

**San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority**  
2016 Strategic Plan



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# From the Executive Director

It is my pleasure to share with you this important and timely document: The San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority's Strategic Plan, setting forth a vision, mission and priorities for the next 20 years of SF Bay Ferry service.

We envision and are planning for a system that seamlessly connects cities in the greater Bay Area with San Francisco, using fast, environmentally responsible vessels. With this increased capacity, and new docking facilities and terminals, we visualize wait times of 15 minutes or less during peak commute hours, along with new operations and maintenance facilities that keep our ferries running at peak performance.

Expansion of the system is critical for emergency response, a role mandated in our agency's state charter. In the event of a natural disaster, or a bridge or highway closure, we must meet our responsibility for coordinating water transit and the movement of emergency responders. Our target is to evacuate all of downtown San Francisco within 48 hours. It is a major responsibility, and one we do not take lightly.

Ferries historically have played a major role in Bay Area transportation. From the Gold Rush until the completion of the great Bridges in the 1930s, they were the sole means of transportation across the Bay. They fueled San Francisco's development as a major corporate and financial center. Today, ferries are once again a pivotal player in the Bay Area's future. The ability to expand ferry service ultimately will affect the region's economic resiliency, and its ability to attract and retain employers, employees and jobs.

I look forward to working with our many stakeholders—passengers, community leaders, transit partners, and elected officials—to build the next generation of ferry service. WETA is ready to provide the leadership, coordination and knowledge to ensure that we make the most of this opportunity and responsibility.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nina Rannells". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nina Rannells

# Introduction

With funding and environmental approvals, WETA's long-range plan calls for new terminals in Richmond, Treasure Island, Mission Bay, Berkeley, Redwood City, Seaplane Lagoon, the South Bay, and the Carquinez Strait, ultimately creating a robust 16-terminal regional network to meet the Bay Area's demand for a safe, sustainable and environmentally responsible transportation alternative.



Instagram: @sarakit13

The Bay Area transportation landscape is witnessing unprecedented growth and change. As the region experiences phenomenal economic and population growth, aging transportation infrastructure, competing funding priorities, and outdated equipment are stressing intermodal passenger capacity and efficiency as never before. Clearly, the region must look at new and innovative ways to ensure the Bay Area can responsibly meet the public's transportation and commuting needs now and in the future. Ferries are, and must be, part of the long-term solution.

Over the last 10 years, ferries have become an increasingly critical and attractive part of the Bay Area's transportation system, and the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) has become a valued partner to local communities in helping to meet the region's overburdened transportation needs. This 2016 WETA

Strategic Plan outlines a vision for the San Francisco Bay Ferry system over the next 20 years that responds to passenger demand, makes critical infrastructure investments, and increases WETA's ability to respond to emergencies and system disruptions.

With funding and environmental approvals, WETA's long-range plan calls for new terminals in Richmond, Treasure Island, Mission Bay, Berkeley, Redwood City, Seaplane Lagoon, the South Bay, and the Carquinez Strait, ultimately creating a robust 16-terminal regional network to meet the Bay Area demand for a safe, sustainable and environmentally responsible transportation alternative. As WETA plans for the future, its vision is that ferries run every 15 minutes in the highest volume locations, and that commuting by ferry is the first-choice travel option for thousands more Bay Area residents every day.

WETA has made significant progress toward these goals. Ferry ridership is at an all-time high. Legacy services in Vallejo, Alameda and Oakland have transitioned smoothly from city-run services to WETA operations. The first new ferry terminal built in the Bay Area in decades—in South San Francisco—is thriving after a ramp-up period. Funded projects such as the North Bay and Central Bay maintenance facilities, as well as expansion of the downtown San Francisco Ferry terminal and a new terminal in Richmond, are in the final design or construction phases. And finally, expansion candidate terminals throughout the Bay are seeking funding to enter project implementation.

Achieving WETA's 20-year vision will require all stakeholders to unite in investing in an expanded, financially efficient and environmentally sound regional ferry system. WETA must think bigger and more creatively to meet soaring consumer demand, while accomplishing its emergency response mission. Bipartisan support and regional collaboration among elected officials, statewide and local referendums, and expanded public-private partnerships will be key to SF Bay Ferry's success in bringing the benefits of water transit to even more communities and passengers.

## Mission and Vision

In 2008, the WETA (then WTA) Board of Directors adopted Mission and Vision statements for the newly-created organization. Since then, WETA services have matured, and its role in the region has evolved. In particular, regional leaders have looked to WETA to help fill gaps in the transportation network following major disruptions to the regional system, such as bridge closures and BART service disruptions and breakdowns. In recognition of the increasingly significant role that WETA plays in supporting the regional transportation network and economy, the WETA Board of Directors developed and adopted new Mission and Vision statements in June 2016:

### **WETA Mission**

*WETA is a regional agency with a responsibility to develop and operate a comprehensive Bay Area regional public water transportation system. WETA shall also coordinate water transportation services following natural disasters and transportation disruptions.*

### **WETA Vision**

*WETA develops, operates and manages an expanded and enhanced region-wide ferry system that provides a reliable, state-of-the-art and attractive transportation option for the Bay Area and plays a critical role in coordinating and providing water transportation to serve emergency response and economic recovery needs.*

The new Mission and Vision statements express the aspirations and goals developed by the Board throughout the strategic planning process. The statements place an emphasis on WETA's regional scope, and emphasize WETA's commitments to expanding the system beyond today's terminals and to enhancing service offerings. The statements also describe WETA's role as a provider of transportation service after a natural disaster and during a subsequent economic recovery. Taken together, the Mission and Vision statements describe and characterize WETA's multiple functional roles in the regional transportation network.

This Strategic Plan provides additional details on how WETA will perform these roles. It also addresses the key focus areas identified in the strategic planning process, and outlines the goals and objectives that will ensure WETA's future success.

# The Strategic Plan

WETA's Strategic Plan addresses seven focus areas that support its strategic priorities over the next 20 years. The following pages detail these focus areas and their respective goals and objectives.

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## VISION

Develop, operate and manage an expanded and enhanced region-wide ferry system that provides a reliable, state-of-the-art and attractive transportation option for the Bay Area and plays a critical role in coordinating and providing water transportation to serve emergency response and economic recovery needs.

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## FOCUS AREAS

1. Expanded Service
2. Funding
3. Quality
4. Partnerships
5. Environmental Stewardship
6. Emergency Response
7. Organizational Capacity and Leadership

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## GOALS

Goals are defined for each of the seven focus areas.

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## OBJECTIVES

Objectives are outlined in each focus area, identifying specific, desirable outcomes.

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Instagram: @tripsandgiggles

# Focus Area: Expanded Service

The expansion of ferry service will help to address congestion in the Bay Area while continuing to build WETA’s emergency response network. In addition, cities across the Bay Area are redeveloping waterfront areas and see ferry service as not only an attractive means of transportation, but as a valuable strategy to enhance communities and support economic development goals.

## Expanding and Enhancing Ferry Service

In WETA’s vision for the future, passengers will no longer need to consult a schedule. This means 15-minute peak frequency in the highest volume locations, with 30-minute peak frequencies at all other terminals. It expands ferry service to Richmond, Treasure Island, Berkeley, Mission Bay, Seaplane Lagoon, the South Bay and the Carquinez Strait. It changes ferry service, currently a small niche market in the Bay Area’s transportation system, into a first-choice travel option for thousands more people every day. This level of expansion will allow us to quadruple our ridership capacity from current levels, and extend the reach of WETA’s route network to provide a service that is truly regional.

Today, WETA’s system is positioned for this level of expansion with strong leadership, healthy ridership and fully funded prerequisite system facilities. Investments over the past five years have been made with expansion and system resiliency in mind. New maintenance facilities in Vallejo and Alameda are sized to accommodate a much larger fleet. Expansion of the Downtown San Francisco terminal will support new ferry services from Richmond and Treasure Island, as well as other potential locations that are currently under study. Investment in rehabilitation projects at existing terminals enable the long-term viability of WETA assets and provide for operational flexibility. And finally, prudent use of federal vessel

replacement funds and state funding will increase the size and capacity of the WETA fleet into the future.

WETA’s 20-year expansion and enhancement plan would increase ferry service capacity by more than 80 percent, providing the Bay Area with one of its best options to offer congestion relief in the Bay Bridge corridor. Estimated ridership would grow from approximately 10,000 daily boardings today to more than 40,000 in the future. While there are currently only five peak-hour landings at the Ferry Building, there will be 25 landings in the peak hour once the expansion and enhancement program is realized. Table 1.0 illustrates the significant expansion in ferry service represented by planned enhancement and expansion of the system.

This Strategic Plan sets out an ambitious long-term vision for how ferry service should grow over the next two decades to help meet the region’s transportation needs. This plan includes the full list of projects required to deliver the vision, even where many of the details have yet to be worked out. An appendix to this plan provides a high-level overview of the estimate of the capital and operating costs of the full 20-year plan, based on current assumptions and expectations. Although the exact details reflected in the appendix will likely change over time, the overarching vision will remain that WETA serves all corners of the Bay Area with frequent, reliable service.

**TABLE 1.0:**  
Projected Capacity and Ridership for Enhanced and Expanded Ferry System

	2016	Expanded & Enhanced System
Peak Capacity (Seats)	1,802	13,335
Estimated Daily Riders	10,000	40,760

## Investing in an Expanded and Enhanced WETA System

Today, WETA operates 12 vessels on four separate routes, calling on eight terminals. The future vision as presented in Figure 1.0 would expand service throughout the Bay Area, operating 12 services at 16 terminals with a fleet of 44 vessels.

Doubling the number of terminals and more than tripling the size of the fleet is no small undertaking. As detailed in Appendix A and summarized in Table 2.0, the total capital cost for all of the new projects that are part of this strategic vision is estimated at approximately \$1.15 billion (2016 dollars). About 60 percent of this amount would go towards new vessels, and the remaining 40 percent is for terminal facility improvements. At this time, WETA has secured informal commitments for almost \$300 million in capital funding. The remaining unmet capital need for new projects is approximately \$850 million.

At full buildout, the cost to operate the future system would expand WETA's annual operating budget from just over \$34 million today to approximately \$144 million in the future. Assuming that WETA is able to continue to achieve a farebox recovery ratio – the portion of the operating expenses covered by fare revenue – of 50 percent, the total operating subsidy needed for steady operations at this level of service is \$72 million per year. Based on anticipated funding from existing sources and planned partnerships, this would require an additional annual subsidy of \$49 million per year.

Obviously no single funding source can be expected to support the entire vision laid out in this Strategic Plan. WETA will need to work to identify and secure contributions from multiple partners and stakeholders in order to achieve a fully funded expansion program. This topic is discussed further on pages 10, 11 and 12.

**TABLE 2.0:**  
**Funding Needs**  
**for Expanded and**  
**Enhanced Ferry**  
**System (in millions)**  
**(2016 dollars)**

	Annual Operating		Vessels		Terminals	
	Committed Funding	Needed Funding	Committed Funding	Needed Funding	Committed Funding	Needed Funding
Enhancement	\$17	\$17	\$36	\$113	\$80	\$36
Expansion	\$6	\$18	\$83	\$275	\$99	\$143
Emerging	–	\$14	–	\$188	–	\$90
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23</b>	<b>\$49</b>	<b>\$119</b>	<b>\$575</b>	<b>\$179</b>	<b>\$269</b>

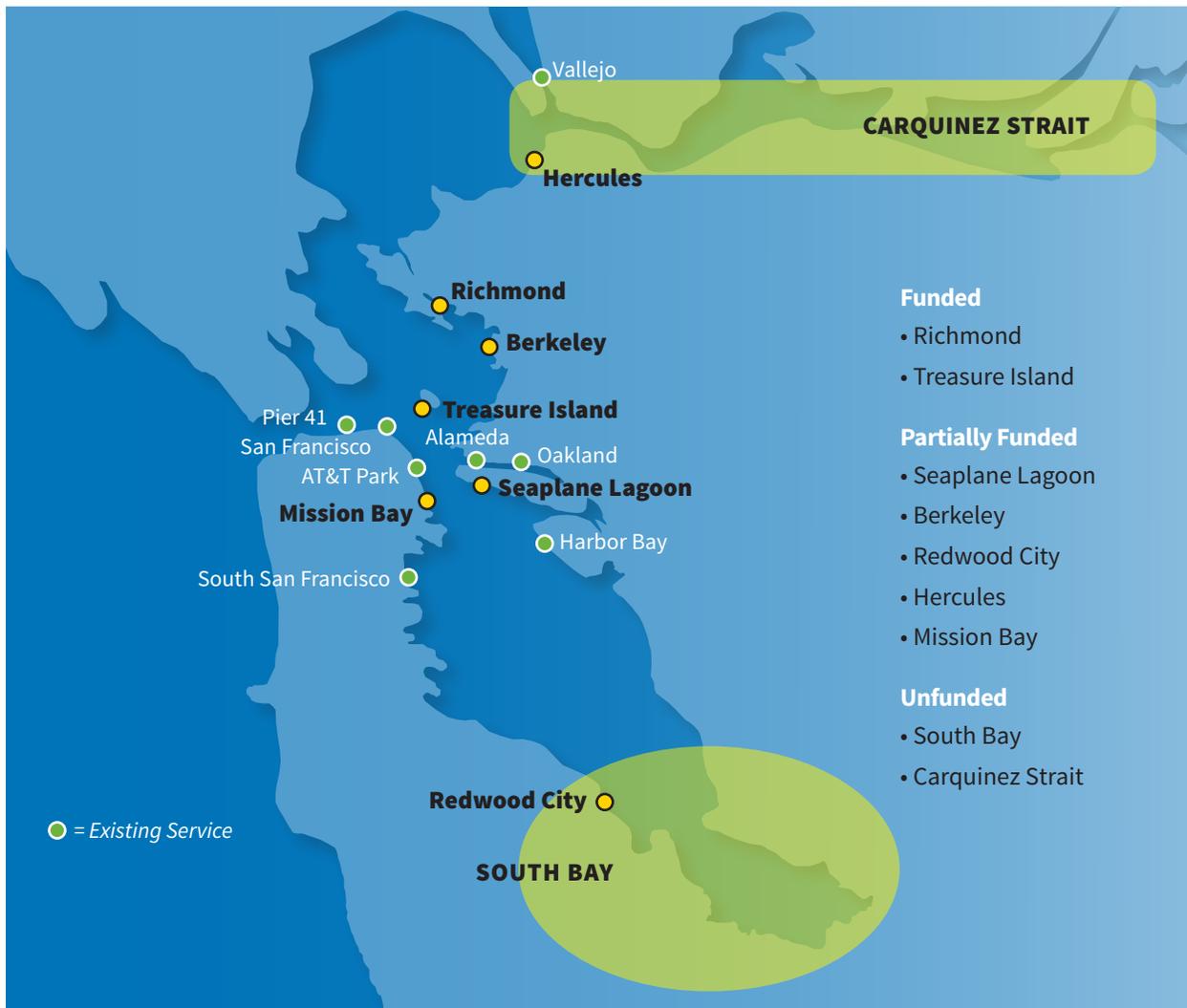
All figures in 2016 dollars.

## Timetable

WETA's strategic vision is to deliver an enhanced and expanded ferry system to the Bay Area as fast as possible. To do this, WETA must place a significant focus on enhancement and expansion. This means dedicating resources and energy toward project development activities, partnering with local governments and the private sector, and campaigning for a greater share of funding at the regional and state level. New ferry terminals are subject to significant permitting requirements and environmental regulations that, combined with complicated construction and vessel procurement processes, can be anywhere from five to seven years in duration from project inception to opening. WETA continues to explore innovative ways to expedite project delivery, through partnerships with public or private-sector entities and site-selection analysis.

## The San Francisco Bay Area's Ferry System

Full buildout of the WETA system vision will bring ferry service to the Peninsula, the Carquinez Strait and the I-80 corridor, while significantly improving existing services in the Central and North Bay. This will be the realization of ferry service for the entire Bay Area as expressed in WETA's Mission and Vision statements. Providing frequent services (all day and all week) positions ferry services as a reliable, state-of-the-art transportation option for thousands of Bay Area residents and visitors. It also provides the necessary capacity and redundancy (additional vessels and terminals) to serve the Bay Area after a natural disaster.

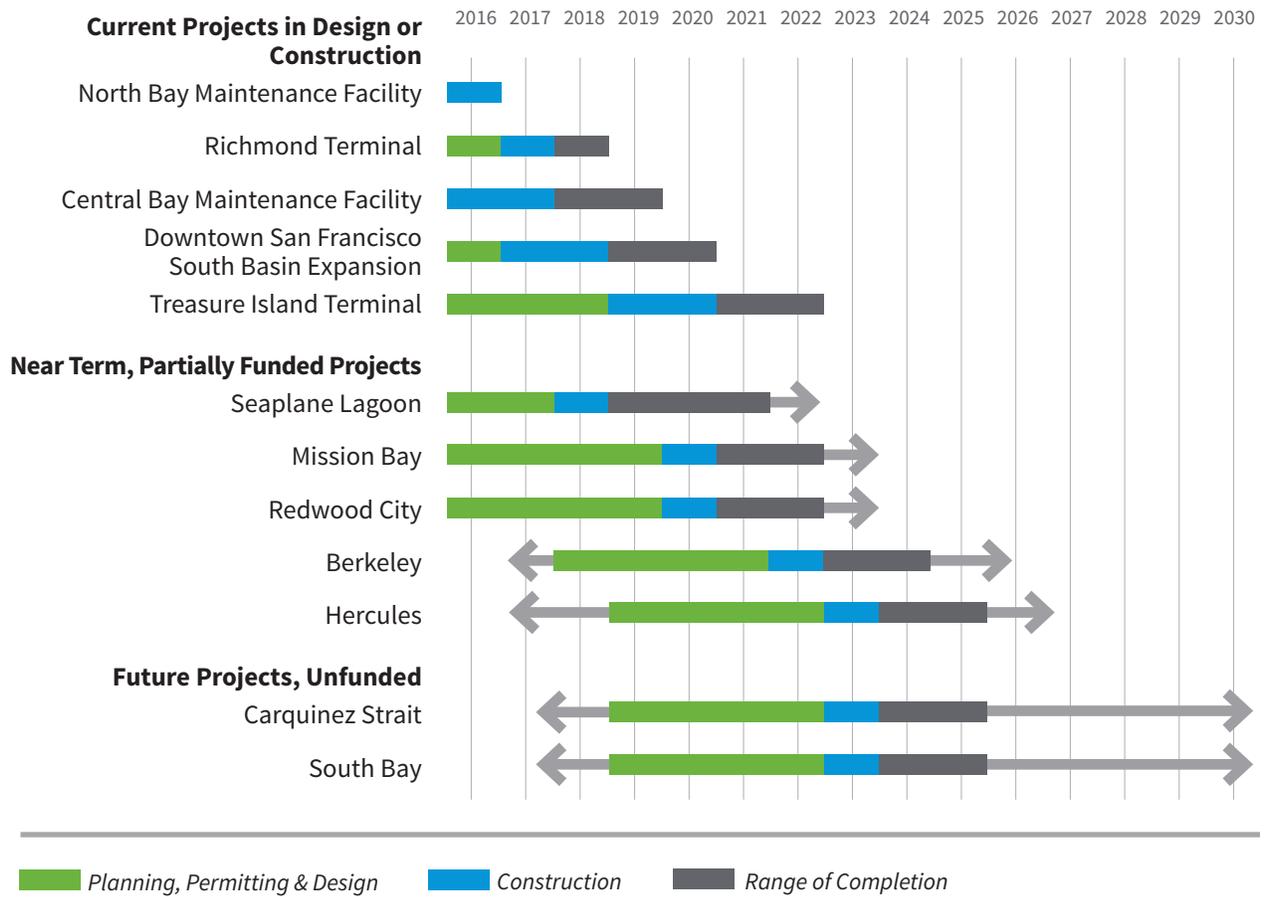


**FIGURE 1.0**

### Emerging Markets: South Bay and Carquinez Strait

With the increased job growth throughout the Bay Area, particularly in the corridor linking San Jose and San Francisco, there is a need to explore ferry service to locations previously not considered viable due to excessive travel time, environmental obstacles or high costs. With few realistic options for adding capacity in the Highway 101/Caltrain corridor, the ferry may be a cost-effective option worth exploring for South Bay communities such as Menlo Park, Palo Alto, Mountain View, Alviso, Milpitas or Fremont. The Carquinez Strait is another region that was the subject of past exploratory studies that concluded ferry service was not cost effective. However, changes in technology and the limited ability to build out other modes may warrant reconsideration of ferry service in the future in communities such as Martinez, Benicia, Rio Vista, Antioch or Discovery Bay. Demand for these services is steadily increasing, and WETA is prepared to work with regional stakeholders to identify and develop cost-effective options for serving travelers in these corridors.

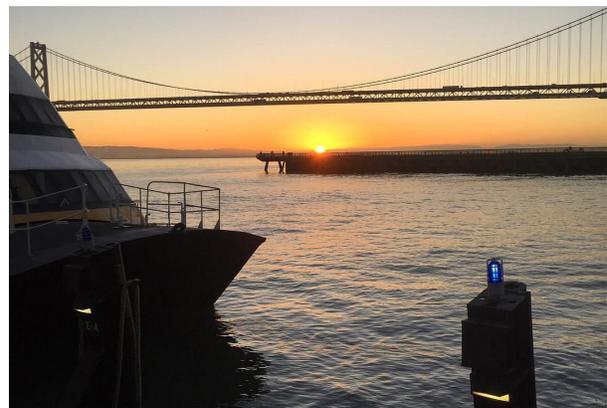
## Completion Timetable (Estimated Range)



- Projects generally take 5-7 years from inception to implementation.
- Implementation schedule significantly influenced by regulatory requirements, local support and fund availability for construction and operation.
- New services must meet WETA System Expansion guidelines, and funding/regulatory agency requirements.



Instagram: @pilawpina



Instagram: @bayferrycommuter

# 1. EXPANDED SERVICE

GOAL	OBJECTIVES
<p><b>A. Expand ferry service to meet San Francisco Bay Area transportation and emergency response needs.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Meet demand for WETA ferry transportation service.</li> <li>ii. Develop competitive ferry transportation services that offer commute choices and congestion relief.</li> <li>iii. Ensure the ferry is integrated into local and regional transportation plans and services.</li> <li>iv. Ensure expansion efforts are consistent with emergency response and recovery needs.</li> <li>v. Evaluate expansion candidates using WETA’s System Expansion Policy.</li> <li>vi. Evaluate existing WETA services for service enhancement using WETA’s Service Enhancement Policy.</li> <li>vii. Leverage ferry grants and funding by working with funding partners in the private sector and at the local, regional, state and federal levels.</li> <li>viii. Continue to serve as a catalyst for economic development and transit-oriented development initiatives.</li> <li>ix. Leverage private investment to support ferry services.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Reach out to all populations in developing and operating services in order to reduce barriers to ferry ridership and serve the larger Bay Area community.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Offer public transit service that does not discriminate due to physical capability, race, color, national origin, income level or language ability.</li> <li>ii. Design facilities, vessels, and services that are guided by Universal Design, accessible to persons with disabilities.</li> <li>iii. Be a responsible business partner, providing opportunities for disadvantaged or minority-owned businesses to contract with WETA.</li> <li>iv. Ensure public participation in decision making through inclusive methods of public outreach.</li> <li>v. Advocate for effective connecting bus service, providing a means of making the ferry accessible to transit-dependent populations.</li> </ul>



Instagram: @visitvallejo



Instagram: @bayferrycommuter

# Focus Area: Funding

Developing a robust, sustainable regional ferry system will require dedicated new funding sources that are sufficient to support capital and operating needs and create system reserves.

Over the years, WETA has received funding support from a variety of programs, ranging from federal formula and discretionary grants to local transportation funds, to build, maintain and operate its regional system of ferries, terminals, support facilities and services. Of these funds, Regional Measure 2 (RM2) bridge tolls have served as the cornerstone of WETA's ferry transit program, providing seed money for capital expansion projects (\$84 million) and \$18.3 million in ongoing annual operating support. Additionally, State Proposition 1B capital funds will provide \$250 million capital funds to support build-out of WETA vessels, terminals and core facilities necessary to deliver robust, reliable daily and emergency response and recovery services. If it were not for these two significant and dedicated funding sources, around which most other discretionary funds have been secured, WETA's system of vessels, services and facilities would not exist as they do today, serving more than 2 million passengers a year and providing a go-to emergency response transportation alternative. Moving forward, WETA will need a new commitment of similarly dedicated funds to support system services, planned expansion and increased emergency response capabilities.

## State of Good Repair

It is mission critical that WETA vessels and facilities are maintained in a "state of good repair" to support WETA's ability to provide reliable, safe, daily operations and ensure that the system is immediately available to serve in response to a natural disaster and during the economic recovery period that follows. Historically, approximately 80 percent of the cost of major system rehabilitation and refurbishment projects has been funded with federal formula grants programmed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), and the 20 percent local match has been provided by WETA. This significant financial support from the region has been critical to the long-term viability of the legacy routes inherited by WETA and will be vital to

maintaining the system into the future. For purposes of this plan, WETA assumes that federal funds will continue to be available to cover 80 percent of the state of good repair needs at system build-out, resulting in a \$150 million local match requirement.

## Future Funding Needs

Meeting the long-term demand for ferry service will require significantly more funding than is currently available to the agency. Securing increased funding will be challenging in a competitive political environment, but is a critical piece of building out the ferry network to meet regional needs. The strategic vision for Bay Area ferry service expansion outlined in the previous section will require approximately \$50 million in new annual operating subsidy and \$850 million in new capital funds to support system enhancement and expansion over the next 20 years. In addition, approximately \$150 million in new local match (20 percent) funds will be needed to help maintain vessel, terminal and facility assets in a state of good repair to serve WETA's ongoing operation and ensure that vessels and facilities are up and running when needed for emergency response and recovery. This represents a tripling of the initial investment in WETA services made through RM2 and State Proposition 1B funds to support full system build-out. WETA will need the support of its local, regional, state and federal partners and stakeholders in its advocacy efforts for dedicated funding to support its program.

There has historically been strong political support at the state, regional and local level for the inclusion of ferry projects in the Bay Area's regional bridge toll measure programs, which are designed to fund transportation improvements that reduce congestion in Bay Area toll bridge corridors. WETA's regional transbay ferry services provide a strong nexus and logical fit for this program. Regional policy makers have already started discussions around the possibility of a new bridge toll augmentation ("Regional Measure

*All figures in 2016 dollars.*

3"), and there are likely to be other regional funding opportunities in the decades ahead. WETA should engage in these policy discussions early to seek support for new funds to implement the program of projects and services included in this strategic plan. Ideally, the next regional bridge toll measure will include a similar level of commitment to WETA's regional ferry system as was made in RM2 for every new toll dollar authorized. With a commitment of new funds from this program, WETA would be positioned to move forward quickly to implement expansion services while continuing to seek complementary funding sources to stretch committed dollars even further. For example, grant augmentations from all levels of government can help support special projects, such as alternative propulsion technology and emergency response, and private sector contributions can help accelerate services that warrant public-private partnerships.

### Funding Provisions and Policies

WETA has established a solid foundation upon which to take on the task of further system expansion and development. A well-rounded staff of seasoned maritime transportation, finance, planning and operations professionals is in place. This team has established a strong track record of project delivery and responsive and responsible grant stewardship necessary to move WETA's program forward. As part of the effort to secure increased regional funding consistent with public expectations for its role in public transit and emergency response services, WETA will advocate for key changes to regional funding provisions and policies to guarantee that funds authorized for ferries remain dedicated for this purpose and to provide more flexibility in use of funds to meet the various system needs.

Key changes to regional provisions and policies that would support WETA's ability to deliver sustainable services include:

- **Expand fund eligibility to include emergency response and creation of system reserves; allow carry-over of unspent funds from year-to-year.** These provisions will help to recognize and fund WETA's full state mandate to provide ferry transit and emergency response services. It would also ensure

that funds authorized for WETA ferry services would be guaranteed to be made available for this purpose by program administrators. These provisions would improve WETA's ability to responsibly plan for long-term system needs, including establishing essential operating, capital and emergency response reserves that are not allowed per regional policies today.

- **Guarantee annual escalation of operating subsidies to cover a portion of cost inflation over time.**

This will help to ensure that services can be maintained and sustained over time with a balance of increased operating subsidies and reasonable fare increases. Currently, RM2 funds are not escalated on an annual basis, requiring WETA to raise fares annually and customers to shoulder an increasingly disproportionate share of operating costs. Without increased subsidy dollars, fares will eventually need to be priced so high that they will not be competitive with the rest of the regional transit system, and will be out of reach for lower income residents.

- **Establish performance metrics for WETA's regional system that encourage system investment.**

Regional system performance requirements for WETA ferry services were developed a number of years ago before WETA's system of regional ferry services was established. These requirements are outdated and should be revisited to reflect the long-term benefits of building up the ferry network in our region. Revised policies should allow for an adequate ramp-up period for new services (10 years minimum), view WETA ferry services on a system-wide basis rather than route-by-route, and provide allowances for program costs and requirements related to emergency response.

Advocating for changes to funding policies and guidelines does not mean that WETA should abandon its current practice of seeking strong, competitive expansion opportunities. Communities throughout the Bay Area have a number of transportation needs and an investment in ferry service has to make sense from a financial perspective. However, these policy changes are necessary to support and maintain the existing system. Pressing for them now will help ensure that both the existing operations and service to new markets are equally sustainable.

*Financial support for system growth is needed to ensure that sufficient vessels, terminals and trained crew will be available in the event of a major disaster.*

## 2. FUNDING

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### GOAL

### OBJECTIVES

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#### **A. Achieve financial sustainability.**

- i. Identify new sources of stable operating funding for future WETA ferry services.
  - ii. Create an operating reserve, ensuring sufficient operating resources to maintain flexibility.
  - iii. Pursue cost-effective service delivery strategies.
  - iv. Achieve a sustainable balance between existing operating subsidies and farebox revenue.
  - v. Explore revenue-generating opportunities that will contribute to ferry operations.
  - vi. Achieve farebox recovery goals consistent with WETA's Fare and Special Events Policies.
  - vii. Advocate for sustainable provisions in new regional funding that allow for the creation of an operating reserve, escalation of operating funds due to inflation and reasonable performance criteria that will encourage transportation investment.
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#### **B. Be a responsible steward of public funds.**

- i. Manage WETA capital grants and operating funds to ensure balanced budgets.
  - ii. Support regional initiatives offering need-based fare assistance and innovations in fare media-based programs.
  - iii. Expand and enhance ferry service using committed funding, based on partnerships with other agencies whenever possible.
  - iv. Seek cost effective strategies to manage expenses in the provision of ferry service.
  - v. Be consistent with WETA's fare policy and WETA's fare programs when establishing and revising fares.
  - vi. Follow best practices for procurement and fiscal management when using consultants, vendors or contractors.
  - vii. Strive to keep ferry fares affordable and in line with other Bay Area public transit options to ensure equality and access to all income levels.
-

# Focus Area: Quality

Ensuring that WETA's ferry service remains reliable, safe and comfortable is critical to offering passengers the most pleasant means of travel across the Bay. As passenger loads continue to grow, WETA's service quality must remain high.



Instagram: @shakinlikemilk

Today, the WETA system is a small but meaningful component of the Bay Area's transportation system, carrying close to 10,000 travelers on an average day—more than 2 million riders in a year—from terminals in Oakland, Alameda Main Street, Alameda Harbor Bay, South San Francisco, Vallejo and San Francisco. As the Bay Area economy has surged in recent years, the other primary means of crossing the Bay—the Bay Bridge, BART and AC Transit—have reached record levels of demand and have experienced capacity shortfalls. Ferries have been the beneficiary of crowded trains, buses and roads, and recent disruptions to those systems have exposed commuters and recreational travelers to ferry travel.

Overall ridership on the WETA system has increased 72 percent between 2012 and 2016 with individual routes ridership increases as follows:

- Alameda/Oakland - 77 percent
- Vallejo - 56 percent
- Harbor Bay - 64 percent
- South San Francisco - 274 percent

The rapid increase in ridership has caused crowding and strained capacity on the most popular trips, causing leave-behinds and disrupting travel for ferry passengers. In June 2015, the WETA Board adopted a Service Quality Policy that states a service averaging 80 percent occupancy or higher during the peak hour would justify a service enhancement. Many of WETA's services averaged between 90 and 100 percent occupancy during the summer of 2016. It is anticipated that peak-period service increases that exceed the limits of available funding will be needed over the next few years to maintain board-adopted service standards. Projections for continued economic growth in the Bay Area—and for job growth in San Francisco in particular—are robust, while capacity on both BART and the Bay Bridge will continue to be limited, suggesting that barring significant changes in the local economy, recent positive trends in ferry ridership will continue. WETA will continue to strive to meet this demand through existing resources and advocacy for operating funds to support enhanced service into the future.

### 3. QUALITY

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#### GOAL

#### OBJECTIVES

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##### A. Provide quality ferry transportation service.

- i. Offer reliable, scheduled ferry service.
- ii. Ensure ferry travel is comfortable and relaxing.
- iii. Meet demand for ferry service.
- iv. Help to reduce congestion by offering attractive, competitive transit choices for Bay Area travelers.
- v. Provide safe, clean and attractive terminal facilities.
- vi. Offer customer support through friendly, well-trained crew and staff.

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##### B. Ensure safe and secure ferry operations.

- i. Ensure captains and crews are properly trained in all safety procedures.
  - ii. Design and construct facilities to Essential Facilities standards.
  - iii. Maintain a constructive partnership with the US Coast Guard to ensure continued safe operations.
  - iv. Ensure vessels and facilities are properly serviced and maintained.
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*Projections for continued economic growth in the Bay Area—and for job growth in San Francisco in particular—are robust, while capacity on both BART and the Bay Bridge will continue to be limited, suggesting that barring significant changes in the local economy, recent positive trends in ferry ridership will continue.*



Instagram: @jodeemdreambig



Instagram: @crepessuzzette

# Focus Area: Partnerships

Partnerships with local, regional and private sector entities have helped the ferry system develop to what it is today. Moving forward, enhancing existing partnerships and establishing new partnerships will be critical to the success of WETA's expanded network and service.

The ferry system we have today was developed through multiple partnerships with local, regional and private-sector entities. Three of the four WETA routes now in operation were initiated by individual cities that put in significant time, money and effort to establish and nurture the return of ferry transportation in our region. As these routes were consolidated under WETA, more sophisticated partnerships have emerged to support both day-to-day operations and the expansion and enhancement of ferry services. For example, jurisdictions in Contra Costa County have jointly pledged a dedicated funding stream from a local transportation sales tax to cover the first 10 years of operations on the new Richmond service. In another model, the private partners who are constructing a mixed-use development on Treasure Island have agreed to fully fund multiple vessels, plus the net operating funding required for planned service between the Island and downtown San Francisco.

In some cases, partnerships are primarily focused on the activities that support WETA's routine activities. Given the small size of WETA's staff, the agency currently contracts with private-sector firms for many of its functions, including its contract operator and its labor union affiliates, engineers, consultants and vendors working on various WETA capital construction projects. The continued operation of WETA's ferry services is also the result of partnerships between WETA and the transportation funding agencies that provide capital and operating support, including the Federal Transit Administration, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, county transportation authorities and even cities. WETA will need both new partners and the continuation of existing relationships to ensure that funding is sufficient to allow the system to grow to meet demand. In particular, labor unions, community groups, business organizations and other key stakeholders can be helpful allies in making the

case for increased financial support. WETA should also enhance its relationships with local, state and federal permitting and regulatory agencies, and seek ways to better coordinate and accelerate the timeline for review and approval of new services that respond to transportation needs in the Bay Area.

Partnerships with cities, ports and waterfront neighbors are another important component of safe and vital ferry operations. Cities play an important role in building ferry ridership through supportive access infrastructure, such as bicycle lanes or parking. These stakeholders also can provide advocacy at the regional or state level to support needed regulatory or financial reforms. City land use policies and decisions play a critical role in supporting ridership for ferry services. Transit agencies providing feeder bus services are also a natural partner for WETA, which seeks to diversify access options beyond parking to include walking, biking and transfers from local bus providers.

Partnerships with the development community have become increasingly important as more cities become interested in new ferry services for their communities. Ferry terminals serve as catalysts to new development, helping to bring transit to underserved or isolated waterfront communities. This has been the case in South San Francisco, where new commercial development is leveraging the ferry terminal to draw employees from the East Bay. On both Treasure Island and Alameda's Seaplane Lagoon, future ferry terminals will provide a focal point for community development and a key connection to San Francisco. These development partnerships often involve one or more parties bringing new financial resources to the table in order to support the needed capital investments, operating subsidies or ancillary improvements that help to build patronage to sustainable levels. To the extent that government subsidies do not keep up with WETA's financial needs,

developers and their tenants may become more essential partners in targeting investment toward the most promising markets for future ferry services.

Another recent trend in the Bay Area is the emergence of new private transportation options, including small private ferry operators seeking to enter the market, as well as employer-based commuter shuttles aiming to develop new transportation solutions for their urban workforce. It will be important for WETA to monitor developments in this area and consider opportunities for coordinating expansion activities with private transportation innovators in order to ultimately improve and expand the network of water-based services available in the Bay Area.

Finally, WETA plays an important coordination role within the emergency response framework of the Bay Area and California. WETA has developed strong partnerships with both private service entities and public agencies at all levels of government for planning, coordinating and operating emergency response services. Ongoing activities such as regular communications and check-ins with various partners, development of joint plans, and active participation in local, regional, state and federal response exercises are necessary to deliver effective responses to natural disasters and transportation disruptions.

*It will be important for WETA to monitor developments in this area and consider opportunities for coordinating expansion activities with private transportation innovators in order to ultimately improve and expand the network of water-based services available in the Bay Area.*

## 4. PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL	OBJECTIVES
<p><b>A. Establish and foster partnerships to ensure quality ferry transportation and expansion of the ferry system throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Reach out to private-sector partners that provide contract and consulting services through fair and transparent procurement processes.</li> <li>ii. Establish positive working relationships with cities and other government agencies through Memoranda of Understanding and Project Agreements.</li> <li>iii. Work with potential development partners in both the public and private sectors when expanding the WETA system to ensure integrated, attractive projects that serve Bay Area communities.</li> <li>iv. Work with funding partners and regulatory agencies collaboratively to ensure all ferry facilities and services serve the public and provide quality transportation and emergency response services.</li> <li>v. Outreach to private operators of ferry services and other transportation innovators to explore opportunities for collaboration in providing service to underserved or non-competitive markets.</li> <li>vi. Establish partnerships with transportation providers—transit agencies, private ride services, bike share programs—to enhance connectivity to ferry terminals.</li> </ul>

# Focus Area: Environmental Stewardship

Public transit offers an alternative to the private automobile, reducing congestion and pollution due to single-occupancy vehicles. WETA plays a vital role in the Bay Area by providing high-volume service during peak congestion periods, efficiently moving people across the Bay. As vessels and technology advance, WETA will continue to be a leader in environmental efficiency and responsibility.

## Continuous Environmental Improvement

WETA has a multi-faceted role in the Bay Area's efforts to preserve, protect and enhance the local environment. WETA supports alternative transportation choices for local residents and visitors; it seeks greater environmental efficiency when designing new facilities and infrastructure; and it strives to improve the environmental profile of its ferry fleet. Being a water-based transportation service, WETA will be directly impacted by sea-level rise, and climate adaptation strategies are likely to be increasingly important considerations for the organization over the next several decades.

As a provider of public transit, WETA helps to reduce local negative environmental impacts by providing congestion relief in key commute markets and an alternative to trips by single-occupancy vehicles. The vast majority of trips on WETA ferries occur in the heavily traveled I-80 corridor. WETA's daily service offers travelers an alternative to driving on oversubscribed roadways, and ferries are an important backup option in the event of problems with the Bay Bridge or any of the other transit providers in the corridor. In addition to serving the everyday transportation needs of the Bay Area's workers, WETA also provides an attractive option for recreational travel, such as for ballgames and other weekend excursions. This reduces reliance on vehicles, and also alleviates congestion, parking and crowding issues related to parades, festivals and other special events.

As WETA services have gained in popularity, land-side access to terminals has become a greater concern. WETA already partners with the relevant transit operators and nearby employers to establish transit service and shuttles that provide sufficient first- and last-mile access to terminals. WETA also coordinates with local jurisdictions to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is sufficiently developed to encourage non-motorized terminal access.

In addition to the functional role that WETA services play in the transportation network, the agency is also a direct factor in environmental improvement when it makes investments in fixed facilities and other regional infrastructure. Under current practices, WETA strives to have all of its buildings meet the highest possible standards for environmental efficiency, via LEED certification and similar efforts. Building for efficiency from the start reduces life-cycle energy consumption. Going forward, WETA will look for opportunities to further improve the portfolio mix of its building energy consumption. For example, the agency could consider participation in emerging local efforts to develop community choice aggregation projects that offer alternative utility purchasing arrangements, or it could explore direct generation, such as installation of solar panels or wind turbines on its fixed facilities.

With all of its facilities and operations located at the edge of the San Francisco Bay, WETA will be directly affected by climate change and any associated sea level rise. As the region continues to explore adaptation strategies and other mitigations, WETA will monitor forecasts and trends, so that the agency can determine appropriate investments that will protect assets and secure its ability to operate for many years to come.

*WETA has consistently been an environmental leader in developing new clean diesel technology for use on passenger ferry vessels. Moving forward, WETA will continue its work in developing innovative, environmentally friendly propulsion technologies as part of its long-term approach to future capital investments.*

**Clean Vessel Technology**

WETA has consistently been an environmental leader in developing new clean diesel technology for use on passenger ferry vessels. Beginning with its first vessels, the Gemini Class series constructed in 2007, WETA pushed for the development and implementation of new diesel engine after-treatment technology. This resulted in these vessels exceeding EPA’s then-current Tier 2 emissions standards by 97 percent, proving to the industry that increasingly stringent Federal emissions requirements were achievable. New vessels under construction for WETA in 2016 follow suit, and are on target to achieve EPA’s Tier 4 emissions standards and reduce an estimated 10 tons of NOx, PM and CO emissions annually, utilizing a combination of selective catalytic reduction and diesel oxidation catalyst technologies. These achievements support the ambitious goals set by state and regional leaders for reducing harmful emissions and decreasing the climate impacts of transportation.

Moving forward, WETA will continue its work in developing innovative, environmentally friendly propulsion technologies to utilize as a part of its long-term approach to future capital investments. As a part of this effort, WETA will look for targeted opportunities to experiment with emerging technologies such as all-electric, hybrid-electric or wind-assisted propulsion systems as new vessels and services are designed and developed. New vessel technologies employed will be designed to allow flexibility to operate on multiple routes in order to support interlined service schedules, which maximize operating efficiency by sharing vessels and their crews between services, and to allow vessels to be flexed between services to most effectively respond to surges and changes in customer demand. In addition, because WETA’s assets are a critical piece of the region’s emergency response capability, alternative technologies will ideally be both environmentally sustainable and sufficiently resilient to be able to operate continuously in the event of a local disaster.

**5. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

GOAL	OBJECTIVES
<p><b>A. Seek continuous environmental improvement.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Ensure vessels meet or exceed federal, state and regional emissions standards.</li> <li>ii. Utilize proven technologies to improve environmental performance.</li> <li>iii. Reduce automobile travel and congestion by maximizing ferry ridership.</li> <li>iv. Encourage alternate mode access to ferry terminals by accommodating bicycles, transit and pedestrians.</li> <li>v. Build facilities that meet LEED standards for environmental efficiency, as applicable.</li> <li>vi. Monitor sea level rise and plan for impact of climate change.</li> </ul>

# Focus Area: Emergency Response

During the last several years, WETA has provided critical relief-valve service when BART or the Bay Bridge have been shut down or experienced service disruptions. These situations have illustrated that ferries are an important resource for the Bay Area. When faced with a service disruption or disaster, ferries are capable of moving thousands of people across the Bay. WETA's emergency response capabilities will continue to be a focus of the organization.



Instagram: @meredithrex

## Emergency Response

As part of its founding charter, WETA is directed to provide emergency response capabilities that might be needed after events such as natural disasters, emergencies or major network disruptions in the Bay Area. WETA plays an important role in coordinating the ferry transportation response and providing resources for decision-makers at the regional, state and federal level. Should an emergency occur, those decision-makers will direct resource deployment to provide movement of first responders, evacuation from dangerous areas, and delivery of needed supplies. WETA itself can only provide a physical response using the assets and personnel it has on

hand within its own fleet. By coordinating across all maritime partners in the region, WETA can amplify its own capacity to execute the priorities of the California Office of Emergency Services and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

As one example, the existing WETA ferry transit system has the capability of evacuating 62 percent of Downtown San Francisco's daytime population within 48 hours, using its own vessels. With assistance of other operators, WETA could evacuate a more significant share of the daytime population. As the network of WETA vessels, terminals and core facilities expands, the agency will have increased capacity to serve this purpose.

*Currently, the WETA ferry transit system has the capability of evacuating 62 percent of Downtown San Francisco’s daytime population within 48 hours, using its own vessels.*

**Economic Recovery**

In the recovery period after an event, WETA may be the only viable Transbay operator for a period of weeks or months. The ability to maintain transportation connectivity on the water could be critical in helping the Bay Area quickly regain its footing while needed infrastructure and services are rebuilt.

In addition to recovery from emergency and disaster situations, WETA can provide support during disruptions to the Bay Area’s transportation network. Closures of BART and the Bay Bridge have increased in recent years and will continue to be a concern as

existing transportation systems age and experience the stress of increased demand. This includes both scheduled facility closures for construction and maintenance activities and unscheduled closures due to equipment failures or unanticipated incidents.

As with natural disasters and other emergencies, WETA’s ability to respond when called upon is tied directly to the size and scale of its fleet and facilities. Building increased capacity through system expansion and service enhancement will strengthen WETA’s ability to operate for prolonged periods at increased service levels, helping to sustain the Bay Area both in the short term and in the long run.

**6. EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES</b>
<b>A. Effectively manage the waterborne transportation response to natural disasters and disruptions to the Bay Area’s transportation network.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Actively maintain and update WETA’s Emergency Response Plan.</li> <li>ii. Build emergency response capability in conjunction with WETA’s enhancement and expansion of transit service.</li> <li>iii. Increase the size and capacity of WETA’s fleet to absorb surges in ridership due to emergency response and recovery needs or disruption in Bay Area transportation.</li> <li>iv. Ensure WETA terminals have sufficient capacity for emergency response operations.</li> <li>v. Develop maintenance and fueling facilities that support emergency response activities.</li> <li>vi. Develop emergency preparedness partnerships with public safety officials and transportation operators at the federal, state and regional level.</li> <li>vii. Maintain training programs and participate in regional joint exercises to ensure WETA and contract operator staff are prepared for emergency operations.</li> <li>viii. Communicate WETA’s emergency response capabilities and resource needs to key participants and stakeholders in the emergency response community.</li> </ul>

# Focus Area: Organizational Capacity and Leadership

WETA’s organizational capacity and leadership will be critical to managing and expanding ferry services in the future.

The legislation that created WETA anticipated the agency playing a leadership role in the areas of emergency response and ferry development throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Today, the WETA Board is well positioned to prepare the organization for continued growth. The 2016 Strategic

Plan provides the direction needed to realize WETA’s vision, and will be reassessed over time to account for changes in the region and the industry. The WETA Board will continue to play an active role in managing the ferry system and partnering with stakeholders throughout the Bay Area.

## 7. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND LEADERSHIP

GOAL	OBJECTIVES
<p><b>A. Ensure WETA has the organizational capacity to manage and expand ferry services, according to the strategic direction of the Board of Directors.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Provide an environment where WETA’s strategic direction can be understood and reassessed on a periodic basis.</li> <li>ii. Prepare the organization for continued growth by ensuring that Board direction is clearly communicated and understood.</li> <li>iii. Maintain and develop WETA staff resources.</li> <li>iv. Utilize contract service providers and consultants to augment the organization’s administrative and service needs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Provide leadership for the continued operation and expansion of ferry service throughout the Bay Area.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Provide a forum for policy development and regular input through WETA Board meetings.</li> <li>ii. Establish and maintain collaborative partnerships with WETA contractors and vendors.</li> <li>iii. Develop cooperative relationships between WETA and organized labor.</li> <li>iv. Seek the input of ferry riders when considering major changes to the service and the ferry system.</li> </ul>

# Implementation and Monitoring



Instagram: @susankrlib

## Implementation

The Strategic Plan is designed to help guide agency priorities and decision-making. It will be implemented in the management of ongoing ferry operations, the enhancement and expansion of services and facilities, and in planning for the future. The Plan will provide WETA leaders with guidance and direction at critical junctures where resource allocation and stakeholder needs must be addressed. It will also direct WETA's attention to areas of focus as the future unfolds. It does not dictate how these various activities occur, but instead provides a cohesive policy framework for long-term growth and success.

## Monitoring

The WETA Board will continually revisit and reassess the direction of the Strategic Plan through planning studies and public forums. Additionally, monitoring of WETA's progress toward the goals and objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan will occur through integration with key regional reporting requirements and Board oversight.

## External Standards and Reporting

WETA adheres to standards and reporting requirements set by federal, state and regional agencies. WETA will work to integrate and synchronize these external requirements with its own framework for tracking performance and progress towards

Strategic Plan objectives. Key external reports and standards include:

- **Federal Requirements:** WETA reports performance data to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) through annual submittals to the National Transit Database. Additionally, WETA participates in the FTA Triennial review process.
- **Regional Requirements:** The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) requires WETA to make annual reports of key service and cost efficiency metrics as part of its Transit Sustainability Project. MTC also requires that transit operators within the Bay Area produce *Short Range Transit Plans* (SRTPs) that describe and quantify their 10-year operating and capital plans. The WETA 2016 *Short Range Transit Plan* (SRTP) provides a fiscally constrained projection for the FY2016–2025 period.
- **Other:** WETA's Emergency Response Plan (March 2016) and related documents describe WETA's plans and strategy for response to a catastrophic incident affecting Bay Area regional transportation operations consistent with the standards of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and other federal and state requirements and standards for emergency response.

# Our Vision for Ferry Service in 2035

**12 Vessels**  
**7 Terminals**  
**4 Routes**  
**Peak Capacity of 1,802**  
**7,583 Daily Riders**  
**5 Peak Hour Landings at SF Ferry Building**  
**\$33 Million Operating Budget**



2016

2035



**44 Vessels**  
**16 Terminals**  
**12 Routes**  
**740% Increase in Peak Capacity**  
**5x the Daily Riders**  
**25 Peak Hour Landings**  
**\$144 Million Operating Budget**

# An Evolution of WETA

## Milestones, Plans and Opportunities

**1989**

### **Loma Prieta Earthquake**

The Alameda/Oakland service, coupled with existing Vallejo service initiated in 1986, helped to serve travelers in the Bay Bridge corridor during this critical time.



SFMTA.com

**1999**

### **State Legislature Creates Water Transit Authority (WTA)**

In 1999, the state legislature created the San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority (WTA) to plan new and expanded environmentally friendly ferry service and related ground facilities.

**2003**

### **WTA Adopts the Implementation and Operations Plan**

In July 2003, WTA delivered an Implementation and Operations Plan (IOP) and companion programmatic Environmental Impact Report, identifying seven new potential ferry routes linking Oakland-South San Francisco, Berkeley-San Francisco, Richmond-San Francisco, Hercules-San Francisco, Antioch-San Francisco, Redwood City-San Francisco and Treasure Island-San Francisco.

**2004**

### **Voters Approve RM2**

Successful passage of Regional Measure 2 (RM2) in 2004 provided local toll bridge funds for regional ferry system expansion. With the approved funding, WTA moves forward with public ferry expansion plans outlined in the IOP.

**2006**

### **WTA Awards Contract to Nichols Brothers Boat Builders for First New Vessels**

In April 2006, the WTA Board approved the first of two contracts with the team of Nichols Brothers Boat Builders and Kvichak Marine Industries, Inc. for the construction of four new ferry vessels to add to the Bay Area fleet. These environmentally-friendly Gemini Class vessels were designed for low-wake/low-wash operation, and exceeded EPA Tier 2 Emission standards by 97 percent by utilizing a state-of-the-art Particulate Matter and NOx emission reduction system built specifically for WETA.

**2007**

### **SB 976 Establishes San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) to Replace WTA**

In 2007, with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina still fresh, the governor signed SB 976, which created the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) as successor to WTA. It directed WETA to run a consolidated regional ferry system and prepare the system to respond to a natural or man-made disaster, in particular a major earthquake that disrupts bridge traffic in and out of San Francisco.

**2008**

### **CalOES Approves \$25 Million Proposition 1B Funds to Support WETA Build-Out**

In June 2008, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services approved \$25 million in state Proposition 1B bond funds to support the design and construction of planned WETA ferry terminals, facilities and vessels to be made available to support emergency response transportation services in the region. This landmark allocation was the first installment of a promised \$250 million to be made available by the state to support build-out of WETA's planned expansion system.

**2009**

### **WETA Delivers Transition Plan**

In June 2009, WETA issued a Transition Plan as specified by recent legislation SB 1093. The legislation required that transfer of the boats, terminals and other equipment and facilities to WETA be negotiated between the agency and those cities, subject to public hearings and review, and mandated that the Transition Plan lay out WETA's plans for operating and financing current and expanded ferry service. The Plan was prepared in collaboration with the cities to ensure continuity of service and respect for local development goals for ferry terminal property and nearby lands.

### **WETA Breaks Ground on New South San Francisco Terminal**

In October 2009, WETA began construction of a new ferry terminal in South San Francisco.

## 2011

### **WETA Enters Into Operations and Maintenance Contract With Blue & Gold Fleet**

In 2011, Blue & Gold Fleet was selected to operate WETA's consolidated San Francisco Bay Ferry System.

## 2012

### **City of Alameda Services Transitioned to WETA**

Consistent with state law, operation of the Alameda-Oakland and Harbor Bay services, previously managed by the City of Alameda, was transitioned to WETA.



Photo by Barrie Rokeach

### **South San Francisco Service Begins**

In June 2012, construction of the new South San Francisco terminal was completed and service was launched. In addition, the ferry service began operating under the new consumer-facing San Francisco Bay Ferry name.



By ROMA Design Group in association with Moffatt & Nichol and Simpson Gumpertz & Heger

### **SF Bay Ferry Introduces Clipper**

SF Bay Ferry introduced Clipper on the Alameda-Oakland and Harbor Bay routes, connecting ferry riders to the extended transit network. Clipper is central to the integration of the ferry system with the long-term vision for Bay Area transit infrastructure.

## 2013

### **Ferry Ridership Triples During BART Strike**

During BART strikes in 2013, SF Bay Ferry's ridership tripled as many Bay Area residents used the ferry system to commute to and from work. The strikes introduced many commuters to SF Bay Ferry for the first time, and increased ridership continues today.



### **City of Vallejo Services Transitioned to WETA**

In June 2013, Vallejo ferry service previously managed by the City of Vallejo was transitioned to WETA. This transition included transfer of the system's vessels and terminals, as well as responsibility to carry-out the planned construction of a new maintenance and operations facility on Mare Island. This facility, as constructed, will serve as a core part of WETA's emergency response and North Bay operating infrastructure.

## 2014

### **WETA Awards \$32 Million Contract to Kvichak Marine Industries, Inc. for Two New Vessels**

In April 2014, the WETA Board of Directors awarded a \$32 million contract to Kvichak Marine Industries, Inc., of Seattle, Washington, for the design and construction of two 400-passenger, 27-knot, passenger-only ferries. The new vessels are expected to enter service by summer 2017.



Rendering courtesy Incat Crowther

### **WETA Breaks Ground at North Bay Operations and Maintenance Facility**

In May 2014, WETA began construction on the North Bay Operations and Maintenance Facility, located along the Mare Island Waterfront in Vallejo. The facility will serve as the center of the Vallejo system operations and vessel maintenance and fueling activities, and will provide a north bay emergency response center for WETA's system. The facility is scheduled to open in fall 2016.

### **WETA Implements Enhanced Service Schedules to Meet Growing Demand**

In summer 2014, WETA initiates the first of what will end up being a series of service increases in response to skyrocketing demand resulting from the booming economy.

## 2015

### Ferry Service to Richmond One Step Closer to Reality

In March 2015, the WETA Board of Directors approved a Cooperative Agreement with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and the City of Richmond to provide operating subsidy for proposed Richmond ferry service. The 10-year agreement will serve as the basis of future planning efforts among the involved agencies to support and plan for Richmond ferry service.

### SF Bay Ferry Ridership Increases 79% Over 5-Day Period During BART Closure

Over the five-day BART closure in the summer of 2015, SF Bay Ferry carried 79 percent more passengers than normal compared to a similar five-day time period.



## 2016

### WETA Delivers Short-Range Transit Plan

In February 2016, WETA updated its 10-year Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP) for FY2015-16 to FY2024-25. The Plan provides an overview of WETA's public transit ferry services and recent system performance, as well as a financially constrained 10-year projection of transit operating and capital expenses and revenues for the system.

### Ferry Ridership Peaks for Super Bowl 50

In February 2016, SF Bay Ferry enhanced its regular service for Bay Area residents traveling to and from San Francisco for Super Bowl festivities. For the nine-day period of enhanced ferry service, SF Bay Ferry ridership saw an 81 percent increase compared to a similar timeframe.



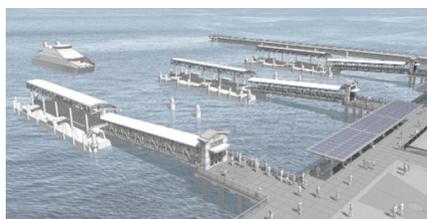
@bayferrycommuter

### WETA Approves Updated Emergency Response Plan

In March 2016, the WETA Board of Directors adopted an update to its Emergency Response Plan, which outlines WETA's roles, responsibilities and procedures for coordinating the Bay Area water transportation response in the event of a catastrophic event, such as an earthquake.

### WETA Awarded \$4 Million Grant for Downtown SF Ferry Terminal Expansion

In April 2016, WETA was awarded a \$4 million competitive grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for its Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion Project.



### WETA Board Approves Blue & Gold Fleet Contract Extension

In May 2016, the WETA Board of Directors approved a five-year extension of its agreement with Blue & Gold Fleet for the operation and maintenance of WETA's San Francisco Bay Ferry. Under the agreement, Blue & Gold Fleet is responsible for the daily operation and management of WETA's ferry transit system, including vessel operations and maintenance, ferry terminal operations, and fare collection.

### WETA and the City of Alameda Celebrate Opening of O'Lot

In May 2016, WETA and the City of Alameda hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the new O'Club Parking Lot, a paved parking lot with 121 spaces for Alameda Main Street ferry passengers. WETA funded the needed improvements, and City staff led the construction.



### WETA Completes Strategic Plan

The WETA Board of Directors approves the 2016 Strategic Plan, which sets forth a vision, mission and priorities for the next 20 years of SF Bay Ferry service.

## 2018

### Richmond Ferry Service (Planned Launch)

Weekday commuter service from Richmond to San Francisco was approved for funding and planning in 2015 and is scheduled to become operational by 2018 at a remodeled Richmond Ferry Terminal, in Richmond's Marina Bay District.



ci.richmond.ca.us

### Ron Cowan Central Bay Operations and Maintenance Facility (Planned Completion)

Construction of the Ron Cowan Central Bay Operations and Maintenance Facility is planned for completion in 2018. The facility will be the future home of WETA's central San Francisco Bay ferry fleet, providing a consolidated base for WETA to maintain vessels operating on its East Bay and South San Francisco ferry routes, as well as Richmond and Treasure Island services. The facility will also include an Operations Control Center for service dispatch and an Emergency Operations Center.



### San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion Project (Planned Completion)

The Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal Expansion Project will expand and improve facilities at the Downtown San Francisco Ferry Terminal. The project includes the construction of two new ferry gates, installation of amenities such as weather-protected areas for queuing, improvements to pedestrian circulation, and covering of the current "lagoon" area south of the Ferry Building for future use as a staging area for evacuees in the event of a major catastrophe.



## 2020 – 2026

### Expansion Services

A series of terminals that have recently entered into the planning and design stages will open during this time period, provided funding gaps can be closed and development activities continue forward progress. A third terminal in Alameda—at **Seaplane Lagoon** as part of the Alameda Point mixed use development—has a target opening of 2020. **Treasure Island** service is scheduled to open in 2022,



sfcta.org

assuming the current development schedule. A second destination terminal in San Francisco, in the emerging **Mission Bay** neighborhood, will open by the 2021-2022 basketball season. Terminals in **Redwood City** and **Berkeley** will open between 2022 and 2026, offering ferry service to underserved and congested corridors in the Bay Area



Rendering by Tai-Ran Tseng

## By 2035...

### Emerging Markets to South Bay and Carquinez Strait

With the increased job growth throughout the Bay Area, there is a need to explore ferry service to locations sites previously not considered viable due to excessive travel time, environmental obstacles or high costs. WETA will work with government and business stakeholders to identify opportunities to work collaboratively to develop cost-effective options for serving travelers in the South Bay and Carquinez Strait with ferries.

# Acknowledgments

## **Board of Directors**

Jody Breckenridge, Chair

Jim Wunderman, Vice Chair

Anthony Intintoli

Tim Donovan

Jeff DelBono

## **Executive Director**

Nina Rannells

## **Key Contributing Staff**

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## **Consultant Support**

Diana Dorinson – Founder and Principal, Transportation Analytics

## **Communications and Design**

MacKenzie Communications

# Appendix A

## 2016 Cost Estimate for WETA Expansion and Enhancement Plan

WETA staff has developed a preliminary estimate of the cost to develop the region’s ferry system as described in the Strategic Plan. The following sections lay out the total cost and net funding need in three separate areas: operating expenses, vessels and terminals. The scope, schedule, and budget for each of the projects below will evolve as projects move through the planning and development process. This Appendix will be periodically updated to capture major changes in the information presented here.

### Summary

(2016 dollars)

	Annual Operating		Vessels		Terminals	
	Committed Funding	Needed Funding	Committed Funding	Needed Funding	Committed Funding	Needed Funding
Enhancement	\$17	\$17	\$36	\$113	\$80	\$36
Expansion	\$6	\$18	\$83	\$275	\$99	\$143
Emerging	–	\$14	–	\$188	–	\$90
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23</b>	<b>\$49</b>	<b>\$119</b>	<b>\$575</b>	<b>\$179</b>	<b>\$269</b>

All figures shown in millions of dollars

## Operating Expenses

Table A-1 below presents an estimate of annual operating expenses, broken down by service for both existing and anticipated future ferry lines. Destination terminals such as the San Francisco Ferry Building, Pier 41 and Mission Bay are not included in this table, because the cost to serve those facilities is incorporated into the origin terminal expenses. For illustrative purposes, cost estimates are presented in current 2016 dollars, even for routes that are not scheduled to begin until future years.

WETA currently recovers approximately 50 percent of its operating expenses through fare revenue. Assuming that the system is able to achieve the same farebox recovery ratio for all services going forward, this would mean that the total operating budget of \$144 million would require an operating subsidy of \$72 million. This

value represents the subsidy required for a mature route network. The first several years of each new service will be a ramp-up period that could require additional subsidy to fully cover operating expenses while ridership builds to steady-state levels.

Two services—Richmond and Treasure Island—have already received commitments for operational funding support. The MOU for Richmond calls for an operating subsidy for the first 10 years. The table below assumes an increase in Richmond service above what is currently planned for the route and extension of the service beyond the current 10-year operating funding commitment. According to the development agreement for Treasure Island, operating expenses for that route will be covered by the Treasure Island Mobility Management Association (TIMMA) on an on-going basis.

**TABLE A-1: Estimated Annual Operating Expenses – Future System (2016 dollars)**

Operating Expenses	Service Levels		Total Annual Operating Budget	Operating Subsidy Required		
	Current	Enhanced			Committed Funding	Needed Funding
Alameda/Oakland	30	15	\$20	\$10	\$5	\$5
Vallejo	40	15	\$34	\$17	\$8.5	\$8.5
Harbor Bay	60	30	\$6	\$3	\$1.5	\$1.5
South San Francisco	60	30	\$8	\$4	\$2	\$2
<b>Enhancement Subtotal</b>			<b>\$68</b>	<b>\$34</b>	<b>\$17</b>	<b>\$17</b>
Richmond		30	\$8	\$4	\$2	\$2
Treasure Island		30	\$8	\$4	\$4	\$ -
Berkeley		30	\$8	\$4	\$ -	\$4
Redwood City		30	\$12	\$6	\$ -	\$6
Hercules		30	\$12	\$6	\$ -	\$6
<b>Expansion Subtotal</b>			<b>\$48</b>	<b>\$24</b>	<b>\$6</b>	<b>\$18</b>
Carquinez Strait		30	\$14	\$7	\$ -	\$7
South Bay		30	\$14	\$7	\$ -	\$7
<b>Emerging Subtotal</b>			<b>\$28</b>	<b>\$14</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$14</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$144</b>	<b>\$72</b>	<b>\$23</b>	<b>\$49</b>

All figures shown in millions of dollars

## Vessels

A fleet of 44 vessels would be needed to deliver the full buildout of the WETA system, as envisioned in the Strategic Plan. This assumes a spare ratio—the proportion of vessels in reserve versus those in daily operations—of 50 percent. Because of the challenges and complexity of maintaining vessels in a marine environment, which requires periodic dry dock inspections and repairs as well as extensive rehabilitation periods, a higher spare ratio is needed for ferries than may be required for other transit modes such as bus or rail. See Table A-2 below for required fleet and capital costs for the future system.

WETA operates two types of vessels today: waterjet propulsion vessels for the Vallejo service and propeller propulsion vessels in the Central Bay (Oakland, Alameda, Harbor Bay, South San Francisco). In addition, a green technology (hybrid, wind assist, electric) vessel is currently being considered for Treasure Island service. Future Richmond and South Bay services would require water jet vessels due to distance and travel time goals. Berkeley vessels may be green technology or propeller propulsion. Given current and projected demand, WETA is pursuing large vessels capable of carrying 400 passengers or more.

**TABLE A-2: Required Fleet and Capital Costs – Future System (2016 dollars)**

Vessels	Current Fleet	Enhanced Fleet	New Vessels Required	Total Cost	Committed Funding	Needed Funding
Alameda/Oakland (PROP)	3	6	3	\$54	\$36	\$18
Vallejo (JET)	4.5	7	3	\$59	\$ –	\$59
Harbor Bay (PROP)	2	3	1	\$18	\$ –	\$18
South San Francisco (PROP)	2.5	3.5	1	\$18	\$ –	\$18
<b>Enhancement Subtotal</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>\$149</b>	<b>\$36</b>	<b>\$113</b>
Richmond (JET)		3	3	\$71	\$47	\$24
Treasure Island (PROP)		3	3	\$54	\$36	\$18
Berkeley (PROP)		2.5	3	\$45	\$ –	\$45
Redwood City (JET)		4	4	\$94	\$ –	\$94
Hercules (JET)		4	4	\$94	\$ –	\$94
<b>Expansion Subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>\$358</b>	<b>\$83</b>	<b>\$275</b>
Carquinez Strait (JET)		4	4	\$94	\$ –	\$94
South Bay (JET)		4	4	\$94	\$ –	\$94
<b>Emerging Subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>\$188</b>	<b>\$ –</b>	<b>\$188</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>\$694</b>	<b>\$119</b>	<b>\$575</b>

All figures shown in millions of dollars

## Terminals

As outlined below in Table A-3, terminal expenses consist of both new terminal construction and expansion of existing terminals. Some new terminals already have a full funding plan in place. For example, the Treasure Island terminal is being funded by the team developing Treasure Island. Other new terminals require additional funding in order to move into the construction phase. Planned terminal expansions include the downtown San Francisco facility along with terminals in Alameda and Oakland.

**TABLE A-3:**  
**Capital Cost of**  
**Terminal Facilities –**  
**Future System**  
**(2016 dollars)**

<b>Terminals</b>	<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>Committed Funding</b>	<b>Needed Funding</b>
Downtown South Basin	\$80	\$80	\$ –
Alameda Main Street	\$18	\$ –	\$18
Oakland	\$18	\$ –	\$18
Vallejo	\$ –	\$ –	\$ –
Harbor Bay	\$ –	\$ –	\$ –
South San Francisco	\$ –	\$ –	\$ –
<i>Enhancement Subtotal</i>	<i>\$116</i>	<i>\$80</i>	<i>\$36</i>
Downtown North Basin	\$30	\$ –	\$30
Richmond	\$18	\$18	\$ –
Seaplane Lagoon	\$18	\$10	\$8
Treasure Island	\$30	\$30	\$ –
Berkeley	\$35	\$ –	\$35
Redwood City	\$30	\$15	\$15
Mission Bay	\$46	\$3	\$43
Hercules	\$35	\$23	\$12
<i>Expansion Subtotal</i>	<i>\$242</i>	<i>\$99</i>	<i>\$143</i>
Carquinez Strait	\$40	\$ –	\$40
South Bay	\$50	\$ –	\$50
<i>Emerging Subtotal</i>	<i>\$90</i>	<i>\$ –</i>	<i>\$90</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$448</b>	<b>\$179</b>	<b>\$269</b>

All figures shown in millions of dollars

# Appendix B

## Description of Available Funding Sources

This appendix provides a brief overview of the funding sources that are currently or potentially accessible to WETA to fund the enhancement and expansion of the regional ferry system. This appendix will be updated in the event of significant changes to WETA's funding structure. Additional detail about capital and operating funding sources can be found in other WETA documents that are updated on a more frequent basis, such as the Short Range Transit Plan and the Annual Capital and Operating Budget.

### Federal

#### Formula Grants

The Federal Transit Administration provides formula grants to transit operators through its Section 5307 (Urbanized Area) and 5309 (Transit Capital Investment) programs. These funds are restricted to specific types of capital rehabilitation expenditures, programmed annually to WETA by MTC through the regional Transit Capital Priorities process.

The Federal Highway Administration Ferry Boat Program provides a small amount of federal grant funds annually by formula to support existing public ferry operator's capital needs.

#### Discretionary Grants

Ferry boats and facilities are eligible for FTA Passenger Ferry Grant Program funds administered by the Federal Transit Administration annually through a nationwide competitive call for projects. This program is consistently oversubscribed, so funding levels are uncertain in any given year.

### State

#### Proposition 1B

This voter-approved program sells state bonds and directs the proceeds towards a variety of transportation needs throughout California. WETA received a \$250 million state commitment through the Regional Public Waterborne Transit portion of this program to support efforts to develop and expand regional ferry emergency response capacity in the San Francisco Bay Area.

#### State Transit Assistance

State Transit Assistance (STA) funds are appropriated by the State Controller's office on a revenue and population formula basis and allocated annually to WETA through grant agreement with MTC to support transit capital and operating needs. STA funds are derived from the sales tax on fuel sold in California, and can vary considerably from year-to-year based on changes in oil prices and the overall economy.

#### Low Carbon Transit Operations Program

The Low Carbon Transit Operating Program (LCTOP) is a part of the State's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund that provides assistance for transit projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve mobility. Revenues are generated from a specified portion of cap-and-trade auction proceeds, and then allocated to operators based on the State Transit Assistance (STA) Revenue-Based formula. These funds can be used to support new or expanded transit services, or expanded intermodal facilities and equipment, fueling and maintenance for those facilities. WETA will need to identify expenditures that qualify as a GHG reducing projects in order to be eligible for reimbursement from LCTOP. In addition, action by the state legislature may be required to extend this program beyond 2020.

### Regional & Local

#### Regional Measure 1

In 1988, Bay Area voters approved Regional Measure 1 (RM1), authorizing a \$1.00 toll increase for all seven state-owned Bay Area toll bridges. WETA receives multiple funding allocations from the toll revenues, to support both operating and capital needs. The funding amounts do not escalate over time to keep pace with inflationary increases in costs.

#### Regional Measure 2

In 2004, voters passed Regional Measure 2 (RM2), raising the toll on the seven state-owned toll bridges in the San Francisco Bay Area by an additional \$1.00. WETA has been allocated fixed amounts to support specific capital projects and operating expenses to maintain, enhance and expand the existing ferry system. The funding amounts do not escalate over time to keep pace with inflationary increases in costs.

### **Assembly Bill 664**

Assembly Bill 664 funds are also related to Bay Bridge tolling. They are programmed annually by MTC to provide partial local match to Federal Section 5307 and 5337 formula grant funds for capital projects serving the Bay Bridge transbay corridor. WETA has received funding in the past and will continue to pursue this source for upcoming projects which may be eligible.

### **Transit Performance Initiative (TPI) Incentive Program**

The Transit Performance Initiative (TPI) Incentive Program is a relatively new program that provides a financial reward to those Bay Area transit agencies that improve their ridership and productivity. MTC has designated a portion of federal monies from the regional Surface Transportation Program (STP)/ Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds to the TPI Incentive Program and developed criteria and formulas for distribution on a periodic basis. WETA must identify capital and operating expenditures that would otherwise be eligible for STIP/CMAQ monies in order to seek reimbursement from MTC under this program.

### **Alameda County Measure B / Measure BB**

In 2000, Alameda County voters approved Measure B, the half-cent transportation sales tax and an accompanying 20-year expenditure plan. Then in 2014, Alameda County voters passed Measure BB, a 30-year Transportation Expenditure Plan which extends the existing 0.5 % Measure B sales tax beyond its original sunset date, and augments the tax by 0.5%. Alameda CTC administers Measure B funds to deliver transportation improvements and services in Alameda County and to address congestion in major commute corridors. WETA receives annual allocations to support a portion of its operating and capital needs. Measure BB will expire in 2045 without voter renewal.

### **San Francisco Proposition K**

San Francisco Proposition K (Prop K) is a half-cent local sales tax for transportation that was approved by San Francisco voters in November 2003. The City and County of San Francisco programs funding to eligible projects identified in its 5 Year Prioritization Programs (5YPPs), which are updated every four years.

### **Contra Costa Measure J**

In 2004, Contra Costa voters approved Measure J, which extended the half-cent local transportation sales tax first established by Measure C in 1988 for another 25 years, in order to provide funding for continued and new transportation projects in the county. WETA has received allocations from these funds for both operating and capital purposes, primarily to support new service in Richmond, per an MOU between WETA and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA).

### **San Mateo Measure A**

In 2004, San Mateo County voters approved an extension of the existing Measure A transportation sales tax measure to provide funding for continued and new transportation projects in the county. The revised expenditure program included capital funds to support development of new ferry services to South San Francisco and Redwood City. A portion of the approved funding has already been used to construct the South San Francisco terminal. WETA will work with the San Mateo County Transportation Authority, South San Francisco and Redwood City to identify any future projects that would be an appropriate use for the remainder of the voter-approved funds.

### **Local Property Taxes & Assessments**

In the past WETA has received minor allocations of funding from various local entities to support a portion of capital and operating costs of ferry service to specific Bay Area communities. Examples include municipal property taxes from the City of Alameda and special district assessments from the Harbor Bay Business Park. Community-level funding support is often critical in accelerating small-scale projects and closing funding gaps so that larger projects can move into implementation.

### **Future Regional & Local Programs**

In the years ahead, WETA anticipates that new funding programs will be crafted to help provide revenues to support the continued improvement of the Bay Area's regional transportation system. Programs that have been suggested in the past include a third bridge toll augmentation, a regional gas tax, and new county-level transportation sales taxes. Where appropriate, WETA will advocate for a portion of these new programs to support enhancement and expansion of ferry transit operations.



