

To: MTD Board of Directors
From: Jerry Estrada, General Manager
Date: September 7, 2021
Subject: General Manager's Report

MTD started its most recent fall 2021 bid on August 9, with the new service changes to dovetail with local schools resuming some form of in person classroom instruction. With school is back in session and MTD booster services to area Junior Highs and High Schools are in service as of August 17, 2021. On Monday, August 23, 2021, service was restored on Lines 15x (SBCC/UCSB Express) and 16 (SBCC Shuttle) for the first time since March of 2020.

We are proud to announce that one of our Supervisors, Eddie Pacheco, successfully completed an Instructors Course for Transit Trainers, sponsored by the Transportation and Safety Institute. This was a week long course, which included developing presentation skills and learning facilitation methods and adult learning principles for teaching operators, becoming certified to train and order U. S. Department of Transportation certificates for bus/paratransit operators. He joins the ranks of three other Supervisors that have earned this coveted designation.

On Monday, July 26, MTD launched its "Tap to Ride" pilot, demonstrating contactless fare payment on the Lines 12x and 24x in partnership with Caltrans' California Integrated Travel Project. This pilot enables riders to pay their fare by tapping a Visa or MasterCard credit or debit card (with contactless capabilities) or a smart device (phone or watch) with Apple Pay, Google Pay, Samsung Pay, or Fitbit Pay.

On the technical side, the implementation of the contactless fare payment pilot project with CalITP has gone smoothly. The onboard validator devices that "collect" fares via credit cards or mobile apps have worked flawlessly. Given the demonstration status of the system, additional software functionality, security, and reporting improvements are ongoing.

SBCAG's Clean Air Express is also participating in the pilot, and the two agencies held a joint interview and photo opportunity in Old Town Goleta at the Hollister and Nectarine stop. Both the Line 12x and Clean Air Express serve passengers at that stop. Caltrans District 5 Deputy Director Scott Eades attended to express support for the pilot and partnership.

MTD was awarded approximately \$3.8 million in Section 5229(a) formula funds by Caltrans and FTA Region IX. FTA apportioned the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2018 funds to Caltrans for small urbanized areas throughout the state, and the funds would have lapsed and been returned to FTA for re-apportionment on October 1. Caltrans and Region IX provided the funds to MTD for the purchase of five 40-ft. electric buses. The award is currently awaiting Department of Labor certification, which is expected prior to this Board meeting, and SBCAG approval of an FTIP amendment on September 16.

On August 11, the California Energy Commission approved a \$200,000 grant for the "Santa Barbara Zero-Emission Resilient Transportation Blueprint" (SB-ZERT). The SB-ZERT is a collaborative project between MTD, the City of Santa Barbara, and CALSTART to develop a

blueprint that will enable the adoption of Medium Duty/Heavy Duty Electric Vehicles for transit and municipal fleets.

Staff prepared and submitted the California State of Good Repair “Project List Submittal” for the \$1.2 million in funds allocated by SBCAG for the “MTD Facility Modernization Project - Phase 1.” This \$8.8 million Phase I project is also planned to include several years of the SGR funds that are allocated directly to MTD, as well as other sources of funds.

Staff attended Zoom meetings of the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments’ (SBCAG’s) Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) and Joint Technical Advisory Committee (JTAC) on August 5, and will attend another virtual meeting of TTAC only on September 2. On August 5, JTAC recommended that the SBCAG Board approve the “Connected 2050” Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP-SCS). TTAC voted to recommend that the Board adopt “Option A” for the distribution of funds from the California State of Good Repair (SGR) and Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) programs. Option A was the option voted for twice unanimously by County transit operators, and once previously by TTAC. At the September 2 meeting, TTAC will be asked to recommend that the Board approve Amendment 4 to the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). Amendment 4 includes the \$3.8 million in new MTD funds discussed above.

Staff submitted the required quarterly Federal Financial Reports (FFRs) and Milestone Progress Reports (MPRs) for MTD’s open FTA awards. Staff also submitted the required July monthly ridership and safety and security reports to FTA.

Staff participated in the kickoff meeting for the upcoming California Transportation Development Act (TDA) Triennial Performance Audits. SBCAG has contracted with a consultant who will conduct the audits of SBCAG and all of the County transit operators.

On Wednesday, July 28, 2021, MTD’s GM authorized renewal of the Cyber Liability insurance policy coverage at \$1MM, \$10K retention written by the current insurance carrier, Coalition Insurance Solutions, at an annual premium of \$12,843.27, for the policy term of 8/1/2021 – 8/1/2022. Coalition Insurance Solutions Insurance is an A+ XV (Superior) AM Best rated carrier. Brown & Brown Insurance Services went out to market for quotes from other carriers. The Cyber Liability market is under pressure due to the abundance of ransomware demands and other claims and Coalition Insurance, the incumbent carrier, presented the best renewal terms in this hard market.

Recruiting is the top priority for the Human Resources (HR) department as we look toward increased service, schools reopening and a few retirements on the horizon. HR is working diligently to fill two vacant Service Persons, three Mechanics, two Maintenance Supervisors, Bus Operators, Director of Administration & Finance and HR Generalist. While we are receiving applicants for some of the positions, and it seems with the pandemic we are not the only organization struggling to bring in candidates, we anticipate a stronger response with our full marketing campaign now in place. In addition to print publications throughout Santa Barbara

County, including the cities of Santa Maria, Lompoc, and Santa Ynez, as well as throughout Ventura County, HR is using all proven reliable online resources and social media available as tools for recruitment including, Indeed, Google, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. We have put in place creative new ways to advertise such as with a few local radio stations and Pumplix gas stations. We have revised our careers page by adding new photos of current employees and a dedicated link just for Bus Operators applicants. We have re-vamped all our job flyers in English and Spanish with a new hip easy to read design, along with designing interior and exterior hiring ads posted on all of MTD's fleet.

A second internet service provider (ISP) is being added to increase data bandwidth as well as to serve as a backup in the event of an outage. Cox Communications is the existing ISP and has been quite reliable. However, with today's dependence on internet access for so many aspects of carrying out business (e.g., email, cloud services, telecommuting, general information and research. Etc.), the need for a backup has become a necessity. Impulse Advanced Communications will provide a secure wireless internet service that also has excellent upload speeds, which is important to keeping MTD's cloud-based backup system up to date.

MTD has completed the transition from a local Microsoft Exchange server to Exchange in the cloud. This move provides a more reliable, accessible, and secure email solution for MTD. Employees are now able to access email remotely via Office 365 Outlook, which eliminates security concerns with the legacy Microsoft remote access application.

IT staff are working on several necessary MTD transit application software and hardware updates that have converged in schedule. These concern the Genfare electronic fare collection system, the EAM vehicle maintenance software, the Apollo onboard video system, and the Trapeze application that is comprised of route scheduling, runcutting, blocking and timekeeping. Extensive testing of software updates is required prior to going live with the new versions.

The annual financial and single audit remains ongoing with the goal of completion by the end of October. With additional entries and adjustments to the "books" still in progress, reportable fiscal results are not yet available.

Currently out to bid is an important service that typically remains under the radar for the supply and laundering of maintenance department uniforms, towels, rags, mops and other linen supplies as well as mats and runners at all facilities. Bids for the weekly service are due the first week of September. With a five-year contract under consideration, the contract value will likely necessitate bringing it to the Board for consideration of approval.

The solicitation for construction management services is also underway with draft request for proposal (RFP) documents recently completed. As this professional service falls under the definition of architectural and engineering services per state and federal regulations, a "qualifications based" RFP process will be used wherein the firm deemed most qualified is first determined before taking into account cost. Engagement of the construction manager consultant is scheduled to occur prior to the initiation of Terminal 2 recommissioning work.