



**DATE:** August 24, 2021

**CATEGORY:** Consent

**DEPT.:** Public Works

**TITLE:** **Support Seamless Transit Principles**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Mountain View in Support of Seamless Transit Principles, to be read in title only, further reading waived (Attachment 1 to the Council report).

### **BACKGROUND**

Housing affordability and traffic congestion are key challenges in Mountain View and throughout the Bay Area. These issues are exacerbated by an inconvenient and disjointed public transit network, which makes it more difficult for residents, workers, and visitors to access jobs and services by anything other than driving alone.

The Bay Area has one of the most fragmented metropolitan public transit networks in the United States. As seen in Figure 1, 27 different transit service providers operate within the Bay Area, with limited to no coordination on important issues like geographic integration, timed connections, fare rates, payment systems, trip transfers, maps, public information, and branding.

For users, a lack of a regional transit coordination creates confusion, increases costs, and imposes barriers to access for residents, workers, and visitors who are trying to get from one place to another. People with lower incomes are among the most adversely affected, especially those who have experienced displacement and have long commutes requiring multiple transit services, thus representing an equity issue. The impacts of COVID-19 on transit service and ridership have further exacerbated the issues associated with regional transit fragmentation.

Fragmented transit provision also leads to piecemeal planning; lack of public accountability for regional transit connectivity; high transit operating costs; and poorly

managed transit expansion projects resulting in cost overruns for publicly funded projects.

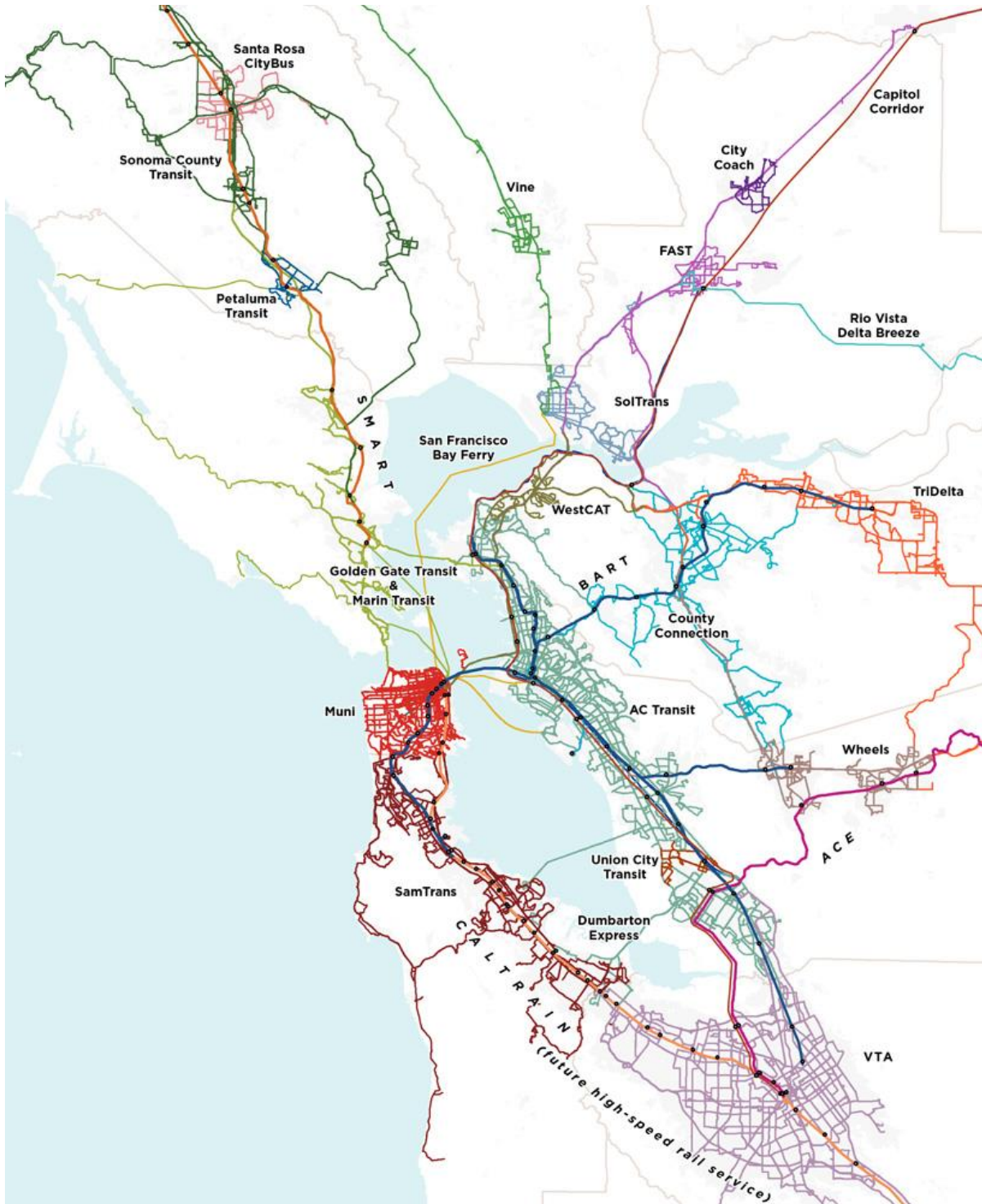


Figure 1: Service Areas of the Bay Area's 27 Transit Agencies

Regions that have successfully integrated and simplified transit fares experience broad social benefits, including a shift in travel from private cars to public transit, expanded mobility options, and cost savings for riders. As seen in other metropolitan regions throughout the world, transit has the potential to serve travelers using 50 times less land area than driving alone, with commensurate reductions in a range of environmental impacts. In the Bay Area, where ongoing economic growth, housing unaffordability, and traffic congestion continue to challenge cities, the ability to capture this efficiency is critical.

## ANALYSIS

Throughout the Bay Area, local agencies, including Mountain View, depend upon reliable and coordinated regional transit access in order to provide access to jobs, reduce traffic congestion, and improve the sustainability of current and future housing development. The City of Mountain View has planned future growth around transit service and based assumptions relating to trip generation and travel options on its continued and increasing availability.

Seamless Bay Area is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) group that advocates for a unified, world-class public transit system with the input of cities and transit advocacy groups, local leaders, transit agency staff, and local elected officials. Seamless Bay Area compiled a set of seven guiding principles to guide local, regional, and State decision-makers to pursue a seamlessly integrated, world-class transit system that works for people. As shown in Attachment 1, the principles include:

1. Run all Bay Area transit as one easy-to-use system.
2. Put riders first.
3. Make public transit equitable and accessible to all.
4. Align transit prices to be simple, fair, and affordable.
5. Connect effortlessly with other sustainable transportation.
6. Plan communities and transportation together.
7. Prioritize reforms to create a seamless network.

The principles have been endorsed by 40 organizations and 15 public agencies, including the cities of Albany, Berkeley, East Palo Alto, El Cerrito, Fremont, Half Moon Bay, Millbrae, Pacifica, Redwood City, and San Mateo; the counties of Alameda and San Francisco; and the Cities Association of Santa Clara County.

At the June 8, 2021 Council meeting, a Councilmember expressed interest in the City supporting the Seamless Transit principles. There was general consensus for staff to review the principles and bring them back to Council for consideration. Staff has assessed the principles, finds them to be in line with the City's transportation policies, plans, and programs, and recommends that Council adopt a resolution expressing Mountain View's support. Support of the Seamless Transit Principles would contribute to building public awareness of, and broad support for, the need for reforms that promote greater regional transit integration and the vision of seamless transit in the Bay Area.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Support for Seamless Transit Principles would not have any fiscal impact on the City of Mountain View.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Do not approve the resolution.
2. Modify the resolution.
3. Provide other direction.

**PUBLIC NOTICING**

The meeting agenda and Council report have been posted on the City's website.

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Attachment: 1. Resolution

Approved by:

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