Transit 2050+ Network Performance Assessment and Implementation Priorities

Subject:

Final update on Transit 2050+, including findings from the Transit 2050+ Network Performance Assessment and near-term implementation priorities.

Background:

Transit 2050+, initiated in winter 2023 and developed in collaboration with a Project Management Team comprised of staff from both large and small Bay Area transit operators, applied a connected network planning approach to develop a new fiscally-constrained vision for the future of Bay Area transit. The Transit 2050+ Final Network (https://mtc.ca.gov/digital-library/5092062-7cii-24-1479-att-transit50-final-network), presented to this committee in December 2024, includes strategies and projects that improve transit frequency, connectivity, speed, and reliability, as well as overall transit customer convenience and comfort across the region. The Commission approved integrating the Transit 2050+ Final Network into the Plan Bay Area 2050+ Final Blueprint (the Plan) as part of its Transportation Element in January 2025. Today's materials were previously presented to the MTC Policy Advisory Council and Regional Network Management Council in July 2025.

Transit 2050+ Network Performance Assessment:

The Network Performance Assessment seeks to understand how implementation of the transit strategies and projects that make up the Transit 2050+ Final Network could improve regional outcomes and complement the other strategies of the Plan. This assessment builds upon the prior two analyses within Transit 2050+ – the Needs, Gaps, and Opportunities Analysis, which focused on identifying existing transit needs, and the Project Performance Assessment, which evaluated the potential costs and benefits of major projects individually. For each of the four Transit 2050+ goals that were developed by the Project Management Team in 2023, key performance indicators (https://mtc.ca.gov/digital-library/5079405-transit-2050-network-performance-assessment-performance-indicator-summary-july-2025) measure the forecasted

impacts of the Transit 2050+ Final Network. Using MTC's transportation demand model, the assessment compared key performance indicators between:

- the Final Blueprint (i.e., including the Transit 2050+ Final Network, and all other transportation, housing, economic, and environmental strategies, as well as planning assumptions regarding future growth), and
- the Final Blueprint *without* the Transit 2050+ Final Network, wherein transit is maintained at baseline year 2023 service levels.

Staff also evaluated outcomes for 2035 and 2050 to understand how the anticipated timing of planned transit investments may affect potential outcomes. Overall, the Transit 2050+ Final Network would yield strong positive outcomes for Bay Area residents, including:

- **Transit Ridership and Mode Share Gains:** Ridership levels in 2050 are 41% higher with the Network than without, and over two times higher than existing levels. Prioritization of lower-cost, higher-impact improvements in the near-term (e.g., frequency boosts) accelerates ridership recovery prior to 2035, resulting in a 36% ridership gain with the Network in comparison to without the Network. Transit commute mode share in 2050 rises from 14% without the Network to 20% with the Network.
- **Enhanced Access to Jobs:** In 2050, the average Bay Area household has access to an additional 136,000 jobs (31% increase) via a 45-minute transit journey as a result of the Network. Residents of Equity Priority Communities have access to 30% more jobs than the average household in 2050, and residents in zero-car households have access to 60% more jobs.
- **Increased Transit Priority:** In 2050, bus riders would have access to twice as many transit service miles with time saving priority treatments as a result of Network investments. Combined with new transit expansions, these investments could improve transit travel times by up to 8% for some origin-destination pairs and improve reliability.
- **Reduced Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT):** By year 2035, regional VMT is lowered by 3% as a result of the Network, contributing to state-mandated climate goals established by the Air Resources Board.

While not quantified with performance indicators, various projects and programs included within the Transit 2050+ Final Network such as the Regional Mapping & Wayfinding program and enhanced safety & security measures also seek to improve access to and usage of transit.

Transit 2050+ Implementation Priorities:

Staff worked extensively with transit operators in early 2025 to identify near-term implementation priorities. Key themes included advocating for additional transit revenue sources, accelerating safety, security and other improvements, improving project delivery, and continuing rider-focused improvements. Concrete implementation actions for the next five years are currently being finalized as part of the Plan Bay Area 2050+ Implementation Plan, which will be released in draft form this fall for further input and feedback.

Next Steps:

Transit 2050+ was recently awarded the 2025 Excellence in MPO Coordination and Partnership award from the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO). This national recognition reflects the deep engagement and collaboration between MTC and Bay Area transit operators over the past three years. MTC will be recognized later this month at the annual AMPO conference in Providence, Rhode Island for this complex innovative effort to shape a post-pandemic regional vision via Transit 2050+, given tighter fiscal constraints.

Staff anticipate that this is the final update to the Committee on Transit 2050+. The Network Performance Assessment findings and implementation actions will be incorporated into the Draft Transit 2050+ Report, slated for public release and comment in fall 2025, with the Final Transit 2050+ Report anticipated in early 2026.
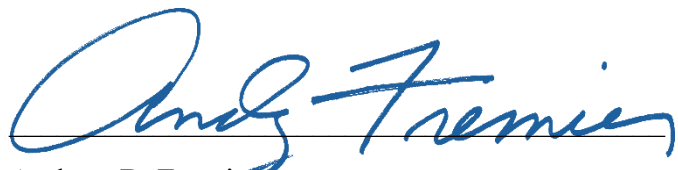
Issues:

None identified.

Action:

Information

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Presentation

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