

**TRANSIT RECOVERY
TASK FORCE**

TO: Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force

DATE: June 15, 2020

FR: Steve Kinsey, CivicKnit

RE: BRTRTF Meeting #1 Summary

After each meeting, the Task Force will receive a summary that highlights the mutual understandings, suggested actions, and remaining concerns. The Task Force will be asked to approve each meeting summary.

Mutual Understanding from Task Force Meeting #1

- 1- COVID-19 has created an unprecedented public transit crisis.**
- 2- Broad support exists for the Task Force to guide regional transit recovery.**
- 3- Safe and healthy transit protocols are essential across all systems.**
- 4- Addressing mobility needs of low-income and vulnerable riders is a priority.**
- 5- CARES Act Phase 2 funds must be delivered expeditiously.**
- 6- This effort will reach out to frequent transit users and other constituencies that are not specifically represented on the Task Force.**

Meeting Summary

The meeting opened with Chair Spering welcoming the Task Force and the interested public. He emphasized the unprecedented scale of the crisis and proposed a 3-stage approach, beginning with urgent resolution of CARES Act distribution, parallel with understanding and contributing to operator's Near-Term Recovery strategies, and finally the more challenging and time-consuming development of a Bay Area Public Transit Transformation Plan.

State Transportation Secretary David Kim confirmed the state's full support for the Task Force, and pledged to participate throughout its work. He emphasized that the recovery should allow transit to "not only survive, but also to thrive."

California State Assemblymember David Chiu added his support of the Task Force. He wants to help make transit more efficient and user-focused, and noted that a sign of success for the Task Force would be to make moot many of the provisions included in his AB2057, which could allow his legislation to shift toward specifically implementing Task Force recommendations.

MTC Executive Director Therese McMillan pledged staff support of the Task Force and noted how important ongoing collaboration will be. She also pointed out that the pandemic has amplified existing disparities in service.

California State Senator Jim Beall supported the Task Force and stated that his efforts will focus on expanding financing for the future of transit.

There was unanimous support and appreciation for the Task Force having been set up in response to this universally recognized collapse of the Bay Area's public transit system. In addition, MTC staff and operators were praised for their quick resolution and distribution of the CARES Act Phase 1 funds. The Chair, as well as numerous Task Force members emphasized

that it is critical to quickly decide the distribution of CARES Act Phase 2 funds. Deep gratitude was offered to transit system operators for continuing to provide services throughout the shelter-in-place order. Also, the extra effort of all transit agency staff was acknowledged.

It was pointed out that the Bay Area's economic rebound will depend on re-building use of transit, and until that happens, congestion which has already begun to increase during commute times will rise further.

Driver and rider health and safety was identified as the paramount concern. Collaborating operators were appreciated for already having started working to unify and coordinate their safety protocols. Task Force members stressed the importance of consistent cleanliness throughout the network, and requested ongoing updates on the situation. In addition, several Task Force members suggested that some of the CARES Phase 2 funds should be used to support system health and safety costs.

Regarding the Near-term Recovery plans, there is strong support for prioritizing services for the most vulnerable, including seniors and disabled as well as low-income riders. It was proposed that an essential network be defined at the beginning of the recovery.

Several members raised concern about the potential to lose important school access routes. Consideration of transit's relationship to compact mixed use development and integration of multi-modal practices were specifically recommended.

There were several suggested actions that should be undertaken in support of the Task Force's efforts. These include:

1. Work with partner agencies and local governments to hold relevant public forums on different topic areas to expand input and awareness.
2. Engage with the California Transportation Commission (CTC) staff to seek their support and to keep them aware of future needs.
3. Engage in direct outreach with transit riders to receive their in-depth understanding of beneficial systemic changes.

Task Force / Next Steps

1. MTC staff will ask transit operators to present a coordinated presentation of their collaborative health safety protocols at the June 15th meeting of the Task Force.
2. MTC staff is collaborating with individual transit operator's to understand their Near-term Recovery strategies, including how they address safety, equitable service, connectivity beyond their own service areas, and fiscal year 20-21 expectations, including use of CARES Act funds. The Task Force will receive a presentation and have the opportunity to comment at the June 15th meeting.
3. MTC staff will present several different CARES Act Phase 2 fund distribution options at the June 15th meeting, and receive Task Force comments to help staff draft a specific recommendation for presentation at the June 29th Task force meeting.