



Date: October 26, 2020
Attention: Chair Jim Spering, Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force
Re: Item 5a. Stage 3: Transformation Action Plan

Dear Commissioner Spering and Members of the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force,

We appreciate the commitment of agency staff, elected officials, and other stakeholder groups to the recovery of public transportation, and the ongoing engagement through the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force. We strongly support the focus on network management and governance in the task force roadmap. We also applaud the recognition that objective professional expertise will be needed to support the task force in developing a strong governance reform and network management strategy.

We wish to express concern about elements of the draft Transformation Action Plan Scope, Goals and Objectives as circulated in the meeting materials. As currently phrased, the goals and objectives fall short of a Transformation Action Plan that would set the region on the path toward an integrated, equitable public transportation system.

We ask that the Scope, Goals and Objectives be strengthened in order to position our region for meaningful Transit Transformation that addresses the needs of our riders and urgency of our climate crisis.

Our specific suggestions include:

- (1) The Scope, Goals and Objectives should more clearly and specifically identify what we actually want to achieve with transformation. Current wording of “an appropriately frequent, accessible, reliable, affordable and better connected transit network” is a good start, but would benefit from additional specificity, including the need for “fully integrated service, fares, schedules, customer information, and a common identity that creates a unified experience for riders.” We also recommend language that recognizes the goal of optimizing the impacts of existing and future public transit investments in the Bay Area.
- (2) Stage 3 should assess how the state and region can deliver stronger authority to implement transit priority on our streets and highways. This could include more authority for transit agencies to deliver bus priority lanes, implement signal priority, and advance regulations and other infrastructure that supports faster transit service.

- (3) Goal 3 should be amended to clarify that network management and governance analysis and reform actions, including the evaluation of consolidation options, should not be limited to near-term actions. This work should be guided by long-term goals, and should include both near-term and long-term reform actions. We applaud the focus on near-term actions, but this should not exclude consideration of mid-term and long-term strategy.
- (4) The framing of Goal 4 should be improved to clarify that the purpose of learning about existing transit coordination initiatives is to highlight successes, shortcomings, and obstacles of current work, which should feed into network management and governance reform actions. Goal 4 may in fact be more appropriate as a process step in support of Goal 3 rather than its own goal.
- (5) In addition to hearing about MTC-led current initiatives, we request in the near future the Task Force receive a presentation from the California State Transportation Authority about ongoing and related State-led transit initiatives and priorities, including the Statewide Transit Strategic Plan. CalSTA should be invited to provide recommendations for what transformative actions would best support State Goals and plans, and position the Bay Area to be in a competitive position for existing and future state funding.

Thank you for considering these suggestions, which we believe can lead to a clearer and bolder Transformation Action Plan that can set our region up for long term success.

Sincerely,

Ian Griffiths
Policy Director, Seamless Bay Area

Jonathon Kass
Interim Transportation Policy Director, SPUR

Gwen Litvak
Senior Vice President, Bay Area Council