



**METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION**

Bay Area Metro Center  
375 Beale Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
TEL 415.778.6700  
WEB [www.mtc.ca.gov](http://www.mtc.ca.gov)

## *Memorandum*

**Date:** November 20, 2024  
**To:** Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)  
**From:** MTC Policy Advisory Council Chair, Pamela Campos  
**Regarding:** November 2024 Council Report to Commission

### **Summary:**

This memo provides a summary of the activity of the Policy Advisory Council (Council) over the previous month.

### **October 22, 2024 Meetings:**

The Policy Advisory Council meeting on October 22, 2024. The first item covered re-envisioning Equity Priority Communities (EPCs) and enhancing transportation equity in the Bay Area. Council provided extensive feedback when this item was last presented in April 2024 and while not all recommendations were included in the Final Blueprint Adoption planned for Early 2025, MTC Staff acknowledged there is an urgent need to update the criteria for identifying EPCs and will begin EPC re-envisioning in 2025-2026. Several Council members were concerned with the changes in EPC, and communities of need losing their EPC status, however, MTC staff reassured members that former EPCs would still receive support through community-based transportation plans.

Council Members requested a more nuanced approach to equity analysis beyond census data alone, and suggested adding supplemental tools and referencing other data in an appendix. Members also cautioned the use of metrics without qualitative references, as there were several examples of changing EPC communities that indicated gentrification instead of success and identifying 0 household vehicles may not indicate a problem, but rather success.

The gravest concerns expressed by the council about EPCs were regarding displacement and gentrification. Council members want to ensure changes to the next EPC iteration are made that include data overlay for environmental / health / digital literacy concerns, and better reflect the regional cost of living rather than the federally defined poverty level which does not equate to the realities of low-income communities across the SF Bay Area.

The Council also received an update on the Means Based Collaborative, focusing on programs like Express Lanes START and Clipper START. Upon hearing low enrollment numbers, Council Members suggested streamlining the approval process to provide same-day benefits. Several Council members expressed interest in cross qualification as the floor, not ceiling, to get more eligible participants enrolled. Similar to Fasttrak being available to purchase at major retailers, partnerships with health clinics, community organizations, CAL ITP and the DMV were suggested to make this EL START program more accessible to residents.

The **Policy Advisory Council's Equity and Access Subcommittee** met later in the day on October 22 and received several presentations. The first was an update on the Express Lane START program. The program shows promising results and needs stronger, community-focused efforts, communications and marketing to attract the intended audience. To improve program participation, Council Members suggested offering tiered discounts based on income levels.

The following item was a proposed toll increase for BATA bridges, where members expressed concerns with the proposed toll increase and stressed the importance of conducting community outreach before the December approval vote.

Finally, there was a brief update on the Transit Transformation Coordinated Plan, which led to discussions about innovative paratransit solutions. A Councilmember shared a positive experience with Richmond's paratransit program partnering with a ride-share company to positively impact and improve mobility for people with disabilities.

Sincerely,  
Pamela Campos  
Policy Advisory Council Chair