



Regional Transportation Funding Measure Platform

VPT'S VISION is for residents of all abilities, identities, and incomes to enjoy abundant, accessible transportation options that reliably, affordably, and conveniently get us where we need to go around the San Francisco Bay Area. We have the power to do this by passing a regional funding measure that will enhance our freedom of movement while at the same time create good-paying green union jobs and contribute to a clean and healthy environment by reducing car trips and carbon emissions. While many of us are traveling around differently from how we were before the pandemic, now, more than ever, transformed transit is essential for a healthy, thriving Bay Area.



LET'S MOBILIZE THE BAY to pass a transportation funding measure for:

GREATER ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES: People of all ages, abilities, genders, races, and backgrounds will have more access to jobs, education, housing, and services, building a more equitable economy. Low-income and transit-reliant people will spend less time and money getting around, making the benefits of our region's economy more available to them.

AN EXCELLENT TRANSIT EXPERIENCE: Riding public transit will be simple, convenient, reliable, accessible, and affordable, offering an excellent experience for riders of all abilities. It will work as one integrated network across the region. Riders of all backgrounds will feel comfortable riding transit, free from the threat of discrimination and harassment.

RACIAL, ECONOMIC, AND DISABILITY JUSTICE CENTERED OUTCOMES: Communities of color, low-income people, people with disabilities, and labor unions will be engaged from the beginning and their leadership will be prioritized in decision making.

REDUCED TRAFFIC AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Millions more people will use sustainable transportation to get around because it is fast, reliable, abundant, and cost-effective. This will help us meet our zero greenhouse gas emission goals, reduce driving and congestion, and improve air quality.

HEALTHY, DIVERSE, AND ECONOMICALLY THRIVING COMMUNITIES: High quality public transit will be at the heart of walkable, bikeable, and affordable communities across the Bay Area, growing the economy while reducing the need for a car. Low-income people will be able to remain in their communities even as they benefit from improved transit options.

HIGH QUALITY GREEN JOBS: Thousands of new, good-paying green union jobs in transportation will be created, supported by new pathways to opportunity for those most in need.



A regional funding measure should focus on the following types of investments with a mix of near-and-long-term improvements:

1

Improve and increase existing transit service, making it fast, frequent, and reliable.

- Ensure substantial dedicated operations funding to stabilize existing service, address structural funding deficits, and support excellent local and regional service.
- Reduce wait times by increasing how often transit comes throughout the day, creating an expanded, frequent, connected, all-day network.
- Design service that centers the needs of low-income and disadvantaged communities.
- Provide maintenance funds to ensure a state of good repair for transit infrastructure.
- Improve streets and infrastructure to increase transit speeds and ensure transit is faster than private vehicles when there is traffic.
- Expand paratransit service availability and geographic coverage, address the shortcomings of the 3/4-mile limitation on paratransit, and provide integrated, regional, “on-demand,” and flexible options.
- Develop a zero-emission bus fleet.

2

Build and run new transit options that connect more people with opportunities and each other.

- Build an integrated, rapid, resilient, and cost-effective transit network connecting the places where people live, work, and play, filling gaps in the existing network.
- Create transformative new transportation options that dramatically improve the competitiveness of transit relative to driving

3

Expand and enhance walking, biking, and new non-car options as a key part of getting around.

- Build an interconnected all-abilities bicycle network that prioritizes reach into historically disadvantaged communities.
- Redesign existing streets to be “complete streets,” prioritizing non-car options, increasing safety of pedestrians and cyclists, and providing excellent connections to transit.

4

Create an easy-to-use, accessible, integrated, and affordable transportation system.

- Provide funding for coordinating and integrating the regional system to minimize complexity for riders and expand transit use.
- Create integrated and affordable fares, expanding reduced-fare and fare-free programs throughout the Bay Area for riders who need them most, including people with disabilities for both fixed-route and paratransit.
- Prioritize high-quality transit access for low-income communities.
- Upgrade infrastructure to implement universal design standards that ensure equitable access for people of all abilities.

5

Re-imagine safety on transit.

- Innovative, data-driven pilot efforts and partnerships should center community engagement, service providers, and marginalized people to reduce harm to all riders and transit workers.



In order to achieve these goals, all measure investments will:



PRIORITIZE THE NEEDS OF DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES: Including people with disabilities, low-income communities, and communities of color. New investments and improved service will be paired with strong policies and affordable housing incentives that protect against the physical or economic displacement of disadvantaged residents. A social equity fund will help address historical inequities and will be spent supporting under-served communities through a participatory budgeting process.

PLAN FOR BOTH CAPITAL AND OPERATING COSTS: Transit expansion and capital projects must include sufficient funding for operations and maintenance as a condition for approval.

BE OUTCOME-ORIENTED: Projects will be identified, evaluated, and funded based on how they accomplish specific goals and not chosen piecemeal. Goals and metrics will be informed by robust community engagement and a planning process. Regular reviews of project benefits and costs should determine a project's readiness to advance and receive funding for each subsequent stage of project delivery.

FUND QUALITY JOBS: The thousands of new operating and construction jobs created by new transit investments and increased service will focus on local hire, good working conditions, a living wage, and public sector union contracts. A workforce development fund will help train new employees and ensure a robust workforce. Hiring will include people with disabilities for union, policy, and customer-facing jobs. Construction, operations, maintenance, and service jobs created by these funds will be union jobs and will meet the highest labor standards.

PLAN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE: Investments will reduce vehicle miles traveled to meet or exceed state targets. Expenditures will enable the region to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. Projects will be built for resilience to uncertain and changing conditions. No funds will be spent on roads and highways that increase driving.

KEEP PUBLIC TRANSIT PUBLIC: New funds will protect and increase the availability of publicly run transit service. Transit funds will be allocated for publicly governed transit service that meets the highest labor and rider service and accountability standards.

CREATE A SENSE OF SAFETY, BELONGING, AND COMMUNITY FOR EVERYONE: This starts with a holistic definition of safety defined by the most vulnerable riders and transit workers. It includes reimagining safety approaches, redesigning spaces and systems, and reducing harm. This is accomplished through community-based and data-informed pilots and partnerships.

BE TIED TO REGIONAL STANDARDS AND PLANS: Public agencies receiving measure funds must work together toward a more integrated, accessible, coordinated, and rider-focused system. A strengthened organizational structure for network management, engaging and prioritizing the leadership of transit riders and workers, shall ensure agencies comply with regional standards and plans as a condition of funding.

The revenue source for a major regional funding measure must balance two key principles: **SCALE** and **PROGRESSIVITY**.



Scale

We must pursue funding at a scale that matches the need, recognizing decades of underinvestment. We estimate the nine-county Bay Area region needs at least \$1–2 billion annually to achieve our goals and fund our expenditure priorities. Over a 30-year period, and accounting for inflation, this would amount to a \$50–100 billion ballot measure.



Progressivity

At the same time, responsibility for funding the next generation of transportation investments must come from those with the ability to pay, and not unfairly burden working families, low-income residents, and small businesses. Public transit is a public good and fulfilling our vision requires funding from progressive revenue sources.

A revenue source should also seek to provide a reliable source of funds, protected from economic cycles, and be able to pass at the ballot box.

Research conducted in 2019 assessed revenue sources proposed by VPT members. These four seemed to hold the most promise:

- A surcharge on high-income tax brackets;
- A head tax on large employers
- A parcel tax with a low-income exemption; and
- A tax on corporate parking.

The income tax surcharge alone could generate revenue at the scale sufficient to meet our regional need of \$1–2 billion per year.¹ The other sources individually raised less, but collectively may be able to match the scale of the identified need if that is a feasible option. We support the continued exploration of these and additional progressive revenue sources to identify alternative strategies that would be both equitable and generate sufficient funds, while evaluating their potential impacts.

For a broader view of these issues, please see the published research we sponsored with the Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

¹ The estimated revenue generated by the income tax surcharge is higher than what was cited in the Silicon Valley Community Foundation report and is based on less conservative assumptions.