



AGENDA REPORT

City Manager's Office

DATE:	April 28, 2026
TO:	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
FROM:	Shasa Curl, City Manager Gabino Arredondo, Project Manager
Subject:	Presentation from San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) Director Barnali Ghosh for 2026
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	There is no fiscal impact for receiving this item.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	None.
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	Over the past several years, BART has made significant improvements to the rider experience. Despite improvements to the system, BART faces a fiscal crisis due to high remote work rates in the Bay Area. BART Director Barnali Ghosh will deliver a presentation on this topic and share the impact of service cuts on Richmond and the Bay Area.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	RECEIVE a presentation from the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) Director regarding BART's recent service improvements and the transit fiscal crisis due to Work From Home – City Manager's Office (Gabino Arredondo 510-620-6606).

DISCUSSION:

The following content of the staff report has been provided by San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) staff.

The year 2026 is a defining year for BART and for public transit in the Bay Area.

Over the past several years, BART has made significant improvements to the rider experience. BART has introduced a new fleet of train cars, installed next-generation fare gates at all stations to improve safety and reduce fare evasion, increased the visible presence of police and staff, enhanced cleaning, and introduced new payment options such as Tap-and-Ride. These efforts have produced measurable results, including high customer satisfaction ratings and significant reductions in crime.

The Richmond Station is the northern terminus of the BART system and a major regional transportation hub connecting BART, Amtrak, Capitol Corridor, and AC Transit. BART also plays an important role in reducing traffic congestion on Interstate 80, improving air quality, and supporting economic activity throughout the region. Many Richmond residents rely on BART as an affordable transportation option, including those who do not have access to a car.

Despite these improvements, BART faces a fiscal crisis due to high levels of remote work in the Bay Area. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, BART relied on passenger fares to fund a large portion of its operating costs. Today, approximately 75 percent of riders have returned; however, due to remote and hybrid work patterns, they are taking fewer trips per week. This has reduced fare revenue and created a structural operating deficit of more than \$370 million annually beginning in Fiscal Year 2027. BART has taken steps to reduce costs and increase revenue, but these actions alone are not sufficient to close the long-term funding gap.

In 2025, the California Legislature authorized a regional transportation funding measure to be placed on the November 2026 ballot. If approved by voters, the measure would provide a new source of operating funding for BART, AC Transit, and other Bay Area transit agencies. BART is currently planning for two scenarios: one in which new funding becomes available and service can be maintained, and one in which no new funding is secured and major service reductions must be implemented.

If additional funding is not secured, the BART Board of Directors has initially approved an Alternative Service Plan to balance the budget. Beginning in 2027, potential actions could include closing the system at 9:00 p.m., reducing service by up to 70 percent, increasing fares and parking costs by 50 percent, reducing cleaning and police services, laying off more than 1,000 employees, and closing stations and/or up to 25 percent of system track miles. Final decisions would be made by the BART Board of Directors based on available funding and safety considerations.