

A Smart Parking Program!

Problem: BART has a \$28 million budget gap that it needs to close by July 1st. BART plans to fire an additional 70 employees to cut costs, but this only saves \$7 million. Meanwhile, a number of parking lots in the BART system fill up early in the morning, discouraging people who must drive to the station from riding BART.

BART's main options are to raise fares and cut service, or charge a modest daily fee for parking. (Parking spaces cost BART \$1 or more per day in maintenance and other costs.)

Solution: A Smart Parking Program, which would include a fee of \$1 to \$2, is the best way to solve BART's budget crisis and address the problem of full parking lots. The Smart Parking Program could raise \$5 million in the remainder of 2002 and \$15-20 million next year. If combined this year with innovative one-time measures – such as one-time lease/lease back programs or real estate sales – BART could *completely avoid raising fares and cutting service*.

The Smart Parking Program is designed to *increase* BART ridership. Free parking encourages those who might walk, bike, take transit, or carpool to BART to drive instead. Parking fees would encourage more riders to get to BART without a car. However, to maximize ridership *parking fees would be flexible* and would drop if parking lots do not reach maximum capacity.

The Sierra Club, Environmental Defense, and a host of other environmental, community, transit, and consumer rights groups support the Smart Parking Proposal because it is:

- **Good for riders:** The alternative to parking fees is for BART to raise fares and cut service. These measures would be inconvenient and costly to riders and would cause a decrease in ridership, which would be bad for BART.
- **Good for families:** Free parking rewards those who can arrive very early in the morning before the lots fill up. But these early hours are tough on families and people with fixed 9-5 work hours. Parking fees would be a better way to allocate spaces.
- **Good for drivers:** The Smart Parking Program would dedicate up to 10 percent of each parking lot for guaranteed monthly reserved spaces. This would provide an important service to regular riders who cannot get to the station before the spaces are filled. If there are lots that do not fill, remaining spaces would be allocated to a long-term parking program to serve airport-bound riders. Parking after 10:00 AM and on weekends would continue to remain free.
- **Good for the environment:** BART's studies show that a large percentage of people who park at BART live less than a mile away. Parking fees would encourage more drivers to walk, bike, take transit or carpool to BART, freeing up space for those who must drive.

Tell BART to make the smart choice –

see the back for ways to help! ⇨ ⇨ ⇨

Tell BART to make the smart choice: Implement the Smart Parking Proposal – Don't raise fares or cut service!

Write to BART!

Send a letter to the BART Board of Directors in support of the Smart Parking Program.

Mail your letter to:

Bay Area Rapid Transit District
Board of Directors
800 Madison Street LMA-5
Oakland, CA 94607

or fax it to: (510) 464-6011

Speak out!

Attend the next BART Board Meeting and speak in favor of the Smart Parking Program.

Thursday, June 27, 2002, 9:00 A.M.

800 Madison Street, Oakland
(*above the Lake Merritt BART station*)

Write or call the media!

Send a letter to the editor or call in to talk radio shows. Letters to the editor should be short (200-250 words), and must include your name, address, and phone number.

Chronicle: letters@sfchronicle.com fax: (415) 543-7708

Contra Costa Times: letters@cctimes.com fax: (925) 943-8362

KGO 810 AM: call-in to (415) 808-0810

Learn more!

To learn more about the Smart Parking Proposal and BART's budget crisis visit www.transcoalition.org.

SAMPLE LETTER

– *write letter in your own words* –

Dear Board of Directors:

I support parking fees at BART stations as part of the Smart Parking Proposal.

Parking fees are the best approach to the budget crisis and can reduce the need for service cuts and fare hikes.

Free parking rewards those who can arrive very early in the morning before the lots fill up. But these early hours are hard on families. Parking fees would be a better way to allocate parking spaces.

Parking charges would also benefit the environment as they would encourage more BART passengers to walk, bike, or take transit to BART, freeing up space for those who must drive.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME & ADDRESS]