

Metropolitan Transportation Commission

January 24, 2024

Agenda Item 7a

Regional Transportation Revenue Measure Enabling Legislation

Subject:

Summary of MTC ABAG Joint Legislation Committee discussion regarding legislation enabling MTC to place a future regional transportation revenue measure on the ballot.

Background:

At the January 2024 MTC ABAG Joint Legislation Committee (Legislation Committee), staff provided a summary of the proposed elements of enabling legislation for a future regional transportation revenue measure (enabling legislation) that MTC would sponsor, reflecting the feedback Commissioners provided at the December 2023 Commission meeting as well as additional feedback from stakeholders and key legislative leaders (see Attachment A).

Committee members had a robust discussion, providing feedback in the following areas: reforms to enhance transit coordination, integrating into the bill flexibility related to revenue options and amounts as well as expenditure priorities, geographic return-to-source provisions, the “North Star” vision statement (revised Vision Statement is included in Attachment B), transportation demand management, and project eligibility considerations with respect to highway investments. Key takeaways from the discussion are summarized below.

There was broad support expressed by committee members for staff’s recommended approach to integrate into authorizing legislation reforms to enhance transit coordination. Throughout the fall, the Legislation Committee challenged staff to identify a range of policy provisions – from enhancing coordination to exploring transit operator consolidation – that could be included in authorizing legislation that would help ensure any bill the Commission sponsors delivers rider-focused outcomes for the Bay Area traveling public. Consistent with the Commission’s direction in December, staff is proposing that the enabling legislation enhance regional transit coordination (rather than consolidation) as a way to deliver rider-focused outcomes by strengthening MTC’s role as a regional transit network manager. Specifically, staff recommended the authorizing legislation include statutory changes to accelerate implementation of key Bay Area Transit Transformation Action Plan (TAP) action items and other customer

facing policies that would benefit from a regional approach, such as ambassadors to assist riders and support a safe atmosphere.

Several committee members highlighted the importance of integrating flexibility into the authorizing legislation, specifically as it relates to seeking authorization for a menu of revenue options (with flexibility for MTC to determine *which* option to place on the ballot in 2026 or later) and staff's recommendation that authorizing legislation identify goals of the measure and outline expenditure categories, but retain flexibility for MTC and regional partners to develop a detailed expenditure plan prior to placement of a measure on the ballot as well as over the long-term as the region's needs evolve.

Committee members and Commission leadership also recommended a minor change to the vision statement and supported staff's recommendation to broaden the proposed transportation demand management (TDM) policy provision to mandate Bay Area employers with 50 or more employees in the Bay Area provide a subsidy to their employees to encourage alternatives to single occupancy trips. These revisions are outlined in Attachment B.

Further, the Legislation Committee had a robust discussion related to highway capacity expansion projects and whether they would be eligible for funding from the measure. Informing this discussion was a coalition letter urging that the measure avoid funding highway widening. For context, the proposed goal for the measure (as included in the January Committee materials) is a "climate friendly transportation system that is safe, accessible and convenient for all," consistent with the state's ambitious greenhouse gas reduction targets. In the proposed multimodal "connectivity" category, staff has further described this category in Committee and Commission materials as available to fund "mobility improvements that close gaps and relieve bottlenecks in the existing transportation network in a climate-neutral manner."

During the Legislation Committee discussion, it was proposed that proceeds from the measure should not be eligible to fund highway widening projects. Some committee members made the case for a more nuanced approach recognizing that highway widening projects might have benefits to transit or other features that avoid any negative climate impacts. The Legislation

Committee directed staff to identify a range of options for further consideration at the January Commission meeting. Staff will provide those options in a handout.

Next Steps


At your meeting, staff will be available to answer questions about the key elements of the proposed enabling legislation that staff is recommending MTC sponsor, as described in Attachments B and C. On January 11, Senator Wiener introduced a spot bill for the enabling legislation, SB 925. The first opportunity to amend the bill will be in mid-February.

Recommendations:

Commission Approval

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Proposed Vision Statement and Key Provisions s and Comparison with January Legislation Committee Version
- Attachment B: Presentation
- Attachment C: January 12, 2024 Legislation Committee Materials (Regional Transportation Revenue Measure Enabling Legislation)



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