

GUIDELINES
for
COUNTYWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLANS

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
March 2000

Countywide Transportation Plans: MTC Guidelines

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Intent of these Guidelines

In 1988, the State legislature passed Assembly Bill 3705 (Eastin), authorizing Bay Area counties, along with the cities and transit operators, to develop Countywide Transportation Plans on a voluntary basis. The provisions in AB 3705 are codified in Section 66531 of the California Government Code, and were modified by the passage of AB 1619 (Lee) (Statutes of 1994, Chapter 25). Among other things, the law specifies: the relationship between Countywide Plans and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the relationship between Countywide Plans and Congestion Management Programs (CMPs), and specific considerations to be addressed in Countywide Plans.

The law directed the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to “develop guidelines to be used in the preparation of county transportation plans.” MTC produced an original set of guidelines for Countywide Plans in 1989, after AB 3705 was passed. MTC revised these Guidelines in 1995, primarily to reflect new legislation at the Federal and State levels.

MTC is again revising and updating these Guidelines, principally to reflect the passage of new legislation at both the Federal and State levels, specifically the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) and SB 45 (Statutes 1997 Chapter 622), respectively.

The intent of the countywide transportation plan guidelines is to:

- Strengthen the relationship between Countywide Plans and the RTP;
- Encourage the compatibility of the countywide plans with those of adjoining counties; and
- Promote implementation of TEA 21.

B. Legislative Mandate for the Countywide Plans and Guidelines

Government Code Section 66531 and revisions in AB 1619 allow for preparation of Countywide Plans within every county in the MTC region by the agency responsible for developing, adopting and updating the CMP (unless, by January 1, 1995, another agency was designated by the county board of supervisors and the city councils). The plans must be developed with participation from the cities and transit operators within the county, and may be updated every two years.

State law calls for Countywide Plans to be the “primary basis” for the RTP, and states that MTC shall add proposals and policies of regional significance to the RTP. The law also states that MTC may use the RTP to resolve conflicts between different counties’ plans.

Government Code Section 66531(c) requires MTC, in consultation with local agencies, to adopt revised guidelines for the Countywide Plans which are consistent with the preparation of the RTP.

C. **Countywide Plan Opportunities**

Countywide Plans can establish a county's long-range transportation vision and goals. This long-range transportation planning context is increasingly important given the complexity of the transportation system in the Bay Area. Second, strategies and investment priorities can be crafted to help achieve the Plan's goals. Countywide Plans also serve as input to MTC's 20 year RTP, which explicitly addresses regional priorities and funding constraints.

Countywide Plans can be particularly effective if they:

- Establish a transportation policy context;
- Provide a focal point for integrating city, county and regional level transportation plans; and
- Prioritize transportation investments for consideration in the RTP development process.

II. **COUNTYWIDE PLANS AND THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RTP)**

State law created an inter-dependent relationship between Countywide Plans and the RTP. While Countywide Plans must consider the most recently adopted RTP, they are also to serve as the primary basis for the RTP. These Countywide Plan guidelines must also be "consistent with the Commission's preparation of the RTP." These requirements ensure that Countywide Plans and the RTP employ a common planning framework, even though the plans differ in scope. The following two sections outline RTP elements which should be considered in Countywide Plans.

A. **RTP Elements Which Should be Considered in Countywide Plans**

Legal requirements for the RTP are established by State law (Govt. Code Sec. 66500 et seq., & Sec. 65080) and Federal law (Title 23, U.S.C., Sec. 134 et. seq.).

Under state law, the RTP must address three "elements." Countywide plans should also address these elements in an appropriate way.

- 1) **Policy Element** - identifies the long range goals, policies and objectives. The five interrelated RTP goals of mobility, economic vitality, community vitality, sensitivity to the environment, and promotion of equity should be recognized, as well as the regional priority to maintain and operate the existing transportation system.
- 2) **Financial Element** -projects the cost to operate and maintain the existing transportation system; estimates reasonably available revenues for transportation over the next 20 years.

The RTP Track 1 estimates should be incorporated into the Countywide Plans. Counties should also include other local sources of funds (development impact or sub regional fees) to the extent they are known. Countywide Plans

may also include estimates of future revenues from new sources that require voter or Legislative action (similar to the RTP “Track 2” revenues).

- 3) **Action Element** - outlines an investment strategy based on funding levels as indicated above for the 20 year period, including the maintenance, operation, and expansion of the system. As allowed in TEA 21, the RTP also includes, for illustrative purposes, additional projects that would be included if reasonable additional resources were available (i.e., “Track 2”).

The RTP is also developed in accordance with federal metropolitan planning requirements, including the following considerations:

- TEA 21 planning factors (see Appendix A);
- Integrated management and operation of an intermodal system, including bicycle/pedestrian facilities;
- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Architecture;
- Transportation Control Measures to attain and maintain federal air quality standards; federal air quality “conformity” requirements for the RTP;
- Americans with Disabilities Act planning;
- Consideration of the Presidential Executive Order on Environmental Justice; and
- A public participation process to provide the broader public with an opportunity to comment on the proposed Plan.

These federal RTP requirements may be considered in preparing countywide plans.

B. Countywide Plans as the Primary Basis for the RTP

Countywide Plans can best inform the RTP if both plans use a common set of planning assumptions. The most important are:

- Demographic projections and transportation modeling methodologies that are consistent with those used in the RTP.
- Revenue estimates for State (STIP) and Federal (STP/CMAQ) revenue that are consistent with those used in the RTP.
- Costs for maintenance and operations of the existing system, including the following categories: transit capital rehabilitation and operations, and local street pavement and non-pavement.
- Inclusion of MTC’s Regional Customer Service Programs.

In developing the Countywide Plans, use of a corridor planning framework, as detailed in the RTP and applied through the Corridor Management Plans, should be considered.

Situations may occur where local and regional priorities can not be fully accommodated within a financially constrained RTP investment strategy, where there are conflicts between strategies in different counties, or where regional and local policy are not in complete concurrence. Because State law does not

prescribe a course to follow in such situations, they must be resolved through the planning process. This process is best supported by early and continuous consultation between MTC and the CMAAs (or other designated agency responsible for developing the Countywide Plan).

III. COUNTYWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN CONTENT

Countywide plans should consider highways, arterials, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities as integral parts of a single transportation system for moving people and freight, and develop strategies for its optimum performance. At the regional level, MTC has defined a Metropolitan Transportation System (MTS) as the focus of planning and system management efforts.

Under existing legislation, Countywide Plans may include, but are not limited to, the following content areas (original text from the legislation is in bold underlined italics):

A. Investments to Sustain MTS Effectiveness and Efficiency

Recommendations for investments necessary to sustain the effectiveness and efficiency of the county portion of the Metropolitan Transportation System, as defined cooperatively by the Commission and the agency; (Section 66531(c)(1))

MTC Suggestions:

- MTC has identified the MTS within each county. The current MTS should be identified in the Countywide Plan, along with any proposed future additions (optional).
- The Plan should indicate the cumulative shortfall for maintaining and operating transit systems and local streets within the county, both MTS and non-MTS. MTC will provide updated financial information as part of the preparation of the RTP.
- System Performance Measures (optional)
System performance measures may be included. These may be the same as those in the Performance Element of the CMP, or may include other measures, such as those evaluated in MTC's Environmental Impact Report for the RTP.
- Corridor and Other Studies
Countywide Plans should summarize the results of recently completed corridor studies and relevant recommendations, and identify ongoing studies.

B. Transportation System and Demand Management

Consideration of transportation system and demand management strategies which reinforce the requirements contained in Section 65089 (i.e., the CMP statutes); (Section 66531(c)(2))

MTC Suggestions:

- Include descriptions of the relevant Corridor Management Plans and Corridor Management Objectives (prepared as a basis for receiving certain flexible TEA 21

funds).

- Include descriptions of MTC Regional Customer Service Programs, including TransLink®, TravInfo™, Traffic Operations System (TOS), Traveler Information, Welfare to Work, Ridesharing, Signal Coordination, Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC), etc. that are relevant in the county. Descriptions of these programs are available from MTC.

C. **Transportation Impacts of Land Use**

Consideration of transportation impacts associated with land use designations embodied in the general plans of the county and cities within the county and projections of economic and population growth available from the Association of Bay Area Governments. (Section 66531(c)(3))

MTC Suggestions:

- In order to provide consistency with the RTP, and with major corridor studies undertaken in each county, the countywide plan should evaluate transportation system performance using the most recent Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) demographic projections.
- Additionally, as provided for in the statutes, the Countywide Plan may analyze transportation performance of the Plan based on current land use designations embodied in the general plans of the county and the cities within the county.
- MTC anticipates still other alternative land use options may be of interest to local policy makers. Alternative land use assumptions should be developed with recognition of current land use conditions, local land use plans and accompanying regulations.
- Should the CMA or agency with similar authority decide to adopt a plan based upon a preferred alternative land use / demographic projection that differs significantly from ABAG's projections, the Countywide Plans should indicate:
 - the basis for a divergence from the ABAG projections, and
 - the implications on Countywide and RTP transportation investment priorities of the alternative land use assumptions.
- MTC encourages local agencies to review their general plans to consider ways to coordinate the general plans with desired transportation investments.

D. **Transportation System Capacity Conservation Strategies**

Consideration of strategies that conserve existing transportation system capacity, such as pricing policies or long-term land use and transportation integration policies jointly developed by the commission and the agencies designated pursuant to Section 65089 (i.e., the CMAs) (Section 66531(c)(4))

Transportation system capacity conservation strategies are intended to preserve the most capacity from the existing facilities.

MTC Suggestions:

- Corridor studies should consider system management opportunities (incident management, Caltrans Traffic Operation Systems (TOS), signal coordination, traveler information, transit coordination, ridesharing, etc.).
- Corridor and Countywide Plans should consider Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) opportunities.
- Certain corridors may consider “Value Pricing” of new facilities as a management option.

E. Financial Considerations

Consideration of expected transportation revenues as estimated by the commission, the impact of these estimated revenues on investment recommendations, and options for enhanced transportation revenues. (Section 66531(c)(5)) The County Transportation Plan shall include recommended transportation improvements for the succeeding 10- and 20-year periods.
(Section 66531(e))

MTC Suggestions:

- Countywide Plans should consider the most recent MTC estimates for future State and Federal revenues. These estimates have historically been updated in conjunction with RTP updates.
- The Plan should provide estimates of current local revenues, such as those from existing local sales tax expenditure programs and local fee programs.
- The Countywide Plan should indicate the cost of projects in today’s dollars. If future dollars are used, inflation factors from the RTP should be utilized.
- The Plan should indicate how federal/state/local revenues are assigned for each project.
- If the Plan includes a Track 2 component, it should identify the sources and amounts of new revenue assumed.

IV. COUNTYWIDE PLAN PREPARATION AND SUBMITTAL TO MTC

A. Public Participation

Development and adoption of Countywide Plans should include a broad and open public participation process, including outreach to any under-represented interests.

B. Regional Coordination

The Plan should be reviewed with the Partnership Planning and Operations Committee (PPOC). This would assist in identifying issues with the RTP, as well as with county plans in adjoining counties.

C. Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

MTC's RTP is subject to CEQA review. In order for Countywide Plans to be the "primary basis" for the RTP, they too must undergo CEQA during their development.

D. Submittal to MTC

State law governing the RTP (Government Code 65080(c)) was recently changed, modifying the scheduling requirement for Regional Transportation Planning Agencies with urbanized areas to submit RTPs every three years, instead of the previously required every two years. Specifically, MTC will be required to submit an updated RTP to the California Transportation Commission and Caltrans every three years beginning by September 1, 2001. While MTC has not yet adopted a schedule for the next RTP, it is anticipated that draft RTPs will typically be circulated in early Spring, and final RTPs adopted in late Summer.

In order to maximize consistency between the RTP and Countywide Plans, it would be best for Countywide Plan development to slightly precede development of the RTP. Major milestones for the RTP and Countywide Plans could be reviewed by the Partnership Plans and Operations Committee.

Appendix A

TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY (TEA 21) SEVEN FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

As per USC, Title 24, Section 134(f)

The metropolitan transportation planning process for a metropolitan area under this section shall provide for consideration of projects and strategies that will

- A) Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- B) Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- C) Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight;
- D) Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life;
- E) Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- F) Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- G) Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

Appendix B

Legislative Statutes for Countywide Transportation Plans

66531. (a) Each county within the jurisdiction of the commission, together with the cities and transit operators within the county, may, every two years, develop and update a transportation plan for the county and the cities within the county. The county transportation plan shall be submitted to the commission by the agency that has been designated as the agency responsible for developing, adopting and updating the county's congestion management program pursuant to Section 65089, unless, not later than January 1, 1995, another public agency is designated by resolutions adopted by the county board of supervisors and the city councils of a majority of the cities representing a majority of the population in the incorporated area of the county. Nothing in this section requires additional action by the cities and county, if a joint powers agreement delegates the responsibility for the county transportation plan to the agency responsible for developing, adopting, and updating the county's congestion management program pursuant to Section 65089.

(b) The county transportation plans shall be consistent with, and provide a long-range vision for, the congestion management programs in the San Francisco Bay area prepared pursuant to Section 65089. The county transportation plans shall also be responsive to the planning factors included in Section 134 of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-240).

(c) The commission, in consultation with local agencies, shall develop guidelines to be used in the preparation of county transportation plans. These guidelines shall be consistent with the commission's preparation of the regional transportation plan pursuant to Section 65081. These plans shall include recommendations for investment necessary to mitigate the impact of congestion caused by an airport that is owned by the county, or city and county, and located in another county. The plans may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Recommendations for investments necessary to sustain the effectiveness and efficiency of the county portion of the metropolitan transportation system, as defined cooperatively by the commission and the agency designated pursuant to Section 65089.

(2) Consideration of transportation system and demand management strategies which reinforce the requirements contained in Section 65089.

(3) Consideration of transportation impacts associated with land use designations embodied in the general plans of the county and cities within the county and projections of economic and population growth available from the Association of Bay Area Governments.

(4) Consideration of strategies that conserve existing transportation system capacity, such as pricing policies or long-term land use and transportation integration policies jointly developed by the commission and the agencies designated pursuant to Section 65089.

(5) Consideration of expected transportation revenues as estimated by the commission, the impact of these estimated revenues on

investment recommendations, and options for enhanced transportation revenues.

(d) The commission shall adopt revised guidelines not later than January 1, 1995.

(e) The county transportation plan shall include recommended transportation improvements for the succeeding 10- and 20-year periods.

(f) The county transportation plans shall be the primary basis for the commission's regional transportation plan and shall be considered in the preparation of the regional transportation improvement program. To provide regional consistency, the county transportation plans shall consider the most recent regional transportation plan adopted by the commission. Where the counties' transportation plans conflict, the commission may resolve the differences as part of the regional transportation plan. The commission shall add proposals and policies of regional significance to the regional transportation plan.

(g) With the consent of the commission, a county may have the commission prepare its county transportation plan.

(h) The counties, together with the commission, shall jointly develop a funding strategy for the preparation of each county's transportation plan.

Appendix C

Table 1: Transportation Control Measures in the Federal Air Quality and Maintenance Plan for the Bay Area

FEDERAL TCMs		DESCRIPTION
TCM 1	Reaffirm commitment to 28% transit ridership increase between 1978 and 1983.	Increase transit ridership according to the transit operator's five-year plans.
TCM 2	Support post-1983 improvements identified in the operator's five-year plans, and, after consultation with the operators, adopt ridership increase target for the period 1983 through 1987.	Support productivity improvements in transit operators' short-range plans.
TCM 3	Seek to expand and improve public transit beyond committed levels.	This TCM is to upgrade and expand transit service between the years 1982/83 and 1987/88. The target was to increase the combined fleet size by 15% during this period.
TCM 4	Continue to support development of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.	Implement HOV lanes where justified on a case-by-case basis; also includes highway ramp meters with HOV bypass lanes.
TCM 5	Continues to support RIDES efforts.	Support for RIDES efforts in regionwide commuter matching services, vanpooling and employer services designed to encourage employees to participate in ridesharing activities.
TCM 7	Reaffirm commitment to preferential parking program.	Support the development of park-and-ride lots, where commuters can leave their cars and complete trips by other modes.
TCM 8	Encourage transit operators to work with Caltrans to identify underutilized lots along major transit lines that could be used as park-and-ride lots.	Applies to Caltrans' joint use park-and-ride program to establish lots in existing private parking areas.
TCM 9	Expand Commute Alternatives Program.	Encourages employers to promote alternatives to commuting in the single-occupant vehicle. Includes funding to conduct employer transportation coordinator training classes, market ridesharing to the media and employers, and outreach programs to employers.
TCM 10	Develop Information Program for Local Governments	This TCM consists of providing information to local governments and developers detailing the role of local governments in addressing commute transportation and providing technical assistance.
TCM 13	Increase bridge tolls to \$1.00 on all bridges.	Would raise tolls to \$1.00 on the Antioch, Bay, Benicia and Carquinez bridges.
TCM 14	Bay Bridge surcharge of \$1.00	Increase Bay Bridge toll to \$2.00 to discourage single occupant automobile use and improve transit.
TCM 15	Increase state gas tax by 9 cents	Raise State gasoline taxes from 9 cents to 18 cents per gallon. This measure takes credit for emission reductions due to a full 9-cent increase, phased in by 1995.
TCM 17	Continue post-earthquake transit service	Continuation of ferry service initiated after the October 1989 earthquake and the expanded BART peak period service.

Cont'd.

FEDERAL TCMs		DESCRIPTION
TCM 18	Sacramento-Bay Area Amtrak service	Implement near-term improvements recommended in ACR 132 Rail Study. Assumes three trains in each direction between Sacramento and the Bay Area.
TCM 19	Upgrade CalTrain service	Increase service frequency to 66 trains per day. Extend service to Gilroy.
TCM 20	Regional High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane System Plan	Expand and improve HOV concept first proposed in TCM 4 by developing and implementing the HOV Lane Master Plan. Includes 221 directional miles of HOV lanes.
TCM 21	Regional Transit Coordination	Includes multiple coordination initiatives: fare coordination, service coordination.
TCM 22	Expand Regional Transit Connection (RTC) ticket distribution	Expand on-going MTC program to provide a regional clearinghouse for sale of transit tickets to employers; encourage employers to subsidize tickets.
TCM 23	Employer audits	Development of a program to review the TSM programs of selected employers in the region and to suggest actions to enhance programs. Targets specific large or mid-size employers and small employers for improved commute alternatives program.
TCM 24	Expand signal timing program to new cities	Establishes a program to provide technical assistance to cities in the form of traffic monitoring, design of signal timing plans, and hardware improvements.
TCM 25	Maintain existing signal timing programs for local streets	Involves the provision of technical assistance to cities for periodic program adjustments and coordination with adjacent cities.
TCM 26	Incident management on Bay Area freeways	Incident management is part of Caltrans' Traffic Operations Systems (TOS). Assumes emission reductions from the initial phases of TOS on the approaches to the Bay Bridge.
TCM 27	Update MTC guidance on development of local TSM programs	MTC report "Key Considerations for Developing Local Government TSM Programs" (December 1988) contains guidance on developing TSM programs and would be updated.
TCM 28	Local Transportation Systems Management (TSM) initiatives	This TCM accounts for effects of new local TSM initiatives.

**Table 2: Transportation Control Measures Adopted by the
Bay Area Air Quality Management District in the
1997 Bay Area Clean Air Plan to Meet the California Clean Air Act**

STATE TCMs		DESCRIPTION
TCM 1	Support voluntary employer based trip reduction programs	Assist with training employee transportation coordinators and city/county transportation demand management coordinators; with starting-up transportation management associations; and with telecommuting programs, employee commute surveys, vanpool programs.
TCM 3	Improve areawide transit service	Increase local bus service; continue post-earthquake increase in BART service; expand rail service; upgrade CalTrain service.
TCM 4	Improve regional rail service	Based on MTC Resolution No. 1876, revised.
TCM 5	Improve access to rail and ferry services	Improve feeder bus service and bicycle access; at transit stations add parking and encourage preferential parking for electric vehicles; add private shuttles from transit stations to employment centers.
TCM 6	Improve interregional rail service	Implement new intercity rail service in Auburn-Sacramento-Oakland-San Jose corridor
TCM 7	Improve ferry service	Per MTC Regional Ferry Plan.
TCM 8	Construct carpool/express bus lanes on freeways	Based on “2005 HOV Master Plan”.
TCM 9	Improve bicycle access and facilities	Maintain Bicycle Advisory Committees and comprehensive bicycle plans; encourage bicycles on transit vehicles and on all bridges; encourage employers and developers to provide bicycle access and facilities.
TCM 10	Youth transportation	Allocate funds for discount youth transit tickets; encourage carpooling among students; convert school buses to clean-fuel vehicles.
TCM 11	Install freeway / arterial Metro Traffic Operations System (MTOS)	MTOS includes traffic surveillance, traffic advisory signs, incident management, ramp metering; develop automated electronic toll collection facilities.
TCM 12	Improve arterial traffic management	Expand local signal timing programs for cities; study signal pre-emption for buses. Develop MTS Management Strategy. Improve arterials for buses and bicycles.
TCM 13	Transit use incentives	Improve coordination between transit operators regarding routes, schedules, transfers, fares; expand distribution of transit passes and tickets; consider fare reductions on off-peak.
TCM 14	Improve Rideshare/Vanpool Services and Incentives	Enhance ridesharing marketing services and provide incentives to vanpool and carpool. Examine opportunities to reduce vanpool vehicle acquisition and operation costs.

Cont'd.

STATE TCMs		DESCRIPTION
TCM 15	Local Clean Air Plans, Policies and Programs	Encourage cities and counties to incorporate air quality beneficial policies and programs into local planning and development activities, with a particular focus on subdivision, zoning and site design measures that reduce the number and length of single-occupant automobile trips.
TCM 16	Intermittent Control Measure / Public Education	Encourage public to reduce motor vehicle use on days of predicted ozone exceedances through "Spare the Air" program. Continue public education program to inform Bay Area residents about status of regional air quality, health effects of air pollution, sources of pollution, and measures that individuals and communities can take to help improve air quality.
TCM 17	Conduct Demonstration Projects	Promote demonstration projects to develop new strategies to reduce motor vehicle emissions. Potential projects will include telecommuting and electronic toll collection.
TCM 18	Transportation Pricing Reform / Implement Market Based Pricing Measures	Measures would be based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Smog Fee": vehicle registration fee based on emissions and miles driven. - Gas Tax increase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider expanding congestion pricing upon successful completion of Bay Bridge congestion pricing demonstration project - Encourage expansion of parking cash-out programs. Use revenues for transportation alternatives and equity programs.
TCM 19	Advocate planning and design of development projects to facilitate pedestrian travel	Encourage cities and counties to incorporate pedestrian travel into local planning and development activities. MTC has published and distributed resource information concerning community-oriented transportation planning "Moving Toward More Community-Oriented Transportation Strategies for The San Francisco Bay Area: A Resource Guide". MTC's 1998 RTP identifies \$217 in TEA funding and \$95 million in STP federal funds for the Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) program over the next 20 years.
TCM 20	Promote traffic calming	Encourage cities and counties to consider traffic calming where appropriate. Traffic calming is included as one component in the information distributed in "Moving Toward More Community-Oriented Transportation Strategies for The San Francisco Bay Area: A Resource Guide" and in the TLC programs, as described in TCM 19.