



## Memorandum

**RE:** Board Meeting - March 22, 2022  
**DATE:** March 21, 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 Budget - President Biden Signs Spending Bill:** On March 15, President Biden approved the Federal Omnibus Appropriations bill, providing funding for the government through September 2022. The \$1.5 trillion spending bill includes an additional \$27.1 billion for the United States Department of Transportation. When added to the transportation funding already approved under continuing resolutions and through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the bill raises the total amount for transportation programs to \$141 billion for the 2022 fiscal year, a 60% increase over 2021. Its approval will allow several grant programs to be implemented that had been put on hold, including \$175 million for Bus and Bus Facilities grants, and \$75 million for Low or No Emission Bus grants as well as new discretionary spending for transit capital investments. We anticipate the Department of Transportation will release notices of funding opportunity shortly, and that the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) will be very competitive for these funds. We will continue to work with our transportation agency partners, the Mayor's Office, and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to establish priorities. We are also pleased to announce that Senator Feinstein secured \$2 million in federal funding for the SFMTA to refresh its cable cars and \$2 million for the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District's (BART's) fare gate program. We will engage with our San Francisco delegation to seek additional congressionally directed transportation grants in the Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriations Bill.

**Federal Transit Grants - Bay Area Transit Operators Awarded Additional COVID Relief Funding:** On March 7, the Federal Transit Administration announced the award of a total of \$2.2 billion in American Rescue Plan Additional Assistance grant funding to transit operators across the country. This represents the final tranche of federal relief funding for transit and was awarded to operators based on demonstration of outstanding need for day-to-day operations support. Bay Area operators received more than \$500 million, an unprecedented share of funding. For operators serving San Francisco, that included \$271 million for BART, \$115 million for the SFMTA, \$39 million for Caltrain, and \$26 million for the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA). This will allow these operators to continue providing



essential transit services as they continue to recover from the pandemic and delay the fiscal cliff their operating budgets are facing.

**Caltrain Governance - Caltrain is moving forward with structural changes:** On March 3, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB), the body that oversees Caltrain, approved a Term Sheet to affect governance changes related to its relationship with SamTrans. Thank you to Commissioner Walton, who is one of San Francisco's Directors on the PCJPB, for his leadership on this important subject, as well as San Francisco PCJPB Directors Heminger and Zmuda, with support from Transportation Authority Chair Mandelman and Vice Chair Peskin. As this board may recall, the investigation of governance changes was a condition established by the Board of Supervisors and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Board as a condition for supporting the inclusion of Measure RR on the November 2020 ballot. Measure RR, which imposed a 1/8 cent sales tax in the three Caltrain counties, will provide approximately \$100 million a year to Caltrain. The Term Sheet is the result of many board and staff meetings and discussions over the last 18 months. Under the Term Sheet, Caltrain employees will continue to be SamTrans employees, but under a different structure. Among other terms, the proposal provides for a dedicated Executive Director appointed and supervised exclusively by the PCJPB, legal counsel, and auditing functions separate from SamTrans, and a management team that will be exclusively managed by the Caltrain Executive Director. It also provides for an agreement for shared services. On the related matter of reimbursement to SamTrans for its purchase of the right-of-way, the MTC has committed to pay \$19.6 million and the SFMTA will pay \$200,000, which will complete the reimbursement. In addition, Santa Clara and San Francisco counties will pay SamTrans \$15.2 million in additional compensation for time elapsed and changes to the managing agency relationship. The Term Sheet now goes to the SamTrans Board for ratification (probably at its April 7 meeting – it has not been agendaized yet).

**Clean Ferry Grant - Water Emergency Transit Authority (WETA) Awarded Grant to build Electric Ferry:** On February 17, the Federal Transit Administration announced it will provide \$3.4 million to WETA for a new zero-emission ferry that will provide future service to San Francisco's Treasure Island and Mission Bay neighborhoods. Chairs Mandelman and Haney, have thanked the FTA, WETA and Speaker Pelosi for this award, which will improve service for the commuters, visitors, and families who will depend on ferry service in these growing neighborhoods. We are excited to help WETA demonstrate the tremendous mobility, air quality, and resilience benefits that a clean ferry can offer.

## **LOCAL ISSUES**

**School Access Plan:** We formally launched the School Access Plan last month in coordination with the San Francisco Unified School District and the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families. The Plan will develop transportation solutions for kindergarten through 5th grade students who travel long distances to school and afterschool activities. We aim to schedule focus groups, the next phase of outreach for the Plan, in late April or early May. We are working closely with the study's Technical Advisory Committee on both content and participant recruitment, which will begin in the coming weeks. We appreciate the collaboration with the School District whose partnership helps ensure that we hear from the families of vulnerable youth and caregivers. A second round of engagement, including



surveys and co-creation events, will take place in the fall. For more information, visit [www.sfcta.org/projects/school-access-plan](http://www.sfcta.org/projects/school-access-plan)

**San Francisco Transportation Plan - Outreach Begins This Week:** The San Francisco Transportation Plan is the long-range county-wide policy blueprint for San Francisco's transportation system development and investments. The Plan analyzes every transportation mode, every transit operator, and all streets and freeways every four years. To support this year's update, we are conducting an online survey in English, Spanish, Chinese, Filipino, and Russian, offering presentations to community and neighborhood groups citywide, and hosting a town hall on Thursday, April 28. To request a presentation, please contact [communications@sfcta.org](mailto:communications@sfcta.org). More details about outreach will be available at [sfcta.org/sftp](http://sfcta.org/sftp), once activities launch this week.

## PROJECT DELIVERY

**Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit and Infrastructure Improvements:** After years of planning and construction, work on the Van Ness Transportation Improvement Project is nearing completion. Construction of the center-running red transit lanes, boarding islands, streetlights, and utilities have been completed. The project team is finishing remaining punch list items and testing buses along the corridor. The project also includes replacement of underground utilities (sewer, water) as well as addition of pedestrian signals and upgrading of traffic signals and lighting along the 2-mile corridor. SFMTA will unveil the Van Ness Avenue light sculpture between Geary and O'Farrell streets on March 31. The ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for April 1, at 9:15 a.m at the War Memorial building, and members of the public are invited ([rsvp at sfmta.com](mailto:rsvp@sfmta.com)). The Transportation Authority provided \$45 million for all phases of the project using Prop K sales tax funds, and also led planning and environmental work for this first center running BRT project for the city. We congratulate the SFMTA and its partners at the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and San Francisco Public Works on this project that will reduce travel times, increase safety and improve reliability for 20,000 riders on Muni and Golden Gate Transit per day.

**Better Market Street:** The Better Market Street Phase 1 Project will deliver transportation and street improvements between 5th and 8th streets. San Francisco Public Works advertised the project in October 2021 and received bids in December 2021. The project team is working with the U.S. Department of Transportation Office of the Secretary on a BUILD grant amendment before awarding the contract. At the April 26 Board meeting, the project team will present details on contract award, business mitigation, and bike detours. Construction is anticipated to start in fall 2022.

**Mansell Street Curb Ramps - Mid-Point of Construction:** Public Works has reached the mid-point of construction on the Mansell Street Curb Ramps project, completing 25 curb returns and 30 curb ramps along Mansell Street in Districts 9 and 10. The Board funded both the original and additional locations for this project with over \$1.5 million in Prop K funds. The additional curb ramps will begin construction once the final change orders are approved with an anticipated completion date of June 2022.

**SFMTA's Slow Streets - Prop K-funded Upgrades Installed on 31 corridors:** The Slow Streets program has upgraded 15 existing Slow Streets corridors with more durable materials and installed delineator materials on 16 new Slow Streets Corridors. Upgrades to the existing



corridors replaced the temporary barricades that were used to implement the Slow Streets program in early 2020. The Slow Streets program team worked with the public throughout the project and responded to public input by removing eight corridors from the Slow Streets program and developing recommendations for the post-pandemic extension of four additional Slow Streets corridors for approval by the SFMTA Board of Directors. The project also produced a comprehensive report evaluating the effectiveness of Slow Streets.

## **MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

**Staff Participation to Promote Women in Construction Week Virtual Event:** On March 8, Transportation Authority staff joined five other local and state agencies and participated in a How to Find Construction & Public Works Bid Opportunities webinar, hosted by the Northern California Procurement Technical Assistance Center. The event was one of a three-part series in the Women in Construction Week Series, focusing on women-owned small businesses interested in working with public agencies. Staff provided information on accessing business opportunities and described upcoming contracting opportunities at the Transportation Authority and TIMMA to 54 attendees. The Northern California Procurement Technical Assistance Center's mission is to advance entrepreneurship and economic growth through procurement technical assistance for all businesses in Northern California particularly underserved businesses such as women, minority, LGBTQ+, and veteran-owned businesses.