Agenda Item No. (10)(A)

**Special Order of Business**

To: Board of Directors  
Meeting of March 27, 2020

From: Denis J. Mulligan, General Manager

Subject: AUTHORIZE ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON DISTRICT OPERATIONS, INCLUDING RATIFICATION OF TEMPORARY ACTIONS

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Directors approve actions to address the impacts of COVID-19 on District operations, as follows:

1. Ratify the necessary, immediate actions taken by the General Manager in response to the impacts of COVID-19 on District operations as outlined in the attached resolution;

2. Approve the suspension of Board procedural rules and policies to allow timely execution of emergency actions during the COVID-19 pandemic, consistent with federal, state, regional and local public health mandates;

3. Authorize the General Manager to take all necessary and appropriate actions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;

4. Authorize the General Manager, or his designee, to prepare and submit applications on the District's behalf to federal, state, and local government entities for funding and/or reimbursement related to the fiscal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the District's operations; and,

5. Require the General Manager to provide reports to the Board of Directors, at each regularly scheduled Board meeting, regarding the impacts on District operations and the actions taken by the District in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Summary**

On March 4, 2020, the Governor of the State of California (Governor) proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in California as a result of the threat of the COVID-19 outbreak. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Specific to the Bay Area, on March 16, 2020, the County Public Health Officers in six Bay Area counties (San Francisco, Marin, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Alameda and Contra Costa) issued sweeping Shelter-in-Place Orders that remain in effect until at least April 7, 2020.
The movement of people by Bridge, bus and ferry is an essential service that the District provides to its communities. Since the issuance of the Shelter-in-Place Orders, bus ridership has declined over 85%, ferry ridership has declined over 90%, and Bridge traffic during the morning commute has fallen by 70%. This results in a drop in our combined revenues from Bridge tolls and transit fares of over $3 million per week during the Shelter-in-Place Orders. This represents about an 84% decline in the amount of money that we would normally collect. We expect these dramatic declines in transit ridership and Bridge crossings to continue for at least the duration of these orders, with the potential impacts to be much longer.

In response to the Shelter-in-Place Orders, and the associated impacts on travel within the Bay Area, the District has, on a “pilot” basis, modified bus and ferry transit service levels. These changes maintain a level of service to ensure that workers providing essential services are able to get to their places of work, and to ensure that the District's transportation services remain in a state of readiness to respond to emergencies, while reducing the District’s expenses.

Staff has also moved quickly to work with State and Federal legislators to communicate the severe impact of COVID-19 actions on the District as well as coordinated with other transit agencies throughout the Bay Area and California to ensure that public transportation is well represented in any legislation that is advanced to mitigate the profound impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Bay Area.

The General Manager will provide an overview and update of current District activities and COVID-19 developments at the regular Board meeting on March 27, 2020.

**Fiscal Impact**

The exact financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on District is unknown at this time; however, staff estimates that the decline in revenues is more than $3 million per week. Providing the proposed delegation will allow staff to respond to the challenges associated with COVID-19, which will, among other things, provide the opportunity to mitigate the $3 million per week of lost revenues.

Attachment – *Draft* Resolution No. 2020-017
ATTACHMENT

GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-017

APPROVE ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON DISTRICT OPERATIONS

March 27, 2020

THIS RESOLUTION is adopted with reference to the following facts and circumstances, which are found and declared by the Board of Directors (Board) of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (District):

1. On March 4, 2020, the Governor of the State of California (Governor) proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in California as a result of the threat of the COVID-19 outbreak.

2. On March 11, 2020, the Director-General of the World Health Organization characterized and declared that the global outbreak of COVID-19 as a pandemic, in light of the 13-fold increase of cases outside China, and the tripling of affected countries within the prior two weeks and the anticipated acceleration of the disease throughout the world.

3. On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

4. Despite sustained efforts at the national, state, and local levels, COVID-19 continues to spread and remains a serious and ongoing threat to public health.

5. The Governor issued Executive Order N-25-20 (March 12, 2020) and Executive Order N-29-20 (March 17, 2020), effective immediately, to relieve legislative bodies from certain requirements of the Brown Act in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to facilitate essential government functions.

6. On March 16, 2020, the public health officers of seven Bay Area jurisdictions, including the City and County of San Francisco and the County of Marin, issued legal orders directing residents to shelter at home for three weeks beginning on March 17, 2020 through April 7, 2020. The orders limit activity, travel and business functions for only the most essential needs.

7. The impacts of COVID-19, and the shelter at home orders, have resulted in a decrease in Golden Gate Transit bus ridership of over 85% and a decrease in Golden Gate Ferry ridership of over 90% and a decrease in Bridge traffic during the morning commute of about 70%. This results in a drop in our combined revenues from Bridge tolls and transit fares of over $3 million per week which represents about an 84 percent decline in the amount of money that the District would normally collect. This significant decrease in fare revenue constitutes a fiscal emergency.
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8. Due to the immediate need to address the COVID-19 pandemic, emergency action was taken prior to a hearing contemplated under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21080.32(d).

9. CEQA exempts specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency, including a sudden, unexpected occurrence, involving a clear and imminent danger, demanding immediate action to prevent or mitigate loss of, or damage to essential public services. (Pub. Res. Code §21080(b)(4); CEQA Guidelines §15269(c).

10. The Rules of the Board grant the General Manager of the District the responsibility, commensurate with the authority established by the Board, to operate the District and supervise and control employees in the administration, operation, construction and planning and research activities of the District. Rule XIII authorizes the General Manager to take all necessary and proper measures in emergency conditions to keep the Golden Gate Bridge and approaches open for public transportation at all times and to maintain bus and ferry public transportation systems in operation.

11. It is necessary and appropriate to ratify certain temporary immediate actions taken by the General Manager in response to the rapidly changing operational needs of the District due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

12. It is necessary and appropriate to temporarily suspend Board procedural policies and rules, including the requirement that a public hearing be held prior to implementing a major reduction in service, as set forth in subpart B of Rule XV (Procedures for Hearings) of the Rules of the Board.

13. It is necessary and appropriate to reaffirm the authority of the General Manager to take all necessary and appropriate action during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic to keep the Golden Gate Bridge and approaches open for public transportation at all times and to maintain appropriate levels of bus and ferry public transportation systems in operation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District hereby approves the following actions to address the impacts of COVID-19 on District operations as follows:

1. Ratify the following necessary immediate actions taken by the General Manager in response to the impacts of COVID-19 on District operations:

   a. Temporary reduction in weekday Golden Gate Transit bus trips effective on March 17, 2020, until further notice.
   b. Temporary reduction in Golden Gate Ferry weekday commute service effective on March 17, 2020, until further notice.
   c. Temporary suspension of Golden Gate Ferry weekend service effective on March 17, 2020 until further notice.
d. Temporary suspension of Golden Gate Ferry service to the Chase Center and Oracle Park in San Francisco for basketball and baseball games effective on March 17, 2020 and until further notice.

2. Approve the suspension of Board procedural rules and policies to allow the timely execution of emergency actions during the COVID-19 pandemic, consistent with federal, state, regional and local public health mandates.

3. Authorize the General Manager to take all necessary and appropriate actions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Authorize the General Manager, or his designee, to prepare and submit applications on the District's behalf to federal, state, and local government entities for funding and/or reimbursement related to the fiscal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the District's operations.

5. Require the General Manager to provide periodic reports to the Board of Directors, at each regularly scheduled Board meeting, regarding the impacts on District operations and the actions taken by the District in response to the COVID-19 pandemic on District operations.

ADOPTED this 27th day of March 2020, by the following vote of the Board of Directors:

AYES ():

NOES ():

ABSENT ():

[Note: On this date, there were two vacancies on the Board of Directors.]

_________________________________
Barbara L. Pahre
President, Board of Directors

ATTEST: ____________________________
Amorette M. Ko-Wong
Secretary of the District