

Name: **ANU NATARAJAN**

Phone: 510-501-0332

Email: [anu4bart@gmail.com](mailto:anu4bart@gmail.com)

Website: anu4BART

Current occupation: Legislative Affairs Manager, Stopwaste

1. Motivation -- Why did you choose to run for the BART Board? A long-time, daily commuter on BART I share the frustrations of delay, unclean trains and stations, and lack of commuter communication. I am the Chair of the Measure RR Bond Oversight committee and bring a solid understanding of the funding needs to maintain BART's core infrastructure. As a planner and a former city councilmember, I understand the intersection of land use and transportation at a regional level. A consultant who has worked on sustainability, I value how significant BART is to reaching our climate goals and want to see it continue to thrive.

2. Please give a summary of your background and qualifications for the office of BART Board. Professionally, I am urban planner with extensive experience as a public agency planner and a sustainability consultant. I served on the Fremont City Council for 10 years, and have served on various boards and commissions that focused on smart growth and sustainable planning, including ABAG's regional planning committee and chaired the placemaking committee. I served as a boardmember with Transform, SPUR San Jose, Smart Growth America and Greenbelt Alliance – all organizations dealing with policies that shape livable cities. And have worked with a non-profit affordable housing builder and advocated for policies and funding at the local, regional and state levels. I am currently the Legislative Affairs Manager at Stopwaste, working on climate action plans and efforts to reduce waste at home, school and work.

3. (For incumbents) How would you assess your own job performance? Please give some specific examples of accomplishments and setbacks? I am not an incumbent.

4. How would you go about leading change that would result in better coordination between BART and other transit providers, especially AC Transit? What could BART do to improve its coordination? One of the challenges of coordinating transit and regional infrastructure is that there are over 27 transit agencies in the Bay Area. BART is the transit spine and needs to be integrated with other transit to provide seamless connectivity. There is great potential to partner with AC Transit to figure out last mile connections that will get people out of their cars, and reduce the need to drive and park at BART stations.

5. Please discuss your priorities of investing in the expansion of BART vs. investing in maintenance of the existing core system. What is your position regarding various proposals for expanding service to Livermore (and/or beyond); further into Contra Costa County (for example, Brentwood); or elsewhere. What is your position on a Bus Rapid Transit connection to Livermore? In my role on the Bond Oversight committee, I have gained an understanding of the funding needs for BART to maintain its core

system. BART has the oldest stock of cars, a communication system that needs an overhaul and earthquake retrofits. As a daily commuter, I see the overcrowding during peak hours and a decline in ridership during the off peak hours. In addition, issues of safety are front and center for commuters. BART has an obligation to maintain its core infrastructure. With the bond funding (we must work to defeat Prop 6) and funding from RM3, if the court rules in favor of continuing funding, BART should look at funding for expansion of services. The I-580 corridor needs relief. As long as we don't provide affordable housing in the Bay Area we force our workforce to commute from Tracy, Stockton, and beyond, we should study options to provide transit connections. Any extension of BART relies on local jurisdictions to provide the right zoning and transit oriented developments to build ridership. With the move away from downtown Livermore to Isabel Avenue along the freeway corridor, I believe we should look at financially sustainable options or creative ways to obtain additional funding to provide transit. While I personally believe that BRT may be an option, we need to work with the community on a pilot project to understand the opportunities and challenges of using transit. For transit to be successful, it needs to be seamless, you cannot expect ridership if commuters are asked to transfer from ACE to connect to BART through a third system.

6. What would you do to ensure that a boondoggle project (like the Oakland Airport Connector) would not happen again? The federal govt pulled \$70 Mill from the Oakland Airport Connector project since it would disproportionately affect protected groups in violation of Title VI. BART is currently proposing to begin service one hour later, at 5am instead of 4am. What will you do to ensure the rights of riders that depend on that service are protected? I believe that the BART Oakland Airport connector serves as a reference point to consider the financial viability of a project and the cost to riders. I will commit to hearing from constituents and stakeholders and understand the tradeoffs and be transparent with the decision-making.

7. Are you satisfied with employee safety? If not, have you any proposals to increase employee safety? Please include your thoughts and proposals regarding employee safety, including Train Operators' workplace injuries, and assaults on Station Agents. Employee safety is a concern. My initial thought on overall safety and workplace injuries is enhanced and increased safety training programs, improved job training, and allowing adequate time to perform the task at hand by trained, qualified personal. With higher incidents of violence at BART stations involving passengers, and BART personal we must better protect station employees. While I do not have any specific ideas I would seek input from BART employees to hear their suggestions of what is needed to protect them. Then work on both short and long term solutions.

8. BART has claimed a need for \$17 billion moving forward in order to keep facilities in a state of good repair. Briefly discuss your budget priorities for generating revenue and balancing the various expenditure needs (ongoing operating costs, maintenance needs, investments in capacity increase and extending the system). Are there areas you feel BART should look at reducing costs?

9. What is your opinion of the MTC and its funding priorities for transit? I plan to review MTC funding in detail. The fix it first strategy allocates 87% of funding on existing infrastructure. MTC's priorities for transit investment focuses on improving the region's core transit systems, new bus rapid transit lines, rail extensions that support future housing and employment growth and integrating high-speed rail along the Peninsula corridor.

10. What will you do to ensure that housing development on BART-owned properties provides below market rate (i.e. "affordable") housing, allowing low-income folks (who are the most transit dependent) the ability to live within walking distance to BART? I have been supportive of inclusionary zoning and other policies to promote lifecycle housing that includes choices for affordability at various levels including the "missing middle" and affordability by design. I will work to include affordability requirements in any development agreements on BART sites.

11. What will you do to expand "owl service" or to run BART 24hrs per day, as is done in NYC? BART plays a dual role of being a subway metro system connecting the urban nodes of Oakland and San Francisco. It also is a commuter rail connecting suburban communities to employment nodes. I will need more information on need, ridership numbers and cost of service in an era where mobility as a service and private sector options will provide competition.

12. What do you think about the pilot plan for bikes on BART at all hours? Very supportive.

13. Do you believe that public sector unions should have the right to strike? Please explain your answer. As an elected Director, what is your role in regards to contract negotiations? If elected, what will you do to ensure good faith bargaining efforts on the part of District Staff? What role do you believe the media should play during negotiations? BART engaged in negative campaigning against its employees in the 2013 negotiations. Do you support such messaging, and if not, what would you do to reverse that? What will you do to improve relations with workers at BART? What would you do to ensure the voice of workers is heard, as well as that of management? Will you oppose two-tier systems in pay or benefits, including pensions, at BART? BART would be best served if management, the board and labor leaders met regularly to establish and maintain open lines of communication in order to ensure employee and agency needs could then be regularly monitored and addressed as opposed to only communicating when entering into contract negotiations. If elected, I would work to open lines of communication within the agency and provide clear direction to district staff. I would use my decades of experience and proven leadership to bring stakeholders together to reach consensus. It is of critical importance that BART honor it's commitment to employees and constituents. BART should never engage in negative campaigning against staff. I am opposed to a two-tier system for all forms of compensation.

14. Please give an example (if applicable) of when you took a position different than management's position. Please describe how you, as a Director, will be independent from management. As a councilmember for ten years, I have the experience of understating my role as an elected member. I believe it is the role of staff to provide all data to enable the board to make policy decisions. I have pushed back on management decisions that were overtly or subtly political and those that lacked transparency. I have been and will continue to be independent and seek input from all sides prior to making decisions – and I have no trouble in pushing back when needed – with respect and civility.

15. How can you help strike a better balance between community service police and BART police, in terms of safety and funding? BART cannot continue to be an insular agency hoping to tackle large issues such as safety by itself. BART has to do a better job of collaborating with partners and stakeholders in the various communities it serves. I believe BART commuters will be well served with a balance of community service police and BART police. I understand there are challenges of appropriate training, defined roles and responsibilities and a clear culture of partnerships.

16. BART has implemented some reforms for BART police since Oscar Grant. Do you feel these changes are adequate or more should be done? This is an area that needs to be constantly reviewed and updated based on input from commuters and community partners. The 12 point Safety Plan that was proposed has some good ideas – the Board's decision to seek community input prior to adopting a strategy is a good one. This issue needs partners with other government agencies and non-profit community groups.

17. What are your thoughts on having an armed BART police force? Please refer to my answer to question #15.

18. Other ideas you have to provide better service? (To reduce noise?) The new trains will be quieter and provide clean cars. I will work with the Board to make sure that there is a public awareness campaign for commuter partnerships in keeping the trains and stations clean. Another area for improvement is to make communications clear for commuters and to integrate the various technologies and channels of communication – including syncing Live BART and announcements at the station.

19. Will you oppose two-tier systems in pay or benefits at BART? As a current PEPRA employee, I am not supportive of different structures for similar employee groups.

20. Please describe your viewpoint on Transit Oriented Development. As an urban planner and designer who has worked on downtown plans (Milpitas, Fremont, Redwood City), I have focused on the importance of true transit oriented developments (TODs not TADs). As a councilmember in Fremont, I led the visioning and specific plan development for 800 acres around the Warm Springs BART station to ensure that it

develops as an employment TOD (eTOD). As much as I believe in the principle of local control for land use decisions, I am supportive of a short term intervention like AB 2923 to ensure that we do not waste land with inefficient developments.

21. Please describe the sources of the financial contributions your campaign has received. Please identify any sources from which or from whom you would not accept donations. I have received contributions from individuals and organizations that have endorsed me. I plan to continue to obtain individual contributions.

22. What endorsements have you received thus far? Alameda County Building Trades SEIU 1021 AFSCME Sierra Club Tri Cities Democratic Forum Alameda County Democratic Club East Bay Women's Political Alliance South Alameda County Young Democrats Rep. Ro Khanna