

Bay Area Toll Authority Oversight Committee

May 13, 2020

Agenda Item 4a - 20-0559

Bay Bridge Forward: Funding Update

Subject: A report on the development of a funding plan for Bay Bridge Forward.

Background: The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge (SFOBB) corridor is consistently ranked as one of the most congested corridors in the region. In particular, during the morning commute hours, severe traffic congestion exists at each of the major approaches from I-80, I-580, I-880, and West Grand Avenue. This, in turn, causes delays to buses and carpool vehicles accessing the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) by-pass lanes at the toll plaza.

At the February 12, 2020 Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) Oversight Committee, staff presented the Bay Bridge Bus Lane Assessment and Bay Bridge Forward in response to interest in reinstating a bus lane on the SFOBB. Note that in 1962 the State repurposed one of the lower deck lanes as a dedicated contra flow bus lane for AC Transit, but after a year, the San Francisco Division of Bay Toll Crossing nixed the bus lane due to repaving work to be done on the upper deck. In lieu of reinstating a bus lane on the bridge, staff recommended a new set of Bay Bridge Forward (2020) to deliver near-term operational, transit, and shared mobility strategies to increase travel time savings, increase person through put and smooth traffic flows at the approaches to the bridge for bus transit and carpools. Staff also recommended that we challenge our partner agencies – Caltrans, Alameda County Transportation Authority (ACTC), and Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) – to pool \$20 million in resources to advance the capital improvements through the project development process, starting with planning, environmental review and design phases. Under the leadership of the MTC Chair, this Committee directed staff to develop a funding plan and report back to this Committee.

In response to our \$20 million challenge, below are the initial contributions from the participating agencies:

Funding Contribution	
MTC	\$7.8 Million
Caltrans	-
ACTC	\$7.0 million
CCTA	\$350,000
Total	\$15.15 Million

MTC is contributing \$7.8 million to Bay Bridge Forward via the fund programming actions made by the Programming and Allocations Committee for \$3.0 million in federal funds in February 2020 and \$4.8 million from Regional Measure 2 for the I-80 express lanes in June 2013. Caltrans will consider contributing staff resources

and project approval streamlining rather than funding. ACTC will seek funding approval for \$10 million – \$7 million for Bay Bridge Forward and \$3 million towards BATA's The Link bicycle/pedestrian path project – at their Commission meeting on May 28, 2020. MTC, ACTC and CCTA will jointly fund the estimated \$1 million I-80 Design Alternative Assessment (DAA) via a three-way split with each contributing \$350,000. MTC continues to coordinate with CCTA to confirm their contribution. The I-80 DAA is an engineering study to assess traffic conditions, bottlenecks, and operational deficiencies and propose a range of operational strategies, including but not limited to, a dedicated bus lane, bus on shoulder, express lanes, HOV occupancy policies, and interchange improvements.

With this initial \$15 million in funding, staff will prepare the I-80 DAA for purpose of identifying a recommended set of corridor-wide operational improvements to advance into project delivery pipeline, as well as to complete the environmental and design phases for the "low-hanging fruit" capital projects such as the I-580 Westbound HOV extension, I-80 Westbound Bus on Shoulder/HOV, and I-80/Powell Interchange improvements.

Staff estimated that Bay Bridge Forward is a \$65 million investment to improve traffic flow and provide travel time savings for Transbay express bus riders. The overall program costs does not include funding for express lanes nor capital projects identified in the I-80 DAA. Additionally, the program costs will be adjusted as we learn more through the scoping and environmental/design phases wherein we will develop cost estimates for the discrete capital projects. At this point, we have only secured \$15 million out of \$65 million towards Bay Bridge Forward.

Given COVID19 and the resulting downturn in the economy, the challenge to find the remaining \$50 million in the short-term to fund Bay Bridge Forward is daunting. In managing expectations, we may need to position these investments for critical trade-offs discussions as we move forward. Or, we may be optimistic that traffic returns to some new normal and fund sources such as the \$140 million for the Core Capacity Transit Improvements in Regional Measure 3, federal transportation stimulus funding in response to COVID19, federal surface transportation funding for One Bay Area Grants (OBAG 3), California Senate Bill 1 Congested Corridor funding and other local funding materialize. On the upside, these cost-effective, high-impact projects in Bay Bridge Forward may become even more valuable under the economic circumstances we will likely be facing.

Staff will plan on providing periodic updates on the progress being made on Bay Bridge Forward to this Committee. Our goal is deliver operational, transit and shared mobility improvements over the next three to five years should resources and funding priorities remain in place to deliver Bay Bridge Forward.

Issues: None identified.

Recommendation: None


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Bay Bridge Forward (2020)

Near-Term Investment to Reduce Delay, Move More People and Buses

