



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
October 28, 2020

New Appointments

Emily Ma – Emily started with MTC on October 5, 2020 as an Accountant/Auditor II in the Finance & Accounting section.

Retirements

Maria Leon Retirement

I'd like to take a moment to recognize Maria Leon for her 22 years of service to the agency—and to the Executive Office in particular. Maria was hired in June of 1998 as an Administrative Assistant, and by 2005 she had been promoted to become Andy Fremier's Executive Assistant and then early last year shifted to become Executive Assistant to Brian Mayhew. Maria has asked that her retirement be met with no fanfare, and while I am committed to honoring her request; I am equally committed to having the record show our deep thanks to Maria for her service to the agency; our congratulations to Maria on her retirement; and our best wishes to Maria, her husband Jorge, and their family for good health, good times and good luck in the years ahead. *Salud, buenos tiempos y buena suerte a todos!*

Key Updates on COVID-Related Activities

MTC COVID Response: Bay Area Metro Center (BAMC)

The challenges around Covid-19 are ever changing and the City and County of San Francisco Health Orders and Directives are updated in response to these changing dynamics. Per the announced updated Order issued on October 20, 2020, MTC will review, respond, and comply with all updates and changes, as necessary.

To date, MTC staff that can perform their work remotely will continue to do so until COVID-19 is controlled and/or Shelter In Place (SIP) requirements allow them to do so safely and productively. This practice has been in place since the start of the SIP orders.

For MTC staff that have essential functions that require them to perform work at the MTC offices they can and will continue to do so without limitation while adhering to all health directives.

MTC staff has worked to ensure that:

- The building and staff meet all requirements of the Health Orders and Directives,
- MTC employees are kept as safe and healthy as possible,
- MTC does what it can to assist with slowing the spread of the virus, and
- MTC operations continue without interruption or negatively impacting the region we serve.

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COVID-19 Related Operational Statistics

Staff have updated the Operational Statistics page, incorporating COVID-related data on regional VMT and Transit Ridership metrics. Impacts of the COVID pandemic also is evident on Toll Bridge Crossings and Clipper Fare Payment System indicators. Additional metrics will be added to the COVID landing page.

COVID Related Activities (Website Landing)

The MTC website has been updated to capture the various COVID-19 related activities, updates, and statistics that are affecting the region. This landing page will make it easier to access information and reach a collective understanding of the challenges that are occurring throughout our various transit systems.

The website can be accessed at the address below:

<https://mtc.ca.gov/covid>

Riding Together: Healthy Transit Plan and Dashboard

Transit operators provided their joint report detailing monthly operator performance on key metrics related to COVID-19 health and safety measures, as reported by agencies through a publicly accessible dashboard. This month and subsequently, these updates will be included as part of the MTC Commission meeting consent calendar.

Plan Bay Area 2050

I presented an update to the Joint meeting of MTC Planning and ABAG Administration Committees at their regular meeting on October 9, 2020 to delve deeper into the details of the PBA 2050 strategy on telecommuting, which has generated much attention among local stakeholders, business interests and the media. Commissioners and staff continue outreach on this subject, and at the direction of Planning Chair Sperling a fact sheet on the subject was presented, and is attached here for reference.

Also of note, on October 15, 2020 the ABAG Executive Board approved the methodology for the 6th cycle Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), which is built on key PBA2050 growth assumptions. As housing affordability and availability are foundational issues in our regional plan, ABAG's decisions around RHNA are critical to our joint agency planning responsibilities.

East Bay Economic Development Alliance

On October 8, I gave a presentation to the East Bay Economic Development Alliance on the work we're doing regionally to help strengthen the East Bay's economy including the proposed Plan Bay Area Blueprint strategies on Economic Development, Housing, Transportation and Priority Production Areas. An update on ABAG's work with RHNA were also briefly reviewed. I encouraged attendees to provide their input and feedback on the upcoming Plan Bay Area Implementation Plan.

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Early Earthquake Warning System Installed at the Metro Center

Last month staff completed installation of an early earthquake warning system at the Bay Area Metro Center. The alert system uses data from a network of monitoring stations throughout the state. It will give an advance warning of a few seconds to tens of seconds if there is an earthquake of 4.0 or greater in San Francisco at the location of the Metro Center. It alerts those in the building (agency staff, tenants and visitors) to take cover for safety in the event of a strong earthquake. The system is similar to that used by BART, and a number of other government agencies and service providers statewide.

October Metro Talks: Gender Equity in Transportation


On Thursday, October 3, due to a scheduling conflict my Chief of Staff moderated a discussion on what a safe and equitable transit system, accessible for women and girls, can look like in the Bay Area. Facing greater burdens in the current COVID crisis—and discussing what the transit sector can do to support riders and provide career pathways with elevated economic opportunities, was also a focus of the talk.

A recording of the conversation, exploring how the Bay Area transportation can be more welcoming to women and girls especially those from our communities of color, can be found on our YouTube and Facebook pages (links are below).

Public access via MTC-ABAG YouTube and Facebook

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MTCBATA>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/mtcabaglibrary>

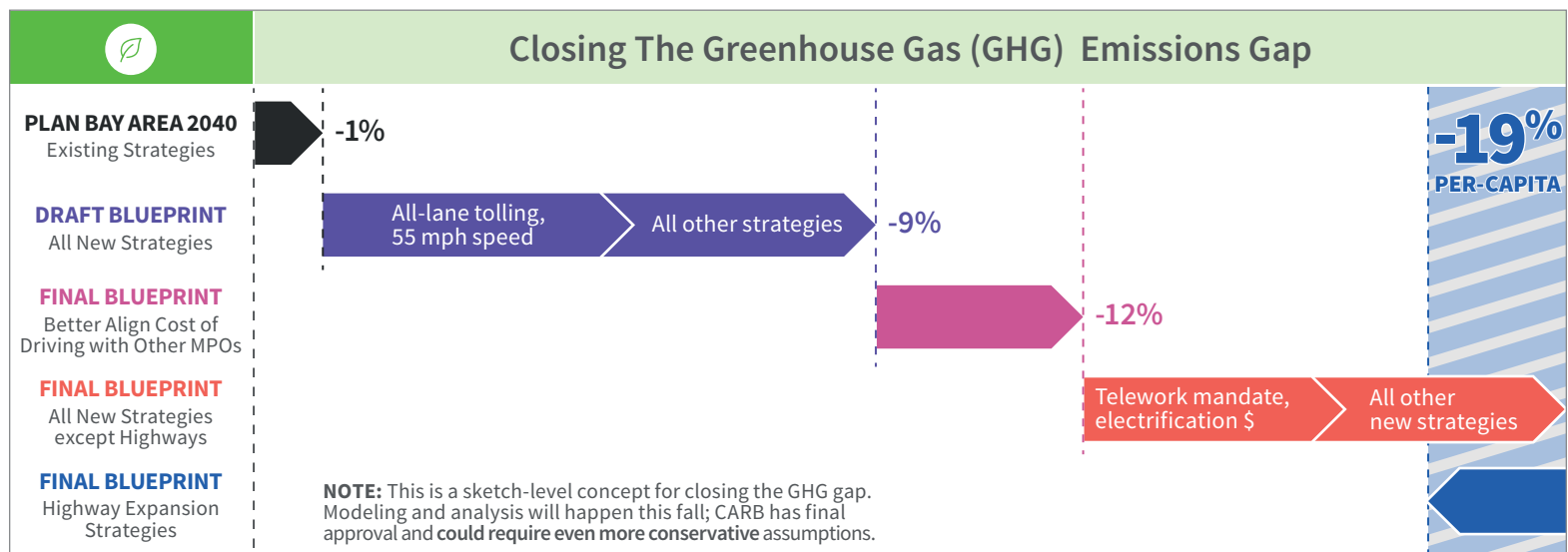

Therese W. McMillan

What the Telecommuting Strategy Is...and What It Is Not

- The **Plan Bay Area 2050 Final Blueprint telecommuting strategy (EN7)** focuses on requiring large office-based employers to achieve a telecommuting target of 60 percent on a typical weekday by the year 2035. Employers could meet this target using any variety of alternative work options, such as compressed work weeks, flexible work schedules, or remote work policies.
- This is a strategy in a 30-year long-range plan.
 - ▶ MTC does not have regulatory power to enforce. New authority would require act of the Legislature.
 - ▶ Moving from strategy to policy requires negotiation, consensus and refinements from all stakeholders, public and private.
- The strategy is **targeted...**
 - ▶ 60 percent **planning** goal is assumed to apply only to office workers in businesses with 25 or more employees.
 - ▶ Does not include warehousing, retail, etc.
 - ▶ Strategy aims to reduce auto trips and associated GHG emissions.
- The strategy is **packaged...**
 - ▶ The telecommuting strategy is **one of 35** strategies in the Final Blueprint.
 - ▶ Works only with other strategies, notably broadband investments in low-income communities to advance equity.

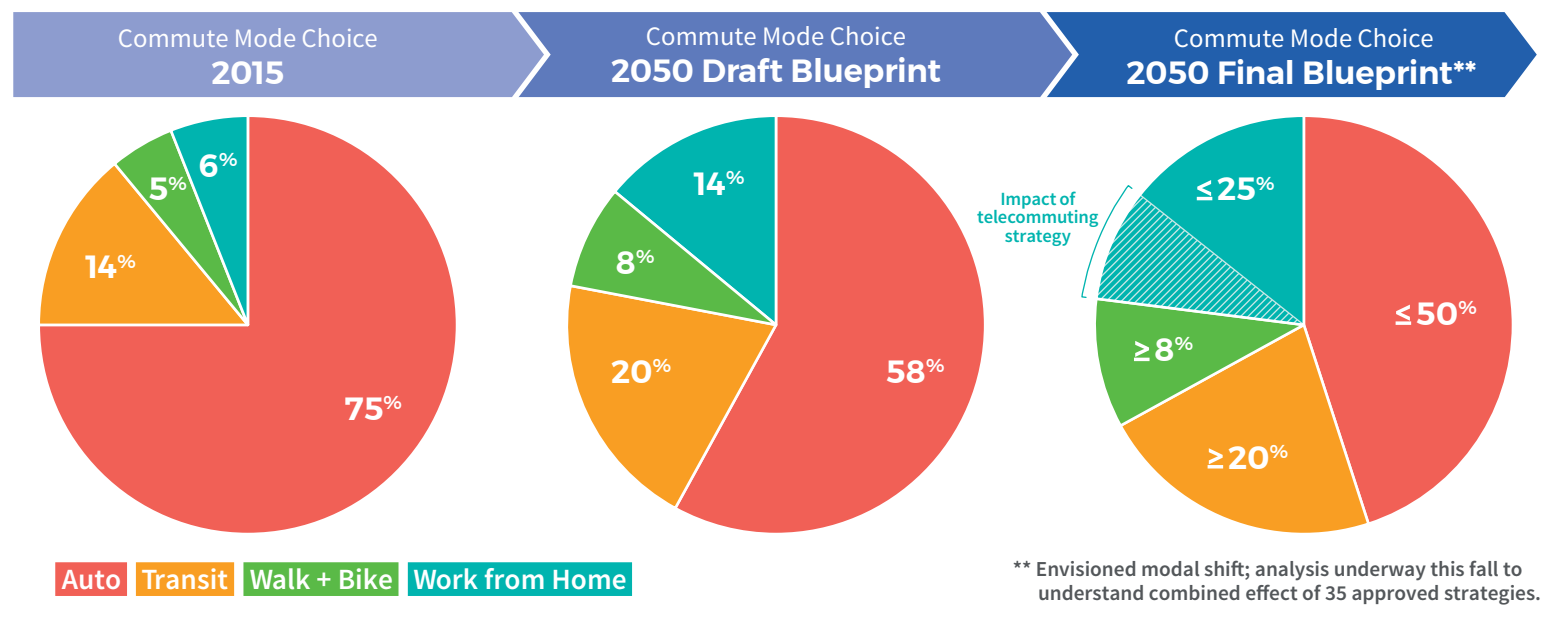
Why Does This Matter?

- Plan Bay Area 2050 has a state-mandated greenhouse gas reduction target (19 percent reduction by 2035).
- The Draft Blueprint did not achieve the target despite significant investments and policy commitments:
 - ▶ **Transit:** \$400+ billion to sustain and expand the network, increasing commute mode share from 14 percent to 20 percent
 - ▶ **Bike/Pedestrian:** \$13 billion for regional network of protected bike lanes and paths in Final Blueprint
 - ▶ 1.4 million **additional** households accommodated – 70 percent of new housing in places with frequent high-quality transit
 - ▶ Pricing the highway network with “all road tolling” strategy on congested freeways



- All of the above and more got the Draft Blueprint just halfway to the -19 percent target.
- There are no easy fixes.

Telecommuting: One Piece of the Puzzle



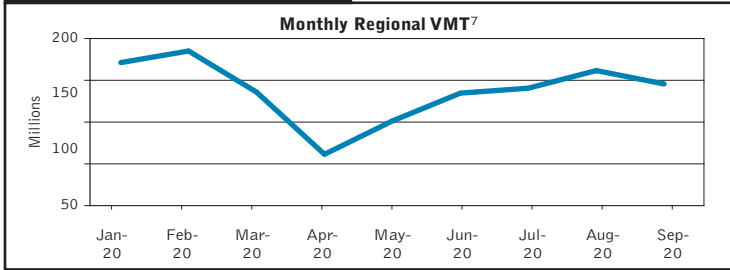
Next Steps – Limits and Opportunities

- Falling short of GHG target in Final Plan could result in loss of at least \$100 million per year in Bay Area transportation funding, beginning in 2022.
- In adopting the Final Blueprint, including the telecommuting strategy, the Commission directed staff to examine alternatives, if they generate equivalent GHG reductions.
- Any viable alternative to the telecommuting option must adhere to the following parameters:
 - ▶ **At Scale:** Alternate strategy cannot have marginal impact on GHG emissions. Telecommuting works well on top of other strategies.
 - ▶ The alternative strategy cannot “double count” estimated GHG emission reductions – a major factor for CARB approval.
 - ▶ **Fiscal Constraint:** All transportation strategies must fit federal “fiscal constraint” requirements. Final Blueprint transportation element already has \$581 billion price tag — of which \$115 billion is assumed to come from new, unsecured sources.
- Public supports bold telecommuting strategy, based on summer 2020 engagement with 7,000 residents.
 - ▶ **Poll question:** “Require employers to limit in-person office work when telecommuting or working from home is possible”
 - ▶ 76% support (45% strongly support, 31% somewhat support) versus 21% oppose (10% somewhat oppose, 11% strongly oppose)
- After Plan Bay Area 2050, three more long-range plans will be developed and adopted by 2035. Subsequent iterations can review and revise strategies and assumptions based on changed conditions, requirements, and priorities.

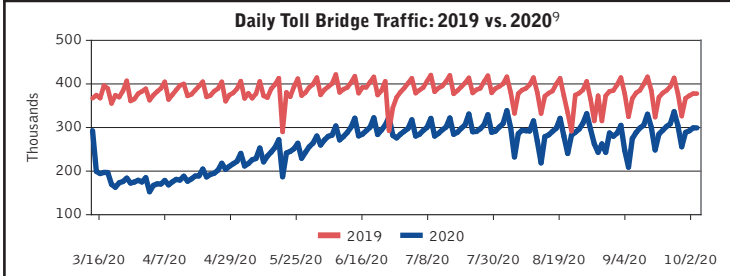


MTC Operational Statistics: October 2020

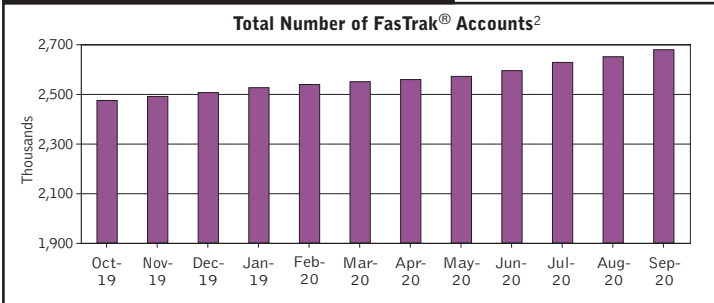
VMT in COVID-19 Pandemic



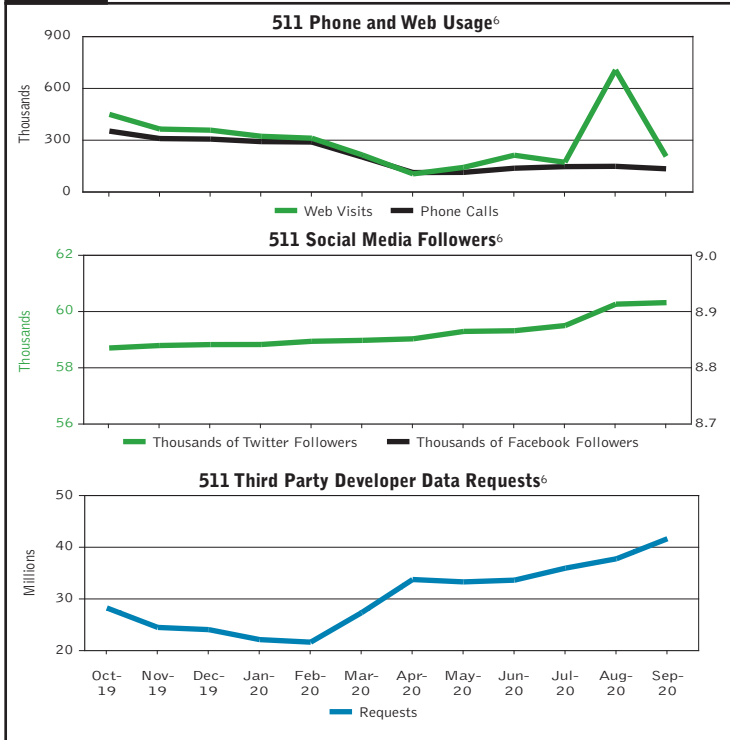
Toll Bridge Crossings



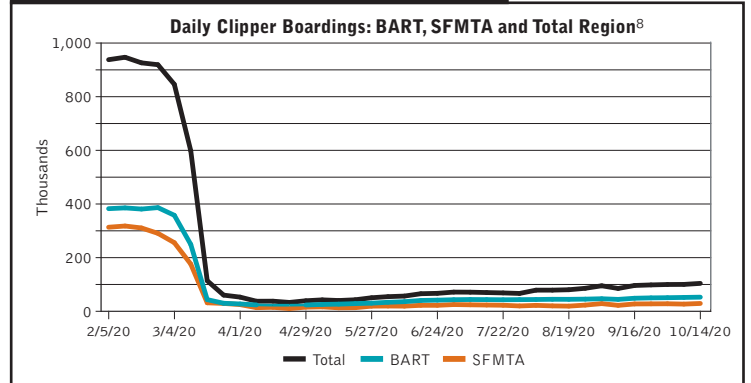
FasTrak® Electronic Toll Collection¹



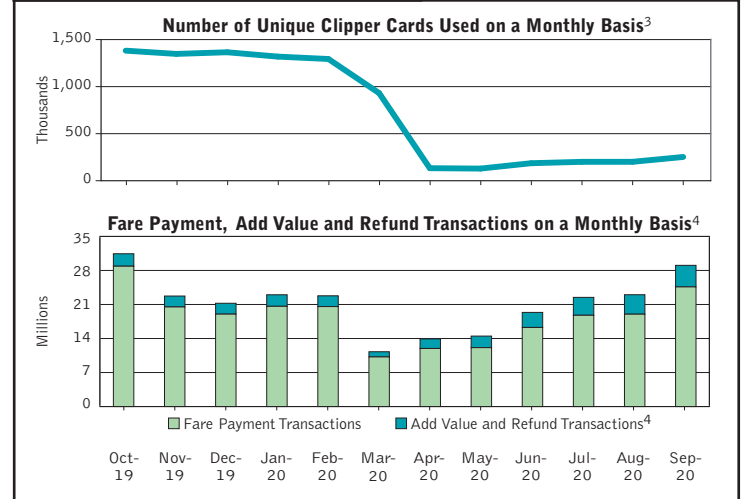
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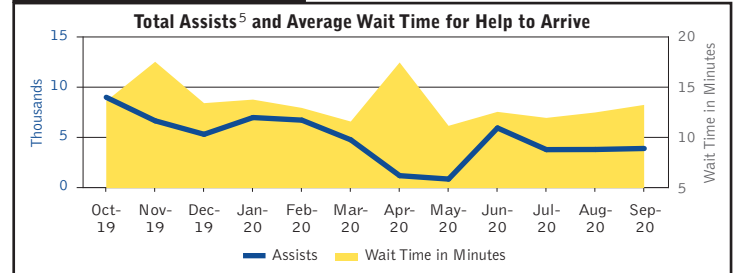
Transit Ridership in COVID-19 Pandemic



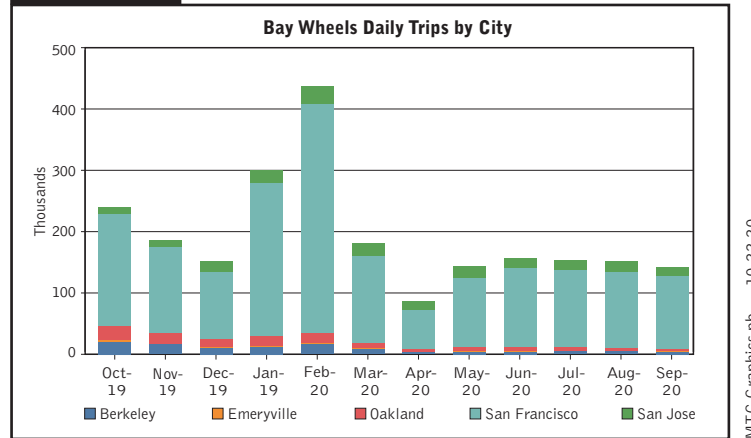
Clipper® Fare Payment System



Freeway Service Patrol



Bay Wheels



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.

⁷ VMT data courtesy of StreetLight Data.

⁸ Clipper-paid boardings recorded on Wednesdays of each week.

⁹ Daily crossings in the toll-paid direction on the Bay Area's seven state-owned toll bridges. Does not include Golden Gate Bridge.