



SCTA Sonoma County Transportation Authority
Keeping Sonoma County Moving

Directors

January 3, 2007

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Jon Rubin, Chair
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607

RE: Bay Area Partnership's Action on Environmental Justice Analysis

Dear Chair Rubin:

Representatives from the Bay Area Partnership have participated in a joint Minority Citizens Advisory Committee (MCAC) / Partnership subcommittee to analyze data related to the potential presence and extent of inequities in transportation funding based on race and income. This subcommittee was created after the MCAC recommendation that the Commission adopt Environmental Justice principles. The Commission adopted two of the proposed four principles and directed staff to gather data related to inequities, provide analysis and report back to the Commission on the findings of the analysis.

The data collection and analysis effort was extensive, however all parties agree the data available is imperfect. Given the data that was available and reliable, the MCAC/Partnership subcommittee focused on the funding allocated to the major transit operators in the region and how funding is related to communities of concern.

After much questioning, discussion and consideration the subcommittee was split in its decision as to whether or not the data demonstrates inequity in transit funding to communities of concern. However, a majority of the members believed an inequity exists. The subcommittee agreed that the need to gather consistent data related to transit ridership, funding and communities of concern is an important step in ensuring that the potential for inequities can be kept in check.

This information was brought back to the full Partnership at its December 8, 2006, meeting and discussed at length. The Partnership concluded that the Environmental Justice analysis in general, and the analysis of funding distributions among transit operators in particular, was proving to be particularly divisive for the region and did not recommend any further

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specific action regarding Environmental Justice principles three and four. Instead, the Partnership recommended that the Commission focus explicitly on developing new sources of transit operating revenues for the region as a means of providing more service in communities of concern and addressing the intent of the Environmental Justice principles.

While the Partnership could not reach agreement about a recommendation on the presence or absence of inequities, the process of the Partnership and the MCAC working together was a valuable one and the issues surrounding Environmental Justice were brought to light for all members of the Partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne Smith".

Suzanne Smith
Chair, Bay Area Partnership

Cc: Carlos Valenzuela, Chair, MCAC