



# Memorandum

**Date:** 11.17.15 **RE:** Transportation Authority Board  
November 17, 2015

**To:** Transportation Authority Board: Commissioners Wiener (Chair), Cohen (Vice Chair), Avalos, Breed, Campos, Christensen, Farrell, Kim, Mar, Tang and Yee

**From:** Tilly Chang – Executive Director *TTC*

**Subject:** **INFORMATION** – Executive Director’s Report

## REGIONAL, STATE AND FEDERAL ISSUES

**Federal Transportation Bill – House Passes 6-Year Surface Transportation Bill:** On November 5, the House approved the Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015 (the STRR Act) as an amendment to the Senate-approved Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy Act (or DRIVE Act). While the House version of the bill includes a new bus discretionary program that may benefit bus operators in San Francisco, overall the House bill provides far less funding for transit than the Senate bill, which could translate to \$83 million less transit funding for the Bay Area. These proposed cuts could make it more difficult to secure anticipated funding for state of good repair and the next generation of transit expansion projects. We will continue to work with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the City and organizations such as the American Public Transit Association to advance San Francisco’s priorities in the final bill. The current MAP-21 extension expires on November 20. Another extension will likely be necessary, though Congress is moving with some urgency now and is expected by many to pass a multi-year comprehensive bill by the end of the year.

**Progress Toward Closing Funding Gap for Transbay Transit Center – Parcel F to be Sold for \$165 Million:** Last Thursday the Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA) Board agreed to accept a proposal from Crescent Heights Development to acquire Parcel F for \$165 million, \$5 million over the minimum bid. An additional \$20 million would be forthcoming if the developer succeeds in acquiring an adjacent parcel, currently under negotiations, and the two parcels can be combined to build a single project. The offer calls for payment in full at close of escrow in February 2016 making the funds available when needed for construction, eliminating the need for TJPA to obtain financing for that amount. The project will provide 35% affordable housing. At the same meeting, the TJPA Board approved an interim budget for Phase 1 (Transbay Transit Center) for \$2,064,400 to account for the additional funds from the sale of Parcel F. Meanwhile, the MTC-led cost review for Phase 1 resulted in a recommendation to increase the budget by \$360 million, which provides a confidence level of 70% that the project will be completed within budget. Proceeds from the sale of Parcel F reduced the additional funding need to \$195 million. We will continue to work with TJPA, MTC, and the city to close the Phase 1 funding and financing gap. Results of the Phase 2 (Caltrain Downtown Extension) cost review will be presented to the MTC Programming and Allocations Committee in December.

**Regional Agency Reorganization – MTC and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to Study Agency Merger:** After several months of discussion over whether to consolidate the two agencies’ planning sections, at its October meeting MTC Commissioners voted to delay the decision and instead develop a proposal for a full agency merger. MTC and ABAG staff work closely together on, among other things,

developing the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy (most recently Plan Bay Area), and MTC claims a merged planning section would facilitate that work. ABAG challenged that such a merger is necessary and is concerned that the transfer of staff would hinder the organization's ability to perform its other functions. The governing bodies from both agencies, as well as numerous advocates and other stakeholders, concluded that it would most benefit the region to study how the two agencies could fully merge into an integrated body that addresses both transportation and land use, similar to the structure of all other Metropolitan Planning Organizations across California. MTC and ABAG are working to secure a consultant to aid the development of a merger proposal and will strive to reach consensus on the path toward consolidation by June 1, 2016. We will continue to monitor the process and flag the pros and cons for San Francisco and the region's core for our MTC and ABAG Commissioners.

**MIT/UCB Disrupting Mobility Conference - Landmark Study on TNC's Announced:** I attended the Disrupting Mobility Conference that was held in Cambridge last week to present on the topic of equity and access in the shared mobility sector and to meet with MIT graduate students. During the conference, it was announced that the National Resources Defense Council Urban Solutions will be partnering with UC Berkeley's Transportation Sustainability Research Center on the first-ever climate analysis of the ridesourcing/transportation network companies (TNCs) Uber and Lyft. The Hewlett Foundation and the Transportation Authority will be funding the study, which will evaluate the volume and attributes of TNC trips, and will explore the demand of TNCs in terms of their relationship to transit, taxis and automobile ownership. This work will help inform policymakers around the world as we learn the scale and impact of these services on transit, access and the environment.

**Self Help Counties Coalition (SHCC) - Annual Conference Held in Newport Beach:** Along with several members of the Transportation Authority's management team, I attended the annual Focus on the Future Conference sponsored by the SHCC, an organization of 20 local county transportation agencies delivering voter-approved investments funded by dedicated transportation sales tax funds throughout California. Themes of this year's conference ranged from innovative funding and finance to methods for improving project delivery and discussions of emerging technology and industry trends. With respect to the latter, I had the pleasure of serving on a panel entitled R&D - Developing the Future of Transportation. The panel spoke to mega trends - demographic shifts and the rise of connected and autonomous vehicles, the roles of the public and private sectors in meeting demand, and the challenge of harnessing "Big Data" - all of these trends are changing the way we plan and design transportation systems - and all are themes in the San Francisco Transportation Plan update that is getting underway.

## **LOCAL ISSUES**

**Neighborhood Transportation Improvement Program (NTIP) - Projects Advance Citywide:** The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) continues to make progress on the design of the District 2 Lombard US-101 Corridor project, which will be the focus of a third outreach meeting tonight, Tuesday, November 17 at 6:30 p.m. at the Marina Middle School (3500 Fillmore Street). SFMTA staff will share project updates made in response to past community feedback. SFMTA staff is also gearing up for future outreach on the District 1 NTIP efforts, which will create concepts for safer walking and biking on Arguello and several other corridors in District 1. We will share those dates once SFMTA has finalized the outreach schedule for the project. On today's agenda we are also bringing the Planning Department's District 7 Balboa Area Transportation Demand Management Study for approval, which was developed in coordination with Commissioner Yee. We are also working with Commissioner Avalos and city departments to explore a District 11 NTIP planning project for intersection improvements at San Jose and Geneva Avenues and San Jose and Ocean Avenues. For more information, please contact NTIP Coordinators Anna LaForte (Transportation Authority) at

anna@sfcta.org or 415-522-4805 or Craig Raphael (SFMTA) at 415-579-9740 or craig.raaphael@sfmta.com. More information on NTIP projects can be found at [www.sfcta.org/NTIP](http://www.sfcta.org/NTIP).

**Western Addition Community-Based Transportation Plan - Outreach Continues, Conceptual Designs Under Development:** The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) continues to move forward with this planning effort, which will identify transportation needs and create a blueprint for implementation by developing and prioritizing transportation improvements from the community's perspective. Public outreach to identify safety, security, transit, and street improvement priorities started in early August and continued in mid-September at a Sunday Streets event and Western Addition Service Providers meeting. Currently, SFMTA is working to develop phase 2 outreach materials and identify community events for this next round of outreach. SFMTA is also beginning to develop conceptual designs based on the community feedback received to date. After the second phase of outreach, SFMTA will return to the community to present the final conceptual designs. More information on this NTIP planning project can be found at <https://www.sfmta.com/western-addition-community-based-transportation-plan>.

**Prop AA Vehicle Registration Fee - Upcoming Call for Projects:** We are pleased to announce an upcoming call for projects (to be released before Thanksgiving) for approximately \$1.1 million in Prop AA vehicle registration fee funds. In keeping with the Prop AA Expenditure Plan guiding principle of delivering tangible benefits quickly to San Francisco neighborhoods, priority for these funds will be given to projects that will enter design and/or construction in Fiscal Years 2015/16 or 2016/17. This funding is available primarily from cost savings from completed projects in the Pedestrian Safety and Transit Reliability & Mobility Improvements categories. Depending on the applications received, funds will first be awarded to competitive projects eligible in the categories from which the funds were made available. Any public agency is eligible to apply. Applications will be due to the Transportation Authority in early January, with Board approval anticipated in February 2016. For more information please contact Chad Rathmann ([chad.rathmann@sfcta.org](mailto:chad.rathmann@sfcta.org)) or visit [www.sfcta.org/PropAA](http://www.sfcta.org/PropAA).

**Powell Street Station Modernization - BART Plans Customer Experience Improvements:** BART recently released a plan to modernize and upgrade the Powell Street station, which is the third busiest BART station overall and the busiest station on weekends. BART plans to spend \$30-40 million to increase overall safety, capacity, sustainability, appearance, and enhance the customer experience at the station. The first improvements BART riders will notice include a new ceiling and lighting on the concourse level, remodeling and reconfiguration near several entrances, including near Hallidie Plaza, Westfield Center, and Stockton Street, and escalator and elevator improvements to correspond with the opening of the adjacent Central Subway in 2019. BART anticipates these improvements to be rolled out over three years and completed by 2018. BART also plans to test canopies over the Market Street escalators at the Powell Street Station in an attempt to protect the escalators from the elements and make the station more secure when closed. Future mid- and long-term improvements for the station could include additional bicycle parking, reopened restrooms, platform screen doors, upgraded ventilation, and new corridors and stairways. The near-term improvements will be funded with state Prop 1B Public Transportation Modernization, Improvement, and Service Enhancement Account Program funds.

**School Transportation Survey Project Underway - City-Wide Survey Planned Covering Public and Private Schools:** The Mayor's Office and Commissioner Tang have initiated a study of school transportation focusing on a city-wide survey of the parents of school-aged children at both public and private schools, to better understand school transportation patterns and potential needs. Currently, the city does not support school transportation needs other than a very limited yellow school bus program for some public school students. The need to transport children (often in private vehicles) can detract from parents' work productivity and can be an affordability issue, and vehicle trips to and from school also contribute to

congestion on San Francisco roadways. This work is funded in part by SFMTA and the Transportation Authority. The project is expected to take approximately nine months and will kick-off in December. We hope to improve our understanding of the transportation challenges facing the parents of school-aged children and the reasons behind parents' choices. For more information, contact Ryan Greene-Roesel (ryan@sfcta.org, 415-522-4808), or Commissioner Tang's office.

**Geary Bus Rapid Transit Project – Environmental Process Public Comment Period Extended:** As a result of feedback we received following the public meeting on November 5, the Geary team has extended the EIR/EIS public comment period by two weeks, now to end on Monday, November 30. The November 5 public comment meeting was a productive event, with over 120 attendees submitting more than 90 comments via written card or court-reporter dictation service. However, early in the event, approximately five of the comment cards were stolen, some of which were later returned by anonymous mail. In response, the project team has provided notification to meeting attendees and the community overall regarding the theft and the extension, encouraging the public to submit or re-submit comments. Meanwhile, the project has received over 50 emailed comments. In addition, 4,000 people have used the digital viewfinder devices known as OWLs at 17th Avenue and Webster Street to view images of the proposed improvements. We received over 1,000 responses to a survey that we administered through the devices, approximately 75% of which expressed positive views about the proposed project. After the public comment period, the project team will produce a Final Environmental Document that includes all comments received, along with responses. The final document is scheduled to be released in spring 2016, after which we will bring a publicly noticed action item to the Transportation Authority and SFMTA Boards to complete the environmental and approval and project selection process. For more information please visit the Geary BRT website at [www.sfcta.org/gearybrt](http://www.sfcta.org/gearybrt).

**Treasure Island Mobility Management Program – Community Outreach This Week:** We partnered with the Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) this week on a series of community outreach events in support of the Treasure Island transportation improvement program. The events include several resident focus groups organized by the Treasure Island Homeless Development Initiative (TIHDI); focus groups with Island businesses; and open houses. The purpose of the outreach is to share ideas for transportation policy adjustments based on feedback from this summer's stakeholder and Board outreach. Following this month's outreach, we will bring revised recommendations to the TIMMA Board for information and adoption in early 2016. Information on the time and location of outreach events is posted to [www.timma.org](http://www.timma.org). For more information, please contact Rachel Hiatt, Principal Planner, at [rachel.hiatt@sfcta.org](mailto:rachel.hiatt@sfcta.org) or 415-522-4809.

## PROJECT DELIVERY

**Central Subway – Contractor Completes Special Trackwork at 4th and King Streets, SFMTA opens Market Street raised Cycle Track; Caltrans coordinates smooth Van Ness underpass work and Bay Bridge take down:** From November 6 to November 14, the Central Subway contractor closed the intersection of 4th and King Streets to install the special trackwork that will allow the T-line trains to transition from the existing trackway on Mission Bay to the new surface track leading to Chinatown. The work, which included all the tracks and switches on that intersection, went very smoothly. On another front, the contractor is in the process of installing the Winter Walk on Stockton Street, between Geary and Market for the holidays. The walk, which was very successful last year, will provide a public open space with benches, lighting, and artificial turf, where shoppers will be able to rest and play during the holiday season. We also applaud SFMTA's completion of the city's first raised cycletrack on Market Street and congratulate Caltrans on the smooth coordination of construction for the CPMC pedestrian underpass on Van Ness Avenue near Geary, as well as successful implosion of the former Bay Bridge piers this past weekend.

**One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) Cycle 1 – First project reaches completion:** SFMTA completed the construction of seven pedestrian bulb-outs at the intersection of Bacon and Goettingen Streets, near the ER Taylor Elementary School and the Portola branch of the San Francisco Public Library. Led by San Francisco Public Works and funded with OBAG and Prop K sales tax funds, this project is the first OBAG project that has been completed in San Francisco. The bulb-outs will increase safety for students and other pedestrians at the busy vehicular intersection by shortening the crossing distance, preventing speed turns, and increasing visibility.

**Mansell Corridor Improvements – Groundbreaking Event November 23:** On November 23 we're excited to join with the Recreation and Parks Department, Public Works and SFMTA to celebrate the construction kick-off of the Mansell Streetscape Improvement Project. Mansell Street bisects McLaren Park and cars often zip through at almost 50 mph along its four traffic lanes. The streetscape project will address pedestrian safety and bicycle access issues by reducing the number of vehicular lanes from four to two (one lane in each direction) and separating vehicular traffic from cyclists and pedestrians with a landscaped median. Safety improvements include raised crosswalks and flashing beacons at intersections and corner bulb-outs. Street-level lighting, trees and landscaping, and site furnishings are also included to make this a complete streets project. In support of this project, the Transportation Authority allocated Prop K sales tax funds and Prop AA vehicle registration fees, while One Bay Area Grant funds were made available through MTC. The project is expected to be open for use by fall 2016.