



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

For Immediate Release

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FREE BART DURING TOMORROW MORNING'S COMMUTE *First of Five Free Mornings Offered on Spare the Air Days*

OAKLAND, Calif., September 6, 2004. . . Tomorrow is the third *Spare the Air* day of the season, and those who jump on BART during the morning commute will be able to ride for free!

On June 16, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), BART and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) announced a landmark agreement that will make riding BART **free on the morning of the first five weekday *Spare the Air* days** this summer.

Tomorrow will be the first of the free weekday morning commutes that will give a whole new meaning to the phrase "ticketless travel." That's because BART riders will not need to use a ticket as long as they get into a BART station between the start of service and 9 a.m. **These free morning commutes will be available at every station throughout the BART system, and will be offered only on the first five *Spare the Air* weekdays this summer smog season.** The estimated \$2 million cost of the free ride program is paid by MTC, using federal transportation dollars allocated to the Bay Area.

"Weather is the biggest factor in the Bay Area's compliance with federal air quality standards," explained Air District Chair, MTC Commissioner and Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty. Typically, the Air District declares a *Spare the Air* day on hot, windless days when ground-level ozone reaches unhealthy concentrations. *Spare the Air* advisories are issued the afternoon prior to a *Spare the Air* day and usually receive wide notice on television and radio, and in the newspapers on the morning of a *Spare the Air* day. Announcements of *Spare the Air* days also are posted on the Air District's www.sparetheair.org Web site or can be obtained by calling 1-800-HELP-AIR. The public can get advance *Spare the Air* notification by e-mail, text messaging or pager by registering for AirAlerts at www.sparetheair.org.

continued on next page



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MTC is the transportation planning, coordinating and financing agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is the regional agency chartered with protecting air quality in the Bay Area. For more information about the Air District visit www.baaqmd.gov.

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