



April 25, 2023

MTC Commission Workshop April 26 - Agenda #2 - Regional Ballot Measure Polling

Honorable Commissioners,

We are pleased to provide comments regarding Regional Ballot Measure Polling, Agenda Item 2 of the MTC Board Workshop.

As organizations in strong support of public transportation, we are encouraged to see the broad general support among the community for public transportation, including among people who do not use transit.

However, we also believe it's important to note a significant share of Bay Area residents aren't satisfied with the current system. The polling results show that Bay Area residents want to see a better public transportation system that is more convenient, connected, fast and affordable, and that supports communities depending on transit. The polling indicates both that people support transit more strongly when they use it more, and many say they would ride transit more often if it was improved.

We appreciate the initiatives being taken by MTC and Bay Area transit agencies to improve and transform transit, and we encourage you to strengthen and accelerate initiatives to improve and transform transit, as they will be critical to passing a regional measure in the future.

Given the polling that shows a majority support that is well below the two-thirds threshold to pass, we believe pursuing a ballot measure in 2026 or 2028 for public transportation should be our primary strategy, as we can't afford to fail at the ballot. We need more work and time to build public support

There is significantly more groundwork that needs to be done to prepare for a ballot measure that will succeed. This year, MTC is leading a public process to develop expenditures and policies that will deliver abundant, convenient, affordable services; and that will be supported by a broad coalition and minimize opposition. MTC is also conducting analysis of potential revenue mechanisms that will be perceived as fair and will be successful with voters.

In order to have the option of waiting until 2026 or 2028 for a regional measure, **our region urgently needs the state** to step in and provide funding to prevent massive service cuts. We strongly support the Survive and Thrive campaign to seek multi-year “gap” funding from state budget sources to maintain transit service and to fund improvements to the transit system that improve rider experience and that polling shows will help increase voter support.

**We need your help as MTC Commissioners in advocating to our Governor and our state representatives for funding for transit** in the state budget. We urge you to contact our legislators in Sacramento to express how the region needs immediate funding to even have the option of a future regional ballot measure. The perspective of MTC commissioners and staff will be helpful for state legislators in Sacramento to fully understand how risky it would be for the Bay Area to attempt to pass a regional measure in 2024. .

We are excited to continue to work with MTC and transit agencies in support of better transit, and initiatives to provide the funding needed for abundant, convenient, affordable service through the state budget and for a future regional measure.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ian Griffiths, Policy Director  
Seamless Bay Area

Adina Levin, Executive Director  
Friends of Caltrain

Amy Thomson, Transportation Policy and Programs Manager  
TransForm

Peter Straus, Board Member  
San Francisco Transit Riders