

From: [Mimi Willard](#)
To: [MTC Info](#); abokelman@bayareametro.gov
Subject: Fwd: Letter to Board re of opposition to CARES Act funding allocation to SMART
Date: Sunday, June 14, 2020 4:58:36 PM
Attachments: [COST letter to MTC 061420.docx](#)

External Email

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Mimi Willard** <coalitiontaxpayers@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Jun 14, 2020 at 4:54 PM
Subject: Letter to Board re of opposition to CARES Act funding allocation to SMART
To: <abokelman@bayareametro.gov>

Please see attached and distribute to MTC board for consideration at its 6/15/20 meeting

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Mimi Willard
President
Coalition of Sensible Taxpayers
COSTMarin.org

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June 14, 2020

**Ms. Alix Bockelman
MTC Deputy Director for Policy
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066**

Subject: A Challenge to the Blue Ribbon COVID Transit Recovery Task Force

Dear Ms. Bockelman,

I am writing on behalf of COST, the Coalition of Sensible Taxpayers, regarding MTC's allocation of the second tranche of CARES funding for public transportation in the Bay Area.

In particular we wish to register our reservation concerning the \$10.38 million scale of funding to SMART for the initial CARES allocation, and our disagreement with the potential for a second round allocation of \$6.6 million to SMART. These sums, in comparison to the funding allocated to Marin County Transit and Sonoma County Transit are out of proportion to the public transit service, effectiveness and utility rendered by the respective agencies.

Every year since its rail service inception in 2017 SMART has had extraordinarily high operating expense per passenger trip. In FY19-20 and budgeted for FY 20-21, SMART's estimated operating expense per passenger is in excess of \$50 per passenger trip, far higher than that of other North Bay transit operators. The SMART Board each year since service inception has drawn down reserve funds for rail operations.

SMART is currently running 16 weekday train schedules (with over 2,500 daily seats to carry just over 200 passenger per day. This can hardly be an "essential" service since pre-COVID ridership in early 2020 was over 3,500 per weekday. The current rail ridership has access to bus services the full length of the SMART corridor with equally frequent service and much lower operating cost than SMART.

We urge MTC to reduce the CARES funding allocation from SMART to local North Bay and Golden Gate Transit services because of their higher volume of ridership and much less costly operating expense, as well as because of SMART's low ridership and inefficient and excessive cost

Sincerely,

**Ms. Mimi Willard,
President
Coalition of Sensible Taxpayers
COSTMarin.org**