transit, carpool, and biking information layers;
- Consolidated tweets from 511 and partner agencies; and
- Resources for traffic, transit, paratransit, RTC discount card, carpool, vanpool, bicycling, express lanes, and park 'n ride lots.

511 will also focus on its strengths as a regional data provider to support and collaborate with the innovative work being done by the private sector. All of 511's data is available free of charge on 511.org. For more information, including a list of trip planners and other options, visit the 511.org website.

MTC and Partners Receive Federal Environmental Planning Award for Highway 37

MTC and its partners received a 2019 Environmental Excellence Award from the Federal Highway Administration for the State Route 37 Resilient Corridor Program. The award recognizes outstanding transportation projects incorporating environmental stewardship into the planning and development processes. Projects selected use Federal Highway Administration funding sources.

About 40,000 vehicles a day use 21-mile Highway 37, which skirts the northern shore of San Pablo Bay, delivering commuters and goods. The entire highway is at risk for submerging under a predicted sea level rise of 6 feet by the end of the century. The area is environmentally rich, with nearby wetlands hosting a variety of species.

The Highway 37 program developed by MTC and its partners is a design alternative assessment process that lays out near-, mid-, and long-term improvements to address three critical issues in the corridor: severe and extended traffic congestion, vulnerability to flooding and potential impacts on environmental resources. Resilient SR 37 is a first step to proactively develop integrated transportation and ecosystem design solutions that can be progressively implemented to improve mobility for all modes of transportation and maintain public access, while developing resiliency to storms and sea level rise. The outcomes of Resilient SR 37 will identify the projects that move into the next phases of the project.

Project partners include Caltrans, Solano Transportation Authority, Sonoma County Transportation Authority, Transportation Authority of Marin and the Napa Valley Transportation Authority.

Bridge Tolls Help Ease East Bay Commuters' Parking Crunch

On July 24, 2019, MTC awarded a total of \$9.3 million in Regional Measure 2 toll dollars to advance new commuter parking projects in Alameda County. The commitments include \$7 million to the Alameda County Transportation Commission to help fund the construction of a new parking garage near the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station plus \$2.3 million through MTC's Bay Bridge Forward initiative to complete a trio of commuter parking lots at Oakland and Albany locations served by AC Transit's transbay buses.

"This a great way to improve the quality of life for a lot of commuters who don't live within walking distance of a BART station or bus stop," observed MTC Chair and Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty. "Among the ways to reduce congestion on East Bay freeways is to make it more convenient for people to ride transit; and one of the best ways to improve convenience is to solve the chronic parking shortages at so many of our key transit stops."

The \$34 million, 537-space parking garage near the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station will be built adjacent to the existing BART garage at the station, which contains nearly 3,000 spaces. The \$7 million commitment from MTC supplements \$20 million in state funds awarded to the Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority for the project through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program plus another \$7 million in vehicle registration fee money contributed by the Alameda County Transportation Commission. Construction on the new garage is expected to begin next spring, with the opening scheduled for mid-2021.

The three commuter parking lots now under construction in the East Bay are scheduled to open by the end of this year. These include two lots beneath Interstate 880 at High Street and Fruitvale Avenue in Oakland, and a third lot adjacent to Interstate 80 at Buchanan Street in Albany.

Regional Measure 2, which was approved by Bay Area voters in 2004, raised tolls by \$1 on each of the region's seven state-owned toll bridges to finance a range of highway and transit improvements in the bridge corridors and along their approaches, as well as to provide operating support for transit services in the bridge corridors.

Little Oyster to Combat Sea-Level Rise

The [Giant Marsh Living Shoreline project](#) along the western edge of Contra Costa County is now underway with the goal of creating a healthy marine environment for native oysters, which will improve aquatic quality and help gird against sea-level rise.

Three hundred and fifty cement and sand oyster reefs were placed along the coast to create a living shoreline near the Giant Marsh at Point Pinole Regional Shoreline in Richmond. Sediment and development around the bay eliminated many of the hard surfaces on which the Olympia oysters need to grow. The artificial reefs provide that hard surface.

Eelgrass beds were also planted near the reefs as part of the project. Eelgrass provides a nursery area for many fish and shellfish species and is a major food source, forming the base of food webs and hosting organisms that feed directly on its leaves. Eelgrass also supports tiny plants, animals and organisms that, in turn, are eaten by other invertebrates, larval and juvenile fish, and birds.

Living shorelines use nature-based infrastructure to create shoreline buffers that reduce the impacts from sea-level rise and erosion, while creating habitat for fish and wildlife. These living shorelines are proving to be an effective approach to protecting the coast and shoreline communities and protecting the coast from wave action.

The work addresses goals outlined by the [San Francisco Estuary Partnership](#) and the implementation of its [Estuary Blueprint](#), a vision for the estuary's future. The partnership's host entity is the [Association of Bay Area Governments](#), which is staffed by the [Metropolitan Transportation Commission](#)

San Francisco Bay Trail Featured by Bay Nature

The San Francisco Bay Trail was featured in the summer edition of [Bay Nature](#) with an overview of the pathway and highlights of certain segments. The 500-mile Bay Trail — which celebrates its [30th anniversary](#) this year — is now 70 percent complete with a vision to connect people to the bay and communities along the edge of San Francisco Bay. The trail links to residential areas, transit stations and employment centers with more than 2.7 million people living within 2 miles of the Bay Trail. Much more detail about the trail as well as news and upcoming events can be found [here](#).

Executive Director's Report

The following items are excerpts from the July 2019 Executive Director's Report to the Commission. To read the report in its entirety go to:

<http://www.mtc.ca.gov/whats-happening/news/executive-directors-report>.

Status Report: AB 1487 (Bay Area Regional Housing Funding) Ad Hoc Committee

The AB 1487 (Chiu) Ad Hoc Committee appointed by the MTC Chair and ABAG President met three times since its designation in May by President David Rabbitt and Chair Scott Haggerty. Members include:

- MTC: Vice Chair Alfredo Pedroza, Jim Spring, Amy Worth, Libby Schaaf and Damon Connolly
- ABAG: President David Rabbitt, Vice President Jesse Arreguin, Cindy Chavez, Julie Pierce and Warren Slocum

A [report of its activities](#) was included in the Legislative Committee report for July, as part of the work continuing around AB 1487 in the State Legislature.

Bay Trail 30th Anniversary

This year the Bay Trail Project celebrates 30 years since the adoption of the *Bay Trail Plan* by the ABAG Executive Board on June 15, 1989. The trail is now 70% complete and growing, with over 350 miles of trail in use by the public for recreation, transportation and environmental education. We have had significant press coverage on this milestone within the past month: 1) an 8-page article in the current edition of *Bay Nature* magazine; 2) a July 5 front page San Francisco *Chronicle* article; and 3) an entire episode on NBC Bay Area's Open Road with Doug McConnell that aired on July 14 and is available to view on the Open Road website nbcbayarea.com/openroad (made possible by BATA and the Bay Trail nonprofit). I'd like to thank the Commission for their support of this important regional program.

Kick-off meeting: Joint ABAG MTC Governance Committee, July 24, 2019

The appointed Joint ABAG MTC Governance Committee of MTC — designated as a result of the 2017 Memorandum of Understanding to “begin discussions on whether the two agencies should restructure their governing boards to better serve the region and to better utilize the consolidated staff” — met for the first time. The six MTC Commissioners appointed by Chair Scott Haggerty are Chair Haggerty, Vice Chair Alfredo Pedroza, Nick Josefowitz, Jim Spring, David Cortese, and Amy Worth. The six ABAG members appointed to the Committee by President Rabbitt are President Rabbitt, Vice President Jesse Arreguin, Cindy Chavez, Julie Pierce, John Rahaim, and Warren Slocum.

Upcoming Events:

**6th International Conference - Women's Issues in Transportation - Irvine, CA-
September 10-13, 2019**

I am the co-chair of this international conference hosted by the Transportation Research Board, with support from the international and local chapters of the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS). MTC is a sponsor of the conference, among several others from the private and public sectors.