



## TRANSIT RECOVERY TASK FORCE

TO: Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force

DATE: September 14, 2020

FR: Steve Kinsey, CivicKnit

RE: BRTRTF Meeting #4 Summary

### **Mutual Understanding from Task Force Meeting #4 (July 20, 2020)**

- 1) All operators will provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for employees**
- 2) All operators are cleaning and disinfecting vehicles daily**
- 3) Meeting the needs of transit dependent riders should be a priority**
- 4) Continued coordination among transit operators is beneficial.**

### **Additional Information requested to be included in a future Task Force Meeting**

- 1) What changes can MTC do now vs. what requires legislation?**
- 2) Can cleaning information be posted on buses?**
- 3) How will Governance be analyzed?**
- 4) What additional transit rider survey information will be compiled?**

### **Identified Concerns**

- 1) CTA's industry support role limits their public credibility.**
- 2) Health and safety compliance is not being independently monitored.**
- 3) Public transit ridership will not recover without providing a travel time advantage.**
- 4) 1<sup>st</sup>/Last Mile considerations do not adequately address and are separate from TDM opportunities.**

### **Meeting Summary**

Chair Sperring opened the meeting by expressing appreciation for the Task Force's timely recommendation on the 2<sup>nd</sup> tranche of CARES Act funding. He acknowledged those with continuing concerns, and stated that the Commission is listening. The Task Force received two letters following its action of CARES funding; one from the ATU representative and another from several operators.

Transit operators gave an update on their "*Riding Together: Bay Area Healthy Transit Plan*". They emphasized that it has been a unified effort, draws from national and global research, covers the entire region, and will be adaptively managed by individual agencies, ensuring that both employees and riders are safe. They proposed that the California Transit Association (CTA) serve as the entity to collect transit operator health data (data clearinghouse), offered to update the Task Force on a quarterly basis, and committed to publishing a publicly accessible "dashboard" of safety metrics linked with individual agencies' websites for those interested in more detail.

Task Force members responded with comments and questions. Several disagreed that CTA would be the best manager of information, and some encouraged MTC to take a greater role in monitoring health and safety information.

Operators provided a Near-Term Recovery update. The pandemic has created challenges for both near and long term transit planning. CARES Act funds will run out by year's end and fares will be slow to recover. Operator focus is on communities with the greatest transit need. Operators are

adjusting as ridership demand changes and are maintaining recommended physical distancing measures to the extent feasible. . Flexibility to make changes based on changing circumstances and demand is made more difficult by the months-long process for making service adjustments.

Most operators are participating in weekly coordination meetings that began in April to collaborate on areas including service planning, communications and financial sustainability. Service planning meetings include comparison of passenger surveys, coordination of hub schedule and service information, and advancing transit priority projects on bridge approaches and along major corridors. Ongoing transit improvement planning includes transit priority projects, hub signage, Clipper upgrades, and fare integration.

A regional network map was presented, illustrating a snapshot of frequent service routes that will be updated as service changes are made. Operators plan to establish shared principles related to a connected network, funding needs, and associated governance considerations.

MTC staff initiated the Task Force's Stage 3 effort to develop a *Public Transit Transformation Action Plan*. Though time was limited, members were asked to identify personal priorities. Task Force members support continuing coordination. Several indicated that providing buses an advantage on streets and highways should be prioritized. Others emphasized that governance needs to be systematically analyzed. Giving vulnerable populations, including paratransit users, special attention was mentioned. Secretary Kim encouraged engaging with the state's Integrated Travel Program (Cal ITP) regarding contactless payment upgrades. Assembly Member Chiu restated his willingness to introduce legislation, beginning in December.

Additional surveys of rider preferences, coordinated, connected network planning, transit advantage infrastructure, universal data collection, finding additional funding, considering governance changes, reducing disparities for disadvantaged communities, and creating affordable fares were mentioned.

As the process proceeds, targeted outreach, additional surveying, receiving input from the Advisory Council and Partnership Board, and bringing forward work related to Fare Integration, Signage and Wayfinding, and the BATA Recovery Ad Hoc Working Group will occur.