



Muni Metro Capacity Study

May 6, 2025

SFMTA Board of Directors



What is the Muni Metro Capacity Study ?

The problem: Muni Metro is experiencing

- **Aging pains:** old infrastructure is in need of renewal
- **Growing pains:** some crowding today and more growth planned

The opportunity: Develop a capital program to expand **system capacity** and address **state of good repair** over the next 10-15 years so that we can apply for an FTA Core Capacity grant



Federal Core Capacity Program presents a unique funding opportunity

- For existing fixed-guideway systems that will experience overcrowding within 10 years
- **Funds up to 80% of project cost**
- **Benefits systems like Muni Metro that need to improve capacity and fix aging infrastructure at the same time**
- SFCTA Prop L Sales Tax plan sets aside money that can be used as local match for this federal grant to increase our competitiveness



BART: \$1,170 million federal grant



Chicago: \$957 million federal grant

Critical State of Good Repair investments that enhance capacity could benefit from a Core Capacity grant

SFMTA's 2023 State of Good Repair Report found that we would need \$424M per year to replace transit critical assets over the next 20 years

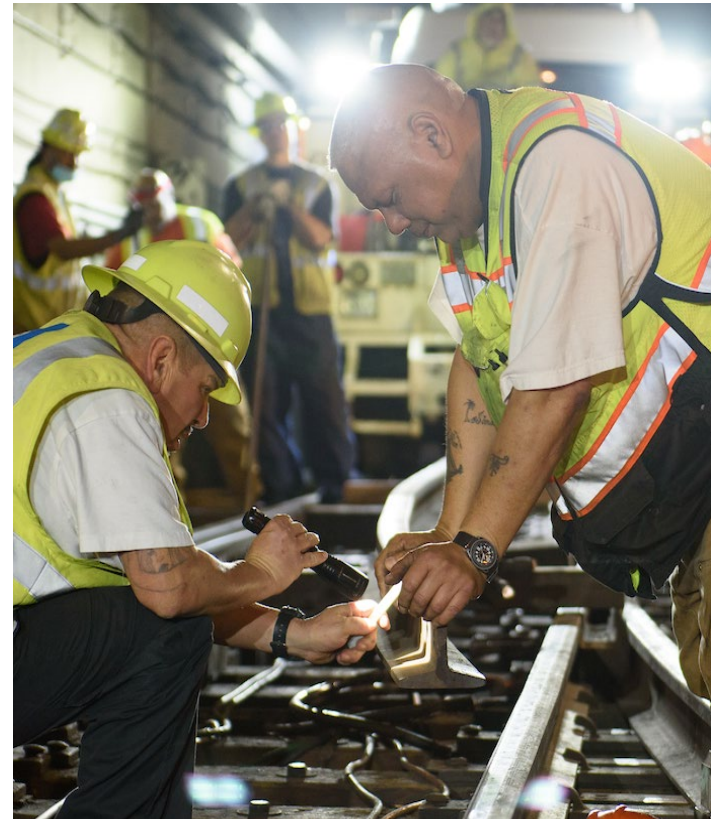
Train Control Upgrade Project (TCUP)

- Potential later project phases could benefit from a Core Capacity grant

Rail State of Good Repair

Some costs associated with capacity-enhancing components of :

- Traction power
- Station upgrades
- Rail replacement
- OCS replacement



Why now?

- A Core Capacity grant could provide ~\$1 billion
- Lead time to award is significant (~4-6 years from application to award)
- Segments of system that are overdue for major renewal (e.g. new rail, overhead) such as the N Judah are unfunded and are good candidates for combining capacity enhancements with infrastructure renewal
- After completing Study, we would take initial steps to enter grant pipeline to position ourselves to receive a grant and begin construction in the early 2030s.



Muni Metro's unusual history – 100+ year old streetcar lines + 1970s era Market Street subway



What is the Muni Metro?

That portion of the new Municipal Railway which will operate in the upper level of the Market Street subway and in Twin Peaks Tunnel out to West Portal will be the Muni Metro.



The Muni Metro is a subway-surface system. In the subway the Metro cars are rapid transit; on the surface they are streetcars.

Muni Metro today



- Light-rail vehicle expansion to 219 cars near completion, ~200 stops, ~100,000 ridership
- 4th busiest light-rail system in the nation. Busiest transit corridor in the Bay Area, after the Transbay Tube



- Subway delays have been cut by ~2/3 since the pandemic, in part due to scheduling fewer trains

Major infrastructure components of the system, over \$10 billion in value

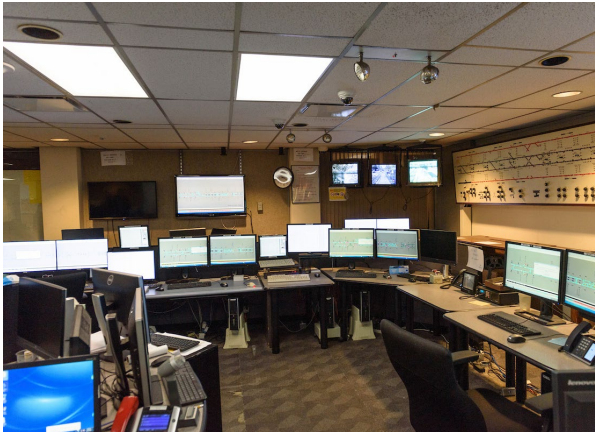
Track



Light-rail vehicles



Train control and comms



Stations and tunnels



Facilities

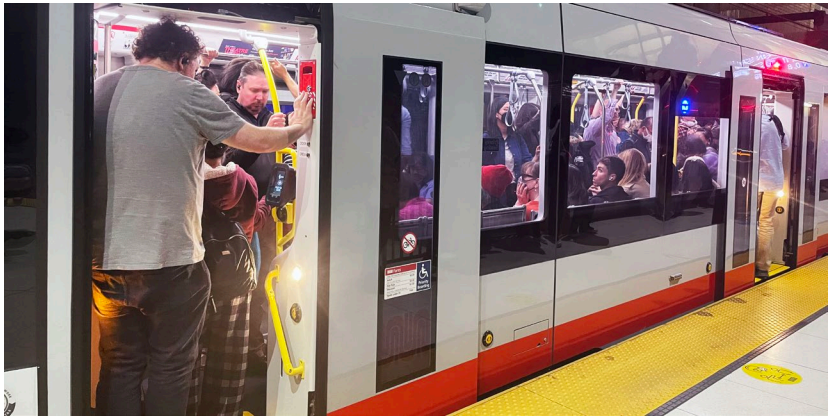
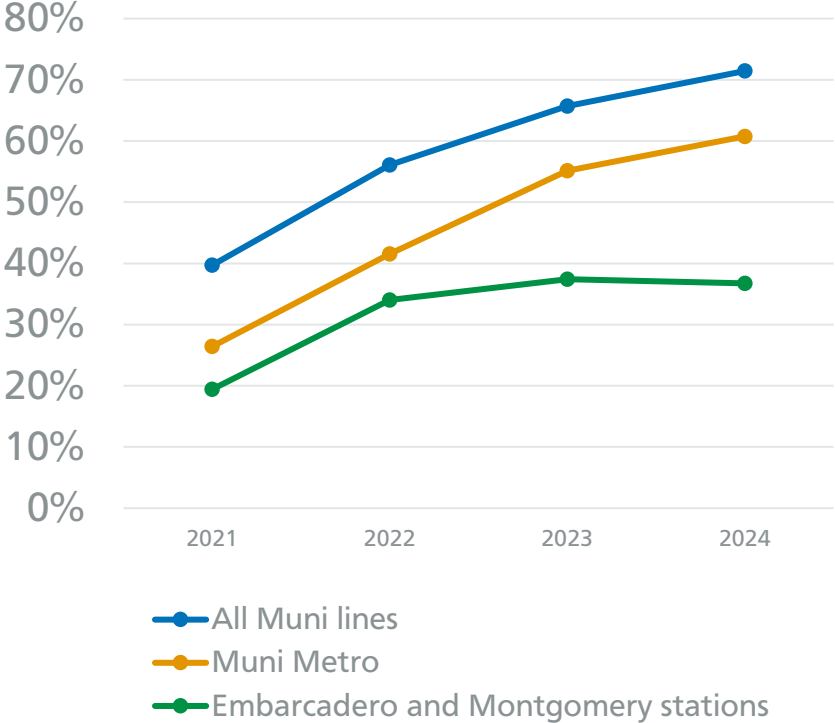


Traction power system



Muni Metro ridership is recovering more slowly than system average, but overcrowding is re-appearing

Ridership recovery (Average October weekday boardings as a percent of 2019)



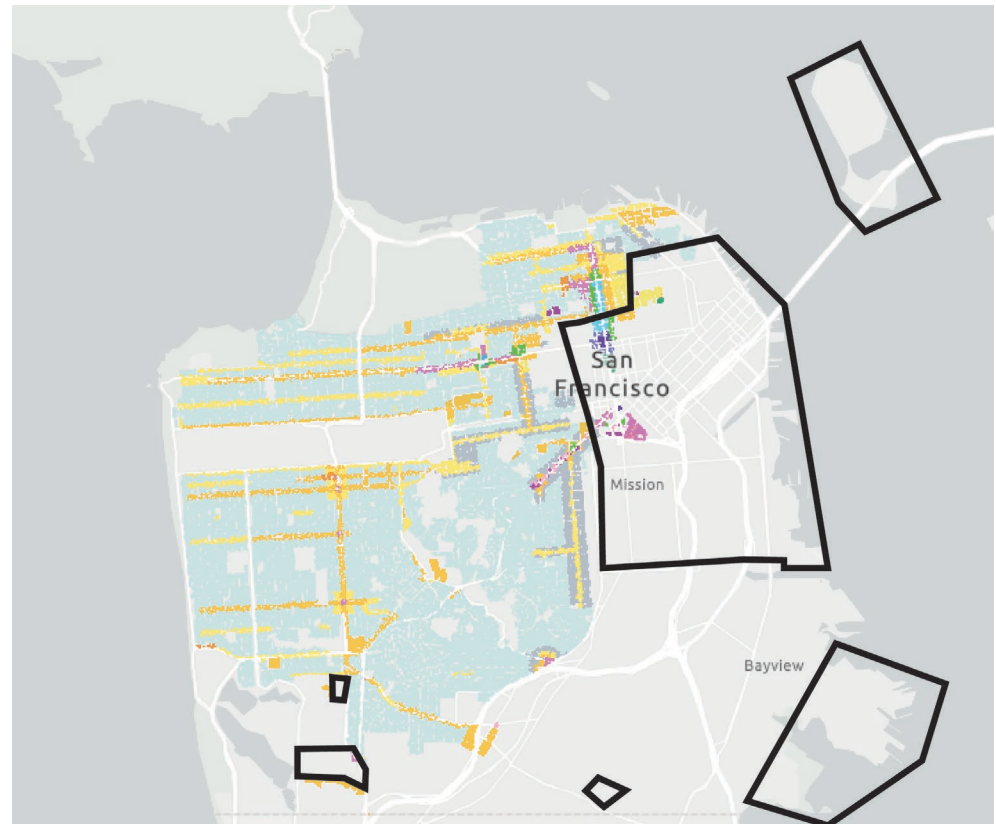
Recent crowding on the N Judah line

The future is uncertain, but we are preparing for more growth and more ridership in the long-term

- In 2023, the city approved a Housing Plan to add over 82,000 units of housing for 150,000 people by 2031
- While some of this growth may take longer to realize, we need a vision to accommodate growth and help the City meet its housing affordability, climate and equity goals.

San Francisco housing growth areas

Colored areas indicate locations proposed for re-zoning. Black outlines indicate approximate areas with existing capacity for more housing growth.

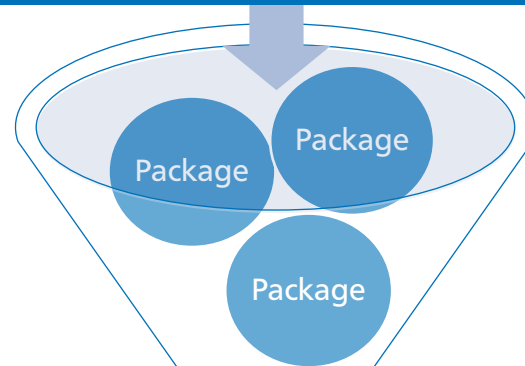


Study process

Outreach:

- Community Working Group meetings
- Muni rider focus groups
- Presentations to interested community groups

Assessment of capacity solutions



Evaluation

We are here

Recommendations

Funding and Implementation Strategy

Core Capacity Grant Program (10-15 years)

Other Recommendations for Longer-Term Future Muni Metro (Vision, >15 years)

Improvement strategies we're studying

Transit lanes and other transit priority upgrades



Better signal priority and preemption



State of Good Repair + capacity work



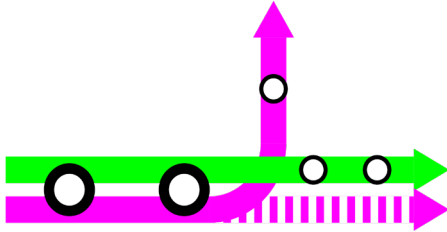
3-car trains



Modern, accessible stops



Route restructuring



Route restructuring: Where are we headed?

- Study is focused primarily on defining a future capital program
- Route restructuring is largely an operational strategy that could be useful in the future to boost other capital-focused capacity strategies
- Study looks at the impact of combining service restructuring with other capital strategies, but in most cases capital investment does not necessitate restructuring.
- Future exploration of route restructuring would only be considered if ridership increases or subway performance declines and any work in this area would include extensive community outreach.

The Study **will not**:

- Result in decisions about whether to restructure lines

The Study **will**:

- Establish future ridership level that, if achieved, would trigger the need for a planning, outreach, and decision-making process. If approved after such a process, route restructuring could then be implemented.
- Analyze benefits and impacts to several different route restructuring concepts
- Define potential mitigations that should accompany any route restructuring

Outreach

- **2023-2024:** Six meetings with 21-member Community Working Group, with at least two more planned in 2025
- **October 2024:** Four Muni Metro rider focus groups in English, Chinese, and Spanish
- **Summer 2025:** Draft recommendations shared for public feedback
- **Ongoing:** As-needed presentations/meetings with community-based organizations
- **Ongoing:** Study webpage, subscriber email updates
- Projects that are recommended by the Study would be further developed with more traditional community-based, corridor-focused outreach

Key feedback we're working on incorporating into Study's recommendations

- **Be visionary** → There is broad agreement on the importance for Muni Metro to continue to serve San Franciscans' mobility needs. The Study should be bold in defining what it will need to ensure its ongoing success.
- **Focus on rider needs** → Recommendations will be explained in terms of rider-oriented outcomes (e.g. if we do not renew old infrastructure, Muni riders will be unable to rely on Metro to get where they need to go)
- **Plan for multiple future scenarios** → We are preparing multiple growth scenarios to inform our recommendations and will defer more difficult capacity-enhancing strategies to only if or when they are needed.
- **Set future corridor-based outreach up for success** → Instead of "zero-sum" pitting different interests (modes, lines) against one another, frame future outreach broadly to strive for consensus-building
- **Route restructuring should be left as "last resort"** → Study will quantify approximate future year ranges when capacity constraints become large enough to potentially necessitate route restructuring, given different possible growth trajectories.

Study timeline and future

The Muni Metro Capacity Study is just the beginning of a larger planning effort.

Decisions at this stage are about what recommendations and opportunities to continue to explore further.

The Study does not commit the SFMTA to any major expenditures.

Early-mid 2025

Mid 2025

Late 2025-onward

Draft Study findings and recommendations



Final recommendations



Project Planning, Environmental, Design, FTA Core Capacity Application, Phased implementation



Circulate draft Study findings and recommendations for public feedback



Final report presented to SFMTA Board for approval

What we are asking of MTAB today

- We covered the Study's purpose, approach, and strategies.
- **We are seeking feedback on:**
 - Refinements to how we communicate about the Study purpose and/or approach
 - Feedback on the Study strategies as we finish formulating draft recommendations
 - Anything else you want us to take into account as we prepare the Final Report for your acceptance in the Fall

Thank you!



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