



Comparison of the TransForm Regional Coalition Platform and MTC's Final 2009 RTP Investment Package

In 2007 over 100 of TransForm's member representatives and individual advocates collaborated to develop TransForm's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) platform. Since then, coalition members have advocated for the platform through testimony, analysis, reports and promotion in the media. This is a comparison of asks outlined in TransForm's platform and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC's) RTP, which was adopted on April 22, 2009. In total the RTP had \$218 billion in total funding for 25 years, of which 15% was considered discretionary. For a full version of the platform, go to <http://www.transformca.org/campaign/rtp-2009>.

1. Establish a *Transportation Fund for Climate Protection* to reduce global warming pollution from the transportation sector through projects and programs (including those outlined in this platform) that help everyone decrease emissions.

TransForm envisioned the establishment of a new fee to fund this Transportation Fund for Climate Protection. Building on enthusiasm for this proposal, TransForm sponsored state legislation in 2008 (AB 2744) that would have allowed MTC to put a 10 cent per gallon impact fee on the ballot. Unfortunately the legislation did not pass, due to withering opposition from the petroleum and vehicle lobbies. TransForm will continue to work with partners to pursue a dedicated funding source for climate protection.

2. Spur innovative new projects and programs that reduce global warming pollution through a new *Climate Protection Grant Program*.

Success! MTC created a new multi-agency Transportation Climate Action Campaign with \$400 million over 5 years. The program includes:

- \$10 million per year for 5 years for Safe Routes to Transit.
- \$10 million per year for 5 years for a *new* regional Safe Routes to Schools program.
- A Climate Grants Program to fund major demonstration projects that test innovative strategies for promoting changes in travel behavior.
- A Transit Priority Program that would improve speed and reliability through on-street improvements and technology.
- An education program about transportation choices and global warming.

3. Fix it first: Make the region's existing public transit system as reliable and affordable as possible by prioritizing funds for operating and maintenance shortfalls.

As a result of declining sales tax revenue and the State's action to defund public transit operations, Bay Area transit agencies are facing a tremendous \$32 billion shortfall in combined operations and capital needs. MTC dedicated \$6.4 billion in discretionary funding towards this, much larger than in the past but still leaving a \$17.2 billion capital shortfall and an \$8 billion operations shortfall. Funding this shortfall will have to be a major focus in the coming years, but we can't leave it to the RTP, there just isn't the money. New funds will have to be raised to close the shortfall.

TransForm's platform called for looking at creative ways to supply transit operating funds, even though RTP generally directs capital money. No funds were directly used for operations, leaving

the \$8 billion operations shortfall. MTC will soon conduct a “Transit Sustainability Study,” which will look at how to increase efficiency of our existing transit systems. Done well, with input from riders and other stakeholders, this study could point to near term cost-savings and service enhancements for transit across the region.

4. Ensure low-income communities have access to mobility by closing identified gaps in bus routes and services and by funding high-priority projects in Community-Based Transportation Plans.

MTC dedicated \$400 million in discretionary funding towards a Lifeline Transportation Program. Added to existing federal and state commitments of \$280 million it creates a program of nearly \$700 million over 25 years. It can be used for a wide range of programs as outlined on page 65 of the RTP. With the shortfall in transit operating funds, it will be critical for MTC to prioritize allocating funds to this program in the near term.

5. Achieve faster, more reliable and cost-effective transit by fully funding Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along major corridors.

While MTC did not create a particular BRT funding program, the RTP does contain a broad range of BRT projects that were funded from County submissions:

Alameda County:

- Grand-MacArthur corridor in Oakland
- Telegraph Avenue/International Blvd/E.14th St. corridor

San Francisco:

- Van Ness Avenue
- Geary Blvd
- Geneva Ave/Harney Way corridor

Santa Clara County:

- El Camino Real from Diridon Station (SJ) to Palo Alto
- Downtown East Valley in Santa Clara Valley
- Sunnyvale to Cupertino
- Monterey Highway

Many of these projects may move forward by the next RTP update in 2013.

6. Support an integrated and expanded regional rail system by connecting Caltrain with a new Transbay Terminal and funding projects in the upcoming Regional Rail Plan that uphold the principles of this platform.

The Regional Rail Plan, once it was completed, was not seen by the coalition as a good basis for selecting projects. The 2009 RTP did not add discretionary funding to the Caltrain extension project (the project already had some committed funding)—a \$1.39 billion shortfall remains to complete the full project.

7. Aggressively promote vibrant, walkable neighborhoods near bus, rail, and ferry service throughout the region by establishing and funding a comprehensive land use program at MTC.

Big Success!

- MTC doubled the Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) program from \$27 million per year to \$60 million per year.
- There are discussions to make the Transportation for Livable Communities program more focused to support Priority Development Areas, provide technical assistance, and support land acquisition for affordable housing development around transit.

- MTC seems to be prioritizing a Regional Smart Parking program, which is a long-time coalition favorite!

Given the constrained funding environment, it will be critical for advocates to push MTC to allocate TLC funds in the first year of the plan.

8. Make walking and bicycling safe and convenient for all types of trips by:

- **Fully funding all projects in the Regional Bicycle Network**
- **Conducting a major revision of the 2001 Regional Bicycle Plan**
- **Creating and funding a Regional Pedestrian Plan**
- **Increasing funding for Safe Routes to Transit**
- **Creating a regional Safe Routes to School program**

Big Success! With fabulous advocacy from The Bay Area Bicycle Coalition and their member coalitions, the public health community as well as strong commitment from Steve Kinsey and other commissioners, MTC quintupled their commitment to the Regional Bike Network to \$1 Billion! This would complete the Network within the lifespan of the RTP (with the exception of the bridges).

MTC also took the TransForm Regional Coalition recommendation to fund a new Safe Routes to Schools program at \$10 million per year for 5 years. Additionally, MTC quintupled the amount of money currently going to the Safe Routes to Transit program. Both programs will now be funded at \$10 million per year for five years (as part of the climate change program).

9. Designate at least half of Local Streets and Roads Maintenance funds for where they are needed most: in the cities and counties planning for significant levels of new infill housing near existing or planned transit.

Local Streets and Roads money was not prioritized for Priority Development Areas (PDAs) or other areas of focused growth. The Commission agreed to consider this for new Local Streets and Road funding in the future.

10. Maximize the efficiency of our current highway system using road pricing that:

- **Reduces congestion**
- **Reduces global warming pollution**
- **Funds transportation choices, not more highway expansion**
- **Decreases the overall costs of transportation for low-income commuters**

The RTP outlines a proposal for a regional HOT network. However, it does not make a specific commitment to using a certain portion of the funds for public transportation in the corridor or to benefit low-income commuters. The network would reduce congestion. MTC is now sponsoring legislation (AB 744) that outlines how a regional HOT network would work. There is still time and room to influence the proposal and TransForm will focus on that over the coming months. However, even as this legislation that outlines how to invest HOT revenue, and other decisions about the HOT network is being developed, MTC's Planning Committee approved dedicating a \$2 billion, a full third of anticipated HOT revenue, to Santa Clara County. TransForm objects to this premature commitment of HOT revenue.

For more information on TransForm's RTP Platform and campaign visit www.TransFormCA.org/campaign.rtp-2009 or contact Carli Paine at 510-740-3150, carli@TransFormCA.org