



*Bay Area*

# **Commuter Benefits Program**

**David Burch, Principal Environmental Planner**  
**Executive Committee – March 17, 2014**



METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION



BAY AREA  
AIR QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT  
DISTRICT

# BACKGROUND & OVERVIEW

- Senate Bill 1339 signed by Governor in fall 2012
- Authorizes Air District & MTC to jointly adopt a regional commuter benefits ordinance
- Modeled on local ordinances in several Bay Area cities
- Program must be approved by Air District Board of Directors & MTC in order to take effect
- Would apply to employers w 50+ employees in Bay Area
- Pilot program: 2014-2016
- Report to Legislature due by July 2016

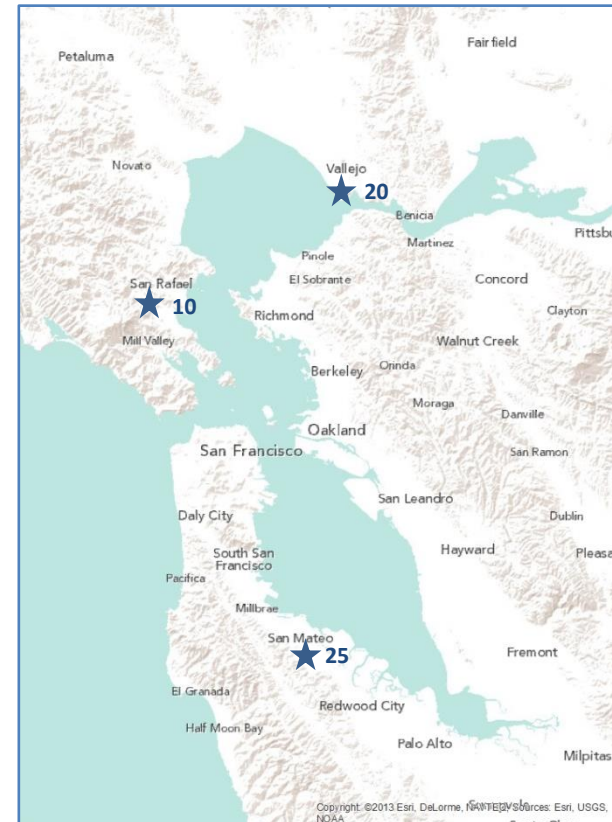
# APPLICABILITY

## Employers with 50+ full-time employees in Bay Area:

- Private business
- Public agency
- Non-profit organization

## Employee count based on all Bay Area worksites combined

- Including branch locations with less than 50 employees



# FOUR COMMUTER BENEFIT OPTIONS

- **Option 1:** Pre-tax payroll deduction for transit or vanpool
- **Option 2:** Direct subsidy for transit or vanpool
- **Option 3:** Employer-provided transportation
- **Option 4:** Alternative commuter benefit



# PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

New regulation will serve as foundation for Program:  
- **Regulation 14, Rule 1, Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program**

Key requirements:

- Designate a commuter benefits coordinator
- Select one of the four commuter benefit options
- Register with Air District/MTC
- Notify employees & make benefit available
- Provide information needed for Program evaluation

# POSITIVE OUTCOMES

- Better air quality
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Employers save on payroll taxes
- Employees save on transit/vanpool fares - both existing & new riders
- Enhanced employee benefits
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Economy: more \$\$ stay in the Bay Area



# PUBLIC OUTREACH

## **Meetings with numerous employer groups & other stakeholders throughout the Bay Area:**

- Chambers of Commerce & other employer groups
- Northern California Human Resources Association
- Transportation Management Associations
- Congestion Management Agencies

**Public workshops in all nine Bay Area counties in October to get input on draft Program**

# RECENT PROGRESS

Made revisions to proposed Program/rule based on comments received on draft Program

Issued key docs for public review on January 21:

- Proposed rule (Regulation 14, Rule 1)
- Staff Report
- Socio-economic analysis
- CEQA doc (Initial Study / Negative Declaration)



# COMMENTS RECEIVED

**No comments submitted on CEQA doc**

## **Comments on proposed Program:**

- Support for proposed Program (4)
- Program would be a burden to employers (1)
- Raise threshold to 100 employees (1)
- Exempt worksites not near transit (1)
- Need minimum stds for Option 3, employer-provided transit (1)
- Do more to promote bikes & carpools (1)
- Expand beyond commuter trips (1)

**Revised Program & guidance documents as appropriate**

# PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION



*Bay Area*

## **Commuter Benefits Program**

- Program webpage: <http://commuterbenefits.511.org>
- Employer assistance materials
  - Employer Guide, Quick Guide, FAQs
- 511 Regional Rideshare Program staff will provide information & assistance
- Web-based employer registration process



# NEXT STEPS

Board hearing on March 19

- Adopt Negative Declaration for CEQA
- Adopt proposed Regulation 14, Rule 1

Concurrence by MTC Commission on March 26

Notify employers & roll out the Program by March 31

Employers will have 6 months (by 9/30/14) to:

- Select & implement an option
- Notify their employees
- Register with 511 Regional Rideshare Program