Agenda Item 5

METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

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Memorandum

TO: Policy Advisory Council

DATE: November 5, 2014

FR: Rebecca Long

W.I. 1131

RE: 2015 Draft Advocacy Program

The Draft Advocacy Program for the 2015 state and federal legislative sessions is attached for your review and comment. The program includes efforts MTC will spearhead, as well as a number of items that MTC will actively engage in as bills are introduced.

The Council brainstormed and provided input on legislative priorities last month. Several topic areas, such as increased transportation finding, improvements to bicycle/pedestrian safety, and development of express lanes, are included in the draft program. In addition, as part of our consultation and advisory process, MTC hosted a meeting of Bay Area transit and CMA legislative staff in October. Members of MTC's Policy Advisory Council will have an opportunity to review the draft program next week at your November 12th meeting. Based on input and feedback, staff will prepare a final 2015 Advocacy Program for consideration by the Legislation Committee in December, before going to the full Commission for approval that month.

Attachment

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METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

2015 DRAFT ADVOCACY PROGRAM

STATE		
Issue	**Goal**	**Strategy**
1. Transportation Funding	A. Secure new sources of statewide transportation funding	Support efforts to establish new sources of statewide funding for transportation, including returning truck weight fees and off-highway vehicle gasoline tax revenue to the State Highway Account or implementing a new dedicated user fee, such as a vehicle license fee or some combination thereof. Advocate that *all transportation modes* should be eligible for new funding sources.
	B. Raise the sales tax cap for local option transportation sales taxes	Given the limited availability of new funding at the state and federal levels, cities and counties should be given the option of asking their voters to approve additional funding. Support the Sonoma County Transportation Authority and any other Bay Area county seeking to raise the cap on local sales taxes in order to accommodate additional transportation sales taxes. Ensure legislation to provide such an increase preserves a reasonable degree of local control over the development of the expenditure plan, subject to negotiation with the state on road maintenance issues.
	C. FY 2015-16 State Budget	Advocate for a FY 2015-16 State Budget that focuses transportation funds on the state's most important needs and giving top priority to maintenance, system operations and preservation of the existing transportation system. Seek opportunities to enhance the state's investment in public transportation, active transportation and highway operations/system management.
	D. Regional Measure 3	Sponsor legislation seeking authority for Bay Area voters to consider at a future election whether to raise tolls on state-owned bridges to fund transportation improvements in bridge corridors.
2. Senate Bill 375 Implementation	A. Increase state funding for affordable housing	Consistent with the goal in Plan Bay Area to secure additional funding for affordable housing, work with Bay Area and statewide affordable housing organizations to support efforts of Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins to establish an Affordable Housing Trust Fund through enactment of a new, dedicated statewide revenue source.

2. Senate Bill 375 Implementation (cont'd)	B. Improve bicycle and pedestrian safety	Support legislation to increase enforcement of traffic laws protecting pedestrians and bicyclists, and where appropriate, pursue new laws to improve safety.
	C. Ensure Cap & Trade Funds are invested in a manner that helps implement Plan Bay Area	Monitor and comment on program guidelines for the three new transportation-related Cap & Trade programs established by the Legislature in 2014 (SB 862) — the Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities Program (AHSC), the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (IRCP) and the Low Carbon Transit Operations (LCTO) Program— as well as the methodology for measuring greenhouse gas emission reductions to be developed by the California Air Resources Board. • Advocate for programs that give the Bay Area's priority projects a fair opportunity to compete for funds. • Monitor any legislation related to the designation of disadvantaged communities by the California Environmental Protection Agency. Pursue revisions to the methodology to account for cost-of-living and provide for a more accurate representation of the Bay Area's disadvantaged communities. • Support clean-up legislation to ensure bus operators are eligible recipients from the IRCP and to clarify that the requirement that 50 percent of LCTO funds be spent to benefit disadvantaged communities be applied at a statewide level, rather than to each operator.
4. Bridge Toll Evasion	Require temporary license plates at the point of sale on new and used cars	Reintroduce legislation, co-sponsored by the Golden Gate Bridge and Transportation District, to eliminate the $8 million loss in toll revenue each year as a result of vehicles without license plates using the region's toll bridges. Establish a mandatory temporary license plate program, similar to that which exists in numerous other states (including Arizona, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island and Texas). The program would require: • Installation of a temporary license plate at the point of sale on any new or used vehicle sold in California without a permanent plate. • Deployment of a system capable of providing toll authorities and law enforcement with information associated with the temporary plate and the vehicle's owner as soon as the temporary plate is installed.

5. Express Lanes	Support development of the Bay Area's Express Lane Network	Monitor express lane legislation to preserve the planned operational and management structure for the Regional Express Lane Network. Support legislation to reestablish the California Transportation Commission's ability to approve additional express lanes, similar to that which was proposed in SB 983 (Hernandez, 2014).

FEDERAL		
Issue	**Goal**	**Strategy**
1. Surface Transportation Authorization	A. Maintain basic structure of MAP 21, but provide financial stability supporting a multi-year surface transportation bill	Work with our partner Bay Area transportation agencies, Caltrans and other statewide transportation organizations to build on the structure and performance-based framework established by MAP-21 and identify a new, permanent funding source of funding for the Highway Trust Fund. Seek inclusion of a new program focused on metropolitan mobility, increased funding for maintaining our existing roadways and transit systems — and most importantly — a new, dedicated funding source that supports an authorization bill of at least five years.
	B. Support creation of a National Freight Program funded by a new, dedicated revenue stream	MTC will partner with other metropolitan planning organizations in California and nationwide to urge Congress to establish a National Freight Program in the next surface transportation act that includes the following key elements: • Requires DOT to establish a multimodal National Freight Network, expanding on the highway-focused "Primary Freight Network" required by MAP-21. • Establishes a National Freight Trust Fund backed by new user fees generating at least $2 billion per year. • Incorporates multiple revenue options such that the burden of funding the new program is distributed widely across all freight modes. • Sources of new revenue that ought to be considered include, but are not limited to: o An optional charge that would be authorized at the federal level, similar to the airport Passenger Facility Charge, that seaports could levy to raise funding for freight-related infrastructure improvements.

1. Surface Transportation Authorization (cont'd)	B. Support creation of a National Freight Program funded by a new, dedicated revenue stream (cont'd)	Funds would be returned directly to the port and could be eligible to be spent more broadly than a traditional container fee. o A mileage-based user fee for trucks o A freight waybill tax, sometimes called a "carriage" fee, added to the cost of transporting goods. o Raise and index existing user fees, such as the existing tire tax and heavy vehicle use tax.
2. Federal Appropriations	A. Maximize federal transportation appropriations for MAP-21 programs	Partner with local, regional and statewide transportation agencies as well as national associations to ensure that Congress appropriates funding in FY 2014-15 and 2015-16 consistent with amounts authorized in MAP-21.
	B. Advocate for Capital Investment Grant funding for Resolution 3434/ Plan Bay Area projects	Seek annual Capital Investment Grant (commonly referred to as "New Starts") appropriations to help implement the Regional Transit Expansion Program, Resolution 3434, consistent with the full funding grant agreements (FFGAs) approved for the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) Third Street Light Rail/Central Subway project and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's BART to Berryessa extension. Seek Small Starts funding for bus rapid transit (BRT) projects sponsored by Alameda Contra Costa Transit District (East Bay, Oakland-San Leandro) and SFMTA (VanNess Avenue). Seek New Starts commitments for the next generation transit consistent with Plan Bay Area.
3. Increase Local/Regional Transportation Funding	Seek passage of the Marketplace Fairness Act in order to increase sales tax revenue available for transportation	Track and support efforts to enact the Marketplace Fairness Act (MFA), which seeks to apply state and local sales tax rates to e-commerce transactions. The MFA has the prospect of increasing funding for Bay Area transportation agencies as a result of increased revenue from county-based transportation sales taxes, the Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds — a key source of transit operating funding — and AB 1107, the permanent ½ cent sales tax for BART (applicable in Alameda, San Francisco and Contra Costa counties).
4. Pre-Tax Transportation Fringe Benefits	Preserve mode-neutrality in pre-tax transportation benefits	Continue our long-standing advocacy for parity between the pre-tax transportation fringe benefit allowed for public transit and vanpooling and that which is allowed for parking. Furthermore, condition the pre-tax allowance for parking expenses on an employer's offering of a cash-out option to all employees who are offered the parking subsidy.