



January 13, 2016

Nina Rannells  
Executive Director  
Water Emergency Transportation Authority  
Pier 9, Suite 111  
San Francisco, CA 94111

Dear Nina:

Thank you for sharing the draft of the 2016 Strategic Plan with me. In the face of rising congestion on highways and transit systems throughout the Bay Area, the demand for ferry service has never been so great and the role of this agency has never been more important. WETA has an extraordinary opportunity to meet the needs of Bay Area residents, and it is up to us to deliver on that opportunity.

The Strategic Plan document is our opportunity to demonstrate our vision for the future and build public support for what we believe is necessary. In my view, we should be crafting a set of ambitious goals for the future of this agency and designing strategies to deliver on them. Unfortunately, the document falls well short of that. While the plan includes a table that projects a robust expansion of routes and frequencies by 2030 (page 19), it glaringly lacks a process for achieving that. For example, how will we deliver service to Mission Bay with 20 minute frequency in the next fifteen years when the document does not even include Mission Bay in our ten year plan?

In addition to lacking a strategy to achieve the stated goals, I do not believe the plan goes far enough. For example, the twenty year plan does not identify opportunity sites south of Redwood City, despite the unprecedented commute constraints that plague the region. Exploding job growth in Silicon Valley is driving California's economy, but it has also precipitated severe congestion on Highway 101 and Caltrain. Ferries offer a relatively inexpensive solution for a convenient, comfortable, and congestion-free commute, yet the plan does not prepare for offering service near these critical employment centers.

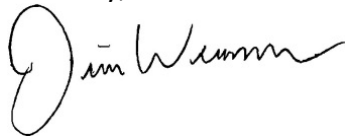
Rather than crafting an ambitious expansion target and strategy to achieve that goal, the document repeatedly cites financial constraints as a justification for not building a more robust plan. The proposal specifically does not identify any new terminals for consideration over the next ten years due to lack of funding. To my knowledge, there have been no attempts to secure more funding, and in some cases money is apparently available. For example, San Mateo County is currently holding \$15 million of Measure A funds which voters have approved for a terminal at the Port of Redwood City. There are also new private financing possibilities

emerging, as major employers are determined to improve commute options for their employees. I understand that the agency faces real financial constraints, but we should be identifying potential new revenue sources, developing partnerships with stakeholders, and exploring other opportunities to overcome these barriers. WETA must be the champion for an expanded system, and a fierce advocate for the services it provides.

Moreover, I feel strongly that the consideration of advanced clean propulsion technologies should be included in this strategic document. Governor Brown and the California Legislature have set us on an ambitious path to decarbonizing the state's transportation system, and we should be establishing ourselves as an environmental leader by operating the nation's least polluting ferries. We have repeatedly been presented with new technologies – including sail-assisted, battery diesel hybrid, and full battery-electric – that can dramatically reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, while also significantly driving down operating costs. We should not design a plan for the future that relies on technology from the past. Sustainable forms of transit will also qualify for new sources of revenue such as cap and trade funding and air quality management grants.

We must significantly expand our system in the short term to meet current demand and accommodate future growth, and the document should reflect our ambitious vision for expansion. I apologize that family obligations prevent me from attending the meeting tomorrow, but I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Board, WETA staff, and key stakeholders over the next few months as the document evolves into a robust vision for the future of ferry service on the bay.

Sincerely,



Jim Wunderman  
Vice Chair  
Water Emergency Transportation Authority

CC: Jody Breckenridge, Chair  
Jeff DelBono  
Timothy Donovan  
Anthony Intintoli