

June 6, 2018

Honorable Members of the SamTrans Board and Staff,

We're writing in reference to the SamTrans Board agenda for Wednesday, June 6, Item 5B: Get Us Moving (GUM) Draft Investment Plan. The Transportation Equity Allied Movement (TEAMC) has been involved with the process to provide input into the development of the investment plan through the GUM Stakeholder Advisory Committee.<sup>1</sup> We thank staff and the Board for establishing this transparent multistakeholder process and feel that staff's Draft Investment Plan is stronger as a result, in many ways reflecting the diversity of interests at the table.

Several weeks ago, TEAMC released our initial recommendations in order to provide input into the GUM process. We are grateful that our recommendations were taken into consideration and that some of our latest input at the last GUM stakeholder meeting is reflected in staff's proposal. As the Board and staff make additional modifications to the Investment Plan, we seek several key refinements related to the Core Principles and Investment Categories and Allocations in order to maximize benefits for our communities, commutes, and climate.

### **Core Principles - On the Right Track**

TEAMC supports many of the core principles in the Draft Investment Plan, including:

- Relieve traffic congestion countywide, and facilitate the reduction of vehicle miles travelled, travel times and greenhouse gas emissions
- Invest in a financially sustainable public transportation system that increases ridership, provides quality transit options for everyone, and embraces innovation to create more transportation choices and improved travel experience
- Prioritize environmentally-sustainable transportation solutions, and incentivize transit, bicycle, pedestrian, carpooling and other shared-ride options over driving alone
- Enhance safety and public health, and incorporate the inclusion and implementation of policies that encourage safe accommodation of all people using the roads, regardless of mode of travel
- Maximize traffic reduction potential associated with the creation of new housing opportunities in high-quality transit corridors
- Invest in repair and maintenance of existing and future infrastructure

These principles are holistic, comprehensive, and visionary. We expect the principles will help guide spending in the investment categories after the measure is approved by voters in November. TEAMC also recommends incorporating the following language in the core principles of the Draft Investment Plan to create even broader benefits to the community:

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<sup>1</sup> The Transportation Equity Allied Movement Coalition (TEAMC) is a coalition of 28 diverse organizations that advances community-supported transportation solutions that promote greater access to opportunity, social equity, public health and safety, and environmental protection. TEAMC engages and empowers those historically underrepresented communities to advocate for a public transportation system that better serves all of our needs.

- Prioritize the needs of those with the greatest transportation needs and barriers, including youth, seniors, people with disabilities, and people of lower incomes.
- Reduce the cost of living for residents, with an emphasis on decreasing the portion of low income residents' budgets on transportation and housing related expenditures.
- Provide greater access to economic opportunity and broaden the economic benefits of investments funded by the measure, including emphasizing the creation of quality jobs.
- Minimize the displacement of existing residents and transit riders.
- Incorporate climate resilience and green infrastructure planning into projects.

### **Policy Overlays - Opportunity to Maximize Benefits**

**TEAMC is pleased that the Draft Investment Plan includes a policy requiring all projects funded by the measure to plan for Complete Streets.** To ensure maximum benefits of the measure and galvanize more community support, we strongly recommend specifically spelling out the following policy requirements in the ballot measure, which build off the measure's core principles:

- **Require VMT and GHG reduction:** All projects funded by the measure must demonstrate a reduction in Vehicle Miles of Travel and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.
- **Ensure minimum TDM allocation:** At least 5% of the measure's funding from the roadway categories must be devoted to transportation demand management strategies focused on reducing demand for solo driving. This is particularly important given that there is no separate TDM category with a percentage allocation proposed by staff.
- **Encourage traffic-light affordable homes near transit:** A minimum of 5% of sales tax revenue should be set aside to fund transportation projects and programs to support affordable transit-oriented development, connecting affordable homes to surrounding development with safe walking and biking routes to jobs, shopping, bus stops, and train stations. Funding for this program could come from multiple categories, but may be most applicable to the Local Safety, Pothole and Congestion Relief Improvements category.
- **Reward cities for jobs-housing fit:** Make jobs-housing fit a criterion in project selection to reward jurisdictions that are responsibly planning for their workforce.
- **Promote Vision Zero:** Jurisdictions that adopt Vision Zero policies should receive priority in local roadway and bicycle and pedestrian spending.
- **Support quality jobs:** Projects funded by the measure must create quality jobs.

### **Investment Categories and Allocations - More Spending for Sustainable and Equitable Transportation**

**We support staff's recommendation for 10% of the measure's funding to go towards Regional Transit Connections.** Furthermore, TEAMC agrees with the range of 10-15% proposed by staff for Local Safety, Pothole and Congestion Relief Improvements. **We strongly recommend that this category be closer to 15%. We also recommend that 5% of the local roadways category be allocated to transportation improvements that *support* the**

**creation of affordable low-traffic homes** near high quality transit stops and major employment centers.

While the proposed 5% allocation for Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements and 50% for County Public Transportation Systems are a significant improvement over prior San Mateo County ballot measures, **we recommend these categories be 10% and 55% respectively** given the historic lack of funding of these categories, as well as the wealth of benefits that these investments will create for mobility, equity, health, safety, and environmental protection.

We remain concerned over the potential for increased traffic and pollution in the future from Countywide Highway Congestion Improvements program. **TEAMC strongly recommends including language around the reduction of vehicle miles of travel (VMT) and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions within each of the roadway categories, particularly Highways.** VMT and GHG language must be included not just in the core principles, but also in the expenditure plan and ballot measure language within the roadway categories in order to ensure spending achieves maximum benefits and minimal impacts, helps meet state and regional climate goals, and increases support for the measure, including from the environmental community.

While these proposed modifications are certainly not insignificant, we feel strongly that they are in the interest of the communities and constituencies we represent. We look forward to continuing to help develop a visionary measure that will provide the greatest benefits to the greatest number of people while advancing social equity, improving quality of life, promoting environmental protection and climate action, and enhancing public health and safety.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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