



Memorandum

AGENDA ITEM 3

DATE: November 19, 2024

TO: Transportation Authority Board: Commissioners Mandelman (Chair), Melgar (Vice Chair), Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton

FROM: Tilly Chang – Executive Director

SUBJECT: 11/19/2024 Board Meeting: Executive Director’s Report – **INFORMATION**

FEDERAL, STATE, AND REGIONAL ISSUES

SF Bay Ferry Receives \$67 Million in Federal Grants for Electric Ferries and Mission Bay Landing. This fall, SF Bay Ferry, as the Water Emergency Transportation Authority is now being known, received a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant for \$11.5 million to construct two electric ferry vessels and a \$55.4 million Clean Ports grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA grant completes the funding plan for the Mission Bay Ferry Landing, provides for a large 400-passenger electric ferry vessel and charging infrastructure at the Ferry Building, and supports a maritime workforce development program in the Bay Area. The funding helps build out a zero-emission network that connects Oakland, Richmond, Vallejo, and Alameda with financial and biotech employment centers and accelerates a new standard for clean ferries nationwide. With these grants, SF Bay Ferry has now secured over \$220 million in funding from local, state, and federal agencies to implement their electrification program. We congratulate the Port of SF and Bay Ferry and look forward to seeing these electric ferries serving Treasure Island and Mission Bay in the next few years.

Federal Railroad Administration Awards \$25 Million to The Portal Project. On October 28, Speaker Emerita Pelosi announced a \$25 million grant to the Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA). The funds will support the design of The Portal/Downtown Rail Extension (DTX) project, specifically the rail track and train systems elements of the project. The grant award is from the Federal Railroad Administration’s Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program through a competitive national selection process by U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. This funding will help TJPA to advance the track and systems design work in coordination with work to design The Portal’s tunnel and other civil works.

SFMTA’s Train Control Upgrade Project (TCUP) - \$130 Million State Grant Awarded for TCUP. The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority’s (SFMTA’s) Train Control Upgrade Project (TCUP) has been awarded \$130 million from the State of California’s Transit



and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP), which provides Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund grants to modernize urban rail systems like Muni Metro. These TIRCP grant funds will be used to implement Phase 2 of TCUP, which will replace the outdated, 30-year-old automatic train control system currently in the subways. This is a welcome addition to the \$30 million TIRCP grant funds awarded to TCUP for Phase 1, which will install the new train control system along on-street rail between Embarcadero and Mission Bay. In August 2024, the City approved TCUP's consultant contract. In November 2024, the SFMTA will seek city approval for TCUP's supplier contract. The project is currently on track to launch in 2025 and SFMTA expects to complete Phase 1 by 2028. Phase 2 will start in 2026 and is expected to be completed in early 2030. The remaining phases will finish, pending funding, in 2032.

Caltrain Electrification - Riders Flock to Faster, More Frequent Service. Following the implementation on September 21 of fully electrified rail service between San Francisco and San Jose, Caltrain has seen its best ridership numbers since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Caltrain served more than 753,000 riders last month, marking a 54% increase from October 2023. Weekend ridership has overtaken pre-COVID levels, and average weekday ridership grew 38% compared to October of last year. Electrified Caltrain is faster and more frequent, and we are thrilled to see that the project is already delivering these benefits to so many riders up and down the Peninsula.

Metropolitan Transportation Commission Next Generation Freeway Study - Executive Committee Meeting on Round 2 Study Findings. On October 30th I attended the sixth executive committee meeting of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC's) Next Generation Freeway Study (Study). This Study is charged with assessing if there are equitable and politically feasible pathways to advance Plan Bay Area 2050's strategy T5, which called for implementing per-mile tolling on Bay Area freeway segments with transit alternatives. The Study's second round of analysis considered three pathways for pricing the regional freeway network to achieve state-mandated greenhouse gas emissions goals in Plan Bay Area, including all lane freeway tolling and a per-mile fee on all roadways throughout the region. Findings from the Study may be used to revise the Transportation Strategies in the upcoming Plan Bay Area 2050+, expected to be released late this year or early next year. MTC expects to conclude the Next Generation Freeway Study in early 2025, with recommendations and a potential roadmap. Additional steps are still necessary for the adoption of any alternatives under study. We will keep the board updated on the outcomes.

New York to Re-Start Congestion Pricing Program. New York State Governor Kathy Hochul announced a revised congestion pricing program with the aim of putting the tolling system in place on January 5 midnight, before the Presidential Inauguration in January. The main revision is expected to be a reduced fee, from the initial \$15 charge to \$9, for cars to enter Manhattan's core at peak hours. The new plan was approved by the Metropolitan



Transportation Authority board this week, with the aim of raising \$15 billion in bond financing for subway system rehabilitation and improvements.

10th Annual World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims - Honoring Lives Lost and Advocating for Safer Streets. On Sunday, November 17, Chair Mandelman, Vice Chair Melgar and I attended the tenth annual *World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims* gathering on the steps of City Hall, organized by WalkSF. This global event serves to honor the lives lost and those impacted by traffic crashes, while advocating for urgent changes to prevent these avoidable tragedies. The evening's program included reading aloud the names of over 300 victims, a candlelight vigil, and stories from Bay Area Families for Safe Streets. This solemn event, organized by San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets and Walk San Francisco, offered an opportunity for community members to stand together in solidarity with victims and their loved ones. The Transportation Authority re-affirms our commitment to safe and equitable streets.

LOCAL ISSUES

Muni Funding Working Group - 3rd Meeting Explores Service Cut Scenarios: On November 13, SFMTA held their 3rd Muni Funding Working Group meeting where Chair Mandelman, Vice Chair Melgar, and I serve as members. We discussed transit service cut scenarios that could help the agency close their projected deficits by a total of almost \$200 million annually. While none of the scenarios discussed at the meeting are actually being proposed for implementation at this time, they help paint a picture of what transit service levels may look like in the case new revenues do not materialize or are insufficient to address SFMTA's projected budget shortfalls, which range from \$239 to \$322 million beginning in fiscal year 2027. The scenarios explored at the meeting include 1) reducing frequency of well-utilized rail and bus routes by 50%, 2) suspending lower utilized routes, 3) suspending historic train and cable car services, 4) implementing Owl Service across the system between 9:00PM and 6:00AM, and 5) eliminating or reducing fare and tow subsidies. Some or all of these scenarios may need to move forward in some form if other solutions are not identified over the next year and a half. We continue to work with SFMTA as well as our other regional partners including MTC, BART and Caltrain to develop frameworks that can sustain and grow transit operations funding across the region. More information on the Muni Funding Working Group can be found at www.sf.gov/muni-funding-working-group

Walter U Lum Place Public Space Study - Outreach Underway This Month. The Walter U Lum Place Public Space Study (Study), requested by Commissioner Peskin, is underway with its second round of outreach this month. This Neighborhood Transportation Program (NTP) planning study will recommend ways to improve Walter U Lum Place and cohesively connect the alleyway to Portsmouth Square renovations and other locations in Chinatown. Following the first round of outreach, which concluded this summer, the Department of Public Works has developed three design options for the alleyway. The designs show a range of



opportunities for the alleyway, including improving the sidewalk for ADA access and pedestrian comfort, increasing sidewalk width, creating spaces for seating and landscaping, and adding art and historical features to enhance community identity. Outreach partner Chinatown Community Development Center held engagement events with community groups and local merchants throughout November and has launched an online survey for feedback. Take the survey at www.sfcta.org/walter-u-lum.

D7 NTIP Inner Sunset Transportation Study - Outreach Underway this Month. The Inner Sunset Transportation Study, requested by Vice Chair Melgar, initiated outreach this month. We held an open house community meeting at the County Fair Building in Golden Gate Park last night, and thank Vice Chair for providing open remarks at the event which was well attended. Participants heard the results of our initial analysis and provided feedback on transportation barriers and issues traveling to, from and around the Inner Sunset commercial core. We plan to return to the community in the Spring to present draft concepts and recommendations, which will be developed closely with staff from SFMTA, to address the issues we've identified this round. In addition to the open house, we invite residents, employees, and visitors to the Inner Sunset to learn more and take our online survey and scavenger hunt, both available on our website at www.sfcta.org/inner-sunset.

Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) Community Open House - Capital Projects Highlighted. On Saturday, November 9, Transportation Authority staff joined staff from TIDA, TICD, SFMTA, SF Planning and MTC for a community Open House meetin to showcase projects and community development efforts on Treasure Island. We explained the West Side Bridges and Hillcrest projects, answered questions about the Yerba Buena Island Multi-Use Path and Bay Skyway projects, and heard concerns about traffic and congestion on the island. We thank Commissioner Dorsey for attending and meeting with community members.

PROJECT DELIVERY

Traffic Signal Visibility Upgrades FY22 - Construction Complete. SFMTA recently completed its Traffic Signal Visibility Upgrades FY22 project, funded with nearly \$700,000 Prop K sales tax dollars. The project included upgrades to 78 traffic signal heads across 32 different signalized locations throughout the city, replacing existing 8-inch signal heads with new 12-inch LED signal heads to improve signal visibility. The larger signal heads are more visually prominent to motorists at a greater distance and were installed in an effort to improve safety and maintain SFMTA's assets in a state of good repair.

BART Next Generation Fare Gates - Installation Complete at SFO Station and 3 San Francisco Stations. BART has completed installation of new fare gates at Civic Center, 16th Street, 24th Street, and SFO stations while Montgomery and Powell Street stations are underway. The new faregates are designed to improve accessibility, reliability, and



maintainability and to deter fare evasion at each BART station. BART anticipates finishing installation of new fare gates systemwide, pending funding, by the end of 2025. The Transportation Authority is providing \$12,525,000 in Prop L funding as local match to this project.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Congratulations and Thank You Commissioner Stefani - On behalf of the Transportation Authority staff, I'd like to congratulate Commissioner Stefani on her election to the state Assembly representing District 19 and to thank her for her many years of service to the City and to the Transportation Authority. We have benefitted greatly from Commissioner Stefani's leadership and guidance over the years! Commissioner Stefani has served on the Transportation Authority since 2018 and before that as a legislative aide for two prior District 2 Transportation Authority commissioners. Commissioner Stefani early on focused on safety including supporting delivery of the Presidio Parkway and Van Ness BRT, holding hearings on gender safety on Muni, championing daylighting citywide and advancing better management of Lombard's crooked street portion. Most recently, Commissioner Stefani requested the District 2 Safety study to address safety challenges and barriers to access on routes to land frequented by children, seniors, and other vulnerable road users. We will carry these forward and also wish to extend our appreciation to District 2 staff, especially Lorenzo Rosas and Mick Del Rosario. We look forward to working with Assemblymember-elect Stefani and send best wishes for continued success in the legislature.