



Memorandum

AGENDA ITEM 3

DATE: September 22, 2020

TO: Transportation Authority Board: Commissioners Peskin (Chair), Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton, and Yee

FROM: Tilly Chang - Executive Director

SUBJECT: 09/22/2020 Board Meeting: Executive Director's Report – **INFORMATION**

REGIONAL, STATE AND FEDERAL ISSUES

Federal Transportation Bill - House Introduces Continuing Resolution: September 30, 2020 marks the expiration date of the current federal surface transportation bill, known as the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. While the House passed its proposal for a five-year reauthorization as part of the \$1.5 trillion Moving Forward Act (H.R. 2), the Senate has not yet responded. On Monday, the House introduced a Continuing Resolution that would extend the FAST Act at current funding levels through September 30, 2021. This will allow the new Congress to pick up negotiations on the long-term bill next year. We will continue to work with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) and the Mayor's Office to advance San Francisco priorities in this effort.

BART Awarded \$1.2 Billion from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) - Transbay Corridor Core Capacity Program: On September 14, the FTA awarded BART a Full Funding Grant Agreement for BART's Transbay Corridor Core Capacity Program. BART will receive \$1.2 billion to increase the frequency of trains between San Francisco and the East Bay, the largest grant the agency has ever received. These funds will grow capacity by 45 percent and improve service for millions of riders. The program includes purchase of 252 additional rail cars, a new communications-based train control system, a new rail car storage yard and enhanced traction power substations in San Francisco and the East Bay. We want to congratulate BART on this significant achievement and thank two of our San Francisco BART representatives including Chair Lateefah Simon and Director Bevan Dufty for their advocacy as well as our Federal delegation for their support of this effort.

Safe Routes to BART Grant Program - \$420,000 Awarded to Fifth Street Project: SFMTA's Fifth Street Improvements project has been awarded \$420,000 in the first round of BART's new Safe Routes to BART grant program, which is a subprogram of Measure RR intended to fund projects that improve walking and biking access to BART stations. The Fifth Street project is a major transformation of the corridor extending from Market to Townsend, including vehicle-lane reductions, signal timing changes, and a parking protected bikeway.



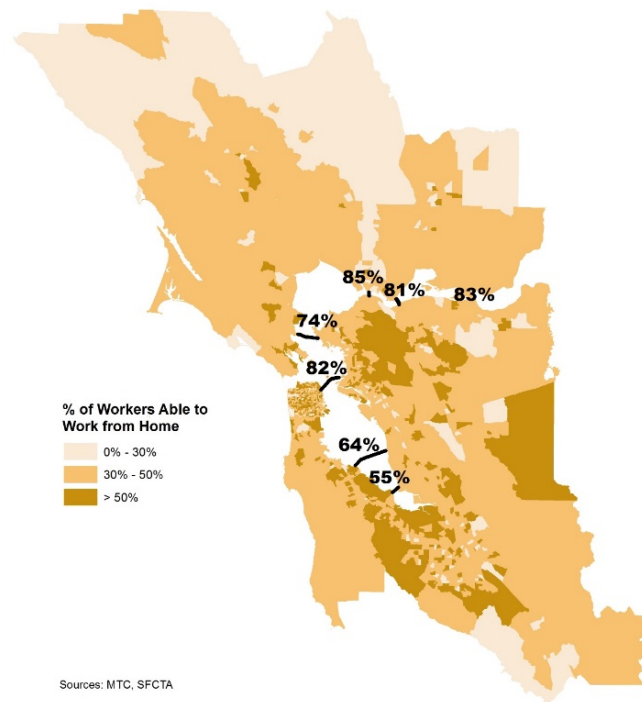
These BART funds will leverage Prop K and Prop AA funds to construct curb ramps, raised crosswalks, transit boarding islands and additional restriping. SFMTA's allocation request for Prop AA funds for Fifth Street will be presented at the October Board meeting. We anticipate future Safe Routes to BART calls for projects on an annual basis until the full \$25 million set aside for the program is exhausted.

Plan Bay Area 2050 - Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to Act on Final Blueprint: The regional agencies, MTC and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), continue to make progress on Plan Bay Area 2050. Tomorrow, the Commission will be acting on the Final Blueprint, a set of regional strategies designed to help the region achieve a more achievable, connected, healthy, diverse and vibrant future. We want to thank our MTC representatives and ABAG representatives, Supervisors Ronen, Mandelman, and Mar for their engagement throughout this process and particularly Supervisor Ronen for advocating for more equitable policies including seeking means-based discounts for toll programs. I also wish to recognize our ace regional policy team, led by Maria Lombardo our Chief Deputy with Michelle Beaulieu and Amber Crabbe for their excellent staffing of this work over the past year, and for their monthly support to our San Francisco representatives and partner agencies. We will continue to track this project as it moves forward into the environmental review process and implementation planning stages this winter.

COVID-Era Congestion Tracking - Bridge Traffic Disparities, North vs. South: Immediately following shelter-in-place orders in March 2020, traffic congestion on Bay Area toll bridges disappeared virtually overnight. During the summer months, bridge volumes returned to approximately 75%-80% of pre-COVID levels. However, traffic increases on the bridges have been uneven, with northern Bay Area bridges volumes returning to over 80% of their pre-COVID volumes, while southern Bay Area bridge volumes remain at around 55%-65% of pre-COVID volumes. We surmise that differences in the ability to work by employment industry may partially explain this trend, with technology industry workers more easily able to work from home than other industry workers. The figure below shows September 2020 traffic volumes as a percentage of pre-COVID levels for seven Bay Area bridges, overlaid on top of the share of workers who we estimate are able to work from home. Workers who live in the South Bay are more likely to be able to work from home than those who live in the North Bay, which may help explain why South Bay bridge volumes have not rebounded as much as North Bay Bridge volumes have.



**% of Normal Bridge Volumes
Weekdays, Sept 2020**



LOCAL ISSUES

Bike to Work Day Re-envisioned as “Bike to Wherever Day” - Join Us September 24 : The San Francisco Bicycle Coalition’s Bike to Work Day, which the Transportation Authority has sponsored for many years, is taking place as Bike to Wherever Day this Thursday, September 24. Whether you are an essential worker commuting, a family running errands, or an individual enjoying the outdoors, we hope you’ll consider riding your bike wherever it is you’re going. The San Francisco Bicycle Coalition is setting up stations at bike shops and other businesses around the city where participants can pick up a traditional Bike to Workday tote bag. Please check the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition website for a map of locations and other details: <https://sfbike.org/bike-to-wherever-day/>.

SF Transit Riders Transit Week 2020 and Rider First Award Nominations - Transit is Essential:

The Transportation Authority is pleased to be a sponsor of the San Francisco Transit Riders Transit Week annual celebration happening this year from October 5 - 9. With this year's theme of "Transit is Essential," the activities of the week will highlight how transit has helped people make essential trips during the pandemic and promote the need for strong transit recovery moving forward. In preparation for the Rider First Awards on Friday, October 9, SF



Transit Riders are accepting nominations for transit heroes who have worked hard to make transit better this year. Visit the San Francisco Transit Rider's website for more information and nominate a transit hero at <https://sftransitriders.org/transitweek>.

Ocean Beach - Steering Committee Meets to Discuss Access and Resiliency Improvements:

On September 10, I joined Commissioner Mar and Directors of many city departments as well as representatives from the National Park Service and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission to discuss near-term and longer-term projects to address access and resilience issues along Ocean Beach. This group serves as a critical forum to coordinate projects that span multiple agencies, including the Ocean Beach Climate Adaptation project, the Fort Funston Trail Connection project, safety improvements at Great Highway and Skyline Boulevard, and the Transportation Authority's District 4 Mobility Improvements Study. Prop K sales tax funds are dedicated to fund improvements along this corridor, leveraging other city, state, and federal resources. The Planning Department announced at the meeting that it has released a Notice of Preparation of the Environmental Impact Report for its Ocean Beach Climate Change Adaptation Project. They are holding a virtual public scoping meeting on September 30 at 6pm, and details are available on the SF Planning's website.

Octavia Improvements Study - Outreach Underway: We are launching outreach for the Octavia Transportation Improvements Study and seeking input on transportation challenges and potential ideas to improve safety and circulation along Octavia Boulevard and the surrounding streets. Through this District 5 Neighborhood Transportation Improvement Program (NTIP)-funded study, we will identify and recommend a list of projects to address safety and accessibility in the neighborhood as well as regional transportation strategies to reduce traffic congestion on Octavia Boulevard. Early next week, we will release a web-based and text base survey. We are also reaching out to neighborhood and community groups, businesses, schools and public housing residents in Hayes Valley. For more information about the study and upcoming outreach, visit the project webpage at <https://www.sfcta.org/projects/central-freeway-and-octavia-boulevard-circulation-study>.

Downtown Congestion Pricing Study - Citywide and Regional Outreach and Engagement

Continues: The project team has presented to over 40 community groups to date, including citywide groups such as the SF Human Rights Commission Community Roundtable and the Vision Zero Task Force, to neighborhood-serving organizations like Chinatown TRIP, Potrero Boosters, and BMAGIC. The project team has also hosted community presentations with Manny's, the SF Interfaith Council and WalkSF, as well as a combined local-regional forum with SPUR and the SF Bicycle Coalition.

The project team is gathering community input through early October. The public is invited to contact our staff for a presentation and to:



- Visit sfcta.org/downtown to play a multilingual online game to design your own congestion pricing program, request a presentation to a community group, or sign up for email updates; or
- Participate in a text-based survey by texting TRAFFIC for English, TRAFICO for Spanish, 交通 for Chinese, or TRAPIK for Filipino to 415-449-4214.

WalkSF has also released a report “Community Voices on Congestion Pricing: Conversations in the Tenderloin, SoMa, and Bayview” which the project team will incorporate into its outreach analysis. WalkSF will share this report at the upcoming Vision Zero Committee meeting on September 29.

PROJECT DELIVERY

Caltrans to Consider 13th Street Safety Project for New State Complete Streets Program:

Caltrans District 4 is nominating a pedestrian and bicycle safety improvement project on 13th Street (under the Central Freeway viaduct) as one of its regional priorities to receive funds from a new \$100 million Complete Streets program approved by the California Transportation Commission recently. We studied this area as part of our Vision Zero Ramps Phase 2 Study and, if ultimately selected, the SFMTA would implement these improvements as part of its broader safety project on 13th Street between Valencia and Folsom Streets. The 13th Street improvements must be associated with a state maintenance or rehabilitation project already programmed in the 2020 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) to be eligible and are within the limits of the upcoming US 101 Roadway Rehabilitation Project, with the construction phase anticipated to start in FY 23-24. SFMTA is starting outreach on this 13th Street Safety project soon, with the goal of implementing quick-build components in mid-2021 and starting construction on the full project later in the Fall. The SHOPP funds, if received, would fund long-term improvements that include lane reductions, protected bikeways, pedestrian safety elements and traffic signal upgrades. Caltrans will announce whether the project is selected to receive funding in November or December.

Treasure Island Autonomous Shuttle Showcased at Intelligent Transportation Society World Congress, Wins FHWA Approvals for System Engineering Plans:

On behalf of the Treasure Island Development Authority, we are leading an autonomous vehicle technology pilot project funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Last week, the goals and evaluation approach to this project were the kick-off session of the ITS World Congress - All Access Digital Education Series, an international transportation technology conference. The session presented outcomes and lessons learned from autonomous vehicle shuttle deployments in Columbus, Ohio and Tampa, Florida. This week, we learned that the Federal Highway Administration has approved our project concept of operations and system engineering management plan, a significant milestone in project development that paves the way for us to work on vendor procurement in 2021, leading to the launch of the pilot in late 2021/early 2022.