

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission**  
**Regional Network Management Committee**

**January 9, 2026**

**Agenda Item 4a**

**Bay Wheels Bikeshare Update**

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**Subject:**

Update on the Bay Wheels bikeshare program operated by Lyft, Inc. (Lyft), pursuant to contracts with MTC and the participating cities of Berkeley, Daly City, Emeryville, Oakland, San Francisco, and San José.

**Background:**

In 2013, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District piloted a regional bikeshare program in the Bay Area with 700 bikes and 70 stations in Mountain View, Palo Alto, Redwood City, San Francisco and San José. When the pilot ended in 2015, MTC approved \$16.4 million to fund bikes and stations and stepped in to expand the system. At that time, Bay Area Motivate, Inc. (Motivate) came forward with a proposal to launch and operate the system at no cost, in exchange for exclusive rights to operate in the five participating cities of San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Emeryville, and San Jose for a ten-year period. The proposal allowed for funds to be reprogrammed and eliminated the need for capital equipment purchases. As Motivate was a leader in the bikeshare industry with a proven track record, the ten-year no-cost proposal was deemed an efficient use of public funds. A contract was signed with Motivate in 2015 with system launch in 2017. In 2018, Lyft acquired Motivate and the bikeshare program was rebranded as Bay Wheels. Staff are planning to return to the Regional Network Management Committee in February 2026 to discuss the future of the program after the current contract with Lyft expires in July 2027.

Ebikes were initially introduced to the system in 2019 and demonstrated great potential before the COVID-19 pandemic depressed system ridership. In February 2023, MTC made a \$15.94 million investment into the Bay Wheels system to expand the station network and the ebike fleet throughout the system. This investment included: 2,700 ebikes purchased and deployed systemwide; 55 new stations installed across the region; an expansion into Daly City, the first city to join Bay Wheels since the program started in the five original participating cities; the launch of a low-cost student membership pilot; installation of the first electrified bikeshare

station; and reduction of prices for members. This new MTC-funded equipment began deployment in November 2023 in San Francisco and San José and in 2024 in Oakland, Emeryville, and Berkeley.

Bay Wheels ridership has since grown by 74% when comparing January to October 2023 to the same period in 2025. The system is approaching 4.4 million trips in 2025 and 22 million trips since 2017. This level of ridership would make Bay Wheels the 7th largest transit operator by ridership in the Bay Area, making bikeshare a critical component of Plan Bay Area's strategies for reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

An easy-to-use bikeshare system helps the region to achieve the Plan Bay Area 2050+ statutory target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as the goal of reducing VMT. Transportation Strategy 9 (T9) – build a complete streets network, and Transportation Strategy 10 (T10) – advance regional Vision Zero policy through street design and reduced speeds – are specifically focused on promoting increased biking and walking. Environment Strategy 9 (EN9) – expand transportation demand management initiatives – includes investments in transportation demand management programs to reduce driving demand and encourage active and shared transportation choices such as bikeshare. Bikeshare is a key implementation component to encourage Bay Area residents to take fewer trips by single-occupancy vehicles.

While Bay Wheels has provided uninterrupted service since launch, other cities that have entered the shared micromobility (bikes and scooter) space, including MTC grant funded programs, have faced volatility, such as bankruptcies and operators who have removed their fleets. In 2017, the Commission approved \$2.5 million in capital bikeshare grants for distinct geographies outside the Bay Wheels service area. These grants were awarded to Richmond, Fremont, and a joint project along the SMART corridor by the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) and the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA). Richmond's operator unexpectedly ceased operations in July 2022 due to financial reasons. Similarly, the operator in Fremont removed its fleet in early 2022 due to theft and vandalism. In November 2024, SCTA and TAM launched the Redwood Bikeshare system.

**Issues:**

None identified.

**Recommendations:**

Information

**Attachments:**

- Attachment A: PowerPoint



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