

DRAFT - December 18, 2019

Voices for Public Transportation

Platform for a Bay Area Regional Transportation Funding Measure

Voices for Public Transportation is pleased to provide this initial input on our vision, goals and priorities for a Bay Area regional transportation funding measure. This feedback has been developed through numerous discussions over the past year with many labor and community membership groups across the nine county Bay Area. It is provided in advance of our having seen a draft bill to provide early input to the draft bill, and will be refined and expanded once we have an opportunity to review the proposed bill language.

Our Vision

Our vision is that residents of all abilities and incomes enjoy accessible transportation options that reliably, affordably, and conveniently get us where we need to go around the region. We have the power to do this by passing a game-changing regional funding measure that will enhance our freedom of movement, while at the same time create good-paying green union jobs, and contribute to a clean and healthy environment by reducing car trips and carbon emissions.

Goals

- **Greater access to opportunities:** People of all ages, abilities, genders, and backgrounds will have easy access to dignified, world-class public transit with affordable fares. Low-income and transit-reliant people will benefit most, spending less time and money on getting around.
- **An excellent transit experience:** Riding public transit will be simple and convenient, offering an excellent experience for riders of all abilities. It will work as one seamless, connected network across the region.
- **Reduce traffic and greenhouse gas emissions:** Millions more people will use transit and sustainable transportation to get around each day because it is fast, reliable, and cost-effective. This will reduce driving and congestion, increase access to jobs, improve air quality, and lower carbon emissions consistent with state targets.
- **Healthy, diverse communities:** High quality public transit will be at the heart of walkable, bikeable, affordable communities across the Bay Area, enabling people to get around without needing a car. Low-income people will be able to remain in their communities even as they benefit from improved transportation options.
- **Low-income and disadvantaged communities will be engaged from the beginning** in a transparent public process, and their feedback will be meaningfully incorporated.
- **High quality green jobs:** Thousands of new good-paying green union jobs in transportation will be created, supported by new pathways to opportunity for those most in need.

Expenditure Priorities

A regional funding measure should focus on the following types of investments with a mixture of near and long-term improvements:

- 1. Improve and increase existing transit service**, making it fast, frequent, and reliable.
 - Ensure substantial dedicated operations funding (at least 30%) that supports excellent service for both local and regional transit service
 - Reduce wait times by increasing how often the bus comes
 - Maintenance funds to ensure a state of good repair for transit infrastructure
 - Get bus riders out of traffic, making transit competitive with driving
 - Expand paratransit service with publicly provided “on demand” and flexible options
 - Develop a zero-emission bus fleet
- 2. Build and run new transit options** that connect more people with opportunities and each other.
 - Build a frequent, rapid, and cost-effective transit rider network connecting the places where people live, work, and play
 - Create transformative new transportation investments that radically change how we get around
- 3. Expand and enhance walking, biking, and new non-car options** as a key part of getting around.
 - Provide safe walking, biking, and non-car options in all neighborhoods, with connections to transit
 - Build an interconnected all-abilities bicycle network that prioritizes reach into historically disadvantaged communities
 - Provide safe sidewalks and streets
 - Repurpose existing land and infrastructure to accommodate non-car options
- 4. Create an easy-to-use, accessible, seamless and affordable** transportation system.
 - Provide funding for coordinating and integrating the regional system
 - Create integrated, affordable fares, including expanded means-based fare and free fare programs throughout the Bay Area
 - Prioritize high quality transit access for low-income communities, and implement universal design standards to ensure access for people of all abilities

Accompanying Policies

In order to achieve these goals, all measure investments will:

- **Prioritize the needs of disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and communities of color:** New investments and improved service will be paired with strong anti-displacement policies and affordable housing incentives. A social equity fund will help address historical inequities, and will be spent supporting underserved communities through a Participatory Budgeting process.
- **Be fiscally responsible:** Transit expansion and capital projects must include sufficient funding for operations and maintenance as a condition of approval.

- **Put people first:** Projects will be identified and funded based on how they accomplish the measure’s goals, and not chosen piecemeal. These metrics will be informed by a robust community engagement and planning process. Capital construction projects will be funded once studied to determine how they accomplish the measure’s desired outcomes, including not contributing to the physical or economic displacement of low-income residents.
- **Fund quality jobs:** The thousands of new operating and construction jobs created by new transit investments and increased service will focus on local hire, good working conditions, a livable wage, and public-sector union contracts. A workforce development fund will help train new employees and ensure a robust workforce.
- **Plan for climate change:** Investments will reduce vehicle miles traveled to meet or exceed state targets. Expenditures will enable the region to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. Projects will be built for resilience to uncertain and changing conditions. No funds will be spent on roads and highways to increase driving.

How to pay for it

Responsibility for funding the next generation of transportation investments will come from those with the ability to pay and not burden small businesses, working families and low-income residents. We challenge the notion that a regressive sales tax is the only way to achieve these outcomes. The following progressive funding sources offer significant revenue generation potential that are more equitable. They could be applied singly or combined as multiple sources in support of a single measure:

Revenue Mechanism	Potential Range of Annual Revenue (Millions)*
Head tax on large employers	\$104 - \$203 annually
Parcel tax (with exemptions for low income households)	\$20 - \$156 annually
Surcharge on upper income tax brackets	\$225 - \$1,720 annually**
Tax on corporate parking	\$142 - \$567 annually

**Projections reflect conservative estimates. Full report summarizing analysis of revenue mechanisms available: <https://www.siliconvalleycf.org/blog/announcements/how-can-we-fund-our-transportation-investments-equitably>*

***This high end estimate is higher than that in the Silicon Valley Community Foundation report, and is based on less conservative assumptions.*