



January 23, 2024

Re: MTC Item XX - Objection to a revenue measure that supports highway widening

Dear Commissioners:

As organizations committed to environmental sustainability and equitable transportation investments, we appreciate MTC's work toward a potential transportation revenue measure. The need for significant new funding for our region's transit operators is critical to prevent severe service cuts and enhance overall service quality. We are in the midst of a global climate crisis and a thriving transit system is imperative to meet the Bay Area's sustainability objectives and to reduce our region's greenhouse gas emissions. .

We must ensure that the measure leaves a positive impact on the climate and our communities. We recognize the importance of generating revenue for public transit operations as a primary goal for this measure and we also understand the potential need to include some non-transit investments in the expenditure plan. **Nonetheless, we strongly object to the development of a transportation revenue measure that supports highway widening.** Our concern is based on evidence that highway widening:

- 1) Promotes higher levels of automobile use and, consequently, contributes to increased greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, noise pollution, and traffic hazards, which often disproportionately affect communities of color, people with limited incomes, seniors, and children.
- 2) Draws riders away from public transit, resulting in reduced political support and fare revenue for transit agencies.
- 3) Redirects funds toward road infrastructure that would otherwise be available for vital needs such as transit operations, expanding transit services, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements, safer streets, and incentives for sustainable transportation choices.
- 4) Fails to solve the congestion problems that motivate such investments.

The measure being contemplated by the Bay Area region represents a generational investment in our transportation system that will support projects and programs decades into the future. In 2023, in the midst of a climate emergency, it is simply unconscionable to authorize new funding for projects that work directly against our climate goals. A successful measure will need to avoid highway widening. Please develop a measure that we can all support. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laura Tolhoff, Transportation Policy Director
SPUR

Clarrissa Cabansagan, Executive Director
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

Zack Deutsch-Gross, Policy Director
TransForm

Bob Allen, Policy and Advocacy Campaign
Director
Urban Habitat

Jack Lucero Fleck, co-leader 350 Bay Area
Transportation team
350 Bay Area

Nile Malloy Malloy, Climate Justice Director
**California Environmental Justice
Alliance (CEJA)**

Jordan Grimes, Resilience Manager
Greenbelt Alliance

Zak Accuardi, Senior Advocate
NRDC

Nailah Pope-Harden, Executive Director
Climate Plan

Robin Pam, Founder
Kid Safe SF

Ian Griffiths, Policy Director
Seamless Bay Area

Vinita Goyal, Executive Director
San Francisco Transit Riders Union

Aaron Eckhouse, Local and Regional
Programs Director
California YIMBY

Robert Prinz, Advocacy Director
Bike East Bay

Jodie Madeiros, Executive Director
Walk SF

Laurel Paget-Seekins, Senior Policy
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Tarrell Kullaway, Executive Director
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Jonathon Kass, Organizer
**No Bay Area Highway Expansion
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Mike Young, Senior Political and Organizing
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California Environmental Voters

Christopher White, Executive Director
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Matthew Baker, Policy Director
Planning and Conservation League

Charles Siegel
Walk Bike Berkeley

Jamie Pew, Policy Advisor
NextGen California

Ethan Elkind
Council of Infill Builders

Kristina Pappas, President
**San Francisco League of Conservation
Voters**

CC: Bay Area delegation to the state legislature, environment committee chairs and committee staff, and leadership of the legislature