

January 31, 2022

**To:** Members of the PACTS Policy Board and Regional Transportation Advisory Committee  
**Cc:** PACTS Officers

**Subject:** ARPA Transit Funding – Scoring and Selection Process

Dear PACTS Board and Committee Members:

On January 21, staff sent a memo to PACTS committee/board members regarding the process for scoring, evaluating, and selecting projects for the region’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) transit funding. The memo also invited project sponsors or other parties to submit, in writing, any concerns they have with the composition of the scoring committee. PACTS received written concerns from two parties. Pursuant to the process outlined in the January 21 memo, the PACTS Officers met to review the concerns and determine an appropriate course of action. The intent of this memo is to document the decision and outline a path forward.

The PACTS Officers appreciate the various perspectives on this topic. The scoring committee, comprised of individuals who have demonstrated a keen understanding of public transit, was assembled to represent regional voices in an independent and objective manner. All five committee members pledged an oath of objectivity at the outset of last week’s ARPA presentations and there is no credible reason to doubt their ability to fulfill this promise. Considering these factors, the PACTS Officers have complete confidence in the scoring committee to remain impartial in evaluating the ARPA applications. We appreciate the scoring committee members’ efforts in this regard and are extremely grateful for their time and service as we work together to help our region’s transit system recover from the pandemic.

As previously mentioned by staff, project scoring is one input in the project evaluation and selection process. The RTAC and Policy Board, which includes all seven (7) public transit providers, will make the ultimate determination in recommending and selecting projects for the region’s ARPA transit funding. And, in prioritizing investments, the RTAC and Policy Board will be asked to think “big picture”, also considering the forecasted unmet needs (~\$3.8 million) identified through the Fall 2021 CARES exercises. Simply put, there is not enough regional ARPA funding to address all needs and we will have to make some difficult choices.

Given the funding challenges, the PACTS Officers kindly ask staff to consider all factors (project scores, project benefits/costs, previously forecasted unmet needs) when developing materials for the March RTAC and Policy Board meetings. This information could potentially come in the form of a presentation followed by potential funding/investment scenarios. The PACTS Officers also ask staff to continue evaluating alternative sources of public transit funding, whether through the increased formula funding under the infrastructure package or through discretionary grant opportunities. Similarly, the PACTS Officers encourage the region’s transit providers to continue pursuing discretionary funding opportunities (as practiced in the past).

Thank you for your time and your commitment to this important work.

Sincerely,

Matthew Sturgis,  
PACTS Chair

Cc: PACTS Officers: Hope Cahan, PACTS Vice Chair; Nell Donaldson, Chair of PACTS Regional Transit Advisory Committee

GPCOG staff: Kristina Egan, Executive Director; Chris Chop, Transportation Director

Bcc: PACTS Policy Board, PACTS Regional Transit Advisory Committee, PACTS ARPA Scoring Committee