

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 [MTC Resolution 4493](#) (2022), which updated the regional Complete Streets Policy, first adopted in 2006. The Policy establishes requirements for roadway projects on public right-of-way requesting more than \$250,000 of MTC discretionary funding or MTC endorsement.

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

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
- Bus bulbs or boarding islands
- Strategic traffic/parking regulations
- Optimized transit stop placement and spacing
- Off-board fare payment or all-door boarding

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 transit priority treatments on high-priority transit corridors.

The detailed transit agency review process can be found in the Appendix.

Optional Local Transit Priority Policy or Resolution

A roadway owner or operator 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: 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 approved, anticipated no earlier than early 2027.

Which Agencies Must Complete the Transit Review Process?

The proposed 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

The following coordination steps between project sponsors and transit agencies is documented via a [Transit Agency Review Form](#) uploaded to the CS Checklist portal.

1) Project Sponsor: Confirm if there is transit service, and the level of review required

Project sponsor checks if there is transit service by an agency listed in Table 2 in the broader community, and specifically within the project area. These agencies operate scheduled, fixed-route, publicly-accessible roadway transit service and are eligible for State Transit Assistance (STA) funds.

Contacts by transit agency can be found in the [Transit Agency Contact List](#). If you need assistance contacting a transit agency, please reach out to transitpriority@bayareametro.gov.

Table 2: List of Applicable Transit Agencies

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

The level of transit review depends on transit service in the project area (Table 3).

Table 3: Level of Transit Review Required

Transit service in project area?	Transit Review Required
No transit service in project area or surrounding community	No transit review required. Indicate lack of service on Transit Agency Review Form and upload to CS Checklist portal. <i>Transit review is complete.</i>
No published transit routes in project area, but transit service in surrounding community	<p>Contact transit agency to confirm if existing non-revenue scheduled¹ routes, existing recurring detour² routes, or planned budgeted³ routes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit agency confirms no transit service. Indicate lack of service on Transit Agency Review Form and upload to CS Checklist portal. <i>Transit review is complete.</i> • Transit agency confirms transit service. Transit agency reviews project for accommodation of basic bus movement through project area, via Transit Agency Review Form.
One or more published transit routes in project area	<p>Project sponsor identifies potential project impacts to transit and works to mitigate impacts. Transit agency reviews and potentially identifies suggestions to further mitigate project impacts, via Transit Agency Review Form.</p> <p><i>If Project is on Transit Priority Network (TPN) (once adopted): Project sponsor and transit agency coordinate to identify potential transit supportive design improvements to incorporate into project.</i></p>

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

If there is transit service (confirmed in step 1), project sponsor shares a general description of the project, project information (i.e., goals, scope, schedule, funding,

¹ “Non-revenue scheduled” routes are pull-in/pull-out routes where buses operate without passengers.

² “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.

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

designs), and measures to mitigate project impacts to transit and/or transit-supportive design elements included in the project with all applicable transit agencies via Transit Agency Review Form. 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, Conceptual Design, or Environmental	Identify opportunities to avoid or mitigate transit impacts.
	<i>Additional considerations if on TPN: Identify opportunities to improve transit travel time, reliability, or access at stops.</i>
Detailed Design (≥30% design)	Identify potential project impacts to transit delay, reliability, and stop access and discuss opportunities to mitigate impacts.
	<i>Additional considerations if on TPN: Identify opportunities to improve transit travel time, reliability, or access at stops.</i>
Construction	Identify potential permanent and temporary construction impacts to transit operations and stops and discuss opportunities to mitigate project impacts.

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

Transit agencies complete project review, via Transit Agency Review Form, within 20 business days, with feedback documented by senior-level staff or authorized delegates. 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). Transit agencies should use the questions in Table 5, by stage of project delivery, as a guide when reviewing a project and providing comments.

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

Stage of Project Delivery	Questions to Guide Transit Review
Planning, Conceptual Design, or Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does project impact the basic operations of transit? • Are there opportunities to improve transit travel time, reliability, or access at stops without a substantial scope change? <p><i>Additional considerations if on TPN:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does project have goals to improve transit speed and reliability?</i> • <i>Does project identify opportunities to improve transit travel times or delay, or minimize impacts to transit?</i>
Detailed Design (≥30% design)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do project elements impact transit travel times or delay? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If so, what are the anticipated impacts? ▪ Can mitigation measures reduce the impacts? If so, to what extent? • Are there opportunities to improve transit travel time, reliability, or access at stops without a substantial scope change? • Does project meet transit agencies’ stop guidelines, including accessibility? <p><i>Additional considerations if on TPN:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does project include transit-supportive design elements? What transit-supportive design elements could be added?</i> • <i>How would transit-supportive elements be operated and maintained?</i>
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is overall construction phasing/schedule? • Will construction require transit stops to be temporarily relocated? How will transit be maintained? <i>(Note, while not a part of the Transit Priority policy, consideration for paratransit needs is also recommended.)</i> • Will temporary traffic control plans modify transit movements or lane configurations? • What is anticipated construction impact to transit travel time and/or delay, and are there opportunities to mitigate construction impacts?

4) Project Sponsor: Review and react to feedback from Transit Agencies

Project sponsor reviews the feedback from transit agencies and incorporates any feedback into project (i.e., makes updates to project scope and/or design to mitigate impacts to transit), or claims an exception documenting reasons it cannot do so. A

collaborative meeting with affected agencies may be convened to discuss feedback from transit agencies and how project can be modified to address suggestions or concerns.

***If project is on TPN:** Project sponsor should work with transit agencies to develop consensus around reasonable transit-supportive design elements to incorporate into the project to improve transit travel time and reliability. The NACTO Transit Street Design Guide 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, bus stop placement adjustments, stop access improvements, transit boarding islands or bulbs, ADA access improvements, transit signal priority, transit lanes, transit queue jumps, adding red curbs to improve access to stops, and other curb regulations.*

a) If feedback can be incorporated:

Enter updated project scope and/or design information on CS Checklist portal, including a description of changes made, based on project review by and discussions with transit agencies.

***If project is on TPN,** document the transit-supportive design elements considered, and detail the design elements proposed to be included in the project.*

b) If project is unable to meet the above requirements

Project sponsor documents discussions with transit agencies on CS Checklist portal, documenting why feedback from transit agencies was not incorporated. 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 and the 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 percent⁴. 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 upload a Transit Review Exception Form on the CS Checklist portal detailing 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 & Transit Agencies: Stakeholder meeting (if needed)

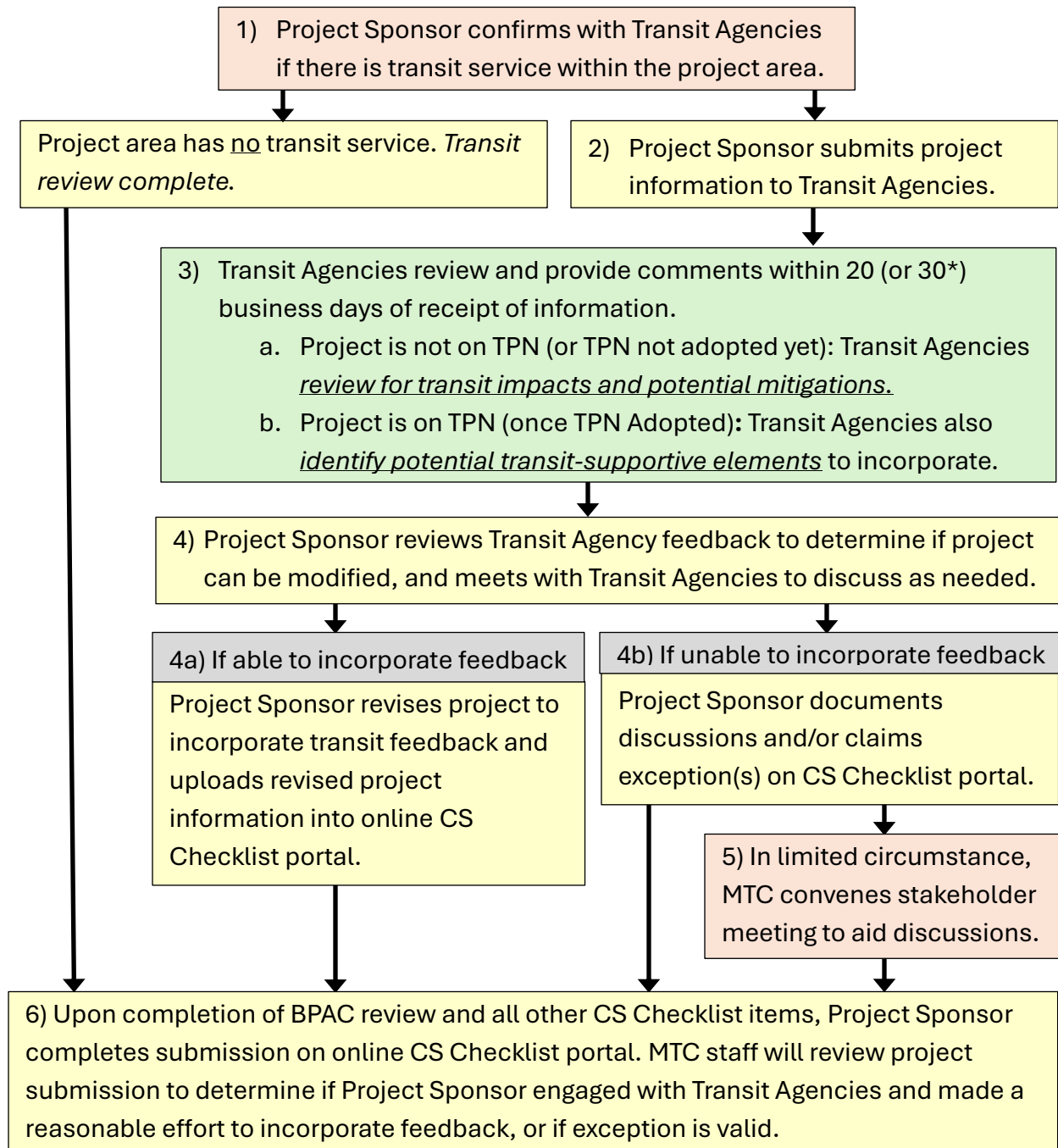
Agencies are encouraged to work collaboratively to develop a project that considers transit’s needs while meeting the project goals. If consensus cannot be reached by the project sponsor and transit agencies, MTC may convene a stakeholder meeting with the affected agencies to aid in discussions, working 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.

6) Project Sponsor: Upload documentation onto CS Checklist portal

Upon completion of BPAC review and all other CS Checklist items, project sponsor completes submission on online portal, and MTC staff review project submission to ensure project sponsor had conversations with transit agencies and made a reasonable effort to incorporate transit agency feedback, or the claimed exception (if applicable) is valid.

⁴ 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



**Transit Agencies may request an additional 10 business days for review of a complex project or extenuating circumstances.*

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