



December 4, 2024

The Honorable Alfredo Pedroza, Chair
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale St., San Francisco, CA, 94105

Re: Comments on Proposal for a Regional Transportation Measure

Dear Chair Pedroza:

On behalf of the Bay Area Council, the California Alliance for Jobs, and SPUR, we thank MTC for its work to build consensus on how the Bay Area funds public transportation. Each of our organizations appreciated the opportunity to serve on the Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee, and while that process did not reach a final agreement on how to move forward, we have continued to collaborate to identify areas of alignment across our organizations.

We understand the transit and overall transportation challenges the Bay Area is experiencing and know there will be no easy solution to resolve the funding issues we face. We also believe that an efficient and safe transportation system for all improves quality of life and provides significant economic benefits to the Bay Area. However, as we have just observed in this past election, business as usual is not acceptable to the voters. Any future funding measure must be innovative, forward-thinking, and supplemented with extensive research to identify voters' transportation priorities.

Below are several key principles that our organizations believe are essential to any measure that will be developed and proposed to Bay Area voters:

- **Sustain and Transform Transit:** Our organizations participated in the Select Committee and remain engaged in this process because we are concerned about the future of transit in the Bay Area and understand its importance to our residents, the economy and the environment. We need to address the looming funding crisis and find a solution that ensures our transportation system continues to function.

At the same time, sustaining transit alone is not enough. Extensive public outreach has made clear that voters want a safer, cleaner and more integrated transit network and will need to see any new investment paired with a strong commitment to transformation. This means delivering the improvements riders and the public want to see- including enhanced safety, security and cleanliness in our stations and on our vehicles as well as customer improvements to make the

transit system more integrated and easier to use. It also means a renewed focus on controlling costs to reduce shortfalls over the long term as well as strong, independent oversight of agency finances.

- **A Multi-Modal Expenditure Plan:** We know from extensive polling that any new revenue measure must have a balanced expenditure plan that responds to the multimodal needs of all Bay Area residents and employers. Less than 10 percent of our population regularly rides public transit, and while we urgently need funding to sustain and improve these systems, we also need an expenditure plan that delivers benefits to all transportation users. We believe there is a path toward a balanced and compelling multi-modal expenditure plan that is attractive to voters, supports and transforms transit, and advances our region's climate goals.
- **Flexibility and Pragmatism:** Successfully passing a regional transportation measure will require strong leadership and support at the local level. A successful measure will work within and around existing local funding structures - providing flexibility to counties to define and pursue local priorities. A successful measure must also include a reasonable and fair approach to geographic distribution of funds that will help counties feel assured that their residents' tax dollars are being put to good use delivering benefits and supporting local priorities over time.

Additionally, a revenue measure must rely on a viable tax mechanism. While all revenue sources have challenges, a sales tax is a traditional source of transportation funding and polling indicates that it resonates with the voters and has the greatest probability of success. Our organizations want to help address the crisis transit and transportation face- and we will only support a measure that we believe can succeed.

We hope the above principles are helpful as the Commission considers how to advance a future regional transportation measure. We appreciate the continued work of all involved in this challenging process and look forward to continued engagement.

Sincerely,



Jim Wunderman
President & CEO
Bay Area Council



Michael Quigley
Executive Director
California Alliance for Jobs



Alicia John-Baptiste
CEO
SPUR