



Writer's Direct Telephone:
408/321-7565
Fax: 408/321-7547

December 28, 2015

Michael J. Ferreira
Executive Committee Member & Conservation Chair
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter
3921 East Bayshore Road, Suite 204
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Gladwyn d'Souza
Sustainable Land Use Committee, Co-Chair
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter
3921 East Bayshore Road, Suite 204
Palo Alto, CA 94303

RE: Update of Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP 2016)

Dear Mr. Ferreira and Ms. d'Souza:


This letter responds to the Sierra Club's request for information regarding the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2016 update to VTP 2040, Santa Clara County's countywide transportation plan. VTA's plan document is not a regional transportation plan that requires the preparation of an EIR. It is a countywide transportation plan. The preparation of countywide transportation plans is not mandatory under California law. Moreover, agency action that establishes a source of funding for future projects but that does not commit the agency to undertake a specific project is not an approval that is subject to CEQA. The 2016 plan will not commit VTA to building any of these future projects, as a whole or as to any particular features. Therefore, it does not preclude alternatives or mitigation measures that CEQA would otherwise require to be considered, including the alternative of not going forward with the project. As with past countywide transportation plans, the plan will merely be an aspirational document, discussing VTA's vision of transportation management, potential funding sources for the implementation of various projects and programs, and a list of projects. Notably, any necessary environmental review required by CEQA will be completed before a specific project is commenced.

In this region, which includes the nine Bay Area counties, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) prepares the regional transportation plan. MTC's Plan Bay Area is the successor to MTC's Transportation 2035, the long-range regional transportation plan

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that was adopted by MTC in 2009. Plan Bay Area includes the region's Sustainable Communities Strategies designed to meet the goals of SB 375 in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. VTA has established an extensive public input process for the development of the countywide transportation plan, which is coordinated with MTC in MTC's development of the regional transportation plan. Information as to how and when the public can participate is included in VTA's website. VTA anticipates that the updates to Plan Bay Area by MTC will continue to assess greenhouse gas emissions, as well as provide additional opportunities for public participation and comments.

Sincerely,



Evelynn N. Tran
Assistant General Counsel