

Public Participation Plan

for the San Francisco Bay Area



September 2026



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105
Tel 415-778-6700 | Fax 415-536-9800
info@bayareametro.gov | mtc.ca.gov

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Chapter 1 — Introduction

This public participation plan (PPP) outlines the many opportunities available to get involved and provide input on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) work. MTC is committed to a transparent decision-making process that is informed by meaningful public consultation and community engagement. MTC wants residents in the San Francisco Bay Area to be involved in the regional planning process. As such, MTC aims to give the public ample opportunities for early and continuous participation opportunities in important projects, plans and decisions, and to provide full public access to key decisions.

The policies and investments made by MTC influence the lives of people who live and work in the Bay Area every single day. To help inform those decisions, MTC is committed to providing ample, accessible opportunities for members of the public, partners and other stakeholders to engage with our policymakers about ongoing programs and projects. This PPP defines our mission and vision for public engagement and participation, along with the processes for communicating with the public about our programs, plans, projects and decisions. This plan seeks to provide Bay Area residents with the information necessary to participate in and influence the regional policy development and decision-making processes.

What is MTC?

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. MTC supports the region's network of streets, roads, highways, public transit systems, airports and other transportation resources, including the movement of goods through ports and freight rail lines. MTC was created by the California Legislature in 1970 to plan the Bay Area's transportation system. The federal government later designated MTC as the Bay Area's metropolitan planning organization (MPO) charging it with the task of coordinating and deciding how to spend federal transportation dollars that are suballocated to the region. Over the years, MTC staff's work has expanded through state legislation to address other regional issues, including climate adaptation, housing finance and administration of toll bridge revenues.

MTC's role has expanded into multiple authorities — some created by state law or as a joint powers authority to carry out specific duties or projects for residents of the Bay Area.

Statutory Entities

- [Bay Area Toll Authority \(BATA\)](#) – manages the toll revenues from the Bay Area’s seven state-owned bridges. BATA also manages FasTrak®, the electronic toll payment system established in state law.
- [Bay Area Housing Finance Authority \(BAHFA\)](#) – established in state law, BAHFA is a first-of-its kind regional authority created to address the Bay Area’s chronic housing challenges.
- [Public Transit Revenue Measure District \(PTRMD\)](#) – established by Senate Bill 63 (2025), which also authorizes to be placed on the November 2026 ballot, the District has many responsibilities, including administrative responsibilities related to the November 3, 2026 statewide general election and additional responsibilities if a regional transportation revenue measure were to be approved by the voters.

Joint Powers Authorities

- [Bay Area Headquarters Authority \(BAHA\)](#) – manages and maintains the Bay Area Metro Center building in San Francisco where ABAG and MTC are housed. BAHA was established as a joint powers authority of MTC, ABAG, the Bay Area Air District and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission — all co-located in the Bay Area Metro Center.
- [Bay Area Infrastructure Financing Authority \(BAIFA\)](#) – oversees the financing, planning and operation of MTC Express Lanes and related transportation projects. BAIFA was established as a joint powers authority of MTC and BATA to administer express lanes and other toll facilities.

Two Boards, One Staff

In 2008, Senate Bill 375 (Steinberg) was enacted and called upon regional agencies to link together their transportation and land use plans more closely to help achieve climate goals — specifically, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the transportation sector. This law linked MTC’s work more closely with that of the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), the Bay Area’s regional planning agency responsible for housing and land use planning.

ABAG is a joint powers authority of the nine counties and 101 cities in the region that works to strengthen cooperation and collaboration among them to build healthier, stronger communities. ABAG helps local governments plan for new housing development

and adapt to change while addressing sustainability, energy, resilience and equity. In 2017, the staffs of both agencies were consolidated via a contract for services, and they now work as one integrated organization reporting to two boards to promote better collaboration and integration on common regional goals.

Public Participation Plan Purpose

Two key planning efforts prompt the development of a public participation plan: the [Regional Transportation Plan](#) (RTP) and the [Transportation Improvement Program](#) (TIP). State law also requires a participation plan for the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). Together, the RTP and SCS make up the region's long-range plan known as Plan Bay Area. Federal regulations require MTC to engage in a planning process that creates opportunities for public involvement, participation and consultation throughout the development of the RTP. Furthermore, SB 375 requires MTC to develop a public participation plan for the RTP/SCS.

However, the work of MTC expands beyond these planning and funding efforts to encompass a range of plans, projects and programs that work together to improve the quality of life for all Bay Area residents as well as our natural environment. As such, this public participation plan details MTC's decision-making process through policy committees and highlights other opportunities for getting involved and influencing the regional decision-making process. The federal requirements for public participation related to the RTP and TIP are included as **Appendix B. Public Participation Procedures for the Regional Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program**, and the state requirements related to the RTP/SCS are included as **Appendix C. Public Participation Plan for Plan Bay Area 2060**.

Public Participation Opportunities

MTC works on a myriad of plans, projects and programs with a wealth of engagement opportunities. Below is a sampling of major efforts.

- [Plan Bay Area](#) — The long-range regional plan for the Bay Area is focused on transportation, housing and environmental resilience, and serves as the region's RTP and SCS. The plan helps shape where housing is planned, how people travel and which transportation and environmental improvements are prioritized throughout the Bay Area. See Appendix C for the complete public participation plan for the next update of Plan Bay Area.

- [Transportation Improvement Program](#) (TIP) — The TIP is a federally-required comprehensive four-year regional spending plan for near-term transportation projects, programs and investment priorities. Federal regulations require MTC to engage in a planning process that creates opportunities for public involvement, participation and consultation throughout the development of the TIP. These funding decisions affect which transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian improvements move forward in Bay Area communities over the next four years. The public participation procedures for the TIP are thoroughly detailed in Appendix B.
- [Overall Work Program](#) (OWP) — The OWP describes the annual budget, allocation and use of federal and state transportation planning funds in the Bay Area. The OWP is developed each fiscal year and details the agency’s planning and budgetary priorities for the following fiscal year. These funding decisions support the planning activities that help MTC address regional transportation needs and prepare for future investments.

Who We Engage

MTC aims to engage the entire nine-county San Francisco Bay Area in all its economic, geographic and demographic diversity. The agency is committed to engaging and using input from a range of stakeholders, including:

- **General Public** — all residents of the region, with special consideration for the needs of historically underserved populations, including people of color, communities with low-incomes, persons with disabilities, youth, communities with limited English proficiency and elderly individuals.
- **Community Organizations** — especially those that serve Equity Priority Communities and other groups such as environmental advocates, special interest nonprofit organizations, neighborhood groups, homeowner associations and others.
- **Government Agencies** — public agencies like local transit operators, cities and counties, other regional agencies like the Air District, public health agencies, water districts, county transportation agencies (CTAs), the region’s ports and airports, and agencies working on transportation, housing and environmental issues at the state and federal levels, including Federal Land Management Agencies.
- **Business Community** — private-sector entities whose work intersects with transportation and land use planning, including business associations, private transportation providers, freight shippers, consulting firms, technology developers and non-profit business interest groups.

- **Elected Officials** — elected representatives at all levels, including city councils and mayoral offices, county supervisors, and state and federal legislators.
- **Tribal Governments and Native American Communities** — federally recognized tribal governments within the Bay Area and California Native American tribes with tribal cultural resources in the region.

See Chapter 5 for a full list of partners with whom MTC strives to engage.

How Regional Decisions Connect to Daily Life

Decisions that affect how people travel, where housing is planned and how communities prepare for future needs are made by several regional and local agencies:

- **MTC** coordinates regional transportation planning and funding and manages regional services such as Clipper®, FasTrak® and 511.
- **ABAG** works with cities and counties on regional housing, land use, resilience and related planning issues.
- **Cities and counties** make local land use decisions and plan streets, neighborhoods and public services.
- **Transit agencies** operate buses, trains and ferries and make decisions about routes, schedules and fares.
- **County transportation agencies** develop county transportation priorities and help fund and deliver local projects.

These responsibilities are closely connected. MTC may fund or coordinate an improvement, while a city, county, transit agency or other partner implements or operates it. Coordination among these agencies helps align regional investments with local needs, and public participation provides information that can help shape decisions.

Chapter 2 — MTC’s Commitment to Engagement

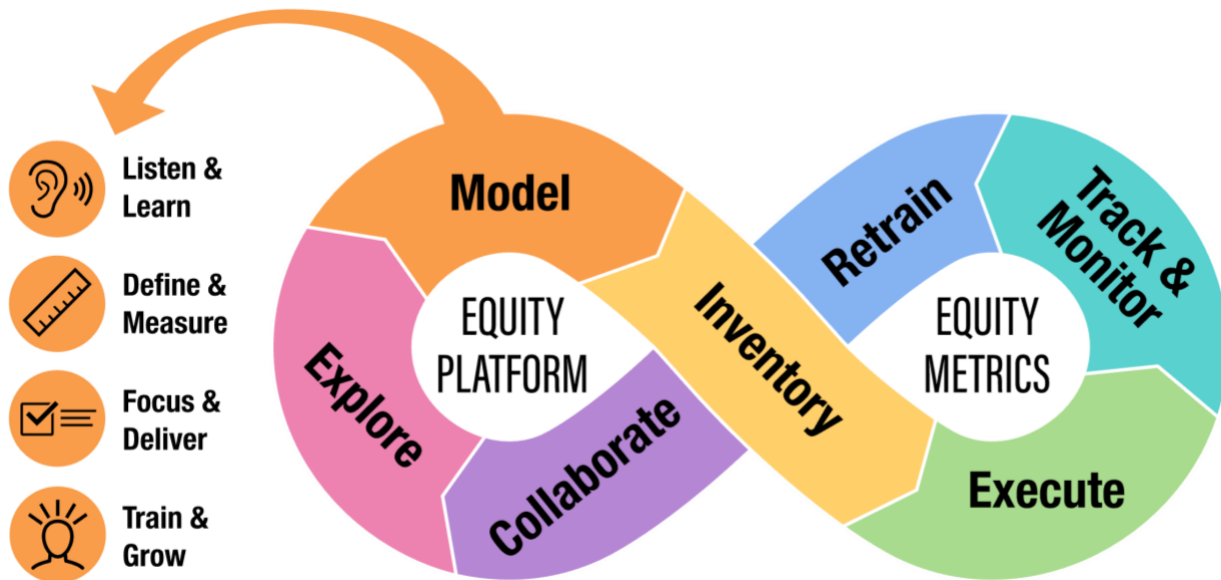
MTC’s Mission, Vision and Values

Public participation plays a critical role in supporting **MTC’s mission to advance shared local and regional priorities for transportation, housing and the environment**, and in realizing its **vision of a vibrant Bay Area that is connected, equitable and sustainable**. Meaningful engagement strengthens regional decision-making by ensuring that plans, policies and investments reflect lived experiences across the Bay Area’s diverse communities. Through inclusive and accessible public participation, MTC seeks to build trust, improve outcomes and foster shared ownership of regional strategies that shape how people move, live and thrive throughout the region. Public input is especially critical in addressing cross-jurisdictional challenges and aligning regional priorities with local needs and capacities.

This PPP is grounded in **MTC’s core values of collaboration, equity, excellence, innovation and integrity**, which guide how the agency engages with the public and its partners. MTC is committed to valuing all voices and perspectives by reducing barriers to participation, prioritizing outreach to historically underserved communities, and creating multiple, culturally responsive ways for the public to engage. Engagement practices emphasize transparency and accountability, ensuring that public input is clearly documented, meaningfully considered and communicated back to participants. By continuously improving engagement tools and approaches, MTC aims to provide high-quality public participation processes that support equitable outcomes and strengthen confidence in regional decision-making.

Equity Platform

MTC defines equity as inclusion into a Bay Area where everyone can participate, prosper and reach their full potential. The agency is committed to advancing equity through policies, investments and processes that address historic disinvestment and structural barriers faced by historically underserved populations, including people with low incomes and communities of color.



Adopted by the Commission in January 2023 (Resolution No. 4559), MTC’s Equity Platform provides a framework for how the agency approaches equity across its programs, decision-making and external engagement. The platform is grounded in four interconnected pillars:

- Listen and Learn
- Define and Measure
- Focus and Deliver
- Train and Grow

The Equity Platform is an ongoing and iterative process that guides staff in designing solutions centered on affected communities, expanding access to opportunity for those most impacted by exclusion, and shifting decision-making in ways that meaningfully reflect community priorities. It also emphasizes continual learning and capacity-building to strengthen institutional practices that support fairness, inclusion and accountability. Additional information about MTC’s Equity Platform is available at mtc.ca.gov/about-mtc/what-mtc/equity-platform.

Operationalizing the Equity Platform within public and community engagement means intentionally revising policies and implementing practices that elevate voices historically underrepresented in regional decision-making. This includes prioritizing outreach and engagement approaches that reach historically underserved populations. Through these efforts, MTC seeks to ensure that public participation processes are accessible, inclusive and responsive, and that community input meaningfully informs regional plans, programs, and investments.

Guiding Principles: Our Vision for Engagement

MTC's guiding principles for engagement serve as our vision for public participation and are rooted in our mission to advance equity in the Bay Area by investing resources in engagement strategies that lift the voices of those who have been historically left out of the decision-making process, and working to ensure historically underserved populations can meaningfully influence decision-making.

1. Effective engagement has a clear purpose.

Defining the purpose for engaging the public, understanding the context and identifying the audience of those affected is imperative to ensure meaningful engagement from the standpoint of the agency and the participants. Engagement activities should make effective use of participants' time by clearly explaining the purpose of participation, the relevance of the topic and how input may inform the process.

2. Effective engagement requires two-way education and relationship building.

Acknowledging the expertise that exists within a given community and boosting engagement with activities that increase mutual education fosters more productive conversations. Ongoing, mutual education improves outcomes and requires cultivating relationships with partners and communities to build trust and achieve consensus.

3. Effective engagement is not one-size-fits-all.

Efforts must be tailored to each unique project and audience to enhance community engagement while making every effort to increase participation opportunities for those most impacted by past and current decisions.

4. Clear communication is essential in effective engagement.

Public engagement must be conducted through clear and compelling communications that are appropriate for the intended audience. Leveraging inclusive storytelling builds shared understanding.

5. Effective engagement demands accountability.

Informing the public of opportunities to participate in the process and clearly demonstrating how community voices have influenced planning and policy decisions builds confidence in the public process.

6. Engagement requires openness and transparency.

An open and transparent public participation process empowers low-income communities and communities of color to participate in decision-making that affects them (adopted as an environmental justice principle by the Commission in 2006).

Engagement Framework

Our engagement framework describes the iterative process MTC follows when implementing public engagement programs and activities, and it guides *how* we conduct engagement.

Framework Element 1: Coordinate Engagement Efforts

MTC recognizes that residents, community-based organizations and partner agencies are often asked to participate in multiple overlapping outreach efforts across plans, programs and decision points. As a prerequisite for engagement, MTC will coordinate engagement efforts across the agency so requests are better timed, more clearly connected to decisions and less duplicative. MTC also will strive to collaborate early with partner agencies and local governments, where feasible, to align engagement activities, build on existing forums and community relationships, reflect local circumstances and reduce duplicative requests of the public and shared partners.

Framework Element 2: Communicate Early and Often

MTC structures major planning initiatives and funding decisions to provide the public and our partners with many opportunities to help shape outcomes. MTC provides timely information to raise awareness of upcoming projects, key milestones and opportunities to influence policy development and decision-making processes. At the outset of an engagement process, MTC will strive to clearly communicate the decision to be made, what is open for public input, when input can influence the process, and how the public can participate.

Framework Element 3: Enable Access for All

MTC works to identify and reduce barriers to participation and provide Bay Area residents with meaningful opportunities to participate, regardless of ability, age, income, language, access to technology or other circumstances. This approach is intended to expand engagement with communities that historically have been left out of policy decisions that affect them. Further, MTC recognizes that individuals should not need to be transportation professionals to understand our work.

Framework Element 4: Prioritize Co-creation and Plain Language

MTC aims to design and create solutions in partnership with communities affected by its policies and decisions. MTC will strive to consult with community-based partners in designing engagement approaches for the communities they serve, and to create clear content that fosters informed, productive dialogue throughout the engagement process. Engagement materials aim to explain how the issue under consideration relates to MTC's mission, vision and values and connect regional decisions to their potential effects on Bay Area communities.

Framework Element 5: Respond and Report Back

MTC is committed to summarizing comments heard from participants on impending actions, so decision-makers and the public have a clear understanding of the depth and breadth of opinions on a given issue. MTC also strives to report back on how input informed staff analysis and decisions — and, when outcomes do not align with comments received, to explain why.

To remain effective when comment channels receive high-volume, duplicative or automated submissions (including template or AI-generated messages), MTC will organize input to identify unique issues and ideas, distinguish form/duplicate messages from substantive individualized comments, and document both volume and content in a transparent manner.

Framework Element 6: Assess Impact

MTC evaluates engagement activities in an effort to inform and improve future engagement. Evaluation may occur throughout an engagement process, after key milestones or at the end of the process to understand who participated, identify communities or perspectives that may be missing and determine whether engagement methods were accessible and effective. MTC also evaluates how input informed staff analysis, recommendations and decisions, and uses the findings to adjust engagement strategies and improve future efforts.

Chapter 3 — Opportunities for Ongoing Participation

Policy Committees

MTC carries out much of its work through policy committees, which serve as the primary forums where the public has direct access to the Commission and where regional transportation, housing and funding decisions are discussed, debated and shaped. These committees review proposals, hear staff presentations and consider public input before making recommendations to the full Commission. As a result, the committee level is where most substantive policy deliberation occurs.

MTC strongly encourages public participation in policy committee meetings, as this is where public comment can be most impactful in the decision-making process. All committee meetings are open to the public and include opportunities for members of the public to observe proceedings, participate virtually and provide input directly to decision-makers.

A complete calendar of committee and Commission meetings is available on the MTC website at mtc.ca.gov/meetings-events. Members of the public may also receive email updates about individual committee meetings by contacting the MTC Public Information Office at info@bayareametro.gov or (415) 778-6757 and requesting to be added to a committee's distribution list.

Members of the public can watch meetings via webcast on the [MTC website](#), or they can participate in meetings either in-person or via Zoom. To provide live public comment, participants must join the meeting by Zoom or attend in person. Instructions for attending or participating remotely are provided on the Meetings & Events page by selecting the specific meeting of interest.

MTC Committees

The following committees have federal and statutory planning responsibilities and make recommendations to the Commission:

- [**Joint MTC-ABAG Legislation Committee**](#) — A joint committee of MTC and ABAG that oversees both agencies' legislative advocacy priorities, including positions on state bills and budget requests.
- [**Planning Committee**](#) — Oversees MTC's planning studies, including updates to Plan Bay Area. Typically meets jointly with the ABAG Administrative Committee.
- [**Programming and Allocations Committee**](#) — Develops the policies and recommendations about how to spend regional, state and federal funds, and allocates funding to specific projects.
- [**Regional Network Management Committee**](#) (formerly the Operations Committee) — oversees the Regional Network Management framework and many of the programs MTC runs for the public, including MTC's traveler services like 511 and Clipper®, as well as highways and major roads.

Other MTC Committees include:

- [**Administration Committee**](#) — Oversees and approves administrative tasks, including staff oversight, consultant contracts, budgeting and financial policies, reports and audits. Has final decision-making authority over most agenda items.
- [**BAIFA Network & Operations Committee**](#) — Oversees the BAIFA Express Lane network and State Route 37 tolling.
- [**BAIFA Regional Toll Policy Committee**](#) — Guides BAIFA on coordination of toll policies and express lane planning.

In addition, BAHFA and BATA have their own oversight committees:

- [**BAHFA Oversight Committee**](#) — Oversees BAHFA's work to address the Bay Area's chronic housing challenges.
- [**BATA Oversight Committee**](#) — Oversees policies and funding decisions related to BATA, including FasTrak, the region's electronic toll collection system.

Furthermore, MTC believes that strong collaboration creates better transportation systems for the Bay Area and has several [interagency committees](#) that work with many partners to manage a transportation network that ranges from sidewalks to regional rail, and that is owned and operated by dozens of government agencies.

ABAG Committees

MTC's work is sometimes conducted jointly with ABAG. For example, ABAG's [General Assembly](#) periodically receives updates on [Plan Bay Area](#), and the Legislation Committee is a joint committee of ABAG and MTC. Additionally, ABAG's Administrative Committee meets jointly with MTC's Planning Committee to discuss and advance decisions on the long-range plan and other relevant topics.

- [ABAG Administrative Committee](#) — Studies recommendations assigned by the ABAG Executive Board (i.e., the executive director selection) and discuss joint efforts such as Plan Bay Area.
- [Joint MTC-ABAG Legislation Committee](#) — A joint committee of MTC and ABAG that oversees both agencies' legislative advocacy priorities, including positions on state bills and budget requests.

Full information on ABAG's policy committees is available at abag.ca.gov/about-abag/what-we-do/how-we-govern.

MTC ABAG Community Advisory Council

In March 2026, the MTC Policy Advisory Council and ABAG's Regional Planning Committee merged into the new MTC ABAG Community Advisory Council. MTC and ABAG are committed to including the public in an open and transparent process of making housing and transportation decisions for the Bay Area. Made up of 27 residents with diverse perspectives, the Council advises MTC and ABAG on issues related to housing and land use, transportation and the environment.

The Council meets on the first Friday of each month, and its meetings are open to the public. To be notified about MTC ABAG Community Advisory Council meetings, contact the MTC Public Information Office at (415) 778-6747 or info@bayareametro.gov and request to be added to the Council's distribution list.

Other Engagement Activities

Public Meetings and Events

Public meetings on specific issues or projects are held as needed. These meetings can range from large in-person open houses and community workshops to small group discussions or focus groups to webinars or online workshops. To solicit comments on

various plans, projects and programs, MTC holds meetings online or throughout the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Meetings are located and scheduled to maximize public participation (including virtual, evening meetings, etc.). MTC provides [notice of upcoming meetings and events on the MTC website](#). If appropriate, e-mail announcements and news releases are also sent to the public and local media outlets, respectively.

Public Hearings

Public hearings are sometimes required by law for certain policy decisions. Notice of these public hearings is placed on [MTC's website](#), and — when required by law — in the legal section of numerous newspapers in the region, including newspapers circulated in historically underserved communities of the Bay Area. Materials to be considered at public hearings are posted online and made available to interested persons upon request. To be notified when public hearings are scheduled, contact the MTC Public Information Office at (415) 778-6747 or info@bayareametro.gov and request to be added to the public hearing distribution list.

Online Engagement

Websites

MTC's website — mtc.ca.gov — is targeted to audiences ranging from transit riders to transportation professionals, elected officials and news media seeking information on particular programs, projects and public meetings. Updated daily, the site provides information about MTC's projects and programs, the agency's structure and governing body, and upcoming public meetings and workshops. It contains the names, e-mail addresses and phone numbers for staff and Commission members; all of MTC's current planning and funding documents; information about the MTC-ABAG Library and a link to the library catalog; as well as detailed facts about the region's travel patterns. It also includes important links to partner government agencies as well as to other MTC sites such as the Bay Area's 511.org, ClipperCard.com, and BayAreaFasTrak.org.

The Vital Signs website — vitalsigns.mtc.ca.gov — provides a wealth of data on Bay Area travel and commute patterns. Vital Signs tracks trends related to transportation, land and people, the economy, the environment and social equity. This data-driven website compiles dozens of indicators; each is presented with interactive visualizations that allow readers to explore historical trends, examine differences between cities and counties, and even compare the Bay Area with other peer metropolitan areas.

The ABAG website — abag.ca.gov — is targeted to local government staff and elected officials. The site provides information on ABAG’s work, as well as the agency’s structure and governing body; upcoming public meetings and events; and technical assistance resources for local staff.

The Plan Bay Area website — planbayarea.org — is the central hub for information about the long-range plan, including key milestones, engagement opportunities and materials for public review. The site is targeted to all audiences interested in getting involved in the long-range plan development process.

Social Media Channels

MTC has a plethora of social media channels that help to engage the Bay Area’s nearly eight million residents.

MTC’s main social media channels

- Facebook, [MTCBATA](#)
- Instagram, [MTCBATA](#)
- <https://twitter.com/mtcbata>
- Bluesky, [MTCBATA](#)
- Threads, [MTCBATA](#)
- YouTube, [MTCBATA](#)
- TikTok, [MTCBATA](#)
- LinkedIn, [Metropolitan Transportation Commission](#)

Other MTC social media channels

- Clipper
 - Facebook, [BayAreaClipper](#)
 - Twitter, [@BayAreaClipper](#)
 - YouTube, [BayAreaClipper_Official](#), <https://www.youtube.com/@clipperonyourphone4742>
 - Instagram, [bayareaclicker_official](#)
 - Discord, [bayareaclicker_official](#) (alerts channel)
 - Reddit, [u/clippercard_official](#) & subreddit [r/bayareaclickercard](#)
- FasTrak®
 - Facebook, [BayAreaFasTrak](#)
 - Twitter, [@fastrakbayarea](#)
 - Vimeo, [bayareafastrak](#)
- 511
 - Facebook, [511SFBay](#)
 - Instagram, [511sfbay](#)
 - Twitter, [@511SFBay](#)
 - Bluesky, [511SFBay](#)

Bay Link Blog

The Bay Link blog is a source for news and insights from MTC and ABAG. The blog compiles news headlines about transportation, housing, the environment and the economy from around the Bay Area and shares original content about MTC's and ABAG's work. The blog is available at: blog.bayareametro.gov.

e-News

MTC maintains several distribution lists used to send out announcements, e-newsletters, meeting agendas, project updates, and much more. To sign up to receive updates from MTC, visit mtc.ca.gov/about-mtc/public-participation/get-involved. To be added to the distribution lists of MTC committees, contact the MTC Public Information Office at info@bayareametro.gov or (415) 778-6757 and request to be added to the individual committee distribution list.

As required by state statute, Plan Bay Area and BAHFA offer a simple way for the public to register to receive updates. Plan Bay Area has an e-newsletter that is sent periodically, delivering project updates and announcements during the plan development process. To sign up to receive Plan Bay Area updates, visit planbayarea.org/get-involved/mailling-list.

BAHFA also has a simple way to sign up for updates, including news on their projects and engagement opportunities. To sign up to receive BAHFA updates, visit abag.ca.gov/our-work/housing/bahfa-bay-area-housing-finance-authority.

Public Information Office

MTC's commitment to public participation includes staff dedicated to involving the public in our work. In addition to the components of MTC's public outreach program detailed in this plan, public information staff can:

- request translation services or ADA accommodations for members of the public who speak languages other than English or are visually- or hearing-impaired.
- help and make available to the public any item on its websites (including meeting notices, agendas, meeting materials, etc.) when a person does not have Internet access.
- work with interested organizations to arrange for staff and/or Commissioners to make presentations to community groups.
- respond to inquiries from the public and media received by:
 - Telephone: (415) 778-6757
 - Mail: 375 Beale Street, Suite 800, San Francisco, CA 94105
 - E-mail: info@bayareametro.gov

Multilingual Phone Lines

Members of the public can reach public information staff in various languages:

- English: (415) 778-6757
- Chinese: (415) 778-6689
- Spanish: (415) 778-6656

Plan Bay Area Comment Line

Plan Bay Area has a dedicated listening line that allows members of the public to participate in the plan update process via phone. Participants can record their comments to be entered into the official record. Callers can leave Plan Bay Area-related comments in English, Cantonese, Mandarin and Spanish by calling (415) 778-2292.

Library

The [MTC-ABAG Library](#) provides access to both a digital and physical collection of materials on transportation planning, housing, demographics, economic trends, public policy issues and more. The library, located at 375 Beale Street, offers a collection of publications from MTC and ABAG, as well as research on current topics, historical documents from transit agencies and local governments, and more.

The digital collection can be accessed [through the library catalog](#), and the physical collection can be accessed by making an appointment to visit the library. Call or email our American Library Association-accredited librarian for reference assistance or to make an appointment to visit the library's physical collection at (415) 778-5236 or library@bayareametro.gov. MTC also offers a searchable, complete digital archive of reports, plans and more at mtc.ca.gov/digital-library.

Chapter 4 — Engagement Techniques

Outreach, Participation and Engagement

MTC uses different engagement approaches based on the purpose, audience, timeline and decision point. Outreach focuses on sharing information and building awareness. Participation provides defined opportunities for the public to submit input. Engagement involves two-way learning, dialogue and relationship-building and, when appropriate, collaboration with affected communities. A menu of the participation methods employed is outlined below and includes traditional approaches as well as opportunities to engage virtually. This list is not exhaustive.

Traditional Methods

- Offer meetings, workshops and open houses at varied times, including evenings and weekends, and provide flexible participation options to reduce barriers related to work, family responsibilities and transportation.
- Present to existing groups and organizations, co-host events with community groups, business associations, etc.
- Participate in community events.
- Contract with community-based organizations in Equity Priority Communities for focused outreach.
- Use “pop-up” workshops/meetings in public gathering places. These are on-the-spot meetings or workshops held in locations where the public is already gathered.
- Organize small-group discussions such as focus groups with participants recruited randomly from telephone polls or recruited by stakeholder interest groups.
- Sponsor a topical forum or summit with partner agencies, the media or other community organizations.
- Present to existing forums of local elected officials and local jurisdiction staff, including opportunities for question-and-answer sessions.
- Participate in community events and offer engagement activities in trusted, familiar and accessible locations where people already gather.

Virtual Engagement

- Virtual workshops/open houses hosted via online meeting platforms like Zoom.
- Provide remote access to meetings by webcasting meetings via Facebook, YouTube, websites, etc.
- Host telephone town halls or online webinars.
- Provide asynchronous opportunities for participating (e.g., webinar recordings with online comment forms, interactive games, etc.).
- Online interactive surveys, polls.
- Use social media and paid digital promotion to reach a larger audience.
- Post video recordings of past public meetings/workshops.
- Post written or display materials from in-person meetings online.
- Encourage interaction among participants via web (e.g., online discussion boards, etc.).
- Provide access to planning data (such as maps, charts, background on travel models, forecasts, census data, research reports, etc.).
- Post information online in advance of public meetings.
- Offer short, focused and low-barrier opportunities for participation that can be completed at a time and in a format convenient for participants.

Visualization Techniques

- Maps
- Charts, illustrations, photographs
- Table-top displays and models
- Electronic voting at workshops
- PowerPoint slide shows
- Videos (traditional, animated, simulation)
- Data dashboards

Polls and Surveys

- Statistically valid telephone polls.
- Electronic surveys via web and SMS-based (text) surveys.
- Intercept interviews/surveys where people congregate, such as at transit hubs.
- Printed surveys distributed at meetings, transit hubs, on-board transit vehicles, etc.

Online and Printed Materials

- User-friendly, accessible documents (including use of executive summaries).
- Review of publications to ensure use of plain language.
- Postcards, mailers, etc.
- Maps, charts, photographs and other visual means of displaying information.
- Use of the Bay Link blog to share important or complex information in an accessible manner.

Targeted Mailings/Flyers

- Work with community-based organizations to distribute flyers/information via their channels.
- Periodic e-newsletters, e-announcements, etc.
- E-mail to targeted distribution lists.
- Distribute “Take One” flyers to key community organizations.
- Place notices on board transit vehicles and at transit hubs.

Local Media

- Issue news/press releases.
- Invite reporters to news briefings.
- Conduct media roundtables to educate reporters on complex topics.
- Meet with editorial staff.
- Submit opinion pieces/commentaries to local news media.
- Purchase display ads.
- Negotiate inserts into local printed media.
- Visit ethnic media outlets to encourage use of MTC/ABAG news releases.
- Place speakers on radio/TV talk shows.
- Public Service Announcements on radio and TV.
- Develop content for public access/cable television programming.
- Develop civic journalism partnerships.

Notification of Meetings and Events

- Maintain an updated Meeting & Events online calendar.
- Post meeting and events announcements on websites.
- Use paid digital promotion to promote events and meetings.
- Use of the Bay Link blog to promote events and meetings.
- Distribute e-mail blasts to share important announcements, project updates, etc.
- Disseminate information through partnerships with local government, transit operators and community-based and interest organizations.
- Distribute periodic e-newsletters.
- Disseminate information via social media channels.
- Disseminate information via local media.

Techniques for Involving Communities with Low Income and Communities of Color

- Presentations and discussions with the MTC ABAG Community Advisory Council.
- Paid partnerships with trusted community-based organizations to co-host meetings, events, etc.
- Remove barriers to participation by offering assistance such as childcare, meals, translation services, etc.
- Distribute “Take One” flyers on transit vehicles and at transit hubs.
- Outreach in the community (such as pop-up meetings in trusted community spaces).
- Use of community and ethnic media outlets to announce participation opportunities.
- Use of social media channels that the communities already use.
- Paid informational stories in ethnic media.
- Partner with organizations and service providers that have trusted relationships with historically underserved populations, including people who may not be reached through traditional public meetings or digital engagement.

Techniques for Involving Native American Tribes

- Send tribal governments and relevant tribal representatives, organizations or groups timely and adequate public notices and announcements.
- Connect with tribal governments and establish an expected level of communication.
- Actively seek tribal government input on MTC projects and programs through direct contact with Chairpersons and/or tribal representatives, as appropriate.
- Respond to all tribal government comments.
- Respond to all consultation requests from tribes.
- Intentionally create engagement opportunities for tribes to be involved in the regional planning process.

Techniques for Involving People with Disabilities and Older Adults

- Develop accessible documents and digital content that are compatible with screen readers and other assistive technologies.
- Use captions, alternative text, accessible color contrast and other features that make visual and multimedia content easier to access.
- Host meetings and events in accessible locations and provide accessible virtual participation options.
- Include information in meeting notices about how to request disability-related accommodations.
- Provide reasonable accommodations, such as American Sign Language interpretation, real-time captioning, assistive listening devices or materials in alternative formats, upon request.
- Allow comments to be submitted through multiple formats, including online, by email, by telephone, by mail and through audio or video recordings.
- Partner with organizations, service providers and community networks that work with people with disabilities to share information and support participation.
- Use a range of outreach methods to reach people who may be isolated or unable to attend traditional public meetings.
- Train staff to be alert to and anticipate the access needs of people with disabilities at meetings, workshops and other engagement activities.

Techniques for Involving Populations with Low Literacy

- Use plain language in all materials and presentations.
- Train staff to be alert to and anticipate the needs of low-literacy participants in meetings, workshops, etc.
- Robust use of visualization techniques to communicate about complex topics, including maps and/or graphics to illustrate trends, choices being debated, etc.
- Personal interviews or use of audio recording to obtain oral comments.
- Use of a listening line for participants to submit audio comments via phone.

Techniques for Involving Populations that Speak Languages Other than English

See also MTC's Final Revised Plan for Special Language Services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Populations, which can be found in English, Spanish and Chinese on MTC's website at mtc.ca.gov/about-mtc/public-participation/language-assistance.

- Conduct meetings entirely in languages other than English (e.g., Spanish, Chinese).
- Train staff to be alert to, and to anticipate the needs of participants who speak languages other than English at meetings and workshops.
- Use personal interviews or use of video/audio recording to obtain oral comments in languages other than English.
- Use social media channels used by persons who speak languages other than English.
- Translate documents and web content on key initiatives.
- Translate materials; have translators available at meetings, upon request.
- Include information on meeting notices about how to request translation assistance.
- Translate vital news releases and outreach to non-English media, such as radio, television, newspapers and social media.
- When conducting statistically valid polls, surveys or focus groups, offer the information in other languages.
- MTC may provide translated materials and engagement opportunities in additional languages based on community needs, demographics, project-specific considerations and available resources.
- Follow the guidance in the MTC [language assistance plan](#).

Techniques for Involving Youth

- Partner with schools, parent organizations, academic programs, student-led groups and youth-serving organizations to share information and provide opportunities for participation.
- Use communication channels and digital platforms commonly used by youth to share accessible information and promote engagement opportunities.
- Meet young people where they already gather, including schools, community events and other familiar and accessible locations.
- Offer quick, low-barrier ways to participate, including short surveys, polls and one-time engagement activities.
- Clearly identify when an engagement opportunity is intended for youth and explain how the topic connects to their daily lives, interests and experiences.
- Use interactive activities and other youth-friendly formats to explain complex planning topics and gather input.
- Provide opportunities for youth to speak directly with staff who can answer questions and explain the purpose of the engagement activity.
- Highlight opportunities for learning, career exploration, skills development and other benefits of participation, when appropriate.
- Report back on what was heard and how youth input informed the planning process and decisions.

Techniques for Reporting on Impact

- Summarize the input received, including key themes, differing perspectives and the level of participation.
- Share public input with decision-makers in advance of relevant discussions and actions.
- Explain how and when public input can influence the planning and decision-making process.
- Describe how public input informed staff analysis, recommendations or proposed changes.
- When decisions do not align with public input, explain how the input was considered and why a different approach was recommended or selected.
- Use staff reports, presentations, websites, email updates and other appropriate channels to communicate how public input influenced the process and decisions.

- Notify participants when summaries of input, staff responses or final decisions are available.
- Provide specific examples, when available, of changes made in response to public input.
- Evaluate whether participants understand how their input was considered and use the findings to improve future engagement activities.



Chapter 5 — Partners

MTC aims to meaningfully engage those affected by its policies, actions and decisions and to tailor engagement efforts to each project and its respective audience. Partners may participate by providing subject-matter and local expertise, sharing information through established networks, identifying affected communities, supporting engagement activities and providing input on regional plans, policies, programs and investments.

Below is a sample list of partners MTC strives to engage in its work as required by federal and state law:

- affected public agencies, including local jurisdictions
- affordable housing advocates and organizations
- airport operations
- bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations
- broad-based business organizations
- building trades councils and labor organizations
- chambers of commerce
- city managers
- commercial property interests
- communities with low incomes
- community development agencies and organizations
- community-based organizations
- county transportation agencies
- disability advocacy organizations
- economic development agencies
- educational community and institutions
- elderly and retired persons
- elected officials
- environmental advocates
- environmental protection agencies
- Equity Priority Communities
- federal agencies
- federal land management agencies
- freight shippers

- general public
- health and wellness representatives
- home builder representatives
- homeowner associations
- landowners
- individuals with limited English proficiency
- local government staff
- local planning departments
- natural disaster risk reduction agencies/organizations
- neighborhood and community groups
- neighborhood councils
- organizations serving rural area residents
- organizations serving people experiencing homelessness
- parent organizations
- people experiencing homelessness
- persons with disabilities
- private providers of transportation
- private sector
- providers of freight transportation services
- public agencies
- public health and wellness representatives
- public ports
- public sector
- regional government agencies
- renter/tenant advocacy organizations
- representatives of public transportation employees
- representatives of the disabled
- representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities
- representatives of users of public transit
- senior-serving organizations
- state agencies
- students and youth
- student organizations
- tourism interests
- transit agencies

- transportation and transit advocates
- transportation commissions
- tribal governments and Indigenous communities
- youth-serving organizations

MTC will strive to engage local governments, county transportation agencies, transit agencies and other public agency partners early and at appropriate points in the decision-making process, recognizing their knowledge of local conditions, constituencies and implementation considerations.



Chapter 6 — Tribal Government

Consultation and Engagement with Native American Tribes

MTC acknowledges that the land that makes up the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area has been home to diverse groups of Indigenous peoples with unique cultures and deeply rooted relationships to the land for over 10,000 years. MTC acknowledges these diverse groups of Indigenous peoples as the traditional caretakers of the land that makes up the Bay Area. We honor their connection to the land and the deep respect they hold for this region.

MTC is committed to furthering meaningful partnerships with the tribes of this region and consulting with tribal governments prior to making decisions, taking actions, or implementing programs that may impact their communities. MTC's work strives to ensure programs and activities avoid or minimize adverse impacts to cultural and other important tribal resources.

Federally Recognized Tribes

There are six federally recognized Native American tribes in the San Francisco Bay Area:

- Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians
- Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians
- The Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
- Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria
- Koi Nation of Northern California
- Lytton Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians

MTC is committed to consulting with the region's tribal governments in our major plans and in projects of priority to tribes. Furthermore, MTC routinely invites and encourages the tribes to request formal government-to-government consultation at any time and on any project, program, action or decision. When requested, MTC commissioners and executive staff will participate in government-to-government consultation with tribal governments and will conduct consultation and/or engagement activities in locations convenient for tribal governments.

The groundwork for engagement and consultation with our region’s tribal governments occurs early in an engagement process and is conducted according to tribal preference. MTC staff is committed to working with tribal leaders and their representatives to co-create engagement activities and present topics of interest to the tribes. Additionally, MTC commits to conducting individual meetings and government-to-government consultation with each tribe, upon request.

California Native American Tribes

It is important to note that there are many other tribes with connections to the lands that make up the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, including tribes that are not recognized by the federal government. MTC recognizes these tribes as important stakeholders in the regional planning process that also are affected by MTC’s work and decisions. As such, MTC is committed to building relationships with and engaging the many tribes connected to our region, including:

- Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
- Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista
- Big Valley Rancheria/Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Cachil Dehe Band of Wintun Indians of the Colusa Indian Community
- Chicken Ranch Rancheria Me-Wuk Indians of California
- Coastanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe
- Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Guidiville Indian Rancheria
- Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan
- Lone Band of Miwok Indians
- Kletsel Dehe Wintun Nation of the Cortina Rancheria
- Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians
- Mishewal-Wappo Tribe of Alexander Valley
- Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area
- Nashville Enterprise Miwok-Maidu-Nishinam Tribe
- Northern Valley Yokuts Tribe
- Pinoleville Pomo Nation

- Potter Valley Tribe
- Redwood Valley Rancheria
- Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians Rumsen Am:a Tur:ataj Ohlone
- Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Tamien Nation
- The Confederated Villages of Lisjan
- The Ohlone Indian Tribe
- Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
- Tule River Indian Tribe
- United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria
- Wuksache Indian Tribe/Eshom Valley Band
- Wilton Rancheria
- Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation

Furthermore, MTC provides written notification to all tribes in the region, including federally recognized tribes and all California Native American tribes with cultural resources in the Bay Area, about the opportunity for engagement in the long-range regional plan update process, as required by Assembly Bill 52.

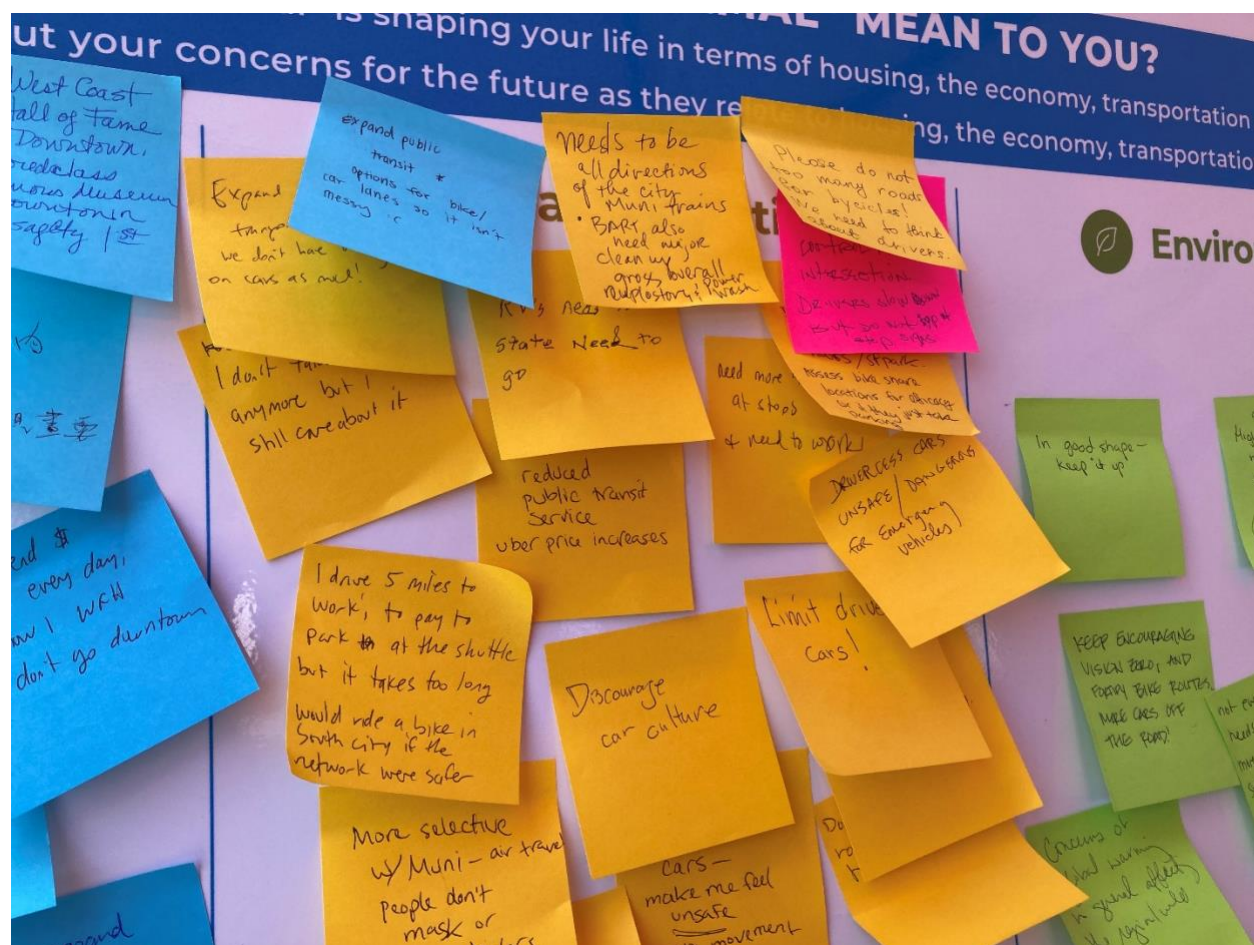
Plan Bay Area 2060, TIP and OWP Engagement

For Plan Bay Area 2060, the next update to the region's long-range plan, the 2027 TIP and the OWP, staff will intentionally build on the relationships developed and the lessons learned over the course of the Plan Bay Area 2050+ development process. Tribes will be engaged in these efforts through early notification, opportunities for consultation, and clear opportunities to provide comment.

Staff will begin with early and direct outreach to each tribe, including the region's six federally recognized tribes and the 31 California tribes with cultural affiliations to the region. This means confirming preferred points of contact and how each tribe wants to communicate and engage with MTC. Engagement will not be limited to formal comment periods. The tribes will be invited to participate early and stay engaged throughout the development of these important documents, and the opportunity for government-to-government consultation will remain an open invitation to all tribes.

Staff also will focus on ensuring tribal input informs outcomes, not just process. Tribal feedback will help inform staff's understanding of culturally sensitive areas, ancestral lands and stewardship priorities, and how those considerations can be incorporated into the long-range planning process. The input will be documented and reflected in staff analysis and policy discussions, and when something cannot be incorporated directly, staff will be transparent about how feedback was considered.

MTC's goal is to continue strengthening relationships with the tribes, so tribal perspectives meaningfully inform regional planning and investment decisions.



Chapter 7 — Revising the Public Participation Plan

MTC’s public participation plan is not a static document, but rather an ongoing strategy that is periodically reviewed and updated to reflect changing circumstances and current best practices. Additionally, as part of every public engagement program developed for Plan Bay Area, MTC sets performance measures to gauge the effectiveness of the engagement program. This evaluation serves to inform and improve future engagement programs, including future updates to this public participation plan.

Furthermore, this PPP may be subject to minor changes from time to time. Minor changes will be noticed and posted on the MTC website. For major updates, the PPP will be released for public review and comment for a period of 45 days, as required by federal regulations, and also will include review by the MTC ABAG Community Advisory Council, the Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee and approval by the Commission. MTC will extend the public comment period by an additional 45 days in instances where major revisions are proposed in response to comments heard.

