



May 23, 2022

Alfredo Pedroza, Chair  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
375 Beale St #800, San Francisco, CA 94105

**Re: May 25, 2022, Metropolitan Transportation Committee Meeting,  
Agenda Item #3, Public Comment/ Other Business**  
*Advance Authorizing Legislation in 2023 in Support of a Regional Transportation  
Funding Measure*

Dear Chair Pedroza and MTC Commissioners:

Public transportation is key to an equitable and economically vibrant region, and our regional system's chronic underinvestment has left us with massive mobility injustice. The availability of quality, affordable public transit is a determinant of people's access to affordable housing, job, and educational opportunities. The COVID-19 crisis has driven transit agencies into financial instability and crisis, forcing service cuts and threatening many transit agencies' near and long-term ability to continue to deliver service - and exacerbating already deep social inequities. We must act now as a region to ensure public transit has the necessary resources to recover from the losses of the pandemic, rebuild service and ridership, and in doing so meet the needs of transit riders present and future, especially low-income communities, communities of color, and transit-dependent people.

**We urge MTC to take immediate action toward introducing legislation in 2023 that would authorize a transformative regional funding measure.**

Authorizing legislation in 2023 is critical for several reasons. First, this was a public commitment made to the region and all the transit agencies in the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force process in 2021 as a fundamental part of transit recovery. Second, transit agencies across the region are in serious need of operations funding to prevent service cuts; [per their own data](#), many transit agencies face fiscal cliffs as soon as 2024 as federal funds run out. Much of the recently approved additional federal infrastructure funding that has been authorized is restricted to capital purposes only and will not help transit agencies avoid service cuts. Third, passing enabling legislation in 2023 gives our region the greatest flexibility as to when to put a measure on the ballot; should polling look favorable, a ballot measure can be advanced as early as 2024. Fourth, passing enabling legislation in 2023 shows state legislators and transit agencies in our region that MTC is serious about a regional measure, and is likely to improve the region's chances of getting one-time state budget funding for transit that would carry our region through to the year when we have a regional ballot measure. Your own listening session on this topic in

December indicated the need for action in the spring of this year – time is running out to develop the regional consensus needed. Now is the time to work with key stakeholders around the region, especially workers and riders, to develop a framework for legislation.

[Voices for Public Transportation](#) is a coalition of over 50 labor, environmental, community-based organizations, and equity advocates that support a regional funding measure. Our groups represent thousands of workers, riders, low-income community members, people with disabilities, and transit-dependent people. In order for a measure to succeed and address the dire need facing the Bay Area's transit system, a regional transportation funding measure must:

- Include primarily **operations funding**, to ensure frequent and reliable service;
- Fund **integrated and affordable fares** to ensure equitable access to the system;
- Be funded by a **progressive revenue source**—which is both more equitable and more passable.

Support for a measure built upon these three policy pillars is broad and growing, and should be the basis for the regional consensus that lawmakers will need to move forward with a bill in 2023.

In order to ensure we can introduce authorizing legislation in 2023, we encourage MTC to take the following actions:

- Undertake analysis of revenue options for a funding measure, including various progressive sources, [building on the research](#) our coalition conducted in 2019;
- In partnership with transit agencies and our coalition, develop high level expenditure plan scenarios that reflect agency operations deficits, and explore possible scales and geographic scope and local/regional splits;
- Continue to meet with the Voices for Public Transportation coalition to ensure alignment and collaboration.
- In partnership with stakeholder groups, begin meeting with state legislators in fall 2022 to build support and understanding to introduce authorizing legislation in 2023.

We need a long term and transformative investment in our public transportation system in order to meet our equity and climate goals. **MTC must take immediate action to develop a framework for legislation for a regional transportation funding measure to protect, maintain, and grow our regional transit system in the face of the current financial crisis.**

Sincerely,

Vinita Goyal  
Executive Director  
**San Francisco Transit Riders**

Ian Griffiths  
Policy Director  
**Seamless Bay Area**

Hayley Currier  
Policy Advocacy Manager  
**TransForm**

Richard Marcantonio  
Managing Attorney  
**Public Advocates Inc.**

Mary Lim-Lampe JD  
Executive Director  
Carol Taylor  
Chair, Transit Disability Justice Task Force  
**Genesis**

Bob Allen  
Policy & Advocacy Campaign Director  
**Urban Habitat**

Shiloh Ballard  
Executive Director  
**Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition**

Maia Piccagli  
Volunteer Organizer and Leader  
**Mothers Out Front SF**

Derek Sagehorn  
Chair  
**East Bay Transit Riders Union**

Brian Haagsman  
Vision Zero Organizer  
**Walk San Francisco**

Daveed Mandell  
Member, Transportation Committee  
**American Council of the Blind**

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