

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments
MTC Planning Committee and ABAG Administrative Committee**

October 11, 2024

Agenda Item 9b

Plan Bay Area 2050 Amendment: Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit to Healdsburg

Subject:

Approval of a proposed amendment to Plan Bay Area 2050 (“Plan”) to include the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District’s (SMART) passenger rail service extension to Healdsburg, and the approval of two companion technical documents: the Transportation-Air Quality Conformity Analysis (Conformity Analysis) and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Addendum. These documents demonstrate that the Amended Plan complies with federal air quality standards and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Background:

In July 2024, MTC/ABAG staff presented a proposal to the committees to amend Plan Bay Area 2050 to include the next phase of the SMART rail extension, which would extend service from Windsor to Healdsburg in Sonoma County. Staff outlined that the amendment must meet several statutory obligations, including ensuring fiscal constraint. To comply, MTC/ABAG staff, in consultation with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) staff, recommended offsetting the costs of the SMART extension by removing other Sonoma County projects of equivalent cost. The identified projects for removal include planned improvements to US-101/Railroad Avenue and the Farmers Lane Extension in Santa Rosa.

MTC/ABAG staff also ensured that, beyond fiscal constraint, other statutory requirements have been addressed. These include technical analyses to assess the amendment's impacts on regional traffic volumes, greenhouse gas emissions, and other mobile source emissions. The completed analyses confirm that the amendment will have minimal impact on regional traffic and will not affect the region’s ability to meet greenhouse gas reduction targets or achieve a positive air quality conformity determination.

The public comment period, which ran from August 12th to September 11th, generated just over fifty responses. While some comments expressed opposition, the majority of feedback supported the SMART extension to Healdsburg. Many also advocated for including a further extension to Cloverdale. A summary of the public comments is provided in **Attachment A**.

Technical Analyses

As part of the amendment process, MTC/ABAG staff prepared two key technical analyses to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations: the Transportation-Air Quality Conformity Analysis and the Addendum to the Final EIR. These documents, along with the Amendment to Plan Bay Area 2050, are included for your review and approval as **Attachments B through D**.

In accordance with MTC's Public Participation Plan, both the amendment and the conformity analysis were released for a 30-day public comment period, which elicited the feedback summarized above.

- **Transportation-Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the Amended Plan Bay Area 2050 and the 2025 Transportation Improvement Program:** This conformity analysis was prepared in compliance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conformity rules and MTC Resolution No. 3757. It was reviewed by the Air Quality Conformity Task Force, which includes representatives from U.S. EPA, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Caltrans, and other partner agencies. The total projected emissions for the amended Plan conform to the state air quality implementation plan (SIP), and the timely implementation of federal transportation control measures is not impacted.
- **Addendum to the Final EIR for Plan Bay Area 2050:** This EIR addendum was prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and it included the addition of the SMART rail extension and the removal of other projects specified above. The analysis found no new significant impacts, and the severity of previously disclosed impacts has not substantially increased compared to those identified in the certified Final EIR.
- **Amendment to Plan Bay Area 2050:** This amendment incorporates the scope and cost of the SMART rail extension while removing the specified Sonoma County projects from the fiscally constrained Plan. The amendment remains compliant with the Plan's financial constraint requirements, and no other changes are included as part of this amendment.

Issues:

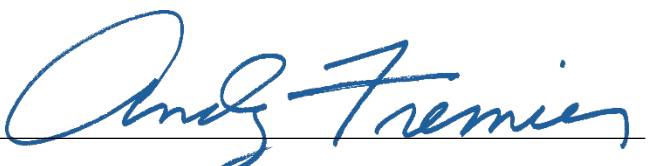
None identified.

Recommendations:

1. The MTC Planning Committee finds that the Transportation-Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the Amended Plan Bay Area 2050 and the 2025 Transportation Improvement Program is in conformance with the applicable federal air quality plan for ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulates and refers MTC Resolution No. 4465 (Attachment B) to the Commission for approval.
2. The MTC Planning Committee and ABAG Administrative Committee have: (1) reviewed and considered the information in the EIR Addendum prior to considering the Amendment to Plan Bay Area 2050, (2) finds that the EIR Addendum has been completed in compliance with CEQA, and (3) refer MTC Resolution No. 4466 and ABAG Resolution No. 09-24 (Attachment C) to the Commission and ABAG Executive Board (respectively) for approval.
3. The MTC Planning Committee and ABAG Administrative Committee find that the Amendment to Plan Bay Area 2050 complies with the requirements of applicable laws and refer MTC Resolution No. 4467 and ABAG Resolution No. 10-24 (Attachment D) to the Commission and ABAG Executive Board (respectively) for approval.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Summary of Public Comments
- Attachment B: MTC Resolution No. 4465: Transportation-Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the Amended Plan Bay Area 2050 and the 2025 Transportation Improvement Program
- Attachment C: MTC Resolution No. 4466 and ABAG Resolution No. 09-24: Addendum to the Final EIR for Plan Bay Area 2050
- Attachment D: MTC Resolution No. 4467 and ABAG Resolution No. 10-24: Amendment to Plan Bay Area 2050


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