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Subject: Public Comment for Network Management business case advisory group meeting, 12/17/22, agenda item 4a.
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External Email

I find myself in such fundamental and far reaching disagreement with the updated proposed RNM structures, that it would be best for me to approach the subject by offering alternative Mission and Vision statements to those proposed in today's presentation.

The Mission Statement I propose would read...

"The Mission of the RNM is to achieve a transformative increase in public transit ridership through:

1) Securing adoption by MTC and ABAG member governments and agencies of policies and public interface which consistently direct residents towards available public transit, and do not reflect and reinforce the prominence of private motor vehicles and ride-hailing services in the general culture.

2) Expanding and improving extent of coverage, frequency, schedule and routing connectivity, and addressing other matters which may affect rider accessibility and quality of experience.

The Vision Statement I propose would read:

"By pursuing its mission, the RNM aims to support ongoing public planning and implementation of land use and infrastructure initiatives for the achievement of goals in equity, livability, environmental sustainability and resiliency through a unified regional transit system that establishes public mass transit as the primary mode of motorized transportation for all Bay Area residents.

The consultants' proposed mission and vision statements as well as RNM functional structures (with MTC commissioners seeming to be more in a 'commanding' rather than supporting role) do not seem to adequately take account of the fact that the main issue we are dealing with is not a matter of an ample transit ridership complaining of a poor "customer experience", but low ridership which for well over a decade has (-unevenly, but overall-) expressed itself in a downward spiral of persistent low ridership in the face of increased and improved service, followed by curtailment of underused services, with additional incremental ridership losses, new and different service improvements with little effect on the continuing losses...etc. The 'transit dependent' population is in many cases indeed impacted by the decreased reach and availability of well timed connections beyond the most used bus routes, and by meager connections for "counter" (i.e. secondary) commute directions. But it is only from among motor vehicle owners who currently use their cars and trucks as a default rather than a specialized tool, that the additional ridership to support build-out of a more robust regional multi-modal transit system can come. I happen to be one of the rare specimens of motor vehicle owners who habitually use transit resorting to my truck on certain necessary occasions. This has always been for me a matter of simple preference, not out of some kind of civic or environmental concern. But it is of considerable frustration to know that such people as myself will not be consulted for insight or suggestions because we do not represent a statistically significant demographic.

I have in my 'archives' a September 1975 planning newsletter from the Golden Gate National Recreation Area issued soon after it was authorized by congress. Since they were not operationally established, they provided the following directions for visiting the Marin headlands for those who might not be disposed to walk across the Golden Gate from the presidio: " A bus ride across the bridge brings you from the city to the Marin

Headlands...Weekend service makes getting there easy. MUNI No.32 Embarcadero moves from the Southern Pacific Terminal along the waterfront, down Lombard street, through the Presidio and across the bridge (40 minute intervals). Normal rates apply-never has 25 cents gone so far." Period. No pitch as an 'alternative' to driving; no rationalizing of 'inconvenience' on the basis of needing to reduce congestion; no appeal for environmental protection... rather a matter of fact ' this is how you get there: take bus number...!', implying that it is normal to expect that, even if you own a car, you will exit your home into the public space unless you have some special itinerary or task that requires you to bring along a large, heavy machine, enclosing yourself in a private space. That is the consistent message and attitude which I allude to in the first part of the mission statement proposed above. As an Oakland resident I am fortunate to be able to vote for transit board members -- AC Transit and BART -- whose sole purview is public transit and have been fully responsive to my concerns in a knowledgeable, engaged and thoughtfully practical manner. Yet I am compelled to be 'represented' on the MTC by a mayor whose attention to transit policy is in competition with other--including countervailing--concerns.