

To: MTD Board of Directors
From: Jerry Estrada, General Manager
Date: July 21, 2026
Subject: General Manager's Report

Operations and Fleet Maintenance

The Operations Department received the August bid package from the Planning Department, following the Board's approval of the associated service changes which will be implemented starting August 17. Staff from both departments worked collaboratively to review the service changes and make any necessary operational adjustments before finalizing the bid. The bid process will begin on Monday, July 20. Vehicle Transit Training (VTT), a DMV Commercial Driver License (CDL) requirement for all bus operators, is scheduled for the week prior to implementation of the new bid. This training provides the opportunity to deliver essential information and instruction to all operators before the August service changes take effect.

Operator staffing has improved modestly with continued progress in recruiting and training new operators. Priscilla Price has successfully completed training and is now in revenue service. Jose Guardado has also completed all required training and will begin revenue service on July 20. Manny Mendez is scheduled to complete his DMV Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT) behind-the-wheel examination this week to obtain his Class B Commercial Driver License (CDL). Stephen Chapek and Kenneth Izah continue to progress through the training program and are scheduled to complete their behind-the-wheel drive tests next week. We also welcome Eric Salmeron, who joins MTD on July 27 as our newest operator-in-training.

MTD welcomed our inaugural Safety Manager Nicole Sell to the agency on July 6. Ms. Sell comes to MTD with 12 years of transit experience, having worked in security, as a Train Operator, Line and Yard Supervisor, Controller, Operations Control Center Supervisor, and most recently in safety and regulatory compliance with San Diego MTS.

Preparation for the introduction of the new Gillig battery-electric buses continues. A Gillig training representative recently met with Operations and Maintenance training staff to provide fleet-specific instruction. This training will be incorporated into standard operating procedures (SOPs) and hands-on operator training to ensure staff are prepared for deployment of the new fleet and the upcoming California Highway Patrol (CHP) terminal inspection.

The Amtrak First Mile/Last Mile service has been well received and continues to operate smoothly, with only a few reported train delays. Operations has been prepared to adjust service as needed to maintain reliable connections and the level of service our Amtrak passengers have come to expect. The Summer Shuttle service also continues to receive positive feedback from riders. Our partnership with the Santa Barbara Zoo has been especially successful, with favorable comments from passengers regarding the convenience and reliability of the service. Operations remain committed to identifying opportunities to improve service delivery and operational efficiency. Through continuous

evaluation of our processes and close collaboration across departments, we will continue to provide safe, reliable transportation to our community.

Administration

The 2025-2026 Fiscal Year is being closed by Finance/Accounting Staff. An Audit Kick-off Meeting was held on June 23, and staff has already been submitting documents to the Audit Team of Vazquez + Company, LLP for review. Year-end inventories were completed with a variance of less than a ½ of 1%, mostly reclassifications.

Quarterly Grant Reports for the period ending 6/30/26 are being compiled by Grants and Compliance for Federal and State awards. Support was provided to the Planning and Marketing Department in the Access for All grant application to SBCAG for the Microtransit Pilot Project.

A successful department restructuring was completed in the Accounting/Finance Department by Information Technologies (IT) rewiring multiple workstations and providing additional resources. New hardware with installation Support was provided to Accounting to ensure Inventory was completed accurately and efficiently. On-going data projects are being coordinated to streamline automation of current processes.

Procurement has completed a draft policy to add Prequalification of Contractors to the current Procurement Policy Manual. Staff recommendations will be presented at the Board Meeting.

Planning & Marketing

The bus stop sign project has closed with over 700 individual signs having been replaced with MTD's updated branding. The complexity of making sure every sign has the correct information in the correct location was quite the task, and executing the project took strong coordination between Planning and Operations.

The effort to enroll MTD riders eligible for discounted fares (seniors 65+, people with disabilities, and Medicare card holders) on the Tap2Ride system via the Cal-ITP Benefits portal continues to show growing adoption. MTD consistently had the most quarterly enrollments in the program of any transit agency in the State of California for the first half of 2026.