CITY OF
SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Chuck Reed
MAYOR

June 11, 2010

Mr. Scott Haggerty, Chair
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Subject: MTC Governance Update

Dear Mr. Haggerty:

As you are aware, the California Legislature created the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) in 1970 and designated its mission to serve as the recipient for federal funds and to act as the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine Bay Area counties. Over the past forty years, the Bay Area has seen significant changes in population, employment, and travel patterns. The most dramatic changes are attributed to the emergence of Silicon Valley in the southern Bay Area. Interestingly, the term Silicon Valley did not exist when MTC was formed in 1970.

The purpose of this letter is to strongly urge MTC to take proactive steps to update its governance structure and Bay Area representation so that it is relevant to these modern times and is well structured to effectively take on the challenges of the coming decades. We believe that the Commission's consideration of adding a seat on MTC for the city of San José is a positive step in this direction.

The key issues that are prompting us to support this action are as follows:

- MTC Board Structure Does Not Adequately Represent the South Bay Area. The San José/Santa Clara County area now makes up more than 25 percent of all Bay Area population and jobs, and yet only has 12 percent of MTC's voting membership. San José, the largest city in Northern California, has no designated representation on the Commission. With a current population of 1,023,000 people, San José is the 10th largest city in the nation and is forecasted to surpass 1.3 million residents by 2040. Over the last four decades, the overall Bay Area population has grown by about 55 percent. In that time, employment in Santa Clara County has grown by 110 percent, and San José has grown in population by 130 percent.

- Current Federal Transportation Legislation Is Proposing Reform of Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Governance. The initial draft of the new federal surface transportation bill includes language requiring proportional voting on MPO boards. This federal direction is supported by other large cities in the nation concerned with outdated MPO representation structures. Proponents of MPO reform include New York City, Minneapolis, Denver, Seattle, and San José. We believe MTC should be proactive in addressing these national concerns in advance of a potential Federal mandate on the issue.

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- Effective Implementation of Bay Area Policies on Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sustainable Community Strategies. California has given landmark policy direction with AB 32 and SB 375 to limit greenhouse gas emissions and plan communities for "smart growth." San José and the Silicon Valley area are already taking bold leadership steps in this area as evidenced by San José's Green Vision strategy, the Bay Area Climate Change Collaborative, and the Clean and Green Energy Action Plan by the Silicon Valley Leadership Group. Greater representative participation from the South Bay on MTC ultimately will be not only helpful, but also necessary to effectively plan for a better and more sustainable Bay Area for the future.

We believe the above issues compel MTC to take proactive steps to update its forty-year old governance structure and modernize it to be relevant into the future. We suggest that seeking consensus on MTC governance reform over the coming months with a goal of initiating state legislation on the issue for the 2011 California State Legislative Session is the necessary and appropriate next step.

I would appreciate the opportunity to address the board personally at your June 23rd meeting to discuss the governance issue. Due to my schedule, I respectfully request that this item be heard early on the agenda.

MTC has been a progressive, proactive, and effective organization serving the Bay Area during the past forty years. We look forward to your positive response and leadership to help shape an equally effective MTC for the next forty.

Sincerely,

Chuck Reed

Chuck Reed
Mayor

cc: US Congressmembers Zoe Lofgren and Mike Honda
State Senator Elaine Alquist
State Assemblymembers Jim Beall, Joe Coto, and Paul Fong
San Jose City Council
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
VTA Board of Directors
Silicon Valley Leadership Group Board of Directors
Steve Heminger, MTC Executive Director