

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency  
**Youth Transportation Advisory Board**

# 2021 Youth Town Hall Report Summary

November 2021



## Introduction

### Youth Transportation Advisory Board (YTAB)

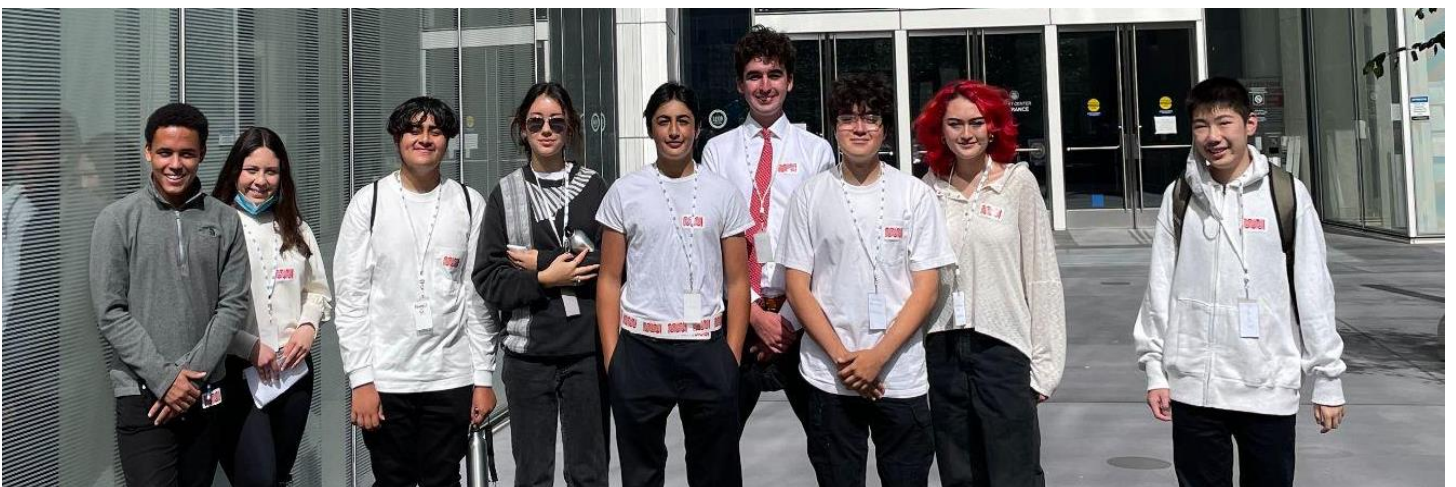
The unique relationship that young people have with transportation makes them particularly sensitive to changes in our services and programs. By specifically amplifying the perspectives of local youth, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) is investing in the next generation of transit riders, whose experiences can and should shape the development of the transportation system. **SFMTA's Youth Transportation Advisory Board (YTAB)** aims to elevate the lived experiences of young people explicitly and intentionally from across the city of San Francisco to better inform our policies and practices.

For the many young people in the San Francisco Bay Area, who have limited transportation options, public transportation, and active transportation, like walking and bicycling, are key components of their mobility. Too often, however, their need to connect to educational, social, and economic opportunities and other critical services go unmet.

The SFMTA's Youth Transportation Advisory Board (YTAB) was created in December 2020 to better inform the SFMTA decisions and conduct youth outreach in San Francisco so into the future the needs of youth are met and gaps are closed.

The following duties and functions will form the foundation of YTAB's work:

- Identify the unmet needs of San Francisco's children and youth through examining the existing services, practices, and budgets of the SFMTA.
- Design and conduct outreach to youth and their communities on SFMTA services and projects to learn from underrepresented groups and begin addressing gaps in dialogue.
- Develop and deliver recommendations to staff and the Director of Transportation to support or improve SFMTA services.
- Report to the SFMTA Board of Directors and Director of Transportation on the activities, goals, and accomplishments of YTAB on at least a biannual basis and may give public comment in between biannual reports if needed.



## YTAB Town Hall 2021

*Why hold a Town Hall?*

1

YTAB recognized the consequence of the budget and learned that the budget is "a statement of [the SFMTA's] values."

2

Prior SFMTA outreach had not been successful at identifying youth needs, in order to fulfill its duties, YTAB found it necessary to take a new approach.

3

Holding the Budget Town Hall allowed YTAB to introduce itself to SF youth.

The YTAB held a town hall on September 18, 2021 where it educated over 100 attendees about the SFMTA's operations and initiatives, held a Question-and-Answer session, and collected feedback about the SFMTA's services.

YTAB used this feedback and conversations with SFMTA staff to develop **a series of recommendations relevant to youth** in San Francisco. This document summarizes the work which will be presented in detail to the SFMTA

Board of Directors November 16, 2021. The YTAB members hope that this work will fulfill its statements of purpose and improve youths' experiences with the SFMTA and improve their mobility options.

## What We Heard

During the town hall, YTAB collected both qualitative and quantitative data through discussions, question and answer sessions, and surveys. Importantly, SFMTA services are essential to youth as many lack other travel options. A few of the most important areas of concern are as follows:

- Youth find that the SFMTA's transit services are letting them down. From frequent pass-ups to infrequent buses on key school corridors at dismissal times, youth find that the SFMTA's network is slow, unreliable, and costs them lots of time.
- Youth are excited by the roll out of Free Muni for All Youth, however they are concerned about enforcement mechanisms, especially since many find it hard to secure an ID card or are distrustful of law enforcement.
- Youth find that the SFMTA does not effectively communicate with them. Many SFMTA events are held during school hours or other times that aren't accessible to youth, and network change announcements are published on unfamiliar mediums, resulting in many youth struggling to navigate the system. In fact, many students arrived late on their first day of school this year due to uncommunicated network changes during the pandemic.
- Many youth feel like they are discriminated against by other riders and SFMTA operators. Their frustration is heightened by operators appearing to skip stops that have large groups of teenagers waiting to board.
- As frequent walkers and bikers, SF youth want to be able to utilize those modes of transportation safely across the whole city. Many enjoy the SFMTA's Slow Streets program and bicycle infrastructure which they hope will be expanded to all neighborhoods.

## Recommendations

### Network Reliability

- Pursue dedicated funding for transit operations via the ballot in 2022 or 2023 to sustain and expand Muni service and provide a stable funding base for the SFMTA
- Continue to fund maintenance and replacement of outdated infrastructure in the system to ensure greater system reliability
- Expedite its NextBus replacement (new Customer Information System) project to make vehicle predictions more accurate for youth and all riders along with improving the interface of the system
- Expand the network of transit only lanes to reduce delays caused by traffic and speed up Muni vehicles

### School Service

- Improve afternoon supplemental school service for the 29, 44 and 48 which currently experience severe overcrowding
- Provide additional morning rush-hour service on lines such as the 23, 28, 29, 43, 48 and 49 which experience overcrowding from youth travelling to school
- Conduct more outreach with students and faculty at schools in order to receive more feedback on how to improve regular and supplemental Muni service to schools
- Continue to meet and work with SFUSD to resolve problems with synchronized school start and end times that cause crowding on lines that serve multiple schools and stretch agency resources

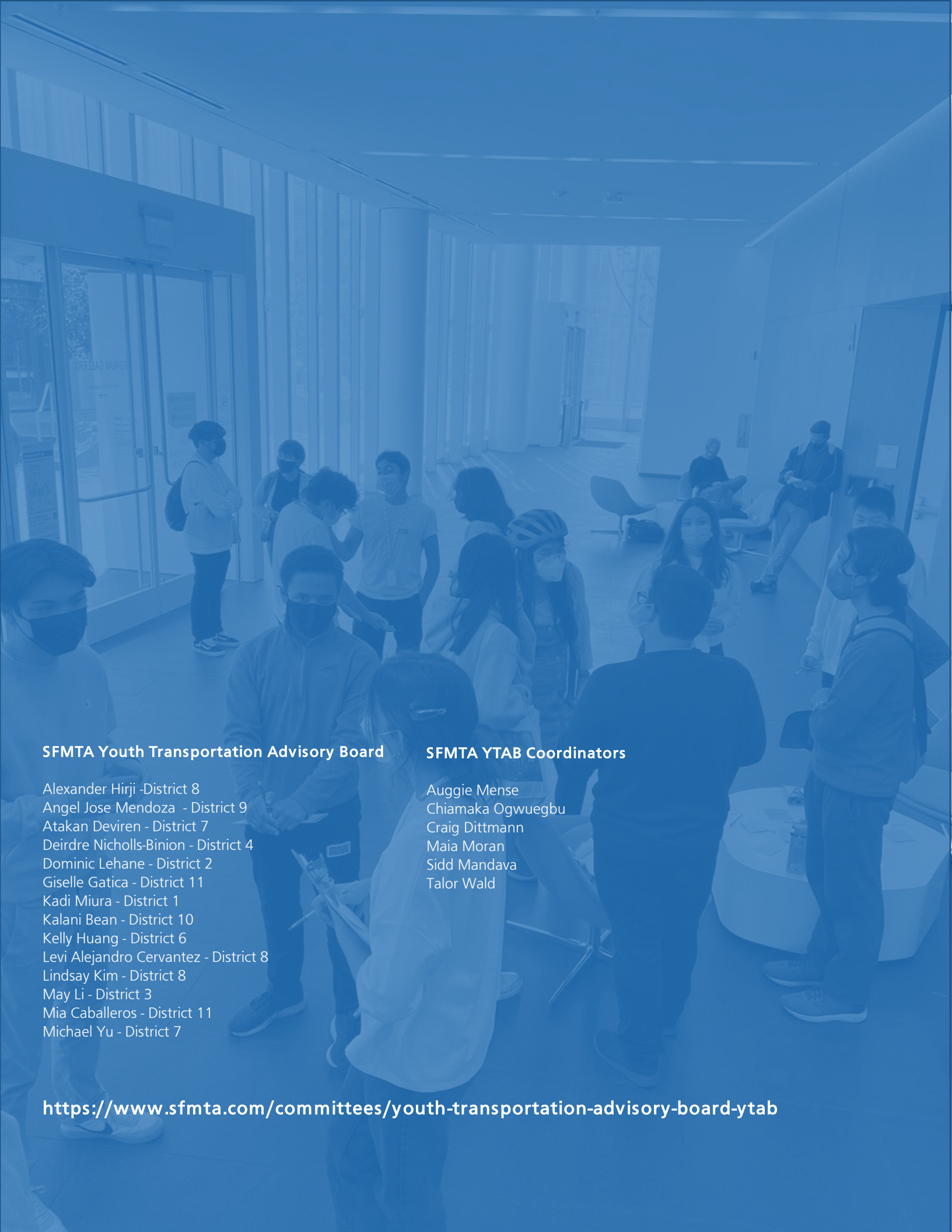
### Communications

- Work with YTAB to design social media content aimed at youth, such as content promoting outreach events designed for youth, surveys targeted at youth riders, route restorations and service changes that will affect youth, and campaigns like Free Muni for All Youth
- Continue to expand SFMTA presence on social media platforms that youth use, and work to grow youth engagement with SFMTA content on those platforms
- Make meetings that discuss issues affecting youth more accessible to youth, by hosting meetings on platforms and in places that youth are comfortable using, along with adjusting the timing of meetings that discuss issues that affect or will affect youth

### Safety

- Work to improve rider safety and security by partnering with community groups to reduce gender-based harassment onboard Muni vehicles
- Incorporate anti-youth bias training into Muni operator training courses to reduce incidents of intentional youth passups
- Make policy regarding door reopening available to the public, and re-examine it for situations where intending patrons are in the street
- Work with its Transit Shelter Contractor and the Department of Public Works to make transit stops more inviting to riders and improve rider safety and security at bus stops
- Continue to expand the network of slow streets and expedite the implementation of life saving traffic calming measures that will keep youth safe on City streets





### **SFMTA Youth Transportation Advisory Board**

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<https://www.sfmta.com/committees/youth-transportation-advisory-board-ytab>