

**Introduced by Senator Becker**

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(Coauthors: Assembly Members Lee, Levine, Mullin, and Ting)

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An act to amend Section 66502 of, and to add Sections 66513.5, 66516.1, 66516.7, and 66516.8 to, the Government Code, relating to transportation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 917, as introduced, Becker. Seamless Transit Transformation Act.

Existing law creates the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, as a local area planning agency and not as a part of the executive branch of the state government, to provide comprehensive regional transportation planning for the region comprised of the City and County of San Francisco and the Counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma.

This bill would require the commission to develop and adopt a Connected Network Plan, adopt an integrated transit fare structure, develop a comprehensive, standardized regional transit mapping and wayfinding system, develop an implementation and maintenance strategy and funding plan, and establish open data standards, as specified. The bill would require the region's transit agencies, as defined, to comply with those established integrated fare structure, regional transit mapping and wayfinding system, implementation and maintenance strategy and funding plan, and open data standards, as provided.

Under existing law, moneys in the Transportation Planning and Development Account and Public Transportation Account are

continuously appropriated to the Controller for allocation to transportation planning agencies, county transportation commissions, and the San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board for purposes of the State Transit Assistance Program. Existing law requires the Controller to allocate those moneys to those entities based on population and qualifying revenue, as specified.

This bill would make any of the region’s transit agencies ineligible for an allocation of those moneys if the commission determines that the transit agency is out of compliance with the integrated fare structure, regional transit mapping and wayfinding system, implementation and maintenance strategy and funding plan, or open data standards described above.

To the extent that this bill would mandate that a transit agency establish a new program or provide a higher level of service as part of an existing program, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1 SECTION 1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the
- 2 Seamless Transit Transformation Act.
- 3 SEC. 2. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:
- 4 (a) Transit connectivity and integration in the nine-county San
- 5 Francisco Bay area has been a longstanding challenge. Legislative
- 6 efforts to mandate and incentivize coordination between dozens
- 7 of disparate transit agencies date back to 1996 and earlier.
- 8 (b) Low-income residents, many of whom have experienced
- 9 displacement and have long commutes requiring many transfers,
- 10 are among the most adversely affected by the fragmentation,
- 11 experiencing a significant financial burden from needing to pay

1 multiple separate transit fares or being forced into costly vehicle  
2 ownership.

3 (c) As of 2017, only 5 percent of all trips in the San Francisco  
4 Bay area were made using transit. Per-capita transit ridership in  
5 the region decreased 12 percent between 1991 and 2016. “Plan  
6 Bay Area 2050,” prepared by the Metropolitan Transportation  
7 Commission, has identified that to achieve climate, equity, and  
8 economic goals, the share of commuters who travel by transit must  
9 increase from 13 percent in 2015 to at least 20 percent by 2050.

10 (d) The COVID-19 pandemic has led to further ridership  
11 declines, due to both dramatic shifts in travel patterns and  
12 significant transit service cuts across the region. As the region  
13 emerges from the pandemic, transit ridership is recovering much  
14 more slowly than the economy as a whole; as of November 2021,  
15 transit ridership had recovered to just 40 percent of pre-COVID  
16 levels, while traffic on a majority of bay area bridges exceeded 90  
17 percent of pre-COVID levels.

18 (e) In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in May 2020, the  
19 Metropolitan Transportation Commission convened a 32-member  
20 Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force composed of transit  
21 agency managers, advocates, and elected officials, to coordinate  
22 transit recovery efforts and identify reforms that would position  
23 the bay area’s transit system to emerge from the pandemic stronger  
24 and more connected than before and to help recover and grow  
25 transit ridership.

26 (f) In July 2021, the task force unanimously approved the Bay  
27 Area Transit Transformation Action Plan, which included 27  
28 actions to increase ridership and improve fares and payment,  
29 customer access to information, transit network management,  
30 accessibility, and funding.

31 (g) In November 2021, the region’s Fare Integration Task Force,  
32 co-led by Bay Area transit agencies and the Metropolitan  
33 Transportation Commission, unanimously adopted a policy vision  
34 statement supporting the advancement of key fare integration  
35 policies, including deployment of an all-agency transit pass,  
36 reduced cost transfers, and a common fare structure for regional  
37 services.

38 (h) Although the Legislature has generally authorized the  
39 Metropolitan Transportation Commission to set rules and  
40 regulations related to transit fare coordination and transit

1 connectivity, to ensure that the recommendations emerging from  
2 the Bay Area Transit Transformation Action Plan are implemented  
3 by the region’s transit agencies in a timely manner and for the  
4 benefit of current and future transit riders, this act is necessary.

5 SEC. 3. Section 66502 of the Government Code is amended  
6 to read:

7 66502. (a) There is hereby created, as a local area planning  
8 agency and not as a part of the executive branch of the state  
9 government, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to  
10 provide comprehensive regional transportation planning for the  
11 region comprised of the City and County of San Francisco and the  
12 Counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Mateo,  
13 Santa Clara, Solano, and Sonoma.

14 ~~As used in this title, “region” means the region described in this~~  
15 ~~section.~~

16 (b) *For purposes of this title, the following definitions apply:*

17 (1) *“Commission” means the Metropolitan Transportation*  
18 *Commission.*

19 (2) *“Region” means the region described in subdivision (a).*

20 (3) *“Transit agency” means a public agency that meets all of*  
21 *the following requirements:*

22 (A) *The public agency provides surface transportation service*  
23 *to the general public, complementary paratransit service to persons*  
24 *with disabilities as required pursuant to Section 12143 of Title 42*  
25 *of the United States Code, or similar transportation service to*  
26 *people with disabilities or the elderly.*

27 (B) *The public agency operates the service described in*  
28 *subparagraph (A) by bus, rail, ferry, or other conveyance on a*  
29 *fixed route, demand response, or otherwise regularly available*  
30 *basis.*

31 (C) *The public agency generally charges a fare for the service*  
32 *described in subparagraph (A).*

33 SEC. 4. Section 66513.5 is added to the Government Code, to  
34 read:

35 66513.5. (a) The commission, in consultation with the region’s  
36 transit agencies, shall develop and adopt a Connected Network  
37 Plan on or before December 31, 2023.

38 (b) The Connected Network Plan shall do all of the following:

1 (1) Be consistent with the State Rail Plan required pursuant to  
2 Section 14036 and California Transportation Plan updated pursuant  
3 to Section 65071.

4 (2) Identify connected network transit corridors and hubs of  
5 regional significance across the region.

6 (3) Identify service-level standards for different parts of the  
7 network to optimize access across the region, particularly for  
8 low-income and transit-dependent populations, corresponding to  
9 different density and land use conditions, including by doing both  
10 of the following:

11 (A) Identifying target travel times between key transit hubs,  
12 service frequencies, and operating hours for weekdays, Saturdays,  
13 and Sundays.

14 (B) Quantifying access to jobs, housing, and other achievable  
15 opportunities.

16 (4) Identify operating and capital funding needs associated with  
17 the Connected Network Plan.

18 (5) Identify potential governance, institutional, or legislative  
19 changes that would support the Connected Network Plan.

20 SEC. 5. Section 66516.1 is added to the Government Code, to  
21 read:

22 66516.1. (a) (1) Consistent with Section 66516, on or before  
23 December 31, 2023, the commission shall adopt an integrated  
24 transit fare structure that will become effective on or before July  
25 1, 2024. The integrated transit fare structure shall be developed in  
26 consultation with the regional transit coordinating council  
27 established pursuant to Section 29142.4 of the Public Utilities  
28 Code.

29 (2) The commission, in consultation with the region's transit  
30 agencies, shall annually review the integrated transit fare structure  
31 to determine if updates are necessary.

32 (3) Each of the region's transit agencies shall comply with the  
33 integrated transit fare structure.

34 (b) The integrated fare structure shall include all of the  
35 following:

36 (1) No-cost local-local and local-regional transfers, regardless  
37 of whether transfers are between the same transit agency or  
38 multiple transit agencies.

1 (2) A common fare structure for regional services by which  
2 trips involving one or more regional services are priced  
3 equivalently.

4 (3) Common transfer rules for local fares, such as means for  
5 validation.

6 (4) Common definitions for adults, youth, seniors, persons with  
7 disabilities, and other categories.

8 (5) A multi-agency pass, which may include a cap, that allows  
9 access to all services provided by the region’s transit agencies on  
10 a daily or monthly basis for one set price.

11 (6) A simplified system for local transit fares across the region,  
12 whereby the differences in local transit fares are minimized and  
13 intersecting local transit services have the same fares.

14 (c) On or before October 1 of each year, each of the region’s  
15 transit agencies shall notify the commission of any proposed  
16 change to its fares in order to facilitate the alignment of fare  
17 policies across the region’s transit agencies in the integrated transit  
18 fare structure for the following year. The commission shall  
19 disseminate that information to all of the region’s transit agencies.

20 (d) Consistent with Section 99314.7 of the Public Utilities Code,  
21 if the commission determines that one of the region’s transit  
22 agencies is out of compliance with the integrated fare structure  
23 described in subdivision (a), then that transit agency shall not be  
24 eligible to receive funds pursuant to Section 99313 or 99314 of  
25 the Public Utilities Code.

26 (e) This section does not prohibit a transit agency from offering  
27 free transit.

28 SEC. 6. Section 66516.7 is added to the Government Code, to  
29 read:

30 66516.7. (a) The Legislature finds and declares both of the  
31 following:

32 (1) The lack of a universal regional transit map and common  
33 wayfinding format at transit stops and stations in the region adds  
34 to the fragmented experience transit riders encounter, especially  
35 when planning a trip across multiple transit agencies.

36 (2) Research has shown that the way transit lines and stations  
37 are displayed on maps strongly influences how travelers use the  
38 system.

39 (b) (1) The commission, in consultation with the region’s transit  
40 agencies, shall, on or before July 1, 2024, do both of the following:

1 (A) Develop a comprehensive, standardized regional transit  
2 mapping and wayfinding system, including common branding for  
3 regional transit service and a shared digital mapping platform.  
4 Standards and resources shall be developed to display this  
5 information on print, digital, and interactive media. The system  
6 shall identify the standards that are required and the standards that  
7 allow for customization.

8 (B) Develop an implementation and maintenance strategy and  
9 funding plan to deploy the comprehensive, standardized regional  
10 transit mapping and wayfinding system. The commission may  
11 adopt a phased deployment of the system.

12 (2) Each of the region’s transit agencies shall implement and  
13 comply with the comprehensive, standardized regional transit  
14 mapping and wayfinding system and implementation and  
15 maintenance strategy and funding plan developed pursuant to this  
16 subdivision.

17 (c) Each of the region’s transit agencies shall use only the  
18 comprehensive, standardized regional transit mapping and  
19 wayfinding system by July 1, 2025, unless the commission adopts  
20 a schedule that sets out an alternate deployment timeline.

21 (d) If the commission determines that one of the region’s transit  
22 agencies is out of compliance with subdivision (b), then that transit  
23 agency shall not be eligible to receive funds pursuant to Section  
24 99313 or 99314 of the Public Utilities Code.

25 SEC. 7. Section 66516.8 is added to the Government Code, to  
26 read:

27 66516.8. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
28 following:

29 (1) Studies have shown that travelers view the wait time at a  
30 transit stop as the most inconvenient part of the transit journey  
31 experience.

32 (2) Despite best efforts by the region’s transit agencies to adhere  
33 to their published schedules, the conditions on the roadway,  
34 including congestion and other unplanned delays, create  
35 unpredictability for on-time arrivals.

36 (3) The development of technology enabling real-time transit  
37 information, including arrival and departure predictions, vehicle  
38 locations, occupancy, and service alerts, has created an opportunity  
39 for the region’s transit agencies to alleviate the wait-time  
40 frustrations and provide riders with other useful trip information.

1 (4) Transit riders should have access to consistent and uniform  
2 real-time information across all transit services in the region.

3 (b) (1) On or before January 1, 2023, the commission shall  
4 establish open data standards, in consultation with the regional  
5 transit coordinating council established pursuant to Section 29142.4  
6 of the Public Utilities Code, that are aligned with, but may exceed,  
7 any data standards adopted by the state to provide real-time transit  
8 vehicle location, arrival and departure predictions, and service  
9 alerts data to transit riders.

10 (2) Each of the region’s transit agencies shall comply with the  
11 standards established pursuant to this subdivision.

12 (c) The commission shall coordinate the activities of the region’s  
13 transit agencies pursuant to subdivision (b), serve as the region’s  
14 point of contact for data development and dissemination to third  
15 parties, and develop an implementation and funding plan for  
16 deployment of real-time information.

17 (d) If the commission determines that one of the region’s transit  
18 agencies is out of compliance with subdivision (b), then that transit  
19 agency shall not be eligible to receive funds pursuant to Section  
20 99313 or 99314 of the Public Utilities Code.

21 SEC. 8. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that  
22 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to  
23 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made  
24 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division  
25 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.