



RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PLAN BAY AREA 2050 FINAL BLUEPRINT  
TELECOMMUTE MANDATE STRATEGY

WHEREAS, The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the nine-county Bay Area (the region), is required to develop in conjunction with the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) a regional plan every four years in order to satisfy federal and state planning requirements; and

WHEREAS, MTC and ABAG are currently undertaking the process to develop and adopt the 2021 update to the plan, entitled Plan Bay Area 2050; and

WHEREAS, Plan Bay Area 2050 is intended to result in an affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant Bay Area for all, including an expanded, well-functioning, safe, and multimodal transportation system that connects the Bay Area and reduces our environmental footprint; and

WHEREAS, MTC is required by state law to include in this regional plan achievable strategies and investments to meet the region's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction target (as defined by the California Air Resources Board) of 19% per-capita by 2035 relative to 2005 levels; and

WHEREAS, The San Francisco County Transportation Authority (Transportation Authority) strongly believes that that MTC (and the region) must continue to strive towards achieving our share of the state's GHG emission reduction targets; and

WHEREAS, On September 23, 2020, MTC voted to adopt MTC Resolution No.4437 and ABAG Resolution No.16-20 Plan Bay Area (PBA) 2050: Final Blueprint; and

WHEREAS, The Plan Bay Area 2050 Final Blueprint includes Strategy Environment (EN) 7: Institute Telecommuting Mandates for Major Office-Based



Employers, which proposes to mandate that large (over 25 employees) office-based employers have at least 60 percent of their employees telecommute on any given workday; and

WHEREAS, The Final Blueprint indicates that the inclusion of Strategy EN7 is necessary to achieve the required GHG emission targets, and Strategy EN7 includes as a primary objective the reduction of GHG emissions; and

WHEREAS, Strategy EN7, as written, will not accomplish these goals, but instead will have negative impacts on San Francisco as a Transit First city as well as on low-wage workers and people of color throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, Strategy EN7 takes a blanket approach to the proposed telecommute mandate on workplaces, resulting in the suppression of both trips that contribute to regional GHG emissions, such as drive-alone, and trips that would be taken by zero-emission or low-emission modes, such as walking, cycling, and transit; and

WHEREAS, Though the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent Shelter-in-Place orders necessitated that employers and employees quickly transition to telecommuting where possible, the economic, environmental, equity, social, and health impacts of sustained, significant percent share of telecommuting have yet to be fully understood; and

WHEREAS, Sustainable reduction in GHG emissions in the region requires fidelity to Plan Bay Area's goals to direct growth in population and employment to areas served by fast, frequent, and reliable transit, and areas that are walkable and bikeable for more than just commute trips; and

WHEREAS, The shift to telecommuting as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic response has resulted in significant ridership declines and budget shortfalls at all transit operators in the region, necessitating the reduction of service frequency,



capacity, hours, and coverage; and

WHEREAS, A higher number of essential workers are low-income people of color, who have suffered from COVID-19 in numbers disproportionate to their population and many of whom have not had the ability to work from home nor the type of jobs that can be accomplished through remote work; and

WHEREAS, If a large portion of the workforce is no longer commuting, transit fare revenues will continue to drop, forcing further cuts to public transit service, resulting in serious harm to low-wage workers and people of color in San Francisco and across the region; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco's downtown economic vibrancy relies on its daytime population, including large and small businesses and their office workers which support the city's tax and revenue base; and

WHEREAS, a mandate on large employers to require that majority of their workforce work from home would encourage sprawl and expand development into exurban and rural areas, leading to an increase in non-work related automobile trips and contributing to further environmental damage; and

WHEREAS, As a result of San Francisco's long-standing Transit First Policy, San Francisco is a transit-oriented, walkable, bikeable city, and has the lowest rate of GHG-emitting commute modes in the region with only 30% of overall commuters driving to work; and

WHEREAS, The organization Transportation Management Association San Francisco (TMA SF), whose members comprise the largest office users in downtown San Francisco, estimates a drive-alone commute rate of less than 10% for their participating employers, reflecting efficacy of combined transportation demand management (TDM) efforts of TMA SF and the City and County of San Francisco over several decades; now, therefore, be it



RESOLVED, That the Transportation Authority hereby opposes the inclusion of Strategy EN7: Institute Telecommuting Mandates for Major Office-Based Employers, as it is currently described, in the ultimate adoption of Plan Bay Area 2050; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Transportation Authority reiterates its support for the Plan Bay Area 2050 Guiding Principles for a more affordable, connected, diverse, healthy, and vibrant Bay Area, including the importance of strategies and investments designed to meet the region's GHG reduction targets; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Transportation Authority encourages MTC to

- a) Re-focus and rename this strategy to TDM to Reduce Driving Commute Trips, where they occur throughout the region;
- b) Recognize the varied workplace circumstances across the region with flexibility in its TDM policies and programs to ensure efficiency, equity, and effectiveness; and
- c) Consider how other strategies in PBA 2050 could be amended, or new strategies added, in order to meet the region's GHG emissions reduction target, such as considering a regional gas tax and/or modifying or deferring freeway widening projects; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Transportation Authority is committed to continuing to collaborate with MTC and partner agencies on these and other strategies in PBA 2050.



**San Francisco  
County Transportation  
Authority**

BD102720

RESOLUTION NO. 21-18

The foregoing Resolution was approved and adopted by the San Francisco County Transportation Authority at a regularly scheduled meeting thereof, this 27th day of October, 2020, by the following votes:

**Ayes:** Commissioners Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee (11)

**Nays:** (0)

**Absent:** (0)

*Aaron Peskin* 10-29-20

Aaron Peskin  
Chair

Date

ATTEST:

*Tilly Chang* 10/29/20

Tilly Chang  
Executive Director

Date