July 9, 2020
Mayor Pauline Cutter
Alameda County Transportation Commission Chair
1111 Broadway, Suite 800
Oakland, CA 94607

Re: Valley Link TEP Amendment

Dear Chair Cutter,

Thank you for providing AC Transit and other jurisdictions in Alameda County the opportunity to comment on the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) and Tri-Valley San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority's (TVSJVRRA) proposed amendment to the 2014 Measure BB Transportation Expenditure Plan (TEP) to reprogram $400 million in the Measure BB funds from the BART to Livermore project to the Valley Link Rail project. Please note that AC Transit's Board of Directors has not had the opportunity to provide official comment and position on the proposed amendment and AC Transit's Board representative has indicated she will be guided by the board's direction. Therefore, this letter reflects the comments of AC Transit staff.

As a primary transportation provider in Alameda County, AC Transit has interest in the county's transportation services and the establishment of a comprehensive, multi-modal transit network. As a result, staff has the following comments with regard to the proposed amendment:

- Though the BART to Livermore project did not align with BART's service priorities, the project was primarily intended for Alameda County residents, employees and taxpayers. Any alternate use of the funding allocation should benefit the same population in the county. This is consistent with Implementing Guideline #14 - "No Expenditures Outside of Alameda County" under the TEP.

  The Valley Link Rail project appears to have a primary purpose of transporting residents from San Joaquin County to Alameda County, with an ultimate destination in Santa Clara County, similar to existing ACE Train service. ACTC Staff and Valley Link Project staff were unable to clarify this issue when asked by the AC Transit Board. If the funding allocation is transferred to this project, Alameda County taxpayers would not directly benefit as much as San Joaquin County residents, especially if there are no committed funds from San Joaquin County.

- Appropriate use of the $400 million in funding should be to help create a comprehensive multimodal transportation network that serves the residents, employees and taxpayers of Alameda County. There are many transportation projects

that could improve travel and commute for Eastern Alameda County and would have a better cost-benefit ratio than the Valley Link Rail project and thus, a better and more efficient use of funds. Possible projects such as express bus service and bus rapid transit would fall into this category. Implementing Guideline #22 – "Fund Allocations" under the TEP would allow for such projects to be funded with the allocation.

- Given the current financial climate and the uncertainty that lies ahead, it is within reason for ACTC to also consider reallocating the $400 million to any number of under-funded capital projects throughout the county, including transit projects within the AC Transit service area that are identified in multiple countywide plan documents. Per Implementing Guideline #4 – "Amendments Require 2/3 Support" of the TEP, ACTC could amend the plan with a 2/3 supporting vote of the commission and distribute funds to existing planned or proposed projects.

Again, thank you for giving AC Transit the opportunity to comment on this proposed amendment to the TEP. Should you have any questions or need clarification on the above comments, please do not hesitate to contact AC Transit staff.

Sincerely,

Michael Hursh
General Manager