

NVTA Executive Director Reports

April 2024 – June 2025

MTC Executive Director Report, July 24

- [An event](#) announcing the completion of the Golden Gate Bridge suicide deterrent net was held on July 15
- The Bay Area’s regional agencies, including ABAG, the Air District, and BCDC, entered into a MOU with Caltrans District 4, the Coastal Conservancy, and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board to coordinate efforts that [prepare for sea-level rise](#).
- MTC released the coordinated [Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan](#) for public comment. The plan is intended to provide leadership among transit agencies and health and human service agencies to ensure low income, elderly or disabled community members have adequate transportation services.

MTC Special Meeting, August 25

- [Transportation Revenue Select Committee](#) (chaired by Commissioner Jim Spring) and MTC held a special meeting to discuss a transportation revenue ballot measure in time for the 2025 legislative session – the last chance before the 2026 midterm. There are two proposals under consideration. One is a four-county (Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, and San Mateo) approach with an opt-in for other counties, which would rely on a ½-cent sales tax measure in 2026. This proposal would raise \$540 million annually and focuses on the big transit agencies’ shortfalls in the first 8 years with flexibility to use 50% of the funds for other transportation purposes in years 9-15, and 90% flexibility in years 16-30. Of all the funds, 10% would be committed to the [Regional Network Management](#). In the second proposal, all 9-Bay Area counties would raise \$1.5 billion, bringing multiple funding sources to bear (1/2-cent sales tax and payroll tax), and includes funding for a commuter benefit program. A subset of the funds would go to MTC for the Regional Network Management. The [Transportation Revenue Select Committee](#) is scheduled to act on a proposed structure in October.
- Housing Measure: On August 14, BAHFA and ABAG voted to remove the \$20 billion general obligation bond measure from the November 5 ballot.

Executive Director Report | September 2024



[caption id="attachment_4219" align="alignright" width="150"] Addrell Coleman[/caption]



Dexter Cypress[/caption]

NVTA Staffing

- Addrell Coleman and Dexter Cypress have been promoted from Assistant Planners to Associate Planners. Congratulations to both!

Meetings and Events

- August 20 — MTC's Regional Network Management staff visited Vine Maintenance Facility. The Vine Transit system is often eclipsed by the region's larger transit systems. We were able share with MTC all of the work we're doing to buttress our system and some of the challenges that linger due to uncertainties with the labor force and technology.
- August 23 and Sept. 17 – [Transportation Revenue Measure Executive Group](#). This group advises the Transportation Select Committee that Director Alfredo Pedroza serves on, to which I have also been appointed. We have probably one more meeting before the Select Committee convenes. I have been urging MTC staff to identify sufficient opportunities above and beyond the budget shortfall, to also garner public support. There are a lot of players in the room – there is also considerable interest in a future housing measure. Stay turned.
- August 29 – [Transit Transformation Task Force](#). The task force is zeroing in on the specific mandates associated [SB 125](#), the Transit Program. There is considerable frustration among transit operators to focus on new funding which will not only address the fiscal cliff but also to improve how transit systems operate to draw back customers.

- The PCC and ITOC were on the move in September with meetings and tours at the Vine Maintenance Facility.
- We also hosted the CAC meeting at the Vine Maintenance Facility. In that meeting, we discussed the potential to revisit a 2005 plan to build Transit-Oriented Development next to the Soscol Gateway Transit Center. The project was well received, and it prompted a letter of support to the NVTA Board of Directors.

Project Updates

- The new bus stop at Napa Valley College has been completed. By shortening this route, Vine Transit will save 200 minutes of operation time every single weekday, which translates to 51,000 minutes (850 hours) a year, for a projected annual cost savings of \$142,000.
- The Napa Valley Forward SR 29/Rutherford intersection improvements have been put on hold. As a reminder, the preferred alternative for that intersection is a signal — a safety improvement. A couple of factors influenced this decision. First, many of the public comments received did not support a signal. One of the other drivers was to provide safe crossing for bikes and pedestrians when the Vine Trail is completed. Given the timing of that project, we think it would be better to focus the funds that we have left (about \$4 million) on the compact roundabout project in Oakville, which has been largely supported by the adjacent property owners and the public. One of the challenges is to understand whether the funding for the program can be pushed out until other funds are identified. An additional \$3 million is needed to complete that project. In the meantime, we are waiting for Caltrans to clear the NEPA document so we can proceed with the ROW.

Events

- August 16 – NVTA hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Napa Valley Vine Trail, Calistoga to St. Helena segment.

- [caption id="attachment_6229" align="alignright" width="300"]



From left: Kate Miller, executive director of NVTA; Mark Joseph, American Canyon Councilmember and NVTA Board Chair; Rep. Mike Thompson; Supervisor Ryan Gregory; Dina El-Tawansy, director Caltrans District 4. (Photo: Caltrans)/[caption]

September 13 – To mark the completion of the Soscol Junction Roundabouts, NVTA and Caltrans co-hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony at Meritage Spa and Resorts, since the project site is already open to traffic.

- Transit Month (September) was celebrated with a social media contest and a free day for all riders on Friday, Sept. 27. To honor California Clean Air Day on Oct. 2, all Vine transit rides were also free (read about all the ways we're helping to [clear the air](#)).

Other Business

- NVTA received a \$139,000 grant from the Office of Transportation Safety which will be used to acquire speed data from Michelin Mobility Intelligence. Well done Diana Meehan!
- Jackie Rhodes, 81, a life-long Vine rider and passionate pedestrian was tragically killed by a hit-and-run driver on August 4 as she walked north on SR 29 toward the Vine Trail in St. Helena, which had not yet opened. NVTA and the Vine Trail will memorialize Ms. Rhodes with a plaque on the Vine Transit bench in front of Freemark Abby, adjacent to the trail.
- Staff Updates/Acknowledgements: I'd like to acknowledge Communications and Outreach Coordinator Emily Charrier, who has done an amazing job organizing two ribbon cutting events within one month. Both of the events were well executed, and I just wanted to publicly thank Emily for all her work and creativity on these celebrations.

Meetings

[caption id="attachment_5641" align="alignright" width="300"]



Park Tread, an alternative to asphalt, is laid on the Napa Valley Vine Trail in July 2024. (Photo by Patrick Band)

On July 8, staff was invited to watch [Park Tread](#) being installed on the [Napa Valley Vine Trail](#), Calistoga-to-St. Helena segment. I think all of us were impressed by the look of the natural material and its characteristics, which appear to be an improvement over asphalt. The cost, unfortunately is 2-to-2.5 times more expensive than asphalt. It's been used to build trails in Golden Gate Park, Yosemite National Park and other popular hiking destinations. The trail will open to the public on Aug. 17, with a [community celebration](#) hosted by the Napa Valley Vine Trail Coalition.

Project Updates

- There will be single lane closures on southbound SR 221 beginning on July 26 through August 9. On July 26, the signals at SR 29/SR 221 will be removed and the roundabouts will open to traffic. The northbound SR 221 connector will remain closed until mid-September.

- Transit Signal Priority system in American Canyon will go live in August. This will allow transit vehicles that are behind schedule in the vicinity of the signals to extend the signal time to allow the bus to travel through the intersection unimpeded by a red light.

Events

- The Accessible Transit Needs Assessment public workshop on July 8 was well attended.
- Staff has concluded its jurisdiction check-ins – I think we learned a lot about each of your jurisdictions – the projects and priorities that you are working on. We look forward to addressing some of the issues that were discussed.
- The ribbon cutting to celebrate the opening of the Calistoga to St. Helena Vine Trail project has been scheduled for August 16 at 10:30 a.m. The Vine Trail Coalition is also organizing a public event on August 17.

Executive Director's Report | May 2024

Meetings

Along with NVTA staff members Danielle Schmitz, Tony Onorato, Rebecca Schenck and Emily Charrier, I attended the California Transit Association's annual Spring Legislative Conference in Sacramento. We also met with Senator Dodd and his staff, and the staff of Assemblymember Aguiar-Curry. At the conference, CSAC staff provided a summary of the Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act, more popularly known in civic circles as the Taxpayer Deception Act, which would limit governments from raising taxes and fees. The California Supreme Court is scheduled to act on the proposed initiatives constitutionality prior to the June 27 deadline required for the November ballot timeline. For your June meeting, staff will provide a comprehensive analysis on the impacts of this initiative, as well as ACA 1 and ACA 13.

Project Updates

On June 4, MTC supported by NVTA staff will be holding a public meeting on the Napa Valley Forward project at the Rutherford Grange located at 8550 St. Helena Highway.

Events

[caption id="attachment_5447" align="alignright" width="640"]



NVTA's energizer station at Bike to Where Ever Day 2024. [/caption]

- Bike to Work and School Day was held on May 16. NVTA sponsored an energizer station near the Vine Trail at Soscol/McKinstry. Total participation increased this year over last year, with close to 100 more community riders and over 1,300 riders in total. NVTA counted 52 cyclists who stopped or rolled by, bolstered by the cowbells that were rung enthusiastically by NVTA staff members Danielle Schmitz, Diana Meehan, and Emily Charrier. Thank you all for getting up so early to cheer on our bike to work/school day riders.
- Mariana Toscano and Emily Charrier participated at the Up Valley Senior Health Fair on May 29 in Calistoga.
- August 16th is the expected date for the Calistoga to St. Helena Vine Trail ribbon cutting event.

- There will be extended Vine Transit hours and free rides for BottleRock again this year, as well as new free weekend services for the La Onda music festival. We'd like to thank Latitude 38 Entertainment and Napa Valley Vintners for their continue sponsorship.

Staff Updates/Acknowledgements

- - In your packet is a copy of the cover of Bus Line Magazine featuring a wonderful photo of our very own Rebecca Schenck. The article highlighted Rebecca's work transitioning the Vine to a zero-emission fleet. Great article Rebecca – congrats!
 - Danielle Schmitz has been busy meeting the California Department of Fish & Wildlife's mitigation requirements on the Soscol Junction project. Danielle took the initiative to question the cost of the additional swainson hawk credits which reduced the amount of the credits from \$50K an acre to \$35K an acre, saving the agency almost \$50K. She also made a significant effort to keep project revenues in the valley and as a result, \$416,500 will go towards the Napa Valley Land Trust project –Wragg Ridge Preserve Red Legged Frog Habitat Restoration and Enhancement project.

Executive Director's Report | April 2024

On April 12th, NVTA held the ribbon cutting at the new [Vine Transit Maintenance Facility](#). Senator Bill Dodd, FTA Region 9 Administrator Ray Tellis, and NVTA Board Chair Liz Alessio cut the first ribbon. Over 100 people attended the event and enjoyed a brunch provided by Alten Construction. It was a wonderful event and I want to thank NVTA staff members Emily Charrier, Kathy Alexander, and the entire team for making the day so special.

[caption id="attachment_5216" align="aligncenter" width="640"]



From left: Ray Tellis, Regional 9 Administrator for the Federal Transit Authority; NVTA Board Chair Liz Alessio; Sen. Bill Dodd; NVTA Executive Director Kate Miller cut the ribbon on the newly finished bus maintenance facility. (Justin Lopez Photography)[/caption]



I attended the third statewide Transit Transformation Task Force meeting on April 15th, which was held in San Diego. The event included a ride-along on the MTS trolley including an overview of the proposed extension to the airport. The TTF focused on identifying availability standards and metrics for the state's transit systems based on three broad categories: urban, suburban and exurban. The task force made a number of comments that regional and local

knowledge was central to establishing the standards given the varied demographics and geography of each area.

Staff has been working with Bobby Puri of True Elegance Worldwide on airport service to SFO, which was just launched this week. The new service will provide rides from the Imola Park and Ride and American Canyon Park and Ride stops. Parking is limited to two days in the Imola Park and Ride, so patrons should consider taking the Vine bus to access the new service.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission will receive \$20 million to improve corridor resilience and prevent flooding impacts on a 10.4-mile section of State Route 37 by installing sheet pile walls, nature-based and engineered side slope reinforcement, and raising the profile grade at two segments. The project is part of a larger corridor plan that will improve mobility, reduce emissions, and improve safety and public access, serving disadvantaged communities in Sonoma, Napa and Solano counties.

NVTA Staff participated in the Napa Valley College Career Day on April 16th. We were also notified that Napa Valley College students will be voting on a reduced bus fare pass that would be subsidized by student fees. NVTA will also help subsidize the program in anticipation of the increased student ridership. NVTA staff have been working on this for 10 years and are excited that students will now be able to decide if they want their fees to help fund their transit services. We have a verbal reciprocity agreement with Solano Transportation Authority so that student passes will be honored in both counties.

Staff will also be tabling at two Earth Day events – in [Napa on April 20th](#) at Oxbow Commons, and in [American Canyon on April 21st](#) at Wetlands Edge.

Chair Alessio will co-lead the Cinco de Mayo Ride ride with council member Bernie Narvaez to kick off [Bike Fest](#). NVTA is a premiere sponsor of Napa Bike Fest 2024.

Bike to work/school day is on May 16th so put on your helmets and ride to NVTA's energizer station at the Vine Trail Soscol Gap at Vallejo/McKenzie Streets.

NVTA staff will be attending the California Transit Association Legislative Conference on May 20th in Sacramento.

Project Updates:

- - **Road Closures:**
 -

- SR 29/Soscol Junction southbound single lane closure is scheduled for April 17 and 18 from 10 PM to 5 AM each night, to complete the paving needed to open the southbound lanes on the new overpass.
- Full highway closures are planned on westbound SR 37 between SR 29 to SR 121 on the weekends of April 19th and April 26th beginning each Friday at 9 PM and reopening at 4 AM the following Monday. Drivers will be detoured onto SR 12/121/29 to Jameson.
- Full highway closures on SR 37 eastbound are scheduled for the weekends of May 3 and May 10 – closing both Fridays at 9 PM and reopening both Mondays at 5 AM. The same detour will be used, but in the opposite direction.

Policy Update:

I'm happy to report that all six jurisdictions have now approved the Measure U expenditure plan. The next steps include holding a public hearing on May 22nd and to request that the Napa Board of Supervisors place it on the November ballot.