



May 10, 2021

David Rabbitt, Chair, Programming and Allocations Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale St., Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066

Dear Commissioner Rabbitt:

In advance of the May 12th Programming and Allocations Committee meeting, we are writing to support Agenda Item 4b: Proposed Principles for the Distribution of Transit Funding from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP Act) in the San Francisco Bay Region.

The CARES and CRRSA Acts provided a \$2.3 billion lifeline to Bay Area transit agencies to preserve the region's transit systems in the face of the devastating ridership and revenue losses due to the pandemic. Most importantly, that funding has ensured the survival of our transit agencies in the meantime while averting layoffs and enabling safe transit service for those who need it the most. We continue to appreciate the dedication, collaboration and flexibility demonstrated by our labor partners throughout the pandemic. Now that the worst of the pandemic is behind us and the Bay Area begins to emerge from over a year of shelter-in-place, transit agencies are looking to the ARP Act funding to help them recover into the future along with the rest of the economy.

MTC's proposed principles for the ARP Act facilitate an equitable and sustainable recovery and will allow MTC to target the initial distribution to ensure all agencies have sufficient funding for the next year of transit operations, stabilizing our systems and forestalling any possible layoffs. The principles also hold operators accountable by focusing the funding on planning and taking demonstrated measures to restore service to meet the expected increases in demand by September 2021.

In planning for the future, one possible outcome is that the ARP Act could be the last infusion of federal operating recovery funds for the Bay Area's transit systems, despite the fact that the trajectory of the recovery is uncertain, evolving, and is expected to take many years. Having more than one distribution of ARP Act funds will allow the region to make a more deliberate and

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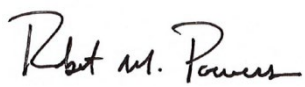
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informed decision until we have better information about the trajectory of the recovery, ridership demand, and the unique financial circumstances each transit agency is facing. Accordingly, it will allow for the ARP Act funds to be deployed as strategically as possible to meet rider demand and allow transit operators to meet budget needs and keep workers in their jobs.

Finally, we appreciate the acknowledgement of the importance of reducing physical distancing guidelines in order to more effectively operate and continue service restoration. Due to the capacity constraints imposed on transit vehicles, meeting increasing ridership demand will not be possible until the physical distancing health orders are lifted.

We want to thank MTC staff for their work to craft the currently proposed principles and the Commission for its past actions to ensure that the Bay Area's federal relief dollars are allocated in an expeditious, thoughtful, and strategic manner under such challenging circumstances. We urge the Commission to adopt the proposed principles and look forward to our continued partnership to strive to best meet the public's needs with the ARP Act funds and through the work underway with the Blue Ribbon Transportation Recovery Task Force.

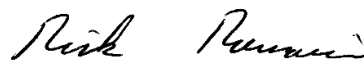
Sincerely,



Robert Powers,
General Manager
San Francisco Bay Area
Rapid Transit District
(BART)



Michelle Bouchard,
Acting Executive Director
Caltrain



Rick Ramacier,
General Manager
County Connection



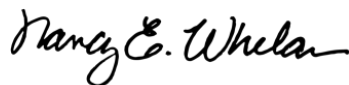
Diane Feinstein,
Transportation Manager
Fairfield and Suisun Transit
(FAST)



Denis Mulligan,
General Manager
Golden Gate Bridge,
Highway and Transportation
District



Michael S. Tree,
General Manager
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Transport Authority (Wheels)



Nancy Whelan,
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Marin Transit



Kate Miller,
Executive Director
Napa Valley Transportation
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Jeffrey Tumlin,
General Manager
San Francisco Municipal
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(SFMTA)

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Carter Mau,
Acting General Manager
San Mateo County Transit
District (SamTrans)



Seamus Murphy,
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Water Emergency
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Beth Kranda,
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Solano County Transit
(SolTrans)



Jeanne Krieg,
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Tri Delta Transit



Evelynn Tran,
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General Manager/CEO
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Transportation Authority
(VTA)



Charles Anderson,
General Manager
Western Contra Costa Transit
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