



## Memorandum

### AGENDA ITEM 3

**DATE:** February 23, 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:** 02/23/21 Board Meeting: Executive Director's Report – **INFORMATION**

### REGIONAL, STATE AND FEDERAL ISSUES

**Federal COVID Relief Package - Biden Administration Advances Significant Support for Public Transit:** The proposed \$1.9 trillion COVID relief proposal includes a new infusion of state and local aid, another round of transit emergency relief, and additional housing assistance. The Bay Area's share of the \$30 billion for emergency transit relief is estimated to be \$1.677 billion, to be distributed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) similar to the last two relief packages. It also includes \$350 billion in state and local aid, with the Bay Area estimated to receive \$3.1 billion. The package is expected to advance through the U.S. House of Representatives quickly, with or without Republican support.

**Caltrain Electrification -San Francisco Community Meeting This Week:** On February 24, from 6:00 to 7:00 PM, Caltrain will conduct a virtual community meeting about Caltrain Electrification work in San Francisco. Over the next few months, crews will begin the installation of poles and foundations, and continue the installation of two traction power facilities. The meeting will provide an opportunity for residents to learn more about the project, including the scope and schedule of upcoming construction activities, with particular focus on activities in District 10. For more information, please call the Project Hotline at 650-399-9659 or email [calmod@caltrain.com](mailto:calmod@caltrain.com).

**Link21 - New Transbay Rail Crossing Program Officially Launched:** In late January, BART and Capitol Corridor launched the Link21 program (<https://link21program.org>). The Link21 program is intended to transform Northern California's passenger rail network into a faster, more integrated system with a new transbay crossing between Oakland and San Francisco at the program's core. Building on prior work conducted as part of the MTC's Core Capacity study and Crossings white paper conducted for Plan Bay Area, the Link21 team is exploring program options over the next year, including both BART and standard gauge Transbay rail (Caltrain and Capitol Corridor) options. As part of the ConnectSF Transit Corridor Study, we have been working in partnership with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), the San Francisco Planning Department, and the Mayor's office to evaluate how a new regional rail crossing supports a broader City transit strategy. We will be bringing an update on that strategy to the Board in March.



**Clean Cars for All Vehicle Replacement Grant Program -Trade-in for New or Used Clean Vehicles, Pre-Paid Transit Fares, or Electric Bikes:** The Bay Area Air Quality Management District has updated its Clean Cars for All program, which provides an average incentive of \$8,500 to trade-in an older vehicle in for a new or used plug-in hybrid or electric vehicle, pre-paid transit fare, or an electric bike. We are especially excited about the transit and e-bike benefits of up to \$7,500 that can really help people get out of their cars and change the way they travel around the city. Households can even purchase multiple e-bikes with the benefit. The program has income limits for eligibility and only residents of certain zip codes, primarily in Districts 5, 6 and 10 in eastern San Francisco are eligible, so it is important for anyone interested in the program to read over the program details at the Air District's [Clean Cars for All webpage](#). Funds are available on a first come, first served basis.

**San Francisco Housing Production - City Produces More Than Half Region's Affordable Housing from 2018 to 2019:** MTC staff provided a report at its February 10 Programming and Allocations Committee meeting detailing how much affordable housing each jurisdiction in the Bay Area produced or protected near transit in 2018 and 2019. San Francisco delivered 54% of qualifying units across the entire region, dwarfing all other jurisdictions. While as a city we still need to do more given the magnitude of the housing crisis, this clearly demonstrates that during this time period San Francisco was the region's leader in producing and protecting affordable housing. With continued efforts, this could secure the city a significant share of up to \$71 million available from the regional Housing Incentive Pool program when funding is distributed in 2023.

## LOCAL ISSUES

**Partial Downtown-Bound Muni Metro Service to Return in May:** For nearly a year, San Francisco has lacked Muni Metro service in the Market Street subway. At their recent Board meeting, SFMTA announced they will be bringing back Muni Metro service from West Portal to the Embarcadero by May of 2021. If the City continues to dictate COVID - 19 restrictions and vaccination rates, it is possible that the targeted reopen date can be accelerated. Bus service is anticipated to continue to run in place of trains on the K-Ingleside, L-Taraval and M-Ocean View through spring. SFMTA said that bringing back the trains will allow them to reallocate bus resources and workforce towards other transit routes, and other priorities such as state of good repair, Vision Zero and Slow Streets. We look forward to the Transportation Recovery hearing that Commissioner Chan requested, which is anticipated to be agendized in late March.

**Take Transit to Vaccination Sites - Free Muni and Paratransit to COVID-19 Vaccine Appointments, and Additional Subsidy for the Essential Trip Card Program:** Last week Mayor Breed and SFMTA announced that starting today, Muni and paratransit will be free for those traveling to and from COVID-19 vaccination appointments to help ease transportation and cost barriers to receiving the vaccine. The trips are available to city-sponsored high-volume vaccine sites, hospitals or anywhere else that is offering vaccines. For Muni, riders are asked to have their vaccine appointment confirmation on hand. Paratransit riders on SF Access van service will be free for eligible participants, who must call in advance to make a trip reservation and indicate they are going to get their COVID-19 vaccine. Paratransit taxi riders will have \$60 loaded onto their taxi debit card, which will be valid for up to two months, to get to and from their vaccination appointment. The SFMTA is also providing additional access to taxi service for older adults and people with disabilities who use the Essential Trip Card



program. Participants will be allowed to add a one-time addition of \$60 at the cost of \$12 to the rider if the cost of rides to and from vaccine appointments will require more funds the \$60 maximum that can be loaded on the card each month. Last July, the Board allocated over \$10 million in Prop K sales tax funds towards SFMTA's paratransit program which includes the Essential Trip Card. For more information, visit: <https://www.sfmta.com/blog/free-muni-and-paratransit-covid-19-vaccine-appointments>.

**Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program – Transportation Authority Support for Three Applications:** We supported three applications submitted by Caltrans' February 12 deadline for its Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program. With the goal to maximize mode shift and increase safety, the SFMA's Active Communities Plan will create community-specific solutions to increase active transportation with a focus on innovative outreach in the city's diverse and underserved communities. We also supported the MTC's Bay Area Safety/Vision Zero Program, which builds on the Vision Zero policies adopted in San Francisco and other Bay Area cities and will support MTC in facilitating a data-driven regional strategy and an inclusive approach to improving safety equitably and cost effectively. Lastly, we supported MTC's Next Generation Bay Area Freeways Study, which would investigate freeway pricing strategies included in the Plan Bay Area Blueprint, given the significant benefits in achieving regional greenhouse gas reduction targets. Caltrans is anticipated to announce awards in the summer and awarded projects can begin this fall.

**Vision Zero SF Action Strategy Update - Input for Safer Streets:** SFMTA is in the process of updating the Vision Zero Action Strategy, which outlines the initiatives and actions the city will take to advance Vision Zero and work to meet its goal to eliminate traffic fatalities by 2024. To ensure the update represents the input of San Francisco's diverse communities, SFMTA has created a survey and Story Map. The survey serves as an opportunity to inform the priorities and initiatives for safer streets and the Story Map provides context by laying out current strategies and policies. The survey will be available online until March 5 in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Filipino. We will work with SFMTA staff to provide a Vision Zero Action Strategy update to the Board this spring. To take the survey and view the Story Map, visit: <https://www.sfmta.com/getting-around/walk/vision-zero-sf>. We will also hold Commissioner Melgar's requested hearing on traffic safety along Lake Merced Boulevard and access to Lake Merced at our March 9 meeting.

**Golden Gate Park Sustainable Travel Study - Stakeholder Group Update:** The eastern half of John F Kennedy Drive through Golden Gate Park has been designated car-free in order to give San Franciscans space to recreate safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the request of former Commissioner Fewer, we convened a working group of stakeholders from the disability community, nearby merchants' associations, adjacent neighborhood groups, park institutions, and bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations to assess the car-free designation and park access needs. The group has met twice to discuss shared values and goals, as well as relevant data and unmet needs. We are working closely with Commissioner Chan's office and colleagues at the Recreation and Parks Department as well the SFMTA to bring an action plan with potential strategies to the working group for feedback during our third and anticipated final meeting in March. <https://www.sfcta.org/projects/golden-gate-park-sustainable-travel-study>. We will bring an update to the Board following the final meeting this Spring.



## **PROJECT DELIVERY**

**Electric Vehicle Fast Chargers Installed By EVgo - Funded, in Part, by a TFCA Grant from the Transportation Authority:** EVgo, a grantee of our Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) program, has just completed installation of fast chargers for electric vehicles at the Lucky Supermarket at Fulton and Masonic and has received permits to install additional chargers at the Safeway at 7th Avenue and Cabrillo, which are expected to be open for use this May. The TFCA program is unusual among the fund sources that we administer in that private entities are eligible for some project types. To make sure that the public is getting good value, we required EVgo to contribute a commensurate amount of funds to construct these chargers and to locate them in areas of the city that did not have many existing charging options.

**SFMTA Completes Golden Gate Park Traffic Safety Project - Sales Tax Funded Project Has a Transformative Impact:** SFMTA recently installed new safe hit posts to protect the bike lane on Kezar Drive leading into Golden Gate Park from the Panhandle. This was the final component of the Prop K-funded Golden Gate Park Traffic Safety project that they began in 2017 and we wanted to recognize the transformative impact that this project has had on the park. Through the project, SFMTA constructed 7 new speed humps, 4 speed tables, 10 raised crosswalks, and dozens of intersection upgrades all across the park that have calmed traffic and improved safety for all road users. Our sales tax funds supported design and implementation of these improvements. Some of the roads in the park are now closed to car traffic, but we are continuing the conversation about how to improve safety and accessibility of this amazing public space through our Golden Gate Park Sustainable Travel Study, described above, that will be wrapping up this spring.

## **MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

**Proposition 1B Performance Audit Final Report Issued - No Findings:** At the request of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the California Department of Finance, Office of State Audits and Evaluations, has completed its performance audit of the I-80 Yerba Buena Island Ramps project, which is partially funded by State Proposition 1B funds. The final report concluded that we properly expended Proposition 1B funds in compliance with applicable state and federal regulations. In addition, we accomplished project deliverables consistently with the project scope and schedule. I am pleased to report that we received a clean audit, with no findings or recommendations for improvements. A special thank you to our Deputy Director for Finance and Administration Cynthia Fong and her team for a job well done.