March 21, 2016

Contra Costa Transportation Authority
Board and Staff
2999 Oak Road, Suite 100
Walnut Creek, CA 94597

Re: **Need for 5% bike ped funding, $120 million, in new Measure J**

Dear Commissioners:

At your March 9 Board meeting, some comments were made suggesting that funding for bike improvements in a new Measure J can be accommodated through the Local Streets & Roads category rather than from a dedicated bike-ped funding category, and thus satisfy other desires for fewer funding categories and more flexibility. Ten years ago, Bike East Bay hoped this were true and indeed many Contra Costa cities were willing to add bike lanes where feasible in repaving projects. But times have significantly changed over the last ten years and more dedicated bike ped funding is needed in Contra Costa County. Please show support for 5% funding for bike-ped projects.

Contra Costa’s bike commute mode share is one-fourth that of Alameda County and one-seventh that of San Francisco County, as shown in this graph.

*Chart of Contra Costa bike mode share compared to Alameda and San Francisco Counties*

There is a reason Contra Costa’s bike mode share is so low and not trending upward--a lack of funding for bike projects.
In 2002, Alameda County dedicated 5% of Measure B money to bike ped projects and then in 2014 increased this funding to 11%. In 2004, San Francisco dedicated 10% to bike ped projects in their Prop K sales tax measure and then in 2014 passed a GO bond that included significant additional money for bike projects. As a result, Alameda County is set to spend over $32 million/year on bike ped projects, while San Francisco will spend $47 million/year. Yet in Contra Costa County, we spend less than $5 million/year, thanks to a paltry 1.5% of funds from the current Measure J. The results tell the story. Even our Countywide Transportation Plan predicts that Contra Costa’s bike mode share will remain at 0.5% in the year 2040, due to current funding levels.

### Comparison of dedicated funding amounts for bike ped projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Annual Funding for Bike Ped Projects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>$47 million/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alameda</td>
<td>$32 million/year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contra Costa</td>
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**Why Can't Local Streets & Roads Money Build Bikeways?**

As recently as 5 years ago, it was thought that striping a five inch wide white line for bicycling along the shoulder of a roadway and keeping roads in good condition was the way to get more people bicycling. We know now that this does not get us to our goals. Why?

Regular bike lanes are an improvement for residents already bicycling, but do not encourage many new people to bicycle. The reason for this is that a five-inch-wide white line on the road is not sufficient protection from traffic. Protected bike lanes separated from traffic are needed on streets with any significant amount of traffic, the types of streets with destinations residents go to every day.

Take a look at these photos and think about which bicycle facility you or your neighbor would be more comfortable bicycling on--the photos on the left or the photos on the right.
People bicycling want separation from vehicle lanes and physical protection from high-speed traffic, as you see in bikeways in the photos on the left. Where protected bike lanes have been built, they encouraged on average a 75% increase in bicycle traffic\(^1\), and converted 10% of users from other travel modes. This is important--people are leaving their car keys at home and trying bicycling for trips where protected bike lanes are built. 270 protected bike lane projects have been built around the country, but not one in Contra Costa County. Trails are important, but not everyone lives near a trail.

Protected bike lanes cost more money and include more design elements than the white paint of regular bike lanes. They include various forms of physical protection from traffic, such as parked cars, curbs, planter boxes, upright flex posts or a raised surface. At intersections, traffic signal timing is often adjusted and bike traffic signals installed for safe crossings. On busy streets with

\(^1\) Lessons from the Green Lanes: Evaluating Protected Bike Lanes in the U.S., Monsere, Clifton, Dill and McNeil, 2014 Portland State University
bus traffic, bus boarding islands are needed. All of this costs money. On average, protected bike
lanes can cost ten times what a regular unprotected bike lane costs and often much
more--$100,000/mile for bike lanes vs $1,000,000/mile and up for protected bike lanes.

Repaving Money More Precious Than Ever
With the loss of redevelopment and continuing drop in state gas tax revenues, cities have much
less money than they used to have for repaving streets. State gas tax revenues have dropped
30% to date and will drop 50% next year. As a result, there is tremendous pressure to spend
every dollar of repaving money to simply fix the streets as they exist, and not add improvements
such as new or wider sidewalks, protected bike lanes, bus stop improvements, or traffic signal
coordination--as cost-efficient as that would be to do. Local Streets & Roads money in a new
Measure J will be precious, as we have already heard from city managers.

Modern Bikeways Are Built, Not Striped
Ten years ago cities striped bike lanes. Today they are building bikeways. Alameda County has
built miles of separated and protected bike lanes and has many more in the works. As explained
above, modern bikeways on busy streets protect bicycle traffic from motor traffic and this
protection costs money and all of the local streets & roads money in a new Measure J could not
possibly provide.

The 2009 Contra Costa Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan identified 317 miles of unbuilt bikeways of
countywide significance throughout the county. These in addition to three times as many local
yet to be built bikeways in city plans. Protected bike lanes on these routes of countywide
significance would cost well over $300 million and a build out of an entire bike network $1 billion
by our estimates. Please express support for 5% of new Measure J money--$120 million, to
bicycling and pedestrian projects. Bike East Bay will work with our RTPC’s to make the math
work.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dave Campbell
Advocacy Director

Cc:  Ross Chittenden
     Brad Beck
     Bill Gray
     Matt Todd