

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Policy Advisory Council**

September 8, 2021

Agenda Item 11

Staff Liaison Report

Subject:

Relevant MTC policy decisions and other activities.

Issues:

None identified.

Recommendations:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Staff Liaison Report – September 2021

Staff Liaison Report – September 2021

All Aboard! Transit Agencies' New Campaign Invites Bay Area Residents to Move Forward Together

As more schools reopen for in-person learning and more businesses welcome employees back to the workplace, MTC and more than two dozen transit agencies joined forces to launch a new multi-lingual advertising campaign encouraging Bay Area residents of all ages to move forward together on the region's buses, trains, ferries and light-rail vehicles.

Using the tagline 'All Aboard Bay Area Transit,' the roughly \$180,000 campaign, which is scheduled to continue into the fall, includes messaging in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Tagalog, using a combination of social media advertising, digital and terrestrial radio, display ads in local publications, posters in bus shelters and transit stations, and interior and exterior placards on transit vehicles. MTC and the transit agencies also have established a website, AllAboardBayArea.com, as a source for more information, including information about all participating transit agencies.

The 'All Aboard Bay Area Transit' campaign was initiated by the [Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force](#) organized by MTC in May 2020 to help guide the future of the Bay Area's public transit network in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. MTC Commissioner and Solano County Supervisor Jim Spering, who chaired the 32-member Task Force, noted the need to stabilize transit systems and restore ridership as the Bay Area continues its emergence from the pandemic. "A new season is beginning," said Spering, "and our transit agencies are working together like never before to help all of us connect with the people and places we've missed."

Interstate-680 (I-680) Express Lane Opened for Business August 20

Tolling operations for the new 11-mile Express Lane along southbound Interstate 680 from Martinez through Walnut Creek began at 5 a.m. on Friday, August 20. By linking with the existing Express Lane from Rudgear Road in Walnut Creek to Alcosta Blvd. in San Ramon, this will create a continuous 22-mile southbound I-680 Express Lane through Contra Costa County.

The stretch of I-680 from Marina Vista Blvd. in Martinez to Rudgear Road currently operates as a traditional carpool lane. Tolling rules include:

- All vehicles must have a FasTrak[®] toll tag to use the Express Lanes;
- Carpools with two or more people, vanpools, buses and motorcycles travel toll-free with a FasTrak Flex toll tag set to the 2 or 3+ position;
- Solo drivers of eligible clean-air vehicles (CAVs) pay half-price tolls with a FasTrak CAV toll tag. Eligible CAVs are those with red, purple, orange or blue decals; and
- Other solo drivers pay the full toll to use the Express Lanes with either a standard FasTrak toll tag or a FasTrak Flex tag set to the 1 position.

Operating hours for Express Lanes are weekdays from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tolls rise as traffic increases and fall as traffic declines. Digital signs over the roadway display the toll rates for various destinations. Customers always pay the toll displayed when they enter the Express Lane, even if toll rates change during their trip. Toll-paying customers pay for each toll zone they enter. There are five southbound toll zones from Martinez to San Ramon.

Express Lanes are designed to keep traffic moving reliably without congestion, and to encourage travelers to carpool or use transit to get a free and faster trip. Drivers can visit 511.org to learn everything they need to know to use Bay Area Express Lanes, how to find a carpool match, and how to sign up for FasTrak.

Transportation, Housing News Right to Your Inbox

MTC offers a convenient [Daily 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](#) 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](#), 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](#).

For MTC and Plan Bay Area glossaries:

- <https://mtc.ca.gov/tools-resources/mtc-abag-library/glossary-transportation-planning-acronyms-and-terms>
- <https://www.planbayarea.org/about/glossary>

Executive Director's Report

The following items are excerpts from the July 2021 Executive Director's Report to the Commission. To read the report in its entirety visit the [Executive Director's Report webpage](#).

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.

Draft Plan Bay Area 2050 August Webinar: What We Heard

After over three years of extensive engagement on MTC/ABAG's groundbreaking planning effort, we are pleased to invite the public to a special webinar that will review what we learned after listening to Bay Area residents during the Draft Plan Bay Area 2050 public comment period from May 26 to July 20, 2021. Staff will provide an overview of the plan's engagement process, from the Horizon initiative, to the Draft and Final Blueprint, the Draft Plan Bay Area 2050 and the Implementation Plan. Staff will also provide an extensive review of the input received during the public comment period, before discussing next steps for the Final Plan Bay Area 2050, focusing specifically on the Final Implementation Plan. We hope you will join us on Tuesday, August 17 from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Find details on the [Plan Bay Area website](#).

Express Lanes

Effective July 1, 2021, the Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority (BAIFA) Express Lanes Operations Center integrated Alameda County Transportation Commission's (Alameda CTC's) Express Lanes Operations. Specifically, BAIFA's Regional Operations Center now provides day-to-day monitoring of express lanes on I-580 and I-680 in Alameda County in addition to BAIFA's lanes on Interstate-880 and I-680 in Contra Costa. This merger provides efficiencies and public cost savings, and promotes the goal shared by Alameda CTC and BAIFA to improve regional express lane operations by providing consistent and streamlined incident management with respect to tolling. Caltrans and CHP now have only one agency to reach out to for incident management in the east bay. BAIFA's Regional Operations Center will also provide day-to-day monitoring for express lanes US 101 in San Mateo County when the open.

Items of Note

Plan Bay Area 2050

For the month of October, there will be a joint meeting between the MTC Commission and ABAG Executive Board to take a final vote on Plan Bay Area 2050. This meeting will take place on **Thursday, October 21st at 5 pm**. It will occur during ABAG's regularly scheduled Executive Board meetings. There are several considerations that we are having to navigate in advance of this meeting that we would like to bring your attention to besides putting a "save the date" notice on your calendars.

- If the Governor rescinds Executive Order N-29-20, reversing the waivers of specific Brown Act considerations then note the following:
 - If Commissioners and Board members want to participate remotely, you must provide notice of your location 72 hours prior to the meeting.
 - We suggest that you meet at your public office or another easily accessible location.
 - You will also have to ensure that the public has access to this location, keeping in mind this meeting starts at 5 pm. The public must be able to hear you and your responses to this meeting to count as an acceptable location.
 - Remote Public Comment may not be available-final decision TBD
- If Executive Order N-29-20 waivers of specific Brown Act considerations are extended past the meeting date then the following will occur:
 - We will continue to hold remote meetings with public remote access

Equity On-Call Consultant Catalog

We have put together a catalog that showcases the work and past projects of the pre-qualified equity consultants on our consultant Bench. This resource will provide those who are new to the equity field as well as those who are not familiar with the consultants listed with a starting point on being able to engage and learn about the different services offered. As mentioned before, we have included contractual language that allows any agency the ability to direct select off this bench saving time and resources. The catalog is available online at the link below and a copy will be provided to all Commissioners in advance of this meeting. Also included is a link to learn more about our Equity Platform.

- [Equity Platform](#)
- [On-Call Equity Consultant Catalog](#)

New MTC Website

Check out [MTC's new and improved website](#), which launched this month. It was redesigned to improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility.