



San Francisco Bay Chapter

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1 February 2016

Chair Julie Pierce and Commissioners
Contra Costa Transportation Authority
Suite 100
2999 Oak Road
Walnut Creek CA 94597

Via D. Rosenbohm danice@ccta.net

Re: Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee (EPAC)

Dear Chair Pierce and Commissioners:

The Sierra Club has been a participating member of the EPAC to date. This letter is to notify the Authority that the Sierra Club as an organization is resigning from the EPAC. For any future publications of drafts and the final version of the sales tax expenditure plan (TEP), please do not cite the Sierra Club, Ms Piras or me.

Developing a TEP without a current Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) and its accompanying Environmental Impact Report (EIR) means the TEP could end up being unhelpful and unsuccessful at identifying and addressing the County's climate change and mobility challenges.

Without a 2014-2015-2016 CTP, the Authority is, we understand, placing reliance upon the 2009 CTP. As noted in the Sierra Club's letter to the Authority of 25 September 2015:

The Authority's current long range plan provides information showing that by 2030 vehicle miles traveled (VMT) will increase by 50% (from 2007) and that the county's population will increase by 22% (from 2008). This means that VMT per capita will increase by approximately 22%. The 2009 CTP states—

Vehicle miles traveled are closely correlated with increased levels of GHGs...Reducing vehicle miles traveled will require getting people out of their cars and onto buses, trains or bicycles. Actions will likely involve discouraging driving and making walking, bicycling and transit more attractive.

As Sierra Club representatives, Ms Piras and I have often been frustrated at EPAC meetings by the downplaying of important issues such as reducing VMT and greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs).

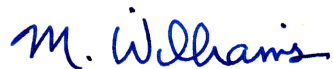
Also of concern is that the four Regional Transportation Planning Committee boards still have not been briefed on Plan Bay Area and the reasons for and purposes of its Sustainable Communities Strategy. The comment letter submitted by the California Department of Transportation (3 November 2014) on the draft CTP and its draft EIR remains worthy of consideration today in terms of changes to VMT and additional costs.

In Volume 1 on page 1-28, (the draft CTP) states “Where feasible and beneficial, improve the throughput capacity of roadways while recognizing that these improvements will not, in the long run, eliminate congestion.” It should be noted that capacity increasing projects often move the bottleneck / congestion downstream, lead to induced travel, and also contribute to increased operation and maintenance costs. This is especially important when proposing capacity increasing projects as a way to achieve RTPC action plans and MTSO goals for freeways and arterials. Please link capacity-increasing projects to system management strategies that would preserve and improve operations.

The Sierra Club can be of assistance to the Authority when it is ready to pivot in a “transformative” manner towards supporting the Sustainable Communities Strategy, and to “getting people out of their cars and onto buses, trains or bicycles...discouraging driving and making walking, bicycling and transit more attractive.”

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact me at mwillia@mac.com. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Matt Williams
Chair, San Francisco Bay Chapter Transportation and Compact Growth Committee

cc: Chair, Chapter Executive Committee