

Date: July 16, 2021

Attn: Jim Spering, Chair, Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force

Re: July 26, 2021 Blue Ribbon Task Force Meeting, Transformation Action Plan Recommendation

From: Bay Area Elected Officials & Voices for Public Transportation

Dear Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force Chair Spering:

Public transportation is key to an equitable and economically vibrant region, and our regional system's chronic underinvestment has left us with massive mobility injustice. It is the backbone of the multimodal system that so many of our region's residents depend on to get to work, see family and friends, and to get basic needs met. The COVID-19 crisis has only exacerbated the deep inequities present in our transportation system.

Recently approved federal sources of funding, including American Rescue Plan funds, provide only temporary relief to transit agencies. For transit to attract more passengers and adequately meet the needs of low-income communities, communities of color, and transit-dependent people, a significant ongoing investment in operating our transportation system must be made.

We therefore urge MTC to immediately begin planning a public process to develop a transformative regional funding measure to be ready for a ballot measure as early as 2024. A successful public process will include the leadership of a multi-stakeholder body as well as extensive community involvement. Examples of past Bay Area public processes that should inform a future funding measure include "Get Us Moving San Mateo County" that led to Measure W and the Mayor's Transportation Task Force 2030 that led to Props J and K in San Francisco. We can learn from the successes and shortcomings of these processes to shape this next endeavour.

Other regions that have succeeded in passing significant funding measures, such as Seattle and Los Angeles in 2016, took years to build the broad support to achieve success at the ballot box. We need to do the same in the Bay Area. MTC has the opportunity to move a transformative investment in our system, but it must act now to initiate an equitable regional process to develop that investment. In order to be ready for a 2024 ballot measure, enabling legislation must be introduced by early 2023, which means a regional process must be initiated by January 2022.

In order for this to be an equitable and successful process, it must be:

1. **Representative and rider-centric:** The multi-stakeholder process must prioritize the voices and priorities of key constituents of the transit system: riders and transit workers. There must be significant representation by historically disadvantaged and disenfranchised communities, including communities of color, low income people, and people with disabilities, as well as equity groups, labor, transit advocates, and

environmental groups. Those groups must represent a majority of seats of any stakeholder body.

2. **Broad-based:** Decisions must be informed by extensive, iterative, and meaningful outreach to communities across the Bay Area, ensuring that outcomes and investments are shaped around these identified needs.
3. **Accessible:** Outreach must meet people where they live, work, and use transportation, and account for a variety of needs including disability, language, schedule, physical access, and childcare. Feedback should be collected in a variety of formats, with options for in-person meetings in all counties, online events, mail-in or online surveys. All outreach should be made inclusive and understandable to all, and value lived experience. Outreach should thoughtfully educate communities in order to empower people to engage. Specific attention should be made to accessing hard to reach communities.
4. **Time sensitive:** A regional process must be initiated with sufficient time to allow for a full public engagement process, including iteration, so that a plan is ready for a 2024 ballot measure.
5. **Well-funded:** Strong outreach and equitable participation requires resources. Ensure funding is available to compensate groups and community members who need it for their participation, and provide the resources needed to reach all parts of the region, especially hard-to-reach communities.
6. **Transparent:** Demonstrate that community feedback and priorities are central to and included in final decisions through ongoing, two-way communication.

We need a long term and transformative investment in our public transportation system in order to meet our equity and climate goals. **We encourage MTC to initiate a publicly led, multi-stakeholder process by January 2022 to develop regional consensus for a public transportation funding measure that embodies these principles.** We urge you to include this recommendation within the Blue Ribbon Task Force's Transformation Action Plan.

Sincerely,

Bay Area Elected Officials

John Gioia
Contra Costa County Supervisor

Gayle McLaughlin
Richmond City Council

Victor Aguilar, Jr.
San Leandro Vice Mayor

Terry Taplin
Berkeley City Council



Rev. Dr. Ray Pickett Chair
Mary Lim-Lampe, J.D. Executive Director
Genesis

Monica Mallon, Transit Lead
Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action

Rigel Robinson
Berkeley City Council

Kate Harrison
Berkeley City Council

Rashi Kesarwani
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Kelsey Banes, Executive Director
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Jean Tepperman, Co-Coordinator
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Patrick Chaffey, Chair - Housing Working
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**Democratic Socialists of America - Silicon
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Dave Campbell
Bike East Bay

Brian Haagsman
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Ogie Strogatz, Member, Leadership Team
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David Blake
East Bay Gray Panthers

Michael Gimbel, Chair
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Armando Barbosa, Organizer
ATU Local 265

Sheri Burns, Executive Director
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Daveed Mandell
**San Francisco Chapter California Council
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Hoai-An Truong, Leadership Team
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