

Date: March 26, 2025
W.I.: 1111
Referred by: Commission

ABSTRACT

MTC Resolution No. 4694

Resolution of Appreciation for **Harold Brazil** on the occasion of his retirement from Metropolitan Transportation Commission after 23 years of service.

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RE: Resolution of Appreciation for **Harold Brazil**

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Resolution No. 4694

WHEREAS, Harold Brazil is retiring from the staff of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission after 23 years of dedicated practice to the arcane yet essential art of air quality conformity planning for the nine-county Bay Area, and after a total of nearly 37 years of outstanding service on behalf of regional government; and

WHEREAS, despite his having grown up in the Bay Area communities of Fairfield and Oakland, the regional government agency to which Harold first lent his skills is the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, where, during a time when privatization was proclaimed the hot new trend in transportation, he began his planning career as an intern developing a cost-allocation tool to calculate the market values of various suburban Detroit bus routes; and

WHEREAS, despite nary a single Southeast Michigan bus line attracting the interest of private investors, SEMCOG leader Carmine Palumbo nonetheless pegged Harold as a promising planning prospect and in 1988 extended an offer of regular employment to the youthful Californian turned Michigander; and

WHEREAS, while Harold originally was interested in regional airport and aviation planning, his early SEMCOG assignments also included working on the eight-county region's Transportation Improvement Program, an experience that provided TIP-top exposure to travel modeling; and

WHEREAS, the 1990 Clean Air Act and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 opened new air quality conformity planning opportunities within the SEMCOG Environment section without requiring Harold to entirely abandon corridor planning; and

WHEREAS, Harold's decade-plus of air quality conformity work for SEMCOG involved communication with other metropolitan planning organizations, including MTC, eventually leading to a series of conversations with then-MTC Planning Director Chris Brittle that piqued Harold's interest in taking his talents from Motown to The Town; and

WHEREAS, after accepting an offer of employment from MTC in 2002, Harold seamlessly transitioned to the unique planning environment for which California is famous, supplying essential travel data for mobile source emissions inventories, supporting regional and local efforts to assess air quality impacts, and developing effective mitigation strategies; and

WHEREAS, Harold's technical analyses of project-level emission reductions informed funding decisions and strengthened competitive grant applications, helping to direct investments toward cleaner transportation solutions; and

WHEREAS, among the funding decisions to which Harold's work contributed was MTC's 2003 allocation of some \$15 million in local and federal money to help Bay Area transit agencies retrofit the exhaust systems on more than 1,500 diesel-powered buses with advanced filters that reduce the emissions of both particulate matter and oxides of nitrogen, a clean-air breakthrough that delivered a workable substitute for what was known as Transportation Control Measure 2, which originally had obliged the Bay Area to boost transit ridership; and

WHEREAS, Harold became acutely aware of the intricacies of the California Air Resources Board and its EMFAC emissions model, running every version of the tool from 2002 to 2021, missing only the opportunity to navigate the world of EMFAC 2025 due to delayed federal approvals this year; and

WHEREAS, Harold for many years led the Air Quality Conformity Task Force, adeptly coordinating with colleagues and building strong relationships with staff from the Bay Area Air District, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration and Caltrans as well as the California Air Resources Board; and

WHEREAS, Harold's expertise in federal and state air quality regulations also provided critical guidance to local agencies, ensuring transportation projects met conformity requirements and advanced through complex approval processes; and

WHEREAS, Harold contributed to six different long-range regional plans, from Transportation 2030 to Plan Bay Area 2050+, teamed with colleagues from MTC's funding section on innumerable updates to the short-term Transportation Improvement Program, and joined forces with counterparts at the Bay Area Air District on a photochemical modeling study conducted as part the effort to curb ozone emissions; and

WHEREAS, just as Harold has demonstrated his commitment to clean air, so too has he dedicated himself to clean play on the pitch, beginning an auxiliary career as a Michigan high school soccer referee in the late 1990s, a calling he continued to pursue after his return to the Bay Area by affiliating with two separate East Bay referee associations; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from the University of Michigan with a degree in Biology and before pursuing a career in planning, Harold toiled in a physiology lab at Wayne State University, where his duties included going to an Eastern Market slaughterhouse to collect blood from cattle carcasses, an experience that might have helped prompt his eventual decision to take a computerized career interest and aptitude test; and

WHEREAS, when the test results suggested planning as a field compatible with Harold's skills and interests, he enrolled in graduate Urban Planning courses at Wayne State and also took a job in the university's Property Office, where his real world education in transportation included driving the school president back and forth between Detroit and the state capital in Lansing; and

WHEREAS, not long after starting the MTC phase of his career, Harold was introduced by then-colleague Dana Lang to Laureteen, the woman to whom he would be married two years later and with whom he would honeymoon in Belize, where at least one of the newlyweds

enjoyed a September telecast of her alma mater scoring a decisive victory over his; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the staff and Commissioners of MTC thank Harold for his decades of service to the agency and the people of the Bay Area; salute his long-lasting contributions to air quality that have helped reduce emissions and support healthier communities; and extend best wishes to Harold, Laureteen and their daughter Harper for more good times, good games, grand adventures, and unparalleled success on the Road to the Elwood. Go Blue.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Sue Noack, Chair

The above resolution was entered into by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission at a regular meeting of the Commission held in San Francisco, California, and at other remote locations, on March 26, 2025.