

Transit 2050+: DRAFT Problem Statement

Throughout the 2010s, many of the Bay Area's transit operators experienced a decline in ridership that has been exacerbated by changing travel patterns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Bay Area transit riders have been challenged by service that is seen as infrequent, unreliable, and unsafe, which are issues made even more acute for disadvantaged and vulnerable populations. As traffic congestion has continued to increase, riders have also been challenged with slower bus service due to a lack of transit priority, transit service design that is still oriented toward traditional commute patterns, and a lack of cohesive service connections across the Bay Area's 27 transit providers. Furthermore, existing low-density residential and commercial areas designed for automobile access do not support cost-effective, frequent fixed-route transit service that provides an attractive alternative to driving.

At the same time, this decrease in ridership and change in travel patterns introduced significant and imminent revenue shortfalls to keep the current transit network operating. These revenue shortfalls and other economic changes have reduced anticipated transportation revenue over the 25-year planning horizon for Plan Bay Area 2050+, which will negatively impact the region's ability to deliver on planned capital expansion, service increases, and transit priority investments and programs.

A Bay Area without a robust and cohesive transit network will contribute to greater regional inequity and make it more difficult to provide transportation services for our aging population, hinder our ability to meet sustainability goals and grow our economy, impact livability, and continue the damaging trend of automobile dependency. To address these challenges, Transit 2050+ will undertake the creation of the Bay Area's first regionally comprehensive transit network plan. Transit 2050+ aims to help create a more connected, affordable, diverse, healthy and vibrant region. Strong transit is essential to the vitality of the Bay Area.