



Daniel Lurie, Mayor

Janet Tarlov, Chair
Stephanie Cajina, Vice Chair
Mike Chen, Director
Alfonso Felder, Director

Steve Heminger, Director
Dominica Henderson, Director
Fiona Hinze, Director

Julie Kirschbaum, Director of Transportation

Date: September 15, 2025

To: Members, San Francisco Commission Streamlining Task Force

From: Janet Tarlov, Chair, SFMTA Board of Directors
Stephanie Cajina, Vice Chair, SFMTA Board of Directors

Subject: September 12, 2025 Memorandum: Criteria-Based Outcomes and Associated Analysis for Infrastructure, Climate, and Mobility Bodies

Dear Esteemed Task Force Members,

As Chair and Vice Chair of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors (MTAB), we read with interest the analysis and preliminary recommendations of the Task Force and we deeply appreciate your thoughtful attention to our Board and the SFMTA Citizens' Advisory Council (CAC).

We wish to express our agreement with the idea that insulating MTAB from political pressure could or, in our view, should remain a priority as was intended by the special charter status conferred at the Board's inception in 1999. Specifically, preserving our sole authority to hire/fire the Director of Transportation and allowing termination of SFMTA Directors only for cause are, we believe, essential to the Board's ability to provide effective oversight of the Agency. Many, if not most, of the decisions taken by our body have long-term consequences for large numbers of San Franciscans and our topics frequently engender passionate and sometimes polarized positions within the citizenry. Aligning our structure with the Governance Commission Template could create a situation where our appointing authority, the Mayor, would have inappropriately outsized influence on our decisions. We also believe experience and tenure on MTAB are extremely important to our effectiveness as directors and as a body. The complexity and size of the Agency are such that our knowledge and understanding are continually growing and becoming more nuanced. Serving as at-will directors could result in greater turnover, and this advantage of directors' experience and tenure for everyday San Franciscans would be lost.

Regarding the SFMTA Citizens' Advisory Council, we acknowledge the Task Force's finding that there is significant overlap with MTAB's policy focus which could justify the body's elimination. However, we agree with the point raised in staff discussion that, at this critical moment of uncertainty about the Agency's financial future and with the attendant need to foster trust in SFMTA, serious consideration should be given to retaining the body in the near or long term. Unlike



MTAB, CAC members are appointed by both the Mayor and Board of Supervisors representing all of San Francisco's districts and neighborhoods. We believe this provides valuable insight for MTAB that is worth preserving. Inefficiencies and delays created by added SFMTA staff time and sometimes conflicting meeting cadence are concerns that we share with the Task Force but we feel these issues can be at least partially addressed with careful attention.

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide feedback and trust you will take our views into consideration as you deliberate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Janet Tarlov'.

Janet Tarlov
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Cajina'.

Stephanie Cajina
Vice Chair