Who Counts?

Each day BART calculates ridership from and to each station and the total for the day and week. That is the total number of people who paid to use the system, but not the number of people who use the system.

Why not get some of those clickers out of the desk at HQ, send teams to the busiest stations and count the the number of people who enter and leave the system without paying.

Those are the real ridership numbers. And those people are going someplace to do something. They are not all dealing drugs or getting high on the platforms or on the trains. They are part of the life and functioning of the Bay Area.

The Money is There

Gov. Newsom and the California politicians are wringing their hands over how to fund public transit.

In our current situation – especially facing a global climate crisis, reliable, affordable (and free?) public transit is a necessity.

There could have been some real demands made on the big employers during the tech boom. But it’s not too late. The place to look is not in the pockets of those who still ride public transit nor other taxpayers. (Most corporations and billionaires actually pay little or no tax.)

Let’s look at the Bay Area for starters. Of the ten U.S. companies with the largest market capitalization, five are in the Bay Area. Market capitalization is the total value of a company’s shares of stock. (If a company has issued 10 million shares, and its share price is $100, its market cap is $1 billion.)

Apple is #1, setting a record with a market cap of $3.016 trillion with a profit of $96 billion last year

Affordable, reliable public transit is a necessity, not a luxury. The rich can pay for once.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank/Company</th>
<th>Market cap</th>
<th>Profit 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 Apple</td>
<td>$3.016 trillion</td>
<td>$94 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 Alphabet (Google)</td>
<td>$1.529 trillion</td>
<td>$59 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6 Nvidia</td>
<td>$1.039 trillion</td>
<td>$4.37 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7 Tesla</td>
<td>$876.49 billion</td>
<td>$11.8 billion</td>
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<tr>
<td>#8 Meta Platforms</td>
<td>$748.29 billion</td>
<td>$21 billion</td>
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</tbody>
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BART for the Big Shots

California Governor Gavin Newsom filmed a PR video at the North Concord/Martinez station last week to announce the signing of the new state budget. He signed it while riding on BART to show that it includes some funding for local transit agencies like BART to temporarily avoid their “fiscal cliff.” He made a big deal out of signing it on BART as it hadn’t been clear if transit funding would be included in the final version of the budget.

In the video, the station looked really nice—everything was squeaky clean and everyone had been cleared out of the station. It looked pretty similar to when management or the board comes around for “photo ops.”

It’s almost as if there is a BART experience for the big shots and then another one for the rest of us.

Increased Tolls: Making Workers Pay

There is a new proposal in the California State Legislature to raise all tolls for Bay Area Bridges by another $1.50 from 2024-2028. They say the revenue from this toll increase will be used to help fund Bay Area transit agencies like BART.

Public transit is an essential public service and must absolutely be funded! But why is it that ordinary people driving into the city to work or spend time with friends are the ones that have to foot the bill?

Save the Date!

Speak Out - BBQ Sunday, September 24
Good Food! Good Company! Children’s area, Sports, Discussions and more!
More info to come – soon

Pass this on to a co-worker and leave some in the break room. Contact us or talk with the person handing this out or other people connected to Speak Out.

If things are going to change, it’s up to us.