

# HANDOUT - Correspondence

## 10-10-2018 Executive Director Selection Committee

**From:** Gerald Cauthen

**Sent:** Saturday, October 06, 2018 11:15 AM

**To:** MTC Info <[info@bayareametro.gov](mailto:info@bayareametro.gov)>; ABAG Info <[info-abag@bayareametro.gov](mailto:info-abag@bayareametro.gov)>

**Cc:** Monica Ruck

**Subject:** Qualifications of next MTC Executive Director

### Bay Area Transportation Working Group (BATWG)

Updated October 6, 2018

To MTC Commissioners and ABAG Executive Board members:

An important and difficult decision is before you; namely, the selection of the next MTC Executive Director. The Region is currently afflicted with chronic gridlock and a badly disconnected patchwork of trains, buses and boats. To ensure that the best possible candidates are identified and screened for the job, BATWG strongly recommends that this important selection be pursuant to a thorough and professional national search conducted by objective individuals highly experienced in the field. The process should also be informed by input from the MTC Board, ABAG, the local jurisdictions, the transit agencies and other stakeholders.

In an effort to inform the selection process we cite the successful tenure of Paul C. Watt, MTC's first Executive Director. Here are some of the qualities that helped Mr. Watt to introduce and successfully promote the concept of regionalism to the Greater Bay Area.

- Mr. Watt was patient but persistent.
- He was completely committed to the objective of developing a well-integrated network of non-automotive systems throughout the Region.
- He had a good sense of humor and often poked fun at himself. Partly for this reason he was well liked by his employees and the transit properties with whom he worked.
- He was well-organized and kept his priorities straight.
- He was a leader who took ownership of regional problems when and as necessary.

During the years he was at the helm Mr. Watt gradually gather support for a regional transportation approach to what were clearly regional problems. And he was making headway. In the mid-1970's, the Bay Area's large public transportation agencies attended a meeting in San Francisco ready to talk coordination and cooperation. Included were Caltrans, Muni, BART, AC Transit, Golden Gate Transit, Samtrans, the VTA, Southern Pacific and Greyhound. The goal of the meeting was to improve the non-automotive modes of travel in order to persuade travelers to do less solo driving. MTC was also invited, but by this time Mr. Watt was gone. His successor arrived 20 minutes late and angrily broke up the meeting, saying that regional coordination was MTC's responsibility and that MTC would be attending to the matter shortly.

TRANSCOT

## 10-10-2018 Executive Director Selection Committee

That was 40 years ago.

Today the transit agencies are still under-performing and still insufficiently integrated. And the Bay Area is now more mired in traffic than ever. Hence the importance of the pending decision before you. We hope that the above suggestions are of use to you.

Sincerely yours,

Gerald Cauthen

President, [BATWG](#)



October 2, 2018

Page 1 of 2



Mr. Jake Mackenzie, Chair  
**Metropolitan Transportation Commission**  
Bay Area Metro Center  
375 Beale Street, Suite 800  
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066

Dear Chair Mackenzie:

As you consider the significant decision of selecting the next Executive Director for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the Executive Directors of the Bay Area Congestion Management Agencies would like to provide our perspective on the leadership qualities essential for this role.

The Bay Area region is a unique collection of communities with diverse needs. To optimally address our transportation issues, MTC's next executive director will require leadership skills that are both creative and pragmatic, with the ability to focus on transportation initiatives that will create solutions to the complex mobility issues we face today, and in the future.

As Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs), we share many mutual interests and responsibilities with MTC for funding, planning, and delivering the Bay Area's Transportation systems. MTC's authority for regional planning, programming, and fund allocation supports our local programs and projects, investments in infrastructure, and funding to operate and sustain our transportation systems.

Accordingly, it is critical that we have a strong, two-way, working relationship with the new Executive Director. It is essential to have an Executive Director with significant experience in California, a regional perspective as well as experience and understanding of systems operations, project delivery, and be invested in, and supportive of, local partnerships and initiatives. It is also essential for Executive Director to understand the diversity of the nine Bay Area counties, and how to build strong working relationship and propagate a sense of mutual trust between these local agencies.

The person should be known as a collaborator who values transparency, proactively supports member agencies, places high value on local initiatives and efforts, and understands the value and challenges of effectively integrating transportation and land use decision-making at the local level.

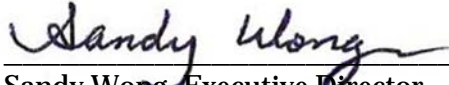
We also urge the Commission to consider diversifying and expanding the search committee to include representatives from the CMAs, large transit operators, and local government. Lastly, we request a meeting with the executive search firm hired for this task to better convey our thoughts and ideas. We can make ourselves available individually and/or collectively as needed to facilitate this exchange.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our thoughts on this critical decision. We will be happy to provide any support or advice you may need, and we look forward to meeting with the executive search consultant.


Sincerely,



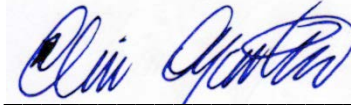
Art Dao, Executive Director  
Alameda County Transportation Commission



Sandy Wong, Executive Director  
San Mateo City-County Association of Governments



Randell Iwasaki, Executive Director  
Contra Costa Transportation Authority



Chris Augenstein, AICP, Director of Planning  
and Programming  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority



Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director  
Transportation Authority of Marin



Daryl Halls, CMA Chair/Executive Director  
Solano Transportation Authority (STA)



Kate Miller, Executive Director  
Napa Valley Transportation Authority



Suzanne Smith, Executive Director  
Sonoma County Transportation Authority



Tilly Chang, Executive Director  
San Francisco County Transportation  
Authority

Cc: MTC Commissioners



September 25, 2018

Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
Bay Area Metro Center  
375 Beale Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Chairman Mackenzie and Commissioners:

Everyone knows that all good things come to an end, but it's still difficult to imagine the Metropolitan Transportation Commission without Steve Heminger as its Executive Director. Over his 17 years as Executive Director, Steve guided the Commission through difficult challenges, into new opportunities, and towards its status as the Bay Area's essential regional public leadership body. His list of accomplishments is far too long to catalog, but I will always remember Steve as the person who drove the overdue MTC-ABAG staff merger, initiated the regional high-occupancy toll lane system, drove the implementation of the Clipper Card, required supportive land use planning as a condition of funding major transit capital projects, and always got Bay Area projects to the front of the line for state and federal discretionary funding. I also credit Steve with backing (and finding funding for) the generational projects that define and serve our region: the Caldecott Fourth Bore, the Transbay Transit Center, Caltrain electrification, and BART's extensions and rehabilitation. Of course he didn't do everything single-handedly, and I also credit him and the Commission with attracting and hiring some of the sharpest transportation planners and engineers in the nation. Steve's accomplishments and legacy will be long celebrated.

Along with the loss of Steve's experience and expertise comes another challenge: recruiting the next Executive Director. When you think about the magnitude of Steve's influence and accomplishments and the length of his service, and then think about the dramatic changes and challenges that lie ahead for the next Executive Director, it becomes clear that this is a critically important recruitment.

I am not exaggerating when I say that the challenges ahead are monumental and existential. While our booming economy is the envy of the nation, the Bay Area has, according to some sources, the second worst traffic and commutes in the nation. We have the most expensive housing in the nation. This is simply not okay. It's a crisis in livability, environment, and economic opportunity. We won't solve this regional transportation and housing crisis by simply doing more of the same, and we won't solve it by waiting for cities, counties, the state, or the federal government to do it for us. It's a regional problem, and because only MTC, our regional transportation and housing agency, can lead us towards the solutions, I expect that the Commission will place accountability and metrics for solutions on its next Executive Director. It's therefore essential that you hire someone who has the necessary ambition, capabilities, and experience — someone who will energize transportation and housing policies with a crisis mentality and will overturn and replace the ineffective and sclerotic strategies and habits that are no longer able to bring the relief that the Bay Area needs.

Our region can no longer tolerate studying transportation projects to death and allowing even simple projects to take ten-plus years to deliver. Now that building new highways is out of fashion, we need to bring world-class highway management technology and strategies to our existing highways and arterials, and we need to do it with



the sort of commitment that drove the Apollo program. We can no longer allow every local jurisdiction and individual to have absolute veto power over transportation (and housing) projects that have regional significance. Public transit can't continue to cost as much — and deliver as little — as it does, and we can't keep treating the sanctity of individual transit operators as more important than the needs of residents and employers. There's not enough money to continue giving everyone their "fair share" or to fund low performing projects; we need to increasingly use transportation money for competitive programs, challenge grants, and to encourage and reward innovation.

Companies like Waymo, Cruise, Zoox, Uber, and Lyft, plus private shuttles and transit operators, are showing what truly customer-focused transportation looks like, and how technology can transform how we get around. We need to recognize that the era of the government transportation monopoly is over, and build a new hybrid system that combines the strengths of public and private, with a focus on serving customers, not agencies.

Recruiting a candidate able to tackle these challenges and deliver on these opportunities is no small task. In addition to the necessary (and extensive) technical, management, and leadership skills, MTC's next Executive Director will need to boldly disrupt much of the way that the Bay Area does transportation.

I believe that MTC should include extensive consultation with key transportation stakeholders. And by "stakeholders," I do not mean just — or even primarily — the many agencies that have a hand in spending transportation funds and delivering transportation projects. Those with the most at stake in this recruitment are the users of the transportation system: the Bay Area residents, employers, and goods movers that are suffering the consequences of an underperforming system and that are desperate for agencies to act with urgency and creativity. The hundreds of employer-members of the Bay Area Council, and their hundreds of thousands of employees, are deeply interested stakeholders, and I am willing and eager (and insistent) to be consulted and engaged in the recruitment effort. Please let me know your thoughts about the most productive way to do so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jim Wunderman'.

Jim Wunderman  
President and CEO

## The future of MTC and ABAG

### Strategies and solutions for our Bay Region

*By Rebecca Kaplan*

In order to ensure a healthier future for our region, the next leader of MTC and ABAG will need to deal with multiple issues, including our growing region-wide intertwined crises of homelessness and lack of affordable housing, and increasing traffic congestion with ever-lengthening commutes. Solutions are achievable, and, since the next leader of MTC/ABAG is now being selected, we should ensure that it is someone who is prepared to accomplish them.

I offer for your consideration a list of strategies. For each item, I can provide more detail about the specific needed actions, and how to implement practical solutions, based on experience and data, upon request.

1) **A significant increase in transit-accessible housing**, especially housing for our workforce and lower-income residents is required. This can be accomplished through incentives for local jurisdictions to allow increased heights, density, and reduced parking and quicker approval times for housing, including affordable housing, in transit-oriented locations. Direct funding to support jurisdictions who provide housing.

2) **Connect the gaps in our rail systems**. Taxpayers have invested billions in important rail transit systems, serving our bay region and beyond. Yet, key gaps, (e.g. between BART & ACE), reduce the effectiveness of the system as a whole. Work with rail providers, local governments and power authorities, and **connect with mega-regional partners**, to plan and deliver connections for our transit systems, reduce conflicts between passenger and freight rail, and allow for faster and more connected transit trips.

3) **Express lanes connected region-wide, increase carpooling and express bus**. Express buses can add transit service to more locations fairly quickly, and help serve more trips. In addition, one of the fastest and cheapest ways to reduce traffic congestion and help people save time, money and fuel, is to use the three empty seats travelling in most cars, by increasing carpooling. Using direct outreach, and contemporary apps to match carpool riders with drivers, we can significantly increase carpooling. To accomplish this increase in carpool and express bus, we must expand and connect our region's "Express" lanes, to incentivize their use so that carpoolers and express buses, don't get stuck in traffic congestion. We have many Express lanes, and more coming in parts of our region, which need to be better interconnected. Harmonize express lane policies and planning across the region that are now held across multiple agencies.

4) **Complete the process of the (partially completed) unification of MTC and ABAG, and unite transportation planning with land use/housing planning**. Bring together the experience base of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), with the local cities and local leadership, to address the issues of housing, planning, and zoning, and sea level rise, that are under the authority of ABAG. Create harmonized leadership structure. Combine Regional Housing Needs Assessment with Regional Transportation Plan.



5) **Fiscal solvency.** Protect and improve the bond rating and fiscal solvency, and long-term financial planning for the agency (including for the new merged agency).

6) **Expand region-wide coordination for housing and homelessness.** Provide model policy examples for allowing more flexibility in housing alternatives to rapidly re-house people in need, including "small homes," RVs, and modular construction. (After the fires in the North Bay last year, some jurisdictions amended their laws to allow wider flexibility in fast and affordable housing alternatives. These types of actions should be shared throughout our region). Expand use of public land for needed housing. Provide funding, planning, and policy support to expand these efforts and incentives for local governments who take these actions.

7) **Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and wheelchair safety, and access to bikes and scooters.** Include bicycles, scooters, pedestrians, and wheelchair use in multi-modal transportation and land use planning. Enhance bike and pedestrian safety and access programs, and design that takes these needs into consideration. Resolve outstanding issues with bike-share program, to enable implementation of e-bikes, and better regional equity. Provide model policies for shared mobility.

8) **Freight.** The consideration of freight in our regional transportation planning needs to be strengthened. The trucks, trains and ships which enable our vital goods movement throughout our region have not received the attention and planning needed, and thus, many of our trade transportation systems have been inefficient, leading to wasted time, traffic congestion, air pollution, and other negative impacts. By strengthening planning for freight movement, and working with stakeholders, we can significantly reduce negative impacts on our communities and make our freight system more efficient, saving money, time and fuel. Some options include: improved logistics, expanding hours of port gates to reduce bottlenecks, planning and funding rail improvements to connect freight rail directly to docks and other key locations, and reduce conflicts with passenger rail. Improve roadway alignment, signals, and online scheduling and information, to reduce truck backlogs, and programs to encourage and fund cleaner and more efficient engines.

9) **Improve coordination with BAAQMD.** In addition to MTC-ABAG, the Bay Area also has another regional agency overseeing air quality (BAAQMD). Since most of the Bay Area's air pollution comes from transportation sources, the work of BAAQMD also largely deals with transportation. Some of the types of projects that could do the most to improve transportation in the Bay Area, are split between BAAQMD and MTC. Improve and strengthen coordination with BAAQMD, including on specific programs with dual roles; carpool programs, electric vehicle charging station region-wide network, and truck and rail improvements.

10) **Safe routes to schools and transit access for our students.** Our young people often face challenges getting to and from school, unsafe walking paths, dangerous rail crossings, and lack of transit access. These issues can cause kids to miss school or get injured, and makes parents who have the ability to drive, feel like they should drive their kids to school, which increases congestion and pollution, and reduces healthy exercise,



and worsens the access gap for low-income families without cars. There have been successes in some schools with Safe Routes to Schools programs, improving bicycle and pedestrian safety and access around schools, and with pilot programs for bus passes for students. We should bring forth successful examples from these pilot programs, and help more schools and jurisdictions make these improvements, which help our kids get to school, and build new norms of transit, bicycling and walking for our next generation.

11) **Electric vehicle charging stations region-wide.** Together (and in partnership with BAAQMD) we should actively ensure a completed electric vehicle charging station network to allow electric vehicle travel throughout our region. Currently, most efforts to provide charging stations simply accept applications from whomever chooses to apply, but we need to also affirmatively plan for needed locations to ensure a region-wide network. We should actively map and identify gaps in the charging station network, including ensuring stations at entry points to the Bay Region, and reach out to identify locations for charging stations to ensure a complete network.

12) **RVs to help house people in need.** Recent fires combined with rising systemic displacement and homelessness have left thousands of people in urgent need of housing, with growing numbers living on sidewalks and underpasses. Together we can and should identify allowable locations for RVs and other alternatives. In addition, by uniting our housing functions with transportation functions and partners, we could combine the "cash for clunkers" program, by having a targeted program to collect RVs, and remove the more polluting ones from the road by using them to provide housing, in partnership with local jurisdictions, non-profits or others who would provide land on which to park them.

13) **Craft a regional jobs-housing balance impact fee and funding system,** and work with local governments, State, and other stakeholders to implement. For example, a fee based on jobs-housing imbalance and affordable housing production, in which jurisdictions which under-produce housing would pay into it, and the funds are used to help those who do provide it.

14) **Improve and expand fare payment unification,** including working with the "Clipper 2" process, as well as other new technologies, to expand access to universal fare payment, and to ease transit connectivity, expand bulk discount pass sales (e.g. through employers, schools, housing developments). Harmonize fare systems for easier region-wide transit use. Include multiple modes (e.g. shared mobility, parking).

15) **Ferries.** Our Ferry system could greatly increase frequency and capacity to be able to serve more riders, including with strengthened outreach and partnerships for connected trips. Thanks to new funding such as RM3, we have the opportunity to make sure to effectively implement more ferry usage for our region, and this can help ease pressure throughout our other transportation systems.

16) **Improve oversight of important large projects** to help identify and catch problems, and ensure better solutions, such as bay bridge and trans-bay terminal. Help ensure engineering needs are not undermined.

17) **BART new train cars and systems.** Help ensure timely funding and support of BART improvements, including new train cars and control systems.

18) **Efficiency of bus transit.** Bus transit is a cost-effective and flexible method to expand transit access in many locations, but traffic congestion, fare payment boarding delays, and other inefficiencies exist. Need to enhance projects, inter-agency coordination, and planning, for solutions such as express lanes, transit signal prioritization, coordinating city streetscape design with transit planning, region-wide fare strategy and fare payment methods, and more.

19) **All-nighter bus system and example of working together.** The Bay Area now has transit service all night while BART is closed, thanks to the launch of all-nighter system, which united multiple transit agencies and cities and counties, to plan together timing, transfer locations, and more, to provide transit after midnight. After proposing this service, and getting it funded (in RM2), we worked together across multiple agencies to plan and deliver this service. It is helping workers, visitors, and more get around our region, and involved uniting decision-making across numerous separate agencies that should be an example for solving many other vital regional needs.

Thank you for your consideration.

**About the Author:**

Rebecca Kaplan serves as the Oakland City Councilmember At-Large, representing a large and diverse constituency in the heart of the Bay region. Kaplan has served as Chair of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC), Board member of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), Executive Board member of ABAG, elected Board member for AC Transit, State Assembly legislative aide, and at the Bay Area Transportation and Land Use Coalition.

Kaplan holds a Bachelor's degree from M.I.T., Master's in Urban and Environmental Policy from Tufts University, and J.D. from Stanford Law School.

September 14, 2018

Mr. Jake Mackenzie, Chair  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
Bay Area Metro Center  
375 Beale Street, Suite 800  
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066

Dear Chair Mackenzie,

While you are considering the important decision of selecting the next Executive Director for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), we would like to provide some perspective on the leadership qualities paramount for this role. Because the Bay Area region is a collection of communities with diverse needs, it requires a leader with continued focus on transportation initiatives that will drive solutions to the complex mobility issues we are facing today.

As the General Managers of the six largest transit operations in the Bay Area, carrying over a million passengers per day, it is critical that we have a strong relationship with the new Executive Director. MTC's authority for regional planning, programming, and fund allocation supports our transit expansion projects, investments in infrastructure and funding to operate and sustain vital transit services. Therefore, it is essential to have an Executive Director with operational experience, to help improve mobility in the region.

The ideal candidate would possess both a regional perspective, and be supportive of local partnerships and initiatives. The person should be known as a collaborator who values transparency, proactively engages member agencies on critical issues, with a forward thinking and equitable approach.

Finally, we urge the Commission to consider diversifying and expanding the search committee to include external stakeholders.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our thoughts on this critical decision. We will be happy to provide any support or advice you may need.

Sincerely,



Grace Crunican  
General Manager  
San Francisco Bay Area Rapid  
Transit



Nuria Fernandez  
General Manager/CEO  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation  
Authority



Jim Hartnett  
General Manager/CEO  
San Mateo County Transit  
District



Michael Hursh  
General Manager  
Alameda-Contra Costa Transit  
District



Denis J. Mulligan  
General Manager /CEO  
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway  
and Transportation District



Edward D. Reiskin  
Director of Transportation  
San Francisco Municipal  
Transportation Agency District