



Memorandum

AGENDA ITEM 3

DATE: January 26, 2021

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

FROM: Tilly Chang - Executive Director

SUBJECT: 01/26/21 Board Meeting: Executive Director's Report – **INFORMATION**

REGIONAL, STATE AND FEDERAL ISSUES

Federal Funding for Transit Relief - Metropolitan Transportation Commission recommends 1st distribution of new COVID relief funds: On December 27, former President Trump signed a \$2.3 trillion COVID relief and Fiscal Year 21 government funding bill into law. This bill includes \$14 billion for transit, with \$980 million for the Bay Area. Tomorrow, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) will discuss allocating part of this funding (\$180 million) to a handful of transit agencies to meet the revenue losses above what had been estimated last summer, which formed the basis of the CARES Act transit relief funding distribution. SFMTA received \$374 million in Federal CARES Act funding. This CARES Act "true-up" recommendation includes approximately \$44 million for the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), \$104 million for BART, and \$7 million for Caltrain. The MTC will discuss the distribution formula for the remaining \$800 million over the coming months, with the intention of allocating the remaining funding in March. We are supporting the SFMTA in their request that the funding be allocated based on equity principles, particularly that funding should be directed to current riders across the Bay Area to meet the needs of essential workers and low-income residents still riding transit during the pandemic.

New America Rescue Plan - President Biden Releases \$1.9 Trillion COVID-19 Emergency Relief Package: President Biden's plan for the next round of federal COVID-19 relief, called the America Rescue Plan, focuses primarily on federal funding for vaccine distribution and virus testing, additional unemployment benefits, direct payments to individuals, and loans for small businesses. It also calls for \$20 billion for the hardest hit public transit agencies, stating that safe and dependable public transit systems are critical components of a robust and equitable economic recovery. The plan will form the basis for President Biden's legislative request to Congress. While passage of some version of the plan in the House seems relatively assured, passage in the Senate, even with the new Democratic control, could be very tight given the likely need for 60 votes to pass. We will work with the Mayor's Office, the MTC, and Bay Area transit agencies to support the plan's advancement and approval.



Vehicle Emission Standards - President Biden's Day One Executive Order Signals Reverse of Prior Administration's Climate Policies: During his time in office, President Trump acted to reverse climate protection policies, including loosening national fuel economy standards and eliminating California's authority under the Clean Air Act to enact its own stricter standards. One of the fifteen executive orders President Biden signed on his first day in office directed his government to review and revise national fuel economy and emissions standards as part of a larger order signaling his intent to roll back former President Trump's environmental actions in order to protect public health and the environment. Governor Newsom has indicated that he will work with the Biden administration to ensure the new standards will help advance his own executive order that established a goal that all new light duty vehicles sold in California be zero-emission by 2035. Our draft federal legislative program includes advocacy for any future revision of federal fuel economy standards to reinstate California's authority to put in place policies and regulations to meet this ambitious statewide goal.

Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike Program - MTC announces \$54 Million Available Regionwide: Federal funding is available to support local and regional projects that can be implemented quickly to benefit communities responding and adapting to the COVID-19 environment. Approximately 12.5% (~\$6 million) is targeted for San Francisco on a competitive basis from MTC. Eligible projects include quick-build bike, pedestrian, and transit access improvements; local safe and seamless mobility projects, including projects that advance equitable mobility, invest in bicycle and pedestrian safety, improve connections to transit, or implement seamless strategies within a corridor; programs that support safe and seamless mobility; and other near-term implementation strategies from the Blue-Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force. We are working with agency partners to identify eligible priority projects and will bring the project list to the Board in March. Initial letters of interest are due to MTC by March 30th, with final approval of projects anticipated in June.

Plan Bay Area - Final Blueprint Adopted with Path to Improve Plan's Housing Strategy for San Francisco: On January 21, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Executive Board adopted the Plan Bay Area 2050 Final Blueprint which presents a 30-year vision for the Bay Area's land use, housing, transportation system, environment, and economy. Over the past month, Transportation Authority and Planning Department staff had been seeking to remedy a last minute change to the Blueprint's growth strategy that dramatically increased the number of households San Francisco was expected to accommodate, with most added to the Black and LatinX communities in the southeast part of the city that are already at high risk of displacement. Prior to the meeting, Chair Mandelman, and Commissioners Mar, Peskin, Ronen, and Walton, with Planning Department and Transportation Authority staff urged ABAG staff to reverse these changes and instead advance a more equitable growth allocation that achieves the plan's housing goals and mandated greenhouse gas emission reduction target. Mayor Breed and ABAG-MTC representatives also sent a letter to the MTC and ABAG boards. The ABAG Executive Board ultimately approved the Final Blueprint with an option to include modified strategies and growth projections to high-resource, jobs-rich, transit-rich



jurisdictions as an alternative during Plan Bay Area's environmental review process. I'd like to thank these Commissioners for their tireless advocacy on behalf of these communities and will work with them over the next few months to further define this new alternative. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission is scheduled to approve the Final Blueprint next week and needs to adopt the same alternative as ABAG to move environmental review of Plan Bay Area 2050 forward.

Caltrain's Positive Train Control Project - Project to Improve Safety on the Caltrain Corridor is Now Complete and in Service: On December 17, 2020, the Federal Railroad Administration certified Caltrain's Positive Train Control system as a mixed Positive Train Control system. It is in revenue service and fully interoperable with all tenants. Positive Train Control will monitor and, if necessary, control train movement in the event of human error. This will increase safety on the Caltrain corridor by preventing train-to-train collisions, overspeed derailments, movements through misaligned switches, and incursions through work zones. This is one of the main elements of the Caltrain Modernization Program which also includes Caltrain electrification and procurement of electrified vehicles.

Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA)- Annual Recruitment for Citizens Advisory

Committee Members: TJPA is conducting recruitment for Bay Area residents to serve on the TJPA Citizens Advisory Committee. The announcement was distributed this past Friday and they are now actively accepting applications. This is a unique opportunity for residents to not only become a part of history by providing input on bringing rail service to downtown San Francisco, but also to be able to provide input on the operations of the Salesforce Transit Center. Applications are available on the agency's website at www.tjpa.org.

Congratulations to Nuria Fernandez newly appointed FTA Deputy Administrator, Nina Rannells, Executive Director of the Water Emergency Transportation Authority on Her Retirement: On behalf of the Transportation Authority, I'd like to extend congratulations to Nuria Fernandez, the former General Manager and Executive Director of Santa Clara County Valley Transportation Authority on her appointment as the US Department of Transportation Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Deputy Secretary this past week, an exciting leadership position in the new Biden administration. We also congratulate Nina Rannells, the executive director of the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA), on her upcoming retirement after 12 years leading the agency and more than 30 years in Bay Area public transportation. Director Rannells greatly expanded WETA services during her tenure and worked closely with the Port of San Francisco to expand capacity at the Port's Ferry Terminal (funded by our sales tax program), as well as with our TIMMA staff to plan for zero-emission ferry services. Our region benefitted greatly from both directors' leadership and we wish them well in their future roles and endeavors.

LOCAL ISSUES

Essential Worker Ride Home - SF Environment Introduces Debit Card System: We're excited to announce that the San Francisco Department of the Environment, or SF Environment, will be expanding the Essential Worker Ride Home program to help additional people by



introducing a debit card system that will streamline administration of the program. The Board approved funding for the Essential Worker Ride Home program last spring to provide taxi rides home for essential workers whose normal transit rides had been paused or eliminated due to the pandemic. SF Environment has found it quite labor intensive to run and has collaborated with the SFMTA to introduce a debit card to ease the administrative burden. The new debit card will use the same technology as SFMTA's Essential Trip Card and staff time savings will allow SF Environment to open up enrollment to an additional 450 essential workers, bringing the total to 750, and to provide rides to work in addition to rides from work. SF Environment and SFMTA are still finalizing details, but we expect this to be up and running soon.

SMFTA Electric Scooter Program - Program Expanded to Increase Number of Permits by 500 to 5,000: Last week, SFMTA expanded the number of shared ride scooters permitted on City streets by 500 to a total of 5,000 scooters across three operators - Lime, Scoot, and Spin. Jump scooters were folded into the Lime permit when Uber sold Jump to Lime in April 2020. Collectively, the three companies have paid for the installation of 1,225 bike racks using the fees from the program. SFMTA is also seeking changes to the program to implement scooters for disabled riders (based on a recent pilot), increase bike rack fees from \$75 to \$100 per device, increase the duration of current permits, and give SFMTA the ability to suspend a permit for health and safety violations.

PROJECT DELIVERY

A Milestone for Smoother Streets in San Francisco - Prop K and Prop AA Funds Help the City Reach Its 10-Year for a "Good" Roadway Condition Score: This month the City announced that San Francisco's roadway Pavement Condition Score, or PCI, hit its 10-year goal, demonstrating the benefits of a systematically planned and executed public infrastructure investment strategy to improve the streets of San Francisco. In 2011, voters approved the \$248 million Road Repaving and Street Safety Bond which initiated a 10-year investment strategy to increase the PCI from 64 to 75, which is considered a "good" condition on the PCI scale of 1 to 100, where 100 is a newly repaved street. The City has invested approximately \$650 million over the past 10 years to deliver street resurfacing improvements. The Transportation Authority proudly supports pavement improvements for San Francisco streets and has provided over \$105.9 million in funding through Prop K half-cent sales tax and Prop AA vehicle registration tax, in addition to other local and regional funds. The regional PCI average is 67.

SFMTA Resumes Muni Metro and new Bayview Express Services: Over this past weekend, the Muni Metro T-Third resumed service between Sunnysdale and Embarcadero stations, and Muni launched two new services with the 55 Dogpatch and 15 Bayview Hunters Point Express service. The 15 bus service in particular was a major long-time priority of the community and called for by Commissioner Walton, and we were glad to help with a recent planning study. Other lines that also re-started service include 33 Ashbury, 27 Bryant, and the 37 Corbet



among other bus services. All of these changes are the direct result of community engagement and feedback and help to implement Muni's Equity Strategy.

Van Ness Improvement Project Business Support Applications Extended - new January 31

Deadline: The application deadline for businesses impacted by the Van Ness Improvement Project's construction has been extended to January 31. For more information visit <https://oewd.org/van-ness-improvement-directed-business-support> or contact Jada Jackson, Project Manager at the Office of Economic and Workforce Development at CMPgrant@sfgov.org or call 415-554-6477.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

COVID Impacts - November Sales Tax Receipts Higher than October: Sales tax revenues of \$6.8 million received for November 2020 came in 13% higher than October 2020 revenues of \$6.1 million. However, collections continue to be affected by COVID-19 trends as November 2020 revenues are 32% lower compared to November 2019. We continue to closely monitor revenue streams and coordinate with the City and sister agencies to assess short, medium, and long-term financial impacts.