

November 1, 2023

David Canepa, Chair, Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale St., Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066

Dear Commissioner Canepa:

On behalf of the region's public transit agencies, we are writing with regard to agenda item **3a** for the November 3rd Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee meeting, entitled Regional Transportation Measure Update.

As detailed in the staff report, the transit operating funding secured in the FY 23-24 State Budget will extend the lifeline that federal relief funds have provided to Bay Area transit agencies. As a result of these funds, critical service provided by the region's transit systems will be preserved in the face of the persistent ridership and revenue losses stemming from the pandemic. Funding continues to be critical to sustaining the Bay Area's transit system that provides mobility for our region's most transit dependent populations, plays a key role in the Bay Area's economic engine and is an integral component to achieve our climate goals.

While those actions have bought time, more is needed. Our projections show that the region's transit operating shortfall will reach \$750 million per year beginning in FY26-27. In addition, funding is needed to successfully advance the transformation of the system outlined in the Bay Area Transit Transformation Action Plan that we are eager to advance.

To that end, we appreciate and support MTC staff's development of a framework for enabling legislation as outlined in the staff report and presentation as we take this important first step toward a 2026 regional transportation ballot measure.

Sincerely,



Michael Hursh
General Manager,
Alameda-Contra Costa
Transit District (AC Transit)



Robert Powers
General Manager,
San Francisco Bay Area Rapid
Transit District (BART)



Michelle Bouchard
Executive Director, Caltrain



Bill Churchill
General Manager,
County Connection



Jeffrey Tumlin
Director of Transportation
San Francisco Municipal
Transportation Agency (SFMTA)



Denis Mulligan
General Manager,
Golden Gate Bridge,
Highway & Transportation
District



April Chan
General Manager/CEO,
San Mateo County Transit
District (SamTrans)



Beth Kranda
Executive Director
Solano County Transit



Jared Hall
Transit Manager,
Petaluma Transit



Carolyn M. Gonot
General Manager/CEO,
Santa Clara Valley
Transportation Authority
(VTA)



Seamus Murphy
Executive Director,
Water Emergency Transportation
Authority (WETA)



Rob Thompson
General Manager,
Western Contra Costa
Transit Authority
(WestCAT)



Christy Wegener
Executive Director,
Livermore Amador Valley
Transit Authority (LAVTA)

cc: MTC Commissioners

From: [Martha Silver](#)
To: [Martha Silver](#)
Subject: FW: 11/3/23 Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee -- Agenda Item #3a
Date: Thursday, November 2, 2023 4:21:56 PM

From: William Goodman <WGoodman@stradasf.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 2, 2023 4:09:36 PM
To: MTC-ABAG Info <info@bayareametro.gov>
Subject: 11/3/23 Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee -- Agenda Item #3a

External Email

Dear Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee:

I am submitting comment on Item #3a on the 11/3/23 Legislation Committee agenda, the Regional Transportation Measure Update. My firm, Strada Investment Group, is a developer and investor in large-scale, transit-oriented development projects throughout the Bay Area. We applaud the Committee's support of regional initiatives to produce much needed housing in the Bay Area. Strada is helping to realize the vision of Plan Bay Area 2050 through development of affordable and market-rate housing in urban infill locations, often in partnership with public agencies like BART.

The success of new housing development will depend on access to a high-quality, multi-modal transit system that connects housing, jobs, and public amenities. We hope you will continue to advance funding measures that enhance the region's transit service. Such measures will be essential for housing in our communities and for the promise of Plan Bay Area 2050.

Thank you,
William Goodman

William Goodman
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Nov 2, 2023

MTC/ABAG Legislation Committee Agenda #3A

Honorable Committee Members,

Thank you for considering the proposed framework for a regional transportation funding measure.

Sustaining and improving public transportation is essential for our region's mobility, including for people who fully depend on transit, for economic vitality, climate and housing goals. Polling shows that the public wants to see the public transportation sustained and transformed to be more convenient, affordable, accessible, efficient, safe and clean. Given the impacts of the pandemic on the financial health of the public transportation system, and the steady and gradual regrowth of ridership and revenue, public operating funding is essential to maintain and improve the system.

Our groups support a regional funding measure with **sufficient funding to not only sustain existing transit service levels, but to transform transit.** To this end, the authorizing legislation should enable raising between \$1 and \$2 billion annually, while allowing a final decision on measure capacity to be made incorporating information about voter sentiment, updated financial needs, and the state of California's long term approach to transit funding.

In addition, **our groups support the staff recommendation of authorizing multiple revenue options.**

The staff report asks whether specific policy reforms should accompany enabling legislation, citing past interest from the Commission in supporting a more integrated, reliable, efficient transit network.

Please support the inclusion of policy reforms that strengthen network management with enabling legislation. The Transit Transformation Action Plan lays out the vision and blueprint for the future public transit system that the Bay Area needs to create to attract large numbers of new riders -

"Design, adequately invest in and effectively manage a public transit network that is equitable, inclusive, frequent, affordable, accessible and reliable; [with] unified service, fares, schedules, customer information and identity."

Realizing this vision of transformation - which is overwhelmingly popular with voters - requires that funding from a regional measure be associated with clear standards and plans set at a regional scale by a Regional Network Manager.

This requires that MTC evolve and empower a Network Manager to take on the role of developing standards and plans, and that funding allocations to transit agencies be tied to compliance with regional programs - including, but not limited to, fare integration policies, service standards, transit priority standards, accessibility standards, and customer experience and wayfinding standards. Strengthening network management creates opportunities for efficiencies, advancing transit priority measures that allow a given amount of operating funding to deliver more service to riders, and streamlining customer experience work that is currently replicated in multiple agencies.

In addition to tying regional measure funding for transit to policy compliance, enabling legislation must also advance the governance and organizational changes needed to evolve the existing preliminary network management structure into a fully realized Regional Network Manager. This includes expanding staffing and resourcing of the RNM as well as evolving the policy layer of RNM governance to ensure that it is aligned with and representative of the interests of the region's transit customers.

These policy reforms are critical to making the case for more funding for transit. We must provide a clear plan for how new funding will be held to a higher standard.

Our groups look forward to working with MTC staff, legislators, and transit agencies on the policy reforms that need to be associated with enabling legislation that will deliver a more integrated system for the public.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ian Griffiths
Policy Director, Seamless Bay Area

Sebastian Petty
Transportation Policy Manager, SPUR