



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **BART Board Meeting**

**July 28, 2022**

**Item 8-A**

**From:** [Joe A. Kunzler](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#); [Janice Li](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#)  
**Subject:** AIRTALK on Mask Mandates  
**Date:** Friday, July 22, 2022 9:01:31 AM

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Hi there;

Figured I should pass this along. I tweeted at NPR's AirTalk yesterday and got this response from Dr. Shruti Gohil, professor of medicine and associate medical director for epidemiology and infection prevention at UC Irvine's School of Medicine. Original audio at 1:01:20 that's [based here](#). With that, let's roll Dr. Gohill, MD:

Host: "Does Dr. Gohill think a mask mandate on transit is still effective?"

Dr. Gohill, MD: "Oh, well, it depends on how crowded those transits are. You know, you're you're in a place with with people in your if you're packed, and are you gonna get you're more likely to get infected? Yeah, I, you know, I would say, Yeah, I would you have a very infectious agent right now in BA five. And Ba four. I mean, they're really infectious. And I know it's hard for people to hear that because we said that about the very first string. And but this is orders of magnitude more. So I would say yeah, right now in mass transit, I would maintain being careful if you're stuck in a, you know, a vessel of some kind with a bunch of people who could be sick. I think that would be good protection for people."

Good protection for people. Food for thought.

I also want to be clear at this critical hour: For me, this is an ideological struggle. Not a pick-on-the-BART-board matter.

There are two Americas right now. One of which is working away fighting this virus and Trumpism also. That one thinks as Director Li said we disableds shouldn't have to be retelling our life stories. That one doesn't just tweet like a mother but fights like a mother. That one should be the home of BART.

The other America of which as patriots saw last night has a fraudulent leader who can't concede an election while his knights on the chessboard run away from a mob they agitated. Pick one America and live with the consequences. Because not everyone is going to like you when we're so damn divided.

Now if you'll excuse me before I copy-paste this Dr. Gohill, MD quote to some other transit boards, I have to put on a KN95 mask and give my mother a COVID-19 test. That's how serious this is.

JOE SENDS

Case 00288438: Mask Mandate - against

Name: no name

Date/Time of Call: 613 am, 7/28/22

Phone: 510 828 6867

Report: Customer left profanity-laced on Customer Services voice mail criticizing BART Board of Directors for getting rid and reconsidering restoration of mask mandate. Customer sees the mandate as a "mistake" and does not support it. He is glad he stopped riding where he was wasting time and money on BART. Customer criticized Board for getting "richer" and "stupider" and wanted to tell the BART Board to "get a life and start paying attention and get with the program."

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Check Before You Go! Sign up for email and text alerts about BART service, improvements, and emergencies at <https://www.bart.gov/alerts>.

ref:\_00Dd0hrYV.\_5006T20a1FK:ref

**From:** [no-reply](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for the BART Board of Directors  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 8:01:57 PM

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First Name: Daniel  
Last Name: Szoke  
Email: [daniel.szoke2@gmail.com](mailto:daniel.szoke2@gmail.com)  
Phone:  
City: San Francisco  
State: California  
Zip:  
Subject: Opposed to Mask Mandate (07/28/2022 Agenda Item 8A)

**Comment:**

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed reintroduction of a mask mandate on the BART.

As someone who was very concerned about catching COVID and very careful to diligently wear a mask through March 2022, I understand why some would desire to reintroduce the mask mandate. However, with the innate reduced disease severity of the Omicron variant (including newer sub variants like the currently dominant BA5) and the widespread availability of COVID vaccines and treatments like Paxlovid, mandated mask wearing is no longer a necessary precaution. Despite the fact that we are currently likely experiencing record-high infection levels, the entire state of California is only experiencing 40 Covid deaths per day, which is close to the lowest level experienced since the start of the pandemic. The risk of death when infected with the virus that causes Covid is now on-par or lower than that of a seasonal influenza across all age groups. If the situation were to worsen, and many more people began to die of Covid, then it would certainly be prudent to reintroduce the mask mandate. But given that Covid remains relatively mild, masking should be optional.

It is understandable that some individuals will feel more comfortable continuing to wear masks, perhaps due to being at higher risk for severe disease. In fact, when I rode the BART today, most people were wearing masks. These individuals should be encouraged to wear high filtration masks, such as N95s, which are highly effective at blocking infection with respiratory viruses even when no one else around is wearing a mask. Likewise, sick individuals who must ride the BART should be urged to mask up to prevent spreading infection. But healthy people who would prefer not to wear a mask should have their personal choice respected due to the reduced disease severity.

Thank you for considering my opposition to the mask mandate. I hope you will chose to vote against requiring masks on BART.

**From:** [no-reply](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for the BART Board of Directors  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 9:54:43 AM

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First Name: Katherine  
Last Name: Schaff  
Email: [kathi.schaff@gmail.com](mailto:kathi.schaff@gmail.com)  
Phone: 2025509076  
City: San Francisco  
State: California  
Zip: 94110  
Subject: I support mask protections on BART  
Comment:  
To the BART Board of Directors,

I've been a resident of San Francisco for over 16 years. I'm a voter and public health worker. I'm also a person with underlying health issues and so from a personal and professional standpoint, I am writing to ask BART to reinstate mask protections on trains and platforms.

I've had the ability to work from home for the duration of the pandemic, but many essential workers do not have this ability. Additionally, we know that essential workers are more likely to be people of color who already face greater risk of exposure to COVID. Keeping mask protections on BART will help reduce exposure and racial and health inequities. For others who do not own cars, are our elders, or have disabilities, BART may be the only option for getting around. As we can see, anytime we lift mask protections, COVID rates go up, putting all of these community members at risk. Additionally, each surge of COVID means people are missing work. About 1 in 40 employed people in the US were out sick with COVID in just 2 weeks (from June 29 to July 11). When people are sick, some are missing work, not taking public transit, and impacting how much BART is collecting in fares.

Public health research is unequivocal. Vaccines are critical and help prevent hospitalization and death, but cannot fully eliminate the risk of COVID or more serious complications. We know that breakthrough infections are common, and while less serious, still pose a risk, especially for the immunocompromised, like myself. I've just started riding public transit again after refraining during the surge, but if mask protections are lifted, I'll either eliminate trips or try to get a ride from someone who will wear a mask.

Additionally, wearing masks can help us protect each other without interfering with local businesses. The false narrative of choosing between COVID protections and economic wellbeing is dangerous, as we now see that when workers are sick, businesses will close and lose money regardless of whether there is a shelter-in-place order.

In the midst of the worst public health crisis of our times, our decisions

must reflect public health science. Masks save lives. They make it easier to get around on transit. They allow immunocompromised people some ability to leave their homes. And they are much more effective when more people wear them--if you are the only one wearing one, it's like driving the speed amongst many others who are drunk and speeding. Please center safety and health and keep the mask protections.

Thank you,

Katherine Schaff, DrPH, MPH

**From:** [no-reply](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for the BART Board of Directors  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 1:06:28 PM

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First Name: Rebecca

Last Name: Moskowitz

Email: [beckymoskowitz@gmail.com](mailto:beckymoskowitz@gmail.com)

Phone:

City: Oakland

State: CA

Zip: 94602

Subject: Continue mask mandate on BART

Comment: We all want BART to be a welcoming, safe, and accessible public transit option for our community. As our community is in the midst of another COVID surge, masks remain one of our best tools for quelling the pandemic's spread. Public transit riders include many people with disabilities and older adults who cannot drive due to their disabilities or limited finances. These individuals are likely to face more significant impacts if they get COVID. Removing the mask mandate will force them to choose between risking their lives and losing their ability to commute affordably. Requiring masks is a minor inconvenience that will protect the most vulnerable members of our community. Please extend the mask mandate.

**From:** [no-reply](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for the BART Board of Directors  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 4:21:39 PM

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First Name: morgann  
Last Name: nieto  
Email: [morgann.nieto@gmail.com](mailto:morgann.nieto@gmail.com)  
Phone:  
City: oakland  
State: CA  
Zip: 94611  
Subject: public comment - please reinstate mask mandate (agenda item #8)  
Comment:  
Dear Bart board members,

Please vote yes on item 8, and reinstate the mask mandate on Bart. There are truly no drawbacks to this, and it will send a strong message that Bart considers the health and safety of its riders, especially those who are disabled, elderly and immunocompromised, a top priority. It is vitally important for the Bay Area to make its public health policies based on science and what is best for those most at risk. I look forward to commuting from Oakland into the city on Bart this fall, but I will only be able to do so if I can expect a reasonable portion of fellow riders will be masked. Please reinstate the mandate, for the health and safety of our community.



**From:** [no-reply](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for the BART Board of Directors  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 9:20:21 AM

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First Name: Lisa  
Last Name: Hubbell  
Email: [lhubbell@sonic.net](mailto:lhubbell@sonic.net)  
Phone:  
City:  
State:  
Zip:  
Subject:

Comment:

I just saw that you will be voting tonight on reinstating the mask mandate.

PLEASE REINSTATE IT.

I commute daily on BART, and do not have an alternate way to get to work.  
Please do everything in your power to support passengers' health and safety.

**From:** [no-reply](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for the BART Board of Directors  
**Date:** Saturday, July 23, 2022 2:38:18 PM

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First Name: Leo  
Last Name: Dooley  
Email: [randompersonfire@protonmail.com](mailto:randompersonfire@protonmail.com)  
Phone:  
City:  
State:  
Zip:  
Subject: No more mask mandates, please.  
Comment:

This message is intended for all BART board members.

I'm very disappointed and concerned that BART is proposing yet another mask mandate at the board meeting. The board had previously indicated that any mask mandate would not be permanent, yet now they're trying to reimpose it again with no end in sight.

There are multiple issues with a BART mask mandate.

1. Putting the police in charge of enforcing this increases the risk of police brutality, unequal enforcement, and racial profiling. There's also the risk of unauthorized enforcement by other passengers. There have been incidents in the US where people were assaulted (or in one case, fatally stabbed) by strangers for not wearing a mask.
2. This mandate seriously harms those who cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability. Even though the previous mandate technically allowed exemptions, this wasn't communicated on signage, nor was it clear what BART's mask exemption process was. (is advance notice and/or medical documentation required, or not?)
3. Most other transit systems in the US and in the Bay Area do not have their own mask mandates. BART's mask mandate will cause confusion, especially when Caltrain, MUNI, VTA, etc. do not have one.
4. A mask mandate only on BART could give the impression that BART is uniquely unsafe.
5. There is still no target for removing the mask mandate. Nothing's preventing the mandate from being extended again.

If BART insists on imposing another mask mandate, I would like to see, instead of an arbitrary date that could be extended again, some clear and realistic benchmarks for getting rid of the mask mandate. (something like "zero cases" is not realistic)

Thanks,  
Leo

**From:** [Marc Norton](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Extend the Mask Mandate  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 26, 2022 12:54:58 PM

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Honorable BART Board members,

You KNOW that it is RIGHT to extend the mask mandate. Come on, you don't even consider it safe to meet in person. How can it be safe to ride BART when other riders aren't even required to wear a mask? Don't give into the pressure from the corporate hucksters.

Marc Norton  
San Francisco  
BART rider since 1976  
(415) 648-2535 (landline)

**From:** [Athan Rebelos](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** July 28, 2022 - Agenda Item 8a  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 12:12:38 PM

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Hello Board Members,

I am writing regarding item 8a, which would reinstate an unenforceable mask mandate on BART trains. As a transportation consultant, a member of the public, and an entrepreneur, I want to let you know that I am against reinstating a mask mandate.

In the past few days, Dr. Monica Gandhi, an infectious disease doctor at UC San Francisco, and Dr. Robert Wachter at UC San Francisco have spoken out against reinstated mask mandates. Dr. Monica Ghandi said, "Thanks to a combination of widespread immunity, effective COVID-19 treatments, and a more benign virus, there's less reason to suppress viral spread by any means necessary". Dr. Robert Wachter said, "The risk of dying from COVID is reasonably low. "It's hard to keep our heads together when the risk of cases is high; the risk of a really bad outcome is relatively low".

Mask mandates are also bad for businesses, especially small businesses. Mandates often are the source of confrontations between employees and customers or between customers. Let's listen to the science. Every individual has the freedom to wear an N95 mask if they want to protect themselves from Covid or any other airborne virus. Listen to the science. Let's avoid going back to the days of forced confrontations and focus on rebuilding our economy and ridership.

--

Athan Rebelos  
CEO, Athan, LLC  
Burlingame, CA  
[www.athan.biz](http://www.athan.biz)  
Text preferred, 650-732-9374

**From:** [Marc Gregory](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Masks  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 8:14:55 AM

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Berkeley resident who uses BART regularly, I hope for the time being you will re-instate the mask mandate. Although the new variant seems to be less dangerous than previous ones, infections, as you know, are rising worldwide. Let's just keep the masks on a while longer till we are more certain of how transmission can be totally contained

Thank you.  
Marc Gregory

**From:** [Joe A. Kunzler](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** On 22-282  
**Date:** Friday, July 22, 2022 4:21:32 PM

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22 July 2022

**RE: On Resolution 22-282**

Dear BART Board;

I am well aware some of you did not and do not want to go the route of 22-282. But I think you heard from Alicia Trost on this and some of you literally made time and space for the disability community to speak to you and senior staff.

I cannot stress enough in America, at a transit conference or on TransitCenter, when BART is on deck - schedules get rearranged. Transit professionals and transit fans in America look to you for leadership - not Sound Transit, not the MTA, and with respect and kindness not the VTA. You.

To quote Alicia Trost to you from TransitCenter so it's done, it's submitted and it's over before the Trostites get *too* insufferable;

Is our job to protect the most vulnerable? Yes. Can we actually create our own mandate? The answer to that is yes. You can't just say it, you actually have to give yourself the legal authority.

So yeah, I worked behind the scenes with our board to make sure they knew that. And I basically put my foot down, and I'm in a meeting yesterday with all men, two of them have no children. And they're like, they just want to take the easy way out, but everyone else is doing it. And now we're free of the enforcement. And I just couldn't I just couldn't do it. I'm like, "No, we have people relying on us. We live in the Bay Area, they support mask mandates. Let's do this."

I do think that it's only because I'm a woman and only because I'm a mother that I recognize that why do we have to settle with this? Why do we have to say, we're just going to let the mask mandate go away when we know that we have to protect the most vulnerable?

Pass 22-282, and I can assure you: You will make a difference. You will stand with Alicia Trost and public health. You will lead, again. With that...

To those inside BART who fought from the inside to stop a very weak plan and reassume your role as national leaders, a grateful nation thanks you. You gave not just public health but *freedom* a fighting chance. Also, you fixed your previous resolution so there are proper on and off ramps with time to spare, plus legislative oversight.

To those skeptics of 22-282, I have a simple message: The Marines at Miramar are masking up. AC Transit is still masking up. Public health experts and nurses are demanding we mask up. We know who is NOT - and their leader who some of my nation's best doctors and nurses fought to save at Walter Reed repaid them with January the Sixth and his rook Josh Hawley ran from the mob that Josh personally helped agitate. You wanna stand with the mob? Seriously?

This vote Thursday evening and subsequent ones present clear but controversial choices. It's why you get a - too small - per diem to make them for G\*d, Country, California Republic, and BART the organization. That's it.

LIKE A STEFANI, THE REST I SUBMIT.

Thanks for hearing me out;

Joe A. Kunzler

[growlernoise@gmail.com](mailto:growlernoise@gmail.com)

**From:** [paula.rainey](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** please reinstate mask mandate  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 9:09:36 AM

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Dear BART board of directors

Please reinstate mask mandate. I limit riding on BART as do many people I know since the mask mandate was lifted. Science shows that masks work!

COVID rates are high, and it is an easy measure to take to prevent/limit infection.

Thank you

Paula Rainey  
556 Palace Court,  
Alameda, CA 94501



**From:** [Maggie C](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Please vote to reinstate mask mandates!  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 6:56:29 PM

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Hello,

I am reaching out to request you please vote to reinstate mask mandates for the BART. Masking is a low-cost, easy way to help keep riders and employees safe from COVID-19 and other illnesses. It is also a step towards accessibility for riders of the BART who may be immunocompromised (such as myself) or have other disabilities. Not requiring masking on the BART makes it less likely people will do so voluntarily, and it makes it less safe and accessible for vulnerable community members.

Please vote to reinstate the mask requirement and in doing so protect the broader community!

Thank you,  
Maggie

**From:** [Joy](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 26, 2022 12:35:02 PM

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Please keep the mask mandate! It makes me feel - relatively- safe from Covid while riding Bart. I won't feel that way without the mask mandate and may choose other ways of getting to work.

Thank you,  
Joy Glasier  
94618

**From:** [David Dunkle](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 10:48:14 AM

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Mask mandates should remain in place for elderly and chronically ill persons. Covid is very active.

David

**From:** [Gina Caspersen](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 2:44:59 PM

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No mask mandates They don't work. Follow the science  
Plus you don't even enforce crime on BART No smoking pot, not anything. Crazy people just doing crazy things with no consequences

No more raises until you fix the loopholes that can allow employees who can't get fired to call in sick on a Monday and then take another shift for overtime on a Tuesday when their buddy calls in

Also how about not allowing station agents to fall asleep while "working"

Or clean up the stations  
Same trash for months

Bart is a corrupted joke and glad I'm only subjected to it 1 or two times a week at most now

Disgusted former full time BART rider

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Rosalie and Barry Howarth](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment 7/28 mtg- Mask Mandate  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 8:35:52 PM

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Dear BART Board-

It absolute lunacy - or at least deliberately negligence - to drop the mask mandate when COVID cases are so extremely high and each new variant is more transmissible than the last.

It is such a minor inconvenience to mask for a mere 45 minutes - for most people even less - to keep our breath off each other, which besides the vaccine is possibly the most effective, low-tech, cheap and easy way to reduce transmission in a crowded setting indoors, with scores of strangers sitting together in close quarters. Sure you might say "well it's not likely to kill you if you DO catch it".

But if you do catch COVID from an infected person unmasked next to you on BART, think of the wedding you will have to miss (your own?), the vacation you will have to scuttle (non-refundable flights?) or the family member you will give it to before you know you have it (some never do know). And maybe THEY die. Thirty-five Californians do continue to die *every day*, day after day.

Anyway COVID is not just about dying or not; it's about being effectively paralyzed for 2 - 3 weeks, til you test clean. The wedding you have to miss (maybe your own?) the vacation you have to scuttle (non-refundable flights?) or the work you have to miss. Or the mortification of being the "houseguest that brought the COVID".

We know that many people cheat the isolation period and go back to work (ON BART) or say their symptoms are "allergies". There is a good chance the person sitting next to you for 40 minutes is positive. And you have no choice who you sit next to or for how long, on BART.

Masking - a simple and effective precaution by every measure - is a slam dunk to continue.

People are used to it; it will be harder to reinstate later if you drop it now and then have to walk it back.

**KEEP THE MASK MANDATE!**

Thank you for your time,  
Rosalie Howarth  
131 Sand Wedge Place  
Walnut Creek CA 94598

**From:** [Daniel Rose](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment- yes to mask mandate  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 26, 2022 9:43:59 AM

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Please vote to reinstate the mask mandate. I cannot imagine riding BART without one.

Daniel Rose  
Tel: (415) 939-0250  
[danrose@danroselaw.com](mailto:danrose@danroselaw.com)

**From:** [Vicki](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** public comment  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 1:48:28 PM

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Dear Bart Board,

With Covid cases remaining at a high level, I urge you to require face masks (fully covering nose and mouth) while inside the paid areas of BART - at least - until October 1, 2022.

Vulnerable patrons use the BART and we must all do our part to keep everyone safe.

Thank you,

Vicki Sommer RN,FNP

94703

**From:** [Juan M](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** public comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 26, 2022 10:04:22 AM

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Dear BART Board of Directors,

Could you please provide the information on which section of SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT CODE (California Public Utilities Code Sections 28500 - 29757) gives the Board of Directors the authority to impose a face mask mandate on BART?

Regards,  
Juan M



**From:** [Barbara Ryken](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** public comment  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 9:37:13 AM

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My trips on BART have been limited since the onset of COVID. The mask mandate, when enforced, plus my being vaccinated has encouraged me to start riding again. As a retired person I am lucky I can schedule trips so as to avoid rush hours.

I've only taken BART once since the end of the mask mandate. It was enough to convince me to avoid BART again for awhile.

Please do reintroduce the mask meeting at your board meeting today.

Barbara Ryken

**From:** [NJ Bice](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 10:28:02 AM

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Hello,

I am writing in support of a continued mask requirement on BART. The board has an opportunity to be a positive example for other agencies in helping to assure the safety of its ridership. Because BART services so many of the Bay Area's cities, requiring masks on board is one simple step to reduce COVID-19 infections and other transmissible diseases across them all. Requiring masks is also an accessibility issue, as doing so would make it safer for immunocompromised riders to use BART. Though the air filters are an excellent step, they can't protect you from someone sitting right next to you with no mask on in a crowded train. Dropping the mask mandate would put many who have no other transportation at risk, or encourage those who do to drive instead, contributing to the use of fossil fuels and further clogging the roads.

Further, the same energy or more that goes into enforcing fares should go into enforcing the mask mandate, which is more important. Occasionally a station operator will actually remind individuals to put a mask on and they are protecting their community better than any fare sweeps have. Rather than target and harass the most vulnerable members of the Bay Area, focus on promoting a culture of keeping each other safe.

Thank you,

- Nathaniel J. Bice

...

He/Him/His

**From:** [Carol Evans](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 1:07:01 PM

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To: BART Board Members

I want to express my support for reinstating the mask mandate. I think it's essential to protect public health and to help riders feel safer. COVID has not retreated. The latest variant is more contagious. Everyone is at risk, especially children, seniors, and those with underlying conditions.

I also support more enforcement.

Thank you.

Carol Evans  
Walnut Creek

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Sherry Wang](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 3:28:30 PM

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Dear BART Board members,

The BART mask mandate is very necessary to protect our most vulnerable people and our health system. BART trains are so crowded, and the Bay Area is a favorite place for summer tourists and international travelers. There are so many ways of transmitting all variants of COVID on a public transportation system such as BART. Riders are not only carrying the COVID contagion to their worksites, but they also bring it home to spread to their family members who are most at risk, including the elderly. We all have experienced the shortages of medical staff and longer waits to see our family doctors. Please do your part to minimize the spread of COVID until the new vaccines and boosters are available this fall, and vote to extend the mask mandate. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sherry Wang

**From:** [Terry Fletcher](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 7:27:22 PM

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Dear BART Directors,

I am writing to you to encourage you to reinstate the mask mandate on BART. Covid levels in the Bay Area and very high and the B.A. 5 variant is extremely contagious.

I am immunocompromised and have stopped taking BART because of Covid danger and lack of a mask mandate.

Please keep our community safe by reinstating it the mask mandate.

Sincerely,

Terry Fletcher  
1417 Carleton St.  
Berkeley, CA 94702

**From:** [Deanna Giolas](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 10:30:58 AM

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Attention BART Board of Directors:

Immunocompromised, disabled, high risk, and elderly people all deserve to be able to use public transit without sacrificing their health and safety. As a high risk disabled person, I have avoided public transit since the removal of mask mandates because one-way masking is not a sufficient protection in such close quarters for extended periods of time with many other unmasked strangers. With the much more infectious BA4/5 becoming the predominant COVID-19 variant across the country including San Francisco, both natural and vaccination immunity are being evaded and both cases and hospitalizations are rising. In addition to serious illness and death, studies have confirmed higher risk of diagnosis of cardiovascular diseases and diabetes within 12 weeks after COVID infection (source: <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1004052>). Masks, especially those of high quality like N95, KN95, and KF94 masks, have been long proven to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Masking is far more effective when everyone does it rather than one-way masking as often happens with "mask optional" policies. Weekly cases in San Francisco are higher now than they were in 2021 or 2020, and this is likely due to the removal of mask mandates. Hospitalizations, as well, are higher in San Francisco compared to July 2021, and have been steadily rising ever since the removal of mask mandates in the city (source: <https://sf.gov/data/covid-19-hospitalizations>). Please protect those who rely on public transit by reinstating mask mandates to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Signed,  
Deanna Giolas  
San Francisco resident

**From:** [elissam68@aol.com](mailto:elissam68@aol.com)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 11:07:18 AM

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My name is Elissa Matross. I am a member of Senior and Disability Action. Thank you for your bold leadership in instituting a mask mandate. You became a a beacon of hope for those of us transit riders who have health conditions that put us at more serious risk if we contract COVID, for those of us with fragile family members and for those of us with immunocompromised health conditions.

To merely recommend but not mandate masking does not work. We have only to look at how air travel has changed since mask mandates were dropped. News coverage of crowded airports across the United States show masses of unmasked people in close proximity to one another. Faced with recommendations people feel freer to go without masks. With mask mandates most people do the right thing. I urge the BART board to do the right thing today. Thank you.

Elissa Matross

**From:** [Alice K.](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 12:00:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [Public Comment in favor of mask requirements--Kostin.docx](#)

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I am submitting my public comment in favor of mask requirements on BART as an attachment.



Dear BART Directors,

I'm an active member of Senior and Disability Action, and I'm writing to urge you to please vote for the resolution today to reinstate BART's mask requirement. When BART lifted its mask requirement, I could no longer ride BART because it is hazardous to me and my family--I live with a beloved family member with a weak immune system. I don't have a car, so not being able to ride BART is very difficult for me. Many people also rely on BART who don't have cars due to a disability or because they can't afford one, among other reasons, and BART needs to be safe and accessible to us all.

When BART doesn't require masks, it is also hazardous to the many disabled people who are at high risk of severe illness from COVID. In fact, without a mask requirement, we all are at risk of long COVID on BART when it doesn't require masks, and long COVID can be debilitating, even if we are vaccinated and boosted. For example, please see the 6/1/22 article in *Salon* titled, "Vaccines reduce risk of long Covid by just 15 percent, study finds," which is available here: <https://www.salon.com/2022/06/01/vaccines-reduce-risk-of-long-by-just-15-percent-study-finds/>.

In case you're not familiar with Senior and Disability Action, please see the July 14 NPR article titled "Many try to return to normal from COVID, but disabled people face a different reality," which says:

People within the disability community, such as Kenny, have actively worked to break the cycle and advocate for the return of COVID safety policies. Kenny is a member of Senior and Disability Action (SDA), a San Francisco-based organization that mobilizes and educates seniors and disabled people to fight for individual rights and social justice. This year, Kenny said that SDA has been meeting with public health officials and transit health officials to push for mask requirements.

Currently, AC Transit, a Bay Area public transit agency, has a mask requirement in place, but Kenny wonders how long it will remain. On June 25, Alameda County undid indoor mask requirements despite still being in the "high risk" category as defined by the CDC. Although some officials have been receptive to SDA's work and goal of reinstating mask mandates, Kenny said that many who have the power to change these policies are resistant.

This article is available here: <https://www.npr.org/2022/07/14/1109874420/covid-safety-disabled-people-immunocompromised>.

Research shows that one-way masking—even with N95s—is not effective when others nearby are unmasked, at least inside. Masks work best when everyone wears them. For more information, please see this 2/15/22 Slate article titled "Why One-Way Masking Isn't a Very Good Public Health Solution" here: <https://slate.com/technology/2022/02/one-way-masking-coronavirus-protection-vulnerable.html>

Unfortunately, COVID levels are currently very high in the San Francisco Bay Area. For example, *The New York Times* lists Alameda County's average daily test positivity to be 14%. And it says today that "The test positivity rate in Alameda County is very high, suggesting that cases are being significantly undercounted." See <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/alameda-california-covid-cases.html>. And the New York Times lists Contra Costa County's average daily test positivity to be even

higher at 16%. See <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/contra-costa-california-covid-cases.html>.

Although mask compliance wasn't as good during the most recent period when masks were required as it was before the mask requirements were temporarily lifted, I was glad that the great majority of people were masked when I rode BART then. Because I work from home and don't need to ride during crowded rush hours, I'm glad that I was able to keep a reasonably safe distance from the fairly small percentage of unmasked people around me.

During another masking order, mask compliance could be much better with strong and widespread public messaging regarding:

- the mask requirement
- that masks are available for free at station booths
- that masks must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in all paid areas and in all elevators
- that well-fitting, high-filtration masks from a reputable source (to avoid counterfeits) are best to protect yourselves and others
- that it's important that we all wear masks on BART (and beyond) to protect ourselves and our communities from getting long COVID, and for people at high risk of severe illness from COVID, even worse.

Please spread the word about BART's mask order through frequent announcements in BART and large and clear advertising throughout BART stations and in BART cars.

Having more BART ambassadors who hand out masks to people not wearing them would also help improve compliance with a masking order.

Please reinstate the mask requirement today for everyone's safety and access, and please have a strong public messaging campaign to make it most likely that there will be excellent mask compliance.

Sincerely,

Alice Kostin, JD

**From:** [Adrienne Aron](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** public comment  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 12:59:41 PM

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Please extend the mask mandate. Without it, I'll be confined to the East Bay, as I use BART to get to the City and would not feel safe riding BART if the mandate were lifted.

Thank you,  
Adrienne Aron, age 81, Berkeley

*Adrienne Aron* [www.adriannearon.com](http://www.adriannearon.com)  
1807 Vine Street Berkeley, CA 94703 (510) 527-2219

**From:** [Iris Biblowitz](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment: Please reinstate the BART mask mandate now  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 8:40:43 PM

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**From:** Iris Biblowitz  
**Sent:** Monday, July 11, 2022 5:13 PM  
**To:** rebecca.saltzman@bart.gov <rebecca.saltzman@bart.gov>; boardofdirectors@bart.gov <boardofdirectors@bart.gov>  
**Subject:** Please extend BART mask mandate

Dear President Saltzman and Board of Directors -

As a nurse, a senior with disabilities, a member of Senior and Disability Action, and someone who's always on public transportation, I'm asking you to reinstate the mask mandate now. I've been heartened by your previous decisions to reinstate the mask mandate, following the ominous statistics of how many people continue to be infected by the COVID-19 Omicron subvariants. I'm sure you've read recent research revealing that fully vaccinated people with HIV have a higher risk of COVID-19 breakthrough infections, and how reinfections increase the risk of cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, kidney, and neurological disorders and more. In addition to those dire warnings, the CDC put out new research that immunocompromised people are at increased risk for severe COVID disease, including needing intensive care with increased risk of death. The specter of long COVID hangs over all of us, whether or not we've been vaccinated, and whether or not we've already been infected.

On the ground in San Francisco (sorry that I don't have other stats for other counties right now), there were 146 patients hospitalized (14.4 % in ICU). UCSF has reported that asymptomatic patients who were admitted for other illnesses accounted for about 5.6% of the population, perhaps unknowingly transmitting an Omicron variant (probably BA.5) to other people. And these numbers don't take into account all the people who are testing at home.

Inequities have been obvious and heartbreaking from the start of COVID, and continue, especially without a mask mandate. Who are the people who depend on public transit? Who are the essential workers? Who had been hardest hit by COVID?

As the World Health Network has clearly pointed out, masks are one of the five pillars of protection from COVID transmission (along with ventilation, surveillance testing, vaccinations, social distancing).

Reinstating mask mandates sends a strong message of great concern for the health of people

in the community.

Thank you - Iris Biblowitz, RN

**From:** [Virginia McKone](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Public comments  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 7:16:29 PM

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Dear Board of Directors of BART:

We are writing to urge you to vote to reinstate the mask mandate on BART trains.

A mask mandate makes eminent sense because

- (1) we're indisputably experiencing a COVID surge;
- (2) the most prevalent SARS-CoV-2 variants are indisputably highly contagious;
- (3) BART can't be avoided for most of us commuting (no other transportation option); and
- (4) masks protect against transmission and protect vulnerable populations.

Many of us have no choice but to use BART despite our health vulnerabilities. Even if we are fully vaccinated, including being boosted, many of us are particularly susceptible to adverse COVID outcomes.

Certain racial groups have a particular vulnerability. Black and Latinx populations are vulnerable to being infected and, as the San Francisco Chronicle recently reported, Asian Americans in California are hospitalized at the highest rate of all groups, even after accounting for socioeconomic and health status.

If the Board of Directors votes not to reinstate the mandate, we urge you to consider designating half of the train cars for only masked passengers.

You have a responsibility to protect your most vulnerable constituents, and I urge the board to do the sensible thing.

Sincerely,  
Virginia & Tom McKone

**From:** [Dan Meltzer](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Require mask wearing on BART  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 7:48:14 PM

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Thank you again for your consideration of this issue and for previously keeping the mask mandate on BART. I was disappointed that the mandate expired, and since I hear that this is once again up for debate tomorrow, I wanted to reiterate my previous point: leaving masking optional puts people at risk and especially those most vulnerable who are often the same people who rely on public transit to get to jobs, healthcare, and to shop for food. I am once again afraid for my own safety when on BATT because we are in a COVID surge. I'm also sure this won't be the last. However I am even more afraid that not implementing a mask mandate is forcing the most vulnerable into an impossible situation where they must risk their health in order to take transit. This is not fair and not right. Please reinstate the mask mandate on BART.

Thank you,  
Dan Meltzer (San Francisco, 94117)

On Apr 25, 2022, at 9:16 AM, BART Board <[BoardofDirectors@bart.gov](mailto:BoardofDirectors@bart.gov)> wrote:

Dan, thank you for your email. Your email will be forwarded to the Board and District staff. Thank you.

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**From:** Dan Meltzer <[danmeltzer@gmail.com](mailto:danmeltzer@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 22, 2022 5:00 PM  
**To:** BART Board <[BoardofDirectors@bart.gov](mailto:BoardofDirectors@bart.gov)>  
**Subject:** Require mask wearing on BART

To whom it may concern,

Mask wearing has been such a cornerstone of our pandemic response and has allowed us to conveniently and collectively take a step to control the spread of disease. While widespread vaccination still seems to be the single most important way to protect our community, mask wearing, especially when in small and/or crowded spaces, has also been critical.

I feel unsafe when I am in public transit and I see people without masks on, and it makes me less inclined to use BART or other public transit. For my friends who are immunocompromised, or live with or care for someone who is, it is even more risky to ride public transit next to unmasked people that may or may not be infectious with COVID. I am afraid personally for my own safety, I am even more afraid for friends who

now have to more carefully weigh the balance between using public transit and contracting a potentially very serious disease. It seems unconscionable to me that we are ready to throw away an effective low barrier public health strategy because some people feel it is inconvenient. Please keep BART safer for disabled people, kids under 5, workers, and our whole community by requiring mask wearing while on BART.

Thank you,  
Dan Meltzer (San Francisco, 94117)



**From:** [Sheri Johnson](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Thanks for the mask mandate  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 10:50:05 AM

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I have to take bart to work. I am so relieved to hear about the mask mandate. Thanks for voting for this!!!

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [John-Marc Chandonia](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** public comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 26, 2022 10:14:56 AM

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Hi,

I'm writing in opposition to Bevan Dufty's resolution to reinstate a mask mandate on BART. I live in Dufty's district, and I'm a regular commuter between 24th St and Downtown Berkeley.

A voluntary mask policy would keep BART accessible to everybody, including people who can't tolerate masking for long periods of time. Just like the previous mask mandate that expired on July 18, the new proposed mandate would have no impact on COVID spread, because it does not require good masks (e.g., N95) that are effective against the current strains of COVID.

With COVID cases finally dropping in the Bay Area, and the climate crisis worsening, it is not a good time to encourage people to use cars (including rideshare, where masks are not required) instead of public transit.

JMC

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John-Marc Chandonia ([jmc@dolorespark.org](mailto:jmc@dolorespark.org))  
<http://www.dolorespark.org/>

**From:** [Greg McKean](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 9:38:08 AM

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Dear Board,

I am writing to encourage you to require masks in BART paid areas. As I am sure you're aware, two highly contagious strains are prevalent at the moment, and cases are rising and are expected to continue rising in the near future. In addition, the summer is of course tourist season in the Bay Area, and the increased number of national and international travelers should be taken into account.

Therefore, I strongly encourage you to continue the mask mandate for the next 2 months. Thank you.

Gregory McKean

**From:** [maiko h](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 5:18:54 PM

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BART Board of Directors:

I have a comment regarding the mask mandate in paid areas. Requiring masks in stations as well as inside trains (no matter how filtered the air is) is essential with the extremely contagious subvariants. BART must do better in enforcing the mandate than you are doing. Right now, I don't feel safe, even with a KN95 mask, because I see so many unmasked people at BART stations and on trains.

I've taken BART recently on weekdays during the day (not during rush hour) and on weekends, and was shocked to see how many people at the stations and on the trains were without masks despite the current requirement. By my count on most days, about ~50% of people on the platform at El Cerrito Plaza have no masks; on trains, ~30-50% have no masks. I have seen station agents without masks as well. On every round trip, I have had to move seats at least once because someone without a mask sits right near me without maintaining distance.

There is almost no messaging (by announcement, signage, etc.) while I was inside a station or on the train to remind people of the mask requirement so I would not be surprised if people thought there was no mask requirement. When I contacted BART customer service with my concern, the response I received only included all the ways I can contact BART police, which indicated to me how uninterested BART is in actually enforcing the mask mandate because calling the police is NOT a solution.

I'm disappointed and alarmed by BART's lack of interest in helping controlling the spread of super contagious variants causing the recent case spikes. Every time I use BART, I'm scared for a few days after that I might become sick because of your system's failure to enforce the mask mandate. It's like BART believes having a mask mandate alone—easy and superficial—is “mission accomplished,” without any enforcement to increase the actual number of riders wearing masks.

If getting people to wear masks in paid areas and on trains is such a hardship for BART, then at least please consider having some train cars where masks are 100% required for those with vulnerable health, who cannot afford to get sick, etc. I'm tired of moving seats/cars because BART won't enforce its mask mandate and leaves it up to me to protect myself on your trains.

Best,  
Maiko Hara

**From:** [Scarlett L](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 1:16:02 PM

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BART Board - Please do not extend the mask mandate again! My partner & I have not been on BART since May 2020, the last day we commuted to work from El Cerrito Plaza to Embarcadero, and will not ride again until we do not have to wear masks. I have an anxiety response that is very similar in feeling to claustrophobia. I know to most everyone this simply seems like a very easy solution to keep the virus from spreading, and most people are voluntarily wearing masks already, unfortunately it's not that easy for everyone.

Thanks for the consideration.

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Scarlett L  
Albany CA 94706

**From:** [Tara Ayres](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 12:15:32 PM

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Dear BART Board members,

I am happy to see the agenda item for the July meeting meeting that will reinstate the mask mandate. As an immunocompromized person, who also depends on BART, I rely on people around me masking in order to be safe. I strongly urge you to reinstate the mask mandate.

Peace,  
Tara Ayres  
Richmond

Sent from my Android phone.

**From:** [Munar, Dane](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2022 11:21:54 AM

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Hello BART board,

As a member of the BART rider population, I am voicing my opinion that the Mask mandate should not be extended to October 1. I have only seen about 50% of riders on my daily commute to and from work wearing masks, which shows that the mandate does not work. People who want to wear a mask will, people who don't want to wear a mask will not. Mandate does nothing productive. Please do not reinstate.

Best,

**Dane Munar**

*Clinical Research Coordinator  
University of California, San Francisco  
Department of Surgery, Division of Transplant  
Sarwal Lab  
513 Parnassus Ave. S-1269  
San Francisco, CA 94143  
Phone: 415-476-6978*

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**From:** [lanworker2go-jblind@yahoo.com](mailto:lanworker2go-jblind@yahoo.com)  
**To:** [BART Board](#); [Mark Foley](#); [Bevan Dufty](#); [Debora Allen](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#); [Lateefah Simon](#); [curiousme+BART@uxscotty.com](mailto:curiousme+BART@uxscotty.com); [hello+BART@crmrose.com](mailto:hello+BART@crmrose.com)  
**Subject:** You must vote yes to bring back the mask mandate on Bart - I am begging you as a legally blind community member  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 12:57:37 PM

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Good day honorable bay area rapid transit board members.

I am legally blind and I cannot see far enough with my low vision to tell if someone has a mask on until they're within 2 to 3 feet of my face.

By the time they are that close to me and I discover they have no mask - possibly a mentally challenged homeless person breathing in my face - and it's too late and I am at great risk for Covid and long Covid after affects - possibly for the rest of my life.

The BART trains are a public utility and they must be kept safe for the disabled that have less ability to protect ourselves and avoid reckless people coughing with no mask on while riding the BART.

UCSF expert doctors have made it clear that cloth or disposable masks do not work well against these new variants and that N 95 masks are necessary to be safe in an indoor crowded environment, and so if BART passengers are allowed to wear no mask at all - it amounts to nothing other than negligence on the part of anyone who has the ability to prevent such risk and chooses not to.

We cannot trust everyone to do the right thing and voluntarily be responsible in an enclosed public transportation environment in an indoor space inside a train.

It does not matter how quickly the BART train ventilation system exchanges air if the mentally ill person purposefully coughs directly in my face as I have seen them do.

With my low vision I can walk without a white cane and so I have an invisible disability and I am not treated with any courtesy or consideration on the BART train and I am often approached aggressively about sitting in disabled seating where I need to be to hear the speaker System for the station announcements - since I cannot read the train station names through the window as I approach each station.

You board members controlling the BART are my only chance for a safety net and any reasonable level of public health safety inside the bar train system During this time of elevated Covid risk where the President of the United States cannot even prevent infection.

I beg you, I implore that you to please do the right thing to protect those who may not be able to adequately protect them selves against hostile and uncooperative community members who are aggressive and go out of their way to cough on others to make some kind of belligerent point about their freedom.

Just because some people don't become gravely ill does not mean that people are not continuing to die from this virus and many are in fact ending up with long-term health problems.



Utmost Regards,

Scott Deaver  
9259795528

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**From:** [Joe A. Kunzler](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Two last things on Resolution 22-282  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 1:11:20 PM

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To the BART Board of Directors;

First, attached is a quote of our hero Alicia Trost on TransitCenter:

## Alicia Trost of BART on A Moral Mask Mandate

I'm sitting here thinking, **is our job to protect the most vulnerable?** **Yes.** Can we actually create our own mandate? The answer to that is yes. You can't just say it, you actually have to give yourself the legal authority.

...

Why do we have to say, we're just going to let the mask mandate go away when we know that **we have to protect the most vulnerable?**



Second, notice how nobody's quoting Sarah Meyer. I cannot stress this enough: When BART leads, other transits and transit advocates follow.

That will be all. Ready to rock and roll tonight.

JOE SENDS



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **BART Board Meeting**

**July 28, 2022**

**Item 9**

**From:** [aleta dupree](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Comments from the branch line  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 26, 2022 10:07:51 PM

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Secretary April Quintanilla, please forward this message to the full BART Board for the Nighttime Meeting of 28 July, 2022.

Good evening President Rebecca Saltzman and Members.

Aleta Dupree for the record, (she, her).

I bring you my miscellaneous thoughts concerning the work and mission of the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District.

“Driven to Tears.”

I consider the profound thoughts and wisdom of Gordon Sumner, an English musician also known as Sting. Mr Sumner, with his band The Police, not affiliated with any agency of law enforcement, in 1980, brought the world the profound message known as Driven to Tears.

I have never been to England, and when I first heard Driven to Tears, I was in New York. I thought of the millions of people every day who traveled in and out of the major business districts of Manhattan, the most centralized and crowded part of the New York mega region. I was part of those masses every day, often moving as if in slow motion. Daily I used the legendary and historic rapid transit system that is known as the Subway. There were many who also used the buses, drove their cars, walked, and rode bicycles. There were many others who used commuter trains as well, traveling through various terminals, most notably New Pennsylvania Station, and a place even larger, steeped in tradition and history, Grand Central Terminal.

I along with millions of others lived through those difficult and challenging times. I remember the graffiti, the broken lights, and a very high crime rate. Often we all crammed into Subway cars like sardines, and I often rode on the outside, between cars, a form of subway surfing. Every so often I read of someone being pushed to the tracks, and in some cases, not surviving. Mr Sumner wrote, protest is futile, nothing seems to get through. At the time I had no idea that the Subway’s governing body held public meetings. There were times that I, and surely others, felt driven to tears. I wondered if the lights would someday go out on this system steeped in tradition and history that is the Subway. In 1984, I moved away from New York, and put those things behind me.

I ask of you as a Board to not allow BART to become a system where its users feel driven to tears. I cannot consider myself an expert on rail based transportation systems. But I can give you my experiences. I desire a BART that will always seek to do better. A BART that is not just about money and infrastructure, but mindful of the people that use it. I ask that all at BART join me in upholding a most basic ideal, that above all else, BART is The Peoples System.

“I ask that you include.”

I often speak and write to you on matters of equity and inclusion. I submit to you that the reason I do so is to highlight the importance of these things. You see, I am a person who is very different. I am different from you, and also different from the many who are employed by this system that is BART. It is true that when different currents of air in the atmosphere come together, the result is turbulence. And I have often had to remember the basic ideal that turbulence may be uncomfortable, but it is not unsafe.

And so I ask of you as a Board to not be fearful of those of us who are different. It is often said that the thing people fear most on airplanes is turbulence. I ask though that you not view those of us who are different as those to avoid, but instead to be willing to engage. I do not expect to be understood, but I do expect to be respected. I think that is something anyone in a public transportation system should expect, regardless of who they are. I ask that you keep in mind the basics of BART, safety, reliability, and affordability. I am concerned that some at BART might seek to

abridge my use of the system simply because of who I am. I ask that you as a Board consider this ideal, that anyone who pays appropriate Fare and follows the Rules of Conduct, should be able to use the System to make their journey unimpeded. I ask that you not see me as defective, but instead as diverse. I am no less because I wear a skirt, or a mask. I ask you not hold the fact that I have had four doses of the COVID-19 vaccine against me. I ask for nothing special, but that I can have the same standing as anyone else who legally enters upon the System.

“On Zoom.”

I mention to you that I have attended and spoken at several BART committee meetings over the last few weeks. I am enjoying the Zoom webinar format in being able to engage in a user friendly manner. I am able to see a clock, and therefore present my thoughts with an understanding of the time as it transpires. I have been able to raise my hand and be called upon at the appropriate time. I ask that you continue to ensure that Meetings are accessible, and embracing a tradition that considers the importance of Public engagement.

I would like to see a BART that is more accessible when it comes to me accessing the information I need to be informed. I consider my visit to New York last year. I attended Meetings of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, headquartered at Number Two Broadway. I felt fortunate to have been able to engage with various leaders of that agency, and I was able to get well thought out and respectful answers to my questions. And it's true that answers often bring about more questions. I ask that BART aspire to a higher level of accessibility and response. BART is Public, and I think anything that is not redacted by statute should be easily available to me, even with me being a person who is very different.

“An Imperative to do Better.”

I think back to the trying times in the 1980's of the Subway in crisis, and bringing that system back from the brink. And the Subway has newer challenges, and a team that I feel is firmly committed to take them on, and building a better system. And so for me, the Subway, and Grand Central Terminal, are not just legendary because of history and tradition, but in continuing to serve the millions that depend on those systems every day. And even in the most trying times, I still believed in the system that is the Subway, even with me moving away. And I enjoy my trips to New York, the place of my birth, of my forebears, and my formative years. I still get on the Subway, and share my stories, and encourage others to use it as well. I ask of you at BART to be forward thinking, in building a BART that people want to come home to. And so as much trepidation as I have about BART at times, I still enter though the fare gates to get where I need to go. And this is my first and foremost reason for doing so. It's because BART is The Peoples System.

Thank you.



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **BART Board Meeting**

**July 28, 2022**

**Item 11-C**

**From:** [Roan Kattouw](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Stop delaying trains for fare checks at Embarcadero  
**Date:** Friday, July 22, 2022 11:34:26 AM

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Dear Board of Directors,

For some time now, there has been a practice at BART of stopping eastbound trains at Embarcadero station for fare checks in the mornings. This used to happen only very early in the morning, but in the past year or so has routinely [continued well into commute hours](#), even [past 9am](#). These inspections delay trains for [up to 10 minutes](#), delaying not only the people on those trains and [making them late for work](#), making them [miss their timed transfers to other BART trains](#) or [miss their bus connections](#) or [miss their connection to Capitol Corridor and having to wait 90 minutes](#), but also [delaying the trains behind them](#). In a system where trains are scheduled to run 2 or 3 minutes apart at most times, there is no way to hold a train for 10 minutes (or even 5 minutes) without causing ripple effects throughout the system.

These fare checks are incredibly disruptive to everyone who travels from San Francisco or the Peninsula to the East Bay on weekday mornings any time before 9-9:30am, and make BART an unreliable way for them to get where they're going, to the point where they have to build in extra time into their schedule to account for these unpredictable delays. I urge you to end these fare checks, or at minimum, to place limits on these checks to minimize disruption to system operations (e.g. not allowing these checks after 7am, or on trains that have another train less than 5 minutes behind them, or not allowing these holds to last longer than 3 minutes).

Roan Kattouw  
San Francisco resident

**From:** [Avishai Halev](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Embarcadero Fare Checks Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 27, 2022 4:42:24 PM

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Dear Bart Board of Directors,

I am writing regarding the Embarcadero Fare Checks program. I strongly encourage you to fix this program to improve the rider experience.

I take Capitol Corridor multiple times a week to travel to and from Davis: I depart from North Beach in San Francisco in the morning and return in the evening. I used to take BART from either Montgomery or Embarcadero stations in the morning and transfer to Capitol Corridor in Richmond; however, I no longer do because of the fare checks. On two occasions, I missed my transfer in Richmond because of 10+ minute delays due to sitting at Montgomery or Embarcadero because of the fare checks. I can't afford to miss my Capitol Corridor train and it is ridiculous to have to leave a 20+ minute buffer to make that transfer; ergo, BART has lost me as a rider (in the mornings, I still take it back in the eve).

I would urge BART to, at a minimum, perform fare checks while trains are in motion. This is common across transit systems worldwide, and BART has the luxury of over eight minutes of non-stop travel between West Oakland and Embarcadero to perform said checks.

In any case, this is a horrible practice that degrades the rider experience for everyone in the name of kicking a few people off the train. Please fix it.

Best,  
Avishai

Avishai Halev  
PhD Candidate, Applied Mathematics  
University of California Davis



**From:** [Raul Maldonado](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** PUBLIC COMMENT - Raul Maldonado, Embarcadero Fare Checks July 2022  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 12:26:35 AM

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Hello! I hope you are all doing well.  
I live in Oakland, CA and commute to San Francisco via BART.

I wanted to raise my voice on behalf of other riders and say current Embarcadero Fare Checks hinder productivity of commuters, perception of BART's efficiency, and long term viability. With the lack of statistical evidence found in the [BART Progressive Policy Update](#) presentation, I feel BART is hurting retention of ridership and not tackling the issue of fare evaders. BART validates this policy based on sentiment (fear), not analysis!

**For example:**

I see the train stopped and people being checked. As a Hispanic tech worker that looks poor, I am easily able to get checked by selection bias, even when more ridership increases in the future. Moreover, I have to wait to be discriminated against...and be late to my destination.

I might as well drive and avoid the hassle!

Thank you for reading this, and I hope we can have a better Progressive Policy than outdated and ineffective "Embarcadero Fare Checks"

Cheers,  
Raul Maldonado

**From:** [Calvin Quick](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#); [Bevan Dufty](#); [Debora Allen](#); [Mark Foley](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#); [Robert Raburn](#); [Elizabeth Ames](#); [Lateefah Simon](#); [Janice Li](#); [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment - Item 11C (File #22-286) - July 28, 2022 Board of Directors  
**Date:** Thursday, July 28, 2022 11:50:39 AM  
**Attachments:** [20220728\\_cquick\\_bart\\_comment\\_11c.pdf](#)

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Dear Directors

Please find attached (PDF) public comment on Item 11C of tonight's Board of Director's meeting, specifically on the ongoing fare inspection operations at Embarcadero station.

Best,

-Calvin Quick  
District 9 Constituent

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**Calvin Quick** | *he/him/his*  
[calvin@quickstonian.com](mailto:calvin@quickstonian.com) | 1(415) 521-9126

July 28, 2022

BART Board of Directors  
2150 Webster Street  
10th Floor, District Secretary  
Oakland, CA 94612

**RE: Item 11C – BART Progressive Policing Update (File #22-286)  
July 28, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting**

Dear Directors,

I am writing to express my concern with the ongoing fare check operations at Embarcadero Station during the weekday morning commute.

The delays caused by the fare check operations add unnecessary uncertainty to commute times. As a regular transbay commuter affected by the fare check operations, I have often been on train delayed up to three minutes at Embarcadero, sometimes over five. While fare inspectors may communicate with OCC to mitigate impacts to timed transfers within the BART system in the East Bay (at 19<sup>th</sup> Street Station in particular), these delays often disrupt connections to other transit, such as AC Transit, SolTrans, and other agencies, some routes of which run on very reduced schedules. Embarcadero fare checks can thus severely impact riders' ability to reach their destinations on time during the morning commute.

Furthermore, the clear targeting of people experiencing homelessness for removal from trains contributes without clear and consistent connections to service and housing does nothing to actually help BART's most vulnerable riders. Tonight's presentation mentions 'Connect more people with services' as a benefit of fare inspections at Embarcadero Station (slide 29), and yet provides no evidence that people experiencing homelessness who are removed from train during fare inspections are being connected with services and housing. In fact, given the backlogged and obtuse state of San Francisco's Coordinated Entry system, and the absence of any visible partnership between the BART District and San Francisco's Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), the plausibility of such connections being made is highly questionable. Instead, BART is scapegoating its most vulnerable riders for our region's unwillingness to make the investments necessary to provide stable and affordable housing for all. To be clear, it is not BART's role, as a transit agency, to resolve the Bay Area's homelessness crisis, but its current strategy does little more than perpetuate the existing cycle of poverty and homelessness, at all of its riders' expense. The presence of BART PD officers during checks creates a threatening environment for many riders, particularly black and brown riders, and whose role would be vastly better performed by BART's unarmed ambassadors and crisis intervention teams.

I urge you to consider the impact of these fare inspections on all riders, and either halt or scale back the fare inspection program. I also urge you to hire more ambassadors to assist riders instead of police, and build connections with HSH's teams on the ground to actually connect people removed from trains with the services they need.

Regards,

Calvin Quick