

PBA 2050 Implementation Plan Comments from SFMTA

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External Email

Dear Plan Bay Area staff,

Copied below, please find our comment letter on the Draft Plan Bay Area, with a special focus on the Draft Implementation Plan. I am sending on behalf of our Planning Director, Sarah Bernstein Jones (CCed).

Feel free to reach out with any questions or follow up, and we look forward to our continued collaboration on this effort.

(Note: We attempted to use the online submission portal but had issues with the URL. We will try this again later but wanted to submit by 5pm)

Thank you!

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To Plan Bay Area Staff,

I am writing on behalf of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA) in response to the public comment period for the Draft Implementation Plan for Plan Bay Area 2050. We want to thank MTC staff for their partnership with our agency and other stakeholders throughout the Plan Bay Area 2050 process.

The Draft Implementation Plan and the entire Plan Bay Area process has, in many ways, helped move the region in the right direction. As we move into more detailed discussions about the implementation

actions and partnership roles, MTC has solicited feedback from partners on the Draft Implementation Plan and initial partnership roles.

In our multifaceted role as a regional economic and transit hub, a local jurisdiction, a department of transportation and a transit operator, the SFMTA anticipates being an active participant in implementing many of the implementation actions and looks forward to being an active partner in discussions to shape the details of individual action items going forward. Detailed initial comments in response to the action items and partnership roles are below, however, we wanted to highlight some initial high-level responses to the actions and roles as proposed:

- ***In its role as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Bay Area, MTC is particularly well positioned to lead the region in advocating for additional funding and partnering on legislative priorities.*** The region has substantial investment needs for state of good repair, transit expansion, and electrification and aspirational policy goals. We look forward to continuing to partner with MTC on these initiatives to bring needed additional funds and policy changes to the region.
- ***We look forward to continuing to partner on sustaining transit service, pandemic recovery and Blue Ribbon Task Force actions.*** The SFMTA has been one of a number of transit agencies collaborating on sustaining and improving transit coordination post pandemic. We are supportive of the effort and look forward to a continuing partnership as these actions are developed.
- ***The SFMTA is a leader in innovative complete streets planning, design and implementation and has a robust equity focus in our transit planning.*** As both the department of transportation and transit agency for San Francisco, we look forward to continuing to lead in streets and transit implementation and community transportation planning.
- ***While we support the increased emphasis on equity and climate change in the Plan Bay Area 2050, the implementation of funding for these actions need to ensure they are accessible by all counties.*** The SFMTA has consistently sought to pursue projects that encourage mode shift and build zero emissions infrastructure. However, we have consistently encountered difficulty when attempting to access funds for projects supporting mode shift through existing channels, due to significant restrictions in the legislative backbone of programs administered by the Air District as well as the narrowly defined metrics for these programs. As conversations for implementing actions continue, we look forward to being an active partner in the discussions around these implementation actions.

1. Where do you see your organization as having a role in implementing [Plan Bay Area 2050's strategies](#)?

The SFMTA anticipates being a leader and a partner on many of the proposed strategies. San Francisco serves a major role in the regional economy and is a nexus for regional transportation. The SFMTA is in the unique position of being part of a local jurisdiction and a transit agency, serving as both a department of transportation and a transit operator. We have outlined below the PBA strategies and implementation actions we anticipate having a role in.

2. Which plan strategies would you like to help implement and what kind of specific implementation role would you expect to play?

The SFMTA intends to be involved in many of the Plan's strategies. In particular, we anticipate a significant role in the following:

T1 – Restore, Operate and Maintain the Existing System: The SFMTA plans and operates transit service across San Francisco. The agency is taking an active role in regional working groups to collaborate on pandemic recovery. The SFMTA anticipates continuing to take a lead role in planning and operating existing transit service in San Francisco as well as continuing to partner with MTC and other agencies to adjust and improve coordination across our agencies.

T2 – Support Community - Led Transportation Enhancements in Equity Priority Communities: The SFMTA has conducted several Community Based Transportation as well as the Muni Equity Strategy, which identifies transit enhancements to Equity Neighborhoods. The agency anticipates continuing to take a lead role in these and similar initiatives as well as partnering with MTC to build opportunities to improve on these efforts.

T3 – Enable a Seamless Mobility Experience: The SFMTA should continue to partner in discussions regarding fare integration and schedule coordination.

T4 – Reform Regional Fare Policy: We would want to be involved as a partner in any conversations regarding discounted fare programs.

T5 – Implement Per-Mile Tolling on Congested Freeways with Transit Alternatives: The SFMTA would take more of a support role in this strategy, though we would want to be closely looped into any reinvestments into transit alternatives.

T7 – Advance Other Regional Programs and Local Priorities: The SFMTA should lead planning in local street and arterial improvements in San Francisco.

T8 – Build a Complete Streets Network Complete streets planning – The SFMTA would lead this work in San Francisco.

T9 – Advance Regional Vision Zero Policy through Street Design and Reduced Speeds: The SFMTA would lead Vision Zero work in San Francisco and support regional Vision Zero work.

T10 – Enhance Local Transit Frequency, Capacity and Reliability: Local bus and light rail improvements, including frequency increases, are core to our Transit Investment Strategy. The SFMTA would take a lead role for these Muni improvements.

T11 – Expand and Modernize the Regional Rail Network: The SFMTA would strongly support key pieces of an improved rail network, such as DTX and HSR, which are also pieces of our future transit vision that would complement increased Muni service.

T12 – Build an Integrated Regional Express Lanes and Express Bus Network: We support an express bus network that continues to prioritize transit in our City and provides additional dedicated right-of-way for our buses.

EN1 – Adapt to Sea Level Rise: This will be critical for SFMTA for major transportation infrastructure and our facilities that are vulnerable to SLR. We see ourselves as key partner for this work in SF.

EN6 – Modernize and Expand Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities: We support active transportation and recreation through trail creation, and we'd partner with other key entities such as our Parks & Recreation Department to execute this strategy in San Francisco.

EN7 – Expand Commute Trip Reduction Programs at Major Employers: We would want to partner on any mode shift programs, particularly for major employers, and how they might be implemented.

EN9 – Expand Transportation Demand Management Initiatives: The SFMTA would partner on TDM initiatives due to our existing expertise and work in this realm.

3. Which implementation actions identified in the [Draft Plan Bay Area 2050 Implementation Plan](#) do you support and wish to partner with MTC/ABAG on?

We believe MTC/ABAG has identified many important actions in the Draft Implementation Plan. The SFMTA strongly supports MTC/ABAG taking a leading role in key areas. In particular, we support MTC/ABAG leading the charge in pursuing new funding and seeking transportation revenues – such as actions 1a, 2a, 3b, 9a, 10a, and 11b. We also support MTC/ABAG using its leverage to advocate for legislative changes, such as automated speed enforcement (2b) or general-purpose lane conversion (3a).

The SFMTA envisions itself as a vital partner on many of the identified implementation actions. These include:

- 1b
- 1d
- 1i
- 2b
- 2c
- 2d
- 3c
- 3e
- 3f
- 3g
- 3j
- 9c

Lastly, we would like to reiterate our call for additional clarity on implementation actions related to the expanded Bay Area Commuter Benefits Program (11a, 11e, 11f), and desire to partner with the region as the program is optimized.

4. What are some key initiatives your organization is leading that support implementation of the plan’s strategies as well as the plan’s overall vision and goals?

There are many initiatives underway in San Francisco that support the plan’s goals. These include our Vision Zero work, Active Transportation planning, and our Transportation Demand Management program.

5. What’s missing in the partnership areas identified by MTC/ABAG? What other partnership opportunities exist or should be further explored? Do you have any concerns you would like to share?

We would like to see a clear framework for prioritizing racial equity as Plan Bay Area is implemented, which goes beyond identifying Equity Priority geographies. Other organizations and jurisdictions have developed Racial Equity Toolkits that could provide a starting point.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Implementation Plan for Plan Bay Area 2050. Please feel free to reach out with any questions, and we look forward to continued collaboration on this and other projects in the future.

Sarah Bernstein Jones
SFMTA Planning Director