

TRANSPORTATION 2035: *CHANGE IN MOTION*

Fact Sheet

Charting a 25-Year Course for Transportation

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is responsible for preparing the long-range Regional Transportation Plan for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. Working in conjunction with the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, MTC is now preparing the latest update to this plan, which will guide the region through 2035.

Known as Transportation 2035: Change in Motion, the new plan will detail a comprehensive strategy to not only protect our existing transportation assets but also to accommodate future growth, alleviate congestion, reduce pollution and ensure mobility for all Bay Area residents, regardless of income.

To qualify for state or federal funding, all Bay Area transportation projects — whether for transit, highways, local streets, airports, seaports, railroads or bicycle/pedestrian facilities — must be included in the plan. Federal law requires the plan to be “financially constrained,” or based on a realistic forecast of future revenues. The plan must also be consistent with federal clean air requirements, and the projects, taken as a whole, must not worsen regional air quality.

The Transportation 2035 Plan does not begin with a blank slate. For example, a significant share of expected funds will need to be invested in the ongoing operation, management, maintenance and rehabilitation of the region’s transportation infrastructure and services already in place. Making room for new projects and programs in addition to addressing prior identified needs is always a challenge.

New Vision for the Bay Area’s Future

At the core of the Transportation 2035 Plan will be a vision of what our transportation network should look like in 2035 — including what will be needed to address future growth and congestion, and the role transportation will play to meet current and future requirements to improve air quality and protect our climate. This emphasis on a shared vision for the Bay Area’s future marks a departure from previous regional transportation plans and establishes one of the first challenges of the Transportation 2035 process. A key focus of the vision will be assessing how the region can achieve ambitious performance targets for the economy, environment and social equity (see back). Making progress demands not only investments to the transportation system, but also integration of our transportation network with a new view of land-use development.

While the planning process puts a vision for the future front and center, it also must take a hard look at the tradeoffs required for various options given existing and potentially new funding sources. The answers won’t be easy. Over the next 15 months, MTC will work with dozens of other agencies, and consult with thousands of local residents and businesses, leading to the adoption of the new plan in early 2009. It’s a long journey. And we take a big step today.



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2035
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AMBITIOUS TARGETS SHARPEN THE VISION

Among the guidelines MTC and its partners will use to steer development of the Transportation 2035 Plan are specific performance targets designed to help achieve goals for the regional economy, enhance environmental quality and promote equitable distribution of transportation resources. Each signals an aggressive commitment to change. Illustrative targets keyed to goals for the environment, economy and social equity will inform development of the Transportation 2035 Plan vision.

TARGET 1 — Reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels

In the Bay Area, the transportation sector contributes some 40 percent to 50 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions, which in 2006 averaged 90,000 tons per day, up from 87,000 tons per day in 1990. The state Legislature's passage last year of the California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) mandates that emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases be reduced to 1990 levels or lower by the year 2020. Our target extends that goal to year 2035, and would reduce CO₂ emissions to no more than 52,000 tons per day (an amount equal to 40 percent below 1990 levels).

TARGET 2 — Reduce emissions of finer particulates (PM_{2.5}) by 10 percent and coarser particulates (PM₁₀) by 45 percent

Particulate matter is a term for a mixture of tiny solid and liquid particles — such as those from dust, dirt, soot and smoke — found in the air. When inhaled, these particles can settle deep in the lungs and pose serious health problems. This target reflects state air quality standards calling for reducing emissions of finer particulates measuring no more than 2.5 microns in diameter (such as those from tailpipe exhaust or burning wood) from 20 tons per day in 2006 to 18 tons per day or less by 2035. Emissions of coarser particulates measuring up to 10 microns in diameter (such as from road dust) are to be slashed from 69 tons per day in 2006 to 38 tons per day by 2035.

TARGET 3 — Reduce daily per-capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by 10 percent

VMT — defined as one vehicle traveling one mile — is a common measure of roadway use and economic activity. To achieve this target, the Bay Area's VMT would have to fall to an average of 17.1 miles traveled per person, per day in 2035, from 19 miles in 2006. There is a strong correlation between VMT and harmful vehicle emissions, including carbon dioxide (CO₂) and particulate matter. Pending state legislation (SB 375) in its original form called for creating aggressive targets for reducing VMT in response to global climate change (the bill now directs the California Air Resources Board to establish greenhouse gas reduction targets for large metropolitan areas).

TARGET 4 — Reduce per-capita delay by 20 percent

Bay Area residents consistently rank traffic as their number one concern. The San Francisco-Oakland area has the second-worst congestion in the nation. This degrades our quality of life and imposes enormous economic costs, not least of which is the inefficient and unreliable movement of freight. This target calls for reducing congestion from 26.7 annual vehicle hours of delay per capita in 2006 to 21.3 hours by 2035.

TARGET 5 — Decrease by 10 percent the share of low-income and lower middle-income residents' household income consumed by transportation and housing

Bay Area families with annual incomes under \$70,000 now spend a combined average of 67 percent of household income on housing (45 percent) and transportation (22 percent). A national study shows that in the Bay Area, the share low-income households spend on housing and transportation combined is about 10 percent higher than the national average (due in part to the high cost of housing here). To achieve the Transportation 2035 target, the combined share of household earnings spent on transportation and housing by low-income and lower middle-income Bay Area families would have to fall to 61 percent.

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Association of
Bay Area Governments



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