

**RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR
JAMES P. SPERING
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 4692
ADOPTED JANUARY 22, 2025**

Whereas, Commissioner James P. Spering, affectionately known as “Jim,” is stepping down from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission after 38 years of dedicated service, consistently delivered with humility, generosity, and integrity; and

Whereas, Jim served with distinction as Chair of the Commission from 1997-1999; and

Whereas, although Jim asserts that being a politician was never his intention, he retired from elected life in 2023 after 16 years as a member of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, a position to which he first was elected in 2006 and then re-elected in 2010, 2014 and 2018; and before which he served as the mayor of Suisun City for 20 years from 1986-2006; and

Whereas, while at MTC, Jim served on and chaired countless committees, including the high-stakes Transportation Revenue Measure Select Committee in 2024 and the Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force from 2020-2021, and steered MTC’s Planning Committee since at least 2002 and likely longer, so long that it is difficult to track down his start date because the records have long been archived off site; and

Whereas, during this tenure, Jim was a get-it-done leader who presided over the growth and development of Solano County’s transportation network and the delivery of high-profile, big-impact projects including the 2003 opening of the Al Zampa Bridge carrying westbound Interstate 80 over the Carquinez Strait, the 2007 opening of the new Benicia-Martinez Bridge, the widening of State Route 12 through Jameson Canyon, the Interstate 80/Interstate 680/State Route 12 interchange improvements, and the 2018 introduction of Capitol Corridor commuter rail service to the new Fairfield-Vacaville Hannigan station; and

Whereas, while Jim championed his county’s local transportation needs, he at the same time honed a regional focus on issues that impact all nine counties; and while he always directed his energy toward what he thought was best for the community, Jim’s definition of community often rippled outward from Suisun City to Solano County to the Bay Area as a whole; and

Whereas, among the regional initiatives Jim championed during his term as Commission Chair were the all-in-one regional transit fare payment card now known as Clipper; the pathbreaking Transportation for Livable Communities program to leverage transportation funding to encourage pedestrian- and transit-friendly development; and establishment of the Bay Bridge Design Task Force and the Engineering and Design Advisory Panel to guide the painstaking design selection process for the replacement of the seismically vulnerable East Span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge in a region known for robust public participation; and

Whereas, Jim came to be well known as a key mentor to new commissioners and MTC leaders, and became MTC’s unofficial “deal maker” for the most challenging regional negotiations, always working hard to get to ‘yes’ and, in the rare occasions when the best answer was ‘no,’ working equally hard to find someone else to deliver that message; and

Whereas, Jim is also a public-spirited institutionalist who served not only MTC and his city and county but also the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Solano Transportation Authority, the Megaregion Working Group that includes representatives from the Sacramento Area Council of Governments and the San Joaquin Council of Governments, and innumerable other organizations, consistently as a problem-solving honest broker and public servant who believes in a public greater good, and understands that relationships build trust and community, and whose word is his bond; and

Whereas, Jim values not only the institution but also the staff of MTC and, with egalitarian ethics and thoughtful respect, was generous with his time to work with and for MTC staff as much as staff worked for him, attend staff functions, make friends — and in 2013 delighted MTC staff donning a long-haired wig to roast a retiring administrative assistant; and

Whereas, Jim has always maintained that he is just “an ordinary guy surrounded by extraordinary people,” his staff, colleagues, friends and family may beg to differ and know that Jim is indeed extraordinary: passionate while professional, engaged while non-partisan, hard-working and competent, and absolutely committed to using his service to make people’s lives better, whether or not he gets credit; and

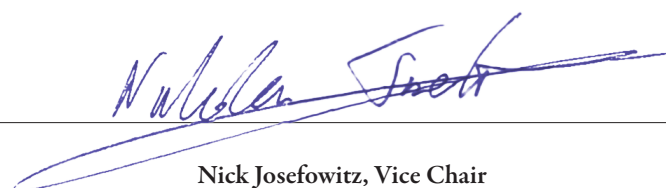
Whereas, Jim is a lifelong fan of American League baseball and true supporter of Little League, and while eschewing future committee assignments does intend to continue serving as the ‘grand poobah’ District Administrator for Little League District 53; and

Whereas, Jim found a bright spot in COVID and the overnight move to Zoom meetings, and enjoyed testing colleagues and staff’s knowledge of military aircraft by selecting obscure fighters or bomber photos for his background — a nod to his upbringing as an Army brat and pride in our armed forces.

Whereas, Jim’s nuts-and-bolts approach to public service is matched by his skills as a contractor, builder and aeromodeller, and his aptitude for bringing together a panoply of pieces and parts to create a cohesive whole has for many decades well served the Bay Area; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the staff and commissioners of MTC salute Jim for his nearly four decades of service to the public and to the agency, express appreciation (and wonder) for the tenacious and generous spirit he brought to this work, commend his commitment to regionalism, and extend to Jim and his family best wishes for a seamless transition into non-public life.

{gold MTC seal goes here}


Nick Josefowitz, Vice Chair