

# ALAMEDA-CONTRA COSTA TRANSIT DISTRICT



## STAFF REPORT

---

**MEETING DATE:** 7/8/2020

**Staff Report No.** 20-261

---

**TO:** AC Transit Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Michael A. Hursh, General Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Blue Ribbon Task Force Update

### BRIEFING ITEM

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Consider receiving an update on the District's involvement in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Blue Ribbon Task Force.

#### **STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE:**

Goal - Financial Stability and Resiliency

Initiative - Financial Efficiency and Revenue Maximization

The Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) was established as part of the region's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the passage of the Federal CARES Act which provided the MTC region with \$1.3 Billion in emergency relief funds, the Task Force was established with the following purpose *"to immediately assist MTC in understanding the scale of the crisis facing all Bay Area transit systems as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to guide its regional support through expedited distribution of CARES Act Phase 2 funds. Safety, network connectivity, financial sustainability, and transportation system equity will be important considerations. Additionally, by mid-2021, the Task Force shall submit a Bay Area Public Transit Transformation Action Plan to the Commission for its consideration and possible adoption. The Plan should identify actions needed to re-shape the region's transit system into a more connected, more efficient, and more user-focused mobility network across the entire Bay Area and beyond."* Participation in the BRTF is of critical importance to the financial stability to the District, as such, the General Manager is actively participating in the Task Force with support from four District staff members.

#### **BUDGETARY/FISCAL IMPACT:**

This report is an update on the actions of the BRTF and does not have any direct fiscal impact. The BRTF is charged initially with recommending an allocation method for the remaining approximately 40% of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding for the region. AC Transit was allocated \$80 million in the first round and is estimating an additional \$40 million in the second round. MTC is aiming to approve a distribution during its July Commission meeting.

#### **BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:**

The Blue-Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force established by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission held

its first meeting on May 29 and has since met on June 15 and June 29. The Task Force is being led by Steve Kinsey, former Marin County Supervisor. The work of the Task Force is divided into three main focus areas:

1. Develop recommendations to MTC Commission on the distribution of remaining CARES Act dollars;
2. Transit Agencies' near-term recovery strategies; and
3. Long-term improvements to the Bay Area transit network.

The Task Force is comprised of 32 members, the members are a combination of MTC Commissioners, Transit Operators (GMs), State Representatives and Stakeholder Representatives. **Attachment 1** contains an overview of the Task Force purpose, timeline and a list of members.

### **Transit Operator Coordination**

In order to maximize collaboration and coordination, the General Managers of AC Transit, BART, VTA, Caltrain/SamTrans, Golden Gate, County Connection, WETA, SFMTA, Marin Transit and LAVTA have been meeting weekly to prepare and submit materials for the BRTF meetings. The General Managers have established four staff level working groups which have also been meeting as a group on a weekly basis and separately as subgroups on a weekly basis. BART has utilized an existing on-call contract and retained WSP to support the work of the transit agencies related to the BRTF. The staff level working subgroups established by the General Managers are:

1. Financial Stability (District Staff lead: Chris Andrichak)
2. Public Health and Safety (District Staff lead: Tabby Davenport)
3. Service and Operations Planning (District Staff lead: Robert Del Rosario)
4. Communications (District Staff lead: Claudia Burgos)

The **Financial Stability Subgroup** is focused on revenue, expense controls, and the need for the CARES Act funds and future continuing funding. The Financial Stability subgroup is engaged in the discussions on the second CARES Act funds allocation.

In response to the first BRTF Meeting, priority has been placed on the establishment of a regional **public health and safety** plan for transit operators. A draft plan was presented to the BRTF by the transit operators during the June 15 meeting, the draft plan is included as **Attachment 2**. The safety plan, which is still in development, will include guidelines, shared protocols, is scalable for large and small operators, recommends consistency in communications across systems and contains key employee and customer facing elements around:

- Face Coverings
- Distancing
- Touchless Payment/Fares
- Cleaning / Disinfecting / Ventilation
- Agency Coordination
- Contact Tracing

The **Service & Operations Planning Subgroup's** purpose of the subcommittee is to identify and develop aspects of the respective transit operations that can be better coordinated in order to create a viable and

possibly better transit system for the Bay Area as it recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. Aspects could include service and network coordination, fare coordination, social distancing measures, maps and schedules, and capital projects to improve transit operations.

The **Communications Subgroup** is comprised of communications, marketing, government affairs, and public information officers. The subgroup has submitted communications from the transit operators to the BRTF to help illustrate the coordination and collaboration that is taking place amongst operators (**Attachments 3 and 4**). The subgroup is currently preparing for the public rollout of the public health and transit plan, market research and the coordination of rider survey data analysis, and a coordinated marketing campaign to welcome riders back to public transit.

The BRTF is expected to be in place for one year. Staff anticipates ongoing in-depth participation in the Task Force.

**ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES:**

This item is a briefing on the District's involvement in the Blue Ribbon Task Force. There are no advantages or disadvantages associated with it.

**ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS:**

The District could opt not to participate in the Blue Ribbon Task Force; however, this is not recommended by staff as the Task Force is making critical recommendations on funding, network connectivity and safety plans that will directly impact the District.

**PRIOR RELEVANT BOARD ACTION/POLICIES:**

None

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Blue Ribbon Task Force Presentation 5-29-20
2. DRAFT Bay Area Transit Health-Safety Plan Presentation
3. Letters from General Managers to Blue Ribbon Task Force 5-27-20
4. Letter from General Managers to Blue Ribbon Task Force 6-12-20

**Prepared by:**

Claudia Burgos, Director of Legislative Affairs and Community Relations

**Approved/Reviewed by:**

Beverly Greene, Executive Director of External Affairs, Marketing & Communications