



SFCTA Clerk <clerk@sfcta.org>

CENTRAL SUBWAY EXTENSION FUNDING: SFCTA Board Hearing, June 23, 2026

1 message

Howard <wongaia@aol.com> Mon, Jun 22, 2026 at 1:49 AM
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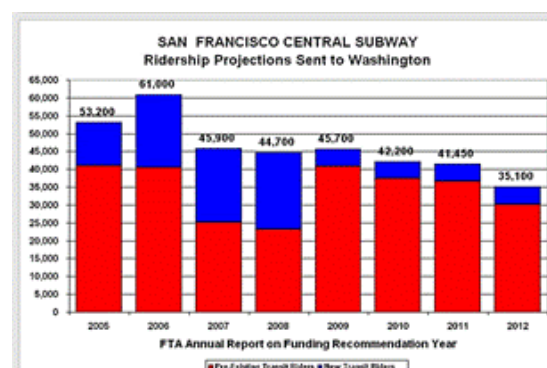
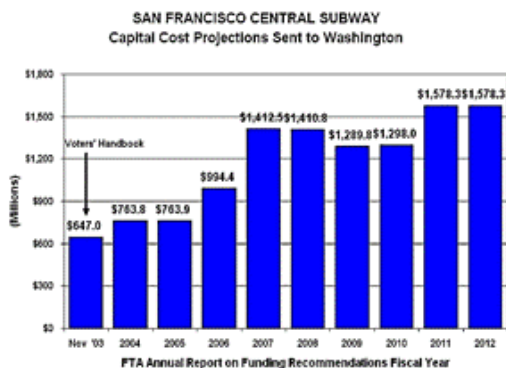


SFTA CENTRAL SUBWAY FUNDING HEARING, JUNE 23, 2026

SFCTA: TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY BOARD, JUNE 23, 2026, ITEM 9: [Final Approval] Allocate \$180,800 in Prop L Funds, with Conditions, to the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency and Appropriate \$49,900 in Prop L Funds, with Conditions, for the Central Subway North Beach Extension Study - **ACTION*** https://www.sfcta.org/sites/default/files/2026-06/SFCTA_Board_Item8_FiscalYear202627AnnualBudgetMEMO_2026-06-23.pdf **SEND COMMENTS TO:** clerk@sfcta.org
 [NOTE: This new funding is on top of \$1.42 million for Initial Study in 2018].

MY RECOMMENDATION: Item 9 Funding---Add Conditions & Requirements to Central Subway/ North Beach Extension Study---to Fulfill Fiduciary Responsibilities of SFCTA Board: Data, cost estimates, schedules, new ridership projections, transit benefits and collateral impacts shall be true, accurate and complete---in plain language within proper context.

BACKGROUND: A NEGATIVE FEEDBACK LOOP: Despite billions of dollars of expenditures, SF transit modal share has decreased---even before the pandemic. False data justified Central Subway Phase 1. As money was diverted from the Muni system, bus lines were cut/ shortened and citywide service/ ridership decreased. As Muni budget deficits increase, citizens/ riders get less service and higher fares/ fees/ fines. Voters are asked for more and more taxes. And the doomsday cycle continues---as lobbyists/ financial self-interests push for more Central Subway funding---taking more scarce funds from the citywide Muni system---for small benefits not remotely commensurate with astronomical costs. [Parenthetically, also destructive construction impacts on businesses and neighborhoods---for years and decades].



WHAT'S THE OBJECTIVE OF TRANSIT CAPITAL PROJECTS: Whether small/ quick or large/ expensive projects, the transit objective is to increase transit modal share---dramatically. The Central Subway Phase 1 has very low NEW ridership at its three stations (Yerba Buena/ Moscone, Union Square, Chinatown-Rose Pak). These stations have fewer daily riders than a busy Muni bus stop. The T-Line's ridership gains have been at Chase Center and Mission Bay. But even the T-Line is unreliable---as residents of Bay View/ Hunters Point demanded and got the restoration of the 15-Third Express Bus (a parallel route to the T-Line) in 2021.

IMMEDIATE NEEDS AND HIGHER PRIORITIES: Every neighborhood has streetscape/ safety/ transit infrastructure needs, where well-designed projects can bring quick benefits, as well as quick construction jobs to local contractors. Even if transit funding measures pass in the November 2026 election, SFMTA/ Muni still need to find efficiencies in 2027, 2028, 2029.... SFCTA, SFMTA and Boards have the fiduciary obligation to scrape every dollar to improve transit today. And if millions/ billions of dollars are available, higher priorities include new train control systems, tracks, overhead catenary lines, traffic signals, elevators/ escalators, lighting, street safety and billions of dollars of past-useful-life assets.

CONCLUSION: Confronting a juggernaut of lobbyists/ financial special interests is daunting, but independent data can push SF to significantly higher transit modal share (of all trips). Around the world, many cities have spent much less funds to reach 30%, 40%, 50% and higher transit modal shares. SF is an extremely small, compact city, which can emulate success stories like Zurich, Switzerland. Best Regards, Howard Wong, AIA

PLANETIZEN: Zurich, the World's Best Transit City <https://www.planetizen.com/node/53044>
ZURICH: Mineta Transportation Institute: Implementation of Zurich's Transit Priority Program <http://www.andynash.com/nash-publications/Nash2001-Zurich-PT-MTI-01-13.pdf> "Consequently, the entire transit network could be improved rather than just building a single line. This was the choice that Zurich faced in a 1973 election that asked voters to spend 1.2 billion Swiss Francs (SFr) for construction of a new underground transit system. Voters rejected that measure and voted instead to provide 200 million SFr over 10 years to implement transit priority measures to make the existing surface transit system more effective."

CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT: TOO MUCH MONEY FOR TOO LITTLE BENEFIT
https://civilgrandjury.archive.sf.gov/2010_2011/Central_SubwayToo_Much_Money_for_Too_Little_Benefit.pdf

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