



CITY COUNCIL 2023

FLOR NICOLAS, MAYOR (DIST. 3)
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SHARON RANALS, CITY MANAGER

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

May 25, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Senator Scott Weiner
Senate District 11
1021 O Street, Suite 8620
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

The Honorable Senator Josh Becker
Senate District 13
State Capitol, Room 3076
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Assemblymember Phil Ting
Assembly District 19
State Capitol, P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0019

The Honorable Assemblymember Diane Papan
Assembly District 21
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 4220
Sacramento, CA 94249-0021

Honorable California Legislators:

As FY 2023-24 budget negotiations continue, South San Francisco strongly urges you to strengthen California's economy, increase job access for all, reduce traffic congestion, clean our air, and decrease climate change emissions by prioritizing a multi-year funding package for transit agencies across California to prevent severe service cuts, adapt to changing travel patterns and regrow ridership.

COVID fundamentally changed how people in South San Francisco live, work, and travel for their daily needs. Ridership continues to recover across the State and although agencies are responding to the changing needs of their communities as quickly as possible, it may be years before many agencies are financially stable again.

Transit agencies across the state are on the brink of collapse and unless state lawmakers step in and save California's transit agencies, services will be cut, stations will be shuttered, and more

Californians will be forced off transit and into already clogged, polluting, and expensive highways — or simply be stranded without access to vital jobs, services, and community connections that they currently access through transit.

Whether or not they use transit, all Californians depend on healthy transit systems. Every person on a bus or train is one less car on the road competing for parking and increasing wear and tear on the state's costly highway system. Public transit is essential to California's economy and to the everyday lives of millions of Californians.

Without state funding to address their budget shortfalls, transit operators across California will be forced to implement drastic service cuts that will send public transit into a death spiral and lead to irreversible disinvestment in an essential public utility. Rising fares and degraded service will cause transit ridership to fall dramatically across the State, which will further decrease transit agencies' revenue. This will further starve transit agencies, and routes and services will be cut across California. In other words, if the State takes no action, declining public transit ridership will reverse the State's investments in an integrated, multimodal transportation network that builds on our existing infrastructure.

Millions of Californians rely on public transportation to access work, school, and other destinations each day. Slashing public transit service would exacerbate poverty throughout California substantially reducing access to jobs, education, and healthcare for low-income Californians.

Supporting and expanding transit cleans our air and helps the state meet its climate goals. While California has made strides on reducing other climate change emission sources, tailpipe emissions and other local air pollutants from gas and electric cars exacerbate poor air quality which causes thousands of premature deaths in California each year. California cannot be a climate leader without robust public transportation, and allowing our transit systems to fall into disarray would run entirely contrary to our climate goals.

We must save public transportation in California. Our state depends on it, and we look forward to working with you to build a more prosperous, secure, and clean California for all by ensuring that transit agencies receive the emergency funding and ongoing investment they need.

Sincerely,

Flor Nicolas, Mayor
City of South San Francisco