

TA

CORRESPONDENCE

as of 10-06-2023

From: [Robert Whitehair](#)
To: [Board \(@smcta.com\)](#)
Subject: Don't widen 101
Date: Thursday, October 5, 2023 3:56:31 PM

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Dear Honorable Board

I write on behalf of the San Mateo Climate Action Team, a group of mothers, grandfathers, students, teachers, lawyers, engineers, craftspeople and ordinary retirees. Our mission is to support local solutions to the climate crisis, ones that protect the health and economic vitality of the community, delivering equity for all.

Adding more cars to the roads, by widening 101 to add express lanes, is not good for the planet, even as the number of internal combustion engines is on a downward trajectory.

Widening US 101 north of Interstate 380 will have irreversible impacts on the adjacent community from increased noise, particulate matter spewing from tires, and increased stress.

- Highway widening does not reduce congestion. It simply induces more traffic and increases the number of vehicles on the road.
- Air pollution levels are higher in neighborhoods adjacent to highways, which are disproportionately low income. Widening 101 will increase childhood asthma in these communities, internal combustion engines, or not.
- More cars on the 101 means more cars driving through the diverse, low income communities adjacent to the highway.
- Making it easier for people to drive will hurt Caltrain and BART revenues at a precarious time, as they teeter on a financial cliff. Transit ridership remains low since the completion of the 101 widening in the southern part of SM County.

We are aware that programmatically these funds are earmarked for widening, but please ask that the money be reallocated to uses that are good for the planet. While the widening option has yet to be selected, SMCTA should amend the resolution, indicating that it will only consider funding the Managed Lanes project if the widening option is off the table.

We know that a full scale, all hands on deck response to the climate crisis will be successful. Adding more lanes and more cars is not part of that equation.

Sincerely

Robert Whitehair, co leader
San Mateo Climate Action Team