



SAN MATEO, SANTA CLARA & SAN BENITO COUNTIES

November 9, 2020

Via Email: board.secretary@vta.org

Re: 2021 Transit Service Plan

Dear members of the VTA Advisory and Standing Committee,

The Loma Prieta Chapter is the local face of the Sierra Club for San Mateo, Santa Clara, and San Benito Counties. Our Transportation Committee's mission statement is "to promote the most cost-effective, equitable, least polluting, and least sprawl-inducing transportation system possible. Special attention needs to be given to rectifying the imbalance between the resources devoted to automotive transport, and other modes, specifically, bicycle, pedestrian and mass transit."¹

Any cut of VTA service from pre-covid levels would undermine our progress in reducing carbon emissions and make transportation more difficult for our lowest-income residents and workers. According to the California Air Resources Board, "[E]missions from the transportation sector continu[e] to rise despite fuel efficiency and decreases in the carbon content of fuel...residents, in search of an affordable place to live, and with insufficient transportation options, are too often left with little choice but to spend significant time and money driving from place to place."² Maintaining existing transit service is crucial to solving our climate challenge. Service cuts will force people into adopting new transportation habits, the most likely of which will be driving alone. Many current VTA riders depend on transit and shifting to cars will impose more financial costs on them.

We urge the VTA Advisory & Standing Committees recommend the 100% transit plan for VTA Board approval. If it is truly not feasible to achieve that now, the Committees should recommend the highest possible service level and have a goal of returning to 100% as soon as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathan Chan
Sierra Club Executive Committee Member-At-Large
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

CC Gladwyn D'Souza, Conservation Co-Chair, Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter
James Eggers, Executive Director, Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

¹ <https://www.sierraclub.org/loma-prieta/about-transportation>

² CARB, "Tracking Progress - Sustainable Communities",
<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/tracking-progress>