



# *DRAFT MINUTES*

## **San Francisco County Transportation Authority**

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

### **1. Roll Call**

Chair Mandelman called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Present at Roll Call: Commissioners, Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton (10)

Absent at Roll Call: Commissioner Mar (entered during item 2) (1)

### **2. Chair's Report - INFORMATION**

Chair Mandelman reported on the restoration of transit services locally and across the region. He shared that Muni reopened the subway and launched a new bus route, the 36/52 special, which would serve Forest Hill, Miraloma and Sunnyside. He also shared that Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) started running trains every 15 minutes on most lines during peak hours Monday-Friday and the system would add 26 new weekday trips between June 1st and June 15th. He said that BART plans to return to near pre-pandemic service levels and hours by the end of August and would offer a 50% discount off all fares on Clipper for the entire month of September.

He also shared that starting in July, the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) would start offering the highest number of daily departures that the agency has ever offered as part of the agency's Pandemic Recovery Program. The ferry would operate 136 weekday transbay departures on five routes, up from 105 departures during the 2019 summer season, he said.

Chair Mandelman expressed his excitement for witnessing the return of the F-Market to Castro, alongside Senator Wiener and BART Director Bevan Dufty the past weekend. He said it was like seeing an old friend after the past year apart and he is looking forward to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority's (SFMTA) presentation on the next group of services to be added later this summer. He said they are also hoping to have Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) come to a future Board meeting to talk about regional initiatives including the Blue Ribbon Task Force and other programs to encourage the safe return of riders to transit. He said that none of this would have been possible without the financial infusion of COVID relief funds from the Federal government, and he thanked Speaker Pelosi for her



leadership on the 3 packages for transit, and also thanked the Bay Area delegation and the President and Vice President for their support.

At the state level, Chair Mandelman said that he heard exciting proposals from California's Secretary of Transportation David Kim about the Governor's proposal for a transportation infrastructure spending package within the administration's California Comeback Plan. He said the plan included \$11 billion in new funding for transportation, including \$1 billion for transit and inter-city rail projects, \$500 million for biking and walking mobility projects, \$500 million for safety including high-priority grade separations and crossings, and an additional \$2.1 billion for critical maintenance projects on state highways and local streets and roads and bridges.

Chair Mandelman said that it was good news on many fronts, from providing funding for electrification of our transit fleet and other climate initiatives as outlined in the Governor's Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure framework, to funding for highway rehabilitation and maintenance. He shared an example of the type of investment and the significant funding gap the city was facing for the Yerba Buena Island Westside Bridges Seismic Retrofit Project. He said the project was ready to award a \$98 million construction contract upon securing sufficient funding to cover a remaining \$30 million shortfall in state and federal highway bridge and seismic program funds. He stated that this critical safety project supports the redevelopment of Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island where 8,000 new housing units would be built, of which 27% would be affordable to low-income households. Chair Mandelman thanked Mayor Breed and Senator Wiener and Assemblymember Chiu for advocating with the agency to their funding partners at Caltrans and MTC.

Lastly, with regard to local funding and finances, Chair Mandelman expressed that he was delighted to hear from staff that the Prop K sales tax funds came in at higher levels in March and said he will let Executive Director, Tilly Chang share the details on that good news in her report. Additionally, he shared that he was happy to announce the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (Transportation Authority) has completely expended the proceeds from its first long-term bond. A total of \$207 million in bond proceeds, including interest earned were spent on voter-approved Prop K sales tax projects including 66% spent on the top five major cash flow drivers of the bond including Muni Motor Coach, Trolley Coach and Light Rail Vehicle procurements, and the Radio Replacement and Central Control Communications Programs. He stated that this was in addition to \$46 million in bond proceeds spent to refinance the agency's prior short-term debt for the sales tax program. He thanked SFMTA and Transportation Authority staff for utilizing the funds to accelerate benefits for riders and the public.

There was no public comment.



**3. Executive Director's Report - INFORMATION**

Tilly Chang, Executive Director presented the item.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun thanked Director Chang for posting the Executive Director's Report on the website prior to the meeting. With regard to the Downtown Rail Extension (DTX), he said that the issue is not with the funding, but that the project has "fallen off the tracks." At the last Executive Steering Committee meeting, Mr. Lebrun said they discovered that high-speed rail platforms were proposed at 4<sup>th</sup> and Townsend and that was in conflict with Prop 1A, which has no high-speed rail platforms between Millbrae and Salesforce Transit Center. He said this, in turn, causes congestion around the DTX, triggering the needed for a third track which entails paying up to \$2 billion in extra costs. Mr. Lebrun noted that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission opined that there were three disconnected projects in the area: DTX, Link21 and the Pennsylvania Avenue Extension. He suggested that they de-fund DTX and pause to ensure harmonious planning between the three projects.

**4. Approve the Minutes of the May 11, 2021 Meeting - ACTION**

There was no public comment.

Vice Chair Peskin motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Melgar.

The minutes were approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

Absent: (0)

**Consent Agenda**

**5. [Final Approval] State and Federal Legislation Update - ACTION**

**6. [Final Approval] Allocate \$640,000 in Prop K Funds, with Conditions, for Two Requests - ACTION**

**7. [Final Approval] Approve San Francisco's Program of Projects for the 2021 Mid-Cycle Regional Transportation Improvement Program - ACTION**

**8. [Final Approval] Accept the Final Report for the Golden Gate Park Working Group and Action Framework [NTIP Planning] - ACTION**

Commissioner Preston moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Vice Chair Peskin.

The motion was approved without objection by the following vote:



Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

Absent: (0)

**End of Consent Agenda**

**9. Award a Three-Year Professional Services Contract, with an Option to Extend for Two Additional One-Year Periods, to Eide Bailly LLP in an Amount Not to Exceed \$310,000 for Annual Audit Services - ACTION**

Cynthia Fong, Deputy Director for Finance and Administration presented the item.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Walton moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Haney.

The motion was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

Absent: (0)

**10. Approve the Schedule and Process for Development of a New Expenditure Plan for Reauthorization of the Local Sales Tax for Transportation and Establish an Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee Structure - ACTION**

Michelle Beaulieu, Principal Transportation Planner, presented the item.

Commissioner Safai asked when Prop K was last authorized.

Ms. Beaulieu responded that voters approved Prop K in 2003.

Commissioner Safai said he would like to understand how Prop K has been spent and in which districts since 2003, looking at it through the lens of community impact, and commented that there was a general feeling in District 11 that they were not receiving a fair share. He acknowledged that there were larger infrastructure projects in other districts but said bicycle safety, pedestrian safety, signals, and other infrastructure projects were needed in his district as well. He asked Chair Mandelman for staff to provide to the Board how Prop K dollars have been spent, including by district, to provide an example of how projects have been prioritized and what communities have benefitted the most from Prop K funding.

Chair Mandelman acknowledged the request.

Commissioner Safai said he would like a commitment from the Transportation Authority's Director that this information would be provided in a reasonable amount of time.



Director Chang replied in the affirmative and said that staff received a similar request from the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Anna LaForte, Deputy Director for Policy and Programming, said staff were working on the analysis which is nearly complete and had district level projects as well as projects with citywide or systemwide benefits. She said the lists would include projects since 2003 for Prop K and other fund sources administered by the agency, such as the Prop AA Vehicle Registration Fee and Transportation Fund for Clean Air.

Commissioner Safai asked if Prop K would be isolated from the other fund sources.

Ms. LaForte confirmed that was the case.

Commissioner Melgar asked to what extent the Expenditure Plan would reflect plans put out by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)/Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the San Francisco Planning Department (SF Planning) including the Housing Element, which considers Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) obligations, and to what extent were considerations made to not exacerbate inequities, but to build transportation where housing would be built.

Director Chang responded that agency planning always starts with land use coordination, working with SF Planning and ABAG/MTC. She said the City had a forecast for land use through 2050 that was consistent with Plan Bay Area, and that the region provided the target for the City for which SF Planning was responsible determining the distribution. She said that even though there had been challenges to the latest Plan Bay Area alternative land use distributions that placed too much development in vulnerable neighborhoods, SF Planning was able to place that growth elsewhere, noting that overall, the City needed to stay within 1% of the regional total. Director Chang continued by saying that for locally led planning efforts, including ConnectSF, growth had been placed in less vulnerable parts of the city. She said in terms of funding, Plan Bay Area provides an estimate of the total funding that may be available, which could be a source for leveraging the local transportation sales tax. She reported that the local transportation sales tax has a history of leveraging \$4 to \$7 in regional, state, federal and other funding. She said the agency would create financial estimates for the total funding that could be expected, assuming the transportation sales tax continues into the future.

Commissioner Preston asked who would be on the Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee and how members would be selected.

Ms. Beaulieu responded that staff were meeting with Commissioners' offices and reviewing the proposed structure to determine appropriate candidates and would work with the Chair and Vice Chair to send invitations.



During public comment, Roland Lebrun asked staff to add seniors to the equity lens.

Commissioner Melgar moved to approve the item, seconded by Chair Mandelman.

The motion was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

Absent: (0)

- 11. Adopt a Resolution of Local Support Authorizing the Executive Director to File an Application for Regional Discretionary Funding with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Committing Any Necessary Matching Funds, and Stating Assurance to Complete the Yerba Buena Island (YBI) Multi-use Pathway Project (Project); and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute Funding Agreements with Caltrans for Receipt of Federal and State Funds for the Project in the Amount of \$1,000,000 from a Priority Conservation Area Grant and \$3,800,000 from a Regional Active Transportation Program Grant - ACTION**

Mike Tan, Administrative Engineer presented the item.

During public comment Francisco Da Costa said that the infrastructure plan is fine and mentioned that it is important that they address quality of life issues.

Roland Lebrun said as the Link21 project moves forward one of the alignments going would require that the entire area of Yerba Buena Island to the east of the existing tunnel become a construction site for several years which would include the drilling of two very large shafts to launch the tunnel boring machine. He said he hopes the agency begins coordinating with MTC to avoid having to demolish any of this proposed infrastructure right after it has been opened.

A San Francisco resident called in support of the resolution and said that he's hoping it will bring more economic opportunities to the islands. He supported the improvements to the network noting he observes people coming to the island on the east span bike path, but they stop short of venturing on the islands given the poor network. He hoped the improved network would make Yerba Buena Island feel more inviting for people travelling from the rest of the City and the east bay.

Commissioner Haney moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Ronen.

The motion was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)



Absent: (0)

**12. San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Transportation Recovery Plan - INFORMATION**

Julie Kirschbaum, SFMTA Director of Transit presented the item.

Commissioner Preston thanked Ms. Kirschbaum for her presentation and SFMTA staff for their work on the reopening. Commissioner Preston said he wanted more information about the timing of certain transit lines returning. He noted that this appeared to be the first time Ms. Kirschbaum had presented to the Transportation Authority Board suggesting that there was a question as to whether some lines like the 21 would be reintroduced. Commissioner Preston asked Ms. Kirschbaum to clarify if she was informing the Board for the first time that some "parallel lines" may not return.

Ms. Kirschbaum stated that the SFMTA is on a continuous journey to restore service. She said the agency's next opportunity to do so would be this winter and the SFMTA would evaluate the resources and hiring that the agency would be able to do between now and January and would increase service accordingly. She said the current removals of service were temporary and the agency would assess what lines are priorities to be restored soonest. This would include an evaluation of the urgency of parallel lines. She said it is the SFMTA's goal with additional ongoing funding that the agency would want to get to 110% of pre-covid levels and invest in a robust system. Ms. Kirschbaum said that in light of the current funding situation and the fact that hiring would take time, the SFMTA anticipates that it should be able to make a significant investment in returning lines in January but that they would be unlikely to be able to return to 100% pre-covid service at that time.

Commissioner Preston asked if there was a commitment from SFMTA that the number 21 and 31 buses will be restored at some point.

Ms. Kirschbaum stated that any commitment would have to be linked to the agency's funding levels. She said that the agency wants to have that dialogue, but it needs to be linked to resources. She noted that the agency is balancing its budget over the next several years based off of 30% one-time funding and that making any commitments for a timeline to service restoration without ongoing funding issues addressed would be premature.

Commissioner Preston said that if he were to ask the same question about restoring the 38, he would assume that the agency would make a commitment to keeping the 38 running, and that if the SFMTA experienced future budget issues the 38 would be unlikely to be taken out of service. Commissioner Preston said he was unclear why Ms. Kirschbaum could not state one way or another that at some point in the future that the SFMTA is committed to restoring 31 bus service. He asked if it is the SFMTA's plan to restore service on the 31 at some point or if the agency does not know.



Ms. Kirschbaum stated that it is the agency's plan to live within its ongoing funding sources and to work with bodies like the Transportation Authority Board so the SFMTA can grow its resources to fully restore service. She stated that when SFMTA went down to 45% service levels during shelter-in-place, the 38 was part of the core 17-line route that remained, so she can say with some confidence that the agency would continue to run frequent routes like the 38, but at this time the agency would need to have a dialogue about what lines should be restored first starting this fall and the 21 and 31 lines would be part of that discussion.

Commissioner Preston clarified that he is not asking when the 21 and 31 lines would be restored, but if they would be restored. He said that it sounds like there is no commitment to a timeline and there would be a future discussion about whether those come back. He asked if that was accurate.

Ms. Kirschbaum said they are looking for a funding situation where they can restore service and confirmed there would be a discussion about whether the lines would come back in January.

Commissioner Preston ask for clarification from Ms. Kirschbaum if she meant that there would be a discussion in January about whether the lines would return, or if there would be a discussion (before January) about whether those lines would return in January 2022.

Ms. Kirschbaum replied that his latter statement was true - that there would be a discussion (before January) about whether those lines would return in January 2022.

Commissioner Preston said that proposals right now around August and winter restoration do not include the 31. If the return of the 31 gets pushed to the spring, that would mean those lines (31 and 21) would have been suspended for a total of 2 years. He noted that he wanted to expand the conversation behind those two lines and asked if there was a commitment to restoring funding for the 2 Clement line.

Ms. Kirschbaum replied that the agency was working toward a funding scenario that would allow the agency to restore all of the service.

Vice Chair Peskin noted that the fundamental issue is about constraints, and that the constraints are money and staffing.

Commissioner Preston said that restoring service is an extremely important issue. He referred to a problem that he has had private and public discussions about. He said the problem is that SFMTA leadership has a different vision for the future of these lines that would eliminate so-called redundant or parallel lines and double down on certain core lines with more frequency. He said this vision is intended to result in more frequency and reliability on the core lines and more transfers with fewer wait times. He said this vision presents a tradeoff between having a parallel line one block away from your house or





having to walk up to a quarter of a mile to get to one of the core lines. Commissioner Preston said that the changes that are being rolled out as temporary fit into that vision. He referenced one proposal in his district which would essentially eliminate the 6 bus line and links to other lines that SFMTA sees as more efficient. He asked Ms. Kirschbaum where these ideas are coming from, and if SFMTA has a master plan or future vision that the agency is working off of that these temporary changes fit into. He noted it feels like there is a broader plan to achieve efficiencies that is being rolled out in a piecemeal fashion through the current emergency and moves to restore service. Commissioner Preston asked if there was a map or a memo that Ms. Kirschbaum is aware of that sets forth a vision for longer-term changes that SFMTA is working toward.

Ms. Kirschbaum said that the agency does not have a master memo guiding this work. She said that the agency does have a few alternative visions that have been presented publicly such as a rapid frequent network, that the agency would continue to communicate about. She said the agency would shape short-term tradeoffs that they have to make in January using some of those options. For August, she said the agency was focusing on the need for people to have some sort of option, even if it is not the one-seat ride they previously had from point "A" to downtown. She noted that the 6 is an example of that, but that the changes aren't intended to be permanent, and they would continue to have the discussion that Commissioner Preston has started as they think through what is happening in January. Ms. Kirschbaum noted that she is hearing from Commissioner Preston that it would be helpful for SFMTA to share what the longer-term vision for the service is post-January 2022 and whether the longer-term vision would be to get more funding and restore service exactly as it was before Covid or if the SFMTA should make some changes based off of lessons learned during Covid. She said as they progress toward January 2022, they will work to communicate about progress in a way that feels less piecemeal. She said the agency was operating at a quick pace and their focus for August was trying to make sure everyone has something so they can get where they need to go on transit.

Commissioner Preston asked what was the definition of walking distance, when they say 100% of equity neighborhoods should have transit access within walking distance.

Ms. Kirschbaum said it was a quarter of a mile which is a 2-3 block walk depending on what neighborhood they live in.

Commissioner Preston noted that while there has been discussion about equity, he finds the elimination of the two major lines through the Western addition and Fillmore to be problematic. He referenced how Ms. Kirschbaum said the Department of Public Health has given approval to lift capacity restrictions on transit, likely on June 15. He said this was major news as SFMTA Director Jeff Tumlin had cited capacity restrictions due to health orders as one



of the major reasons it would be problematic to incentivize Muni ridership through a program like Free Muni. He asked for confirmation that it was the expectation that SFMTA would lift or relax its capacity limits on or around June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Kirschbaum said it was their current plan but there were some important milestones to reach like the Public Health Officer meeting with the SFMTA operator union later this week.

Commissioner Preston said he would like to reiterate his request that data and information regarding the number of Muni operators available is made available to his office in the form of a written memo. He said he has heard repeatedly at the Transportation Authority Board meetings and elsewhere that availability of operators is a reason that they lack capacity to increase ridership and that he has heard something different from the union. He asked for the memo to outline the number of available operators, the number of people who are DSWs doing other things, and the number of folks who could be activated. He said while he would like to talk about this, he wants the information in a written memo so it can also be used in discussion with the union.

Chair Mandelman noted he would continue items 13 and 14 to the next meeting.

Commissioner Mar thanked Ms. Kirschbaum the update on service restoration. He also thanked her for the opportunity to tour Twin Peaks tunnel along with Chair Mandelman, staff from Commissioner Melgar's office, and some SFMTA board members. He said the tour was helpful in understanding what goes into managing infrastructure in the subway. He also thanked Ms. Kirschbaum for the headway-based service management and said the headway numbers showed that this was the right call. He said the shift has been positive, impactful, and appreciated. He said that he wanted to raise concerns similar to what Commissioner Preston had raised regarding the removal of the 23 service along Sloat. He noted that the 23 service was part of the August restoration plan where the 23 line would be ended from West Portal along Sloat all the way out to the Great Highway and only partially replaced by the 57 line. He said he was very concerned about that because Sloat was already impacted by cumulative impacts of street closures and construction, and it would be directly impacted by the SFPUC's West Side Pump Station Improvement Project and ultimately the Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project which would convert a segment of the Great Highway south of Sloat into a multi-use path. He said that for the city to actually follow its Transit-First policy, it was not good enough to simply make it harder to drive to these places, whether it be the new multi-use path on the southern stretch of the Great Highway, the zoo, Ocean Beach, or crucial small businesses on the Sloat corridor. He said the city needs to have transit service that meets these needs. He noted that there was also a major new



development happening on Outer Sloat with the largest luxury condo project in the Sunset District and that they need to be investing more, not less, in transit service to access these sites and the Sloat corridor. He said proposals to reroute the 23 and not bring it back to service to the Great Highway were concerning.

Ms. Kirschbaum said the SFMTA would continue to monitor the situation closely. She said that the SFMTA thinks the new 58 will provide a lot more access and connectivity to the Sloat corridor by making connections to Lakeshore, the recreation area, BART, the shopping center and over to Mission Street. She said the agency would monitor the situation and need for connectivity closely.

Commissioner Mar asked if there was a consideration to extend that service along Sloat west of Skyline to the Great Highway.

Ms. Kirschbaum said not for August, but the changes were temporary so if the 23 did not turn out to be an enhancement or it was not recommended for a permanent change, it would be fully restored.

Commissioner Mar asked to confirm the possibility that the 23 line could be fully restored along Sloat all the way out.

Ms. Kirschbaum said absolutely, reiterating that the changes were temporary, primarily designed to save resources, and would hopefully show them some things about how people travel in the area. She said SFMTA would look at things like congestion and delay before evaluating it as a more permanent change.

Commissioner Stefani noted how recently the SFMTA Board approved temporary HOV lanes on Lombard, and part of the justification for that was to study the impacts of reduced traffic congestion and improved reliability for the 28. She said given that that the 28 may not be restored until January 2022 or later, she was trying to understand why they were installing temporary HOV lanes to study something that may not be in effect until winter of 2022.

Ms. Kirschbaum said part of how they are covering connectivity through the Lombard corridor is that they have an agreement with Golden Gate Transit which runs a lot of service on Lombard and will greatly benefit from the HOV lanes, to pick up San Francisco customers. She said in the short term they anticipate that carpooling and Golden Gate buses would be the primary beneficiaries of the HOV lanes, and as they look to January, the 28 connection would also be incorporated.

Commissioner Stefani asked what the time period was that SFMTA planend to study the impacts on Muni's transit reliability as it applies to the 28 with the HOV lanes. She said her understanding was that a main justification for the HOV lanes was to study impacts on the 28. She asked when the study starts



and the duration given that they would not be restoring the 28 until winter of 2022.

Ms. Kirschbaum asked Sean Kennedy, Transit Planning Manager at the SFMTA to answer the question. She also apologized to Commissioner Stefani if it was communicated to her that the HOV lanes primarily would be a benefit that was linked to the 28. Rather, she said, the HOV lanes were proposed to overall benefit all transit using the corridor. She said they were very cognizant that right now it would primarily be Golden Gate Transit that would benefit.

Mr. Kennedy said they are anticipating a 6-month review period which would be extended another 6 months if the 28 doesn't come into service until January. He noted that they would look at a number of metrics, including transit, traffic impacts, what the HOV lane use is in comparison to the general lanes, as well as any impacts on side streets.

Commissioner Stefani said she would like to have another briefing with her office in terms of the genesis of HOV lanes on Lombard. She said she also wanted to ask about the 43, as she is hearing from several members of her community that they wanted full restoration of the 43.

Ms. Kirschbaum said extensions of the 43 and 28 would be something they would look at for January.

Commissioner Haney asked if the 31 was also under consideration for restored service in January.

Ms. Kirschbaum replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Haney noted that in recent hearing in committee, Director Tumlin expressed concern about bringing more riders onto the system right now, and that it seemed to be related to the capacity limitations and the resulting challenge that creates a need for more buses and drivers. Commissioner Haney asked, now that they would be lifting those limitations, if there would be continuing concerns about bringing more riders onto the system. He added that despite the fact that ridership is at 30% of pre-pandemic levels, they still have some people who are being left at the curb, largely due to capacity limits. He asked if lifting capacity limits would allow them to restore service at a greater level and welcome back everyone who wants to take transit.

Ms. Kirschbaum apologized, noting that she wasn't at that hearing and without fully understanding Director Tumlin's comments, she didn't feel that she could speak to them directly. She said this week the SFMTA has much more certainty on their timeline with capacity constraints being lifted and that has always been a critical path consideration for the August changes as part of how they are accomplishing the August changes is by some redistribution of vehicles from frequent routes. She said since they shifted to 3-foot spacing from about a month ago, they were seeing fewer people left at the curb which



was heartening, and that they were working toward being able to welcome everyone back to Muni. She added that service recovery has not been even - some corridors like Mission Street and Bayshore through Chinatown were getting very close to a full recovery and in other corridors, buses were providing basic access and operating with fewer people onboard.

Commissioner Haney said what is hard for him and some of his constituents to understand is why they are in the place where they are when it comes to restoring service, given that SFMTA doesn't have a short-term challenge with funding, as there has been a large amount of funding that has come in from the federal government, and now the main reasons why it seems service isn't being restored more quickly is because of driver shortages. He added that the driver shortages seemed to be connected to the need to have more buses and trains because of the capacity limits. He asked Ms. Kirschbaum if she can clarify the primary reasons why they aren't able to restore service quicker, and why there are driver shortages if they don't need more buses and trains to starting June 15.

Ms. Kirschbaum clarified that she had not said the SFMTA had a driver shortage, but that notion came from Commissioner Preston's comments. She said that the agency currently has enough operators for their current service levels and that they need to start training new operators because as they promote 95 operators to be supervisors and trainers and as retirements happen in June and ongoing, it would be important for them to continue to train operators over time. She said that currently their cable car operators were not driving buses but were mostly supporting citywide efforts like vaccine centers and enhanced sanitizing of transit. She said they recently returned their rail operators because of the F-line service and trains. She said the SFMTA's operators have been flexible and resilient during this time. She said SFMTA had a 15% vacancy rate across categories going into COVID, and that has only been exacerbated over the past year. She said they didn't have approval to do civil service exams until March, so in the short-term their biggest constraint wasn't funding, but time - time to bring on and train new mechanics and supervisors. She said they have interviewed 95 entry-level transit supervisors and it would take six months starting in classes of 15-20 to bring those folks on board and train them. She said SFMTA was committed to a promotive path for staff, and a lot of their hiring would need backfilling. She reiterated that in the short term, the issue was not money but time. She said it was not primarily training operators, but entailed all of the complex functions they needed to operate Muni. She said the operator issue was exclusive to rail, and that the issue was not hiring or funding, but having enough time to get enough people through the course to train rail operators. She said they were having success there with bigger class sizes but it was going to take time.



Commissioner Haney said he appreciates hearing that the reason SFMTA is saying they cannot restore service was not related to money, or a short-term operator shortage. He asked, is there was not an operator shortage for 100% of service or just for where they are in this moment.

Ms. Kirschbaum said there was not an operator shortage for where they were in this moment.

Commissioner Haney said it wasn't adding up for him that Muni was operating at 100% pre-COVID and had enough operators then, and SFMTA is saying that it was impossible to get near the service they were in previously when they were at only 30% ridership now and don't have an operator shortage.

Ms. Kirschbaum said that staff would work to explain this in the memo that Commissioner Preston requested. She said SFMTA was not delivering all of its service pre-COVID, it was about 97% in addition to another 5% with overtime. She said the agency had operators for about 93% of their service and the SFMTA was training an average of 200 operators per year. She said they were about to double that to address operator shortages once and for all and that with the pandemic, they are now down all of the people they would have hired over the past year. She said they have also seen fewer retirements which has helped offset that, but now that the pandemic is ending, they wonder if the pace of retirements will change. She said they were also hiring over 100 trainers and supervisors which would reduce their numbers. Ms. Kirschbaum restated that they had a gap going into COVID, they had not hired new operators in a year, they continued to need to fill empty positions, and they were working on hiring operators between now and January so they could be at 85% service levels, but it's not just operators that they needed to hire to address current challenges.

Commissioner Haney thanked Ms. Kirschbaum for her explanation, and he noted that one thing that is different than over a year ago is that Muni has a much lower number of riders now which has to affect how it operates. He said that he corrected his past statement that there was a shortage of operators a bit over a year ago, but at the same time they are currently way down in ridership and they should be able to meet the demand of adding some set of operators who would come on in the next few months.

Vice Chair Peskin noted how he was glad the Transportation Authority Board had eliminated the committee system. He said the board would not have been able to have a robust conversation like this under the former committee model. He noted how Ms. Kirschbaum has identified two constraints: financial constraints and human resource constraints. He said he thinks they still have financial constraints and that it is important to articulate that. He said he understands that SFMTA has an influx of one-time funding and doesn't want to use that to fund ongoing obligations, and requested that Ms. Kirschbaum articulate what the financial constraints are. He said that the Board needs to



hear what the SFMTA needs in terms of ongoing resources and how the Transportation Authority Board in their capacity as the Board of Supervisors should address that. He said that he thinks this is the underlying issue, and it could be addressed with a set-aside on the ballot but that the agency needs to specify what they need in ongoing resources.

Ms. Kirschbaum said she would have SFMTA Acting Chief Financial Officer Jonathan Rewers address that in detail. She said that the bottom line for her is that Muni, along with other transit providers like BART and Golden Gate Transit are facing what they expect to be a slow recovery on top of the financial challenges they experienced before COVID. She said that SFMTA is asking the Board and residents of San Francisco for support to resolve some of these problems permanently so the agency can start delivering the system they believe San Francisco deserves.

Vice Chair Peskin said he appreciated her words and would like to hear the actual numbers.

Mr. Rewers said that prior to pandemic, the SFMTA had a structural operating deficit meaning that their ongoing revenues were not growing at a pace to cover their costs. He said in fiscal year 2021/2022 prior to the pandemic the agency had a \$66 million deficit that they had to close in fiscal year 2021 and a \$77 million deficit that they had to close in fiscal year 2022. He said that even at that point in time, the way the agency closed the deficit prior to the pandemic was using one-time funds. He said the one-time funds use to balance the budget included developer impact fees and one-time shifting of funds from capital to operations. He said the gap between revenues and expenditures would continue to grow and had grown over the pandemic. He said ongoing revenue sources, specifically parking and traffic, fees and fines and fare revenues were still at historic lows and were being backfilled with one-time federal dollars. He said they needed to continue to see the pace of the growth of those revenues and as Vice Chair Peskin noted, the sustainability of those revenue sources coming back to help the agency determine how much service they could restore after January.

Vice Chair Peskin repeated his request for a dollar amount.

Mr. Rewers said that to restore the first 15% of service it would cost about \$86 million, and the second 15% to get back to pre-pandemic service would cost approximately \$96 million per year.

Vice Chair Peskin thanked Mr. Rewers for provided the dollar amounts needed.

Commissioner Mandelman said he had forgotten that the 28 is still not running and as a former San Francisco kid, he said he was stunned by that as the 28 seemed like a basic line.



Ms. Kirschbaum clarified that the 28 is running from Daly City to the Richmond but was not currently extending the full loop to Fort Mason.

Chair Mandelman said that made him feel better. He said he wanted to talk about an issue related to his district, the J Church and the subway. He said prior to the pandemic, his office and the SFMTA had done some work on the J and through that work it became clear that the SFMTA thought that the best solution for the J and its reliability issues was to have it run aboveground and have J riders make frequent transfers to the underground. He said that made sense to him, and he started socializing the idea with his community, and in general people seemed okay with it as long as there wasn't a huge wait with the transfer. He said now that the COVID emergency is causing SFMTA to experiment with new things and that includes having the J run on the surface, he said his concern was about the frequency about what is going to happen in the tunnel. He said he wanted Ms. Kirschbaum to talk about frequency in the tunnel so that the passengers using the lines that are only running on the surface won't have to experience a long wait to transfer.

Ms. Kirschbaum said that it was unfortunate that the two issues of the J line service change and the reduced service due to COVID are confounded because of the moment in time. She said the J line is their lowest ridership rail line after the M line which the SFMTA is currently operating as a community shuttle. She said J line customers currently have the option to make subway connections or frequent service connections via the F line and the L bus, but as the city recovers and as SFMTA is able to restore routes like the M line, the subway will get back to having frequent service and allow for more seamless connections. She said the SFMTA is experiencing an interim period with difficult choices as the commissioners have pointed out today. She said the optimistic way to look at it is that the agency has been able to make some important connections for people and get them into the core system, but she understands that everyone has their specific route and constituency and the desire to return service and test out changes like with the J is a high priority.

Chair Mandelman said he is hearing from folks who are getting left at the curb or are riding over-crowded buses. He asked what Ms. Kirschbaum thinks the experience of riders will be around these two issues after June 15 when the health order allows for more capacity.

Ms. Kirschbaum said that they are all getting used to reemerging into public life, and some people will be very comfortable on a bus with 40-50 other people provided that those people are wearing masks while others may let that bus go by. She said her agency respects that and is sensitive to that. She said her agency doesn't have any routes where they expect pass-ups once the capacity constraints are lifted given that routes are currently operating at 30% capacity. She said even routes with strong recovery are at 80-90% service





levels but this will be a change and is only one of many changes that everyone will be facing.

Chair Mandelman said he thought they had had some successes around reliability during the pandemic period. He asked if Ms. Kirschbaum could speak to the 48, which has caused some grief for his constituents but has also apparently been delivering better service.

Ms. Kirschbaum said the SFMTA is trying to not overextend themselves as an agency and they are trying to not say they are delivering 100% service and then routinely send service out with gaps. She said that just filling 100% of the schedule has been a contributor to those more consistent headways. She said where the agency has eliminated slower segments or more congested segments through temporary transit lanes, they are also seeing more predictable and consistent service, so she does think people who are using the service are experiencing a higher quality of service than what they had pre-COVID. She said a lot of the tough decisions that the agency has been making have had to do with the agency trying to live within the staff and financial resources that they have. She said it is not perfect and that they are working and stretching to fill the gaps. For example, she said she would have liked all 95 supervisors to have been in the system before they opened the rail system. She said in some cases she is hoping they will continue to see improvements and her agency will more closely monitor that.

Chair Mandelman said when the subway reopened, the agency had crisis management and line management resources that they don't have every day. He asked if Ms. Kirschbaum could talk about that as part of her human resources (HR) and hiring efforts.

Ms. Kirschbaum clarified that they didn't have the bandwidth they had wanted on the day the subway reopened. She said protests were happening, and her staff were working in real time trying to make sure buses weren't getting engulfed in people and they didn't have the capacity to take a step back to look at the overall spacing of vehicles. She said that over next 6 months SFMTA would start up a new group of supervisors who will be an important addition to the system. She said they also had stronger HR team than pre-COVID, but also there was more work to do there. She said as they think to potential ballot measures or more stable funding, they are trying to make sure they have everything in place so they could make a rapid increase in service. She said, for example, right now they are focusing on developing lists and getting the foundations in place, making sure they have enough accountants and shift supervisors on the maintenance side so once they get to a point where they have invested in the foundation, they can scale up quickly to meet public expectations.

Chair Mandelman said asked if the SFMTA is giving a regular report to the SFMTA board on HR and staffing for different categories. He said if the SFMTA



is not doing this, they should be. He referenced the transit performance working group that was convened by then-Chair Peskin and himself with involvement from the Mayor and Commissioner Safai. The working group had met for a year with leading national experts and local experts as well as local stakeholders. He said the take-away was that the SFMTA had an HR problem because it doesn't have enough people to do the work they need done. This included staff to drive buses and trains but also other roles. He said the SFMTA needs to spend time fixing those hiring and training challenges. He said even if they get staffed up to provide the service they want to deliver now, they will need to grow the body of workers who are doing that work as they want to bring more people onto the system. He said this conversation was already happening pre-COVID and he was not surprised that the situation had worsened. He said he would like to see a regular update on hiring and training and that this should semi-regularly be reported (even if just in written format) to the SFMTA Board and Transportation Authority Board. He said it was not a surprise the SFMTA has a revenue/resource/operating and capital problem. He said it has been studied on multiple task forces and that Mr. Rewers had presented on multiple occasions about the hundreds of millions of dollars the agency needed to deliver the service that existed pre-pandemic. He said they need to do better than that because the service before the pandemic wasn't adequate.

Chair Mandelman then raised a concern about NextBus predictions. He said he got an email on the day of the Board meeting stating that NextBus is up. He noted that the Board of Supervisors had approved an \$80 million appropriation some time ago to fix NextBus. He asked how progress with improving NextBus was going.

Ms. Kirschbaum said she would answer that question and then Mr. Rewers had something to add regarding a previous question. She said she agreed that some of their hiring challenges are about time and numbers and others are more entrenched problems around recruiting. She said they have had some small victories over the past year and that her hardest position to fill right now is finding people to work on overhead lines because they are in direct competition with PG&E and others. She said they were in a rewarding meeting about three weeks ago with City College and Local 6 Electrical Workers Union where they were agreeing on a set of courses that would support safety training and on-the-job training. This was initially to get their current line workers up to speed and then as a precursor to a more formal apprenticeship program. She said they continue to celebrate small victories and they are reporting out to the SFMTA Board and will be happy to share that information. She said it would oversimplify the issue to say that all their issues would be solved with time and money as some of their issues are harder than others.



Ms. Kirschbaum said they have activated the NextBus contract and were working with NextBus to improve the algorithm as the highest priority. She said this will improve accuracy of predictions and would be more flexible in the shift to headway-based management. She said they had to make some unusual tradeoffs in the short-term. She said the algorithm work was set to happen later this fall and they would start testing around September. She noted that they did lose the NextBus system earlier in the day and she apologized that she doesn't know the root cause of that because she was attending the current Board meeting, but that the SFMTA tries to push out notifications about disruptions like these to customers, so they are aware.

Mr. Rewers clarified his previous comment in response to Vice Chair Peskin's question regarding the funding needed to expand Muni service. He said the first 15% of service increase that they are working on now will cost the agency an ongoing \$75 million a year. He said the second 15% increase to get back to pre-pandemic service is approximately \$85 million a year.

Commissioner Melgar said that her colleagues have already asked questions that she had for Ms. Kirschbaum but that she wanted to express her appreciation for Ms. Kirschbaum. She said that Ms. Kirschbaum started this job just a few months before the pandemic and was already stepping into a difficult situation. Commissioner Melgar said that Ms. Kirschbaum had stepped up to the job with grace and tremendous hard work and creativity, and while she has challenged Ms. Kirschbaum personally on transportation issues in her district, Ms. Kirschbaum has always been open-minded and responsive. She also thanked her for meeting with District 7 constituents. She said that while her district hasn't gotten everything they needed yet, that she still appreciated Ms. Kirschbaum.

Chair Mandelman said Commissioner Melgar speaks for the entire Board with that comment.

During public comment, Marc Christensen, President of the Merced Extension Triangle Neighborhood Association, said that they need a meeting with SFMTA and leadership of neighborhood groups over SFMTA's proposals. He said splitting the 57 Park Merced into two routes did a disservice to residents of Park Merced 800 Summit, Merced Extension Triangle, Lake Merced Hill, those who live at the Lakewood apartments, and those traveling to and from the Janet Pomeroy Center. He said residents of 800 Summit and the schools and churches along Brotherhood Way would lose a vital bus line, those living at Lake Merced Hill would lose direct access to Stonestown on Muni. He said the 122 SamTrans line was unacceptable. He said everyone would lose direct service between Stonestown to Lakeside Village and more importantly West Portal. He said the 57 line would no longer serve the Lakeshore shopping plaza on Sloat. He said the benefits of the 57 line were its direct access to seven shopping centers, and access to three of those has been eliminated -



West Portal, Lakeside Village, Lakeshore plaza. He said adding the 58 line did help with certain stops like access to the Janet Pomeroy Center and Lakewood apartments along John Muir and it was a partial plus connecting to the Westlake shopping center, Daly City BART, and the top of the hill; however, it isolates residents from the schools and churches along Brotherhood Way 800 summit, and Lake Merced Hill to Park Merced Shopping Center with no service from these areas. He said the 23 would no longer connect to Sloat Boulevard, Lakeshore Shopping, the zoo, Janet Pomeroy Center and Ocean Beach. He asked how bypassing a direct link to Saint Francis Circle would be an improvement.

Hayden Miller, a San Francisco high school student said some of the plans presented today were good ideas like the new 58 line but other plans were short-sighted and not actually what the residents wanted, but he said SFMTA would not know that because they did not conduct sufficient outreach about these plans. He said plans like creation of the 58 had been ideas at SFMTA since last November. He asked why members of the public were only finding out about these ideas now. He said if the SFMTA wants the public to trust them and understand what was going to happen they need to do outreach. He said these changes were showing up out of nowhere and it was frustrating. He said there is also a lack of service in general, for example the 28 line was critical to connect San Francisco's west side to Golden Gate Transit at the toll plaza. He said going downtown and transferring to Golden Gate Transit takes an hour longer. He said for tourists who are just going to the Golden Gate Bridge, instead of paying a \$3 Muni fare they end up paying a \$4.75 Golden Gate Transit fare and many of them get passed up at the toll plaza because buses going into San Francisco are already full of commuters. He said current Muni service was unacceptable and was going to get worse as the city reopens. He said Muni needed to hire faster, fill positions, get funding, or at least make a commitment to restore lines by January. He said preferably lines would be restored in August. He said they can't keep living with 60-70% of service with the goal of people being within a quarter mile of any bus line.

Chris Arvin introduced himself as a transit rider and member of the SFMTA Citizens Advisory Council, speaking in a personal capacity. He thanked everyone at SFMTA including Ms. Kirschbaum for their hard work to keep the transit system running and safe during the pandemic. He said he knows it is a tough job and he appreciates that. He also thanked the commissioners for asking good questions during today's meeting. He said that over a year since SFMTA started reduced service, the reopening plan for Muni was far too unclear for riders. He said SFMTA was under 70% of the service hours that they had pre-pandemic while most large agencies across the nation are at or above 90% and that the agency had no plan to go past 85% of pre-pandemic service. He said even BART would be at full service by the end of August. He said what this means is they only have 9 bus routes running after 10 p.m. at 30-minute headways. He said this would not work for late night workers or



people trying to patronize small businesses at night as the economy opens back up. He said they also had no timeline to bring back the M or L rail lines, or bus lines like the 31 that had 10,000 boardings per day pre-pandemic, or getting the F line running before 11 a.m. He said in his role on the SFMTA Citizens Advisory Council he passed a motion calling for the SFMTA to commit to a timeline to restore 95% of pre-pandemic service. He said at the SFMTA Board meeting it was presented at, an SFMTA Board member said he "didn't care" about the number and wanted to give the agency "freedom" to not return to any particular percent of service. He said he thinks some of this goes back to a quote from Director Tumlin in an April 2020 interview where Director Tumlin said "... they're never going to bring it back the way it was before, they have to take advantage of this". Mr. Arvin said traffic was coming back in the Bay Area, the city was opening back up, and transit riders still don't know what service will look like in 6 months or a year or two. He said drivers don't have to wonder if their car is going to be there tomorrow. He said it was time for accountability for the SFMTA.

Cat Carter from the San Francisco Transit Riders said she echoed appreciation for the hard work by Ms. Kirschbaum and SFMTA planning and operations staff as they have redesigned the transit system several times during the COVID crisis. She said the Transit Riders appreciated the repair crews who were handling deferred maintenance. She congratulated everyone for the reopening of subway and streetcar service. She said as mentioned in their letter sent to the Board, the Transit Riders continue to be concerned that Muni service was lagging behind demand, leaving transit riders stranded without transit service or at the curb. She said they dream of a world where Muni could have a similar recovery message as WETA that Chair Mandelman mentioned at the beginning of the meeting. She said we'd love to see the message of an increase in service, added connections, and transit priority to enable Muni riders to sail across the city. She said the Transit Riders urged commissioners to do everything in their power to champion transit priority projects that promote accessibility and mobility and support efficient use of Muni's resources. She said if they look at St. Francis Circle for example, the temporary plan has the 23, 57, 58 avoiding that intersection because it is a huge source of delay and a waste of Muni resources. She said they should not be rerouting service and losing connections for riders when the solution is to provide real transit priority at a complex intersection. She said, that transit priority would necessarily impact car travel patterns which is why it probably hadn't happened to date. She said the Transit Riders urge commissioners to support SFMTA in finding the funding necessary to expand service as quickly as possible, so people aren't forced to find less sustainable means of transportation. She said traffic congestion was back. She said transit riders were left at the curb throughout the pandemic and before the pandemic. She said as a city with a Transit-First Policy and a declared climate emergency, they need to do much better.



Rahul Maldonado, who is in Districts 7 and 11, said he is a multi-modal user, specifically with a car and a bike and Muni and is considering how to rely on his bike and transit more often. He said he is trying to advocate for multi-modal and non-car options after his experience with severe climate change in September 2020 with the wildfires and orange skies. He said as he tries to advocate for these things, people ask questions about service, such as why aren't the buses running as good. He said it was hard advocating for that coming into the summer as well with people becoming more vaccinated in the city. He said he wanted to understand if the SFMTA was considering a higher demand of ridership and what the backup plan was for that when compared to the expected August plan. He said he also applauds the SFMTA for trying to build their culture and the foundation of Human Resource processes. He said it would create trust with San Francisco citizens and this Board to communicate when service will come back.

Francisco Da Costa said the 56 was eliminated without consulting anyone. He said as a couple of people have stated, SFMTA needs to learn to work with the community, the taxpayers. He said it seems like a few people at the top are making decisions for everyone. He said they shouldn't eliminate lines and talk about the nearest place they can get transportation is a quarter of a mile - it doesn't work for seniors and the physically challenged. He said they cannot leave these populations out because they received federal money and as long as they receive one dollar from the federal government, they need to give it to the most vulnerable which they do not. He also noted that it is not okay to give the public only two minutes to speak.

Sheila Thompson, a resident of the 500 block of Clipper Street, said they have been working closely with Chair Mandelman's office as well as Damon Curtis from the SFMTA to address safety concerns on their block exacerbated by the rerouting of 48 onto the block. She said while they appreciated changes made to the 48 and changing the turn to split it between Diamond and Castro streets, the bigger issue remained that the bus traffic presents a significant safety concern for residents of the block on a block that is already heavily trafficked with a very steep incline of 18.5%. Now that the 35 has some service restored, she said it is traveling on city streets that were previously traveled on by the previous 48 route, they ask that the 48 and 35 be restored to their previous routes in order to eliminate the bus traffic on the 500 and now 400 blocks of Clipper street which are very narrow and steep and could endanger residents.

A caller said she also lives on 500 block of Clipper Street. She agreed with other callers that there has been a lack of transparency regarding changes on Muni service, and that they have tried to connect with the SFMTA to discuss safety measures but they hadn't been able to schedule that. She said they would like to talk more formally with Ms. Kirschbaum and her team. She said they wanted to discuss the deck they put together outlining pedestrian and



safety concerns they have for the block that affect their elderly who are afraid to walk on the street due to excessive traffic and buses. She said buses were deemed unsafe in that area by Bevan Dufty and the SFMTA in 2008 and now they were back as a result of COVID. She asked why that was the case and why additional outreach wasn't done about this to block residents. She said the street already had excessive traffic and it is scary for pedestrians and bikers with buses going up and down the street with little or no pedestrian visibility. She said the street itself has a 3 ton limit whereas the bus weighs about 25,000 pounds on an 18.9% grade which is like 20 cars speeding up a hill on a narrow street which makes their houses have sonic booms on them. She said she would like to talk to SFMTA staff about these concerns and to have the 48 to be rerouted to its prior route.

**13. Preliminary Fiscal Year 2021/22 Budget and Work Program - INFORMATION**

This item was deferred to the call of the Chair.

**14. Internal Accounting Report and Investment Report (9 months) - INFORMATION**

This item was deferred to the call of the Chair.

**Other Items**

**15. Introduction of New Items - INFORMATION**

Commissioner Preston requested that staff prepare a Prop K funding request to advise the SMFTA on the types of data to collect, and to provide independent review of the Free Muni pilot and reporting of data from that pilot. He also requested that the Transportation Authority conduct a citywide survey to gauge uptake and opinions about the Free Muni pilot if and when it is implemented, and for staff to develop and implement and analyze a multi-lingual survey to draw statistically significant conclusions from the pilot. He added that time is of the essence to move the proposal forward and that his office will work with Transportation Authority staff to develop a study scope and funding request for Board consideration in June, potentially in order to support initiation of a Free Muni pilot in July should that proposal advance at the full Board of Supervisors meeting later in the day.

Commissioner Melgar appreciated the ConnectSF Transit Corridor Study provided to the Board a couple of months ago. She said one of her main priorities was to connect the west side to the rest of the city and the region for many reasons. With that in mind, she asked staff to conduct a study on a subway strategy to connect the west side to the regional corridor and the San Francisco transportation corridors.

Commissioner Melgar said the Balboa Reservoir TAC has been talking about the connectivity on the Ocean Avenue corridor for quite a while. She said the Planning Department did a study about the transportation needs in the corridor about 5 years ago and the Transportation Authority also did a study



about repositioning the I-280 off ramp at Ocean, as two examples of many prior planning efforts in the area. Now that City College is doing a lot such as talking about repositioning the pedestrian bridge over Ocean and moving some of the buildings, Commissioner Melgar said it is an excellent time for a District 7 NTIP study concentrating on the Ocean Avenue corridor from the Balboa Park transit station all the way to Junipero Serra. She said that there are a lot of folks who are interested in participating, so she would appreciate some staff support and help to get the conversation going among the multiple stakeholders who want better transit, bicycle lanes, and better pedestrian infrastructure.

There was no public comment.

**16. Public Comment**

Clerk Britney Milton noted one general public comment was received prior to the Board meeting and had been posted to the website.

During public comment, Patricia Arack of the Concerned Residents of the Sunset said that they have 7,778 people who have signed the petition to open the Great Highway. She said the June 15<sup>th</sup> city opening should coincide with opening the highway. She noted that Commissioner Mar has the power to open up the highway and is causing harm to his constituents. She said people need their cars, and the people of San Francisco are living in fantasy world to think that San Francisco will be car-free. She said millions have been spent on making improvements for bicycle riders and asked for some concern to be shown for working people who need to use their cars and for the safety of Sunset residents. She suggested a compromise to open up the Great Highway during the week and close it during the weekend.

Bob Planthold read some excerpts from a letter about the JFK Drive plan on behalf of a disabled person. He read that the author was disappointed about the one sided and deeply able-ist coverage of the JFK Drive closure issue. He read that it reflects some of the most bald-faced and aggressive ableism he has ever encountered as disabled person in his 70 years of life, and that the voices of opposition throughout San Francisco were being drowned out. He read that closing JFK permanently means effectively that persons with disabilities who cannot ride Muni independently and walk from the bus stop will never be able to visit all the famous destinations in Golden Gate Park and asserted that it is a violation of access and civil rights. Mr. Planthold said the letter included a link to a petition to reopen JFK Drive to vehicles. He said he read the verbatim excerpts to help the Board understand that the media who cover this topic and many of the Supervisors are ignoring people with disabilities and ignoring their civil rights which is inequitable and inappropriate.

Roland Lebrun expressed his frustration towards the Microsoft Teams meeting platform.





**17. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:12 p.m.