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Watchdog Committee's 9th Annual Report Highlights Transportation Sales Tax Activities

Alameda County – California. On August 25, 2011, the Citizens Watchdog Committee (CWC) of the Alameda County Transportation Commission (Alameda CTC) released its Ninth Annual Report to the Public. The report describes the committee's activities, and provides an update on the delivery of projects and programs funded by Measure B, Alameda County's voter-approved half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements.

In July 2010, the Alameda CTC, a joint powers authority, was created as a result of the merger of the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency (ACCMA) and the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority (ACTIA). Alameda CTC is responsible for allocating Measure B transportation tax dollars for a wide range of transportation programs and projects that expand access and improve mobility.

The CWC is responsible for providing independent oversight of Alameda County's half-cent sales tax expenditures. The annual report prepared by the CWC covers fiscal year reporting as well as recent activities undertaken by the committee. In fiscal year 2009-2010, Alameda CTC received \$105.1 million in revenue, and allocated \$123.7 million, including some reserves, to local jurisdictions, capital projects and administration as follows:

- \$63.2 million for public transit, including operations, capital investments and special transportation for seniors and disabled.
- \$26.1 million for cities and the County to spend on local transportation including local streets and roads, and bike and pedestrian projects.
- \$28.1 million for highway and street projects.
- \$6.3 million for administration.

As of March 31, 2011, a Measure B fund balance of \$112.3 million remains, all of which is currently committed to capital projects and program expenditures. The report also notes that audited income and expenditures were in compliance with specific caps, and the auditors did not identify any accounting concerns.

The Citizens Watchdog Committee was created in 2002, after reauthorization of the local sales tax measure in 2000, to review agency financial audits and reports as well as the deadlines for program and project completion. Part of the committee's responsibility is to issue an annual report to voters and taxpayers to report on the sales tax fund expenditures. Citizens Watchdog Committee Chair James Paxson notes, "The CWC continues to actively monitor project and program delivery and expenditures. We are working to increase transparency and improve reporting to the public on fund expenditures and balances by changing report forms and actively engaging with fund recipients. We believe these efforts will help expand on our promise of clearly accounting for the use of Measure B funds."

Since its inception, the CWC has affected change in a number of ways. The CWC has helped ensure that language in the audit is accessible to the public, has requested and reviewed separate independent audits on Measure B administrative caps, has requested that all Measure B audits and reports be placed on Alameda CTC's website for full accessibility by the public and has requested public and stakeholder involvement in how funds are expended.

The CWC has kept watch on all projects, programs, and administrative costs and the progress in meeting Local Business Contract Equity Program goals. Over the past year, the CWC focused special attention on the following:

- Telegraph Avenue Corridor Bus Rapid Transit to ensure compliance with environmental clearance requirements of the Expenditure Plan.
- Dumbarton Rail Corridor to ensure compliance with environmental clearance requirements of the Expenditure Plan.
- Congestion Relief Emergency Fund to include two new projects for congestion relief on Interstate 880 at 29th and 23rd Avenues and for the I-80 Integrated Corridor Management projects.
- Administrative costs to ensure compliance with cost ceilings mandated by the Measure B Expenditure Plan.
- Contracting processes that provide opportunities for local businesses in Alameda County to work on projects funded by the sales tax measure.

The CWC Annual Report is available to the public on the Alameda CTC website, <http://www.alamedactc.org>. Copies of the report, the Expenditure Plan, and audits for each agency receiving Measure B funds are available on the website and at Alameda CTC offices at 1333 Broadway, Suites 220 and 300, Oakland, CA 94612, telephone 510.208.7400. In addition, each jurisdiction's website includes information on Measure B-funded program expenditures.

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[Alameda CTC](http://www.alamedactc.org) administers Measure B, the half-cent transportation sales tax in Alameda County, which was approved by 81.5 percent of the voters. Its mission is to plan, fund and deliver transportation programs and projects that expand access and improve mobility to foster a vibrant and livable Alameda County. For more information visit: <http://www.alamedactc.org>.