



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

September 23, 2024

Mr. Andrew Fremier, Executive Director
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Mr. Fremier,

We write to express our strong concerns about any potential actions to raise bridge tolls or taxes in the San Francisco Bay Area, specifically with the purpose of funding public transit agencies' operations. We have these concerns because any increases will continue to disproportionately impact low and moderate-income residents across the Bay Area and in our districts. We hope that by engaging with you, you can identify a solution that supports riders in both the short-term and long-term, and also is a responsible use of taxpayer funding.

We believe regressive taxes or fees, such as a sales tax, are not the solution because they will continue to take a larger percentage of low-income households' income, as compared to high-income groups. We're also concerned because previous proposals would have significantly benefitted only a select number of the 27 transit agencies across the Bay Area, with certain counties receiving significantly less funding than their residents would contribute in tax revenue. No county should profit disproportionately off of contributions of other counties – all should pay their fair share to receive the benefits.

If implemented, we believe that the funds generated by additional bridge tolls or taxes will not be the optimal use of taxpayer funds if transit and planning agencies continue with 'business as normal.' We recognize and appreciate the difficulties of the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent impacts to transit. Congress recognized this hardship by providing over \$1 billion in emergency federal funding for transit agencies across the Bay Area to survive throughout the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, federal funding consisted of only 1%, or \$52 million, in operating funding.¹ Now that the pandemic is behind us and ridership remains below pre-pandemic levels, we need a clear-eyed evaluation of how transit systems should adapt to this new normal.

The conversations regarding the financial health of our transit operators have focused almost exclusively on new revenue, with too little consideration of cutting costs. We believe continuing to force money into transit systems that are inefficient, without requiring any transformational and effective changes, would be a misuse of taxpayer funds, and relying on external funding sources for operations such as continually increasing bridge tolls or a sales tax is not a

¹ [MTC Transit Funding Overview, April 24, 2024](#)

sustainable, long-term solution to fixing transit services. In our opinion, any additional funding should be used to transform our Bay Area transit systems into efficient and effective transportation options and prioritize the rider by ensuring each system is safe, clean, comfortable.

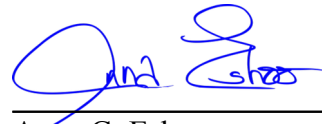
We also caution against attempting to cut costs by consolidating existing agencies. We appreciate that the MTC has taken consolidation off the table, but it remains an active proposal in the Legislature. Many of the benefits of seamless travel across multiple modes can be achieved through greater cooperation and coordination between existing agencies. While the potential cost savings are nebulous, consolidating poses clear upfront costs in harmonizing divergent governance structures, labor agreements, and sources of tax revenue.

As your Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee continues to meet and debate the best options for transit, we hope you will consider our serious concerns and engaging with us in this process. We look forward to working with you to find an efficient and effective solution for all those who live in the Bay Area.

Sincerely,



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Commission Chair
Councilmember John J. Bauters
City of Emeryville

Commission Vice Chair
Supervisor David Haubert, District 1

Alameda County
Supervisor Elisa Márquez, District 2
Supervisor Lena Tam, District 3
Supervisor Nate Milley, District 4
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AC Transit
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BART
Director Rebecca Saltzman

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Councilmember Preston Jordan

City of Berkeley
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City of Piedmont
Mayor Jen Cavanaugh

City of Pleasanton
Mayor Karla Brown

City of San Leandro
Mayor Juan González, III

City of Union City
Mayor Carol Dutra-Vernaci

Executive Director
Tess Lengyel

October 7, 2024

Jim Spering, Chair
MTC Select Committee on Bay Area Transportation Measure
375 Beale Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Response to 9/20/2024 Letter on Transportation Revenue Measure

Dear Commissioner Spering:

On behalf of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC), thank you for your continued leadership and commitment to seeking a framework for a funding measure to provide critical funding to address the fiscal emergency facing the region’s transit operators. A robust and sustainable transit system is critical to Alameda County and our region’s climate, equity, economic and mobility goals. Alameda CTC is committed to continuing to work with all partners on the options under consideration to support transit.

Alameda CTC’s 2024 Legislative Program specifically includes “advocate for sustainable funding to support transit agencies in their continued recovery” as a core legislative priority. Our Legislative Program includes support for efforts to increase transportation funding, including as part of any regional transportation measure, and support for transit agencies as they seek to recover from impacts of the pandemic on fiscal solvency and ridership, including regional efforts to secure sustainable multi-year funding and improve service for the public.

Your letter dated September 20, 2024, requested the four counties served by BART share ideas and options for how to move forward and how to close the funding gaps presented by MTC and the transit agencies. Alameda County’s Measure BB already provides significant funding to transit operations and capital needs throughout the county, including over \$90 million annually to support AC Transit operations, comprising their third largest revenue stream. That said, we recognize transit agencies are facing dire funding shortfalls and new revenues are necessary to support transit operations our communities rely upon.

Jim Spering
 October 7, 2024
 Page 2

Per your request, below are initial thoughts for your consideration:

- Consider a shorter-term option focused on saving transit: While transit agencies have long-term structural funding challenges, a shorter-term measure geared towards solving the fiscal emergency may be more palatable to voters and allow for clearer messaging. A shorter-term measure would also allow for the region to demonstrate continued strong local support for transit to the state in ongoing discussions regarding transit funding at the state level. It would also provide transit agencies time to transition their operating models to adjust to the new travel patterns and demonstrate progress to the public.
- Consider multiple funding mechanisms: Sales tax levels in Alameda County already exceed 10 percent. Additional increases to the sales tax are extremely challenging and concerning given the regressive nature of sales tax and impacts on our low-income and most vulnerable residents. We suggest MTC continue looking at other options, such as a parcel tax, or a combination of options to explore ways to reduce the reliance solely on sales tax.
- Consider authorizing legislation that provides flexibility and delegates various authority to the region: the authorizing legislation for Alameda CTC's Measure BB authorized going over the 2 percent cap but delegated the policies, projects and authority to develop an expenditure plan to the county. This provided additional time and flexibility to develop the full details and allowed the expenditure plan to be developed at a more local level. MTC could consider a similar approach to allow the region time to continue to work through the challenging details at a regional and local level, and also provide flexibility to be responsive to the public.

Again, we appreciate the importance of this effort and look forward to working with all stakeholders to support a robust and sustainable transit system.

Sincerely,



John J. Bauters
 Chair

Alameda County Transportation Commission

cc: Nate Miley, Supervisor, Alameda County
 Carol Dutra-Vernaci, Mayor, Union City
 Sheng Thao, Mayor, City of Oakland
 Andrew Fremier, Executive Director, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
 Alix Bockelman, Chief Deputy Executive Director, Metropolitan Transportation Commission

From: Sophia D
Sent: Monday, September 23, 2024 3:59:57 PM
To: MTC-ABAG Info <info@bayareametro.gov>
Subject: Comment for the Select Committee on a Regional Transportation Measure

External Email

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Sophia D. I am with EBHO part of Voices for Public Transportation. We are the leading affordable housing advocacy coalition in Alameda and Contra Costa counties and we are part of the winning coalition for a regional measure that funds abundant transit, with progressive sources, and is climate positive. **The latest scenarios are moving further away from a proposal the majority of people will be excited to support.** A successful measure needs to raise at least \$1.5 billion a year and have a sustainable source of transit funding over the life of the measure in order to **save union jobs**, increase transit service levels, and implement regional initiatives like free transfers, transit priority, and make improvements to **access for seniors and people with disabilities.**

On an individual level, as someone who relies on transit to get to work, take care of daily errands and be an active and involved part of my community, transit service cuts would upend my life and remove much of the freedom of movement I enjoy. It would also cause a traffic nightmare and prevent us from reaching our climate goals or building the housing we need. The Bay Area can— and MUST— do better.



Rev. Sophia D.
Chief Program Officer
EAST BAY HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS (EBHO)



Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District

Mike Hursh, General Manager

October 18, 2024

Jim Spering, Chair
Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Item 4b, Transportation Revenue Measure Scenario Updates

Dear Chair Spering,

I am writing on behalf of the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) to express my deep concerns regarding the current Transportation Revenue Measure proposals. I appreciate MTC's commitment to building consensus during this urgent and immediate need for transit operating funds to keep transit running. As the CEO of AC Transit, I want to emphasize the critical importance of equitable funding and support for our transit services in the East Bay.

As I have previously mentioned, I am extremely concerned that AC Transit will not receive a fair share from the current proposed scenarios. It will be difficult for AC Transit to support a scenario that fills only 50% of our projects annual operating deficit need.

This inequity would have serious implications for our operations and the communities we serve. Our most vulnerable and underrepresented communities stand to be hit hardest by service cuts if AC Transit's projected deficit is not adequately addressed. We currently serve over 150,000 riders on an average weekday, and in just the first quarter of this fiscal year, we have already surpassed 10 million rides. The number of individuals who rely on our service is significant and cannot be overlooked.

From the outset of this process, we have stressed the necessity for equity to be integrated into the revenue distribution equation. Unfortunately, this has not been adequately reflected in the proposed allocations. AC Transit is facing a projected deficit of \$146 million over the next four years, starting next fiscal year. With emergency federal assistance ending this fiscal year and state financial support concluding next year, the challenges we face are exacerbated by rising operational costs.

It's important to note that our current deficit projections are based on maintaining only 85% of service levels. We have no intention of remaining at this reduced level; we aim to restore our service to 100% as soon as possible. Given our resource constraints, we are committed to maximizing our existing resources and directing service where it is needed most.

The MTC's reliance on fare box recovery as the primary metric for determining transit agency needs is neither fair nor equitable. We have requested an equity analysis and advocated for the inclusion of ridership data in future funding allocations. Without these changes, diminished AC Transit service will only worsen the existing inequities faced by our riders.

I urge the committee to reconsider the proposed revenue distribution and to ensure that the East Bay receives its fair share. Our communities deserve reliable and equitable transit service, and we stand ready to collaborate in any way that ensures our collective goals are met.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 510-891-4753 or mhursh@actransit.org.

Sincerely,



Michael Hursh
CEO/General Manager
Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit)

CITY OF OAKLAND



CITY HALL • ONE CITY HALL PLAZA • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

Office of the Mayor
Honorable Sheng Thao

(510) 238-3141
FAX (510) 238-4731
TDD (510) 238-3254

October 18, 2024

Jim Spering, Chair
Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Bay Area Transportation Revenue Measure

Dear Chair Spering,

As the Mayor of Oakland, the largest city in Alameda County and served by AC Transit, with almost half of AC Transit riders getting on and off the bus in Oakland, I am writing to urge the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to include additional funding for AC Transit as you develop the Bay Area Transportation Revenue Measure. I am deeply concerned that Oakland's public transit system will not receive its fair share from this revenue measure. Scenario 1A leaves 50% of AC Transit's projected annual deficit unfunded.

I worry that communities like Oakland will be significantly impacted by service cuts if AC Transit's funding needs are not met. 75 percent of AC Transit riders are people of color, 65 percent are low-income, and nearly half depend on public transit to travel to school, work, medical appointments, or grocery stores.

According to the MTC's Plan Bay Area 2050, Oakland is defined as an equity priority community. The MTC employs an Equity Priority Communities framework in decision-making for many of its grant programs. This framework should also be applied when reviewing transportation revenue measure proposals. Ensuring financial stability for AC Transit and the East Bay will garner support from Alameda County for passing a funding measure for transit operators. Put simply, I fear that Oaklanders will not give this measure the support at the ballot box it needs if we feel we are being left behind for the benefit of our neighbors.

I appreciate the time and care that the entire Select Committee has put into this process and I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheng Thao". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sheng" and last name "Thao" clearly distinguishable.

Sheng Thao
Mayor, City of Oakland

CC: Members, MTC Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee
Commissioners, Metropolitan Transportation Commission

October 18, 2024

The Honorable Jim Spering, Chair
Bay Area Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale St.
San Francisco, CA, 94105

Re: Comments for October Select Committee Hearing

Dear Chair Spering:

On behalf of the California Alliance for Jobs and the 2,000 employers and 100,000 union construction workers that we represent from the Central Valley to the Oregon border, I am submitting this formal letter to provide comments to be considered by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Bay Area Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee. We understand the transit and overall transportation challenges the Bay Area is currently facing and we also know there will be no easy solution to resolve these funding issues. However, what we do know is that an efficient and safe transportation system improves the quality of life for all residents and provides significant economic benefits to the Bay Area.

Per the Select Committee agenda packet released on October 15th, upon review, we are disappointed that all the proposed scenarios fail to take into account many of our priorities that have been conveyed at previous hearings, and furthermore, based on polling carried out throughout this year, fail to offer a viable pathway to attain voter approval. Moreover, we are unsatisfied with the outreach / vetting process over the past five months as specific advocates continuously appear to have a number of priorities funded in all scenarios when we know for a fact that over 80% of Bay Area residents are motorists, not frequent transit riders. In fact, only 4% of Bay Area commuters rely on public transit according to MTC's most recent Vital Signs report.

Below are several priorities that we have communicated on countless occasions that have not been comprehensively considered:

- Balanced Expenditure Plan: A more tailored and focused measure that possesses a more direct link between its constituents and services provided may have a better opportunity for success. This includes equal amounts of both transit and infrastructure / capital funding.

- Everyone Pays and Everyone Benefits: Establishing a return-to-source formula that is reasonable and fair to ensure each county has sufficient financial resources to fund their transportation priorities.
- Proper Tax Levy: Throughout the Select Committee process a variety of tax levy options have been introduced and explored. As a sales tax has traditionally been the revenue mechanism used to successfully fund transportation measures over time, we will not support the inclusion of other tax levies (i.e. parcel & payroll tax) in a new measure. A sales tax resonates with the voters and has the greatest probability of success.
- Full Flexibility: Any expenditure plan that is developed and includes “county flex” or “opt-in” provisions should specify that allocated funds are completely flexible to fund projects that meet county transportation priorities.

We recognize that the development of a regional measure while addressing a variety of priorities is a challenging endeavor. We also know that the scenarios put forth will not have the consensus of the Select Committee. The abovementioned priorities are both reflective of what voters have conveyed through extensive polling and also the priorities of the construction industry. We know the inclusion of these priorities will get MTC closer to achieving the needed consensus on any successful regional measure that will be put in front of Bay Area voters.

Sincerely,



Michael Quigley
Executive Director



October 19, 2024

Chair Jim Spering
Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

RE: Comments on October Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee

Dear Chair Spering,

Thank you for your steadfast leadership in advancing this important work to build consensus on how the Bay Area funds public transportation going forward. I also want to thank MTC staff for their tireless shuttle diplomacy to find scenarios that are acceptable to the many diverse viewpoints on this topic.

Unfortunately, as we arrive at the final meeting of this Select Committee, I am disappointed that the conversation has not progressed substantially from where we were with SB 1031, which was a lopsided expenditure plan that caused widespread division within our region. We cannot continue to frame this as a measure to bail out an existing public transit system that is not meeting the needs or expectations of Bay Area residents. We must require public transit agencies to provide a better, safer, cleaner, and more coordinated rider experience, and they must take the difficult steps of identifying opportunities to cut costs.

This is not the first time we have come together to reform Bay Area public transit. I served on the Transit Sustainability Task Force in 2012 to improve efficiency and address the persistent transit funding shortfalls, the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force in 2021 to create a more rider-focused system, and I'm currently serving on the State Transit Transformation Task Force which is a process created in response to the fiscal cliff crisis. Yet none of these efforts have had a material impact on the way we provide public transit, or the cost of doing so.

We must now reimagine how we deliver public transit. Our polling repeatedly confirms that the voters are not interested in funding the status quo, and neither is the business community. We will not support any revenue funding absent real and substantive change.

There are several changes we think are very reasonable that we insist upon in order to support additional funding for public transit:

- **We must get costs under control.** Transit shortfalls have existed long before the pandemic, and we need to better understand what is driving costs so we can right size budgets and adjust to post-pandemic travel demands. We cannot continue to do business as usual. We should assess whether we need to continue to operate certain low



ridership lines, or consider how we could integrate technology to improve mobility at a cheaper cost while providing better options for transit users.

- **We must create strong independent oversight of agency operations.** Our polling repeatedly shows that the public does not trust public transit agencies to use taxpayer funds well, so we need to convince voters that agencies will use any new funds far more efficiently. We must also ensure that public transit operators are delivering on their promise to create a more seamless, integrated, and commonsense transit network that riders have long demanded. In some cases, this may require a restructuring of governance structures to ensure that public transit agencies are delivering a service that is responsive to riders and crafting a budget that is responsive to taxpayers.
- **We must deliver a safer, cleaner, and more comfortable transit rider experience *before going to the ballot*.** Our extensive polling and public outreach clearly shows that this is a top concern for riders of the BART system, specifically. Continuing to make progress on increasing the security presence, enhancing the cleaning of trains and stations, and preventing non-paying customers from entering the stations will not only regrow ridership but it will also rebuild voter confidence as we work towards a future funding measure. We appreciate that BART has made progress in these areas over the past year, and we urge the agency to continue to prioritize these top rider concerns and deliver a safe and clean system at all hours of the day.
- **We must offer a multimodal expenditure plan to win voter support.** 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, so we need an expenditure plan that delivers direct benefits to all transportation users. We recognize that public transit agencies are facing a dire financial crisis, and I believe a measure that includes some funding for other transportation needs stands the best chance of being supported by voters.
- **We must pursue a revenue mechanism that can pass at the ballot.** A sales tax is a traditional source of transportation funding and polling indicates that among the various options, it resonates best with voters and thereby offers the greatest opportunity for success.

I'm sorry there is no measure being offered that we can support at this time. However, I look forward to continuing to work together to create a viable option that responds to the diverse transportation needs of Bay Area residents and offers a clear path to success at the ballot.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Wunderman".

Jim Wunderman
President & CEO

From: Carol T.

Sent: Sunday, October 20, 2024 1:11:04 PM

To: MTC-ABAG Info <info@bayareametro.gov>

Subject: Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee for 10/21/24 Meeting

To respected members of the MTC Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee:

Because Monday, October 21, 2024 is the last meeting of this committee I feel pressured to bring up concerns which may be outside the current agenda.

I am a public transit rider - mine is an outsider's view. Throughout these proceedings it seems to me this committee has been generally seeing Golden Gate Transit as "that cute little bus company up north somewhere."

Big numbers are not the only measure of importance.

I believe that if BART were to stop running tomorrow people in the East and South Bay will have alternative means of traveling. But if Golden Gate Transit stops running tomorrow nobody in Sonoma or Marin will have a way of getting to San Francisco or the East Bay by public transit. There isn't any other. We'll have nothing.

Not only that but GGT is our only reliable service running evenings and holidays in both Sonoma and Marin. People in both counties who work at restaurants, stores or go to night classes will have no ride home. Same for holidays because Sonoma County Transit does not run a single bus on any holiday.

It's easy to get sentimental and talk about Sonoma veterans with no way to get to San Francisco's Fort Miley for medical services. Or the black teens stuck in the ghetto of Marin City with no way to go anywhere including the Saturday night movies in San Rafael.

GGT is an intrinsic part of life in Sonoma and Marin and the spine of all public transportation for both counties. For fifty plus years I personally have witnessed their providing reliable services with no noticeable deferred maintenance, no major accidents or work stoppages. Service has only been suspended for floods and fires as far as I know. All this from a company maintaining the Golden Gate Bridge while running boats and buses.

The most important thing for me now is that while BART has the numbers, Golden Gate Transit has our backs.

Please do not forget us.

Thank you,

Carol T.

Bus Rider

Genesis, a member of Voices for Public Transportation

October 21, 2024

Dear MTC Commissioners and Select Committee Members,

We understand the urgency of the financial challenges for transit agencies like BART, Muni, Caltrain, and AC Transit. Getting these agencies on a sustainable footing is important for the region, but Sonoma and Marin counties should not be left out of the conversation about transit funding. Marin and Sonoma need additional transit funding to prevent fiscal cliffs, add new regional connections, and increase local service in order to increase access and reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.

We have two multi-county agencies that will face large fiscal challenges without additional revenue in the next 4 years. Golden Gate Transit hasn't recovered from the loss of bridge tolls, and MTC's numbers project a \$35 million deficit. The ¼ cent sales tax in Marin and Sonoma for SMART that raises approximately \$51 million annually expires in 2029. Both services are critical to getting people up and down the 101 corridor and to San Francisco.

However, North Bay residents have additional important transit needs. The North Bay is lacking in regional transit connections outside of the 101 corridor that are critical to serving current travel needs and reducing congestion. There is only limited Golden Gate service across the Richmond Bridge. Frequent connections to the East Bay will serve both North Bay residents and East Bay residents who work in Marin. We also need transit infrastructure and service across Hwy 37 connecting Marin to Vallejo.

In both Marin and Sonoma counties, we need funding for additional local transit service. Current service is too infrequent to attract riders and inadequate to meet current riders' needs, especially in the evenings and weekends. Currently, Sonoma County Transit doesn't provide service on holidays. SMART's limited weekend schedules make trips inconvenient for Marin and Sonoma residents that want to try using the train for some trips.

The transit improvements in the Transit Transformation Action Plan to make service more user-friendly and affordable are also critical for Marin and Sonoma residents. All students at Santa Rosa Junior College were eligible for the BayPass pilot and in the first year they took over 140,000 trips, with at least 20% of trips outside Sonoma and Marin counties. The wayfinding pilot will help people navigate the Santa Rosa transit center. People with disabilities and seniors are in need of the improvements to accessibility and paratransit.

Please don't leave the North Bay out of the regional transit funding conversation. We have critical transit funding needs for our existing service, and we need to improve our connections to the rest of the Bay Area.

Sincerely,

Jack Swearingen, Chair Friends of SMART

Wendi Kallins, Sustainable Marin

Nathan Spindel, Safe Streets Petaluma

Omar Carrera, Canal Alliance

Carol Taylor, Genesis

Collin Thoma, Disability Services and Legal Center

Dave Sorrell, TDM-CP, Seamless Bay Area & Association for Commuter Transportation,
Northern California Chapter

Stephen Birdlebough, Chair Sonoma County Transportation & Land-Use Coalition

From: Kenne B.

To: MTC-ABAG Info <info@bayareametro.gov>

Subject: Idea for permanently adequately funding Bay Area transit agencies - Bay Area wide toll increases to ensure ongoing viability of transit

External Email

To whom it may concern,

Many ideas have been floated to preserve funding for Bay Area transit agencies to keep them permanently funded. This is a critical issue over the next few years and beyond.

These ideas include parcel taxes, sales tax increases, and income tax increases. These are all unpopular. Of these, parcel taxes are the most regressive and likely the most unpopular. Sales taxes and income taxes are at least progressive and less likely to be resisted by the voters.

However...

I propose something much more direct, and likely far more palatable, since there is an obvious direct cause-and-effect relationship between how the increase is collected, and what it is spent on - making it easier and less stressful to get around.

Toll increases throughout the Bay area - SIGNIFICANT increases - earmarked for preservation and improvement of Bay Area transit.

Such increases may be large - like at least tripling current tolls system-wide. ALL of the increases go to ongoing transit agency funding.

This makes driving more expensive. It also permanently preserves and improves service levels of BART, MUNI, AC Transit and all of the other Bay Area transit agencies.

Driving becomes more expensive to provide a truly viable transit alternative to driving. Car traffic congestion is relieved. By providing a truly viable, and far less stressful, transit alternative to driving.

This could be a real winner for all involved.

Thanks,



Kenne J B.

PS - A cost-saving idea too: Amalgamation of all Bay Area transit agencies, as is the case in New York. This would significantly reduce costs and increase efficiency.

MTC'S Transportation Revenue Measure Scenarios (Item 4b)

Dear MTC Commissioners and Select Committee Members,

I am Collin Thoma the Systems Change Advocate with Disability Services and Legal Center (DSLCL). We serve people with disabilities and seniors in Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino and Lake counties. While we do not serve Marin County my comments still pertain to Marin given its close proximity to our service area. My comments today are regarding MTC'S Transportation Revenue Measure Scenarios. While I am glad to see a plan to increase funding for transportation services in the San Francisco Bay Area I have concerns regarding the funding for the North Bay Counties.

The level of transportation services in Marin, Sonoma and Napa counties are quite different from the level of service in San Francisco, the East and South Bay. The frequency of fixed routes and paratransit service does not meet the demand. The areas of service are also more limited and are disconnected from other North Bay counties. This makes it quite difficult to travel between counties. The only transit providers that serves multiple counties is Golden Gate Transit and the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART). Both providers only serve Marin and Sonoma counties, mostly around the Highway 101 corridor leaving out a large portion of both counties. Both of these providers are also quickly approaching a fiscal cliff in just a few short years. SMART tax will expire unless it is re-approved which is not guaranteed. Golden Gate Transit has seen a reduction in trips post pandemic resulting in less revenue for their service. This is why having a funding option that includes the whole Bay Area is so important to help avoid the fiscal cliff.

All North Bay counties have a mix of rural and urban areas and while level of transportation in the urban area is decent at best, the same can't be said for rural areas. The rural areas greatly need transit improvements. These areas often have more limited bus routes and service times. This makes it harder for those to use the bus since more planning is required, which can be challenging for some. Furthermore, it severely limits paratransit services which are commonly used by people with disabilities and seniors. In my three and a half years at DSLCL I have helped dozens of consumers (clients) who live in these rural areas. I have had some success in getting paratransit services for these consumers. However, I often need to supplement it with Community Based Organizations (CBO'S) transportation services. In some cases, the CBO rides are the only option available since the consumer live outside of the paratransit service area and, can't use the fixed route bus. These options are also pretty limited since there are not a lot of CBO'S that provide transportation. Additionally, some CBO'S only serve a small portion of the county they operate in. Sonoma, Napa and Marin counties are some of the quickest aging populations in the state which will put more of a demand on public transportation.

A major challenge for people with disabilities and seniors is getting transportation service to San Francisco, the East or South Bay. Many need to go to these parts of the Bay Area for medical appointments or for social activities. While those who have Medi-Cal can get

transportation through their plan for these trips, it is nearly impossible for those who do not have Medi-Cal. This is because there is no easy one-seat ride or seamless and easy transfers between transit providers. There are a few companies that provide transportation for medical appointments but cost hundreds of dollars. People with disabilities and seniors often can't afford those trips due to their very limited income from the Social Security benefits and the extremely high cost of living. In my three and a half years at DSLC I have tried to help several consumers who don't have Medi-Cal to get their medical appointments with very little success.

Given the challenges in the North Bay, I strongly recommend the commission and the select committee adopts a hybrid model that automatically includes all 9 counties, so no county has to opt-in. If scenario one is adopted, I worry that it would have a significant negative impact on the level of transportation and transportation providers in the North Bay.

Thank you for taking your time to review my comments regarding MTC'S Transportation Revenue Measure Scenarios and for your efforts to improve transportation. I hope to see a final plan that will work for the entire Bay Area. This will be great to see since the plans that the commission has to improve transportation are greatly needed. These plans will make it much easier to use public transportation especially for people with disabilities, seniors and other marginalized groups who often heavily rely on it.

Sincerely,

Collin Thoma

Systems Change Advocate

Disability Services & Legal Center (DSLCL)

521 Mendocino Avenue

Santa Rosa, CA 95401

(707)636-3076



September 9, 2024

Re: Policy Considerations for a Regional Revenue Measure

Chair Spering,

At the August 26th meeting of the Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee you requested that Committee members provide input regarding policy considerations that could accompany a regional transportation revenue measure. The following suggestions are focused on policy approaches that will help ensure the Bay Area's transit system is both responsive to customer needs and accountable to the region's taxpayers.

General Principles

The 2025 legislative session is the region's final opportunity to secure the needed enabling legislation to place a regional transit funding measure on the ballot. As we work under the pressure of an impending fiscal cliff we urge the Committee, MTC Commissioners and Legislators to be measured and deliberate regarding which policy provisions are attached to authorizing legislation for funding and which ones should be considered independently. Specifically we would advise learning from past experience and hewing to the following general principles:

- ***Strive for simplicity.*** Enabling legislation for a regional measure is likely to be complicated but it must also be readily understood and supported by a wide range of local, regional and state policy makers. Any policy provisions included in legislation must be as succinct and clear as possible, supporting an overall bill that can be readily understood by elected officials and explained to the public.
- ***Avoid blanket mandates.*** The magnitude and immediacy of financial need varies significantly among the region's transit operators. We therefore advise against pairing enabling legislation with the inclusion of universally applied policy provisions that are likely to be perceived as divisive or onerous. Doing so creates a dangerous misalignment of incentives where policymakers representing operators and jurisdictions that do not immediately need funding may be motivated to oppose legislation that others urgently need passed.

- ***Embrace incremental change.*** While voters and policymakers are clear that they want to see transformation, the reality is that transit is a complex system that is funded and regulated at many different levels of government. Important improvements to the region's transit system are already underway and more are needed - but the process to make this change real will take time, resources and many individual steps. Enabling legislation for a regional measure should be viewed as one opportunity among many to both cement the progress we are making and continue efforts to improve the system.

Regional Policy Considerations

SPUR supports MTC's Network Management structure and we expect to see it evolve and strengthen over time. To that end we would like to see any major infusion of regional funding be accompanied by policy provisions that strengthen network management and ensure that riders and the public benefit from a coordinated regional transit system. We believe that a regional measure can best achieve this outcome both by providing funding for coordination initiatives and by clearly tying any transit agency's receipt of new monies to ongoing compliance with the programs and policies defined by MTC's regional network management structure.

We would also like a regional measure to contain policy provisions that strengthen financial transparency and build the public's trust that their tax dollars are being used effectively. Progress toward this goal can be achieved by requiring that MTC take basic steps to strengthen its monitoring and disclosure of key financial and productivity metrics describing the operations of the region's transit agencies - work that is underway as part of MTC's ongoing development of Regional Network Management Performance Measures. These and other measures should be tracked over time, regularly benchmarked against state and national peers, and reported alongside a select number of non-transit measures related to cost and productivity including changes to regional CPI and auto-traffic volumes. Additionally, we also believe that MTC should routinize its practice of collecting and standardizing operator financial forecasts, originally mandated under SB 125. Specifically, we think this could be done efficiently via incorporation of revised forecasting requirements into the existing, cyclical Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) process.

Sustained monitoring and reporting of basic transit cost and productivity metrics is an essential and overdue first step to build trust in our regional system and to lay the groundwork for further transformation. Without this basic information policy makers cannot truly understand the systems they are being asked to direct nor are they well positioned to decide where interventions or change may be needed.

BART Accountability

BART is facing the largest operating deficit of any Bay Area transit agency and providing funding to sustain BART service must be a central and enduring expenditure priority within any future regional revenue measure. The scale of BART's financial need along with the potential for revenues to flow from one or more counties not currently represented in the BART District presents a significant and unique accountability challenge that must be addressed.

Without presupposing a specific approach we urge focus on this issue and encourage a dialog among the counties that are currently represented within the BART District and those whose relationship with BART is governed by separate contractual agreement. SPUR believes that sustained new operating funding for BART is essential - and we also appreciate that such funding must come with a commensurate degree of oversight and representation.

Addressing Consolidation

The outright consolidation of transit agencies is a fraught and complex topic whose study is unlikely to result in tangible benefits to Bay Area riders or taxpayers in any near-term timeframe. While consolidation is much discussed in our region, it is important to state that the number of individual transit agencies in the Bay Area is neither unique nor disproportionate when compared to other parts of the state. The SCAG region in Southern California has more than 100 operators, for example, and California as a whole has over 200. While consolidation is an important topic, discussions around SB 1031 made it clear that this issue has the potential to upend already challenging efforts to advance regional transit funding. We strongly urge that any future study of consolidation be kept entirely separate from a regional funding measure.¹

Sincerely,

Alicia John-Baptiste
CEO, SPUR

¹ A more detailed discussion of SPUR's views on a potential consolidation study can be found in our [January 2024 letter](#) to Senator Wahab's office regarding SB 926 (a bill that was subsequently merged into SB 1031).



Memorandum

Date: September 23, 2024
To: Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee and
Transportation Revenue Measure Executive Group
From: MTC Policy Advisory Council Chair, Pamela Campos
Re: Policy Advisory Council Priorities for a Regional Transportation Revenue
Measure

On August 27, 2024, the MTC Policy Advisory Council met and discussed their priorities for a future regional transportation revenue measure. This memo summarizes the discussion and includes a specific recommendation from the Council.

Discussion

- **Transit Funding and Gaps:** The conversation addressed the differences between the adjusted fare gap (calculated based on fare changes from 2019-2024 with inflation) and the operating gap (forecasted by operators). Concerns were raised about potential service impacts on transit agencies like SFMTA and AC Transit if fare-focused formulas were implemented.
- **Regional Collaboration:** There was general agreement on the importance of a transit measure encompassing all nine counties and 27 agencies, emphasizing rider experience and the need for transformational changes in transit services. The discussion highlighted the necessity of maintaining and improving service frequency to boost ridership.
- **Equity in Transit Planning:** Equity was a recurring theme, with participants stressing the importance of including diverse community voices in the planning process. The need for effective outreach and engagement strategies was emphasized to ensure that marginalized communities are well represented.
- **Legislative Considerations:** The challenges in passing regional legislation include different community needs, a focus on the fiscal cliff and meeting the goals of the transformation action plan, which is why flexibility is key in developing a measure that is likely to pass.

- **Community Engagement:** Council continues underscoring the importance of community involvement in transit planning and funding. Council advocates for a participatory approach that leads with public guidance and collaboration from the design phase to implementation.

Overall, the meeting highlighted the strength in flexibility, collaborative efforts needed to address regional transit challenges, and the critical role of the Policy Advisory Council in shaping effective transportation policies. The Council voted in favor—with 16 Members present, 11 ayes, 4 abstains, and 1 no—of the following motion:

Recommendation

The Council presents the following recommendations to the Commission on Policy Advisory Council priorities for a transportation revenue measure as follows:

1. Have a regional transit measure that covers the 27 transit agencies in the nine counties.
2. Focus is on rider experience and not agency experience, including maintaining and improving service with well-coordinated fares, schedules, wayfinding, and other aspects of user experience.
3. Have a regional measure that is transformational and has benefits for current and future generations.

September 23, 2024

 Outlook

Fw: public comment on September 23, 2024 Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee agenda item 4a

From Brittny Sutherland <bsutherland@bayareametro.gov>

Date Wed 9/18/2024 1:16 PM

To Brittny Sutherland <bsutherland@bayareametro.gov>

From: Bill [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2024 12:59:00 PM

To: MTC-ABAG Info <info@bayareametro.gov>

Subject: public comment on September 23, 2024 Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee agenda item 4a

Good morning:

I am writing as a resident and taxpayer in Santa Clara County.

We don't need another regressive transportation funding measure. Our taxes are already too high.

Vote NO.

Over the last several elections, voters in Santa Clara County have passed multiple tax and fee increases including gas taxes, the Caltrain Measure RR tax, two bridge toll increases, three VTA sales taxes, Santa Clara County's Measure A 1/8 cent sales tax, the state prop 30 1/4 cent sales tax and the 2010 Measure B Vehicle Registration Fee of \$10. Additionally, we're on the hook to pay back numerous state bond issues including high-speed rail, the Proposition 1 water bond and the infrastructure bonds of 2006.

All this nickel and diming contributes into making the Bay Area a horribly expensive place to live; especially for people of modest means, who must pay the greatest percentage of their income in these regressive taxes and fees. Each increase by itself does not amount to much, but the cumulative effect is to add to the unaffordability of the region.

Before increasing taxes YET AGAIN, waste needs to be removed from transportation projects. For example, we need to eliminate the redundant and BART extension between the San Jose and Santa Clara Caltrain stations. The BART segment from these stations will duplicate both the existing Caltrain line and VTA's 22 and 522 buses.

Why don't the wealthy high rollers at MTC suggest taxing rich tech companies and leave the little guy alone for a change?

Bill H.

September 23, 2024



Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District

Michael Hursh, General Manager

September 20, 2024

Jim Spering, Chair
Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Transportation Revenue Measure Scenario Updates

Dear Chair Spering:

I am writing regarding the updated Transportation Revenue Measure scenarios presented to the Transportation Revenue Measure Executive Group on September 17, 2024. I appreciate your comments reiterating that this is an urgent regional emergency to preserve and save public transit. To ensure the Bay Area economy remains viable and thriving, public transit needs assistance recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. As we continue discussions, I want to again reiterate my concerns on behalf of the Alameda - Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit).

As I mentioned during the September 17th Transportation Revenue Measure Executive Group meeting, I am concerned that as currently structured, it will be difficult to gain support from voters and from members of the legislature that represent the AC Transit service area. At the request of MTC, AC Transit's current deficit projections are based on 2023 service levels of 85 percent. While we have taken every step to manage the fiscal crises in all areas that we control, the fact remains that as presented, the scenarios still fail to recognize the impact to the riders and voters residing in the AC Transit Service area. We have a dire need to operate significantly more service beyond pre-pandemic levels, restoring at a minimum, 100 percent of pre-pandemic service levels.

AC Transit, and most bus operators, do not realize significant farebox revenues, yet we still face significant inflation-driven deficits. Deficits are further compounded by unfunded mandates including the regulatory requirement to transition our more than 650 bus fleet to zero-emission by 2040. Specifically, regardless of scenario, the proposed revenue distributions should be

September 23, 2024

informed by an equity analysis. AC Transit provides service to some of the lowest-income communities in the Bay Area. The scenarios must acknowledge equity, so we are not penalizing the most financially challenged who rely on public transit every day.

To reiterate, as MTC continues to work with the public transit operators in the region, I urge the Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee to continue to solve for the issues including a funding distribution methodology that considers unfunded mandates, ridership, equity, and inflation-driven operating cost increases. Despite reduced service levels at AC Transit, 74 percent of our riders have returned to riding our bus service. With 65 percent low-income riders and 75 percent people of color, we remain concerned that without long-term funding solutions to address transit operations funding shortfalls, the most vulnerable will be significantly impacted.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 510-891-4753 or mhursh@actransit.org.

Sincerely,



Michael Hursh, CEO/General Manager
Alameda – Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit)

cc: MTC Transportation Revenue Select Committee
AC Transit Board of Directors



September 20, 2024

The Honorable Jim Spering, Chair
Bay Area Regional Measure Select Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale St.
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Comments on MTC Revenue Measure Scenarios

Dear Chair Spering:

On behalf of the Northern California District Council of Laborers and our nearly 30,000 members, I am submitting this formal letter to provide comments to be considered by the Metropolitan’s Bay Regional Measure Select Committee. We understand the transit and overall transportation challenges the Bay Area is currently facing and we also know there will be no easy solution to resolve these funding issues. However, what we do know is that a balanced, efficient and safe transportation system enhances the quality of life, provides significant economic benefits and improves air quality to the entire Bay Area. Below are several key priorities that we want to convey and have considered by the Bay Area Regional Measure Select Committee.

- **Reasonable mitigation efforts:** We will not support any measure that mandates requirements for full mitigation of highway and road construction projects. The existing process strikes a fair and equitable process between considering environmental impacts and providing an operationally safe and efficient transportation system. Full mitigation of projects will severely restrict funding and reduce the ability to deliver regional transportation priority projects; many times, costs associated with mitigation outweigh actual project costs. In our perspective, this approach is simply a veiled attempt to curtail much-needed highway and road construction projects.
- **Everyone Pays:** A regional measure will ask the voters (both transit and non-transit users) to tax themselves to primarily fund a public service they don’t necessarily utilize on a regular or frequent basis. It’s important to convey to the voters that their government is also taking the challenging steps to demonstrate all entities are in resolving this issue together. While cutting service may not be the best option, we ask that MTC and transit entities come up with new policies aimed at improving efficiencies, safety and operational costs.
- **Successful Measure:** Extensive polling and the ultimate stalling of Senate Bill 1031 provides sufficient evidence that a broad nine-county transit-heavy regional measure is not what Bay Area voters will support. A more tailored and focused measure that possesses a more direct link between its users and services provided may have a better opportunity for success at the ballot box. Additionally, providing as much flexibility as possible for non-transit obligated funds will be ideal to provide public agencies the tools

Affiliated with Laborers’ International Union of North America



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to demonstrate to businesses, alternative transportation users and motorists that they too will receive benefits from the measure.

- **Proper Tax levy:** Throughout the select committee process a variety of tax levy options have been introduced and explored. Historically, a sales tax has been the revenue mechanism used to successfully fund local transportation measures in the Bay Area. The Laborers will not support the inclusion of supplementary tax levies (i.e. parcel & payroll tax) in a new measure. It has been proven through extensive polling that a sales tax resonates with the voters and has the greatest probability of success; any attempt to “load up” a measure with additional funding mechanisms will risk dragging the entire measure down.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to reviewing a set of proposed final scenarios in advance of your October 2024 meeting.

Sincerely,



Oscar De La Torre
Business Manager

ODLT:dle
liuna!67



AFL-CIO

The Honorable Jim Spring, Chair
Bay Area Regional Measure Select Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale St.
San Francisco, CA, 94105

Re: Comments for Select Committee

Dear Chair Spring:


On behalf of Operating Engineers Local 3, I am submitting this formal letter to provide comments to be considered by the Metropolitan's Bay Area Regional Measure Select Committee. We understand the transit and overall transportation challenges the Bay Area is currently facing, and we also know there will be no easy solution to resolve these funding issues. However, we do know that an efficient and safe transportation system improves the quality of life and provides significant economic benefits to the Bay Area, including local jobs for our Skilled and Trained Workforce, the Operating Engineers. Below are several key priorities we want to convey and have considered by the Bay Area Regional Measure Select Committee.

- **Reasonable Mitigation Efforts:** We will not support any proposal/measure that includes requirements for full mitigation of highway/road projects. The existing process strikes a fair and balanced approach between considering environmental impacts and providing an operationally safe and efficient transportation system. Full mitigation of projects will limit the amount of completed projects as, many times, mitigation costs now amount to more than actual project costs.
- **Everyone Pays:** A regional measure will ask the voters (both transit and non-transit users) to tax themselves to primarily fund a public service they don't necessarily utilize on a regular or frequent basis. It's important to convey to the voters that their government is taking the challenging steps to demonstrate all entities are trying to resolve this issue together. While cutting services may not be an option, we ask that MTC and Transit entities come up with a slate of changes that can be made. We ask that reforms (but not consolidation) be included in that slate.
- **Successful Measure:** Extensive polling and the ultimate stalling of SB 1031 provides sufficient evidence that a broad nine-county, transit-heavy regional measure is not what Bay Area voters will support. A more tailored and focused measure that possesses a more direct link between its constituents and services provided may be more successful. Additionally, providing as much flexibility as possible for non-transit obligated funds will be ideal in order to provide public agencies with the tools to demonstrate to businesses and motorists that they too will receive benefits from the measure.
- **Proper Tax Levy:** Throughout the select committee process, a variety of tax levy options have been introduced and explored. As a sales tax has traditionally been the revenue mechanism used to successfully fund transportation measures over time, we will not support the inclusion of other

September 23, 2024

tax levies (i.e. parcel and payroll tax) in a new measure. A sales tax resonates with the voters and has the greatest probability of success.

As the business manager of Operating Engineers Local 3, the largest construction trades local in North America, I know the challenges of funding these types of projects, but I also know the importance of funding them, not just for the communities that utilize the benefits but for the workforce that completes the projects, as their money feeds back into economic growth of the communities impacted. It's a win-win. Please take our priorities into consideration, as you debate these issues. As you can see, we are all committed to working together to make this funding and the subsequent services and projects this funding will provide happen. The above bullet points outline how funding may be possible!



Dan Reding
Business Manager

September 20, 2024

The Honorable Jim Spering, Chair
Bay Area Regional Measure Select Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale St.
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Comments for Select Committee

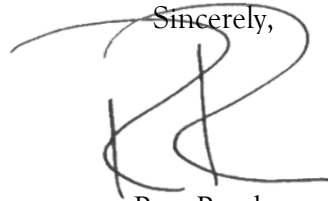
Dear Chair Spering:

On behalf of the Nor Cal Carpenters Union, I am submitting this formal letter to provide comments to be considered by the Metropolitan's Bay Regional Measure Select Committee. We understand the transit and overall transportation challenges the Bay Area is currently facing and we also know there will be no easy solution to resolve these funding issues. However, what we do know is that an efficient and safe transportation system improves the quality of life and provides significant economic benefits to the Bay Area. Below are several key priorities that we want to convey and have considered by the Bay Area Regional Measure Select Committee.

- **Reasonable mitigation efforts:** we will not support any proposal / measure that includes requirements for full mitigation of highway / road projects. The existing process strikes a fair and balanced process between considering environmental impacts and providing an operationally safe and efficient transportation system. Full mitigation of projects will limit the amount of completed projects as, many times, mitigation costs now amount to more than actual project costs.
- **Everyone Pays:** a regional measure will ask the voters (both transit and non-transit users) to tax themselves to primarily fund a public service they don't necessarily utilize on a regular or frequent basis. It's important to convey to the voters that their government is also taking the challenging steps to demonstrate all entities are in resolving this issue together. While cutting service may not be an option, we ask that MTC and transit entities come up with a slate of changes that can be made. We encourage reforms (but not consolidation) be included in that slate.

- **Successful Measure:** extensive polling and the ultimate stalling of SB 1031 provides sufficient evidence that a broad nine-county transit-heavy regional measure is not what Bay Area voters will support. A more tailored and focused measure that possesses a more direct link between its constituents and services provided may have a better opportunity for success. Additionally, providing as much flexibility as possible for non-transit obligated funds will be ideal in order to provide public agencies with the tools to demonstrate to businesses and motorists that they too will receive benefits from the measure.
- **Proper Tax levy:** throughout the select committee process a variety of tax levy options have been introduced and explored. As a sales tax has traditionally been the revenue mechanism used to successfully fund transportation measures over time, we will not support the inclusion of other tax levies (i.e. parcel & payroll tax) in a new measure. A sales tax resonates with the voters and has the greatest probability of success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RR' with a large flourish above it.

Ron Rowlett

Director of Public Relations and Governmental Affairs
Nor Cal Carpenters Union

September 23, 2024

From: Nathan S.

Sent: Saturday, September 21, 2024 2:39:28 PM

To: MTC-ABAG Info <info@bayareametro.gov>

Subject: Public comment for September MTC Select Committee Meeting

External Email

Dear MTC Select Committee,

I live in [REDACTED] (Sonoma County), where I advocate for safe streets improvements. Residents of Sonoma County are in the winning coalition for a regional measure that funds abundant transit, with progressive sources, and is climate positive. The latest scenarios are moving further away from a proposal the majority of people will be excited to support.

I use SMART and Golden Gate Transit to get around the North Bay and San Francisco. I would like to see those transit services continue to increase as they continue to increase their ridership.

To preserve union jobs, enhance transit services, and implement regional initiatives like free transfers and improved accessibility, the measure must secure at least \$1.5 billion annually with sustainable funding.

Public transit, walking, and cycling are crucial for addressing climate change. We should focus road spending on maintenance and safety, avoiding highway expansion. All investments, including flexible county funds, should be climate-neutral at minimum.

Effective public transit is key to creating dense, walkable cities. Without it, we face increased congestion, oversized parking facilities, and barriers to essential housing development.

Thank you,

Nathan S.

[REDACTED]

September 23, 2024

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From: Iris B.
Sent: Sunday, September 22, 2024 11:54:35 AM
To: MTC-ABAG Info <info@bayareametro.gov>
Subject: Support excellent funding for regional public transit

External Email

Dear people at MTC -

I'm Iris B., a retired nurse and senior with disabilities who's depended on MUNI and all public transit for 50 years in San Francisco. I'm part of a coalition that strongly supports a regional measure to give excellent funding for public transit (with progressive sources), and which will help decrease the devastating effect of climate change. The measure requires \$1.5 billion per year to increase public transit services, improve access to seniors, people with disabilities, and working-class people who depend on public transit to get to work, get children to school, go to medical appointments, shop, etc. It will be a great help to the economy and provide critical jobs (including union jobs). Good public transit is also an integral part of the strategy to protect against increased global warming.

I've been dependent on MUNI, BART, and all public transit for all shifts of my nursing jobs. I was already retired when the pandemic hit but continued to take MUNI (where everyone wore masks and tried to keep safe distances). Who was riding MUNI then, and who's riding MUNI now? Essential workers, working-class families, people from BIPOC communities who kept city services going, although many of them would not be able to afford an increase in transit fares. Raising fares and cutting transit services will hurt the workers that all cities depend on, and will have a damaging effect on the economy and environment.

I worked on the struggles for Free MUNI For Youth and Free MUNI For Seniors, both huge successes in San Francisco. I hope you have the determination and clear sightedness to support this current regional measure for strong and sustainable funding for public transit. Corporate ideas of the same old strategy of raising fares and cutting services would hurt communities across California.

Sincerely,

Iris B., RN



London Breed, Mayor

Amanda Eaken, Chair
Stephanie Cajina, Vice Chair
Mike Chen, Director
Steve Heminger, Director

Dominica Henderson, Director
Fiona Hinze, Director
Janet Tarlov, Director

Jeffrey Tumlin, Director of Transportation

November 4, 2024

David Canepa, Chair, Joint MTC-ABAG Legislation Committee
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Bay Area Transportation Measure Framework

Dear Commissioner Canepa,

We appreciate the work the Commission has put into ensuring we can preserve and enhance public transit services throughout the Bay Area. As you know, this is an urgent situation. Bay Area transit needs help, first and foremost because revenue sources have not recovered since the pandemic, and relief funding from the federal and state governments will run out in less than two years. Post-pandemic, the financial model that supported Bay Area transit agencies no longer works. Financial gaps created by societal, economic and changes in mobility choices will not be closed when things return to what they once were. This means we need a new funding framework for Bay Area transit. At this time in the process, all tools should be on the table. Further, time is needed to seriously consider what sustainable measures for transit are required.

We have actively participated in the Transportation Revenue Measure Executive Group that provided input to the MTC Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee to develop a potential transportation revenue measure for a 2026 ballot. We seek a solution to fund the immediate needs of the region’s transit agencies that addresses the feedback received at the California State Legislature and the MTC Select Committee. It should also incorporate feedback from the technical staff at the transit agencies and other organizations in the Bay Area. This letter outlines the provisions that we agree should be included in the funding framework for state authorizing legislation. We encourage the Commission to advance a framework that preserves existing local revenue measures, provides time for the regional transit operators to restructure their funding programs, and seeks to develop lasting and sustainable funding programs.

- 1. **Term:** The proposed framework should include both short-term, regionally funded relief to preserve transit, and allow for a longer-term regional funding measure to achieve financial sustainability and transit transformation. Transit agencies have little time before both federal and state relief are exhausted. The immediate need is to fill the gap when this funding runs



out and provide time for transit agencies to adapt to evolving financial conditions. We recommend a minimum of 10 years of programming with a maximum term of 30 years.

2. **Defined Regional Priorities:** The program of investments to be funded collectively by the region should support multiple counties for the benefit of all residents of and visitors to the Bay Area and should include the following:
 - **Regional Rail System** that includes BART, Caltrain and rail around the Bay, which will be completed via BART to Silicon Valley
 - **Regional Transit Service** consisting of our regional bus services that provide direct connectivity to this regional rail network and regional transit nodes
 - **Regional Transit Transformation**, which includes fare integration, fare program modernization, cleanliness, safety and customer experience improvements

The measure should prioritize funding the needs of the regional program before allocating remaining funds to local priorities. This is consistent with the Select Committee's recommendation adopted as part of Agenda Item 4b at its meeting on October 21, 2024.

3. **Range of Options:** The district, for purposes of this measure, should include four counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco and San Mateo), with the option to include up to all nine Bay Area counties. It should provide options for a sales tax, a parcel tax or combination of the two to allow the region to identify the best option for generating the needed revenues and gaining voter support. This is consistent with the Select Committee's recommendation adopted as part of Agenda Item 4b at its meeting on October 21, 2024.
4. **Flexibility:** The sales tax and/or parcel tax rates should be allowed to vary by county to align with the needs for each county to set its rate so it can meet its contribution to regional priorities and then fund any additional local needs.
5. **Financing:** MTC should be empowered to allocate a portion of the revenue to allow for financing to close transit agencies' immediate gaps. Financing could also be used to align funding with the timeline for needs.
6. **Independent Auditor:** The measure needs to include accountability through an independent auditor, to ensure that funds are distributed as envisioned in the legislation, that the expenditure plan is enacted upon as legislated, and to recommend any needed reforms to ensure that the legislation is implemented as intended. This is consistent with the Select Committee's recommendation adopted as part of Agenda Item 4c at its meeting on October 21, 2024.
7. **Citizen Initiative:** The authorizing legislation should allow for the measure to be a qualified citizen initiative consistent with the Select Committee's recommendation adopted as part of Agenda Item 4c at its meeting on October 21, 2024.



An option that addresses each of these provisions was presented to the Select Committee at its meeting on October 21, 2024, and is available here: [Metropolitan Transportation Commission - File #: 24-1308 \(legistar.com\)](#).

Thank you again for collaborating with us to make sure we can keep supporting Bay Area residents in getting to work, school, the grocery store and the many other places where they live their daily lives. We can't afford to lose transit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey Tumlin'.

Jeffrey Tumlin
Director of Transportation

cc: MTC Commissioners
Andrew Fremier
Alix Bockelman
Rebecca Long