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February 27 2018

Mayor Carol Dutra–Vernaci and Council Members
City of Union City
City Hall
34009 Alvarado–Niles Road
Union City, CA 94587

Via City Clerk Anna Brown annab@unioncity.org

Re: East–West Connector Project

Dear Mayor Dutra–Vernaci and Council Members:

The agenda for tonight’s Council meeting has an item about the proposed East–West Cross Connector Project, item 7.c. The Sierra Club hereby submits several comments and questions about the item for your consideration.

It is not clear why the City is interested in building this project. Appendix Q of the [Final Environmental Impact Report](#) (from 2009) provides comparisons of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), vehicle hours of delay (VHD) and average speed for the year 2035 between “no project” and the proposed project.

	2035 No Project	2035 Project	Difference
VMT	4,617,629	4,621,561	+3,932
VHD	38,583	34,667	-3,916
Average Speed	33 mph	34 mph	+1 mph

The figures are from Appendix E (Measures of Effectiveness for Environmental Analysis) of Appendix Q.

The State, with the passage of SB 743 in 2013, is shifting from considering travel delay as a transportation impact metric [to focusing analysis on VMT reduction](#). The East–West Cross Connector Project may go against this important policy shift. Has the Council considered this policy change?

Further, last year the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Government adopted their [Sustainable Communities Strategy](#) (SCS) as part of the \$303 billion [Plan Bay Area 2040](#); has the City considered whether the project is consistent with the SCS?

The staff report that has been provided to you by the Public Works Director as a part of Tuesday's agenda raises issues pertaining to the voter approved [Measure BB](#). Several actions are required to change the use of voter-approved funds, per the Implementing Guidelines, which begin on page 37.

Please consider Guideline 4—

Amendments Require 2/3 Support: To modify and amend this Plan, an amendment must be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the Alameda CTC Commissioners. All jurisdictions within the county will be given a minimum of 45 days to comment on any proposed Plan amendment.

Has the Alameda County Transportation Commission begun the 45 day comment period that is required to amend the expenditure plan? If so, has a vote been scheduled?

Guideline 22 (page 39) is also quite important—

Fund Allocations: Should a planned project become undeliverable, infeasible or unfundable due to circumstances unforeseen at the time this Plan was created, or should a project not require all funds programmed for that project or have excess funding, funding for that project will be reallocated to another project or program of the same type, such as Transit, Streets, Highways, Community Development Investments, or Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety, at the discretion of Alameda CTC.

The East-West Cross Connector is within the "Local Streets Maintenance and Safety" category. However, funds from other categories are shown in the staff memo as being transferred for use in constructing the East-West Cross Connector. For instance, Dumbarton Corridor Funds, \$40 million, are listed as being transferred to the project. The Dumbarton Corridor Area Transportation Improvements (and Union City Intermodal Station) are within the "Major Transit Corridor and Commuter Rail Improvements" category. Other projects that are shown in the staff memo as providing money for the project and which are not in the Local Streets Maintenance and Safety category include "Bicycle and Pedestrian" and "Local Streets."

Is the Council aware of the category restrictions on Measure BB fund exchanges? We understand that previous fund swaps have taken place in Alameda County with transportation projects, but they were with different voter measures having different rules.

The project's financial requirements have risen dramatically since it was proposed. The initial cost estimate, according to the staff memo, was \$88 million. It now stands at \$319 million. Is the Council confident about the current cost estimate? While not strictly environmental questions, do Council members think the changes with VMT, VHD and Average Speed over No Build are worth the money? How does the Council plan to address the relationship of the Cross Connector item with the one immediately above it on the

agenda (7.b)—“Adopt a Resolution of the City Council of Union City Declaring a Fiscal Emergency in the City of Union City?”

If you any questions about this letter, please contact Matt Williams, chair of our Chapter’s Transportation and Compact Growth Committee. He may be reached at mwillia@mac.com.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Igor Tregub". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Igor Tregub
Chair, San Francisco Bay Chapter Executive Committee

cc: California Department of Transportation, District 4
Alameda County Transportation Commission
San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District
Alameda–Contra Costa Transit District
Loma Prieta Chapter
Southern Alameda County Group