South Bay Cities Council of Governments

September 27, 2018

TO: SBCCOG Board of Directors

FROM: Steve Lantz, SBCCOG Transportation Director

RE: SBCCOG Transportation Update – September 2018

Adherence to Strategic Plan:
Goal A: Environment, Transportation and Economic Development. Facilitate, implement and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay.

FEDERAL

Federal Transit Administration Withholding $1.4 Billion in Rail Transit Funds
The Federal Transit Administration is sitting on $1.4 billion dollars that was earmarked for new transit projects. Just $25 million of the $1.4 billion appropriated for new transit projects in 2018 has been allocated since it was awarded by Congress in March.

Just one project has received any portion of the 2018 appropriations while, 17 other shovel-ready projects await funding, including Phase 3 of the L. A. Metro Purple Line rail extension between Century and Westwood. Metro is advancing local funding to continue project development with the hope that the federal share of funding will be forthcoming.

Federal Autonomous Vehicle Regulatory Bill May Be Revived in U. S. Senate
Autonomous vehicle manufacturers may have succeeded in reviving the dormant AV Start Act (S. 1885), a federal bill that would create a hands-off national regulatory approach to vehicle standards for the emerging vehicle technologies.

Opponents of the bill claim it would essentially codify into federal law the same statewide approach that allows self-driving vehicles to operate in Arizona with few regulations, almost no oversight, and no ability for local communities to learn basic details about where and how these vehicles are operating. The bill also would preempt cities and states from overseeing how and where these vehicles operate in their communities.

The Senate is considering attaching the AV START Act to the Federal Aviation Administration's multi-year reauthorization that must pass before the end of September.

STATE

Amended AB 2989 Would Limit Electric Scooter Users and Uses

AB 2989, as amended in the California Senate on August 16th would permit a local authority to authorize the operation of a motorized scooter on a highway with a speed limit of up to 35 miles per hour, an increase from the statewide limit of 25 miles per hour. However, the existing maximum 15 mile per hour speed limit for the operation of a motorized scooter would still apply regardless of a higher speed limit applicable to the highway.

AB 2989 would require the operator of a motorized scooter to have a valid driver's license or instruction permit. Electric scooter users that are under 18 years old would be required to wear a helmet but those over 18 years of age would not.

The bill also would prohibit operation of a motorized scooter on a sidewalk, except as may be necessary to enter or leave adjacent property. Riders couldn't ride tandem and would be required to have one hand on the handlebars. It would be illegal to leave a motorized scooter lying on its side on any sidewalk, or park a motorized scooter on a sidewalk in any other position, so that there is not an adequate path for pedestrian traffic. And the bill keeps the door open for local regulations of scooter use.

The bill goes back to the Assembly for second vote, then it's off to the Governor's desk.

Lawsuit Challenges Cities' Authority To Impound Vehicles Being Used As A Home

In Los Angeles alone, according to the 2018 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, approximately 9,000 Angelenos live in their car, van, or camper. Cities routinely issue parking tickets then tow and impound the vehicles in compliance with the California law that allows cities to tow a car away if that car has five or more overdue parking tickets.

Offenders must reimburse the tow charge, roughly $500. They also need to pay off their original tickets and the accrued fines on those tickets, which can be $1,000 or more. In addition, it usually costs $71 for every day the car is stored at the tow yard.

The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights in San Francisco has filed a lawsuit to challenge that policy as unconstitutional. The suit argues that cities are impounding the vehicles merely to collect revenue with the adverse impact of increasing homelessness. Their claim is that because losing those vehicles to impoundment can mean the loss of work and home, it can be a tipping point into a life on the streets. Supporters of the current law state that they need to regulate use of the public curb to assure turnover of the scarce public resource.

If their suit is successful, as long as the vehicle was not used in a crime, the vehicle would be returned to the owner but the fines and fees would still need to be paid.

REGION

L.A. Metro Launches Online Tool To Garner Nextgen-Bus Study Input

L. A. Metro launched a new online interactive engagement tool to gather more public input as part of the agency's NextGen Bus Study. The new online engagement tool can be found at: **metro.net/nextgen** by clicking on the icon labeled "Rank Your Priorities." Once there, users can choose from a menu of items that helps them decide what's most important to them as bus riders — for example more mid-day, evening, or weekend service or more real-time information.

The study goal is to create a new bus network that will be more relevant, reflective of, and attractive to the residents of Los Angeles County. Metro hopes the new network will improve service to current customers, attract new customers, and win back past customers when it launches in the fall of 2019. Input gathered over the next few months will be used by Metro to design conceptual bus network service plans for further public review.

L.A. Metro Readies Launch of Multi-Purpose TAP Card

L.A. Metro is putting the finishing touches on upgrades to its Transit Access Pass — known to riders as simply the TAP card – to allow use of the card to pay for a full range of public and private mobility services. The new "TAPforce" platform will roll out in the Fall with bike share being the first application. Metro is also talking to carshare and electric vehicle charging firms.

TAPforce will be an account-based system allowing riders to load money into their account, and then use that account to pay for rides on the Metro's bus and light rail system and other participating providers. Future applications could include parking, microtransit and fare subsidy plans, and promotional programs to increase ridership that include a fare component.

The TAP system already partners with more than two dozen other transit agencies serving Los Angeles County facilitating 29 million transactions a month with more than 750 fare products. The move is similar to undertakings by other transit agencies, like the Chicago Transit Authority, to develop account-based systems that seek to marry public and private transit providers, in an effort to respond to the changing ways residents move around cities.

TRENDS

Bird Plans To Fund Protected Bike Lanes And Safety Projects

Bird, the Los Angeles-based dockless electric scooter company, announced two new initiatives on August 2nd seeking to position the company as a safety leader among the current crop of urban mobility startups—and help give its users safe places to ride in cities.

Bird announced that it will begin steering revenue into a dedicated fund to expand transit infrastructure in the cities where it operates. The initiative would set aside $1 per day from each scooter in operation to help cities build new protected bike lanes, as well as maintain existing ones by repainting and repairing them.

Bird will also form a new Global Safety Advisory Board led by David Strickland, former head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), that will "create, advise, and implement global programs, campaigns, and products to improve the safety of those riding e-scooters." The advisory board will also focus on the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists who share space with these riders.

Waymo and Valley Metro Team to Test Linking Transit And Ride Hailing

Autonomous car developer Waymo (a subsidiary of Google's parent company, Alphabet) began a two-stage experiment in Phoenix, AZ, by teaming up with Valley Metro, the region's public transit system to test how to integrate transit service with a first/last mile ride between the rider's home and the nearest transit station.

The goal of the pilot program is to figure out if Waymo's autonomous cars can increase access to public transportation – to learn if people that have a low-cost way to hail a ride to a bus/light rail

station that is maybe a bit too far to walk to, will be more inclined to use public transportation. Autonomous ride-hailing is expected to cost less than today's ride hailing since companies won't have to pay a driver) This experiment could help both Waymo and Valley Metro figure out if people might embrace the connected service.

In the first stage of the experiment 30 to 50 Valley Metro workers will have the opportunity to make their first/last mile journey to their transit stop in one of Waymo's autonomous vehicles. All they have to do is simply hail a ride via the company's app.

In the second stage of Waymo's public transportation experiment, the company will open up this service to Valley Metro RideChoice travelers, typically seniors and people with disabilities for whom using the standard public transportation system might be too expensive or impractical.

Although this is the first pilot project to use autonomous vehicles, similar experiments have been occurring between Ride-Hailing firms and Transit since 2016. The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority did in 2016.

When ridership across St. Petersburg, Florida's fixed route Suncoast Transit Authority bus lines plummeted by 11% the agency was forced to eliminate some of its existing routes, and to rethink how it was doing business. To cover the areas it had left transit-bare, PSTA became the first agency in the country to subsidize Uber trips. Since its "Direct Connect" program launched in February 2016, PSTA has given $5 discounts on rides provided by Uber and a local taxi company (and as of more recently, Lyft) to and from 24 popular bus stops in its service area to as many as 1,000 riders per month.

According to a report released this week by DePaul University's Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development, since 2016, at least 27 more communities across the United States have joined arms with Uber, Lyft, and other transportation network companies (TNCs) to supplement or substitute traditional service.

The partnerships range in focus and in scope: The most robust program in the country might be in Monrovia, California, where visitors and residents have reportedly taken more than 53,000 subsidized rides since its transit agency began offering $.50 rides on all Lyft trips within the city's boundaries in March 2018. Others, like those in Boston and Las Vegas, are more limited, drawing on Uber and Lyft as platforms for paratransit that are easier to use for passengers and substantially cheaper for agencies to subsidize.

Still to be resolved is the question of whether ride-hailing apps are pulling riders on or off public transit—complementing it, or cannibalizing it. In most cities, rider demand for Uber and Lyft trips through these transit agency partnerships has not been overwhelming.

Partnerships between ride-hailing companies and transit agencies are still in a delicate courting stage, said Jon McBride, a business strategist with a focus on emerging transportation modes. He expects public agencies to become more specific about their data sharing requests, ways to influence equitable access and compensation models. But the ultimate question may be what success looks like to the transit operators and the ride hailing companies and how the combined user costs compare to the existing separate systems.

Forbes Article Predicts Autonomous Vehicles Will Drive A Boom In Working From Car
With self-driving cars poised to storm the streets in the coming years, an August 20th article in Forbes Magazine states that business leaders must start thinking about how an autonomous commute future will impact work productivity, work spaces and their potential to transform the future of work. How do corporate decision-makers preempt, adapt to and harness the potential of autonomous vehicles? How do employers ensure that as self-driving cars positively impact where we live, how we move, and how we work?

Today, the work-from-home debate is largely binary. You can either work from the office or from a fixed location outside of the office such as your home or a coffee shop. The advent of autonomous vehicles (AVs), however, creates a third option: working from a car. Today, employees by and large are not expected to respond to emails or join a video conference during their commute. In the age of automation, however, people may be required to work while in transit. For some office workers, the car may become little more than a mobile desk with the speed and volume of expected work increasing significantly.

By relieving people of their driving responsibilities, Level 5 AVs (fully autonomous vehicles) will free up hundreds of hours per passenger per year. While some have hypothesized that this time will be used to catch up on sleep, this reclaimed time could also be used productively. Others have theorized the increased efficiency and connectivity will foster a "post-urban" society in which a larger percentage of the population will live in the suburbs and exurbs. It may make more sense for certain professionals to use their car as their office rather than carry the overhead of both a car and a brick and mortar space. The car-as-office could augment a home office and allow these professionals to bring their office to clients rather than force clients to come to theirs. In this way, AVs have the potential to create an entirely new type of work space.

In order to enable this type of transformative impact, AVs will have to be designed in a manner that allows for modularity, personalization, health and efficiency. Some automakers, including Audi, have already started imagining what the interior of self-driving cars will need to look like for maximum productivity. Other forward-thinking companies are also positioning themselves for success in the AV age. Gentex, the leading manufacturer of auto-dimming car mirrors, for example, is expanding into connected car technology to enhance the in-car experience for AV passengers. BMW, Panasonic, Bosch and Valeo are all similarly working on passenger experience and AV interior design initiatives. All of these projects are critical to building autonomous vehicles that can serve as mobile platforms for productivity.

Much has been written about the potential impact AVs will have on traffic patterns, road safety, commute times and urban living. Less has been said, however, about These are the new questions leaders will have to ask in the work from car era.

Cincinnati Introduces Bird Cages To Corral Dockless Scooters And Bikes
Cities across the country are working to figure out dockless mobility services such as eScooters and bikes as they pop up overnight with seemingly little-to-no notice to litter sidewalks. Instead of merely banning the devices and services, with a tiny budget and a little bit of creativity, Cincinnati installed "bird cages" in public spaces around downtown Cincinnati in a matter of hours. The cages were simply blue painted limit lines demarking acceptable parking areas of the sidewalks. Download the BirdCage template at:
https://www.dropbox.com/s/0h1eeiier0zhv9z/BirdCage-YARD.pdf?dl=0

Usage Time Fee Proposed As Alternate Highway Revenue Source To VMT Or Fuel Taxes
With Congress contemplating raising federal gas taxes or replacement of highway revenue sources such as the vehicle miles travelled (VMT) tax that would de-link propulsion type from road charges, a new alternative has been invented, the Usage Time Fee. Rather than charging fees for distance traveled, the usage time (UT) fee would be based on time the vehicle is in use; fees start accruing when the engine starts and stop when the vehicle shuts down.

The basic UT pricing concept is to charge motorists for the time they use their vehicle, rather than the distance they use it or the gallons of fuel they use. Like VMT proposals, the UT fee could charge differential fee rates across a variety of vehicle types based on their costly adverse impacts—emissions, road space, and road wear. Higher rates might be assessed to trucks, commercial vehicles, Uber (and other transportation network companies), and older non-air-quality compliant vehicles. Similar to toll road schedules, differential rates would be simple to administer because they are linked to vehicles.

The most significant advantage of UT pricing over VMT is that it can differentiate between road use during high congestion periods and low-demand hours. By design, off-peak, non-commute direction (reverse commuters), and rural motorists could pay less while commuters in congested corridors pay more.

Conceptually, the UT fee administration is similar to VMT rollout proposals. A simple electronic clock, retrofitted in old and new vehicles, would record time in use. Each vehicle could be required to have a funded debit account that imposes fines in order to discourage overdrawing, and the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) could log the time for revenue calculation. These choices would mirror the design of Singapore's electronic road pricing program in terms of payment and technology.

A 5-minute minimum off-time allowance could discourage motorists from shutting down at traffic signals or when stalled in stop-and-go traffic as well ashe low per minute cost of UT fees.

National League Of Cities Issues Broadband Framework
The National League of Cities released a model code on August 28th that municipal leaders can consult when deploying small cell wireless infrastructure, emphasizing local needs over federal and industry interests.

Small cells form the backbone of fifth-generation wireless, or 5G, broadband service that internet providers have promised to begin rolling out in 2018. NLC's model acknowledges "there is no single model code that will work for every jurisdiction" and attempts to balance providers' desire to densify their networks with city efforts to maintain uncluttered streets and sidewalks.