# Bay Area Transit Priority Policy for Roadways (TPPR)
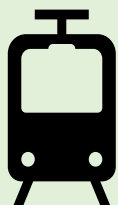
**C/CAG Congestion Management & Environmental Quality Committee**

May 19, 2025

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Photo: Jeremy Menzies/SFMTA

# MTC's Regional Transit Priority Efforts

| Established Initiatives | | New Tools (Regional Network Management) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Transit Performance Initiative** (TPI) | **Forward Commute Initiatives** | **Transit Priority Policy for Roadways, Regional Transit Assessment** | **Bus Accelerated Infrastructure Delivery** (BusAID) | **Innovative Deployments to Enhance Arterials** (IDEA) |
| *Funding* | *Project Delivery* | *Planning & Policy* | *Funding (Quick-Build)* | *Technical Assistance* |
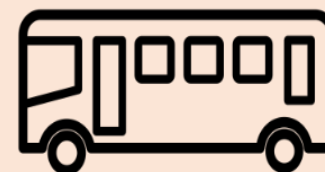
# Why Transit Priority?

**Transit Priority roadway improvements and policies** help transit riders get where they want to go more quickly and reliably.

- **Bus lanes** and other **traffic engineering changes** helps transit avoid traffic congestion
- **Transit signal priority** reduces red light delay
- **Bus bulbs, optimized bus stops,** and **parking regulations** reduces boarding delays

All these improvements combine to make transit **more predictable and reliable**



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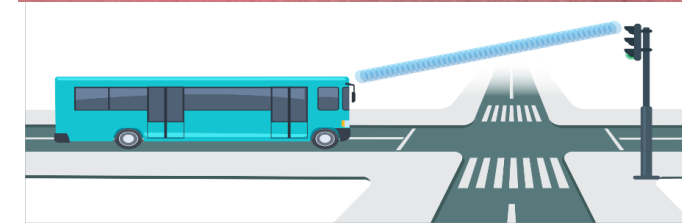
# Transit Priority Lowers Operating Costs

- On average, Bay Area transit has slowed by 5% since 2016.
- Transit Priority can mitigate delays and increasing operating costs
  - Transit Signal Priority can reduce travel times by up to 10% *(AC Transit)*
  - Corridor-wide Transit Priority projects reduced travel times by 10 to 31% *(Muni)*

**EXAMPLE: Cost to Provide 30-Minute Bus Frequency, 6 AM – 8 PM, daily**

| One-way Travel Time | Buses Required | Annual Cost |
|---|---|---|
| 60 minutes | 🚌🚌🚌🚌 | $4 million |
| 66 minutes | 🚌🚌🚌🚌🚌 | $4.5 million |

*Slower speeds means longer trips*

*Higher operating cost for same headway*

*Assumes operating cost $200/hour/vehicle for example purposes only.*

# Vision for Transit in the Bay Area
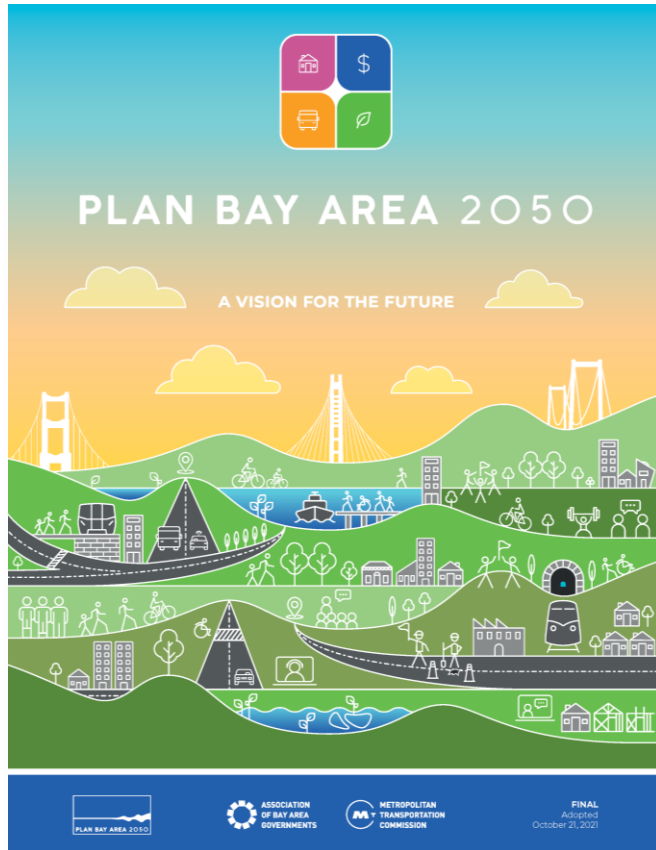


**Plan Bay Area 2050 (PBA)**



**Transit Transformation Action Plan (TAP)**

# Transit Priority Policy for Roadways (TPPR)



Purpose:

**Enhance the transit rider experience by supporting implementation of transit priority infrastructure** and policies, and promote the interagency coordination required to do so.

Goals:

Establish a common definition for transit priority in the region that guides agencies toward roadway investments that:

- **Improve transit travel times and reliability**; and
- **Help transit better serve people's needs and move more people in the Bay Area.**

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Photo: Karl Nielsen/MTC

# Key TPPR Contents

| Topic | Recommendation |
|---|---|
| Where Policy Applies | • All roadways in the nine-county Bay Area with scheduled, fixed-route transit service, including both surface streets and access-controlled highways |
| Transit Priority Network (TPN) | • TPN to inform regional funding priorities<br>• TPN to define where to apply transit-supportive design principles (e.g., from NACTO *Transit Street Design Guide)* should be applied<br>• TPN will be developed in the Regional Transit Assessment |
| Interagency Coordination via CS Policy/Checklist | • Complete Streets (CS) Checklist to be updated to ensure stronger coordination between local right-of-way agencies and transit agencies. |
| Adoption of Local Transit Priority Policy | • Encourage subregional jurisdictions to adopt local resolution in support of transit priority |

# Where would Policy Apply?

- TPPR would apply to all projects on roadways with transit service
  - Projects on Transit Priority Network (TPN) will be subject to additional expectations.
- TPN will be developed in 2026 through a separate process. Criteria under consideration:
  - Approved transit, transportation, or general plans
  - Corridors with existing and planned high service frequencies (context-sensitive)
  - Corridors with high ridership (context-sensitive)
  - Equity / Priority Development Areas
  - Other considerations (network gaps/continuity, local context, transit transfers, etc.)



**Hypothetical Transit Priority Network**
- TPN Corridor
- Non-TPN Transit Corridor
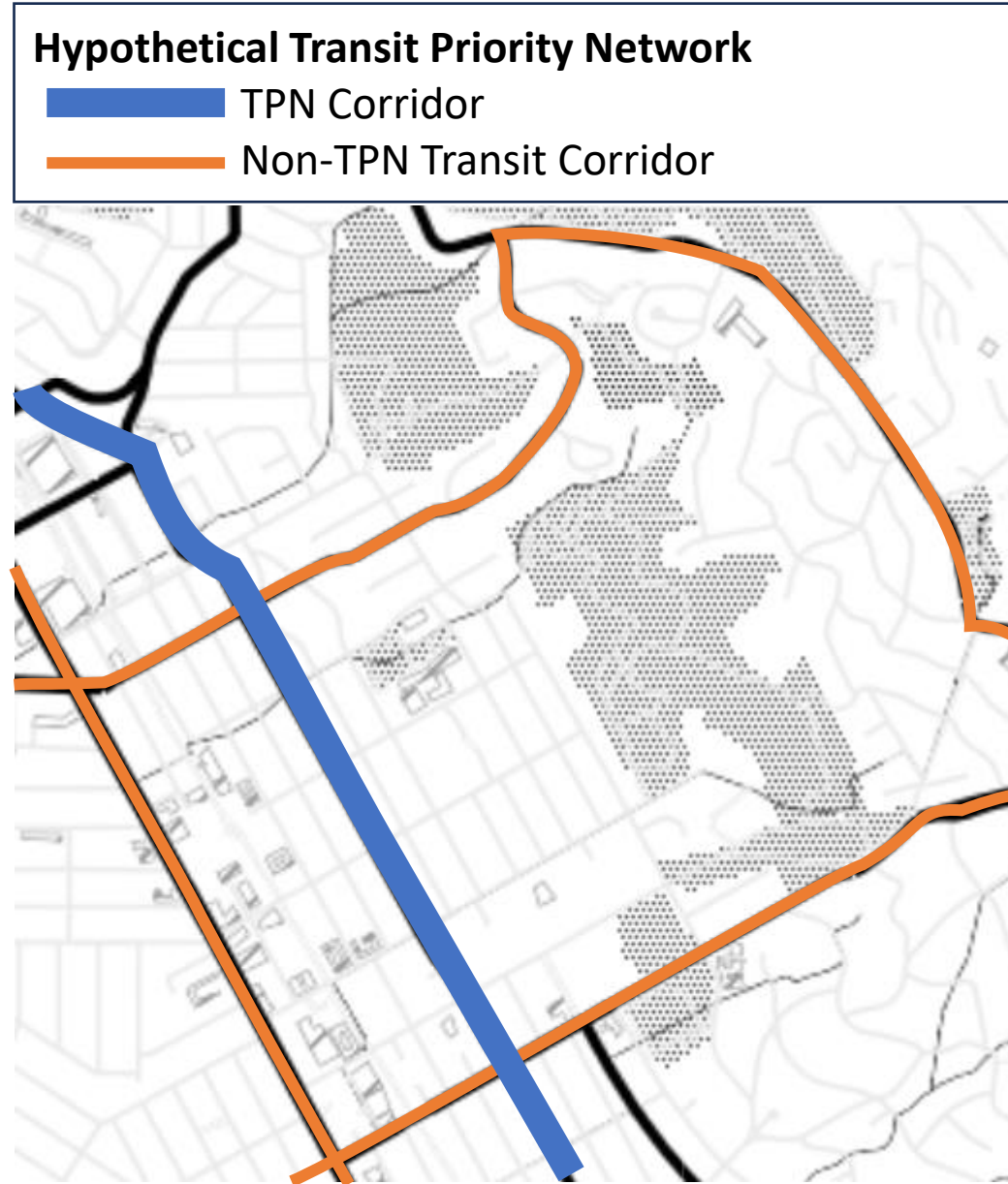
# Proposal: Adding Transit to CS Checklist

Projects seeking more than $250,000 in regional discretionary funds or an MTC endorsement already complete the Complete Streets (CS) Checklist and are reviewed by a local Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

**TPPR proposes adding transit agency review to CS Checklist for a multi-modal, streamlined review.**

**2022 Complete Streets Policy**

*Projects on **Active Transportation Network:***
1. *Consistent with approved Complete Streets plans*
2. *Follow NACTO All Ages & Abilities Design Principles & FHWA PROWAG*

**NEW**
**Transit Priority Policy for Roadways**

*Projects along **transit routes** need transit agency **review for impacts to transit service***

*Projects on **Transit Priority Network**[1] should follow best practice transit-supportive design principles*

*[1]TPN will be developed through the Regional Transit Assessment*

# Transit-Supportive Design Principles

Policy would recommend that projects on the TPN be informed by best practice transit-supportive design principles, such as those presented in the National Association of City Transportation Officials *Transit Street Design Guide* or other local guidelines, such as AC Transit's *Transit Supportive Design Guidelines*.



Transit Streets

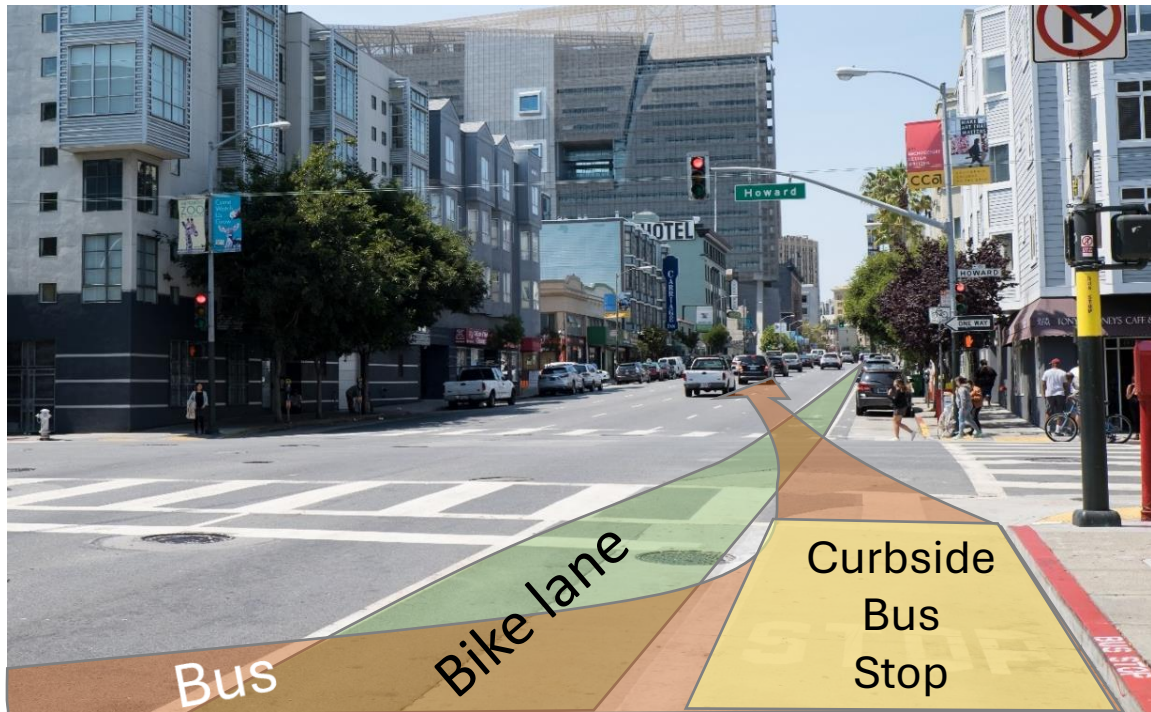Stations and Stops

Multi-modal design

Intersections

Photos: Jeremy Menzies, Noah Berger
City of San José  Deot, of Transportation

# Example of Potential Benefits: Urban Context

**7th St at Howard St (San Francisco): Before**

Buses cross bike lane twice to access curb-side bus stop

With **Transit-Supportive** and **All Ages & Abilities Design Principles**

Bus boarding island creates buffer and eliminates conflict points



Bus

Bike lane

Curbside Bus Stop



Bus

Boarding Island

Bike lane

# Example of Potential Benefits: Suburban Context

**Walnut Ave at Paseo Padre/Civic Center, Fremont - Before**

Buses merge into bike lane at bus stops, forcing bikes into traffic lane

With **Transit-Supportive** and **All Ages & Abilities Design Principles**

Bus bulb and sidewalk level bike lane eliminate conflict points

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Photos: Google, AC Transit

# Optional: Local Resolution on Transit Priority

- **Purpose**: Promote stronger local support of transit priority

- **Incentives**: May increase likelihood of receiving MTC discretionary funding

- Various formats to meet local preferences:
  - Local Transit Priority Policy
  - Local Resolution supporting TPPR
  - Update to local Complete Streets Resolution or similar policy to include transit priority

- TPPR would specify minimum requirements for being considered for potential incentives

Examples
- City of San Jose Transit First Policy
- City of San Francisco Transit First Policy
- City of Berkeley Transit First Policy (as part of 2001 General Plan) and Transit First Policy Implementation Plan

# Policy Expectations by Agency Type

## Local Jurisdictions/Roadway Owners

- Have transit agency(ies) review projects along transit routes for potential transit impacts
  - If project is on TPN, incorporate best practice transit-supportive design elements
- Consider adopting local Transit Priority Policy or Resolution in support of TPPR

## Transit Operators

- Review projects from local jurisdictions and respond within 30 days

## County Transportation Agencies

- Convene discussions to reach consensus and advance solutions
- Provide funding incentives for transit priority

## Caltrans

- For projects on STN, review project applications and document coordination
  - If Caltrans is a project applicant, coordinate with transit agency(ies)
- Guide transit investments through the Bay Area Transit Plan (in progress)
- Adopt design guidance for transit priority facilities by July 2028 (per SB 960)

# Winter 2025 Outreach on Preliminary Draft Memo

Shared initial draft policy memo through staff working groups. Received and incorporated feedback from 50 different agencies.

| Date | Stakeholder Group | Audience |
|---|---|---|
| **February 18** | Transit Priority Working Group (TPWG) | Planning staff at transit agencies |
| **February 27** | Policy Development Working Group (PDWG) | Planning staff at transit agencies, local jurisdictions, CTAs, Caltrans (D4 and HQ), advocacy groups |
| **March 5** | Transit Finance Working Group (TFWG) | Funding staff at transit agencies |
| **March 7** | Bay Area County Transportation Agencies (BACTA) Planning Directors | Planning directors/staff at county transportation agencies |
| **March 10** | Bay Area Partnership Accessibility Committee (BAPAC) | Accessibility staff at transit agencies |
| **March 12** | Caltrans District 4 | Planning staff at Caltrans District 4 |
| **March 13** | Local Streets and Roads Programming and Delivery Working Group (LSRPDWG) | Planning/public works staff at local jurisdictions |
| **March 20** | Active Transportation Working Group (ATWG) | Active Transportation staff at local jurisdictions, county transportation agencies, advocacy groups |

# Spring 2025 Outreach on Revised Draft Memo

| County | Body | Date |
|---|---|---|
| **Alameda** | ACTC Technical Advisory Committee | May 8 |
| **Contra Costa** | West Contra Costa Transportation Commission (WCCTC)<br>East County Transportation Planning Committee (TRANSPLAN)<br>Southwest Area Transportation Committee (SWAT)<br>Transportation Partnership and Cooperation (TRANSPAC) | May 8<br>May 20<br>May 21<br>May 29 |
| **Marin** | TAM Executive Committee<br>TAM Technical Advisory Working Group | June 9<br>June 12 |
| **Napa** | NVTA Technical Advisory Committee<br>NVTA Citizen Advisory Committee | May 1<br>May 7 |
| **Santa Clara** | VTA System Operations and Asset Management Working Group<br>VTA Technical Advisory Committee | April 23<br>June 11 |
| **San Mateo** | C/CAG Congestion Management Technical Advisory Committee<br>C/CAG Congestion Management & Environmental Quality Committee | May 15<br>May 19 |
| **Sonoma** | SCTA Technical Advisory Committee<br>SCTA Planning Advisory Committee<br>SCTA Countyside Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee | April 24<br>May 15<br>May 27 |
| **Solano** | STA Technical Advisory Committee | April 30 |

*Dates are tentative and subject to change.*

# Schedule & Outreach

Staff will engage various groups for input before finalizing Policy, including:

- Staff-Level Working Groups (winter 2025)
- County Transportation Agency Staff and Committees (spring 2025)
- Regional Network Management Bodies (summer/fall 2025)

**We are here**

| | 2024 | 2025 | | 2026 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transit Priority Policy for Roadways (TPPR) | Policy Framework | Draft Policy | Final Policy | | |
| Regional Transit Assessment (RTA) & Transit Priority Network (TPN) | | Procurement | RTA Analysis | | |
| | | | | TPN Development | Adopt TPN |

# Discussion Questions to Guide Your Review

- Do you have any concerns with the proposed TPPR contents and requirements, and what modifications would you suggest to address those concerns?

- How can the TPPR be modified to address existing barriers to effective interagency coordination and reach design consensus in constrained locations?

- What technical assistance and other support materials should MTC consider when assisting agency partners with transit-supportive street design?
  - Transit Operators: how can MTC help you give input on project designs?
  - Project Sponsors: how can MTC help you incorporate transit-supportive elements into project designs?

- How else can MTC support your agency when implementing the TPPR?

# Open Discussion

**Please submit feedback on the <u>Revised Draft Policy Memo</u> by COB Friday, June 6, 2025.**

Please reach out with any questions or to request a presentation to your staff-level group by emailing transitpriority@bayareametro.gov.

| **Britt Tanner, P.E.** | **Joel Shaffer, P.E.** | **Mika Miyasato, AICP** |
|---|---|---|
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