

TRANSIT TRANSFORMATION TASK FORCE MEETING 9

AGENDA ITEM: 5

SUBJECT: Findings and Policy Recommendations for the Report to the Legislature

a. Findings and policy recommendations on first and last mile access to transit.

ACTION: Approve, deny, or amend initial policy recommendations related to first and last mile access to transit.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve or amend initial policy recommendations related to first and last mile access to transit.

BACKGROUND:

Senate Bill (SB) 125 established and convened the Transit Transformation Task Force (TTTF) to include transit representatives from various organizations to establish a structured, coordinated process for engagement of all parties to develop policy recommendations to grow transit ridership and improve the transit experience for all users of those services. The TTTF includes members representing transit operators, both small and large operating in urban and rural jurisdictions, the Department of Transportation, local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, regional transportation planning organizations, transportation advocacy organizations with expertise in public transit, labor organizations, academic institutions, the Senate Committee on Transportation, the Assembly Committee on Transportation, and other stakeholders. The legislation requires the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), in consultation with the TTTF, to prepare and submit a report of findings and policy recommendations to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature. This report includes identifying where statutory changes would be needed to implement recommendations based on the task force's efforts, and the financial and technical feasibility of those recommendations. Section 13979.3.e and section 13979.3.f include the required topics that must be addressed in the report, with section 13979.3.e requiring a detailed analysis on the listed topics, and section 13979.3.f requiring recommendations on the listed topics.

TTTF Meeting 6, was held in Monterey, California on October 28, 2024. Topics discussed included:

- Strategies to provide first- and last-mile access to transit - [Government Code Section 13979.3\(1\)\(f\)\(1\)\(E\)](#)

This staff report contains an initial set of findings and recommendations on these topics, developed through discussions with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), the Technical Working Group (TWG), and the TTTF.

DISCUSSION

A. FIRST- AND LAST-MILE ACCESS TO TRANSIT

Government Code section 13979.3, subdivision (f) states that the report shall include recommendations on strategies to provide first- and last-mile access to transit. The following sections will highlight the draft findings and policy recommendations for providing first- and last-mile access to transit.

Findings

Ensuring that riders have first- and last- mile access is essential, as transit use declines by 90% when riders must walk more than a half mile. In urban regions in California (such as the Bay Area, Los Angeles, and San Diego), more than half of the population lives more than a half mile distance from high quality transit. First- and last-mile solutions could potentially increase ridership for people who live further away from transit. California could support first and last mile access through:

- **Infrastructure** – Building out a network of micro-mobility infrastructure, such as bicycle lanes and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible sidewalks to support first- and last-mile solutions,
- **Service Provision** – Operating shared micro mobility and/or active transportation modes (e.g., shared bicycles and scooters) as well as services for older and disabled transit users, and
- **Integration and Governance** – Improving information and payment systems (e.g., bicycle availability and open payments) and mandating first- and last-mile planning / implementation for local jurisdictions nearby.

Taskforce members agreed on the importance of first- and last- mile access to transit. Members called for the inventory of accessibility features at bus stops and transit/rail stations, for planning purposes and for providing rider information on accessibility. They also suggested creating HD maps of areas around transit stations in California, detailing sidewalk quality, street furniture, and accessibility. These maps would help address universal accessibility needs, particularly for the aging population and individuals with disabilities. Addressing this aspect of safety is equally important in creating a comprehensive approach to transit accessibility and rider well-being.

Members emphasized the need for consistent funding for active transportation projects, which are typically over-subscribed and often the first to face cuts during budget deficits. Members advocated for additional funding streams or adding flexibility to existing programs to enhance bike and pedestrian infrastructure surrounding transit hubs. Additionally, they advocated for a more efficient and streamlined process for delivering active transportation projects,

pointing out that the current funding framework, which treats active transportation like highway projects, is outdated. Given the sustainability and relatively lower cost of active transportation investments, a more streamlined approach is crucial for accelerating progress.

Lastly, SME interviewees discussed the need for coordination and collaboration between agencies on the planning, policy making, and implementation of features for first- and last- mile access to transit, such as consistency in sidewalks and mobility lanes, and accessibility features along transit routes. They also stressed public oversight over micro mobility companies and transportation network companies, and the need for public agencies to have a regulatory role at the regional and state levels.

Note that recommendations regarding payment systems were presented in an earlier staff report.

Principles, Strategies, and Policy Recommendations

Better Service, Better Outcomes	
JJ. Reform planning process to improve access to transit	JJ.1. Empower regional agencies to establish clear urban design guidelines that promote active transportation in areas surrounding transit hubs (including factors such as building placement, parking and loading areas, protected sidewalks, and mobility lanes)
	JJ.2. Streamline permitting processes and timelines for delivering active transportation projects near transit hubs and stations
	JJ.3. Assess conditions and collect data on sidewalk, mobility lanes, and transit hubs and create GIS maps highlighting existing accessibility infrastructure, including sidewalk quality and continuity, street furniture such as benches and lighting, and transit hub features such as signage and shelter to identify and address locations
	JJ.4. Create a statewide registry of bus stops, each with a unique ID, and include stop amenity information
KK. Ensure consistent and flexible funding for active transportation and first- and last- mile access to transit	KK.1. Increase funding for active transportation (e.g. Active Transportation Program funding) with reduced variability from year-to-year
	KK.2. Encourage existing and new State funding for active transportation projects to prioritize its use for projects that better increase first/last mile access to transit

LL. Coordinate and collaborate to provide first- and last- mile access to transit across jurisdictions	LL.1. Ensure interagency coordination on first- and last- mile planning and implementation between MPOs, local jurisdictions, and transit agencies
	LL.2. Create opt-in State Purchasing Schedule agreements for bikeshare infrastructure and service providers