



Memorandum

AGENDA ITEM 3

DATE: May 25, 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: 05/25/21 Board Meeting: Executive Director's Report – **INFORMATION**

REGIONAL, STATE AND FEDERAL ISSUES

Federal Transportation Bill - Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works

Releases Spending Proposal: The House and Senate continue to work on the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill, which expires on September 30, 2021. On May 22, the Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works published its version of the highway side of the bill in advance of a first hearing on Wednesday, May 26. The Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act of 2021 is a five-year bipartisan bill that would increase annual federal investment in streets and highways by 34% over what was approved in the current transportation bill. We are working with regional, state, and federal partners, including the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and ITS America, to review the bill and identify where we can advocate for improvements. We continue to await the Senate Banking Committee's proposal for the transit side of the bill, as well as the Budget Committee's proposal for how to pay for it.

Federal Earmarks - Lawmakers Prepare Directed Funding Requests: For the first time in more than a decade, it appears likely that the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill will include directed funding from each member, also known as earmarks. We are happy to report that Speaker Pelosi has requested \$7.2 million for the Transportation Authority to construct the Quint-Jerrold Connector Road. We would like to thank Commissioner Walton for supporting the project's nomination. The Speaker is also requesting \$6.25 million to BART for the Embarcadero Station Platform Elevator, \$7 million for the Golden Gate Bridge Suicide Deterrent System, and \$12 million for the Mission Bay Ferry Terminal. As discussions about congressionally directed spending continue on the Senate side, we have made requests of the offices of Senators Feinstein and Padilla for \$34 million to close the funding gap for the Yerba Buena Island Westside Bridges Seismic Retrofit Project. We thank Chair Mandelman and Commissioner Haney for their support of those efforts.

The California Comeback Plan - Governor Newsom Announces His May Budget Revise: On May 14, Governor Newsom presented his \$100 billion California Comeback Plan, the biggest economic recovery package in California history. In addition to direct relief to Californians, significant funding to address the homelessness crisis, and a substantial increase in public education funding, the Governor's plan includes an additional \$11 billion to build a modernized and sustainable transportation system. New funds for transportation include \$1 billion for priority transit and rail projects statewide, \$500 million to advance projects that



increase the proportion of trips taken by walking and biking, \$500 million to support high-priority grade separations and grade crossing improvements, and over \$1 billion for zero-emission buses, trucks, and rail and transit equipment. We will continue to track the state legislative budget process and are actively planning for applications for San Francisco's priority projects across these different programs.

Speed Safety Camera Authorization - State Assembly Bill (AB) 550 (Chiu) Dies in Committee:

I very am disappointed to report the AB 550 (Chiu), the bill that would have authorized a speed safety camera pilot program in San Francisco and in limited other locations across the state, did not make it out of the state Appropriations Committee on May 20. This means the bill will not move forward this legislative session. We will regroup with the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) and Assemblymember Chiu to determine why it was held back and work to identify ways to mitigate those factors if similar legislation is proposed in future years. While the bill had broad support from local jurisdictions and walking and biking advocacy organizations, there was significant opposition on record at the time of the hearing, including from the California Teamsters Public Affairs Council, California Conference Board of the Amalgamated Transit Union, and California Walks. We will refocus our advocacy on AB 43 (Friedman), which will give cities greater flexibility in setting local speed limits based on safety. This bill is currently in the Senate Transportation Committee, with no hearing date assigned yet.

Transit Recovery Underway with Local and Regional Service Increases; Welcome Back to Transit Campaigns Start to Take Shape:

As COVID cases decline and vaccine injections increase, we are excited to see that transit recovery continues to expand. Many transit providers operating in San Francisco have announced expanded service in recent weeks. Muni, for example, reopened the subway (N, T and K lines), brought back the F-Market streetcar and will bring back cable cars in the fall. BART is now running trains every 15 minutes on most lines during weekday peak hours. BART plans to return to near pre-pandemic service levels and hours (including midnight closure 6 days a week) on August 30, 2021, and as a way to entice riders back, will offer 50% discounted fares for Clipper Card user in the month of September. Marin Transit and Golden Gate Transit and Ferry will relax social distancing requirements on all rides in Marin County and San Francisco will do so starting this week, meaning more passengers can board. All transit agencies will continue to require masks. More information can be found at transit agency websites and SFMTA staff will provide an update on their transportation recovery plans later on the agenda at today's meeting.

LOCAL ISSUES

Safe and Seamless Mobility Quick-Strike Program - Additional Funding Available through Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA):

Last month MTC announced additional funding of \$34.4 million to augment its Quick-Strike program through the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) and invited additional applications from agencies that initially submitted requests near their target funding amount. We are requesting \$8 million of the additional funding for the Yerba Buena Island Westside Bridges project, co-sponsored by MTC. We also hopeful that San Francisco will receive full funding for the Safe Routes to School program (initially awarded \$1.8 million of the \$2.1 million request) and partial funding for BART's Embarcadero Station Platform Elevator Capacity and Redundancy Project as part of the augmentation. The MTC Commission will approve the final list of projects in June.



District 4 (D4) Mobility Study - Engaging District 4 Merchants: In partnership with Commissioner Mar and as part of outreach for the District 4 Mobility Study, we hosted a community forum for merchants in the Outer Sunset and Parkside neighborhoods. A panel of merchants spoke to transportation issues in their commercial districts with other merchants and community members in attendance providing additional insights and feedback for the study. The project team will be incorporating this outreach as they wrap up the final study report which will be presented to the Board in July. For more information on the D4 Mobility Study, visit www.sfcta.org/d4mobility.

Thanks for a Great Bike to Wherever Day 2021: Bike to Wherever Day was this past Friday, May 21st and I hope many of you were able to get outside and pedal around our city, whether it was for a commute, to run errands, get some exercise, or just for fun. This Prop K sales tax sponsored event featured Energizer Stations in each Supervisor district and the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, which organized the event, reports that volunteers distributed the traditional commemorative tote bags to over 3,000 bike riders. While we are happy to see San Franciscans choosing to bike for whatever reason, we are already looking forward to regular old Bike to Work Day in 2022.

PROJECT DELIVERY

Arguello Boulevard Traffic Signal Upgrades at 6 Intersections Complete: The SFMTA Signal Shop has finished installing a total of 46 accessible (audible) pedestrian signals at 6 intersections on Arguello Boulevard between Lake and Turk streets. This completes the scope of the traffic signal upgrade project, funded by \$775,000 in Prop K transportation sales tax and \$655,000 in Prop AA vehicle registration fee funds. In addition to the audible pedestrian signals, upgrades included new poles, controllers, pedestrian countdown signals, underground conduit and wiring, as well as mast arms and larger signal heads for better visibility.

Jefferson Street Improvements (NTIP) - Phase 2 Near Complete: We are pleased to announce Phase 2 of the Jefferson Street Improvements Project, funded with \$1.4 million in District 3 Neighborhood Transportation Improvement Program (NTIP) and other Prop K funds, is near complete. The project includes streetscape improvements on Jefferson Street between Powell and Jones streets, widened sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting, bike parking, new landscaping, trees, public seating, and a narrowed roadway with geometrically patterned pavement. In April, the contractor completed Muni trackway work to allow re-energization of the overhead lines in preparation for the F-Line return to service earlier this month. The Taylor Street Plaza is open for public use, and streetlights at the Inner Harbor and street furniture have been installed. Installation of landscaping, sidewalk pavers, and final guardrails along the Inner Harbor continue as the project nears completion. San Francisco Public Works (SFPW) anticipates completing the project in June. Project funding also includes a \$6.88 million Local Partnership Program Competitive Program grant from the state which was sponsored by the Transportation Authority on behalf of SFPW.

Downtown Rail Extension - Funding for Upcoming Development Phases: We are working closely with the Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA) and all partners to the Peninsula Rail Memorandum of Understanding on a strategy to fund the next phase of project development work for the Downtown Rail Extension (DTX). This fall, TJPA plans to formally seek entry into the development pipeline for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts program -- a key milestone for advancing the program. FTA will require TJPA to demonstrate committed



and available funds of approximately \$30 million to undertake the next phase of design and related project development work. The TJPA Board and Peninsula Rail Executive Steering Committee considered options for funding this phase at their respective meetings this month. We will continue working with all agencies to advance multi-party funding commitments for the next three years of DTX work, inclusive of the \$30 million design phase and the \$20 million detailed engineering phase to follow. In parallel, TJPA and the Controller's Office of Public Finance are preparing to seek Board of Supervisors authorization later this year to finance a portion of the required funding through the Transit Center Community Facilities District special tax source.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

First Capital Bond Expended - Financing Enabled Faster Project Delivery of Sales Tax Projects: On November 2, 2017, we issued Senior Sales Tax Revenue Bonds (Series 2017) in the amount of \$248 million maturing in February 2034, which will be repaid through sales tax collection in the current and subsequent years. I am pleased to report that we have spent all bond proceeds and interest earned on bond proceeds on various voter-approved sales tax projects such as: new Muni motor coaches, trolley coaches, and light rail vehicles, and the radio replacement and central control and communications programs, which together comprised 66% of total proceeds expended. A special thank you to Cynthia Fong, Anna La Forte, Kalman Hui, Lina Plotnikoff, Eric Reeves, and Steve Rehn, for monitoring our Debt Program.

COVID Impacts - March Sales Tax Receipts Higher Year-on-Year and Previous Month: I'm pleased to share that our March sales tax receipts of \$8.4 million are the first indication of rising sales tax revenues following the 30% drop we experienced last year. This represents over a doubling of the \$3.6 million in revenue received a year ago for March 2020, and are a 42% increase over last month's (February 2021) revenues of \$5.9 million. As we continue to closely monitor revenue streams, we are optimistic that with the rollout of vaccines and re-opening of the economy, sales tax revenues are on the road to recovery.

Farewell to SFBC Executive Director Brian Wiedenmeier: We at the Transportation Authority join many others across the city in thanking departing SFBC Executive Director Brian Wiedenmeier and wishing him well in his next endeavors. Staff and I would like to thank Brian for his partnership over the past 7 years and congratulate him on successfully advocating for numerous Vision Zero initiatives and a 4-fold increase in protected bicycle lanes across the city, among other accomplishments.