

From: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2019 10:09 AM
To: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>
Subject: From VTA: Oct 24-25, 2019 Medial Clips

VTA Daily News Coverage for Thursday, October 24 and Friday, October 25, 2019

- 1. [Bay Area companies and community groups push for \\$16B transportation investment \(San Jose Spotlight\)](#)**
- 2. [Will \\$100 billion transportation mega-measure be put at risk by SF supervisors? \(San Francisco Chronicle\)](#)**

[Bay Area companies and community groups push for \\$16B transportation investment \(San Jose Spotlight\)](#)

A group of 32 Bay Area organizations, from private tech companies to community groups, on Wednesday urged local lawmakers to take big, new strides to invest in transportation throughout the region.

In [a letter](#), signed by Alphabet-owned Waymo, San Francisco-based ridesharing and scooter companies Lyft and Lime alongside a slew of Bay Area bicycle coalitions, asked lawmakers to prioritize [\\$16.32 billion in transportation initiatives](#) in the coming decades. The group also suggested area leaders consider a new region-wide transportation tax measure to get those priority improvements moving.

That ask comes amid chatter around the nine-county Bay Area about potential new funding initiatives for transportation in the coming years, said Emma Shlaes, policy director for the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition.

“We were just, in general, putting forward our thoughts for the next few decades so we don’t get left behind in the conversations that are going on at the regional level,” she said. “Sometimes the conversation is dominated by transit cars and highways.”

While the letter could be interpreted as an open call to Bay Area leaders making decisions about transit and transportation, the group also specifically sent the framework to agencies tasked with battling traffic congestion, including the VTA, and to the mayors of major cities throughout the region, Shlaes said.

Most of the investments the collective is pushing for [in a framework plan released Wednesday](#) include transit, bicycle and walking infrastructure improvements, like adding bikeways that stitch together the “last mile” between transit and homes or workplaces. The group is also pushing for \$5 billion to be set aside to complete the Bay Trail and other regional separated bicycle paths.

The framework also includes support for low-income communities, means-based transit discounts and a seamless regional system for transit riders, so only one transit pass would be required to rent a bicycle, hop on a bus or transfer to a train.

It also advocates for more “Open Streets” events across the Bay Area. Those one-day events shut down certain roadways to cars for the day in order to open that space up for pedestrians and vendors, similar to San Jose’s Viva Calle events.

If implemented, the investments would help push the region toward the group’s goal that a decade from now, 20 percent of trips in the Bay Area would be made by “active modes,” like walking and bicycling, according to the letter. That would be a significant shift for Silicon Valley, where most cities boast a bicycle commuter rate [at or below 2 percent](#).

For the entire Bay Area, a transportation change of that magnitude would equate to around 702 billion fewer miles traveled by car, reducing CO2 emissions by more than 300 million tons, according to the letter.

“Future generations will appreciate being able to easily and safely use active modes for their trips, as well as the resulting cleaner air and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions,” the letter states. “The Bay Area will join the ranks of other world-class regions around the globe.”

Below is a list of the organizations that signed the letter Wednesday.

- Albany Strollers & Rollers
- Bay Area Ridge Trail Council
- Bike Concord
- Bike East Bay
- Bike Fremont
- Bike Menlo Park
- Bike Walk Alameda
- Bikes Make Life Better
- California Bicycle Coalition
- Eisen|Letunic
- Friends of Alto Tunnel
- Friends of SMART
- Greenbelt Alliance
- Lime
- Lyft
- Marin County Bicycle Coalition
- Nancy Buffum Art
- Napa County Bicycle Coalition
- Office of Mayor Tom Butt (Richmond, CA)
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
- RideESSJ
- Safe Routes Partnership
- San Carlos Bikes
- San Francisco Bicycle Coalition
- Scoop Technologies, Inc.
- Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
- Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition
- SPUR
- Tony, President of Almaden Cycling Touring Club
- TRAC, Trails for Richmond Action Committee
- Waymo
- Winter Consulting Group

[Back to Top](#)

[Will \\$100 billion transportation mega-measure be put at risk by SF supervisors?](#) (San Francisco Chronicle)

Two San Francisco supervisors are urging the city to withhold support of a regional tax measure that would benefit what its backers say are desperately needed — but monumentally expensive — transportation projects like Caltrain’s extension to downtown San Francisco and a second Transbay Tube for BART.

Supervisors Shamann Walton and Aaron Peskin said at a public meeting Tuesday they won’t support the \$100 billion measure without a change to how Caltrain is governed. They want to separate Caltrain from the San Mateo County Transit District, which manages and operates the rail system. They say the two other counties served by Caltrain, San Francisco and Santa Clara, should have more control of its leadership and operations.

The request, made during a meeting Tuesday of the San Francisco County Transportation Authority board — whose members are also city supervisors — stunned supporters of the one-cent sales tax measure, called Faster Bay Area.

One Caltrain board director accused the two supervisors of trying to torpedo an ambitious, regional effort to solve traffic gridlock, build rail extensions and tackle important infrastructure projects. Among those projects is the long-delayed effort to extend the Caltrain from 4th and King Streets to the new Transbay Transit Center.

More on Transportation

“The idea that someone would hold a transformative measure like Faster Bay Area hostage to try to force a governance change... it puzzles me,” Caltrain Board Director Charles Stone, who represents San Mateo County, told The Chronicle.

Currently planned for the November 2020 ballot, the measure is locked into a tight timeline. It requires state legislation to grant taxing authority to a regional agency. That legislation has to pass both houses with a two-thirds vote by next May. It would then need approval by the regional Metropolitan Transportation Commission before the campaign can start drafting language in August.

It [aims to generate \\$100 billion for transportation over 40 years](#).

To accomplish all that, proponents of the measure need every city and county in the Bay Area to get on board. Faster Bay Area already has many hurdles to overcome. Not everyone likes the idea of a 1 percent sales tax that would have greater impact on low-income households. Some are wary that the measure’s chief proponents include business associations representing Silicon Valley and the Bay Area’s biggest companies, who are trying to fund new infrastructure to get their employees to work.

“I think big business should be paying more,” San Francisco Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer said at the meeting Tuesday. “Let’s put down... billions of dollars from their companies to help with this transportation infrastructure.”

Backers of Faster Bay Area are cognizant that sales taxes are regressive, so they hit low-income people the hardest. They’ve offered various remedies to compensate, including an income-based rebates and additional contributions to public transportation.

Walton, who serves on the Caltrain board, has not taken a position on the tax measure. But he’s used it to illustrate his frustration with the leadership structure of Caltrain.

“Right now Caltrain has a joint powers authority set up across three counties — San Francisco, Santa Clara and San Mateo — however SamTrans is in complete control,” Walton said in an interview Wednesday. He noted that the San Mateo agency picked Caltrain’s executive director and hires its staff, and that SamTrans and Caltrain have the same legal team, — a quirk he deemed “completely irresponsible.”

“Santa Clara and San Francisco don’t have to a say in operations,” Walton said. He is putting together a resolution requesting that any funding measure that provides resources to Caltrain “include language that Caltrain change its governance structure.”

Few details about the proposed changes have been provided.

Another Caltrain board director, David Pine of San Mateo County, acknowledged that the governance question is important. As [Caltrain moves forward with a new business plan](#) to triple its riders and electrify the trains by 2022, the board is also taking a closer look at how the rail system is organized and managed, Pine said. It will be a topic of discussion at a Nov. 21 workshop.

Still, Pine doesn’t think the issue should be linked to a regional ballot measure, particularly one so critical to the future of Bay Area transportation.

“It’s a complicated question,” he said. “And it’s not something we can resolve in advance of” Faster Bay Area.

Transportation consultant Stuart Cohen, an advocate for Faster Bay Area, expressed hope that the measure will draw more support, including from San Francisco, once people see all the potential improvements.

“Once all the tremendous benefits become clear — bolstering local and regional transit, integrating systems, supporting complete bicycle networks — it’s going to get a lot of support,” Cohen said.

From: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>

Sent: Thursday, October 31, 2019 5:04 PM

To: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>

Subject: VTA Information: Board of Directors November 7, 2019 Agenda Packet

VTA Board of Directors:

You may now access the VTA Board of Directors Agenda Packet for the **November 7, 2019**, Regular Meeting on our [agenda portal](#).

Thank you.

Office of the Board Secretary
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
3331 North First Street, Building B
San Jose, CA 95134-1927
Phone [408-321-5680](tel:408-321-5680)

