



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

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Memorandum

TO: Operations Committee

DATE: October 3, 2008

FR: Deputy Executive Director, Operations

W.I.: 1225

RE: New 511 Transit Website and Trip Planner

In July 2006, this Committee authorized a four-year contract with bd Systems, Inc. (a subsidiary of SAIC) to operate, maintain and further develop the regional transit information system (RTIS), including the 511 Transit website and the transit trip planning software. Replacing the existing transit trip planning software was one of the first and highest priority tasks in the new contract because the demands on the aging software were beginning to affect service quality. At your October meeting, staff will provide a brief project update (see attached slides), including a demonstration of the new website.

The RTIS project has delivered schedule, route, fare, available real-time arrival and other information online for over 30 Bay Area public transit agencies since 1997. In 2001, MTC launched the transit trip planner in collaboration with the region's transit agencies. The website is widely used, averaging about one million user sessions per month over the past two years. During that same time period, the site's most popular feature, the trip planner, generated an average of 635,000 itineraries per month.

New Transit Trip Planner

In January 2007, bd Systems completed an independent evaluation of trip planner software replacement options, including the beta version of a trip planner being developed by Google, and recommended that MTC implement a commercial off-the-shelf product replacement for the transit trip planner, supplied by mdv. The mdv product is used in London, Melbourne, and over 30 locations throughout Europe. It is widely recognized for its ability to handle complex, large, multi-agency transit systems such as the Bay Area. Soon, Chicago RTA will also be launching a multi-modal trip planner using the mdv product. The full transition to the new 511 transit website was completed in early July of this year.

During this same timeframe, Google Labs completed testing of its transit trip planner and now offers it as a standard feature of its website. Google has also expanded the number of agencies for which it provides transit trip itineraries, including five Bay Area agencies. Staff is currently exploring how to share with Google regional transit data that MTC collects for 511. We will also be evaluating the impact of the availability of Google's transit trip planner on the services offered through 511.

Ann Flemer