

**From:** [Mike Swire](#)  
**To:** [cacsecretary \[@smcta.com\]](mailto:cacsecretary [@smcta.com]); [Board \(@smcta.com\)](mailto:Board (@smcta.com))  
**Subject:** MTC Board rejects funding for highway widenings through future transportation revenue measures  
**Date:** Friday, January 26, 2024 11:19:34 AM

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Dear Members of the SMCTA Board and CAC,

Thank you for your service to the people of SM County. I wanted to forward you this article on transportation funding in the Bay Area.

This week, the [MTC Legislative Committee, headed by SMC Supervisor David Canepa, rejected staff's proposal to include highway widenings](#) in MTC's planned regional transportation revenue measure. Almost 50 members of the public attended and commented in opposition to the staff's widening proposal. These included SM County residents, environmental and transportation organizations, transit labor unions, housing groups, and others.

It is obvious that there is a lot of community passion around highway widenings and this merits further discussion by SMCTA.

Mike Swire  
CAC Member  
(speaking as an individual)

## [FREEWAY WIDENINGS](#)

# MTC Backs Off Highway Widening After Outpouring of Community Opposition

It was a clear signal that Bay Area voters want transformational investments in safe, reliable, and accessible transportation for all, not status quo proposals that reflect outdated thinking at odds with

our region's climate and equity values.

6:37 PM PST on January 25, 2024



Photo by [Caltrans](#) of their latest widening project, the 101 'express lanes'

By  
Zack Deutsch-Gross

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The evening before the January 24, 2024, hearing to finalize language for a regional transit funding measure, we got an unwelcome surprise. The

Metropolitan Transportation Commission's staff report on the measure, which aims to raise revenue to improve public transit and active transportation, added new language recommending funds be used to add freeway capacity as well.

Fortunately, [TransForm and our allies](#) were able to activate our lists, and with the help of our supporters and partners, turned out over 50 people to speak out in support of public transit, walking, and biking and in opposition to using any of the new funds for highway projects.

Here's how it unfolded.

## **Funding new freeway lanes**

TransForm, as part of the Voices for Public Transportation (VPT) coalition, has been working for over five years to advance a regional transportation measure that prioritizes transformative investment in transit operations, walking, and biking.

After working with MTC staff to build consensus throughout the Bay Area on the regional measure concept – including ensuring a focus on public transit operations – we found out in January that MTC was planning to include highway widening in its regional transportation measure concept. Knowing that this would undermine public transit investments, climate

goals, and voter support for the measure, we sprang into action, working with partners to mobilize [over 20 groups to sign onto a letter opposing highway widening](#).

However, on the eve of the final hearing to approve the measure concept on January 24th, MTC released a [staff report that supported highway widening as long as they were managed lanes](#) – lanes that are tolled or otherwise restricted in terms of vehicle occupancy, such as high-occupancy vehicle lanes or transit-only lanes.

## **A groundswell of public pressure**

As soon as we saw the staff report, we mobilized. With less than an hour to go before the MTC meeting started, we emailed our supporters, asking them to attend the meeting on Zoom and speak out against using regional measure funds to add freeway capacity.

More than 50 people gave public comment on the measure, many more than usually attend MTC meetings. Almost every speaker asked the commission not to follow the suggestion of the staff report.

In the end, MTC approved the [concept and vision](#) for the regional transportation funding measure without the staff recommendation to support freeway

widening. This was a major victory for advocates who have been [working with the commission](#) to craft the best possible language for the enabling legislation. VPT was instrumental in defeating this last-minute change.

The proposed measure aims to advance a climate-friendly Bay Area transportation system that is safe, accessible, and convenient for all. This includes preserving and enhancing public transit service; making transit faster, safer, and easier to use; repairing local streets and roads; and improving mobility and access for all people, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and scooter and wheelchair users.

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*A version of this post first ran on the [TransForm blog](#).*

**From:** [John Fox](#)  
**To:** [cacsecretary \[ @smcta.com\]](mailto:cacsecretary [@smcta.com])  
**Subject:** For the TA CAC  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 23, 2024 6:44:38 PM

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I saw this article about the WETA ferry and I thought others on the CAC might want to read it. Maybe we can have a "ferry ride" submeeting and try the WETA ferry out ourselves?

John Fox

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2024/01/22/is-the-bay-area-entering-a-golden-age-of-ferries/?share=erenrsonahfreeayreee>

**From:** [Giuliano](#)  
**To:** [cacsecretary \[@smcta.com\]](mailto:cacsecretary [@smcta.com])  
**Subject:** Item to share with CAC  
**Date:** Monday, January 22, 2024 1:44:00 AM

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Hi Jean,

Please share the following with the CAC using the new process. Thanks much for it!

Something for us to consider. Not sure how we'd add discussing it to our agenda, as something to recommend to the TA. [2024 People-First Mobility Budget for California](#). Clearly the TA is under legal strictures that don't exist for the state. That said, it can certainly make significant changes in the projects it funds to align as closely as possible to the above.

giuliano

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Drive a bike a bit more often and cars a bit less. You'll be healthier and happier, and so will our world.

Reach out if you'd like to learn to cycle more safely ([LCI #7105](#)).

<https://bikesiliconvalley.org>

<https://www.peopleforbikes.org/news/your-bike-advocacy-playbook>