



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **BART Board Meeting**

**September 8, 2022**

**Item 6**

**From:** aleta dupree <tsjoan@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 6, 2022 9:04 PM  
**To:** BART Board <BoardofDirectors@bart.gov>  
**Subject:** Comments from the tunnel

Secretary April Quintanilla, please forward this message to the full BART Board for the Regular Meeting of 8 September, 2022.

Greetings Board President Rebecca Saltzman and Members.

Aleta Dupree for the record, she, her.

I bring you my thoughts concerning BART, some might pertain to the posted Agenda.

“Don’t Bring Me Down.”

I consider the words and thoughts of Mr Jeff Lynne, a well known and highly acclaimed musician from the United Kingdom, in particular from the neighborhood in Birmingham known as Shard End. I have never been to Shard End, and when I first heard the words of Jeff Lynne, and his 1979 work Don’t Bring Me Down, I was in New York. I considered his signature work All Over the World, released in 1980, and a video that took place in various locations in Europe, mostly shopping malls and railroad stations. I was instantly reminded of places I had spent time in, and held meaning for me, such as the Crossgates Mall, Columbus Circle, and Grand Central Terminal.

Perhaps Jeff Lynne was speaking of frustration, and about New York, in the trying times I’ve mentioned before. I would ride on the legendary and historic transportation system known as the Subway. I lived through the graffiti, broken lights, the crime and nuisance, and skipped fares, I often said to myself, this is really bringing me down. It was draining for me to live day after day in the world class city of my forebears in finding myself constantly brought down. I eventually moved away, but I still enjoy coming back to New York, and seeing my old favorites and discovering new things. And sometimes in places such as Grand Central Terminal, I discover things much bigger than myself.

I ask that you consider your thoughts and words with the goal of building a better BART. I do not wish to feel brought down when I use BART and attend your Meetings. Yet I see and hear much negativity, often from the gallery. I wonder if your policy discussions and ideas might have unintended consequences for people who are different such as myself who might find our reasonable use of the System to be abridged. I ask that you not allow situations and circumstances that cause those of us who are different to be brought down, but to instead remember this basic premise, that BART is The Peoples System.

“The Slippery Slope.”

I write to you again concerning the matter of military equipment used on BART PD. I do not know if I have standing to comment on a matter more than once, given that this is an Ordinance, and that in Public Meetings one gets a single chance to speak on an item, given the need to be fair to all speakers. But I guess I’ll write to you about this anyway, and see where it goes.

I ask that you respect Chief Ed Alvarez in his decisions concerning the work of building a safer and better

BART. I feel strongly that any equipment to be purchased and used by BART should be evaluated on its own merits, and not solely by definitions. I am concerned about the substitution of judgement, when Chief Alvarez and the BPD leadership team have greater knowledge of security related matters on BART than really anyone else does.

I can't say if I'm in support or opposed to this proposed Ordinance awaiting your approval. I wish there was a nexus as to how the Public will be helped and affected, but I'm not seeing it. I am concerned that from this an Ordinance could be proposed in the future that could result in Veterans and Service Members finding their reasonable use of BART abridged and denied. I ask that you not allow such negative sentiments to become policy on BART. For I as a Veteran, with disabilities, I am a person just as much, and wishes to use the System just as anyone else normally would.

"Interference."

I write of the matters of grand jury reports and the Inspector General. I can't call myself an expert on the matters of inspection, measurement, and evaluation. What I can say, is that I believe that the most important goal for BART is to build the safest, most reliable, and most equitable system we can. Yet I hear of the things brought up in this report, in which I wonder of things most important are being lost in the laundry, if you will.

I believe in a BART that has clear goals and objectives, this I stated in my last paragraph. Policy and guidance come from you as a Board, and are implemented by your General Manager. And so I am concerned about other parties that could interfere with the work of your General Manager in being able to lead BART to being the safest, most reliable, and most equitable System of Public Transportation we can have.

I feel very strongly that the Inspector General needs to be an independent voice, and that includes funding from outside of BART. We can compare ourselves to other transportation systems, but such are not apples to apples comparisons. There are many things about BART that are different. And so BART has an imperative to work within the scope of its uniqueness as a system of Public Transportation. There are many things I say about other systems of Public Transportation, yet I know that things are not the same across the board.

It is up to the Bay Area Toll Authority as to what level of funding to distribute to the IG. I accept that, as hard as it is. You see, I am a person who receives various stipends that are fixed, and I simply am not able to go out and ask for more money, much as I would like to, I can always use more money, but I have what I have. I think everyone at BART needs to be able to live within their means, and do the best they can with what they have. Such is not easy to hear, but is a basic fact we all live with. As much as I like the IG personally, I wonder if BART directing funding to the IG would be akin to the fox guarding the henhouse. Could such funds be used for other things, and hopefully mitigate future fare increases. I'm still not seeing the nexus as to how this matter will help the Public to have the better BART we all desire and deserve.

"On Standing."

I often feel the need to claim and assert standing in my desire to engage with you in the common work of helping to build a better BART. You see, I am not like any of you, or the many others who use BART, on any sort of frequency. It is true that I am a person who is very different. I do not meet societally

established definitions. I am a person with disabilities. I am a veteran. I am not a legal resident of the BART district, therefore I am not able to vote for you. I enjoy many different systems of Public Transportation, especially those that are in New York, the place of my birth and forebears. I enjoy sharing of ideals and aspirations that are legendary and stately. I find inspiration from history and tradition. I seek to engage in hopefully entertaining and inspiring ways. Perhaps there is a higher bar that I must meet in order to be able to engage fully with BART. But I feel that as an ordinary user of BART, I should only have to pay appropriate Fare and follow the Rules of Conduct, in order to use the System in its intended fullness. I seek a BART where people should not have to worry about being pushed figuratively or literally to the tracks. I am different but I am a person just as much. Can we have a BART where all who engage respectfully can have equal standing? I hope so, and it is for this most important reason, BART is The Peoples System.

Traditional and Relevant.



Thank you.



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **BART Board Meeting**

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**Item 7-A**

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