



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION
SERVICE AUTHORITY
FOR FREEWAYS
AND EXPRESSWAYS**

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4700
TEL 510.817.5700
TDD/TTY 510.817.5769
FAX 510.817.5848
E-MAIL info@mtc.ca.gov
WEB www.mtc.ca.gov

Memorandum

TO: Operations Committee

DATE: July 3, 2014

FR: Deputy Executive Director, Operations

W.I.: 6032

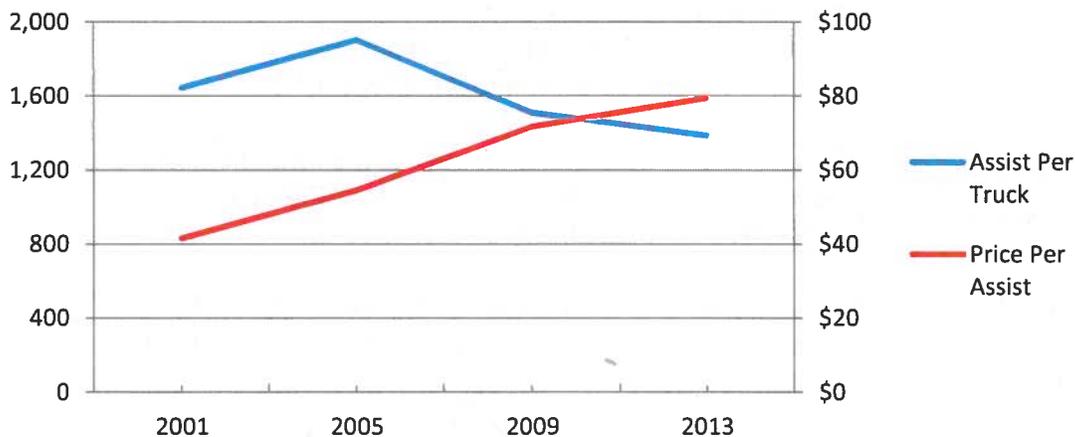
RE: Freeway Service Patrol Tow Procurement – FY 2016-20

This informational memorandum provides the Committee with a summary of the proposed modifications to the Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) program that will be reflected in the upcoming tow contract procurement scheduled to be released in September 2014.

Background

The Bay Area FSP program started in 1992 with 12 tow trucks patrolling 55 miles of freeway to provide congestion relief by quickly clearing incidents during commute hours. The program completed its expansion in 2012 with 80 trucks covering over 550 miles of freeway in the Bay Area. Despite the last expanded coverage and additional trucks, the program has seen a decline in assist per truck along with an increase in price per assist (see Figure 1). The FSP program always strives to be cost effective by making strategic changes as the tow contracts near expiration and regularly conducts performance evaluations. However, this decline in assists clearly suggested that staff should perform a more aggressive assessment of program design.

FIGURE 1: Assist Per Truck and Price Per Assist (Fiscal Year)



The program receives approximately \$6 million annually from the statewide fund that is shared by the 14 FSP programs in California. This funding is based on a formula that factors in congestion, population, and freeway miles. In addition, the Bay Area program receives funding from the Surface Transportation Program and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Service Authority for Freeways and Expressways (SAFE) funds derived from a Department of Motor Vehicles' vehicle license fee. There

continues to be healthy competition for the SAFE funds, as 511 and other regional congestion management programs at MTC rely on it as a local match funding source. As such, any savings accrued by the FSP program can benefit other regional programs.

Procurement

MTC SAFE releases a four-year FSP tow procurement every two years for approximately half of its 35 beats (patrol routes). In the upcoming Request for Qualifications and Bid Invitation (RFQBI), 16 beats shown in Map 1 will be up for bid. The RFQBI is a three-step process that qualifies interested tow providers through experience and inspections and then solicits bids from bidders meeting those requirements. The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid for a particular beat will be recommended for contract award based on its operational limit. This is determined by MTC SAFE in consultation with California Department of Transportation and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to ensure tow contractors are not overextended beyond their capabilities.

Staff continually evaluates the program’s assist rates and data related to motorist delay on freeways to ensure that service is deployed at appropriate levels and locations to effectively reduce congestion. Based on funding and staffing constraints, recent congestion patterns compared with assist information, and feedback from tow drivers and CHP personnel, SAFE staff recommends the strategies shown in Table 1 and Maps 2, 3, and 4. Staff estimates these strategies will provide an operational savings of \$1 million per year out of an annual FSP tow operating budget of approximately \$10 million. Note that these recommendations may be further refined due to future evaluations or changes to the FSP funding programming.

**Table 1:
Recommended Modifications for FY2014-15 Procurement**

Strategy	Justification	Beats Affected
1 Incorporate more pickup trucks in fleet	Only ~20% of total assists require a tow. Pickup trucks are more reliable and cheaper to operate/maintain compared to tow trucks. Beats requiring 3 tow trucks will have 2 tow trucks and 1 pickup.	5, 9, 10, 13, 22
2 Reduce number of trucks	Beats with relatively low assist rates and minimal congestion will have one less truck to improve performance and reduce cost.	17, 27, 33
3 Eliminate poor performing beats	Routes with relatively little congestion, reliable travel times, and very low assist numbers render FSP ineffective.	24, 30, 37
4 Reduce service on holidays/Sundays	Congestion on Sundays and holidays are minimal and assist rates are poor. In addition, future funding for CHP dispatchers on weekends will not continue.	3, 11, 13, 22, 27, 29, 34

Staff plans to release the RFQBI with the above strategies in September 2014. The four-year tow contract recommendations will be brought to this committee for approval in December 2014 for service that will commence in late June 2015.

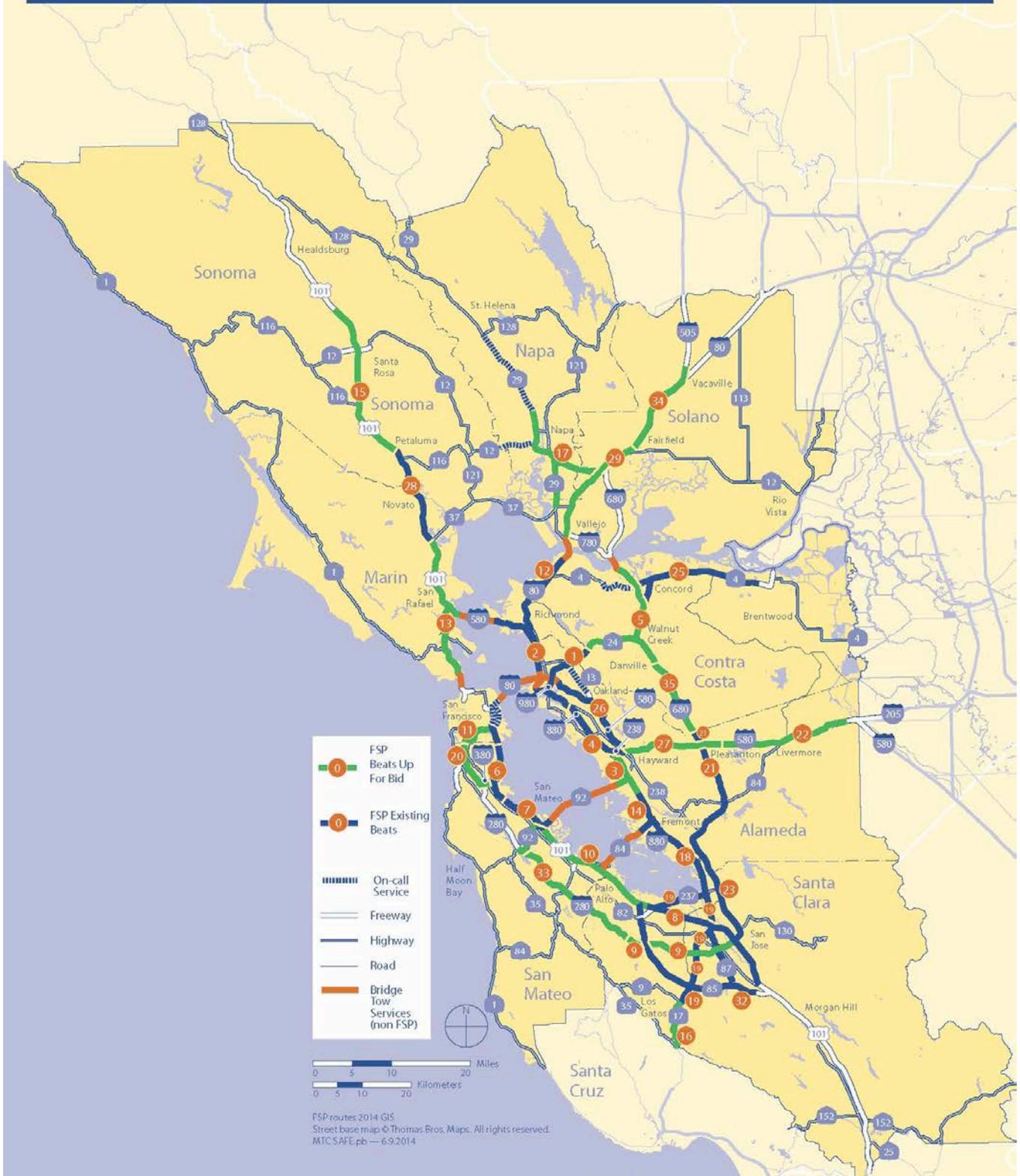


 Andrew B. Fremier

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Map 1

FSP Existing Beats and Beats Up for Bid



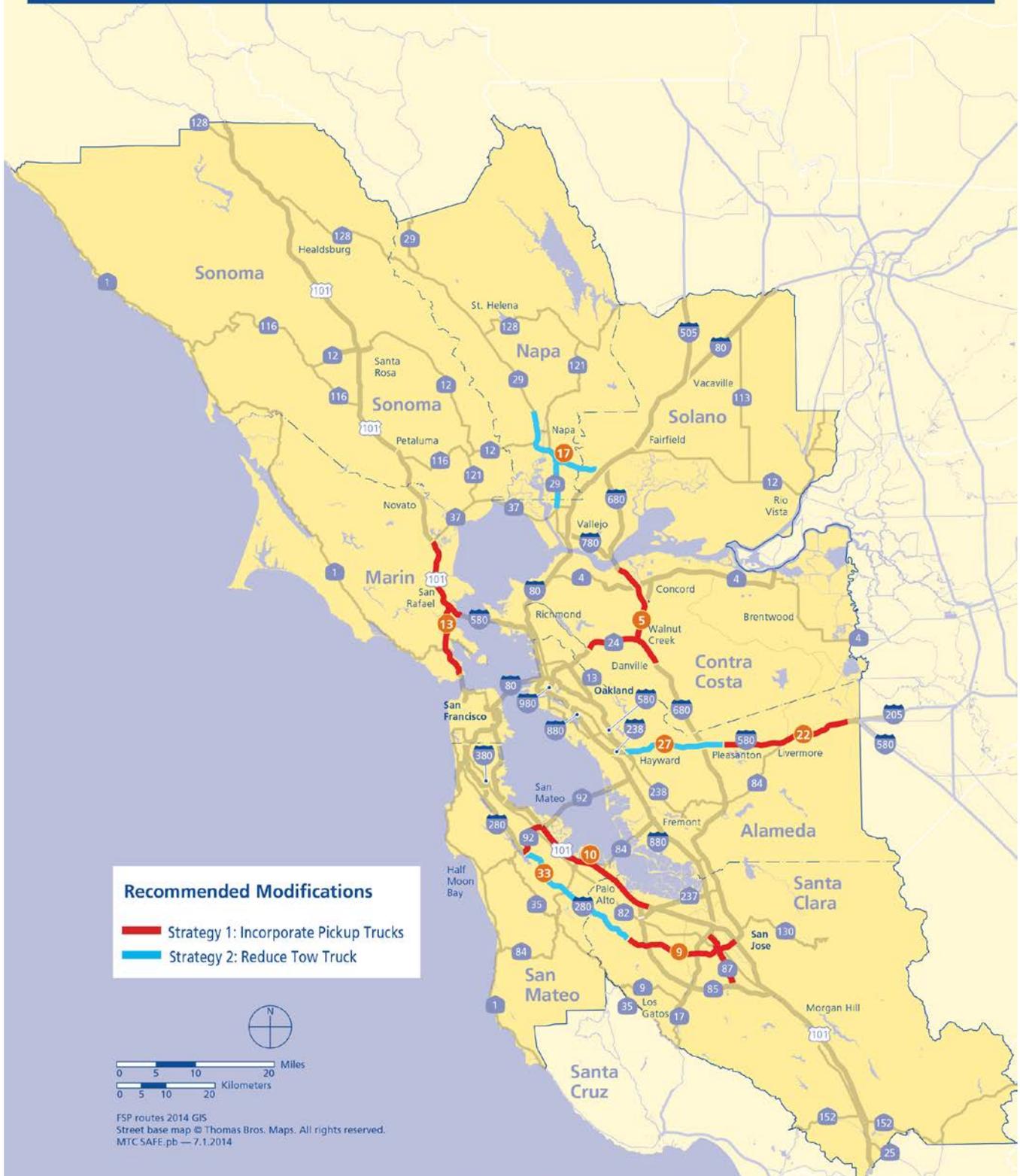
Map 2

Beats Up For Bid with No Change



Map 3

Beats Up For Bid by Recommended Modifications Strategy 1 & 2



Map 4

Beats Up for Bid by Recommended Modifications Strategy 3 & 4

