

TA

CORRESPONDENCE

as of 6-6-2024



May 30, 2024

The Honorable Kevin Mullin
U.S. House of Representatives
1404 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Mullin:

On behalf of the City of Burlingame, the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) and the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain), we are writing to thank you for submitting a funding request for the Burlingame Grade Separation Project as part of the FY 2025 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill.

The Broadway Grade Separation Project (in the City of Burlingame) will replace the at-grade railroad crossing with a new configuration that will separate the railroad from the street. This project will reduce vehicle conflicts, increase safety, and promote clean modes of transportation at this critical east/west gateway in San Mateo County.

The project is shovel-ready, and we have worked together to successfully narrow the funding gap needed to move the project toward construction. However, with the Governor's latest budget, the state funding previously approved for this project is now at risk. Your support and help to secure a much-needed federal investment is even more vital to move this project forward.

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has ranked the Broadway at-grade crossing as the number one statewide priority for grade separation out of the over 10,000 at-grade railroad crossings in the entire state since 2018. Separation of the Broadway crossing will play a critical role in eliminating train-vehicle collisions and improving efficiency of rail operations.

Broadway is the only gateway to Burlingame from U.S. 101, connecting the freeway to two vital business districts, numerous small and large businesses, and eleven San Francisco International Airport-serving hotels. One hundred and four Caltrain trains pass through the Broadway at-grade railroad crossing daily providing passenger service to Bay Area communities. The concentration of these major destinations generates high traffic volumes that are compounded by the current at-grade railroad crossing which experiences some of the worst traffic congestion in the area. In addition to addressing the dangers associated with this crossing, the project will improve traffic flow and the overall quality of life in and around the project area.

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We thank you for your continued support of transportation improvements that are so fundamental to the vitality and health of our region. We look forward to working with you to secure final approval of this funding as part of the FY 2025 appropriations cycle.

Please contact San Mateo County Transportation Authority Government and Community Affairs Director Jessica Epstein at epsteinj@samtrans.com if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



Lisa K. Goldman
City Manager
City of Burlingame



April Chan
Executive Director
San Mateo County Transportation
Authority



Michelle Bouchard
Executive Director
Caltrain

Cc: City of Burlingame – Council
San Mateo County Transportation Authority Board of Directors
Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board of Directors

From: [Mike Swire](#)
To: [Board \(@smcta.com\)](#); [cacsecretary \[@smcta.com\]](#); [cac@sfcta.org](#); [Mima Crume](#)
Subject: NYT - Colorado's Bold New Approach to Highways — Not Building Them
Date: Thursday, June 6, 2024 9:59:29 AM

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Dear Peninsula transportation decision makers,

I hope that you will take five minutes to read [this excellent article from the NY Times](#) (no paywall) on Colorado's recent shift to funding transit and active transportation projects instead of widening highways. Here are some highlights:

- In 2019, Gov. Jared Polis signed a law that required the state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 90 percent within 30 years. As the state tried to figure out how it would get there, it zeroed in on drivers. Transportation is the largest single contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, accounting for about 30 percent of the total; 60 percent of that comes from cars and trucks. To reduce emissions, Coloradans would have to drive less.
- Colorado's Department of Transportation, or CDOT, had canceled two major highway expansions, including Interstate 25, and shifted \$100 million to transit projects. In 2022, a regional planning body in Denver reallocated \$900 million from highway expansions to so-called multimodal projects, including faster buses and better bike lanes.
- The basic principle linking wider highways to more carbon emissions has been well understood since the 1960s. Back then, an economist rebutted the prevailing assumption that adding lanes would fix traffic, showing instead that wider roads only increased the number of cars and made congestion worse. This phenomenon came to be called "[induced demand](#)."
- State transportation departments nonetheless [consistently underestimate](#) how highway expansion leads to more driving. In 2019, a team led by Susan Handy, a professor of environmental science at the University of California, Davis, developed an induced demand calculator to help others translate how specific expansions led to more cars on the road.
- The (Denver) widening was also unlikely to fix traffic: Years earlier, the agency had spent \$800 million to expand another stretch of Interstate 25 in south Denver and ended up with worse congestion than before construction began.
- Housing and transportation, in other words, are intertwined. Unlike most state transportation directors, Ms. Lew did not study engineering. She has a master's degree in American history and a background in finance. Transportation represents

most of the federal investment in cities, she said. But until recently, investing in transportation largely meant following a playbook written in the 1950s, building grand concrete structures that efficiently swept cars from one side of a city to another.

I hope that we will follow Colorado's lead and reconsider whether spending money on highway widenings is the best use of precious transportation dollars provided by taxpayers.

Sincerely,

Mike Swire
Chair, C/CAG Bike & Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Appointee, SMCTA Citizen Advisory Committee
(writing as an individual)

From: [Giuliano](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Comments to TA Board on item 16.a Rules of Procedure
Date: Wednesday, June 5, 2024 2:02:09 PM

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I would have loved to have made these comment on the proposed rules of procedure in person. I waited to the end of the last meeting but then at the close didn't want to keep you from your delayed closed session. And find now that my dojo has promotion exams that I want to attend.

I love the update! It brings the rules into the modern era, streamlines them, and generally makes them much more useful and practical. But (you knew there would be a "but"! '->) I really worry that the proposal to be able to not reappoint, or to remove, CAC members without cause, reason, or explanation will hurt the TA board and the public. The CAC exists to give the board the communities' input. Removal without cause is very likely to diminish the quality of that input. Some folks will fear to speak frankly for fear of removal. If that happens, what's the point of the CAC?

I'd suggest:

- Removal/non reappointment only for cause. This would best ensure the quality of the CAC's advice.
- OR a statement that removal/non reappointment will be explained, and will not occur due to the CAC members voting history and/or opinions. This preserves the ability of the board to remove for almost any reason. They just have to explain. Lack of civility, or of decorum, etc would of course remain grounds for removal. These are not the stating of opinions, these are inappropriate actions.

Thank you,

giuliano carlini

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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.

