



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
June 24, 2020

Retirements

No updates

Departures

No updates

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FOR JUNE:

Protests and Social Unrest

In response to the violent deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, ABAG and MTC leadership released a joint statement acknowledging the systemic injustice that their deaths illuminate in our society. Chair of MTC and the President of ABAG have both committed to advance equity, justice and inclusion within our agencies and lift up those voices in our region who have historically been silenced or not included at the table. I invite everyone to read the statement. It is included on the ABAG and MTC websites.

<https://abag.ca.gov/news/abag-mtc-leaders-issue-statement-supporting-social-justice-activism>

Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force

The task force, established by Chair Haggerty and chaired by Commissioner Jim Spering, met twice on May 29th and June 15th. At the first meeting, key mutual understandings were established for the work of the task force:

- 1- COVID-19 has created an unprecedented public transit crisis.
- 2- Broad support exists for the Task Force to guide regional transit recovery.
- 3- Safe and healthy transit protocols are essential across all systems.
- 4- Addressing mobility needs of low-income and vulnerable riders is a priority.
- 5- CARES Act Phase 2 funds must be delivered expeditiously.
- 6- This effort will reach out to frequent transit users and other constituencies that are not specifically represented on the Task Force.

At the second meeting on June 15th, the focus was on two major areas: 1) near-term recovery strategies with a focus on safety considerations for public transit, for both workers and riders; and 2) CARES Act Phase 2 funding considerations. In both cases, equity emerged as a resounding

theme and concern – particularly our responsibility to serve those most in need of public transit, or are often the most vulnerable to the risks of COVID 19. The transit operators have been working collectively to determine best safety practices, and discussion among all task force members outlined areas for consideration and response, including the most appropriate role for MTC as a regional agency and facilitator. With respect to the distribution of CARES funding, the Commission's direction in what is known as "Principle 5" was reviewed, including initial top line analyses of how those factors may manifest in alternative formula distributions to the transit operators. Further work in this regard will be brought forward at the third meeting of the Task Force scheduled for June 29th.

BAHFA

The MTC Commission will be convening the first meeting of the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority (BAHFA) after the June 24th Commission Meeting. Members of the ABAG Executive Board will be in attendance to celebrate this joint venture between ABAG and MTC, an important new tool that will be available to help implement the Expanded Regional Housing Portfolio you will be discussing under agenda item 11a.

Operations

Re Innovate 680, one of our first DAA (Design Alternative Assessments): Contra Costa, in partnership with Caltrans and MTC, will hold virtual public scoping meetings to launch the project into the environmental phase. This is a big milestone, as the project will close out the 25-mile gap between Rudgear Road to the Benicia Bridge. It includes a conversion of an existing HOV lane into an express lane and the construction of a new express lane.

Clipper, FasTrak, Express Lanes

Since last month's meeting, the Clipper Customer Service Center in the Embarcadero BART/Muni station has reopened limited hours on weekdays. July 15 is the launch date for Clipper START for the operators that are part of that pilot. The Clipper mobile app has been demonstrated to MTC and to operators, and will soon enter its testing phase. More broadly, transit agencies are looking to Clipper as a largely contact-less fare payment solution, as one response to the new reality of COVID-19.

The region's Express Lanes, including BAIFA's I-680 express lanes resumed tolling operations on June 1. They had ceased tolling in mid-March shortly after shelter-in-place directives were issued.

Other News:

State Grants

Award recommendations for the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) and Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) Programs

For AHSC, 10 projects in the region are proposed for award, totaling \$247 million, representing 45% of the pot. For TCC, Oakland's application is proposed for an implementation grant award of \$28.2 million; final awards are expected to be approved by the Strategic Growth Council at their meeting on June 25th.

Caltrans Planning Grant Awards

MTC received notification from Caltrans late last week of two Planning Grant awards:

1) Vehicle Miles Traveled-Reduction Planning for Priority Development Areas in Richmond and Vallejo (\$539,534); and 2) Bay Area Regional Rail Partnerships: Project Delivery and Governance (\$400,000). We look forward to working closely with Caltrans and our regional partners to advance these planning efforts.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

While this is a lead responsibility of ABAG, it is noteworthy for the Commission that the region received its Regional Housing Needs Distribution (RHND) number from the State Housing and Community Development (HCD).

That number, representing the assignment of housing need to the entire 9 county Bay Area, is 441,176, about 2.4 times higher than last cycle. The staff and ABAG are working closely with local government on the required allocation of that number to cities and counties, and coordination with our work in Plan Bay Area 2050 is an important parallel effort.

Things of Note

I moderated the inaugural "Metro Talks forum", on 6/3 via webinar. The topic was equitable housing, and featured Conor Dougherty, Economics reporter for The New York Times; Lorena Melgarejo, Executive Director of Faith in Action; and Steven Falk, Former Interim Oakland City Administrator and Lafayette City Manager. The event received very positive feedback, and the future of transit was highlighted among others as a key topic for future sessions.


On 6/8 there was a positive article in the Chronicle by John King about the newest segment of Bay Trail in Albany, and KPIX Channel 5 aired a segment on the evening news about the new Bay Trail segment as well.

Upcoming/Anticipated Events

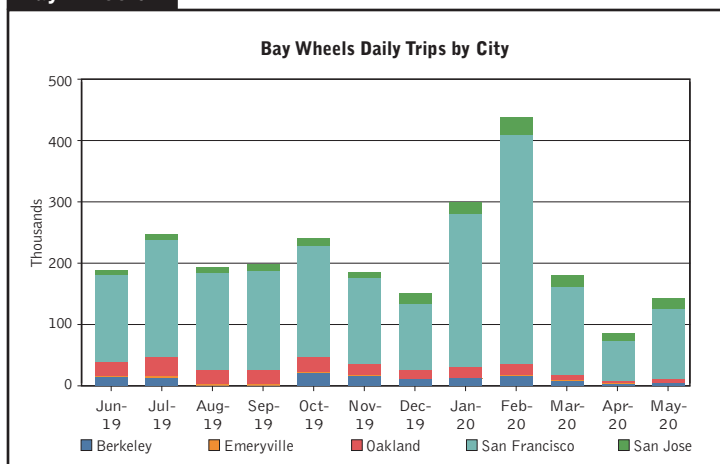
I will be participating as a panelist as part of San Jose State University's Mineta Transportation Institute's (MTI) annual Norman Y. Mineta Transportation Finance Summit (Friday, June 26th, 10:00am) in partnership with the Commonwealth Club of California.

PG&E Shutdowns

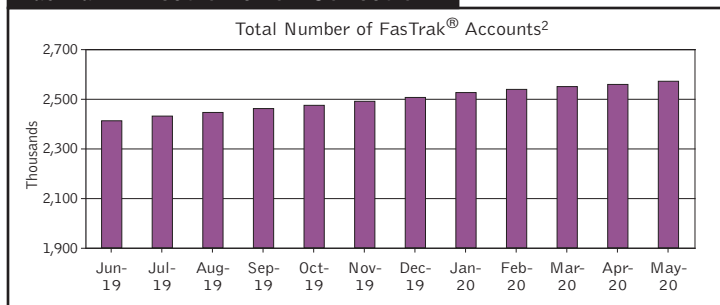
We are approaching the season where PG&E begins to implement their Public Safety Power Shutdown strategy. This is particularly challenging during the current Covid-19 situation given our remote meeting and working environment. These shutoffs could present disruptions to MTC and its operations on a frequent basis depending on PG&E's threat assessments. Staff is reviewing the situation to understand and identify options; we are also dedicated to the ongoing monitoring of possible disruptions.


Therese W. McMillan

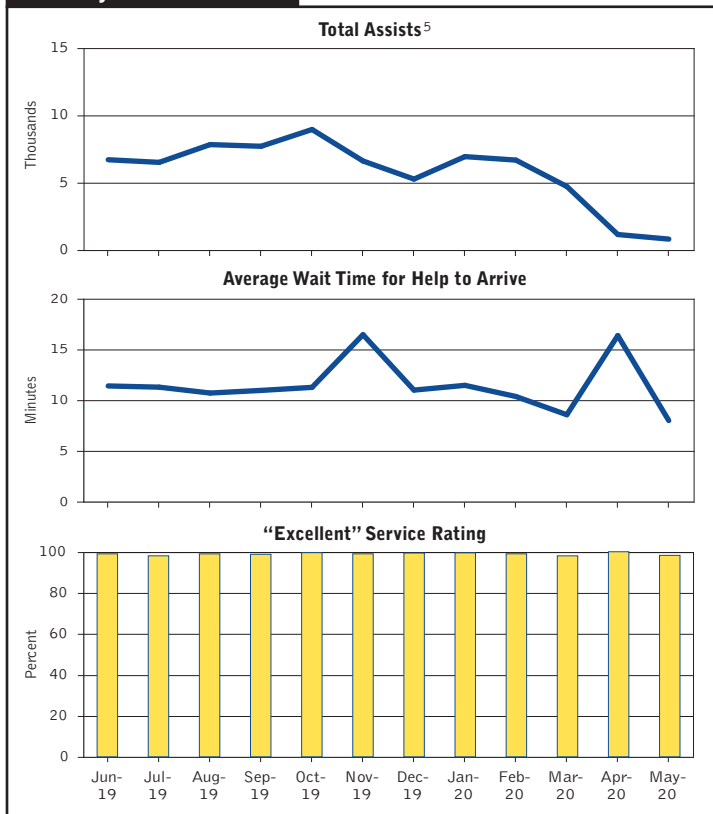
Bay Wheels



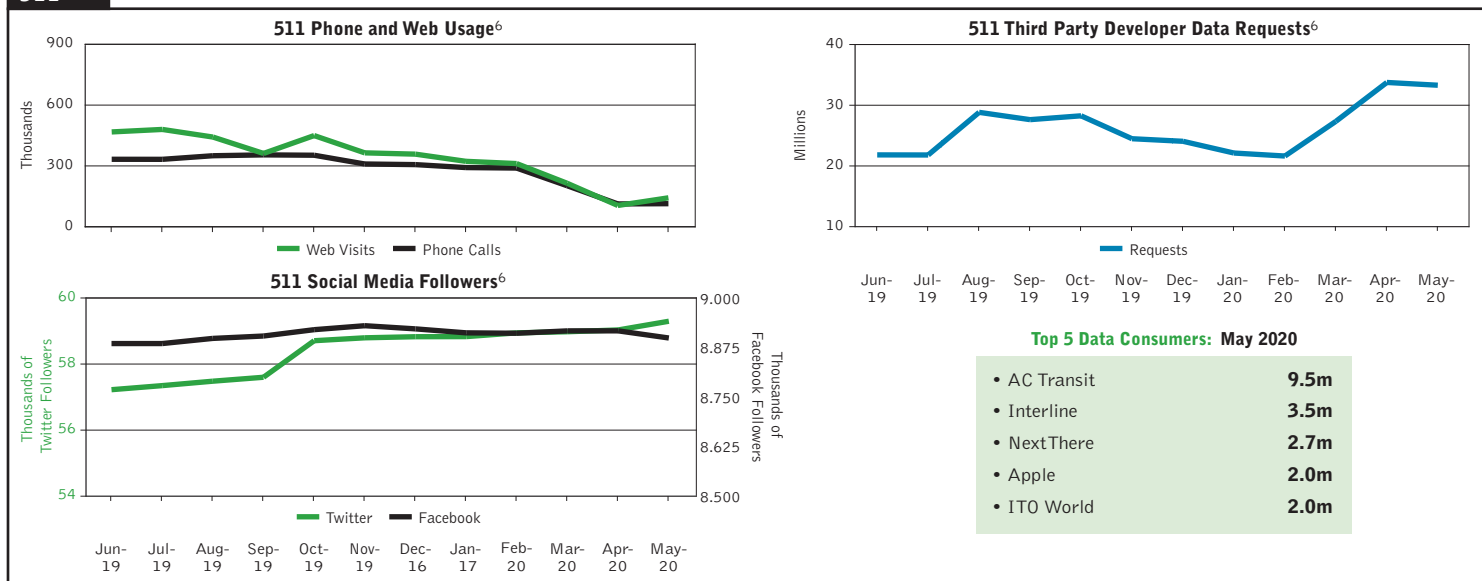
FasTrak® Electronic Toll Collection¹



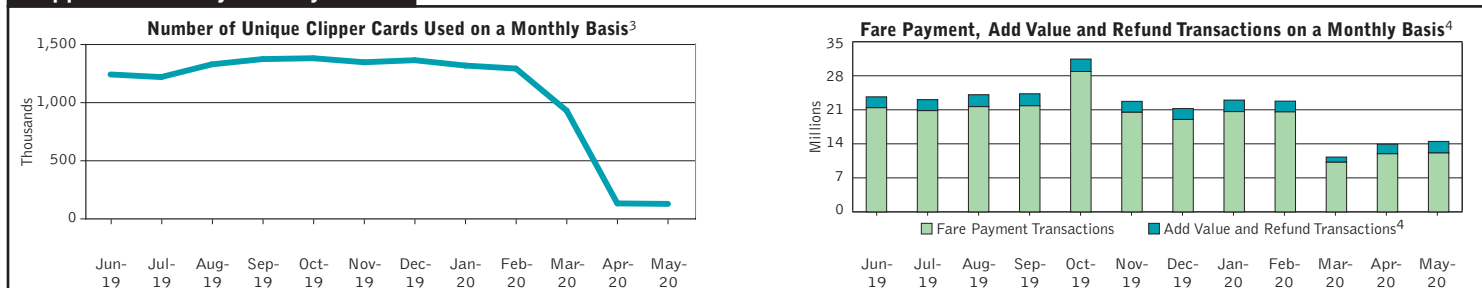
Freeway Service Patrol



511



Clipper® Fare Payment System



Notes: ¹ MTC, as the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA), assumed responsibility for FasTrak® customer service operations in Jan. 2004. Figures are cumulative.

² Number of debit accounts opened through BATA service center; each account may represent more than one toll tag issued.

³ New category as of September 2003; data collected since Aug. 2002

⁴ As of November 2009, refund transactions are counted with add value transactions. This chart includes refunds in the Add Value bars for the past 12 months. (Past reports did not include refunds, which, with few exceptions, have accounted for less than 50 transactions each month.)

⁵ FSP Assist numbers for the most current month are a best estimate, and may be subject to change. Final assist numbers are available at the end of the month, and the report is updated accordingly.

⁶ 511 launched a new phone system and website in June 2016 and now tracks two new types of data in addition to call and web usage: social media followers and developer data requests.