

A Transformative Transportation Funding Measure for the Bay Area

As soon as November 2020, residents of the nine Bay Area counties could vote on a regional transportation funding measure to raise as much as \$100 billion for transit. The decision on how the measure would be funded will be made in the coming months.

The idea for a regional transportation funding measure was created many years ago, following the approval of similar transportation mega-measures in Seattle and Los Angeles, which is currently funding major improvements to their respective transit systems.

Unlike Regional Measure 3 and local transportation sales tax measures that have generally raised \$2-4 billion dollars over 20-30 years, this mega-measure proposes to raise money at a very different scale.

Because of the scale of this funding measure, TransForm and our climate and equity partners want to ensure there is a broader coalition and a more transparent and engaging outreach process than many prior ballot measures. We also want to ensure this measure, including its funding streams and expenditures, is outcomes-oriented and adheres to the following principles developed by our coalition partners. We propose that the measure and its investments:

1. Advance Mobility, Jobs, and Climate Goals: Prioritize cost-effective investments that move more people around the region with fewer cars, create good-paying jobs, and reduce carbon emissions.
2. Create a Sustainable, World-Class, and Coordinated System: Significantly support everyday transit operations through frequent and reliable service and by moving people on our existing networks, while also supporting regional connections and long-term solutions that connect all residents.
3. Support Healthy and Stable Communities: Support resilient and thriving neighborhoods, while avoiding displacement and other harms to vulnerable residents.
4. Promote Social Equity: Provide differently-abled and lower-income residents with dignified, reliable, and affordable transportation options and provide them with good-paying jobs.
5. Ensure Fair Funding Streams: Ensure that the responsibility for funding the next generation of transportation investments comes from those with the ability to pay and not burden small businesses and low-income residents.
6. Prioritize Democratic Community Engagement: Ensure community residents have input at all stages of the process and project development and their feedback is meaningfully incorporated.

Possible funding streams that we are exploring include

- Employee payroll or “head tax”
- Gross Receipts Tax
- Commercial linkage fee
- Vacant home and/or short-term rental tax
- Transfer or parcel tax
- Sales Tax with rebate
- VMT Fee
- Regional GO Bond
- Business Parking Levy
- Land Value Capture Mechanism
- MTC Regional Gas Tax (Existing authority)

Currently, the measure does not have an expenditure plan, however it will need to come together rapidly in the coming months. In early 2020, the state legislature must pass a bill to authorize MTC, our regional transportation agency, to place the measure on the ballot. This bill would need a 2/3 vote to go on the November 2020 ballot. Once the legislature authorizes the measure, MTC would engage in a compressed public process, also early in 2020, before voting to place the measure on the ballot for the Nov. 2020 elections. The ballot measure, which would also need a 2/3 vote at the polls, would specify where the money would come from (the revenue sources) and what it would be spent on (the expenditure plan).

Transportation contributes nearly a third of carbon emissions in the U.S. With the clock ticking on our ability to address the climate crisis, it will take the power of all of us working together to win a transformative measure. We invite you to help us shape this measure and build a diverse coalition around this exciting opportunity.

Partners that have been engaged in the regional coalition and helped contribute to the coalition principles above:

Thea Selby, SF Transit Riders
Bob Allen, Urban Habitat
Peter Straus, SF Transit Riders
Chris Lepe, Transform
Yvonne Williams, ATU Local 192 (Oakland)
Gena Alexander, ATU Local 1555
Jamaine Gibson, ATU 265
Ian Griffiths, Seamless Bay Area
Richard Marcantonio, Public Advocates
Eduardo Gonzalez, Youth Leadership Institute
Brian Schmidt, Greenbelt Alliance
Leslie Gordon, Urban Habitat

Salem Afangideh, Public Advocates
Aboubakar “Asn” Ndiaye, Working Partnerships USA
Derecka Mehrens, Working Partnerships USA
Adina Levin, Friends of Caltrain
Mark Williams, AC Transit
Mary Lim Lampe, Genesis
Dave Campbell, Bike East Bay
Janice Li, SF Bicycle Coalition, BART Board
Roger Marenco, TWU Local 250A
Daveed Mandell, East Bay Center for the Blind