

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Policy Advisory Council**

April 14, 2021

Agenda Item 9

Staff Liaison Report – March 2021

Subject: Relevant MTC policy decisions and other activities.

Recommendation: Information

Attachments: Attachment A: Staff Liaison Report – April 2021



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

**Agenda Item 9
Attachment A**
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
TEL 415.778.6700
WEB www.mtc.ca.gov

Memorandum

TO: Policy Advisory Council
FR: Marti Paschal, Staff Liaison
RE: Staff Liaison Report – April 2021

DATE: April 14, 2021

W.I. 1114

Buttigieg announces \$30.5 billion to assist nation's public transportation systems

On March 29, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration announced \$30.5 billion in federal funding is now available to support the nation's public transportation systems as they continue to respond to COVID-19.

"Transportation workers are serving on the front lines of this pandemic: delivering the vaccine, getting people to essential jobs, and providing goods and services to people who need them," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "The critical American Rescue Plan funding we are announcing today will help prevent service cuts, protect employees from layoffs, keep riders and workers safe, and strengthen our economy."

The American Rescue Plan Act includes \$30.5 billion for public transportation, including \$26.6 billion to be allocated by statutory formulas to urban and rural areas, tribal governments, and for the enhanced mobility of seniors and individuals with disabilities, and \$2.2 billion to FTA grant recipients in communities that demonstrate additional pandemic-associated needs.

Funds will be made available at 100% federal share and primarily directed to operations and payroll. An additional \$1.7 billion is provided for projects in the Capital Investment Grants Program and another \$25 million for competitive planning grants.

Much of MTC's COVID-era work has focused on preserving — and ultimately improving — the Bay Area's transit network. This work began last year. In May 2020, MTC created the 32-member Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force to guide the future of the Bay Area's public transportation network.

MTC Approves Second Award of Federal Relief Funds

On March 24, MTC approved the allocation of \$802 million to Bay Area transit operators as part of a second round of federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) funding to help transit agencies battered from revenue losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the action taken, MTC made these allocations:

- AC Transit \$55,542,954
- BART \$274,420,539
- Caltrain \$39,755,402
- Golden Gate Bridge Highway & Transportation District \$39,429,475
- SFMTA (MUNI) \$297,168,390

- SamTrans \$16,037,830
- VTA \$39,355,158
- Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) \$1,541,963
- Contra Costa Transportation Authority \$3,688,131
- City of Dixon \$69,918
- East Contra Costa Transportation Authority \$2,456,412
- City of Fairfield \$1,049,102
- Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority \$1,636,697
- Marin Transit \$3,654,814
- Napa Valley Transportation Authority \$1,539,743
- City of Petaluma \$351,690
- City of Rio Vista \$28,192
- SMART \$1,789,716
- City of Santa Rosa \$1,931,323
- Solano County Transit \$1,692,275
- Sonoma County Transit \$1,438,846
- Transbay Joint Powers Authority \$3,287,474
- Union City Transit \$514,277
- City of Vacaville \$462,867
- West Contra Costa County Transportation Advisory Committee \$1,263,299
- Water Emergency Transportation Agency (WETA) \$13,475,795

Total: \$802,669,615

When approving the final distribution of CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act funding in July 2020, the Commission directed staff to apply a “true-up” of funding to any future allocation of federal dollars for pandemic relief, compensating operators that received less CARES Act funding than they should have due to inaccurate revenue loss forecasts.

Additional money for transit came in the form of a combined \$2.3 trillion federal COVID relief package and fiscal year 2021 Appropriations bill approved in December 2020. It provides \$14 billion in supplemental funding to public transit due to pandemic losses. This provided a total of about \$982 million to the Bay Area to assist the region’s transit operators.

A first round of CRRSA funding was made in late January 2021 for \$179,601,678. These initial awards included:

- BART \$103,717,002
- Caltrain \$6,936,627
- Golden Gate Bridge Highway & Transportation District \$20,319,959
- San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (MUNI) \$43,750,147
- Water Emergency Transportation Agency (WETA) \$4,877,943

Santa Rosa Vice Mayor Victoria Fleming Named to Commission

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors appointed Santa Rosa Vice Mayor Victoria Fleming to represent Sonoma County and its nine cities on MTC. Commissioner Fleming, whose term of service runs until February 2023, replaces former Rohnert Park City Councilmember Jake Mackenzie as MTC's Sonoma County representative. Mackenzie left the Commission in February 2021 after 12 years of service, including a term as Vice Chair from 2015 to 2017 and as MTC Chair from 2017 to 2019.

Before Commissioner Fleming's 2018 election to the Santa Rosa City Council seat representing District 4, she served on the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women, the Sonoma County League of Women Voters' Santa Rosa Community Advisory Board, and the Sonoma County Democratic Central Committee. Commissioner Fleming was profiled in May 2020 by the North Bay Business Journal as one of the paper's 40 Under 40 award winners.

Commissioner Fleming holds a B.A. degree in Women's Studies from San Francisco State University and an M.S.W. degree from the U.C. Berkeley School of Social Welfare.

MTC Mourns Passing of Long-serving Commissioner Anne Halsted

Former commissioner Anne W. Halsted, a community leader who was reluctant to be known by that title but who nonetheless served from 2005 until last May as the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission's representative on MTC passed away on March 13.

Halsted's commitment to public service was highlighted by her numerous public and civic appointments and leadership positions. In an oral history interview conducted by UC Berkeley in 2018, Halsted said that in her civic role she pursued issues that brought people together in the public interest, maximized diversity in work and in problem-solving, and built alliances within community.

“Overall, I know myself more as a facilitator and a connector of people than as a leader,” she said.

Halsted was born in West Virginia, was raised in Cleveland and Milwaukee, and attended Duke University, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science. She moved to San Francisco in 1964, where she began a career in human resources. From 1969 to 1990, she served as vice president of Human Resources, for U.S. Leasing International, Inc. While her working career was in human resources, her calling was building community, improving the environment, and advancing opportunities for women and minorities.

“For many of us, Anne was more than an extraordinary Board member of immense integrity, thoughtfulness and empathy,” said Therese W. McMillan, MTC’s Executive Director. “She was a dear friend, and for me, a mentor and champion during many a tough go. And there was no one more unequivocal in her support and appreciation of staff. Her dedication to MTC and BCDC, as well as many other Bay Area causes, was felt by those who knew her personally, and all those benefiting from her decades of service to this region,”

In 2018, BCDC chair Zachary Wasserman didn’t hesitate recommending Halsted be reappointed to MTC as her term was expiring. “Anne's depth and breadth of experience in Bay Area planning in general, and with special attention to transportation planning, continues to make her an outstanding choice,” he wrote.

Halsted served as the vice chair of BCDC for many years and as chair of the Northeast Waterfront Advisory Group and the Ferry Building Advisory Group. She was president of the Port of San Francisco and co-chair of the San Francisco Open Space Advisory Committee and was also a commissioner at the Treasure Island Development Authority and the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency Commission.

Her civic involvement included the City Club of San Francisco, where she served twice as chair; the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association (SPUR), where she was president from 1993 to 1997 and served as chair; and the Telegraph Hill Dwellers, for which she served one term as president. She also was a board member of San Francisco Tomorrow and San Francisco Friends of the Urban Forest.

Transportation, Housing News Right to Your Inbox

MTC offers a convenient Daily News Headlines (<https://mtc.ca.gov/whats-happening/news/news-headlines>) subscription, delivering a curated list of stories about transportation, housing, development, the environment and more directly to your email inbox. The headlines are sent each weekday, arriving just in time to enjoy with your morning coffee.

The Bay Link blog (<https://blog.bayareametro.gov/>) offers a more in-depth look at these topics, often in the context of the work that the Association of Bay Area Governments (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.

Sign up for each of these newsletters (<https://service.govdelivery.com/accounts/CAMTC/subscriber/new>) , along with others from the MTC-ABAG family, including the Plan Bay Area 2050 E-Newsletter and updates about MTC Express Lanes.

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, Julie Tunnell. 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: <https://mtc.ca.gov/tools-resources/mtc-abag-library-information-asking>

Executive Director's Report

The following items are excerpts from the March 2021 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>.

Key Updates

COVID-Related Activities

A reminder that all Covid-19 related reporting items can be found on our MTC webpage. We provide monthly updates on all related activities, and statistics that are affecting the region. The website address is below:

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

SR-37 Town Hall

Senators McGuire and Dodd will be hosting an April 15 Town Hall for the SR-37 project, which I will attend. We will report back to the senators on the flooding fixes that have been made on the corridor, our congestion relief project, the multi-modal project, and CalTrans work. It's a nighttime event at 6:30 p.m.

Equity Bench

On March 10, MTC's Administration Committee approved the On-Call Equity Bench, a resource for MTC and ABAG staff and our regional partners to connect with equity-focused thought leaders to partner with in advancing equity outcomes in our regional workplan. Notably the bench uses "Cooperate Use" clauses, allowing for partner agencies including ABAG members to enlist the vetted equity consultants on the bench. Information on the bench and the qualified vendors can be obtained by contacting Nalungo Conley, Chief of Staff at nconley@bayareametro.gov.

Items of Note:

Speaking at Social Equity Forum

On March 17, my Chief of Staff spoke at a Social Equity Forum hosted by Metro Analytics and the National Cooperative Highway Research Program as part of their series "Metropolitan Planning Organizations: Strategies for Future Success." The project hopes to develop a comprehensive resource to inform and guide the evolving roles and functions of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). This session focused on Regional Equity and the steps that agencies like MTC were taking to address long-standing issues of inequity in our region. It was well attended with over 400 participants live-streaming the event through YouTube.

Executive Director "Top Five" focus areas for 2021

The incoming Commission leadership and Committee assignments provides an opportunity for me as the Executive Director to look back over the last extraordinary year, and look forward with an eye to not only managing the sweeping— and often daunting— portfolio of the agency, but spotlighting a few key areas to rise to the top of that leadership agenda. In particular, this list (presented as an attachment to this report) reflects my charge to lead a combined staff serving both MTC and ABAG, and the commitment of its leadership to govern to the benefit of our shared constituents— the people of the Bay Area. I plan to return periodically to the Commission and Executive Board with reports of how these strategic challenges are being met in the next year. Thank you, as always, for your support of me and our exemplary staff.

MTC/ABAG Executive Director: Top five STRATEGIC focus areas for 2021

1) Lead Bay Area Transportation Pandemic Recovery

a) Fiscal ***Stabilization*** – “the Necessity”

There are two critical on-going efforts that will be reaching key milestones in 2021:

- Transit Agency Budgets- operations recovery focus/ Scenarios **for FY 20-21 and FY 21-22**
- BATA Bridge revenue recovery/impact assessment of core asset needs

b) System ***Rebuilding***- “the Opportunity”

The COVID crisis presents some “silver linings” that staff and the Commission are mobilizing to take advantage of:

- Blue Ribbon Task Force “Transformation Action Plan”
- Advocacy and Readiness for “stimulus” funding under the new Biden-Harris Administration (highway and transit- capital focus)
- Express lanes development and coordination- adoption of the strategic plan and new step implementation lays the foundation for critical road pricing discussions, among others
- Keep eye out: reset for next generation regional transportation revenue measure, as assessment of a healing regional economy manifest

2) Tackle Deepening Housing Challenge

a) Support urgent housing funding assistance: state and federal

- Monitor emergency relief/eviction moratoriums, and legislative efforts to address
- Determine regional “value add” outside of funding advocacy, such as technical assistance
- Work with State Delegation on next wave Legislation

b) Root the Regional Housing Portfolio

- ABAG’s leadership via Housing Committee/ \$18.5 M State Budget ask
- Establish BAHFA Oversight Committee and working Board level partner
- Implement Regional Portfolio as baseline for Housing Revenue “campaign”

c) Define clear role/agenda for homelessness

- Define BAHFA and ABAG presence on Regional Impact Council: regional leadership OR partnership role?

3) Wrap UP PBA 2050

a) Establish Executive/Commission priorities within “Implementation Phase” (i.e., 1-2 each with key themes)

- Support Commissioner/ABAG EB leadership (e.g., Board member “champions” for particular implementation plan actions)

b) Highlight and Address Multi-sectoral Policy Conflicts as basis for SB 375 Reform effort

4) Drill down on Mega Project Delivery Priority Program

a) Lead the “regionals”

- Clipper 2
- AET
- Bridge Rehab

- b) Redefine “Partnership” for locally sponsored projects
 - Facilitate a different regional paradigm for project delivery
 - Consider resource capacities and limitations of local (county/CTA) partners to effectively delivery projects of regional scale and impact
 - Examples of challenges now: DTX, Diridon station, Caltrain Electrification, Hwy 37)

**5) NEW JOINT MTC/ABAG Initiative:
“Regional Governmental Partnership for Local Economic Rebound”**

In addition to the established areas of focus highlighted above, the COVID impacts on the health and resilience of the Bay Area economy directly impacts on the sectoral health of transportation and housing—both of which exerted impacts on the region’s economic health **before** the pandemic. With the support of the MTC Chair and ABAG President, staff will explore in what roles— lead, partner, and/or support—MTC and ABAG can bring regional “value add” to a larger Economic Pandemic Recovery strategy? *Potential* avenues to explore include:

- Deploy existing transportation, land use and housing authorities to assist the current recovery in our areas of strength—infrastructure delivery as stimulus, both traditional and emerging.
- Assist leadership in a “listening tour” of local government and private sector partners to better understand the depth and nature of economic recovery among the broad and diverse spectrum of the region’s economic drivers— and what MTC and ABAG might contribute in response.
- Keep a clear and steady eye on the equity challenges and opportunities that present themselves to our most vulnerable communities and evaluate any potential economic recovery actions with better outcomes in mind for them.