



AGENDA REPORT

Mayor's Office

DATE:	June 7, 2022
TO:	Members of the City Council
FROM:	Tom Butt, Mayor
Subject:	California State Senate Bill 917 (Support)
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	N/A
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	N/A
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	California State Senate Bill 917, the "Seamless Transit Transformation Act", would require the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to develop and adopt a Connected Network Plan.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	ADOPT a resolution urging the California State Legislature to enact California State Senate Bill 917 – Mayor's Office (Mayor Tom Butt 510-620-6503).

DISCUSSION:

The San Francisco Bay Area, despite being an exceptional place to live, faces an uncertain future due to several interrelated crises: decreasing housing affordability; increasing congestion; rising pollution; widening inequality; and the COVID-19 public

health crisis, all of which are exacerbated by an inadequate and poorly performing public transportation system. Despite billions of dollars of investments in new transportation infrastructure over the past five decades, public transit in the Bay Area has failed to attract large numbers of new riders and has never been used by more than 12% of the population for commute trips since 1970, and by contrast, automobiles have always been used for over 75% of commute trips. The quality of and usage of public transit in the Bay Area has declined in recent years, with transit trips per capita declining by 10%, average bus speeds declining by 9%, and transit commute times increasing by 11% between 2001 and 2016.

The California Air Resources Board reported in 2018 that no California regions, including the Bay Area, are on track to meet their greenhouse gas reduction targets, with increasing Vehicle Miles Traveled and declines in transit ridership cited as primary factors.

Using public transit in the Bay Area is inconvenient and costly for many types of trips, requiring riders to use multiple transit systems operated independently with little coordination, pay multiple separate fares, experience unpredictable transfers, and navigate different wayfinding systems and brand identities. Low-income people, many of whom have experienced displacement and have long commutes requiring multiple transit services, are among the most adversely affected by the Bay Area's poorly integrated public transportation system, experiencing a significant financial burden from needing to pay multiple transit fares or being forced into costly vehicle ownership.

Regions with high-ridership public transportation systems are, by contrast, characterized by highly integrated networks of quality local and regional transit services that make traveling without a private automobile convenient and easy for all types of trips, featuring: aligned routes and schedules; coordinated transfers; high quality transit hubs; common branding and customer information; and other common regional customer experience standards. Regions that successfully integrated and simplified transit fares have experienced many broad social benefits, including a shift in travel from private cars to public transit, an increase in overall public transit usage, and expanded mobility options and cost savings for riders.

A well-functioning and coordinated transit system plays a critical role in supporting public health and safety during an emergency, with 31% of Bay Area essential workers relying on public transit to get to work, and an economic recovery. During and in the aftermath of major disruptions to our transit system, close coordination among agencies facilitates prioritization of the most critical needs, efficient deployment of resources, and clear communication to customers.

The City of Richmond affirms commitment to working collaboratively with state agencies, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, municipalities, and other public agencies to develop a highly integrated regional transportation system that provides convenient, seamless, and affordable transit.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – Resolution