

# Bay Area Transit Priority Policy for Roadways: Guidance for Implementing Agencies

## Policy Overview

On January 28, 2026, MTC adopted the [Bay Area Transit Priority Policy for Roadways \(Policy\) \(MTC Resolution No. 4739\)](#), in alignment with the transit-related vision and goals of the [Plan Bay Area 2050+](#) Final Blueprint (2025) and the [Transit Transformation Action Plan](#) (2021). It also aligns with the regional Complete Streets Policy ([MTC Resolution 4493](#)), first adopted in 2006 and updated in 2022.

<b>Policy Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote active interagency engagement to minimize unintended impacts to transit; and</li><li>• Enhance the transit rider experience by supporting the implementation of transit priority infrastructure and policies that improve transit travel times and reliability</li></ul>
<b>Policy Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish a common definition of transit priority;</li><li>• Strengthen interjurisdictional coordination and guide agencies to consider transit in roadway projects</li><li>• Inform prioritization of funding for transit priority projects.</li></ul>

## Definition of Transit Priority

Transit Priority refers to transit-supportive infrastructure, design, and policies that decrease transit vehicle travel times and enable them to move more reliably by avoiding traffic congestion and minimizing delays. Some examples include:

- Transit lanes
- High-occupancy vehicle lanes
- Transit signal priority
- Queue-jump lanes
- Transit bulbs or boarding islands
- Strategic traffic/parking regulations
- Optimized transit stop placement and spacing
- Off-board fare payment or all-door boarding

## Transit Priority Network (TPN)

The Policy calls for creating a regional Transit Priority Network (TPN) to guide where transit priority and other transit-supportive investments should be considered and prioritized. The TPN will consist of key roadway corridors in the Bay Area where improving roadway transit travel time and reliability would benefit the most transit riders. MTC is working with and gathering input from a variety of agency partners in developing the TPN, which is anticipated to be adopted in early 2027.

## Implementation

The Policy applies to projects along any public roadway (including surface streets and access-controlled highways) with public transit service that operates in shared or semi-dedicated right-of-way (such as bus, light rail, and streetcar services) that seek over \$250,000 of regional discretionary funding or MTC endorsement.

## Transit Coordination via Complete Streets Policy Checklist

The Policy is implemented via the existing [MTC Complete Streets \(CS\) Checklist](#) process, which is already required for projects requesting more than \$250,000 in MTC discretionary funding or MTC endorsement.

The 2022 CS Checklist only required documentation of transit agency *acknowledgement* of the project; the Policy ensures stronger coordination between agencies by requiring transit agency *review* for potential impacts on transit and that project sponsors consider incorporating transit-supportive design elements into projects on the high-priority transit corridors identified as the TPN.

The detailed transit agency review process can be found in Appendix 1, and answers to frequently asked questions in Appendix 2.

## Optional Local Transit Priority Policy or Resolution

Local jurisdictions (roadway owners/operators) should consider demonstrating their commitment to transit by adopting a local resolution or policy that reinforces their commitment to coordinating with transit agencies during project development, and their support for improving transit travel times and reliability. MTC has templates available in its [Guidance on Optional Local Transit Priority Resolution or Policy](#) to assist local jurisdictions taking an action to:

- Adopt a resolution in support of the Bay Area Transit Priority Policy for Roadways;
- Adopt a standalone local transit priority policy; or
- Modify an existing local plan or policy to include language on transit priority.

In mid-2027 (approximately 18 months after Policy adoption), MTC may begin offering incentives for project sponsors applying for regional discretionary funds if they have adopted a local transit priority policy or resolution. To qualify for incentives, the policy or resolution must meet the minimum requirements outlined in the [Guidance on Optional Local Transit Priority Resolution or Policy](#).

# Appendix 1: Transit Agency Review Process

This Appendix provides step-by-step instructions on the transit agency review process conducted via the Complete Streets (CS) Checklist [online portal](#). The process is also visually summarized in the flowchart at the end.

A separate process is underway to develop the regional Transit Priority Network (TPN). The requirements for review along TPN corridors are shown in blue text boxes, and will not go into effect until after the TPN is adopted, anticipated no earlier than early 2027.

## Which Agencies Must Complete the Transit Review Process?

The transit review process is required for all project sponsors seeking more than \$250,000 of regional discretionary funds from MTC or MTC endorsement, unless the project is sponsored by a transit agency or a transit-specific team within a local or county agency and the project does not affect any other transit agencies (Table 1).

**Table 1: Transit Review Requirements**

Project sponsored by...	Transit Review?
Transit agencies	Yes, if other transit agencies affected
Transit department or transit team within local or county agency	
Other departments or teams within local or county agency, Caltrans, or MTC	Yes

## Step-by-Step Transit Review Process

**Coordination between project sponsors and transit agencies is documented in the CS Checklist Section III: Compliance & Exception Review, specifically the Transit Agency Review subsection.** In this subsection, project sponsors:

- Identify all transit agencies potentially affected by the project;
- Describe transit routes and stops in the project area;
- Explain any measures to mitigate project impacts to transit and/or transit-supportive design elements included in the project; and
- Upload documentation of coordination with all transit agencies potentially affected by the project, via a [Transit Agency Review Form](#) or equivalent documentation (e.g., email correspondence).

**1) Project Sponsor: Check if there is transit service in project area**

The Policy applies to transit agencies that operate scheduled, fixed-route, publicly-accessible roadway transit service and are eligible for State Transit Assistance (STA) funds, listed in Table 2. To determine if there is applicable transit in the transit area, project sponsors can review published transit maps or use the [Transit Route Identification Tool \(https://transitrouteid.mtcanalytics.org/\)](https://transitrouteid.mtcanalytics.org/). The online tool uses a ½ mile buffer of published transit routes to account for unscheduled transit routes that could be affected, such as non-revenue routes (also known as deadheads) or routine detours. In rural and suburban areas, routine detour may go beyond the ½ mile buffer.

**If published transit routes are identified in the project area or vicinity, project sponsors should reach out to all transit agencies potentially affected by the project.**

The transit agency will confirm the type of transit service in the project area. The level of transit review depends on the type of transit service (Table 3). Transit agency contacts and published maps can be found in the [Transit Agency Contacts & Maps](#) resource. If you need help contacting a transit agency, reach out to [transitpriority@bayareametro.gov](mailto:transitpriority@bayareametro.gov).

**Table 2: List of Applicable Transit Agencies**

<b>Transit Agency</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>AC Transit</b> (Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District)</li><li>• <b>County Connection</b> (Central Contra Costa Transit Authority)</li><li>• <b>Dumbarton Express</b> (Dumbarton Bridge Regional Operations Consortium)</li><li>• <b>FAST</b> (City of Fairfield Transit)</li><li>• <b>Golden Gate Transit</b> (Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District)</li><li>• <b>Marin Transit</b> (Marin County Transit District)</li><li>• <b>Muni</b> (San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency)</li><li>• <b>Petaluma Transit</b> (City of Petaluma)</li><li>• <b>SamTrans</b> (San Mateo County Transit District)</li><li>• <b>Santa Rosa CityBus</b> (City of Santa Rosa)</li><li>• <b>SolTrans</b> (Solano County Transit)</li><li>• <b>Sonoma County Transit</b> (Sonoma County Department of Transportation &amp; Public Works)</li><li>• <b>Tri-Delta Transit</b> (Eastern Contra Costa Transit Authority)</li><li>• <b>Union City Transit</b> (City of Union City)</li><li>• <b>Vacaville City Coach</b> (City of Vacaville)</li><li>• <b>Vine Transit</b> (Napa Valley Transportation Authority)</li><li>• <b>VTA</b> (Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority)</li><li>• <b>WestCAT</b> (Western Contra Costa Transit Authority)</li><li>• <b>Wheels</b> (Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority)</li></ul>

**Table 3: Level of Transit Review Required**

Transit service in project area?	Transit Review Required
No published transit routes in project area or within ~1/2 mile of project	No transit review required. Indicate lack of service in CS Checklist Section III, Transit Agency Review subsection, and explain your use of Transit Route Identification Tool or review of published maps. <i>Transit review is complete</i>
No published transit routes in project area, but transit routes within ~1/2 mile of project	<p>Coordinate with transit agency to check for non-published transit service in project area, via Transit Agency Review Form or equivalent documentation. Non-published service includes existing non-revenue scheduled<sup>1</sup> routes, existing recurring detour<sup>2</sup> routes, or planned budgeted<sup>3</sup> routes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If transit agencies indicate there is no non-published transit service in project area on Transit Agency Review Form or equivalent documentation, project sponsor should upload documentation to CS Checklist Section III, Transit Agency Review subsection. <i>Transit review is complete</i></li> <li>• If transit agencies indicate there is non-published transit service in the project area, project sponsor should share project information so that the transit agency can review if project accommodates basic transit movements (e.g., turns) via Transit Agency Review Form or equivalent documentation. <i>See Step 2</i></li> </ul>
One or more published transit routes in project area	Project sponsor should proactively identify potential project impacts to transit and works to mitigate impacts. Project sponsor should share project information with transit agency, which will review project for transit-impact mitigations via Transit Agency Review Form or equivalent documentation. <i>See Step 2</i>

***If Project is on TPN (once adopted):*** Project sponsor and transit agency coordinate to identify potential transit-supportive design elements to incorporate into project.

<sup>1</sup> “Non-revenue scheduled” routes are pull-in/pull-out routes where transit operates without passengers.

<sup>2</sup> “Recurring detour” routes include locations where regular special events require transit service to detour to an alternate street. Non-recurring special event services, demand-responsive services, and paratransit services are excluded from the Policy and transit review process.

<sup>3</sup> “Planned budgeted” routes include transit service that are included budgeted service changes or an approved Comprehensive Operations Analysis (short-term service plan).

**2) Project Sponsor: Share project information with affected Transit Agencies**

If there is non-published or published transit service in the project area (confirmed in Step 1), project sponsor should share general project information with all affected transit agencies, along with any measures to mitigate project impacts to transit and/or transit-supportive design elements included in the project. The information provided in the CS Checklist Section I: Contact & Project Information will typically provide sufficient detail to understand transit impacts. If documenting transit coordination via a Transit Agency Review Form, project sponsor should complete page 1 prior to sharing with transit agency. To expedite transit review, project sponsor should provide information appropriate for the current stage of delivery (Table 4).

**Table 4: Purpose of Transit Review/Coordination, by Stage of Project Delivery**

Stage of Project Delivery	Purpose of Transit Review/Coordination
Planning, Environmental, or Conceptual Design (<30% design)	<p>Identify potential project impacts to transit travel time, reliability, and/or stop access, and investigate opportunities to avoid or mitigate.</p> <p><b><i>Additional considerations if on TPN (once adopted):</i></b> Identify opportunities to improve transit travel time, reliability, or access at stops via transit-supportive design elements.</p>
Detailed Design (≥30% design) or Construction	<p>Consider incorporating transit-impact mitigation measures into design. Identify potential permanent and temporary construction impacts to transit operations and stops and coordinate with transit agencies to minimize transit impacts.</p> <p><b><i>Additional considerations if on TPN (once adopted):</i></b> Consider design changes to improve transit travel time, reliability, or access at stops, recognizing it is difficult to change advanced design without significant impacts to project cost/timeline.</p>

**3) Transit Agencies: Review project and provide feedback to Project Sponsor**

Transit agencies should complete project review, via Transit Agency Review Form or equivalent documentation, within 20 business days<sup>4</sup>. Review should be documented by senior-level staff or authorized delegates. Transit agencies should use the questions in Table 5, by stage of project delivery, as a guide when reviewing a project and providing comments.

<sup>4</sup> Transit agencies may request a 10-business day extension for a complex project (i.e., requiring an expert review) or extenuating circumstances (i.e., staff shortage).

**Table 5: Questions to Guide Transit Review, by Stage of Project Delivery**

Stage of Project Delivery	Questions to Guide Transit Review
Planning, Environmental, or Conceptual Design (<30% design)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does project impact the basic operations of transit?</li> <li>• Are there opportunities to mitigate impacts to transit travel time, reliability, or stop access without substantial changes to scope?</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Additional considerations if on TPN (once adopted):</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Does project have goals to improve transit speed and reliability?</i></li> <li>• <i>Does project identify opportunities to improve transit travel times, reliability, or access at stops via transit-supportive design elements?</i></li> </ul>
Detailed Design (≥30% design) or Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does project impact the basic operations of transit?                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are there opportunities to mitigate impacts to transit travel time, reliability, or stop access without substantial changes to scope?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Does project meet transit agencies’ stop/design guidelines, including accessibility?</li> <li>• What is overall construction phasing/schedule?</li> <li>• Will construction require transit stops to be temporarily relocated?</li> <li>• Will temporary traffic control plans modify transit movements or lane configurations?</li> <li>• What is anticipated construction impact to transit travel time and/or delay, and are there opportunities to mitigate construction impacts?</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Additional considerations if on TPN (once adopted):</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Does project include transit-supportive design elements? What transit-supportive design elements could be added?</i></li> <li>• <i>How would transit-supportive elements be operated and maintained?</i></li> </ul>

**4) Project Sponsor: Review and react to feedback from Transit Agencies, and meet with Transit Agencies if needed.**

Project sponsor should review the feedback from transit agencies and determine whether the project can be updated to reflect feedback. Agencies are encouraged to work collaboratively to develop a project that considers transit’s needs while meeting the project goals. Project sponsor and transit agency may meet to discuss feedback and how project can be modified to address suggestions or concerns.

If consensus cannot be reached by the project sponsor and transit agencies, MTC may convene a stakeholder meeting with the affected agencies to aid in discussions, working with the applicable County Transportation Authority as appropriate. MTC would not take a lead role or be mediator. If a resolution cannot be reached, project sponsor should describe the design dispute and document all efforts made to resolve the dispute in its CS Checklist submission.

**a) If feedback can be incorporated:**

Project sponsor should update project information in CS Checklist Section I (e.g., changes project scope, incorporates design to mitigate impacts to transit). In CS Checklist Section III Transit Agency Review subsection, project sponsor should describe how the project was updated per transit agency feedback and upload the completed Transit Agency Review Form or equivalent documentation of coordination.

***If project is on TPN (once adopted):** Project sponsor should work with transit agency to develop consensus around reasonable transit-supportive design elements to incorporate into the project to improve transit travel time and reliability. The forthcoming MTC Transit-Supportive Roadway Design Toolkit or other national, state, and local transit best practice guidance can be referenced during discussions with transit agencies. Potential improvements could include but are not limited to: transit signal priority, transit lanes, transit queue jumps, transit stop relocation/consolidation, and transit stop boarding islands or bulbs. Project sponsor should document transit-supportive design elements proposed to be included in the project.*

**b) If feedback cannot be incorporated:**

Project sponsor should explain why feedback could not be incorporated and upload the completed Transit Agency Review Form or equivalent documentation of coordination in CS Checklist Section III Transit Agency Review subsection.

If applicable, project sponsor may claim an exception via a [Transit Review Exception Form](#):

1. **Lack of Response.** Transit agencies did not review project within 20 business days and did not ask for a 10-business day extension, or asked for extension and did not review project within extension.
2. **Infeasibility.** Requested transit-impact mitigations are infeasible along the roadway due to conflicts with fire code, designation as evacuation route or similar public safety code requirements, insufficient right of way, conflicts with existing infrastructure, and/or environmental concerns defined as abutting

conservation land or severe topological constraints, and alternative transit-supportive design elements cannot be identified.

*If project is on TPN (once adopted) and transit-supportive design suggestions cannot be incorporated, these exceptions could also apply:*

- 3. **Disproportionate Cost.** The cost to add transit-supportive design elements to the non-transit project is excessively disproportionate to the base project cost. Generally, “disproportionate” is defined as greater than 20 percent<sup>5</sup>. If the cost of preferred accommodation is considered excessively disproportionate, project sponsor shall consider alternatives that represent a feasible share of the total project cost but still provide transit-supportive design to improve transit travel time and reliability.*
- 4. **Separate Transit Project.** Transit-supportive design elements to be addressed through a separate process or project.*

To claim an exception from transit agency review, project sponsor must request an exception in the CS Checklist Section I and upload a Transit Review Exception Form in the CS Checklist Section III Transit Priority Policy for Roadways Exception subsection, which details how the project meets one or more of the exception conditions above. Exceptions must be documented and signed by senior-level staff or an authorized delegate at the project sponsor.

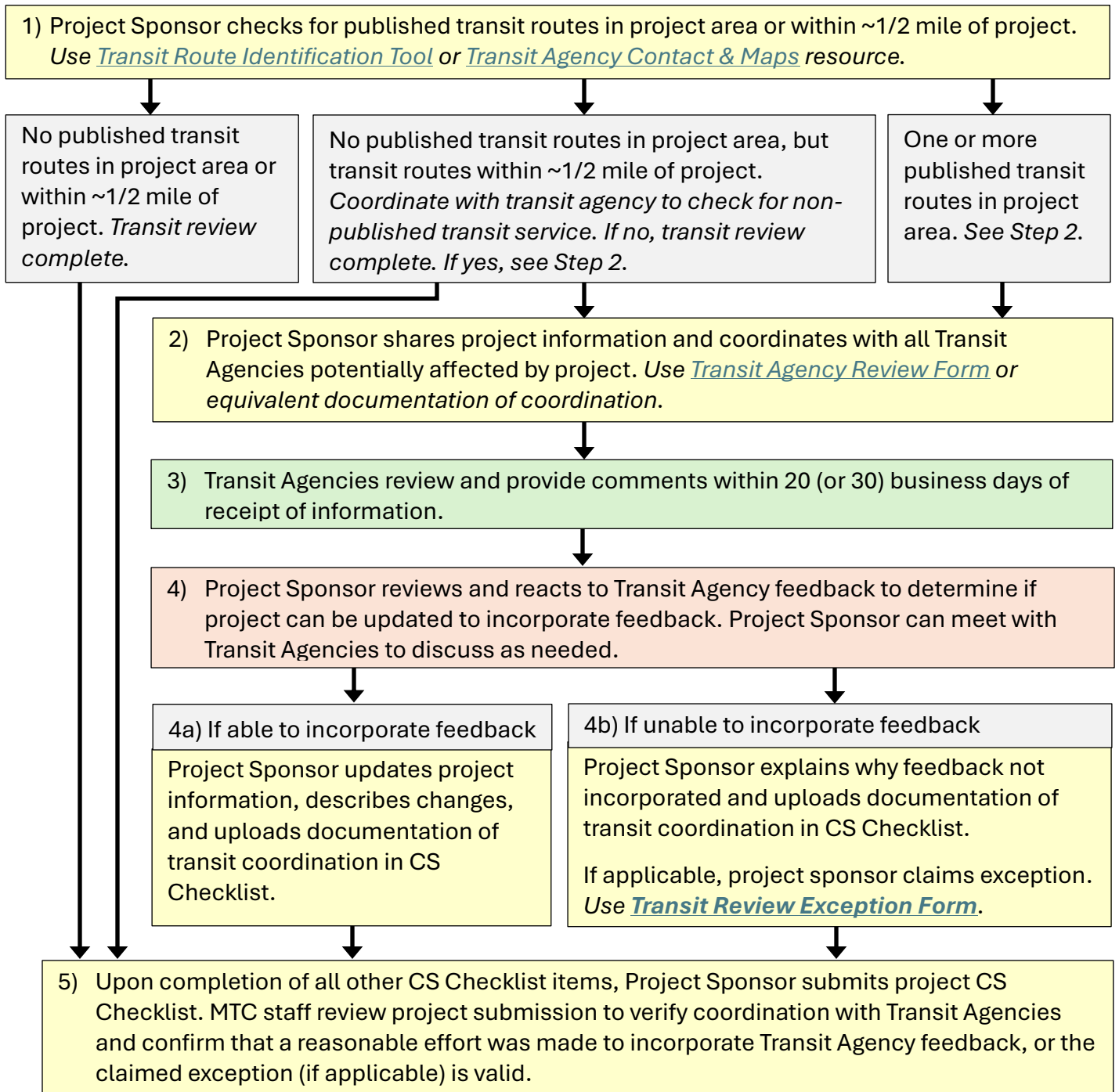
#### **5) Project Sponsor: Upload documentation onto CS Checklist portal**

Upon completion of transit review and all other CS Checklist items, project sponsor submits project CS Checklist. MTC staff will review the project submission to verify coordination with transit agencies and confirm that a reasonable effort was made to incorporate transit agency feedback, or the claimed exception (if applicable) is valid.

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<sup>5</sup> Per FHWA Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations: “A cost may be considered excessively disproportionate when the cost of providing the accommodation would be more than 20% of the cost of the larger transportation project.”

## Process Chart of Transit Agency Project Review



*\*In some cases, if consensus cannot be reached by the Project Sponsor and Transit Agencies, MTC can convene a stakeholder meeting to aid discussions.*

Key: Responsible Agency	Project Sponsor
	Transit Agencies
	Project Sponsor & Transit Agencies

# Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions

## 1) What if I already submitted a CS Checklist via the old Google Form?

Prior to the adoption of the Transit Priority Policy for Roadways, the CS Checklist was submitted through a Google Form. The CS Checklist moved to a more interactive online portal format in conjunction with the adoption of the Policy (i.e., any CS Checklist submitted by Google Form was submitted prior to the Policy being adopted). Projects that successfully completed the CS Checklist via the Google Form and were awarded MTC funding are not subject to the Policy’s transit agency review requirements, unless they are applying for new or additional funding. The table below lays out common scenarios and whether a project needs to comply with the Policy’s transit agency review requirements.

Scenario	When project must follow Policy
Checklist was submitted on Google Form and <b>was awarded MTC funding.</b>	Project <b>EXEMPT</b> from Policy transit agency review requirements.
Checklist was submitted on Google Form but <b>deemed incomplete, and is working to complete submission.</b>	Project <b>SHOULD</b> adhere to Policy transit agency review requirements and <b>coordinate with transit agency for the project phase seeking new or additional funding or reseeking funding.</b>
Checklist was submitted on Google Form but is now <b>seeking new or additional MTC funding or reseeking funding it unsuccessfully applied for.</b>	

**2. How long does transit review and coordination typically take?**

Project sponsors should proactively coordinate with transit agencies as early as feasible, since transit review and coordination takes time. Transit coordination can be done in parallel with Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee review to minimize the time impact of transit review.

If the transit agency’s feedback can be incorporated into the project, the process can typically be completed within a month:

<b>Step</b>	<b>Duration (working days)</b>
Project sponsor provides project information to transit agency; transit agency reviews and provides comments	20 days
Sponsor incorporates feedback	5 days
<b>Total if able to incorporate feedback</b>	<b>25 days (~1 month)</b>

If the transit agency’s feedback cannot be incorporated into the project, additional coordination and discussion may require a total of two to three months to complete transit review:

<b>Step</b>	<b>Duration (working days)</b>
Project sponsor provides project information to transit agency; transit agency reviews and provides comments	20 days
Sponsor realizes it cannot incorporate feedback	5 days
Sponsor and transit agency meet to further discuss comments	10 days
Sponsor incorporates changes, applies for Exception, OR documents good faith efforts	5 days
<b>Total if need to meet, then can resolve</b>	<b>40 days (~2 months)</b>
Optional: elevate to meeting with MTC and/or county transportation agency to try to resolve	20 days
<b>Total if elevated</b>	<b>60 days (~3 months)</b>