

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Policy Advisory Council**

April 22 2025

Agenda Item 6b

Staff Liaison Report

Subject:

Overview of recent MTC policy decisions and other activities.

Issues:

None identified.

Recommendations:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Staff Liaison Report – April 2025

Staff Liaison Report – March 2025

Follow Up Items:

- Council Member Anne Olivia Eldred requested a discussion on electric vehicles (EVs) and future toll policies. She noted that EVs currently don't pay tolls or contribute to road maintenance and mentioned seeing something about this exemption expiring.
 - Staff followed up on this and would like to clarify that in California clean air vehicles that have qualified for the state's "Clean Air Vehicle" sticker are eligible for the carpool discount when using toll bridges and express lanes, but only during carpool hours. Additionally, EVs registered in California are assessed a separate \$100 registration fee to partially make up for the fact that they do not pay gasoline taxes.
- Council Member Howard Wong highlighted the high number of homeless individuals who are disabled or in wheelchairs, noting that while homelessness among veterans is widely recognized, disability often isn't considered. He suggested that the Equity and Access Subcommittee focus on wheelchair mobility issues within the homeless population. Additionally, he brought up a discussion by Senators Adam Schiff and Alex Padilla regarding federal funding disparities. Data suggests that California contributes significantly more in federal taxes than it receives in return. He compared this to the "return-to-source" issue with local sales taxes and suggested that the state and region should advocate for a fairer share of federal transportation funding.
- Council Member Michael Baldini requested a progress chart to track items brought up by council members. He suggested including a graph or chart at the next meeting to show who proposed each topic, its status, and whether it will be addressed. He noted that some issues he mentioned never made it onto the agenda and proposed a system similar to Napa College's new business tracking. This would ensure topics aren't forgotten, dismissed without reason, or lack sufficient interest to move forward. He emphasized the importance of transparency and follow-through. Follow-up requests from the Council are now documented under the New Business section of the Meeting Minutes.

Executive Director's Report:

The following items are excerpts from the March 2025 Executive Director's Report to the Commission. To read past reports in their entirety, see this link:

<https://mtc.ca.gov/news/executive-directors-report>

Updates

- On March 24, Senators Arreguin and Wiener held a press conference announcing upcoming amendments to their bill, SB 63, which authorizes a transportation revenue measure in the Bay Area in November 2026 to avert major transit service cuts and help fund priorities included in the Bay Area Transit Transformation Action Plan. Speakers included Chair Noack on behalf of MTC and Commissioner John-Baptiste in her role as Chief of Infrastructure, Climate, and Mobility for the City and County of San Francisco. Other speakers included Michael Jones, BART Deputy General Manager, San Mateo Supervisor and ABAG Executive Board member Noelia Corzo and Bay Area Council Chair Kristina Lawson. Commissioners Melgar and Kaplan were also in attendance.
- Last week, MTC Chair Noack, Vice Chair Moulton Peters and Commissioners Abe-Koga, Canepa, Fleming, John-Baptiste, Schaaf along with ABAG President and Commissioner Ramos and ABAG Vice President Carlos Romero participated in meetings with the Bay Area's state legislative delegation on March 18 and 19. The group highlighted MTC's top 2025 legislative priorities, including securing new funding for transit operations through a regional transportation measure and additional state funding and a \$30 million budget request for the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority to sustain its existing programs and develop a self-sustaining lending program.

- On March 17, Deputy Executive Director, Metro Planning and Policy, Matt Maloney and I met with our counterparts from the Los Angeles, San Diego, and Sacramento regions, as well as executives from the California Air Resources Board, California Transportation Commission, Caltrans, and California Department of Housing and Community Development. Discussions focused on ongoing challenges with the regional planning framework established under Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg, 2008). The Air Resources Board is expected to pursue changes to the existing greenhouse gas targets in the coming months through its regulatory processes, while parallel legislative reforms are being explored, including but not limited to SB 486 (Cabaldon, 2025).
- As a result of its investigation of the containership Dali's collision with the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore last March, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued safety recommendations that apply to the Richmond-San Rafael, Carquinez, Benecia-Martinez, Antioch, and San Mateo-Hayward toll-bridges. NTSB's recommendations for action apply to bridges built before 1995, experience ocean-going vessel traffic, and do not have risk assessments completed or underway. Sixty-eight bridges nationally met the criteria established by NTSB for recommended action, with seven located in California. The Golden Gate Bridge was also included, and BATA is in communication with the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District to understand their strategy for response and any potential opportunity for collaboration.
- The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge was not included due to ongoing work by Caltrans and BATA that is leading to an upcoming project to replace fender system.
- NTSB recommended bridge owners to understand the risk of collapse from ocean-going vessel collisions with bridges, and if needed, develop a strategy to reduce such risks. A response to NTSB on how Caltrans intends to address the recommendations is due in 30 days, and Caltrans is leading the response with assistance from BATA.
- The Institute of Transportation Studies at UCLA recently released a statewide report focused on better aligning transportation planning and investments with climate and equity goals, looking at processes and practices at large and small MPOs across California. The authors recognized Plan Bay Area as having "the most comprehensive and transparent RTP/SCS programming process among the MPOs reviewed," spotlighting in particular the use of

exploratory scenarios in understanding transportation project performance and its integration of advanced project-level equity analyses. The report also acknowledged the Guide to the TIP and the Vital Signs performance monitoring initiative as statewide best practices. UCLA's report has now been published and is available to the public: [UCLA's PDF Report](https://www2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2025-02/RESEARCH%20CONTRACT%2021RD008%20FINAL%20REPORT_0.pdf)

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- MTC-ABAG has launched an online survey designed for local jurisdictions, partner agencies and technical stakeholders to help prioritize and propose draft implementation actions for Plan Bay Area 2050+. Partners and stakeholders can also schedule 30-minute office hours with MTC-ABAG staff to share further insights. The online survey and link to office hours will be open until April 7 and are available on the [Plan Bay Area 2050+ Partner Engagement webpage](https://planbayarea.org/meetings-events/partner-engagement) (<https://planbayarea.org/meetings-events/partner-engagement>).
- The public comment period for the proposed Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority (BAIFA) Toll Facility Ordinance amendments will open on Wednesday, April 9, through 5 p.m. Friday, May 9. Staff presented an information item earlier this month to the BAIFA Network and Operations Committee on the proposed amendments to the Toll Facility Ordinance, which detail the policies for BAIFA's Interstate 80 (I-80) Express Lanes in Solano County among other changes. During the public comment period, staff will host a public webinar on Wednesday, April 23, at 6:30 p.m. with a presentation and an opportunity for questions regarding the proposed changes. In addition, a public hearing will be held during the BAIFA Network and Operations Committee's regular meeting on Friday, May 9, at 9:35 a.m. Complete information about the webinar and the public hearing will be posted to the MTC website at [Public Hearings](https://mtc.ca.gov/meetings-events/public-hearings) (<https://mtc.ca.gov/meetings-events/public-hearings>)
- On March 8, Chief Deputy Executive Director Alix Bockelman, MTC Chair Sue Noack and ABAG President Belia Ramos joined the League of Women Voters' Annual League Day - Regional Government: How Does it Affect You. Topics included ABAG's support of regional planning, how the agency operates while maintaining separate governing boards and examples of funding in local jurisdictions.

- Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs) are areas nominated by local governments that include natural lands, working lands, recreation areas, urban green spaces, and locations where nature-based solutions can be used to adapt to climate change. Specific projects within designated PCAs may be eligible for future funding from the PCA Grant Program. The window to nominate new PCAs is open through May 2, 2025, offering an opportunity to help shape the Bay Area's conservation priorities. To support local nominations, MTC-ABAG hosted a webinar on March 4 covering the nomination process and submission tool. Materials from the session, along with additional resources and staff assistance, are available online: [2025 Priority Conservation Area \(PCA\) Nomination Cycle](https://mtc.ca.gov/planning/land-use/priority-conservation-areas/2025-priority-conservation-area-pca-nomination-cycle) (<https://mtc.ca.gov/planning/land-use/priority-conservation-areas/2025-priority-conservation-area-pca-nomination-cycle>)

Have a Question? Ask a Librarian

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For MTC and Plan Bay Area Glossaries:

- [Glossary of Transportation Planning Acronyms & Terms](https://mtc.ca.gov/tools-resources/mtcabag-library/glossary-transportation-planning-acronyms-terms) (<https://mtc.ca.gov/tools-resources/mtcabag-library/glossary-transportation-planning-acronyms-terms>)
- [Plan Bay Area Glossary](https://www.planbayarea.org/about/glossary) (<https://www.planbayarea.org/about/glossary>)