



TO: CapMetro Board, ATP Board and Austin Mayor and City Council

FROM: Randy Clarke

DATE: January 12, 2022

SUBJECT: Project Connect Leadership

For nearly four years now, I've had the great honor of leading the women and men at CapMetro. I'm grateful for the trust and partnership that the CapMetro Board has given to me in leading the staff and delivering our strategic initiatives, which are more challenging and ambitious every year. This position continues to be the pride of my career, and I truly appreciate the opportunity I have been afforded to make Austin my family's home. My entire career has been dedicated to serving in the public transportation industry, and specifically working to improve communities and lives of those that rely and benefit from transit. I take very seriously my role in operating our regional transit agency, with it the responsibility of stewarding the FY2022 \$658m budget and a staff of more than 2,300, as well as leading the Project Connect expansion program and Austin Transit Partnership, serving as the Executive Director since December 2020.

Under my leadership, the Project Connect program reached several important milestones over the past year. They include onboarding the initial ATP Board, recruiting a highly experienced staff from across the country to join ATP and CapMetro, establishing ATP organizational policies and resources, forming the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and three Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) and securing real estate for the Project Connect program office. We also created program momentum by launching three new Pickup zones, breaking ground on the Expo MetroRapid line, receiving FTA approval on NEPA categorical exclusion and Letter of No Prejudice (LoNP) for Expo & Pleasant Valley MetroRapid lines, receiving acceptance into FTA Project Development on the Orange and Blue Lines, breaking ground on Red Line double tracking improvements and making substantial progress toward 30% light rail design plans; all of which are on the schedule we promised voters. The first full year of Project Connect program implementation has been full of remarkable achievement based on the incredible efforts of the staff, consultants, and board leadership at the three partner agencies. We should reflect on our joint accomplishments while using the start of a new year to focus on the challenging work ahead. And I wholeheartedly believe that what lies ahead will require everyone working even more closely together.

Over the past several months the topic of how the Executive Director role at ATP is filled has become an unfortunate and unintended area of misunderstanding between the partner agencies. At such a critical time for the program, it is important that potential areas of conflict are jointly resolved to reduce program risk, as our sole focus should be on how we best deliver this transformational program to benefit the community we all serve.

I want to do all I can as the staff lead for the program, to help the two program sponsors, CapMetro and City of Austin, and the lead implementation agency, ATP, make decisions that will best position the program for future success. To that end, if my personal role as leader of both CapMetro and ATP is considered an impediment to program success, I believe a new leadership structure of ATP should be established. In a potential new model, it would no longer be the responsibility of the CapMetro CEO to lead the ATP as Executive Director. This would provide the ATP Board an opportunity to select a new Executive Director who will partner with the CapMetro CEO and City Manager to deliver the program. Additionally, this potential model would include a logical transition to a position for the CapMetro CEO as an Ex Officio member on the ATP Board alongside the City's representative; a transition that can be achieved by the CapMetro Board and City Council amending the ATP's Articles of Incorporation. The Ex Officio Board role for the CapMetro CEO creates consistency in leadership from the program sponsors, CapMetro and City of Austin, when paired with the existing City of Austin Ex Officio Board position for the City Manager or his/her designee. This would help reinforce the shared responsibility and alignment with the program sponsors that is critical for program delivery success. Based on the already defined responsibilities of each partner in the pre- and post-election resolutions and agreements and federal requirements, the CapMetro CEO would continue to serve as the staff lead on significant Project Connect program topics such as directing Federal strategy to ultimately secure the necessary Federal program funding, operational readiness, workforce development, program system safety oversight, and technical systems integration.

Austin Transit Partnership was created as a non-profit local government corporation construction authority with the specific mission to oversee the contracts and financing to build the transit system expansion projects and to fund the City's Anti-Displacement efforts. I believe that ATP will continue building a culture of collaboration and partnership with the program sponsors, as the infrastructure ATP builds ultimately needs to be accepted and then operated and maintained by these respective entities. The talented and hard-working staff at all three partner organizations and consultants working to support execution of the program also need and deserve leadership certainty to reduce program risk and ensure mission execution remains the priority.

As the Boards and Council consider this potential new leadership structure, I want to reassure everyone that my focus has been and will always remain ensuring the success of the Project Connect program and overall transit services for our community. I will continue to serve in my current responsibilities for both CapMetro and ATP until a decision is made regarding a potential future leadership model. You have my commitment that, regardless of the outcome you all decide, I will work tirelessly to move the program forward including any potential transition to a new Executive Director.

I am incredibly proud of the amazing partnership that has been formed between CapMetro and the City of Austin to advance a program that received overwhelming approval from voters. Now with three partners, the work ahead will be exciting, yet challenging, and it will require everyone pulling in the same direction. I am confident that our community's best days are ahead. Long after all of us have transitioned beyond our current roles, the Project Connect program will be seen as one of the most impactful investments in the history of Central Texas.

I am available to answer any questions or assist in any way you deem valuable as you consider the path forward.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Clarke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Randy" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Clarke".

Randy Clarke  
President and CEO, CapMetro  
Executive Director, Austin Transit Partnership