Seamless Bay Area

SPUR

Agenda Item 7

Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force & The Bay Area Public Transit Transformation Action Plan

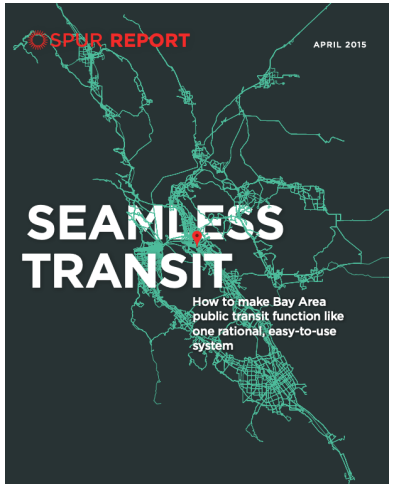
MTC Policy Advisory Council

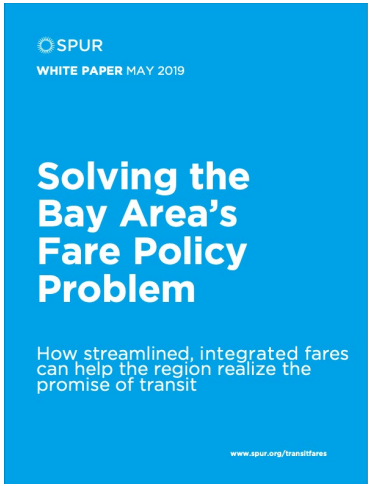
October 14, 2020

SPUR

For years SPUR has researched the benefits of coordinating regional transit to improve customer experience, equity, efficiency, and the environment.

Seamless Transit, published April, 2015, spawned deeper research on transit coordination topics.



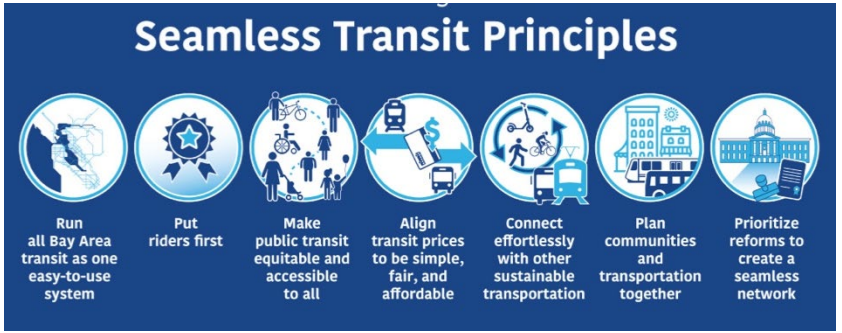


Seamless Bay Area

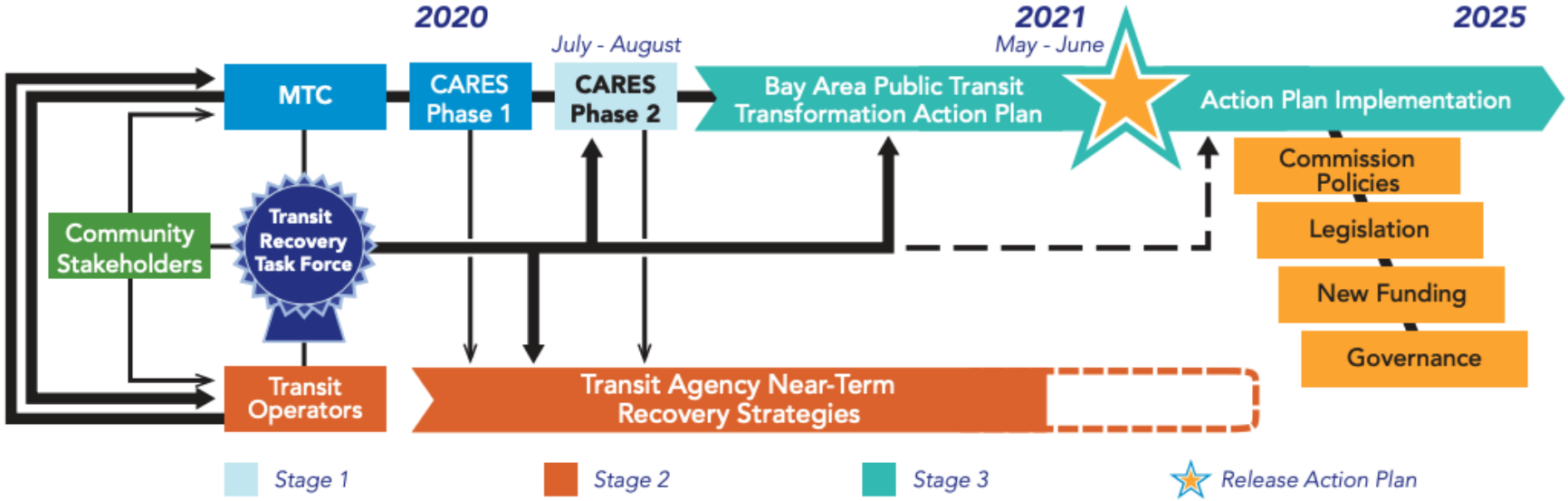
Grassroots organization formed in 2017 advocating for a world-class, equitable, integrated transit system, enabled through governance reform.

Published **Seamless Transit Principles**, supported by 6 public entities, 27 orgs, 1,700 individuals

Sponsor of 2020 Bill AB 2057 (Chiu), The Bay Area Seamless Transit Act; endorsed by 20 organizations



Stage 3: Bay Area Public Transit Transformation Action



July 20 Feedback on Stage 3:

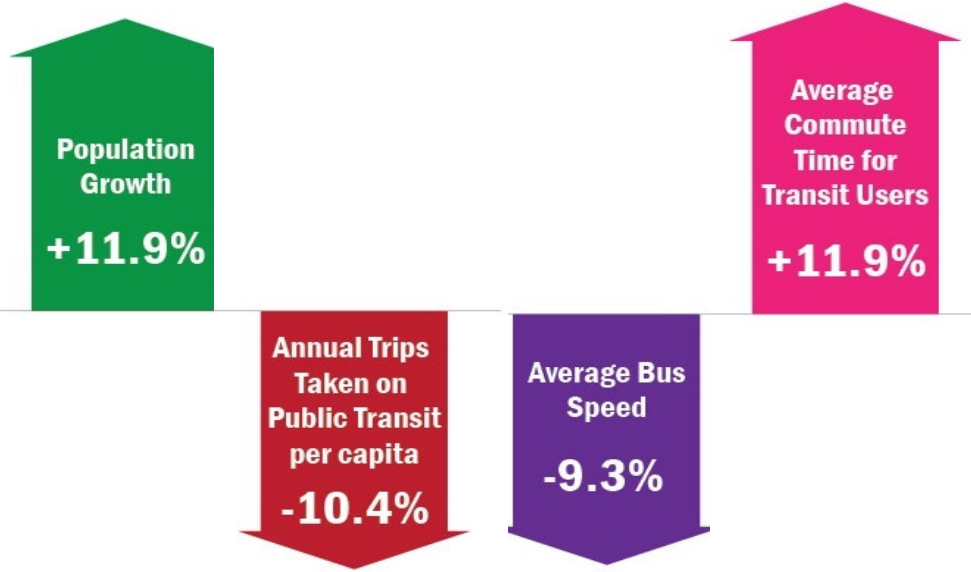
1. ***<u>Equity & connectivity</u> are key goals;***
2. ***<u>Governance & funding</u> are priority topics the Task Force is uniquely positioned to explore & act on to achieve goals***

Agenda

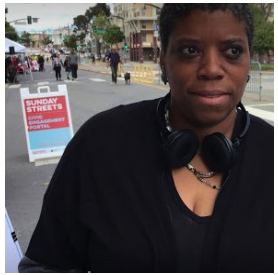
- **Summary of challenges of Bay Area Transit**
- **Vision for an integrated system**
- **Research & lessons from successful regions**
- **Recommendations for “Public Transit Transformation Action Plan”**

Before the pandemic, transit faced great challenges

2001 to 2016 in the Bay Area

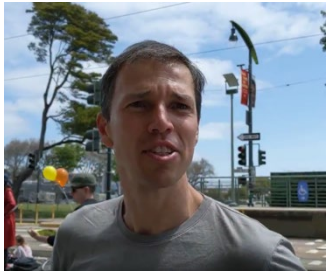


Many face difficulty using transit

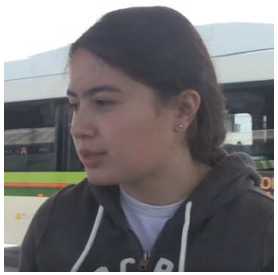











"It takes too long to get around on transit."

"It's not frequent enough"

"It's too confusing"

"It's not reliable"

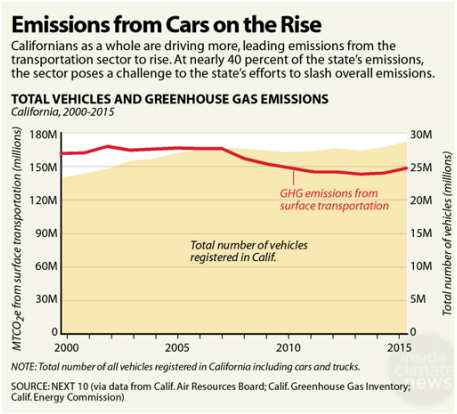
"It doesn't take me where I need to go"

"It's a hassle"

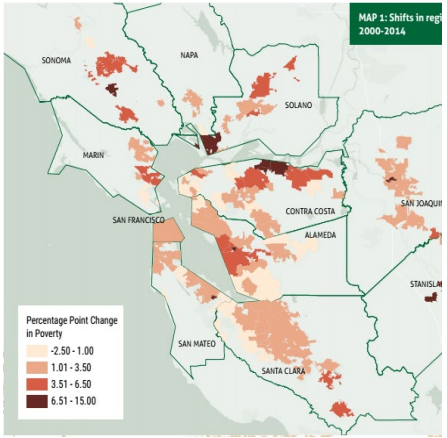
Inadequate transit undermines regional goals & inhibits our ability to respond to crises

Lack of access to affordable housing choices & economic opportunity

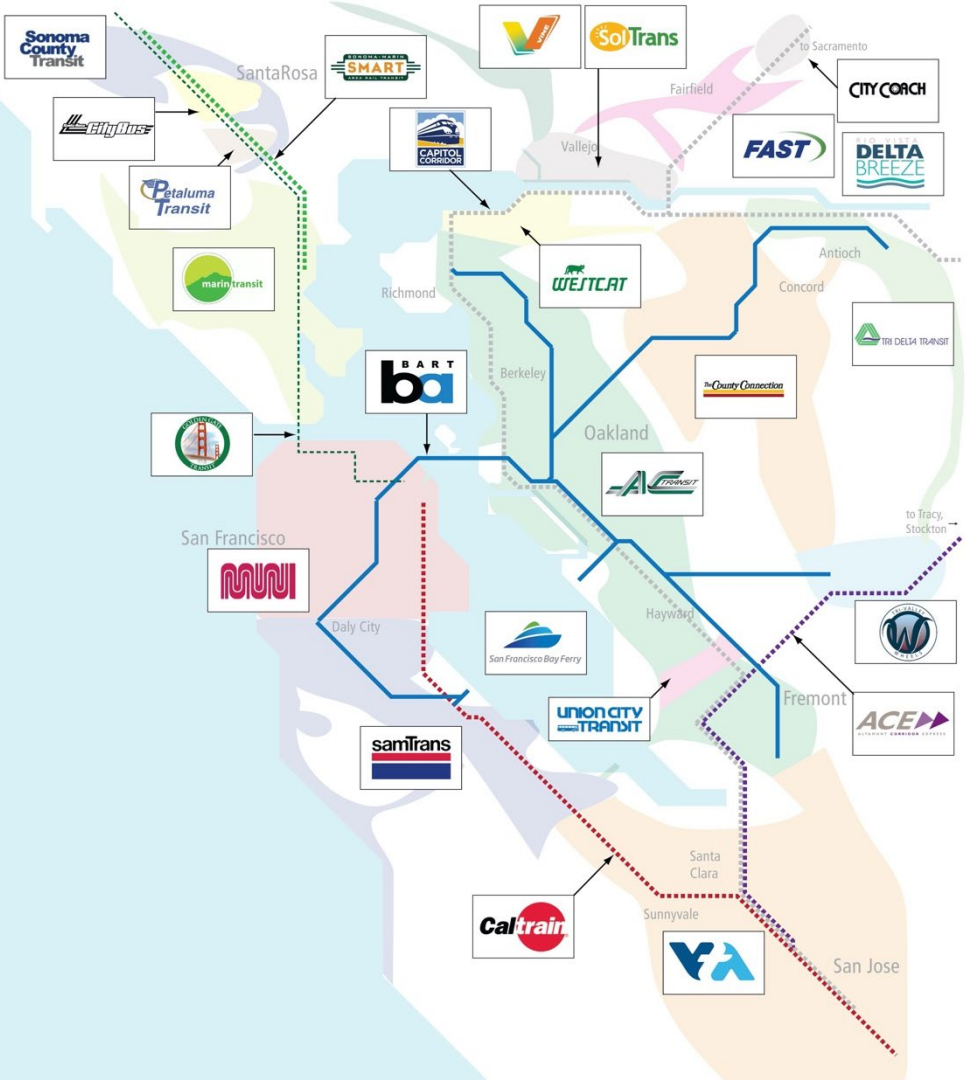
More traffic, longer commutes



Rising transportation emissions and VMT



Increasing Inequality, Suburbanization of Poverty

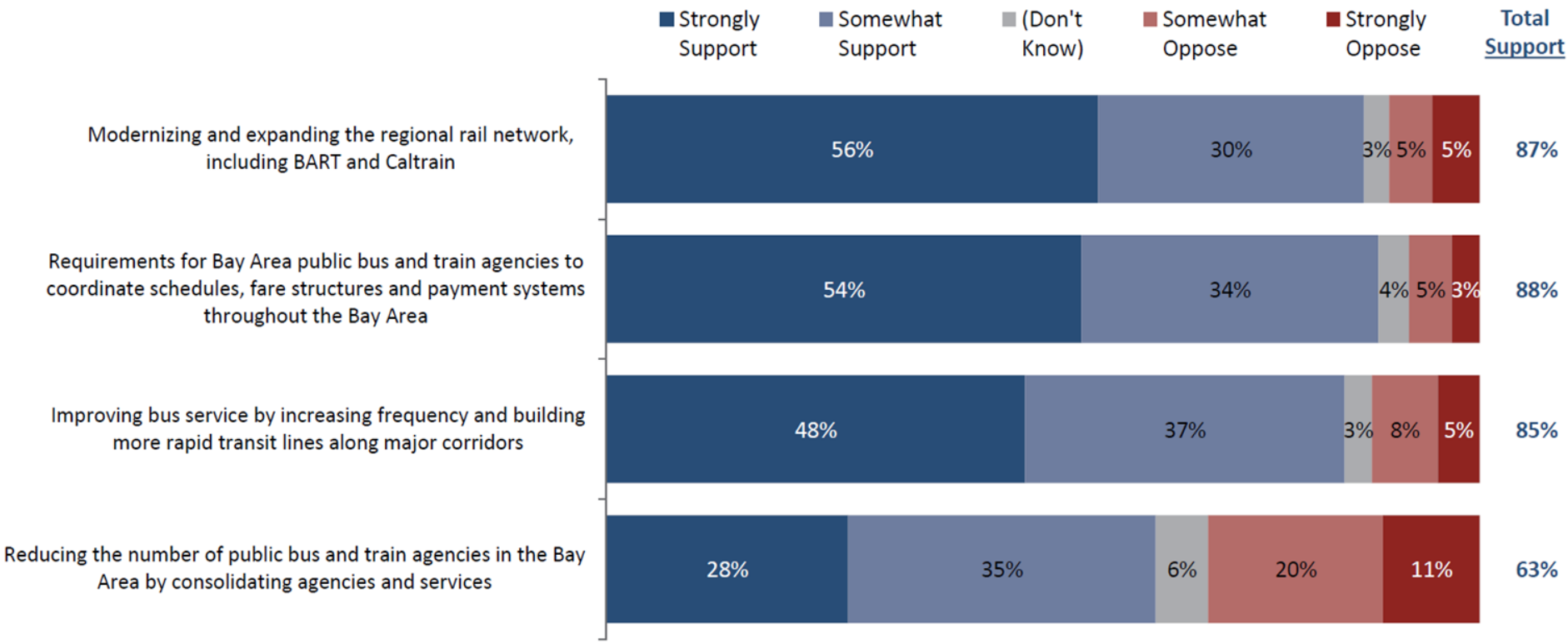


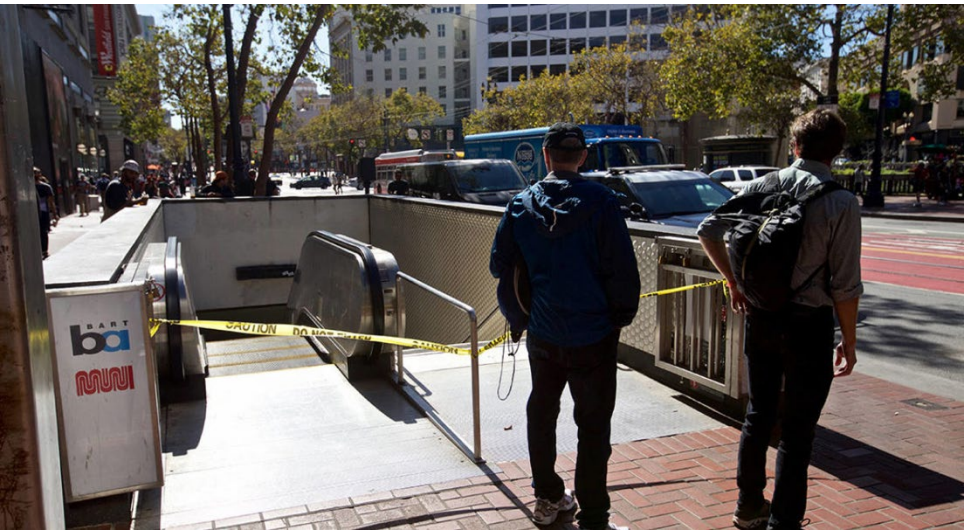
Polls say that the public prioritizes better regional coordination

A top ranking argument for last year's regional transportation funding measure:

"Our current public transit network is managed by dozens of transit agencies and local governments with uncoordinated schedules, different rules, and limited connections. This will improve our public transit system so that it is better coordinated and easier to use."

Transit coordination requirements rank top among residents





Our fragmented regional network challenges agencies and customers

COVID has exposed further gaps and the fragility of our systems.

- A system that was poorly-connected pre-pandemic struggles to adapt
- Local and regional systems don't work together; we see both duplication and gaps
- Without a guiding plan for connectivity or alignment, agencies confront extraordinary challenges to coordinate service changes
- **Recent coordination is unprecedented and a good step forward. It must be institutionalized and streamlined.**

In a seamless customer-focused regional network:

- A connected rapid transit network is strategically planned at regional level to work *as a system* - especially in a region as decentralized as the Bay Area
- Transit agencies work together to operate different parts of the integrated network
- Service quality, fares, schedules, and wayfinding is standardized to be a reliable and as simple as possible for users
- Buses don't get stuck in traffic
- **The system is adaptive to change, particularly in times of scarcity and uncertainty, so that resources can be deployed strategically to best serve riders**

A Regional Network Manager / Transit Coordinator Entity

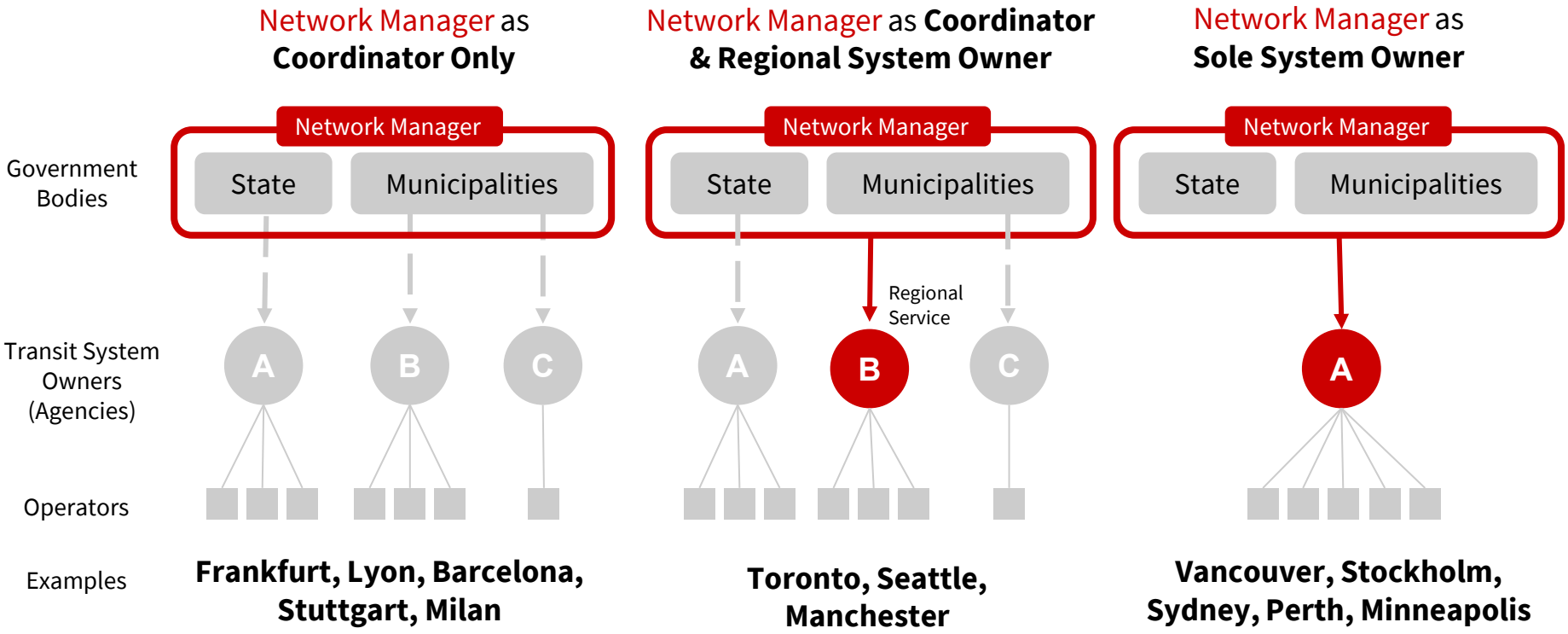
- Sets strategic goals and minimum standards for the network, with a specific focus on integrating urban and suburban routes.
- Focuses on customer experience and interfaces
- Facilitates coordination between operators
- Fulfills additional roles such as:
    - strategic planning
    - fare policy, collection, distribution
    - schedule coordination
    - regional branding and marketing
    - capital project delivery oversight & risk management

The Bay Area is not alone in facing the difficult challenge of coordinating a variety of operators and agencies.

But the Bay Area stands apart because it has not created a transit coordinator to overcome this challenge.

Best Practices from high-ridership, coordinated regions

Network Manager entities exist in three main forms

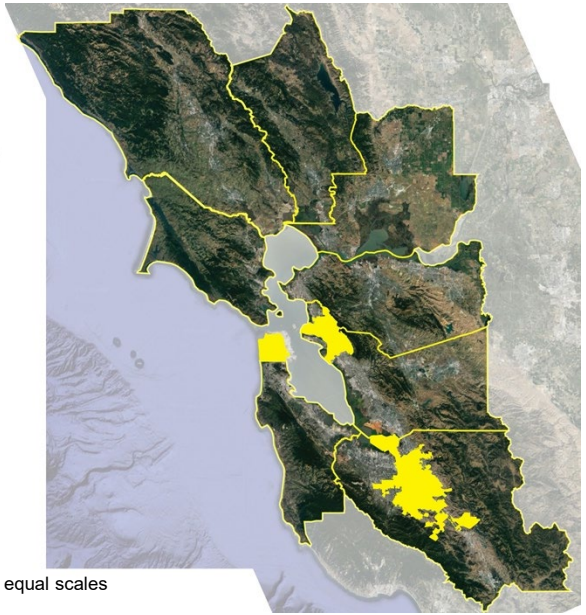


Based on forthcoming research from DeRobertis, et. al. “Characteristics of Effective Metropolitan Areawide Public Transit” 2020

Network Manager as **Coordinator Only**
Greater Frankfurt (RMV)

1993 **Federal legislation required creation of transport authorities to improve accountability + efficiency**

1995 **RMV created**



Approximately equal scales

	Greater Frankfurt (Rhein-Main-Verkehrsverbund)	**San Francisco Bay Area** (9-county)
Population (m)	**4.9 million**	**7.75 million**
Local Governments	**408 municipalities**	**101 cities**
Transit Operating Companies	**160**	**27**
Annual Transit Ridership 1996	**482 million**	**435 million**
Annual Transit Ridership 2018 (SF - 2017)	**769 million (60% growth from 1996)**	**505 million (16% growth from 1996)**
2017 Transit Mode Share	**19%**	**4%**
2017 Central City Transit Mode Share	**40% (Frankfurt, pop. 775,000)**	**26% (San Francisco, pop. 884,000)**

Roles and Responsibilities of Network Managers (Regional Transit Coordinators)

Metropolitan Region	Regional Transit Mode Share %	Planning (Network Design)	Integrated Fares	Schedule Coordination	Marketing/ Public Info Services	Procurement/ Contracting	Monitoring (of Service standards)	Transit Operations	Other Transportation Responsibilities
Vancouver, Canada	12% (all) 18% (work)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - all	Yes (3)
Toronto, Canada	16% (all) 23% (work)	Yes	No (1)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes -Regional bus/rail	No
Milan, Italy	21% (all)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*	No	Yes	No	No
Lyon, France	19% (all)	Yes	Yes (2)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Stockholm, Sweden	37% (all)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Frankfurt, Germany	19% (all)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Stuttgart, Germany		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Barcelona, Spain	20% (all)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Perth, Australia	10.3% (work)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - all	No
Sydney, Australia	23% (all)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes -all	Yes (5)
SF Bay Area (SPUR/SBA Assessment)	4% (all) 12% (work)	Partial	No	No	No*	No	Partial	No	Yes

All data except SF Bay Area assessment from From DeRobertis, et. al. “Characteristics of Effective Metropolitan Areawide Public Transit” 2020 (Pending publishing)

Research Findings: Common Lessons

- A Network Manager entity is the norm in high-performing regions
- Network Manager relationship to state/local governments and transit agencies is clear
- State/national legislation prompted and supported coordination
- Strong regional coordination is associated with
    - High ridership benefits even without major new spending
    - Higher levels of ridership in both urban and suburban areas

Public Transit Transformation Action Plan should answer:

1. What transportation outcomes do we want?
2. What institutions & funding do we need to realize these outcomes?
    a. What authorities are appropriate for a **transit network manager**?
    b. What authorities are appropriate for local institutions?
    c. What types of funding & tools are needed?
    d. What's the right geography?
    e. How should institutions be governed?
3. What's a feasible transition path?

How do we answer these questions?

- Targeted research by third party subject matter experts
- Thoughtful facilitation
- Public engagement & transparency
- Efficient, prioritized decision-making

Recommendations for Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force & Transformation Action Plan

While supporting Stage 2 recovery and alignment efforts initiated by transit agencies, the Blue Ribbon Task Force should...

A. Support the long term goal of a connected, equitable, efficient, and rider-focused transit system across the Bay Area that has integrated service, fares, schedules, and customer information, and a common identity.
B. Identify governance and funding reforms, including legislation, that support creation of an effective transportation network manager in the Bay Area with the authority and mandate to integrate all forms of Bay Area transit.
C. Fully analyze of options for transit agency consolidations and their potential to support a more integrated, accessible, rider-focused system.
D. Bring on relevant subject matter experts with domestic and global expertise in effective transportation governance and organization to complete the analysis of governance and funding.