



Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Lead Agency)
San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District
2150 Webster Street, Oakland, CA 94612

County Clerk, Counties of:

- Alameda
- Contra Costa
- San Francisco
- San Mateo
- Santa Clara

Project Title: Free & Discounted Transfers Pilot Program

Project Applicant: San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

Project Location - Specific: Five County BART Operating System

Project Location – Counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara

Project Location – Cities: Berkeley, Oakland, San Leandro, Castro Valley, Dublin, Pleasanton, Hayward, Union City, Fremont, Richmond, El Cerrito, Orinda, Lafayette, Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill, Concord, Pittsburg, Antioch, San Francisco, Daly City, South San Francisco, Colma, San Bruno, Millbrae, Milpitas, San Jose

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is leading a regional initiative to implement the Free and Discounted Interagency Transfer Pilot Program using the Clipper fare payment system. This program is designed to increase regional transit ridership and enhance customer experience in the Bay Area while mitigating financial impacts to transit operators.

The Pilot Program includes the following elements:

1. Free and discounted transfers between participating agencies within a specified time window.
2. A discount equivalent to the single-ride Clipper fare for amounts up to the region's highest local bus/light rail transit fare.
3. Proportional discounts for riders using discount fare categories (Senior, Youth, Clipper START, Regional Transit Connection).
4. A minimum duration of 18 months, with a possible extension to 24 months if sufficient funding is available.

The Pilot Program is based on recommendations from the Bay Area Transit Fare Coordination & Integration Study & Business Case (2021), which estimated that implementing free and discounted transfers could increase ridership across the region by 27,000 daily trips. By reducing the cost barrier for multi-agency trips, this program is expected to encourage increased transit ridership and reduce vehicle miles traveled throughout the region. By generating new trips, the Program could strengthen regional transit connectivity and lead to long-term ridership and revenue benefits.

Name of Public Agency Approving the Project: San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District

Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number:
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code 21080(b)(8) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15273(a)

Reasons why project is exempt:

The proposed changes in BART fares are exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(8) and the CEQA Guidelines Section 15273(a). CEQA does not apply to the establishment, modification, structuring, restructuring, or approval of rates, tolls, fares, or other charges by public agencies which the agency finds are for the purpose of (a) meeting operating expenses, (b) purchasing or leasing supplies, equipment or materials, (c) meeting financial reserve needs and requirements, (d) obtaining funds for capital projects, necessary to maintain service within existing service areas, or (e) obtaining funds necessary to maintain those intracity transfers as are authorized by city charter.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Donald Dean

Phone/Email: 510-287-4844 / ddean@bart.gov

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? **Yes** No

Signature:  **Date:** 10/8/2024 **Title:** Mgr. of Environmental Review

Donald Dean

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110. Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 2112.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____