



OUR REGION'S FUTURE DEMANDS ADOPTION OF A TRANSPARENT, SUSTAINABLE, AND ACCOUNTABLE TRANSPORTATION EXPENDITURE PLAN

What is the action before the Sacramento Transportation Authority (STA)?

STA is considering placing a measure on the November 2020 ballot to double the existing local half-cent transportation sales tax (Measure A) to a full cent to raise an additional \$125 million/year over 30 years for transportation projects and air quality improvement programs in Sacramento County. In the next few months, STA will consider adopting an expenditure plan establishing how the funds raised by the potential sales tax would be allocated.

Does the coalition of environmental, business, labor, and community groups holding today's press conference generally support placing a new sales tax measure for transportation on the November 2020 ballot?

Yes, both SMART and the SacMoves Coalition believe that there is an urgent need to address Sacramento County's chronically underfunded road and transit system, which faces a \$12 billion backlog of deferred road and transit maintenance, safety and congestion relief projects. However, the County must also meet the needs and demands of residents for more transportation choices as well as tough air quality mandates to protect the region from our number one pollution source – vehicles. Such a plan would be worth supporting.

Why is the coalition asking for changes to the approach STA is taking to the measure?

If the STA Board moves too quickly, it risks adopting a business-as-usual expenditure plan, which is a recipe for economic stagnation and environmental harm for future generations. Because this plan could shape our communities for generations, our coalition is urging STA to adopt a more thoughtful, forward-looking plan.

To compete for jobs and improve our quality of life, Sacramento needs to modernize its transportation system and shift people towards active and transit modes that better serve safe, walkable neighborhoods and business districts. We need an approach that emphasizes efficiency, sustainability, and accountability, while reducing air pollution, carbon emissions, traffic fatalities, and congestion.

Why is the coalition concerned that a business-as-usual plan will fail to meet our region's needs?

Because it fails to adapt to the accelerating effects of climate change and changing demographics. For example, the Mayor's Climate Change Commission recommends that by 2045, 40% of all trips in the City should be by active transportation, 50% by transit, and the remaining 10% in electric vehicles. Similarly, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is poised to adopt an update to a federally required regional transportation plan, which would require spending 50% of the region's transportation dollars on fix-it-first road projects and 50% on transit.

Yet, the last STA measure proposed to voters in 2016 directed only 30% of future funds to mass transit and senior and disabled transportation expenditures, and the remainder to new roads, highways, road repairs and complete streets projects. The plan was developed behind closed doors with insufficient community input and failed at the ballot. In contrast to the 2016 measure, the region now needs an expenditure plan that anticipates the projects and programs needed to achieve transportation mode shift targets over time and allocates funding accordingly.

What is the coalition asking STA to do?

1. Incorporate thoughtful and appropriate goals and investment strategies for the tax measure and accompanying expenditure plan.

The plan should invest in existing communities by prioritizing funding that fixes existing road and transit conditions first, maximizing previous investments along existing commercial and rail corridors. The plan should invest in active transportation by creating safer, more connected bicycle and pedestrian networks and prioritizing funding for complete streets with more sidewalks and bike paths. The plan should invest in local and regional transit to reduce travel times, frequency, and coverage and improve access. The plan should invest in health and safety by eliminating roadway fatalities and creating safer streets, reducing air quality emissions, and increasing access to physical activity. Finally, the plan should invest in electric vehicle technology.

2. Consider “growing the pie.”

A successful STA measure could extend the sunset period beyond 30 years and/or align the termination date of the existing Measure A and the new measure.

3. Ensure effective leverage of state and federal transportation grant programs.

Many state and federal grants and loans are dependent on the availability of local matching funds. Sacramento needs to be competitive in obtaining such grants.

4. Allow flexibility to address changing needs.

As an example, the expenditure plan could include a 10-year review of the funding to adapt to changing needs.

5. Consider establishing funding for specific objectives.

Such categories of objectives may include senior and disabled services, youth services, or innovative services such as neighborhood-serving micro-transit or bus rapid transit.

6. Ensure attainment of targets for reduction in vehicle miles traveled and carbon emissions.

Design the measure to bolster the region’s ability to meet regional or project-specific state law requirements such as SB 375 and SB 743 for reductions in vehicle miles traveled and in carbon emissions.

For further information, please contact Glenda Marsh from SMART at marshmellow8562@yahoo.com or 916-476-9538; or Jennifer Finton from the SacMoves Coalition at jfinton@sacbreathe.org or 916-444-5900 #215.