

From: Katja Irvin
Sent: Sunday, January 05, 2020 2:26 PM
To: City Clerk <city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Gladwyn D'Souza ; James Eggers >; Barbara Kelsey
Subject: January 7, 2020 Agenda Item 6.1 Submit Letter to VTA

Dear Mayor Liccardo and Council Members,

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter supports efforts to reduce single-occupancy vehicle travel and increase alternatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly given the extraordinary climate emergency the planet is facing. The reallocation of transportation funding for public transportation is the kind of action local governments need to stand up and support to demonstrate a true commitment to solve this existential situation.

Please do not oppose action by the Valley Transportation Authority to do the right thing for our long-term future by reallocating these funds. Our grandchildren need us to stand up now to protect their future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katja Irvin and Gladwyn D'Souza
Conservation Committee Co-Chairs
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

Dave Poeschel

Mon 1/6/2020 8:11 AM

To:

- The Office of Mayor Sam Liccardo; District1; District2; District3; District4; District5; District 6; District7; District8;
- District9; District 10

Cc:

- Green, Scott; Agendadesk; City Clerk; Board.Secretary

☐

Dear Mayor Liccardo and Council Members,

Before advocating for Measure B outmoded automobile projects, **please review the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts:** <http://opr.ca.gov/ceqa/updates/sb-743/>. There you will find several brief but informative videos including this which explains the problem with LOS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tM3rdW0kbwA>, which had been the standard paradigm used when Measure B was developed.

The text of Measure B set expectations for allocating its funding. But in terms of the larger categories (roads vs. transit), it states funding levels as "**estimated**". Specific projects (all of which could not be adequately funded) are listed as "**candidate**".

Further, you have already altered expectations. When you declared a climate emergency, you put down in record for all the residents of the City of San Jose and the world the expectation that you will act with urgency to change the way our City prioritizes its infrastructure and behaviors which affect the production of GHGs. The definition of the word emergency is, "**a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action.**"

It would be **wasteful of public tax dollars** and harmful to future generations not to prioritize candidate projects and **reevaluate** estimated funding **based on our current best available science** both in terms of our tools (VMT vs. LOS) and understanding of climate.

Sincerely,
David W. Poeschel



MOTHERS OUT FRONT

MOBILIZING FOR A LIVABLE CLIMATE

Dear Mayor Liccardo and City Councilmembers Jones, Jimenez, Peralez, Diep, Carrasco, Davis, Esparza, Arenas, Foley, and Khamis,

We at Mothers Out Front South Bay urge you to encourage the VTA Board to declare a climate emergency and to reallocate Measure B funds from highway expansion projects towards expanding, upgrading, and electrifying the public bus transit system.

We thank you for your climate leadership, courage and vision in the past few years, including creating the Climate Smart San Jose plan, forming San Jose Clean Energy, passing a strong building electrification reach code and gas ban, and protecting Coyote Valley. These actions put our city on the path toward becoming truly sustainable and equitable for all our residents, and help ensure a livable future for our youth and future generations. Improving public transportation is an essential piece of that future, and must happen now.

As you know, we are in the midst of a Climate Emergency, which is even worse than scientists had predicted. Extreme weather is becoming more common, sea levels are rising, and wildfires are raging. We are fast approaching tipping points that will make climate destabilization irreversible. It's time to take bold, swift action to decrease our carbon footprint and to consider the climate impact of every policy decision we make.

Transportation is the number one contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in our area. San Jose's Climate Smart plan includes several bold initiatives, including "Reduce Per Capita Vehicle Miles Traveled." Your strategy to achieve this goal is **"developing integrated, accessible public and active transportation infrastructure,"** which **"reduces the dependency on the car to move within the city."** In your Resident Playbook on Mobility you tell residents to **"Use Public Transit,"** and that "major

upgrades in San José's transit system are making getting around more convenient and enjoyable."

When voters passed Measure B, we were promised "modifications to bus operations and routes to **improve ridership and efficiencies**" and maintaining and expanding "service to the most underserved and vulnerable populations." Furthermore, Measure B stipulated that "funds may be used to **increase core bus route service frequencies**, extending hours of operations to early morning, evenings and weekends to improve mobility, safe access and affordability to residents that rely on bus service for critical transportation mobility needs."

In fact, VTA has continued to cut bus routes, which has made commuting more difficult and inconvenient, if not impossible for many residents. A commute that would take 20 minutes by car can take **2 hours or more by public transit**, because buses run less frequently than before. This is especially true for our students and disadvantaged residents. People who are trying to be Climate Smart have tried switching to public transit, only to be left stranded or extremely late.

We understand that you are surely hearing from residents frustrated by the traffic jams and long car commutes. However, if you build and expand the highways, they will soon fill up and be gridlocked again. The true solution is to **make public transportation frequent, safer, and more convenient**. When more people can take the bus and/or train, the highways will become less congested. And more importantly, San Jose reduces VMT and greenhouse gas emissions, improving the chances for our climate to stabilize.

Finally, we urge you to encourage the VTA to develop a plan to rebuild the entire bus network with **zero-emission vehicles** and increase the fleet to 750 buses, as approved by voters, within the next five years. Zero-emissions vehicles may cost more up front, but they are much more cost effective in the long run, reducing operating and maintenance costs. Mothers Out Front has experience with converting to electric bus fleets and would be happy to support this transition.

Please encourage the VTA Board to follow your lead in declaring a climate emergency and to reallocate Measure B funds from highway expansion projects towards expanding, upgrading, and electrifying the public bus transit system.

Sincerely,
Mothers Out Front South Bay