[Urging to Reinstate All Transit Lines to Pre-Covid Service Hours by December 31, 2021]

Resolution urging the Municipal Transportation Agency to reinstate all transit lines and restore pre-Covid service hours by December 31, 2021, and release by September 30, 2021, a written plan for restoration of all lines and service.

WHEREAS, The Municipal Transportation Agency (MTA) provides essential transit service that acts as a lifeline, connecting San Franciscans all across the city to services, work, retail, restaurants, entertainment, and more; and

WHEREAS, The City of San Francisco adopted in 1973 a “Transit First” policy under which the City government shall prioritize public transportation in order to build a more equitable transportation system, stronger local economy, safer streets, and cleaner air; and

WHEREAS, Public transit is at the foundation of San Francisco’s economy, our climate goals, and a more equitable, accessible, livable city; and

WHEREAS, Since February 25, 2020, the City and County of San Francisco has been in a local emergency due to the COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 had a severe impact on transit ridership, and the MTA temporarily suspended transit routes in many parts of San Francisco and reduced service affecting access to many neighborhoods across the City; and

WHEREAS, Since the COVID-19 Core Service Plan was announced in April of 2020, many vital routes have remained out of service with no plan for full reinstatement; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Public Health has since relaxed social distancing guidelines and capacity limits on public transportation; and

Supervisors Preston; Chan
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WHEREAS, Senior and disabled communities, working families, and students have been severely impacted by suspension of lines and reduction of transit service which have created large gaps in our transit service system; and

WHEREAS, The steep hills of San Francisco, in particular, deeply constrain seniors and people with limited mobility who cannot easily walk multiple blocks to reach another transit access area, which has been further exacerbated by service suspensions; and

WHEREAS, As nighttime economic and entertainment activity has been coming back, workers have faced limited evening and nighttime public transportation options, and SFMTA has been adding back some evening hours, but the system continues to lack pre-pandemic evening service, severely limiting transportation options for workers and small business patrons.

WHEREAS, Access to critical services is critical to vulnerable populations such as seniors and people with mobility issues; and

WHEREAS, MTA’s current Service Plan leaves many San Franciscans without a viable option to travel by public transportation; and

WHEREAS, Community and equity lines continue to remain out of service for the last sixteen months and the decisions to fully restore certain lines including the 18, 48th Avenue, and 28, 19th Avenue, have not included public outreach or set metrics; and

WHEREAS, The MTA has not held any community meetings regarding the suspension of Muni lines or the plan, timetable, or selection process for which lines return when, and many transit advocates have criticized the slow return of Muni lines and service and the lack of a transparent community driven process; and

WHEREAS, Even with the $1.1 billion in massive federal investment, MTA has not presented a plan, or their metrics, for when many of these neighborhood lines will return; and
WHEREAS, The MTA was operating at 68% of pre-pandemic service hours in May, according to the recent data that the MTA has submitted to the Federal Transit Administration; and

WHEREAS, The MTA Citizens’ Advisory Council (CAC) passed a motion on May 6, 2021, requesting the agency present a plan and timeline to reach 95% of pre-pandemic service hours, and the agency declined to provide such a plan, claiming further service restoration would require “new on-going funding sources;” and

WHEREAS, The MTA responded to the MTA CAC that “SFMTA staff appreciate this feedback. We plan to do scenario planning and resource estimates for further service restoration. Further restoration would require new on-going funding sources;” and

WHEREAS, The MTA is lagging behind nearly every public transit agency in the nation when it comes to restoration of suspended public transportation; and

WHEREAS, The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) agency has committed to increasing service hours, bringing back late-night service and returning to near-pre-pandemic service starting August 30, 2021 as the Bay Area reopens; and

WHEREAS, The MTA continues to refuse to restore critical equity and community lines such as the 31 Balboa and the 21 Hayes which goes through the Western Addition and the Tenderloin, or to provide a timeline for their return; and

WHEREAS, The MTA has acknowledged some of the suspended lines as “critical for neighborhood access” in the agency’s own 2021-2022 “Equity Strategy;” and

WHEREAS, According to TWU-250A President, Roger Marenco, their operators are ready, willing and able to go back to work at pre-pandemic service levels; and

WHEREAS, The City and County of San Francisco must have transit in place as people are increasingly ready to make trips again, and failure to do so could lead to permanent behavior change with many potential riders opting for private vehicles; and
WHEREAS, On Thursday, July 8, 2021, as demanded by the many activists, riders and workers who pushed hard for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to release funds that were desperately needed for public transit, the MTC announced that they would release about $480m from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) stimulus funds; and

WHEREAS, Once MTA receives these additional funds, the MTA will have received $1.1 billion in federal stimulus for the agency during COVID; and

WHEREAS, The entire agency operating budget for a year is about $1.3 billion and the operational cost of running the full Muni rail, bus and cable car system was $833.8 million in 2019; and

WHEREAS, The MTA has saved and estimated $150 million in operating costs due to COVID-related service reduction and the MTA has a $150 million reserve; and

WHEREAS, Before the pandemic, the agency estimated it had a $520 million deficit over five years, and now, despite the pandemic, that estimate has been cut by over half according to MTA’s latest projections; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges MTA to restore all suspended lines and restore overall service hours to pre-pandemic levels by December 31, 2021; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, The Board of Supervisors urges MTA to act with urgency to expand public transit service by restoring suspended lines, expanding nighttime service, and utilizing federal relief dollars to fully restore Muni service hours to pre-pandemic levels; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors requests MTA to provide a plan by September 30, 2021, to the Board of Supervisors to be included in this file for full restoration of Muni lines and pre-pandemic service hours by the end of 2021, and if for any reason the agency determines such restoration to be impossible, that the plan include a detailed report on any barriers that would prohibit the full restoration of pre-pandemic lines
and system service hours by the end of 2021, and the date by which full restoration can be
achieved; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the MTA provides to the Board of Supervisors for
inclusion in this file no later than September 30, 2021, a written update on how all federal
transit dollars have been spent by MTA since the start of the pandemic.
Resolution urging the Municipal Transportation Agency to reinstate all transit lines and restore pre-Covid service hours by December 31, 2021, and release by September 30, 2021, a written plan for restoration of all lines and service.

July 23, 2021 Government Audit and Oversight Committee - RECOMMENDED AS COMMITTEE REPORT

July 27, 2021 Board of Supervisors - AMENDED, AN AMENDMENT OF THE WHOLE BEARING NEW TITLE
   Ayes: 11 - Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

July 27, 2021 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED AS AMENDED
   Ayes: 9 - Chan, Haney, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai and Walton
   Noes: 2 - Mandelman and Stefani

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED AS AMENDED on 7/27/2021 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

London N. Breed
Mayor

08/06/2021
I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without her approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.

08/06/2021

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Angela Calvillo               Date

File No.
210820