



JPB Board of Directors
Meeting of January 7, 2021

Correspondence as of December 11, 2020

Subject

- 1 Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force
- 2 Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Vaccine Support Letter



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105
415.778.6700
www.mtc.ca.gov

December 24, 2020

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Deputy Executive Director,
Local Government Services

Mr. Dave Pine
Chair, Board of Directors Caltrain
(Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board)
1250 San Carlos Ave.
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306

RE: Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force

Dear Chair Pine:

I wanted to provide you and your colleagues an update on the activities of the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force (Task Force) convened by MTC as part of our action last spring to distribute the first phase of CARES Act funding to transit operators. After focusing initially on COVID-19 health and safety protocols and encouraging the adoption of common messaging that all of the region's transit operators could agree upon, the Task Force has now moved to the next critical stage—long-term recovery and transformation. The Task Force's vision of transit transformation is to:

Design, adequately invest in and effectively manage a public transit network that is equitable, inclusive, frequent, affordable, accessible, reliable; is integrated with unified service, fares, schedules, customer information and identity; and serves all Bay Area populations, resulting in increased transit ridership and reduced growth in vehicle miles traveled.

At its meeting on November 16, the Task Force adopted four specific goals and objectives for the Transformation Action Plan, attached. Goals 1 and 2 are foundational to the remainder of the plan: First, acknowledge the fiscal crisis facing operators and defer post-recovery service planning to allow agencies to prioritize difficult fiscal and service choices in the midst of increasing uncertainty. Second, prioritize equity. Third, identify near-term actions to implement network management & governance reforms, and fourth, identify how current MTC and state initiatives can help advance those reforms.

Notably, this effort is related to, but separate from, two other initiatives that MTC is working on with the Bay Area's transit operators of which you may also be aware: A Fare Coordination/Integration Study and a Transit Mapping and Wayfinding Project, both of which seek to improve the transit rider experience and encourage ridership as we recover from the pandemic. Work on those efforts is ongoing, with updates to the Task Force planned for January 2021.

The Task Force currently consists of 32 members, including California State Transportation Agency Secretary David Kim and, Assemblymember David Chiu, eight MTC Commissioners, nine transit agency general managers and 9 stakeholders representing various interests, including labor, business, social equity, and persons with disabilities. Knowing what a difficult time this is for your agency, we very much appreciate the time your staff are devoting to this effort.

MTC staff will schedule a virtual meeting for the region's transit agency board members early next year to provide an opportunity for you to learn more and ask questions. In the meantime, meetings of the Task Force are open to the public and held via Zoom. Prior meeting materials are available for review on MTC's website [here](#). The final Transformation Action Plan, anticipated to be completed in June 2021, will likely include legislative recommendations and Assemblymember Chiu has made it clear he is interested in authoring legislation on this subject. If you have questions or would like to request a presentation regarding the work of the Task Force work at a future board meeting, please contact Rebecca Long, MTC Manager of Government Relations at rlong@bayareametro.gov or 510-504-7914.

Sincerely,


Scott Haggerty
Chairman



cc: MTC Commissioner Jim Spering (Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force Chair)
Jim Hartnett, Executive Director, Caltrain (Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board)



December 8, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

Bay Area transit systems continue to struggle in the face of dramatically reduced ridership and revenues due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This challenge was already the most significant crisis in the history of public transportation, and now it has persisted far longer than any of us would have predicted.

Since the beginning, our workers have been on the front lines, doing their jobs as essential workers, responsible for providing other front line workers with a way to safely travel to and from essential jobs.

Now that the availability of a vaccine is on the horizon, we are proud to echo the attached call from the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU). Specifically, we urge you to work to ensure that transit, paratransit, and school transportation workers are prioritized along with other essential workers to receive the vaccine following the critical need to vaccinate the State's healthcare workers.

Even with reduced ridership, an average of 8 million monthly riders continue to depend on Bay Area transit services. These riders are the healthcare workers, grocery clerks, caregivers, emergency services personnel and others doing the critical work that has kept California functioning during the pandemic. They cannot continue to do so without access to reliable public transportation, and are therefore dependent on the health of the transit workers that serve them every day.

Our agencies have worked hard to ensure the public health of riders and transit workers during this crisis. We coordinated to develop the Riding Together: Bay Area Healthy Transit Plan, which includes a baseline set of measures aimed at minimizing virus transmission on our systems. Among those measures is the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) for all workers and a requirement that all riders wear face coverings. Prioritizing transit workers for vaccination as the attached letter suggests would ensure that our State is aided by a fully healthy transit workforce ready to carry a growing number of workers back to their jobs as our communities shelter in place, and then prepare to reopen safely.

Thank you for everything that you and your team have done and are doing to address this crisis, and thank you for considering the need to make sure transit workers are recognized for the daily sacrifices they continue to make on behalf of all of us.

Sincerely,



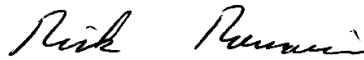
Michael Hursh,
General Manager
Alameda-Contra Costa
Transit District



Diane Feinstein,
Interim Transportation
Manager City of Fairfield



Rachel Ede,
Deputy Director
City of Santa Rosa
Transportation and Public
Works



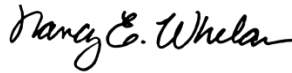
Rick Ramacier,
General Manager
County Connection



Denis Mulligan,
General Manager
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway
and Transportation District



Michael S. Tree,
General Manager
Livermore Amador Valley
Transport Authority



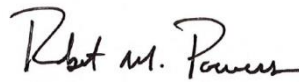
Nancy Whelan,
General Manager
Marin Transit



Kate Miller
Executive Director
Napa Valley Transportation
Authority



Jared Hall,
Transit Manager
Petaluma Transit



Robert Powers,
General Manager
San Francisco Bay Area Rapid
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Jim Hartnett, General
Manager/Executive Director
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District/Caltrain



Nuria Fernandez,
General Manager
Santa Clara Valley
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Beth Kranda,
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Bryan Albee,
Transit Systems Manager
Sonoma County Transit



Jeanne Krieg,
Chief Executive Officer
Tri Delta Transit



Joan Malloy,
City Manager
Union City Transit



Nina Rannel,
Executive Director
Water Emergency
Transportation Authority



Charles Anderson,
General Manager
Western Contra Costa Transit
Authority

Cc: Members, MTC Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force
David Kim, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency



Amalgamated Transit Union

10000 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20903
301-431-7100 Fax 301-431-7117

Office of the International President

November 30, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
State Capitol
Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

The recent promising news of multiple quality vaccines for the coronavirus has lifted the spirits of all Americans, including the hundreds of thousands of transportation workers who have been on the front lines working through this very dark period in our nation's history. On behalf of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), the labor organization representing the majority of these brave workers, we urge you to **provide early vaccine access and availability for our members in the transit and school bus industries.**

This week, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), which is advising the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on who should get the first doses of COVID-19 vaccine agreed on initial priorities. The committee generally concurred that healthcare workers should get the first doses of vaccine, while essential workers should be in the second priority group because they often don't have the luxury of working from home and tend to be racially and demographically diverse. **We urge you to follow these guidelines and include transit and school bus workers in the category of essential workers.**

Nationwide, thousands of transit workers have tested positive for the coronavirus, and nearly 100 ATU members have died due to COVID-19. Our members are getting sick at a rate that is much higher than the general population because we are continuously exposed to large crowds of transit-dependent riders at close range, often times without the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) to keep us safe. In addition, the air flow in transit buses flows from back to front carrying debris, viral particles and other pollution lofted in the air as aerosols and fine particles – an invisible enemy that is killing our members. And as if navigating a massive vehicle through heavy traffic and all sorts of weather conditions while enforcing rules and regulations was not dangerous enough, now our members are serving as the “mask police” during this politically-charged time.

Similarly, since school started up this fall in certain areas, school bus workers have been considered heroes for simply reporting to work each day, and rightfully so. In addition to their normal duties, they must make sure that children are seated far enough apart to avoid the spread of COVID-19. They are also tasked with sanitizing the vehicles, hoping that their employers provide the proper PPE to keep them safe. Even before the pandemic, the school bus industry was

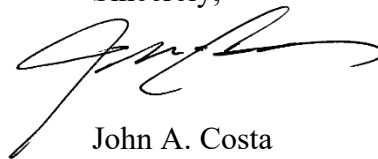
facing a severe driver shortage, and it has only gotten worse in the last year. Many school bus drivers (often older Americans) are just too fearful to return to the job without a vaccine. It takes a minimum of 12 weeks to get a new driver certified with a Commercial Driver License (CDL) and receive training before they can be put behind the wheel of a bus carrying schoolchildren. These factors are causing route cancellations, exposing children to much less safe ways to get to and from school.

In addition, our members and the industries we represent can play a critical role in vaccination logistics. Moving forward, we would welcome the chance to work with your office and local government, and of course transit systems to get masses of people to medical facilities or other staging areas for vaccinations or to transport medical personnel, equipment, and the vaccines to the population at large. But like the healthcare workers who are rightfully first in line because of the role they play in fighting the coronavirus, our members also need priority access and availability. I would also note that our membership is overwhelmingly made up of people who have been disproportionately affected by the virus — especially minorities, lower-income people, and older Americans — an added reason to move them up in line.

Transit and school bus workers are true heroes, and there are safer and easier ways for them to earn about \$15-20 per hour. The least we can do as a nation is to recognize the sacrifices that these workers and their families have made during this health crisis by providing them with early access to the coronavirus vaccine and to make it available to them. It is the right thing to do for the workers and it's in the best interest of the millions of people -- big and small --- who rely on their services.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



John A. Costa
International President

C: Arturo E. Aguilar, President, California Conference Board
Yvonne M. Williams, PR/BA, ATU Local 192, Oakland, CA
Ralph T. Niz, PR/BA, ATU Local 256, Sacramento, CA
John Courtney, PR/BA, ATU Local 265, San Jose, CA
Al Munoz, PR/BA, ATU Local 1027, Fresno, CA
Albert Garcia, PR/BA, ATU Local 1225, San Francisco, CA
Cesar Buenaventura, PR/BA, ATU Local 1309, San Diego, CA
Jesse Hunt, PR/BA, ATU Local 1555, Oakland, CA
Miguel Navarro Jr., PR/BA, ATU Local 1574, San Mateo, CA
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Michelle K Gray, PR/BA, ATU Local 1605, Concord, CA
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Georgia Graham, Transportation Manager, City of Lodi, Transit Division
Ivette Iraheta, Grant Administrator, City of Madera Transit Department
Jared Hall, Transit Division Manager, City of Petaluma, Petaluma Transit
Jason Shykowski, Public Works Director, City of Roseville, Roseville Transit
Darlene Thompson, Finance Director, City of Tulare, Tulare Transit
Angie Dow, Executive Director, Kings County Area Public Transit Agency
George L. Sparks, Administrator, Pomona Valley Transportation Authority
Beth Kranda, Executive Director, Solano County Transit (SolTrans)
Michael Hursh, General Manager, AC Transit (Alameda Contra-Costa Transit District)
Rick Ramacier, General Manager, Central Contra Costa Transit Authority
Gregory Barfield, Director, Department of Transportation/Fresno Area Express (FAX)
Doran J. Barnes, Executive Director Foothill Transit
Denis J. Mulligan, General Manager Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District
Kenneth McDonald, President and CEO, Long Beach Transit
Phillip A. Washington, Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Carl G. Sedoryk, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer Monterey-Salinas Transit
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Gloria G. Salazar, CEO, San Joaquin Regional Transit District
Jim Hartnett, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer, San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans)
Nuria I. Fernandez, General Manager/CEO, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
Lauren Skiver CEO/General Manager, SunLine Transit Agency
Terry V. Bassett, Executive Director, Yolo County Transportation District
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