



December 14, 2015

Steve Heminger
Executive Director
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Ezra Rapport
Executive Director
Association of Bay Area Governments
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607

Re: Comments on One Bay Area Grant Program Cycle 2 and Plan Bay Area 2040 Investment Scenarios, Policies and Advocacy Strategy

Dear Mr. Heminger and Mr. Rapport,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) Program and various elements of the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS or Plan Bay Area 2040) under development. We appreciate the significant amount of work that has already gone in to updating Plan Bay Area work elements to date and the many venues that have been made available to provide input. As major stakeholders and contributors to the success of the first Plan Bay Area, San Francisco, San José, and Oakland are very interested in providing thoughtful and timely input into this update process. The three largest population centers account for over 50 percent of the region's affordable housing, and our transit systems, along with BART and Caltrain services operating within and among our three cities, carry the vast majority of the region's transit trips.

We offer the following comments on the OBAG Cycle 2 framework, the upcoming investment scenarios, and the policy elements of Plan Bay Area 2040. We hope this input is helpful as MTC and ABAG continue to move forward with development of OBAG Cycle 2 and Plan Bay Area 2040.

OBAG Cycle 2

- We strongly support the overall OBAG framework of linking transportation funds with land use. The Bay Area is the only region that has done this, and we are pleased that MTC has adopted an approach to Cycle 2 that retains the existing framework. We urge the region to increase its focus on making transportation investments in those parts of the region taking on the most growth and feeling the day-to-day impacts of that growth right now.
- As we strive to make our cities more walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly, we value the ongoing emphasis within OBAG on Complete Streets and Safe Routes to School.
- We recognize that affordability and displacement are critical and urgent issues facing our cities and other areas in the region that are taking on significant growth. Thus, with respect to the OBAG county program formula, we are supportive of the additional weighting given to the production of affordable housing – the ultimate goal – as well as planned affordable housing. Unlike market rate housing, affordable housing has not happened without public

sector intervention. We also feel that it is important to incentivize both planning for housing through the Regional Housing Needs Allocation and actual production of housing, and thank MTC for ensuring that both happen through its approval of the revised county program formula.

- We support the MTC staff recommendation to direct regional PDA Planning funds to cities with high risk of displacement. This would demonstrate an acknowledgement of the linkages between growth and the unintended consequences that can come with it, and a commitment to support local efforts to develop strategies that support sustainable, equitable development, and that strengthen existing communities. We encourage MTC staff to work directly with our Planning Departments to identify opportunities to leverage the regional PDA Planning funds with other city efforts underway to support and encourage affordable housing and reduce the risk of displacement.
- Solutions for displacement are not easy. We support continued discussion and best practices sharing amongst all jurisdictions in the region and are looking forward to participating in a workshop and considering the results of the workshop on this topic, as requested by the Programming and Allocations Committee at its November 4 meeting. Given the diversity in the region, we agree that any policy requirements related to anti-displacement must be sensitive to different circumstances throughout the region.

Plan Bay Area 2040 Scenarios

- We support significant funding for State of Good Repair (SOGR), consistent with the Commission's long-standing commitment to "Fix it First." Ongoing investment in SOGR reinforces the region's focused growth strategy, and is particularly critical in the core of the region where pavement conditions are at-risk or fair and transit services are at a breaking point given aging infrastructure and record ridership levels. With the uncertainties surrounding federal funding, strong regional and local commitments to SOGR investments are more important than ever. To not do so, will cause us to move backwards on many of the plan's goals and reduce the quality of life in the core of the region, where the majority of residents and jobs reside. We recommend that significant investment in SOGR be a baseline investment in any scenario.
- We strongly encourage focusing on central city/core growth and the investments needed to support that growth – the region needs a vibrant urban core to meet GHG reduction, active transportation, and economic vitality goals and to protect the region's natural resources. These investments strengthen our entire region and are necessary even under the more "dispersed" growth scenario, given the existing concentration of housing and jobs in the big cities, which will continue to be dominant housing and job centers under all scenarios.
- We support including consideration of low-income and transit-dependent populations in all scenarios, as this should be part of any comprehensive regional transportation plan. We encourage MTC and ABAG to clearly call out which strategies are designed to benefit these populations in each scenario to help inform decisions about the preferred investment scenario.
- We support MTC continuing to use performance-based planning to inform policies and investment decisions. Given the overwhelming needs throughout the region, it is critical to make cost-effective investments that benefit the most people possible. We encourage MTC to

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continue to also give special consideration to those policies and investments that serve the region's most vulnerable communities.

Plan Bay Area 2040 Policies and Advocacy Strategy

- As the region moves forward with the full Plan Bay Area 2040, we encourage continued focus on linking transportation and housing with investments in those cities and areas taking the most growth. These areas face major challenges in terms of congestion (transit and road), air quality, affordability, and more. These are front and center issues today, and much more so when we look out to 2040.
- We wish to work closely with MTC to develop and implement a new revenue advocacy strategy that seeks to secure funding for SOGR and strategic and effective capacity increasing investments in the largest population centers. We applaud MTC's recent advocacy efforts directed toward the Extraordinary Legislative Session where MTC, along with our representatives and other stakeholders, impressed upon the Legislature the need to address transit SOGR – which is not addressed by Cap and Trade – in potential proposals.
- We are willing partners in any efforts to establish new regional revenue sources (e.g. regional gas tax, additional bridge toll), and encourage MTC to undertake a transparent and inclusive process that engages the big cities, counties, and other jurisdictions in the region
- We strongly support the regional agencies' efforts to identify funding and other tools and programs for the construction of affordable housing as well as for the preservation of existing affordable housing (e.g. legislative solutions at the state level, potential new regional funding source).

Thank you for your consideration, and for your continued leadership for the Bay Area.

Sincerely,



Edwin M. Lee
Mayor, City and County of San Francisco



Sam T. Liccardo
Mayor, City of San José



Libby Schaaf
Mayor, City of Oakland

cc: The Honorable Members, Executive Board, Association of Bay Area Governments
The Honorable Members, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Tilly Chang, Executive Director, San Francisco County Transportation Authority
Nuria Fernandez, General Manager, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
Arthur Dao, Executive Director, Alameda County Transportation Commission