

Contra Costa County Transportation Sales Tax Coalition Platform

July 30, 2019

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) is planning to place a new half-cent sales tax for transportation on the March 2020 ballot, which would raise about \$3 billion over 30 years. This is a critical opportunity to make Contra Costa County communities more affordable, safe, and healthy, and ensure that all residents, especially those with transportation barriers like seniors, youth, and people with disabilities, can more easily get where they need to go.

As a coalition of residents, commuters, and local and regional non-profits, we are calling for the CCTA to put forth a transformative transportation funding measure that not only addresses rising congestion but also advances public health, safety, social equity, and climate protection.

What we like in the Draft Transportation Expenditure Plan:

CCTA staff have developed a Draft Transportation Expenditure Plan (TEP) that lays out the investments and policies in the sales tax measure. We support the proposed 11% allocation for active transportation (walking and biking) and the Vision Zero, Complete Streets, and Transit-First policies for local and major roads categories. These policies will not require, but will encourage, projects funded by the measure to be designed with consideration and priority for people that walk, bike, and use public transportation.

We also support the Draft TEP's commitment to transportation affordability such as youth and senior transit pass programs, as well as provisions to encourage cities to produce sufficient housing for people of all incomes in order to obtain certain sales tax funds.

We also appreciate the language in the measure signaling a preference for funding projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As noted below, our coalition calls for a firmer commitment from the CCTA.

Finally, we support existing commitments in the plan to protect and strengthen the Urban Limit Line, and the 6% set aside from all infrastructure funds for a Regional Advanced Mitigation Fund to offset negative open space and sensitive wildlife impacts.

TEP Recommendations: We strongly urge the CCTA to adopt the following recommendations to maximize the benefits of the measure:

Commit to a truly outcomes-oriented approach that includes measurable performance targets for all principles and criteria in the measure to ensure the greatest public benefits for every dollar spent.¹ The TEP must help meet and exceed county, regional, and state transportation policy mandates and goals, including those established by MTC's Plan Bay Area 2040². Plan Bay Area calls for several key social and environmental outcomes such as: Reduce

¹ "An outcomes-focused measure fares better than a traditional project/program oriented format... [and] is also more resistant to opposition messaging." EMC research Contra Costa County Voter Survey Conducted for the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, presented to CCTA Board - May 15, 2019

² <https://www.planbayarea.org/2040-plan/plan-details/goals-and-targets>

per-capita CO2 emissions from cars and light-duty trucks by 15%; Reduce adverse health impacts associated with air quality, road safety, and physical inactivity by 10%; Decrease the share of lower-income residents' household income consumed by transportation and housing by 10%; Increase by 20% the share of jobs accessible within 30 minutes by auto or within 45 minutes by transit in congested conditions; Increase non-auto mode share by 10%.

We suggest that a meaningful public process be developed in order to develop and approve performance criteria to guide the measure's spending. Responsibility to develop the performance criteria for evaluating and selecting projects should be given to the Public Oversight Committee that will be established with the passage of this measure, with input from the Regional Transportation Planning Committees, and final approval by the CCTA Board.

Significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and commit to no new GHG and VMT-inducing projects/infrastructure.³ Projects and programs in the measure must reduce per capita GHG emissions from transportation by 19% by 2035 based on 2005 baseline according to state mandates and commit to reporting results from projects and programs funded by the measure annually.⁴

Ensure adequate funding to sustain and improve local transit operations over the life of the measure and add sufficient funding necessary to run frequent transit on the transit capital improvements proposed in the plan. We must be able to inform the public that this Plan will significantly increase the frequency and span of transit services in Contra Costa County both for local and regional transit services. Furthermore, the CCTA should disclose whether the TEP meets MTC's transit performance targets for Priority Development Areas (PDA's) in Contra Costa County to ensure that areas that are slated for significant employment and housing growth receive adequate transit services to grow without gridlock.

Apply the proposed Complete Streets, Vision Zero, and Transit-First Policies to all roadway categories, including highways. The CCTA should hold itself to a higher standard for the highways it manages, not just local jurisdictions responsible for local and major roads, so that people that walk, bike, and take transit are more likely to benefit from all roadway spending.

³ 2018 Progress Report: California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2018-11/Final2018Report_SB150_112618_02_Report.pdf

A key finding of this report is that California's greenhouse gas emissions under SB 375 and VMT per capita for passenger travel are actually heading in the wrong direction, even though every region has prepared an SCS outlining an expected growth pattern and set of investments that will allow it to meet its greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. This suggests that the original SCS plans are not being implemented as envisioned or are not yielding the expected results. Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) growth will not be enough to reduce emissions and meet targets. Furthermore, reducing VMT brings health co-benefits, and reducing VMT is crucial to keep congestion from worsening and placing pressure on the State's roadway infrastructure as population grows.

⁴ In 2018, CARB adopted more aggressive SB 375 targets as one measure to support progress toward the 2017 Scoping Plan goals, which aim to get SCSs that plan to achieve, in aggregate, a 19 percent reduction in statewide per capita GHG emissions reductions relative to 2005 by 2035 from passenger vehicles. However, additional state and local actions are needed to achieve the transportation system reductions necessary to meet our climate goals, which is approximately 25 percent reduction in statewide per capita GHG emissions by 2035 relative to 2005.

<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/carb-2017-scoping-plan-identified-vmt-reductions-and-relationship-state-climate>

Prioritize social equity and provide better mobility options for all, especially those with the greatest transportation barriers, including youth, seniors, people of lower incomes, and people with disabilities. Given growing inequality, barriers to accessing employment and other necessities, and the fact that sales tax measures place a greater burden on the poor, the TEP must have a strong emphasis on advancing social equity. We call on the CCTA to:

- **Help rectify existing social, environmental, and health inequities by ensuring that Disadvantaged Communities (DAC's) as designated by CalEnviroScreen get more than their fair share of sales tax dollars.**⁵ The CCTA can do this by quantifying the percentage of the population within each subregion of the county that lives within a Disadvantaged Community and require that a minimum of 20% of funding for projects or programs (that benefit public health, safety, quality of life, and access to opportunity) be allocated to these communities above and beyond the percentage of the population they represent within each subregion.
- **Support community stabilization efforts** in cases where projects and new investments lead to increased displacement pressures, including: setting aside funding for tenant counseling and legal services that promote community stabilization; adopting a “no net loss” provision to ensure that investments maintain the number of affordable units and low-income households; and providing additional points within project scoring criteria for jurisdictions that have policies from a menu of established anti-displacement and affordable housing policies. MTC's One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) Program requires all jurisdictions that receive funding have a locally appropriate set of anti-displacement and affordable housing policies in place, and prioritize funding to those jurisdictions that have particularly strong policies.⁶ We recommend that a jurisdiction must have adopted and implemented a minimum number of key anti-displacement and affordable housing policies to receive certain sales tax funds, and that a bonus be given to jurisdictions that exceed this minimum.⁷
- **Set aside funding to support local jurisdictions in getting more affordable homes built near transit,** and providing incentives structured similar to those in MTC's Housing Incentive Program.⁸
- **Support local contracting and good jobs** including requiring prevailing wages, apprenticeship programs for Contra Costa County residents, and veteran hiring policy for both construction and operating/programmatic jobs.

Commit to transparent public oversight and authentic community engagement moving forward. While we sympathize with CCTA staff in having to develop this sales tax measure in a very constrained period of time, we are concerned about the extent to which community input will be incorporated into the plan, in particular from disadvantaged and Environmental Justice communities. To remedy this, the TEP needs to require a clear public engagement plan be developed to gather input on programming and project designs as future TEP monies are

⁵ <https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-30>

⁶ <http://housing.abag.ca.gov/policysearch>

⁷ <https://www.urbandisplacement.org/policy-tools/bay-area#stabilizat>

⁸ Survey respondents ranked affordable housing and traffic/congestion as the two most important problems facing Contra Costa County today (tied at 17%). Other affordability-related issues that ranked as the most important to voters included homelessness (11%) and cost of living (3%).

allocated. Such public engagement must involve meaningful community involvement, particularly of disadvantaged communities and low-income and communities of color to ensure those in the community that are the most marginalized and hardest to reach are represented.

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