

**NEWS RELEASE
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Gavin Newsom
Governor

Toks Omishakin
Secretary

Secretary Omishakin Appoints 25 Members to Transit Transformation Task Force

SACRAMENTO – The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) today announced Transportation Secretary Toks Omishakin has appointed 25 members to the state’s Transit Transformation Task Force.

Established in the transit recovery package signed by Governor Gavin Newsom as part of the 2023-24 state budget, the task force will develop policy recommendations to grow transit ridership, improve the transit experience and address long-term operational needs.

After receiving more than 70 applications from a wide range of prospective candidates representing state government, local agencies, academic institutions, advocacy organizations and other stakeholders, Secretary Omishakin made the following selections:

Kome Ajise

Executive Director, Southern California Association of Governments

Rashidi Barnes

Chief Executive Officer, Eastern Contra Costa Transit Authority

Alix Bockelman

Chief Deputy Executive Director, Metropolitan Transportation Commission

Sharon Cooney

Chief Executive Officer, San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS)

Ian Griffiths

Policy Director, Seamless Bay Area

Amy Hance

Deputy Director General Services, City of Clovis

James Lindsay

International Vice President, Amalgamated Transit Union

Eli Lipmen

Executive Director, Move LA

Juan Matute

Deputy Director, UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies

Kate Miller

Executive Director, Napa Valley Transportation Authority/Vine Transit

Lorelle Moe-Luna

Multimodal Services Director, Riverside County Transportation Commission

Seamus Murphy

Executive Director, San Francisco Bay Water Emergency Transportation Authority

Laurel Paget-Seekins

Senior Policy Advocate for Transportation Justice, Public Advocates

Michael Pimentel

Executive Director, California Transit Association

Robert Powers

General Manager, San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

Carl Sedoryk

CEO, Monterey-Salinas Transit District

David Sforza
Principal Consultant,
Assembly Transportation
Committee

Tony Tavares
Director, Caltrans

Laura Tolkoff
Transportation Policy
Director & Interim Chief
Policy Officer, SPUR

Mark Tollefson
Undersecretary, CalSTA

Michael Turner
Executive Officer -
Government Relations, Los
Angeles County Metropolitan
Transportation Authority

Kari Watkins
Associate Professor,
UC Davis

Mark Watts
Legislative Advocate,
Transportation California

Melissa White
Principal Consultant, Senate
Transportation Committee

Jim Wunderman
President and CEO,
Bay Area Council

“Public transportation is essential to achieving our state’s world-leading climate and equity goals but is facing an existential crossroads – not just in California but throughout the country,” said Secretary Omishakin. “I look forward to partnering with task force members on ways to put our state’s public transit agencies on a path toward long-term financial stability and delivering a world-class transit system for all people in California.”

The task force will kick off with a virtual meeting on December 19 and aims to meet in person every two months beginning in February 2024. Agendas, meeting materials and other task force information will be available on the [CalSTA website](#).

CalSTA, in consultation with the task force, will prepare a report of findings and policy recommendations based on the task force’s efforts and submit it to the Legislature by October 2025. The report will include a detailed analysis of specified issues and recommendations on specified topics, including, among others, reforming the Transportation Development Act.

The task force was established as part of Senate Bill 125, which also gives transit agencies increased flexibility to use state investments to fund transit operations or capital improvements, along with accountability measures. Just this year, California has invested nearly \$3.5 billion in state funding to expand transit and passenger rail service throughout the state.

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