

CHAPTER 6 CAPITAL PLAN

The Capital Improvement Program developed for MCTD is intended to address the most pressing issues in the system and to position MCTD to maximize its contracting options in the longer term.

Planning capital improvements for any transit system are complicated by the fact that all transit systems rely on capital grants and the speed at which projects can be completed is dependant on capital grant procurement. A list of capital grant options is provided at the end of this chapter. Many capital grants require matching funds, which MCTD would need to provide through Measure A capital and other funding sources.

Capital Component of the MCTD-Golden Gate Contract

The newly signed contract between MCTD and Golden Gate Transit includes provisions for MCTD to begin sharing responsibility for the capital required to operate the local system. This is a substantial change from previous contracts where capital requirements were simply included in the hourly operating cost for service. The new contract calls for MCTD to make a capital contribution to the combined MCTD/Golden Gate system in three areas:

1. **Matching Funds for Local Buses**
 - Buses that are used entirely for local service will be purchased through state and federal funds available to Golden Gate Transit and MCTD, with MCTD fully responsible for the local match on those vehicles. Unless or until MCTD becomes an eligible

federal recipient, Golden Gate Transit will continue to be the grantee for federal funds, with MCTD providing the full match for the local fleet. Buses used entirely for local service would include the small bus fleet, required to implement the small bus service in this plan. Federal funds are generally available for 80% of the cost of replacement vehicles, even if a smaller bus is purchased to replace a larger one. All vehicles will meet the California Air Resource Board (CARB) clean fuel requirements.

2. **Proportional Matching Funds for Shared Buses** – In addition to assuming responsibility for the local match on buses that are used entirely for local service, MCTD will be responsible for providing matching funds for buses that are used on BOTH local and regional service, in an amount that is proportional to the mileage used for each service. The mileage calculation will be based on systemwide mileage rather than assessing mileage on individual bus procurements.
3. **System-wide Capital Contribution** – Golden Gate Transit has historically provided other capital items, including bus facilities, used by the local system. In the new contract, MCTD has agreed to pay a fixed amount of approximately \$430,000 annually for the five years of the contract to cover the facility costs of the local service.

At the conclusion of the five-year contract, MCTD may either take title to and “own” vehicles purchased with local funds or will receive the proceeds from the sale of any vehicles paid for in part with local transit funds. Contributions to system-wide capital will not result in MCTD “owning” any part of Golden Gate’s facilities at the end of the contract period.

These three capital priorities are requirements of the upcoming contract. The ability to implement additional priorities will depend on the availability of discretionary grants and matching funds.

Additional Capital Priorities

MCTD has operated as a transit system for nearly 40 years without actually owning any facilities and very few vehicles. MCTD has never had responsibility for local bus stops or for providing amenities to its passengers. With the realignment of responsibilities that has occurred over the past several years, MCTD must now take a lead role in providing a comfortable and convenient customer experience.

The proposed service plan will require a fleet of approximately 60 vehicles for fixed-route service, including 49 active duty vehicles plus spares. An estimated 34 full-sized and 15 smaller vehicles¹ are needed for daily operation assuming there is *no* overlap between the regional and local fleet. Of these, MCTD currently owns only three buses, used for the Stage, that are undersized for its service demand.

In addition, Whistlestop Wheels operates 47

¹ Includes 20% spares added to peak pull out requirements.

vehicles for paratransit service, 24 of which are owned by MCTD, including 10 vehicles that have recently been acquired. These vehicles require regular replacement. Federal funds are available for 80% of the cost of a paratransit vehicle, with a 20% match required.

There is a backlog of demand for capital improvements due to a scarcity of transit funds and the MCTD’s increased role in local service planning. Priorities for this capital plan include:

1. Replacement of existing paratransit vehicles based on the life cycle estimated by FTA, and expansion of the paratransit fleet.
2. Acquisition of higher capacity small buses for the Stage to eliminate pass-ups.
3. Development of a safe and convenient off-street transfer center in Novato.
4. Bus stop improvements throughout the system, beginning with the most heavily used stops, completed in cooperation with local entities.
5. Acquisition of accessible taxi vehicles to implement a pilot program for subsidized taxi as a supplement to paratransit.

These projects are not presented in priority order, as each of these is a critical priority for the system.

Should additional funding be available, the next highest priorities would include:

1. Real-time information at transit centers and all key stops.
2. Enhanced information opportunities for web based and other real time technologies.
3. Addition of an improved transit center in Southern Marin.

The following describes each capital project included in the Short Range Transit Plan.

Replacement of Existing Paratransit Vehicles

Whistlestop Wheels vehicles have been purchased through a variety of grant programs; with the result being that as of November 1, 2005, Whistlestop Wheels owns 23 of the 47 vehicles used for paratransit, and MCTD owns 24 paratransit vehicles. The combined fleet is used to operate all of the Whistlestop Wheels paratransit programs.

The granting agency determines the life cycle of all vehicles purchased with grant funds. The type of buses used for paratransit have relatively short life cycles and are generally scheduled for replacement in five to seven years depending on how they were procured.

In addition to replacing vehicles, the plan anticipates a need to increase the total fleet by about 10% over the 10-year period. Expansion vehicles are more difficult to fund than replacement vehicles.

Typically, federal funds (5307 Capital Funds or 5310 Capital Funds) are used for 80% of the cost of paratransit vehicles and ancillary equipment. MCTD has acquired these vehicles through a pass-through agreement with Golden Gate Transit, where Golden Gate Transit is the official recipient of the federal funds. Depending on the source of funding, these vehicles are replaced every 5-7 years.

In prior years, the Marin Community Foundation has provided the match for paratransit vehicles in the region. A total of nearly \$5 million will be needed for replacing and expanding the paratransit fleet. Approximately \$1 million in Foundation funding would match \$4 million in federal funds for vehicle replacements and expansions.

Small Buses for Rural Service

Higher capacity buses are needed immediately on the Stagecoach routes to eliminate pass-ups. Typically, pass-ups occur during the fall and spring semester change at local schools. Once students have been “passed up”, they tend to find an alternative to the bus, and don’t come back to the Stage even when room may be available. By avoiding pass-ups in the first place, ridership will be maximized.

Given the nature of this community service and the roads it uses, vehicles larger than 22 passengers are likely impractical. To avoid pass-ups at the present time, vehicles no smaller than 18-passengers are required. A total of three buses (two for service, one spare) are required in the rural service plan. These buses are estimated to cost up to \$150,000 for conventional buses and up to \$300,000 for hybrid buses and have a life span of up to 12 years.

Rural service buses are typically funded up to 80% with discretionary FTA 5311 Rural Transit Funds. These funds are available to MCTD through a pass through agreement with Golden Gate Transit that allows Golden Gate to be the federal recipient of funds. Assuming 5311 funds remain a possibility for funding 80% of the cost for buses for the rural system, for its 20% portion of the cost, MCTD would be required to contribute \$90,000 to purchase three conventional vehicles, or \$180,000 for hybrid vehicles. These vehicles would be consistent with the overall small bus fleet acquired for local service.

It should be noted that while hybrid vehicles may be preferable, all buses purchased by MCTD will need to meet the California Air Resources Board (CARB) requirements for clean fuel buses. Any bus purchased in this plan will

be “clean fuel” as defined by CARB.

Novato Transfer Facility

The passenger survey and counts showed that one reason transit ridership in Novato remains lower than expected is the lack of a convenient and safe place for making transfers. Current routes 57 and 59 are too circuitous to be used for travel on the corridor and are proposed to be replaced by local routes that will need a safe place to connect with corridor routes. A number of transfer center locations were considered including the SMART station at Ignacio (southern Novato), the Pacheco Plaza shopping center at Entrada Drive and/or the Caltrans Park and Ride Facility at Rowland Boulevard. The plan currently supports a southern Novato facility, in the vicinity of the proposed SMART station. Co-locating the bus transfer hub and the SMART station offers the added advantage of a multi-modal connection and proximity to the developing Hamilton area. The bus facility could be built quickly, ahead of SMART implementation and is not dependant on SMART operation at that location.

The recommended southern Novato location under consideration will cost approximately \$6 million for a five-berth station with simple shelters and basic amenities, including land acquisition. The basic transfer center could be upgraded over time as part of the bus stop facility plan, but would be of very high utility from the beginning of service. Such a facility could be designed and constructed quickly, probably within 2-years, if the required funding was available. The Transportation Authority of Marin has recently approved its 2006 STIP program, which includes a portion of the funding required for the Novato Transit Center. MCTD will work with TAM to optimize the timing and availability of STIP funds for the project.

Marin City Transfer Facility

After the San Rafael Transit Center, the Marin City Transfer Facility is the busiest transfer location in Marin County serving more than 3,000 boardings and alightings per day. The mid-block transfer facility is located in unincorporated southern Marin County along the back side of the Gateway Shopping Center on Donahue Street.

The facility is in particular need for upgrades to improve passenger safety, passenger comfort, and fix roadway and sidewalk damage. Passengers continually report safety concerns regarding this location and very little passenger information is located at this heavily used transfer location. No shelter is located near the southbound bus boarding area and the northbound bus shelter does not protect passengers adequately from wind and rain.

MCTD is working with the County of Marin and the managers of the Gateway Shopping Center to address the immediate needs at this location and improve transit center amenities. Grant money through the Transportation Enhancement program is anticipated to help facilitate improvements. Marin County will be the applicant for these funds.

Bus Stop Improvements

MCTD has previously had no responsibility for bus stops. In the future, MCTD will need to partner with local communities to ensure that bus stops meet accessibility standards and offer a level of amenities appropriate for the amount of use the stop receives. Since MCTD does not have physical jurisdiction over the stops, coordination with cities, the county, and Caltrans will be required to make any improvements. Both the City of Novato and the City of San Rafael have existing shelter programs with Viacom, an

advertising company that installs and maintains bus shelters in exchange for shared revenues from advertisements. If this type of program is not feasible or desirable in other locations, more operating money will be required to install and maintain improvements. MCTD will need to negotiate agreements with the local jurisdictions to locate and improve bus stops.

Conditions at local stops in the MCTD system range from basic to substandard. A concentrated program of bus stop improvements is necessary to bring MCTD's stops up to standard. More than any other improvement in the system, improving information and conditions

at bus stops will send a positive message to customers, encourage new riders to try the system, and will demonstrate the impact of local sales tax dollars on the system.

Not all stops need to be treated equally. Highest priority for bus stop improvements include those stops that do not meet current ADA accessibility standards, and stops with more than 100 users per day. Improvements at other stops should be prioritized by level of usage.

Figure 6-1 Minimum Bus Stop Amenity

Standards

	Transit Center	Pad Stop	High Use Stop (>100/day)	Medium Use Stop (> 50/day)	Low Use Stop (<50/day)
ADA Accessibility*	Meets all requirements	Meets all requirements	Meets all requirements	Meets all requirements	Signed if not accessible (rare condition)
Signage	All Stops	All Stops	All Stops	All Stops	All Stops
Information	Kiosk, with real time information if possible, displays of system map, route and schedule information. Identify transfer locations	Real time information if possible, displays of system map, route and schedule information. Identify transfer locations	Real time information if possible, displays of system map, route and schedule information. Identify transfer locations	Route map and schedule information	Route map and schedule where possible.
Shelters	Shelters at all boarding locations	Shelters at all boarding locations	Shelters where physically feasible	Shelters optional	
Benches	Benches throughout facility convenient to all boarding areas.	Benches inside shelters and all boarding locations	Benches at all stops where physically feasible	Benches at all stops where physically feasible	
Other amenities	Night Lighting Trash receptacles Public phones Restrooms where possible Bicycle storage	Night Lighting Trash receptacles	Night Lighting Trash receptacles Bicycle storage		

* ADA Accessibility improvement priorities may be addressed in a transition plan

In addition, not all stops require the same level of amenities. The following table shows the level of amenities that should be expected at each bus stop based on the use of that stop. Transit centers require the highest level of amenity, while infrequently used stops require a much lower level of amenity.

As the highest usage stops, the transit centers are a high priority for stop improvements. Marin City is in particular need of upgrades, especially as it is unlikely that it will be replaced by an improved southern transit center in the short to mid-term. Issues to address include the poor condition of the pavement in the bus loading area, the lack of good shelter for waiting passengers, and a lack of passenger information.

The following sections describe the proposed bus stop standards in detail. Detailed ADA accessibility requirements will be included in the bus stop inventory completed for this plan, and will be the subject of a system-wide transition plan.

Sign and Sign Post

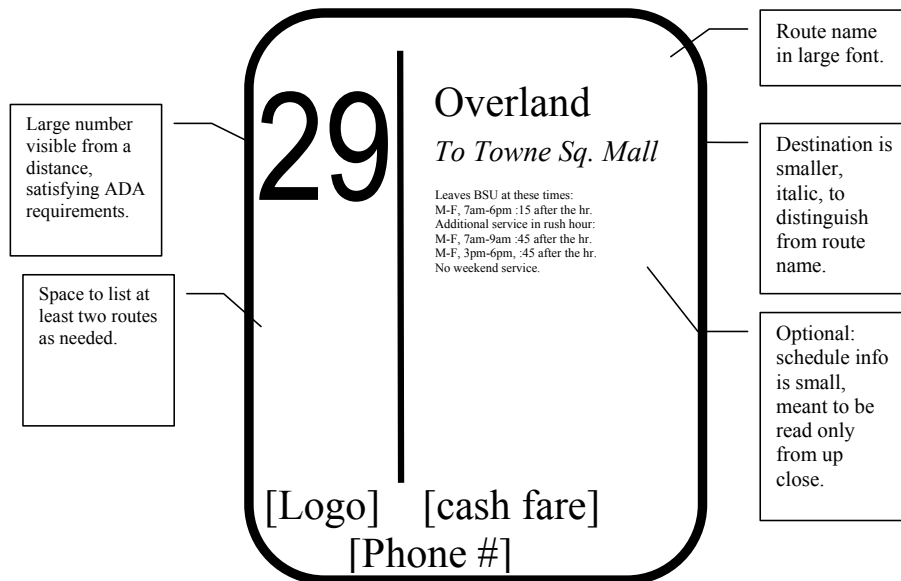
Route signs at bus stops are an important element of good transit service. Bus stop signs allow a transit agency to provide riders with

basic information about the system and are excellent marketing tools to promote transit use and attract new riders.

Bus stop signs should be placed at the location where riders will board the front door of the bus. The sign also assists the operator in positioning the vehicle at the stop. Sign placement should be consistent with current ADA requirements.

The information that should be included on the sign, in declining order of priority, and declining order of prominence if present, comprise of the following:

1. Route number.
2. Route name.
3. Destination (distinguished from route name, less prominent, identical to that used on overhead signs).
4. 511 information phone number (although a good sign, like a good brochure, will reduce the need for these calls).
5. Span information (when it operates, e.g., 7am – 7pm).
6. Schedule (“Service at :32 past the hour.”). Combined with the span information, this is all you need to know to determine whether a bus is coming. Some systems have tried to provide schedule informa-



tion that is specific to each stop, but this detail becomes too hard to update accurately. We recommend providing the time that the bus leaves the beginning of the route, along with that location (e.g. “Departs San Rafael Transit Center at :45 past the hour.”) This information is sufficient to give some sense of when the bus might be expected at this stop, and it is far less complex to produce and update, since there are only two standard schedule decals for each route, one for each direction.

7. Fare. (A sticker on the back of the sign, or even the sign pole, is often sufficient for this purpose.) Only the cash fares need to be displayed here. This completes the information needed to permit spontaneous use.

We recommend making every effort to provide all of the above information in an uncluttered way. Good signage means faster transit service, because it reduces the time drivers spend answering questions as passengers board.

Any good bus stop sign needs to be:

1. Simple and clear (not cluttered with unrelated information, such as promotional material).
2. Consistent with ADA requirements. Industry practice is to put route numbers in very large typefaces, in the range of 1-2 inches high and route names in a large typeface, at least 1/2 inch high and preferably larger. Relatively tall and thin typefaces are often preferred to maximize the number of characters that can be shown.
3. Updateable without replacing the sign. For example, the Six Year Plan, if implemented, should not require replacing signs that are less than five years old. Any procurement of signs must include a cost-effective way to procure decals for revisions, including a means to protect such decals from weather and vandalism. An initial procurement may require a



Examples of pole signs.

contractor to print the route information on each sign, but MCTD must retain the ability to print decals, or provide an exact layout for a printer’s use. Decals used in updating a sign must match the sign’s look exactly, including font and background.

Estimated cost:

Product	Cost	Installation	Total
Sign and post (with 2 decals)	\$300	\$500	\$800

Route Information

System information, schedules and maps can be displayed at bus stops by mounting an information holder to the signpost or on the side panel of a shelter. By displaying route information at the bus stop, the transit agency is making it much easier for regular customers to understand the system and for new riders to learn the routes. Route information encourages riders to plan trips on their own while waiting for a bus instead of depending on customer service to provide route information.

Some recommendations for information displays are as follows:

- Provide updated information when changes are made to route and schedules
- Consider the quality and appearance of information displays
- Make information displays permanent
- Follow ADA clearance, mobility, and visual guidelines

One drawback to route information signs is the regular maintenance required to keep all of the information current throughout the system.

Estimated cost:

Product	Cost	Installation	Total
Information Holder	\$1,500	\$500	\$2,000

Benches

A bench at a bus stop provides patrons with comfort and convenience. Benches are usually installed at a bus stop based on the number of boardings and alightings. Additional benches may be installed where there is a sponsor for both bench installation AND maintenance. Bus stop benches also help identify the stop and add to the urban landscape. In most cases, benches are the first amenity to add to a bus stop as they tend to cost less than shelters and still provide added comfort for patrons.

Important factors in determining bench locations:

- The width of the bus stop location
- Stops where transit agency can maintain general ADA mobility clearances
- Locations where transit riders frequently sit on nearby structures and/or curbs
- Bus stops with a high number of disabled and elderly riders
- Ridership

Estimated cost:

Product	Cost	Installation	Total
Bench	\$1,000	\$250	\$1,250

Shelters

Bus stop shelters provide protection from the outside elements and inclement weather. In most cases, shelters are accompanied by benches, which provide additional comfort for transit patrons. Given the range of bus stop locations on the MCTD system, not all high use stops may accommodate a shelter.

In addition to stops with high ridership, other factors should be considered when selecting locations for shelters, such as proximity to senior housing, location of major activity centers, surrounding land use, and number of routes serving a bus stop. It is also important to consider the right-of-way width to avoid restricting pedestrian and wheelchair traffic.

Shelters come in a wide variety of sizes, shapes and materials. The most critical considerations in shelter design are:

- All accessibility requirements are maintained.
- The shelter provide adequate wind and rain break
- The shelter is “see through” with visibility into the shelter from all sides. This



requires the use of glass or Plexiglas in most shelters.

- The shelter is relatively easy to maintain
- The shelter fits into the overall urban environment and meets local design standards.

Estimated cost:

Product	Cost	Installation	Total
Shelter	\$5,000	\$1000	\$6,000

Trash Receptacle

Trash receptacles can help maintain the overall appearance and cleanliness of a bus stop. Not all bus stops will require a trash receptacle. Bus stops with high ridership should be considered a priority. Problems can arise when the receptacles are not regularly maintained or when the bus stop is next to a land use that generates a lot of trash. As with all passenger amenities, the installation and placement of trash receptacles should follow the ADA clearance requirements.

Estimated cost:

Product	Cost	Installation	Total
Trash Can	\$200	N/A	\$200

Lighting

Lighting plays an important role in the patron's perception of safety and security at a bus stop. A well-lit bus stop provides comfort to passengers waiting for a bus after dark. A cost effective approach to providing indirect light at a site is to locate the bus stop near existing streetlights. In some cases, lighting may have to be provided by the transit agency, which can be restricted by the cost and availability of power in the area.

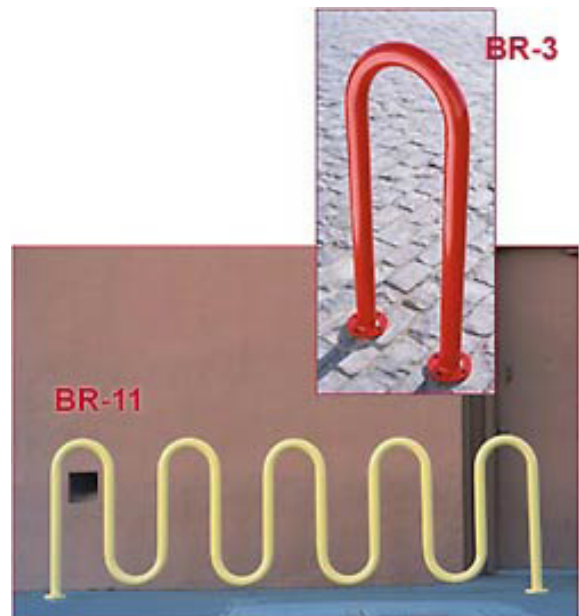
Product	Cost	Installation	Total
Lighting	N/A		

Bicycle Storage

Bicycle storage can range from simple "U style" bicycle locking facilities to bicycle lockers and attended bike stations. Secure bicycle storage should be offered at high volume stops and at locations where commute or recreational cyclists are likely to store bikes. Funding for bike storage may be available as part of the Non-Motorized Pilot Program or Safe Pathway to Transit Funding as well as conventional transit capital sources. Capital costs vary widely depending on the type of securement and installation requirements. Simple "U loops" can be installed for about \$1500.

Product	Cost	Installation	Total
Bicycle Storage	\$500	\$1000	\$1,500

Note: Costs vary depending on product and installation location.



Estimating Bus Stop Improvement Costs

The cost of implementing bus stop improvements is difficult to estimate, because the total costs are largely dependant on the level of accessibility improvements needed at each stop combined with the level of amenity improvements provided. Virtually all of the 600+ bus stops in the system will require at least some improvements. At a minimum, accessible signs and schedule information should be provided at every stop in conjunction with implementation of the service plan.

Assuming an average of \$7,500 per bus stop for capital improvements, the total cost of the bus stop improvement program will be approximately \$5 M, which can be spread over several years. Unlike the other projects included in the capital plan, bus stop improvements are difficult to support with existing grant sources, and may become a primary candidate for Measure A funding.

Accessible Taxi Vehicles

The availability of an accessible taxi fleet is an important goal in Marin County, regardless of the type of subsidized program implemented.

A total of four accessible vehicles are envisioned in the short term, with additional accessible taxis purchased as needed. These vehicles could be owned by MCTD or by Marin County as needed to ensure that the vehicles are fully insured. Vehicles could be leased to taxi companies who would agree to prioritize accessible vehicles for wheelchair calls and to accept taxi scrip as cash on all trips on all vehicles.

Should this pilot program be discontinued for any reason, the vehicles will revert to the paratransit fleet to expand traditional paratransit

service.

An accessible taxi is estimated to cost \$40,000 for a total of \$160,000 for four vehicles. Funding for these expansion vehicles may be available through property tax receipts or other sources. The federal transportation reauthorization bill may also provide an opportunity for funding accessible taxis under the New Freedom program.

Funding Sources

Most transit operators rely on a variety of sources of funds to pay for capital projects. In the Bay Area, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission is responsible for programming federal transit funds for capital, and the Congestion Management Agencies (TAM in Marin County) are responsible for programming certain federal flexible funds and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds and other local funds. The recent passage of SAFETEA-LU, the federal reauthorization of the transportation bill, provides new opportunities to MCTD for funding both capital and operating elements of the planned service. A summary of the funds that could be available to MCTD for the Capital Improvement Program is provided below.

Federal Funds

On August 10, 2005, the President signed the surface transportation reauthorization bill, entitled the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) into law. This legislation increased funding for transportation by 46% over the previous surface transportation bill, TEA-21. The bill continues programs that MCTD has participated in such as the Section 5311 formula program for other than urbanized

areas, and programs that MCTD could be eligible to participate in such as the Section 5307 urbanized area formula grants program. New programs such as the Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands and the New Freedom Program will provide opportunities for new federal funding for MCTD.

Many of the provisions of SAFETEA-LU will require rulemaking activities to define and implement the changes. Until further rulemaking and guidance is available, it is uncertain how funds might flow to MCTD under these programs. MCTD will continue to work with MTC to determine what sources could be used for its capital program and how those funds can be accessed. Under certain of these programs, MCTD will need to become a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grantee or establish a relationship with an existing grantee, such as Golden Gate Transit.

Section 5307- Urbanized Area Formula Grants

These funds are provided to Urbanized Areas and are managed through MTC’s Transit Capital Priorities process. The Transit Capital Priorities process includes a scoring system whereby different types of projects are assigned a score. The categories included in the process and the scores for each category are shown in Figure 6-2. Due to the limited amount of formula funds available in any particular year, only Score 16 projects have been funded. Even with more funds being made available under SAFETEA-LU with the addition of new formula features, it is unclear that projects scoring less than a score 16 will be funded. In the FY06-08 Transit Capital Priorities process, MTC will allow transit operators to use 10% of their total formula share for any lower scoring projects they choose.

Figure 6-2 MTC Transit Capital Priorities Scoring of Projects

Score	Category
16	Revenue Vehicle Replacement/Rehabilitation
16	Fixed Guideway Replacement/Rehabilitation
16	Ferry Replacement/Rehabilitation
16	TransLink
15	Safety
14	ADA/Non-vehicle Access Improvements
13	Fixed/Heavy Equipment, Maintenance/Operating Facilities
12	Intermodal Stations
12	Station/Parking Rehabilitation
11	Service Vehicles
10	Tools and Equipment
9	Office Equipment
9	Capitalized Maintenance, including Tires/Tubes/Engines/Transmissions
8	Operational Improvement/Enhancements
8	Expansion

In the past, Golden Gate Transit has received funding for transit capital projects through this process, replacing buses used in MCTD local transit service. These federal funds are matched at a rate of 80% federal and 20% local match. MCTD would be in a good position to continue to benefit from Section 5307 funds for bus replacement by continuing to participate in the replacement of buses used for local transit service through Golden Gate Transit, even if large buses are being replaced by smaller ones. Should MCTD become a direct federal recipient, it is not clear how MCTD’s vehicle replacements would be scored, since MCTD does not currently own the vehicles it would be replacing. Vehicles required for expanded service, or vehicles that do not replace other vehicles would likely not be in a score 16 category.

Section 5308 – Clean Fuels Grant Program

This program provides discretionary capital grants for clean fuel buses and related facilities in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas. These funds are matched at a rate of 80% federal and 20% local match.

Although a significant number of bus and facilities projects are designated (earmarked) in SAFETEA-LU, MCTD's clean fuel bus purchases would be eligible for funding. With legislative advocacy for MCTD's clean fuel bus program, these discretionary funds may be authorized and appropriated during this SRTP period. MCTD's chances for getting these discretionary funds are enhanced if their proposal represents a combined strategy with Golden Gate Transit and if the two operators are seen as supporting one another.

Section 5307-09 – Excess Capital Funds

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has identified one-time excess federal funds from these two federal funding programs that can be used for one-time capitol projects. MCTD and Golden Gate Transit are currently reviewing the timing and opportunity of this funding.

Funds are allocated by formula that considers the number of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities in each state. In California, Caltrans administers the Section 5310 program. Local non-profit agencies are eligible recipients. Capital projects are eligible for funding at an 80% federal and 20% local match.

Section 5310 – Transportation for Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities

Funds are allocated by formula that considers the number of elderly individuals and individuals with disabilities in each state. In California, Caltrans administers the Section 5310 program.

Local non-profit agencies are eligible recipients. Capital projects are eligible for funding at an 80% federal and 20% local match.

Whistlestop Wheels has funded about one half of its paratransit vehicle fleet with Section 5310 funds. The Marin Community Foundation has provided the local match for these grants. Section 5310 will continue to be a good source of funds for paratransit vehicles.

Section 5311 – Other Than Urbanized Area Formula Program

This program provides capital and operating grants to States for services in other-than-urbanized areas. Under SAFETEA-LU, program amounts have increased and the formula for providing funds to States has changed. It is likely that the amount of Section 5311 funding to California will increase during the reauthorization period. The share for capital projects is 80% federal. For operating projects, the share is 50% federal.

The rural service plan has indicated a need for four new higher capacity buses for the rural service plan implementation. These buses should be funded 80% with 5311 funds if available.

Section 5316 – Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)

This program provides funding for local programs that offer job access and reverse commute services to provide transportation for low income individuals who live in the city core and work in suburban locations. Under SAFETEA-LU this is a formula program, not a discretionary grant program as it had been under TEA-21. States and designated recipients must select grantees competitively.

While JARC funds are more likely to be a source of needed operating funds, rather than being used for capital, expanded services in the Canal

and Marin City areas will require additional buses that could be candidates for JARC funds. In particular, the new direct service from the Canal to Mill Valley could qualify for JARC funds.

Section 5317 – New Freedom Program

This is a new program with the purpose of encouraging services and facility improvements that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Funds are available for capital and operating costs and are allocated to designated recipients and States through a formula based on population of persons with disabilities. Projects must be included in a locally-developed human service transportation coordinated plan beginning in FY 2007.

Expansions of paratransit service to non-mandated populations including subsidized taxi and local initiative shuttle services aimed at older adults and persons with disabilities may be candidate projects for New Freedom program funds. The specific requirements for this program have not been drafted at this time, but are likely to include both capital and operating funding opportunities.

Section 5320 – Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands

The new Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands program provides grants for planning or capital projects in or in the vicinity of any federally owned or managed park, refuge, or recreation area that is open to the general public. Approximately \$22 million to \$27 million is available annually nationwide beginning in FY 2006.

The Muir Woods shuttle service is a possible candidate for planning and capital funds from this new program. The pilot program has been run with very old vehicles that Golden Gate

Transit had available for service, which would require replacement to continue the pilot program.

Surface Transportation Program and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program Funds

The Surface Transportation Program (STP) provides funds for use on a wide variety of highway, public transit capital, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transportation control measures, surface transportation planning activities, and safety. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program provides funding for new or expanded transportation projects, programs, and operations that help reduce emissions. SAFETEA-LU increased STP funds by 17.2% and CMAQ funds by 27.2% over the amounts authorized in TEA-21.

Although MTC has recently completed programming STP and CMAQ funds through FY 2008-09, future programming may be available for transit capital shortfalls, Transportation for Livable Communities, and regional bicycle and pedestrian projects. MCTD should work closely with TAM in developing the Congestion Management Plan, and Golden Gate Transit as the regional operator to ensure that transit projects have maximum opportunity for funding under this program.

Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program

This program introduces a network of non-motorized transportation infrastructure facilities, including sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian and bicycle trails that connect directly with transit stations, schools, residences, businesses, recreation areas, and other community activity centers. The purpose of the program is to demonstrate the extent to which bicycling and walking can carry a significant part of the

transportation load, and represent a major portion of the transportation solution.

Marin County was selected as one of four communities in the U.S. to receive \$25 million for the non-motorized transportation pilot program. Up to \$6.25 million may be allocated annually over the four year period from FY 2006 through FY 2009. This program may supplement funding required for bus stop improvements and transit centers identified in the SRTP, or replace funding that is not yet secured for these projects. As the non-motorized transportation pilot program is still under development, no specific funds are included in the capital funding plan.

State Funds

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

The primary source of state funds for transit capital improvements is the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Transportation Authority of Marin programs a portion of these funds. Due to the state budget shortfalls over the past three years, State funding programmed through the STIP has been minimal, and the preliminary fund estimate for FY 2006 provided little funding for transportation statewide. Generally, the STIP is a rolling five-year program that is updated every two years, adding two new years to the end of the period. Thus, the 2006 STIP adds new programming for 2010 and 2011. TAM has included a portion of the funding for the Novato Transit Center project in the 2006 Marin County STIP priorities. Although the project is identified for funding in FY 2010-11, funds may be advanced to an earlier year. Most STIP dollars for transit have been “federalized” because the state allocates federal Surface Transportation Program formula

funds to transit projects and preserves state funds for highway projects.

State Transit Assistance Funds – Regional Paratransit

State Transit Assistance Funds are allocated to MTC under a formula for “revenue” share that is based on transit operators’ relative share of revenue received and for a population share based on the relative population of the area. The population share is distributed by MTC under various programs. One of those programs is the Regional Paratransit program, which has been tapped in Marin County to match federal Section 5310 grants for Whistlestop Wheels paratransit vehicle purchases. This source can be used for operating or capital purposes and does not require a match.

Local Funds

Annually 6% of Measure A funds, about \$900,000 per year, is provided for investments in bus transit facilities for a clean and efficient transit system. While this amount will not address all of MCTD’s capital needs, it can be used as local match for federal or state funds described above, on projects that are appropriate for Measure A funding.

Measure A allows for debt financing of up to \$5 million for transit capital projects, to accelerate important investments in the local transit system. MCTD will make an initial request to TAM for these capital funds as a part of the SRTP/CIP process. Receiving bond proceeds from TAM will not have a near term impact on the allocation of transit funds available to MCTD from the net proceeds of the tax over the next ten years, because bond repayment is made “off the top” rather than from individual strategies. Future year annual allocations of

Measure A capital funds to MCTD can be used to pay the principal amount (up to \$5.0 million) financed by TAM.

Both the annual allocations of Measure A and the debt financed component of Measure A funding could be used for the projects identified in the capital plan. In particular, bus stop improvements and the Novato Transit Center are projects that can be implemented quickly and with maximum visibility to the public.

The use of Measure A bond proceeds would help accelerate projects such as the bus stop improvements and the Novato Transit Center. However, if Measure A bond proceeds are not available, other funds will be sought. Alternatively, these projects could be deferred, and annual Measure A revenues could be “saved” until such time as the projects are fully funded.

Funding the Capital Plan

Measure A provides a dedicated funding stream for capital projects on the local transit system. However, the funds provided by Measure A alone will not be adequate to address the system’s capital needs. It is imperative that MCTD make the best possible use of all available capital grants described above.

The capital budget for the system includes a number of assumptions about capital grants:

- MCTD will continue to receive 80% funding for paratransit vehicles and 20% match funding through the Marin Community Foundation.
- All other vehicles, except accessible taxis, will receive at least 50% outside funding. MCTD will either purchase vehicles directly or will pay Golden Gate Transit a proportional share of the local match for vehicles used for local service. Should MCTD purchase its vehicles through Golden Gate, it will have input into the

type of vehicles purchased and the specifications for those vehicles.

- MCTD and local partners will share the costs of upgrading all bus stops, which serve both the local and regional bus systems. At least 30% of the cost of bus stop improvements will come from non-Measure A sources, yet to be determined.
- At least 50%, and up to 80%, of the Novato Transit Center costs will come from capital grants yet to be determined.

Capital Funding Plan Summary

The high priority capital needs of the transit system over the next ten years will rely heavily on Measure A and existing sources available to Golden Gate Transit and MCTD for funding. However, SAFETEA-LU, the newly authorized federal transit bill, provides new opportunities that are included in the funding plan. Costs for capital expenditures were estimated in FY 2006 dollars and then escalated by 3% annually to the year of expenditure. The capital plan, summarized in Figure 6-3, does not assign a specific funding source to an individual project, but applies the full range of potential funding sources to a broad set of funding priorities to create a balanced plan. Each source has limitations, and as new information becomes available about discretionary sources, individual projects may be accelerated or pushed back in time.

This plan will require MCTD to aggressively pursue new funding available through SAFETEA-LU and other funding to address the system’s capital needs. Measure A capital funding requests will be applied to appropriate projects as matching funds.

Figure 6-3 Capital Funding Plan Summary

EXPENDITURES	Ten Year Total	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Paratransit Vehicle Replacement	4,765,530	0	668,367	619,576	0	1,095,514	0	0	798,065	822,007	762,001
Paratransit Vehicle Expansion	374,260	0	0	0	141,814	0	0	232,446	0	0	0
Small Buses for Rural Transit	1,311,272			1,311,272							
Small Fixed Route Buses	3,751,518				1,406,886	1,449,093	895,539				
Standard & Articulated Bus Replacement	2,300,000	460,000	460,000	460,000	460,000	460,000	460,000				
Fixed Route Systemwide Contribution	2,158,660	431,732	431,732	431,732	431,732	431,732	431,732				
Novato Transfer Center	6,000,000	0	3,000,000	3,000,000	0						
Marin City Transit Center Improvements			160,625								
Systemwide Bus Stop Improvements	5,888,458			546,364	1,125,509	1,159,274	1,194,052	1,229,874	633,385		
Accessible Taxis	172,290		84,872	87,418							
Total Expenditures	26,721,988	0	4,644,971	6,456,362	3,565,941	4,595,613	2,981,324	1,462,320	1,431,450	822,007	762,001
REVENUES											
Federal											
Section 5307	3,001,214				1,125,509	1,159,274	716,431				
Section 5310	3,812,424		534,694	495,661		876,411			638,452	657,606	609,600
Section 5311	655,636			655,636							
Section 5308, 5316, 5317, 5320	299,408				113,451			185,957			
Federal Transportation Enhancements Program ¹			128,500								
State											
STIP	3,000,000		1,500,000	1,500,000							
STAF - Regional Paratransit	74,852				28,363			46,489			
Local											
Measure A	13,158,810		2,476,604	3,517,241	1,960,965	1,993,042	1,906,676	860,912	443,370		
Marin Community Foundation	953,106		133,673	123,915		219,103			159,613	164,401	152,400
Other Local (TBD)	1,766,537		32,125	163,909	337,653	347,782	358,216	368,962	190,016		
Total Revenues	26,721,988	0	4,644,971	6,456,362	3,565,941	4,595,613	2,981,324	1,462,320	1,431,450	822,007	762,001
ANNUAL BALANCE (Surplus/Deficit)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

¹ Marin County will apply for federal funds,

