

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Policy Advisory Council**

October 13, 2021

Agenda Item 10

Staff Liaison Report

Subject:

Relevant MTC policy decisions and other activities.

Issues:

None identified.

Recommendations:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Staff Liaison Report – October 2021

Staff Liaison Report – October 2021

MTC, BATA Urge Travelers to Get on the FasTrak®

MTC and the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) remind travelers that FasTrak® is the easiest way to pay tolls on the Bay Area's toll bridges — and the only way to use the region's growing network of Express Lanes. To answer customers' questions about electronic toll collection, MTC and the FasTrak Customer Service Center recently released a series of short videos:

- [Four Ways to Pay](#)
- [How to Get a FasTrak Toll Tag](#)
- [Choosing the Right Toll Tag](#)
- [FasTrak and Express Lanes](#)
- [Toll Tips for Tourists](#)
- [Replenishing Your FasTrak Account](#)
- [How to Pay with Cash, Check or Money Order](#)
- [Returning a Toll Tag](#)

FasTrak customers already account for about three-quarters of all crossings at the Antioch, Benicia-Martinez, Carquinez, Dumbarton, Richmond-San Rafael, San Francisco-Oakland Bay and San Mateo-Hayward bridges. The January 2021 launch of a new all-electronic toll system at the Bay Area's state-owned toll bridges highlights the FasTrak convenience advantage. The transition to the new system was seamless for customers who pay their tolls with a FasTrak toll tag or with a License Plate Account, which links a license plate to a credit card and charges that card whenever the vehicle crosses a toll bridge. Customers also can use the bayareafastrak.org website to make a one-time payment, which allows the traveler to pay a toll online up to 30 days in advance of a bridge crossing or within 48 hours afterwards.

Patrons who are not enrolled in any of these programs now receive a monthly invoice for their toll bridge crossings. Automated, high-speed cameras capture images of customers' license plates, and the FasTrak customer service center processes these images and then mails an invoice each month to the address at which the vehicle is registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles. Customers who do not have FasTrak or a License Plate Account — and who do not use the online one-time payment option — are required to return invoices with payment within 30 days.

MTC and BATA encourage customers who do not already have FasTrak to open accounts online at bayareafastrak.org or by phone at 1-877-229-8655 (BAY-TOLL). Customers also may obtain FasTrak tags at select Costco and Walgreens stores. View the [map of retail locations at which FasTrak toll tags are available](#). FasTrak tags purchased at Costco or Walgreens must be registered online. A \$20 deposit per tag will apply if the account is not funded with a credit card. Drivers who would rather replenish their FasTrak accounts with cash can do so at more than 100 [Cash Payment Network locations](#). More information about License Plate Accounts and one-time payments also is available at bayareafastrak.org.

BATA administers all toll revenues from the region's seven state-owned toll bridges.

New Technical Assistance Portal Offers Wealth of Resources for Local Governments

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments have launched a new Technical Assistance portal at abag.ca.gov/technical-assistance. The website is a one-stop shop of programs that provide planning and technical support to make it easier for city and county agencies to access resources they need.

The Technical Assistance portal includes programs to help meet local and regional goals for greenhouse gas reduction, equity, affordability and resilience and is a searchable database that also can be filtered by topics such as housing, environment, land use, resilience and transportation.

Among the resources in the portal:

- Calls for projects
- Case studies
- Data sets
- Interactive tools
- Model ordinances
- Reports
- Toolkits
- Trainings

By compiling programs including Pavement Management Technical Assistance Program (P-TAP), StreetSaver®, Housing Technical Assistance and Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) into a single location, staff from Bay Area cities and counties can more quickly and easily access resources they need, as well as learn about other programs that may be useful to them. This regional collaboration helps local governments increase their efficiency, maximize savings of time and money, and ultimately, better serve residents and businesses in the Bay Area.

Organizations that have contributed materials to the Technical Assistance portal include:

- Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)
- Bay Area Regional Collaborative (BARC)
- Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)

The Technical Assistance database will be refreshed as new materials and programs become available.

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 September 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.

The website address is: <https://www.mtc.ca.gov/covid>

PBA2050

For the month of October, there will be a joint meeting between the MTC Commission and ABAG EB to take a final vote on PBA2050. This meeting will take place on Thursday, October 21st at 5pm. It will occur during ABAG's regularly scheduled Executive Board meetings and will be a "Special" meeting for the MTC Commission.

Bay Area Transit Tour for State Senate and Assembly Transportation Committee Chairs

In August, I was able to meet with the Transportation Committee Chairs from the State Senate and Assembly—Chair Lena Gonzalez (D-Long Beach) and Chair Laura Friedman (D-Glendale). MTC organized the three-day tour on August 9-11 at Assemblymember Chiu's request, with excellent assistance from our partner agencies. During this time, the Chairs were able to ride a number of the region's transit systems, tour the Golden Gate Bridge and meet with key transit agencies, including AC Transit, BART, Santa Clara VTA, California High Speed Rail Authority, Caltrain, the City of San Jose, Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District, SFMTA, the Port of Oakland, SFCTA and Transbay JPA.

While the Bay Area has long held the Chair for one or both transportation committee, Southern California now holds both. The tour was an excellent opportunity to provide the Chairs a first-hand experience of the region's transportation network. Bay Area legislators who participated in segments of the tour included Senator Josh Becker (D-Menlo Park), Senator Nancy Skinner (D- Berkeley), Senator Bob Wieckowski (D-Fremont), and Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco). Chair Pedroza and Commissioners El-Tawansy, Liccardo and Schaaf were able to join for portions of the tour.

Express Lanes

On August 20, BAIFA tolling commenced on the new 11-mile extension of the southbound Express Lane on I-680 in Contra Costa County, from Martinez through Walnut Creek. By linking with the existing Express Lane from Rudgear Road in Walnut Creek to Alcosta Blvd. in San Ramon, drivers now have a continuous 22-mile southbound I-680 Express Lane through Contra Costa County.

BayREN Update

For those Commissioners not too familiar with the Bay area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) program, BayREN and ABAG were featured in an article by CalCOG published on September 9th, 2021. It highlighted the role BayREN plays in filling service gaps by providing "Financing and Rebate incentives, Education and Training tools, and Workforce development training opportunities" to customers who normally face barriers to participating in these money-saving energy efficiency programs. Resiliency and Climate Change are issues that span both agencies and I'd like to highlight staff's effort in this space. A link to the full article is below:

<https://calcog.org/abag-and-bayren-a-regional-model-for-energy-efficiency/>