



December 18, 2023

Chair Alfredo Pedroza
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale Street
San Francisco, CA

Dear Chair Pedroza and Commissioners:

On behalf of the Bay Area Council, representing over 325 major employers across the San Francisco Bay Area, I am writing in regards to the proposal to seek authorizing legislation for a future transportation regional measure.

The Bay Area Council has been advocating to improve our region's transportation system since our founding over 75 years ago, and we have led major transportation funding measures over the years, including most recently FASTER and Regional Measure 3. Our future economic growth depends on our ability to make it easier for residents to commute around the region. We were proud to help secure the state budget operating assistance this year to address the immediate fiscal cliff crisis facing transit, but we recognize that our transit network will require additional revenue in order to deliver the world class system we envision for the Bay Area.

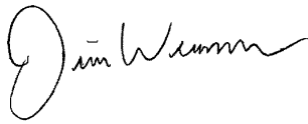
Our region needs a transformative measure that improves commute trips across all modes our residents use. However, before seeking voter approval for additional revenue, our transit systems must show progress on making rider-focused improvements to rebuild public trust in these services. First, it is essential that we make transit safer and cleaner to draw more riders back. BART and others have made significant improvements in this area in recent months, but we need to build on that progress to show voters that these systems are worth investing in. We also must work quickly to deliver a much more connected, efficient, and seamless transit network across our 27 transit operators by implementing the customer improvements outlined in the Transformation Action Plan. To that end, we strongly support the proposal to expand the power and authority of the Regional Network Management structure as part of the enabling legislation. As we work to deliver a more rider-focused transit experience, we must ensure that commute services are maintained and restored to provide convenient and reliable commute options that will make it easier for workers to return to our struggling downtown economic centers.

In addition to the transit transformation improvements, we strongly support the inclusion of road, highway and active transportation improvements in this measure. While we support keeping the expenditure plan flexible for the enabling legislation, the measure that is placed on the ballot will require a significant portion of road and highway improvements in order to be attractive to the vast majority of Bay Area voters who depend on cars to move around our region.

Lastly, regarding revenue options, it is highly unlikely that we could support raising any taxes on business given the economic stress facing our region at this time. Employers are already struggling to stay and grow here, and we cannot afford to let companies and their employees leave for more business-friendly regions. Retaining jobs and talent is essential to building a thriving Bay Area.

We look forward to working with you on the enabling legislation assuming we are aligned with these priorities.

Sincerely,



Jim Wunderman
President and CEO
Bay Area Council