



Memorandum

AGENDA ITEM 4

RE: Board Meeting - February 15, 2022
DATE: February 1, 2022
TO: Transportation Authority Board: Commissioners Mandelman (Chair), Chan, Haney, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton
FROM: Tilly Chang - Executive Director
SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report – INFORMATION

REGIONAL, STATE AND FEDERAL ISSUES

Federal Appropriations Bill - House Advances Short-Term Continuing Resolution, Senate Expected to Follow Suit: On February 8, the House approved a short-term continuing resolution in the House, which would provide temporary funding for federal operations to give legislators more time to complete negotiations on the details of an omnibus appropriations bill. The vote tally in the House indicates that the bill will likely receive bipartisan support in the Senate and be approved before the current continuing resolution expires on February 18. The new bill will provide government funding through March 11, giving legislators an additional three weeks to hammer out the details, and potentially include other priorities like disaster or COVID relief. In a sign of progress, a broad agreement was announced February 9 on a framework for both defense and non-defense spending levels. We will closely monitor developments, as some of the new transportation investment programs in last year's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law rely on receiving annual appropriations.

State Legislation - Senator Wiener Introduces Legislation to Fast-Track Transit and Active Transportation Projects: On February 7, I participated in a press conference with Senator Scott Wiener to announce his introduction of Senate Bill (SB) 922, which will extend and expand his previous legislation to streamline certain bike, pedestrian, light rail, bus rapid transit and carpool lane projects by exempting them from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) if they utilize existing rights-of-way, among other requirements. His prior bill, SB 288 (2020), sunsets on January 1, 2023. The event was held in the Bayview neighborhood near the new Prop K-funded protected bikeway on Evans Avenue, a Quick Build project that San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) was able to implement more quickly by taking advantage of the original SB 288 provisions. We appreciate the Senator's leadership in sponsoring sustainable transportation-supportive legislation.

Congratulations to Toks Omishakin, New Head of the California State Transportation Agency: Last week Governor Newsom appointed Caltrans Director Toks Omishakin, to lead the California State Transportation Agency or CalSTA, the state agency that oversees every state department that touches transportation, including Caltrans, CA High Speed Rail



Authority, the California Transportation Commission, the Department of Motor Vehicles and California Highway Patrol. Secretary Omishakin has been leading Caltrans since 2019. Despite his short tenure, he's left his mark on Caltrans helping to shift the agency toward sustainable transportation. We look forward to working with him at CalSTA.

San Mateo 101 Express Lanes Open - New lanes Extend 9 miles from Santa Clara County line to Whipple Avenue: Last Friday, San Mateo County opened 9 miles of new express lanes along Highway 101 between the Santa Clara County line and Whipple Avenue. The lanes will operate on weekdays between 5:00 am and 8:00 pm with toll rates adjusting based on traffic conditions along the corridor. Buses, vanpools and those vehicles traveling with three or more occupants will be able to access the lanes for free. Users will be required to use FasTrak to pay for the lanes and receive the 50% discounts for two-person occupancy or Clean Air Vehicles. The lanes are part of a larger, multi-agency effort to extend express lanes along the Highway 101 corridor. At the southern end the lanes connect to the existing express lanes in Santa Clara County, while at the northern end they will connect to planned lanes extending to I-380/SFO that San Mateo expects to open later this year.

Solutions for Congested Corridor Grant Program - Caltrans District 4 Submits Yerba Buena Island Multi-Use Path for Consideration: We have been working with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) on an application for state funding for an initial phase of the Bay Skyway project, which will include the multi-use pathway on Yerba Buena Island and the West Oakland Link project, improving access to the existing pathway on the east span of the Bay Bridge. Consistent with the state's new Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure, it would create an active transportation option between Oakland and San Francisco on the Bay Bridge corridor, by way of the new Treasure Island ferry service in the near term while the bike path on the west span is underdevelopment. Caltrans Headquarters will evaluate applications from all Caltrans District offices and will announce the final projects it will nominate for Solutions for Congested Corridors Program funding later this year.

Grant Opportunity for Urban Forestry Projects - \$47.5 Million Available Statewide: The California Natural Resources Agency is now accepting proposals for the Urban Greening Grant Program through March 28th. This program funds urban greening and urban forestry projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide multiple additional benefits. The program gives priority consideration to projects benefiting disadvantaged communities. Government agencies as well as non-profit organizations are eligible for the \$47.5 million available this round. Eligible applicants include cities and non-profit organizations. Past San Francisco projects funded through this program include the Yosemite Slough Restoration & Development at Candlestick Point sponsored by the California State Parks Foundation, and the Shoreview Park Renovation Project sponsored by the Recreation and Park Department. More information can be found online at <https://resources.ca.gov/grants/urban-greening>.

LOCAL ISSUES

Treasure Island Autonomous Vehicle Shuttle Pilot - Regional Grant Funding Awarded: On February 11, the MTC Operations Committee approved the award of \$828,000 in Innovative Deployments to Enhance Arterials Shared Automated Vehicles grant funding to the Treasure



Island Mobility Management Agency (TIMMA), to extend the automated shuttle deployment and community outreach process on Treasure Island. This pilot program is designed to gain a more complete understanding of autonomous vehicle operations on mixed-use streets and of perceptions of street users and passengers. It will increase access for an Equity Priority Community with limited existing travel options, and will support partnerships with workforce development, economic development, and education programs. The pilot also builds on work funded by the Advanced Technology and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment program grant from the Federal Highway Administration. We would like to thank MTC for this grant award which will allow us a longer window to collect data from this pilot, providing greater learning opportunities and enhanced service to the Treasure Island community.

Ocean Avenue Action Plan Task Force - Second Meeting to Be Held February 16: On February 16, we will join Commissioner Melgar for the second meeting of the task force formed to advise us on the development of the Ocean Avenue Corridor Action Plan. The Action Plan is a Prop K sales tax Neighborhood Program Planning effort requested by Commissioner Melgar and approved by the Board in November 2021. The Action Plan, expected to be complete within 12 months, will document funding and implementation strategies for already identified improvements in the corridor and prioritize 4-5 transportation improvements to develop and advance for near-term delivery. Task force members include District 7 and 11 residents and representatives from corridor schools, businesses, and neighborhood organizations. At the second meeting, task force members will vote on project goals and provide feedback on project concepts identified through many past planning studies. Task Force members may also introduce new project concepts for consideration. For more information, email OceanAve@sfcta.org.

PROJECT DELIVERY

Caltrain Electrification - Work on the Project Continues in Earnest: Caltrain has made significant progress on constructing various aspects of the Caltrain Electrification project which will electrify the railroad from San Francisco's 4th and King Caltrain Station to the Tamien Caltrain Station in San Jose. Director Walton joined Caltrain officials to celebrate the a major project milestone recently, the completion of the Overhead Contact System. This entailed the installation of all 3,092 foundations for the project, together with 71% of the poles and all but 5,000 linear feet of contact wire. Work continues on the 10 Traction Power Facilities, which are 80% complete. Caltrain staff anticipates energizing Segment 4 (Santa Clara to Tamien), which will allow running test trains in the segment, in April 2022. On the vehicle side, full dynamic 4,000-mile testing of Trainset 1 (eight cars) has been completed in Pueblo, Colorado and the first trainset delivery to Caltrain is anticipated in March 2022. At its January 6, 2022 meeting, the Peninsula Joint Powers Board approved a new budget of \$2.44 billion, \$462 million over the original baseline. The Revenue Service date remained unchanged and is anticipated for the fall of 2024. We are working with Caltrain staff to agendize a project update at an upcoming Board meeting.

Powell Station Modernization Well Underway - BART Reopens Bathrooms After Two Decades: Earlier this month, our Chief Deputy Maria Lombardo joined BART directors,



including Directors Dufty and Li, General Manager Robert Powers, Senator Wiener and others to celebrate the reopening of the restrooms at Power Station. Restrooms at 10 of BART's underground stations have been closed since 9/11 because of safety concerns. Powell Street Station's two public restrooms were the first to reopen as part of the agency's efforts to prioritize the needs of transit riders, especially now during the pandemic recovery. The remodeled restrooms are part of the larger Powell Street Station Modernization Project which includes installing the new ceiling and LED lighting at station, moving equipment to improve line of site and passenger flow, and installing glass fare barriers on the concourse to replace metal fencing. Funding for the Powell restrooms comes from BART's Measure RR, Prop K sales tax, and the state Prop 1B infrastructure bonds.

Central Embarcadero Quick Build Two-Way Bikeway - Initial Completion Next Week, More Improvements to Follow: SFMTA is working to complete a new two-way protected bikeway along the Embarcadero between Mission and Broadway this week. This quick-build project is expected to improve safety and comfort for bicyclists and pedestrians and is the first phase of planned long-term improvements to the Embarcadero. In addition to the bikeway, the project includes traffic signal timing updates, expanded loading areas near the Ferry Building, relocated bus zones, and accessible parking blue zones. Additional bike parking and wayfinding signage will be installed in the coming months. We are excited to see SFMTA continue to deliver quick-build safety projects and make progress on comprehensive improvements to the Embarcadero. This project is funded by Prop K sales tax.

Southgate Project On Track for Summer 2022 Completion - Yerba Buena Island Vista Point Now Reopened for Cyclists and Pedestrians: The Southgate Road Realignment Project, which we are leading on behalf of the Treasure Island Development Authority, is approximately 75% complete and scheduled for completion the summer of 2022. This project will realign Southgate Road, the critical local connection between the I-80 westbound and eastbound on- and off-ramps. I'm also pleased to report that the Yerba Buena Island Vista Point directly adjacent to the Bay Bridge East Span viewing area was reopened on February 4th. Facilities at Vista Point include bathrooms, benches, and a hydration station. The bike path connecting from the Bay Bridge East Span viewing area to Macalla Road also was reopened - weekends only - this past Saturday February 12th.

Project Delivery Best Practices Study - Executive Roundtable Kickoff Held Late January: At the request of Chair Mandelman and Vice Chair Peskin, we have undertaken a Project Delivery Best Practices Study. On January 27, we held an Executive Roundtable Kickoff meeting including our Chair and Vice Chair, and representatives from the Mayor's Office, City Administrator's Office and key City departments and agencies such as the SFMTA, Public Utilities Commission, SF Public works, Transportation Joint Powers Authority and San Francisco International Airport. We are currently planning for follow up workshops with management group designees in the February/March timeframes with preliminary recommendations anticipated in the May 2022 timeframe.



MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Congratulations to Rachel Hiatt on Her Promotion to Deputy Director for Planning. I am so pleased to announce that Rachel Hiatt who has been serving as our Acting Deputy Director for Planning since last fall, and as Assistant Deputy Director for Planning since 2019 has been promoted to Deputy Director for Planning. Rachel has been instrumental to the Planning Division's and overall agency's management team over the past many years. She has lead projects for us large and small from the Tenderloin-Little Saigon Study to our first countywide transportation plan and the Van Ness BRT Environmental Impact Report, to our Treasure Island congestion management program. Congratulations, Rachel!

Bob Planthold - Advocate for Seniors, Persons with Disabilities, Pedestrians and Transit.

Lastly, to echo the chair's remarks, we lost a tireless and seemingly omnipresent advocate with the passing of Bob Planthold earlier this month. Bob's advocacy left its mark on plans, policies and projects all over the city, and at the regional and state level, as well. We send our condolences to his family and friends and hope they can take some comfort in all Bob did to make travel safer and more accessible for all, but especially the most vulnerable among us.