March 19, 2019

Sarah Tarpgaard, HCFA-32  
US Department of Transportation (USDOT)

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE Mail Drop E62-204  
Washington DC 20590

Subject: Support for Santa Clara VTA Accessible Automated Vehicle Demonstrations

Dear Ms. Tarpgaard:

On behalf of the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), I would like to offer my support for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Accessible Automated Vehicle Demonstrations. This important and innovative set of demonstrations, as part of a proposal led by VTA and supported by the Veterans Administration Palo Alto Health Care System, Prospect Silicon Valley, UC Berkeley, Caltrans, and automated vehicle partners, will yield an essential demonstration of advanced transit services and address a critical need to improve accessibility for all, while contributing significantly to the understanding of automated vehicle safety.

AAPD works to grow the political and economic power of people with disabilities. As a national cross-disability rights organization, AAPD advocates for full civil rights for the more than 60 million Americans with disabilities by promoting equal opportunity, economic power, independent living, and political participation. Access to affordable and reliable transportation is essential for all of these goals, which is why AAPD supports the Santa Clara VTA’s proposal to provide Automated Vehicle Demonstrations to California citizens.

AAPDbrings expertise in policy and human issues surrounding accessible transportation, specifically automated transit networks and leveraging new technologies and innovative processes to achieve a seamless, multimodal surface transportation system. Our work, performed in conjunction with other members of the We Will Ride coalition, is focused squarely on advocacy for a transportation system that will serve all Americans, including those with a wide range of disabilities.

Advocates for the disability community trust that the proposed team for the Santa Clara VTA Accessible Automated Vehicle Demonstrations has the technical expertise, demonstrated experience, and organizational network to effectively advance the tasks demanded for the project. If you should have any further questions regarding our commitment, please contact me directly at hberger@aapd.com. We’re delighted to support the team and bring our own expertise to the table to ensure success.  
  
Sincerely,  
Helena Berger  


President & CEO