

Cities Association of Santa Clara County
Selection Committee Members
P.O. Box 3144
Los Altos, CA 94024

January 26, 2023

Dear Members of the Cities Selection Committee.

I write to express my interest in being reappointed to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

I have had the opportunity to serve as the MTC appointee for the last two years where I have worked hard to represent the transportation interests of all the cities in Santa Clara County, fought for our County's fair share of State and Federal transportation dollars, advocated for ways to improve our regional transit system and advance capital projects.

The last two years have primarily been focused on getting through and recovering from the COVID pandemic. We all know that the pandemic diminished ridership immensely and put many of our transit agencies in deep financial jeopardy. I worked hard with my colleagues on MTC to disperse Federal and State relief funds equitably and worked doubly hard to make sure our County received its fair share. As VTA faced added challenges due to the shooting tragedy in 2021, I advocated for, and was successful in obtaining an extra \$28M for VTA to address the hardships resulting from the tragedy. I've fought for funding for the BART Extension Phase II, Caltrain electrification, expansion of our express lanes, and restoring bus and rail service.

I have been an active member of MTC, serving in several committees, as Vice Chair of the Bridge and Toll Authority (BATA) Committee, and on the Ad Hoc Committee to recruit and appoint a new Executive Director since our current Director, Therese MacMillan, will be retiring in February. The Ad Hoc Committee is in the middle of our work and is expected to appoint someone in the next several weeks.

I have discovered that there is a steep learning curve to serving on MTC and have worked hard to learn and understand the issues at hand. The Commission is also at a critical juncture as we work to reimagine transit/transportation post-pandemic along with having to appoint a new Executive Director. Given that there are many works in progress that I have been deeply involved with, I believe my continuing on MTC would be most beneficial to representing Santa Clara County as well as the Commission. I have had an excellent relationship working with the other members of our South Bay Delegation – County Supervisor Cindy Chavez and Former San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo. I expect to continue in the same way with Supervisor Chavez and forge a strong working relationship with new San Jose Mayor Mahan. I have also been asked to take on more leadership roles should I be reappointed which illustrates my positive relationship with the other MTC commissioners.

I am open-minded, collaborative, have a strong command of transportation/transit issues, and advocate strongly for our county's needs while seeing the bigger picture. As a long serving member of the Cities Association Board who has also held several leadership positions including President, I have come to understand the diverse cities in our County and have demonstrated my leadership in moving our collective issues forward. I would be honored to have your support for re-appointment to MTC.

Finally, should I have the benefit of being reappointed, I would ask that my term be considered a full four-year term that would expire at the end of 2024 when I term off of the Mountain View City Council. With such a conversion, my successor would be able to start a new full four-year term when I vacate the position in 2024.

Sincerely,

Margaret Abe-Koga
President, Cities Association of Santa Clara County
Councilmember, City of Mountain View