

Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club November 2024 Endorsement Questionnaire (July)

PART 1: Required Information

- 1. Full name and pronouns:** Chris Arvin (they/them)
- 2. Office running for / ballot measure:** ComMUNItY Transit Act
- 3. Campaign consultant / primary point of contact:** Chris Arvin – carvin@gmail.com
- 4. Campaign address:** 312 Clay Street, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 9460
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- 7. Campaign website:** SFTransitAct.com

Only Ballot Measures

(Please limit responses to 150 words or less.)

1. Please describe what specific policies or concrete outcomes your proposition would achieve.

The ComMUNItY Transit Act is a community-led ballot initiative to increase operational funding for Muni. Revenue from a new business tax on ride-hail companies like Uber, Lyft and Waymo will be used for:

- Maintaining or expanding Muni service levels
- Improving Muni access to public parks, schools, and libraries
- Maintaining or expanding Muni fare discount programs for youth, students, people with disabilities, seniors, and people with low incomes

We're running this measure because the SFMTA is facing a funding deficit that will lead to Muni service cuts. Service cuts have the hardest impact on riders who lack other transportation options, but affect everyone. Less service will encourage more driving and ride-hail usage, which will lead to more traffic congestion and more pollution.

While our measure won't fully solve the agency's deficit, our measure will be a valuable part of filling the gap, and help limit the severity of Muni service cuts.

2. What would be a) the fiscal impact of your proposition if it passes and b) the fiscal impact if it does not?

Starting in 2025, we estimate our measure will raise up to \$30million/year for Muni. Funding comes from a gross receipts tax on ride-hail companies with rates from 1% to 4.5% based on revenue. The tax only applies to revenue from rides in San Francisco – there is no payroll apportionment.

The SFMTA's structural deficit was exacerbated by the pandemic. While Muni ridership has recovered to 76% of pre-pandemic levels, that growth is threatened by the SFMTA's \$220m+ operations deficit in FY26-27. Staff reductions will start sooner if new funding is not identified. A regional transit funding measure is under negotiation in the state senate, but that measure wouldn't provide funding until at least 2027, and it's unclear if it will fully address the SFMTA's funding gap.

Our measure will be an important part of mitigating Muni service cuts, which could mean longer waits, fewer routes, and less night-time service.

3. Who crafted your proposition, and how was it placed on the ballot?

We submitted our initiative petition with over 17,800 signatures – far more than the 10,029 required to qualify. Over 130 volunteers gathered signatures for our measure, building a coalition for Muni funding. We also gathered signatures through a paid signature gathering operation, funded solely by individual proponents and supporters.

The measure was initially borne out of years of discussion and research from the Transit Justice Coalition and the San Francisco Transit Riders. A smaller subset of this group convened to work on forming the measure earlier this year.

The measure's official proponents are Chris Arvin, Vice Chair of the SFMTA Citizens' Advisory Council; Kat Siegal, Chair of the SFCTA's Community Advisory Committee; and Lian Chang, whose previous advocacy includes supporting Vision Zero at Walk San Francisco. (Affiliations shared for identification only.) Arvin and sustainable transportation advocate Cyrus Hall are the principal officers of our campaign committee.

4. Who are your proposition's individual and organizational supporters of note? What are your proposition's primary funding sources?

We're proud to have received a number of early endorsements during our signature gathering phase. Multiple elected officials are endorsing our measure: Senator Scott Wiener, Supervisor Dean Preston, and BART Board Director Janice Li. We have received endorsements from a number of organizations, including Sierra Club, Democratic Socialists of America – San Francisco, Small Business Forward, and the San Francisco Taxi Workers Alliance.

5. Why do you think the Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club should support your proposition?

Your club's platform rightly states that transportation justice is a queer issue. The platform calls for dedicated revenue sources for Muni funding, dependable public transportation, and for maintaining and expanding equitable fare discount programs for Muni. The ComMUNity Transit Act directly addresses these points. With a tax on ride-hail companies that increase congestion in the city, we are bringing a new dedicated revenue source to Muni operations.

While service cuts could make Muni less dependable by increasing commute times or removing routes, our measure will help reduce or avoid potential service cuts. The funding can also be used to maintain or expand equitable fare discount programs, including the popular Free Muni for Youth, which your platform calls for being made permanent.

We would be honored to have the support of the Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club.
Thank you!