

**From:** Board Secretary  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 28, 2017 8:56 AM  
**To:** VTA Board of Directors  
**Subject:** From VTA: March 25-27 Media Clips



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[New BART station a drum roll for ambitious goals](#)

**John King**

**SF Chronicle**

BART's new station in southern Fremont isn't the end of the line, it's a launching pad for larger ambitions. Fremont plans to wrap a high-rise "innovation district" around the station. And BART finally is on its way to San Jose, a goal since the transit system was conceived in 1955.

How fitting, then, that the Warm Springs/South Fremont Station that opened Saturday has architectural ambitions as well.

The design flourishes are modest, to be sure, and often they're diluted by an emphasis on simple engineering over streamlined aesthetics. But they still make BART's 46th station one of its most attractive — even as they leave us wanting more.

Design is just one aspect of the complicated station, which anchors the 5.4 mile, \$790 million Warm Springs extension. The structure must straddle traffic lanes and railroad tracks, but shrug off major earthquakes and be flexible enough to be able to expand in the future. BART also wants the new station to showcase the system's priorities beyond getting people from point A to point B.

Judging by the display boards on view at Friday's opening celebration, architecture isn't high on the priority list.

One display emphasized the grassy bioswales that filter pollutants from storm water before it is absorbed into the earth. Another celebrated the photovoltaic panels above the station's concourse. A third spelled out the quest for full accessibility, from large-print signs to extra elevators for people in wheelchairs.

Yet the ceremonial ribbon-cutting was held in a plaza beneath the architectural feature that several speakers lauded as an icon — a drum-like rotunda of glass panels, each doing double duty as part of artist Catherine Widgery's "Sky Cycles."

The drum begins 13 feet above the plaza and is 25 feet tall, with reflective glass on the outside that's accented by vertical stripes of black and blue. Walk between the columns holding it up and the interior of the rotunda glows with Widgery's colorful abstractions of the Fremont sky.

The incorporation of art into the architecture is a smart move by BART planners. Widgery took full advantage of it. But it also succeeds because of clarity of the rotunda — part of the larger design by the Oakland office of architectural giant HNTB, which updated the station's conceptual design by architect Robin Chiang of San Francisco.

The synergy continues with the glass draped along the sides of the 700-foot-long elevated concourse, which angles up slightly on either end.

The up-down entry sequence is dictated by the need to get customers across the rails to the trains from the surrounding parking lots (which eventually will become development sites). It's an arrangement similar to the scene in Millbrae, where BART's last station in San Mateo County aligns with a Caltrain stop.

That station with its clutter of buildings and corridors is confusing to anyone who's not a regular patron. Not so with Warm Springs. The uplifted drum is a visual beacon that doubles as a foyer for the stairs and escalators up to the pedestrian bridge that leads into the concourse, where ticket machines wait on either side.

"We wanted to create a room, with a space and a scale you'd remember," said Anko Chen, the lead architect for HNTB on the project. He described the uplifted drum — an adaptation of what Chiang proposed as an inverted cone — as "an ideal form, simple and timeless. We didn't want to use a shape or form that would lose its kick over time."

Another satisfying fusion of architecture and infrastructure involves the fire stairs toward the north end of the concourse.

They're packaged in a taut cage of stainless steel and gray wire mesh. Trusses are visible inside, and the stairs, and a tight row of pipes that leads to the solar panels on the concourse roof. Drab? Not at all. The monochromatic shaft seems to anchor the horizontal concourse, while the art-infused glass panels in the background add color and warmth to the scene.

But if the large moves are effective, too many details are marred by a design-build process led by a joint venture of Kiewit Infrastructure West and Mass Electric Company.

Chen envisioned the rotunda as having an 85-foot diameter and rising another 5 or 10 feet, for instance. Instead, the rotunda was tightened to 60 feet and flattened to keep costs down. And the round pillars that support the exquisite glass wear a mundane coat of fiberglass-reinforced

concrete — with steel bristles on top to keep pigeons away, a task that could have been handled simply by tapering the column at the top.

Down on the platform, the only seating for now is a few squat benches of white-stained concrete. They're as comfortable as they look. This isn't a compliment.

The cynic would shrug this off, saying all that matters is that the trains run on time. But the elegant simplicity of the rotunda, or the counterplay of the open concourse and the steep, dense fire stairs, shows that transit stations can be built with style and within cost.

Efficiency need not be extravagant. But decision makers need to pay attention each step of the way.

Because the rest of the line to San Jose is being constructed by the South Bay's Valley Transportation Authority, it might be decades before BART builds another station on its own. When that time comes, Warm Springs will be worth a visit — as an attractive reminder of the role that architecture can play, and as a cautionary tale of the mistakes that keep it from being better.

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## **[Roadshow: Highway 17's a dangerous, slippery mess — so slow down](#)**

**Gary Richards**

### **San Jose Mercury News**

**Q** Finally, after more than eight weeks of what seems like three or more accidents per day just after Big Moody Curve on Highway 17, the CHP notified Caltrans to clean up the roadway. However, it doesn't address the fact that the road is consistently wet over two lanes, even on dry days, which is causing several collisions per day.

**Angie Fenton**

*Los Gatos*

**A** This is the latest hot spot on Highway 17. Here is what a CHP patrol officer said in a pointed radio message

“17 southbound just south of Brush, wood debris on right-hand shoulder and mud on roadway. Mud is slippery and possibly contributing to increase in collisions in this area. ... Let DOT know they need to clean it thoroughly. This would include all wood logs, sweeping the road and shoulder and a barrier to keep debris from sliding into the roadway. This is a recurring problem and needs to be fixed.”

Caltrans says the debris is being removed, but warns drivers that this is a concern at numerous other locations. According to a Caltrans spokesman, the CHP says most of the accidents are a result of people going over the speed limit.

The road was paved a couple of years ago with material to allow water to seep through grooves as opposed to staying on the surface, but the storms overwhelmed the area at Big Moody.

**Q** Another section of Highway 17 is on the verge of collapsing, approximately four-tenths of a mile before the Redwood Estates turn-off. I'm hoping you will alert Caltrans before someone gets hurt there. I'm convinced they would listen to you much better than to me. Please!  
Gretchen Hill, Redwood Estates

**A** They have been alerted. But until repairs are complete, slow down. Please!

**Q** Thanks for sharing the story behind Jeffrey-the-Giraffe along Highway 85 (Roadshow, March 23). My 3-year-old was obsessed with the giraffe on our morning commute. She would say hi and wave on her way by and was sad when we couldn't see it anymore. She has missed it since and will be excited when the giraffe returns.

Thank you to the family, too, for giving us a few minutes of smiles each day in traffic.

**Tony Lecheler**

*Morgan Hill*

**A** Smiling during the commute is good.

**Q** We need more Jeffreys on Bay Area roads to brighten our day.

*Mike Smith*

**A** Be on the lookout in the coming days on Highway 85 near the Blossom Hill Road exit. Paul Mein and his brother Randy are hatching a surprise for 4-year-old Mara, whose grandmother first brought this to our attention. Here's more about that ...

**Q** They are about to put up a nice surprise for the little girl. Randy has created many different animals for children but it is just a hobby and although he has been asked many times to do it as a business he won't. He says it would take all the fun out of it. So, watch the wall.

**Margaret Mein**

*Mother of the animal artists*

**A** I know of two little girls who will be watching.

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## [E-bikes are becoming a hit with consumers](#)

**Patrick May**

**San Jose Mercury News**

E-bikes. Kind of rolls off the tongue, doesn't it?

Which is good marketing news for the electric-bike industry which is currently riding a wave of popularity, especially here in sunny, athletically minded California, and enjoying buzz like it got at this weekend's Electric Bike Expo in San Mateo.

"I think people would be surprised to see how much fun they are to ride," said Louisa Gillett of Hillsborough who, along with her husband and 3-year-old daughter Helena, did exactly that on

Sunday morning, test-driving some of the premier and emerging electric bike brands that were available for a spin around the enclosed 25,000-square-foot loop. “The last time I rode one was about five years ago and they’ve changed so much. They’re much more stylish; the older ones felt clunky and heavier.”

Her daughter agreed: “Good,” Helena said of her ride. “It was fast.”

E-bikes are on a roll, says event spokeswoman Melissa Balmer, founder-director of [PedalLove.org](http://PedalLove.org), which touts bicycling as improving personal health and well-being, especially for women. She says consumers are starting to discover the joys of electric bikes. Most are pedal-assisted which means the rider keeps pumping but gets a boost from the small electric rechargeable motor attached to the frame.

“E-bikes are already huge in Europe and now for a lot of people, especially in Southern California and here in Silicon Valley, they’re catching on as a means of transportation,” says Balmer. “E-bikes are a big hit with the tech community, which is also coming up with new makes and models all the time, as well as baby boomers who want to have that healthy heart.”

The e-bike is marketed as a way for people to get some exercise and fresh air while not necessarily breaking a sweat. It’s simple: You get on and start pedaling, and the motor — depending on the power level you’ve set on the handlebar-mounted control display — kicks in. Riding, say a 15-mile commute to work on an electric bike, is a lot less sweaty or exhausting than doing it on a traditional bike, says Joe Witherspoon, owner of Motostrano in Redwood City and San Francisco, one of the Bay Area’s largest e-bike dealers.

“Let’s put it this way: You can actually walk after a three-hour ride on an e-bike.”

As a 14-year veteran in the Bay Area’s bicycle business, Witherspoon has seen an incredible growth in consumer interest in e-bikes the past few years. “Our business in the past five years has gone from e-bikes being 10 percent of what we sell to now closer to 90 percent,” he said. “We’ve opened a second store in San Francisco because the demand is enormous.”

Industry surveys show e-bike sales in the United States, which lags behind Europe and Asia, continue to climb year by year and a 2016 report from Navigant Research suggested that by 2025, e-bike sales could lead to annual revenues of \$24.3 billion globally.

Witherspoon said “guys are selling their dirt bikes and their Harleys and buying electric bikes so they can ride with their wives and their kids and go off-road,” he said. “A lot of them look at these things as their retirement.”

E-bikes are defined by the Consumer Product Safety Commission as “a two-or three-wheeled vehicle with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts (1 h.p.)” and a maximum road speed of 20 miles per hour. Individual states, however, are free to craft their own laws on such as things as top speeds. E-bike enthusiasts point out that the nation’s patchwork quilt of varying regulations on e-bikes is a problem. Like California, about 20 states have legislation that defines an e-bike as a bicycle, doesn’t require licensing and allows e-bikes to use bike lanes. In other states, however, even low-speed e-bikes are lumped in with motorcycles and/or require a license or a specific registration.

California is a leader in the field and, says Balmer, and “has passed a law that other states like Utah have picked up. California is really showing leadership and we now have the majority of the country’s e-bike manufacturers, split evenly between Orange County and Silicon Valley.”

One of those local manufacturers, Van Nguyen of Tempo Electric Bikes in San Jose, was on hand for the expo, inviting attendees to try her bikes, which range in price from \$4,500 to \$6,000, approximately in the middle of the e-bike price range. Founded in 2015, her six-person company manufactures two models and “they’re perfect for people looking for alternative transportation and who want to stop using their car so much.”

That draw is a big one in the traffic-snarled Bay Area where an e-bike could turn an hour-long commute up Highway 101 into a 15-minute jaunt along an adjacent bicycle trail.

“We’ve doubled our sales in the past two years,” says Nguyen, who rides her e-bike in heels. “I think the industry needs to do more education and raise awareness around e-bikes and we’re doing that with this weekend’s expo. We feel the breakthrough for the industry will happen when the average consumer realizes how easy these bikes are to ride and then you’ll have more and more people wanting to do it instead of driving.”

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**[Roadshow: Fix-it ticket for aging license plate — must I go to court?](#)**

**Gary Richards**

**San Jose Mercury News**

**Q** Am I the only one who was astonished about the “sad plight” of Bob of Sunnyvale, who may owe over \$1,100 for having no front plate and a “photo-deflecting cover” on the rear? This seems an illegal scheme to evade getting tickets for little pranks such as running red lights.

Sorry, Bob. If your fine is, in fact, over \$1,100 it’s probably too little, as who knows how many times you’ve gotten away with infractions in the past? You’ll get no tears from me.

Mike Gutman, San Jose

**A** Bob heads to court next month, so expect an update. Now to another poor soul with an outrageous fix-it fine.

**Q** I recently got a ticket for having an illegal covering on my license plate. The officer said that there was “some weird plastic” covering my plate, making it impossible to see at night. After the officer left, I investigated and discovered that there was some plastic peeling from the license plate, but it wasn’t anything that had been added. There is nothing over the plate at all; it’s just a stock California license plate that is having some plastic peeling off due to old age. Do I have to go to court over this?

Jason Banich, Mountain View

**A** I would, with a \$1,000 ticket at stake.

**Q** I rode my bicycle down Niles Canyon with several friends last week. Caltrans has recently painted “sharrows” in the lanes, and some drivers did not seem to understand how they work. Some were patient and waited until it was safe to pass us; some were not so patient and shouted obscenities as they went by.

Mr. Roadshow, could you please remind your readers that cyclists are supposed to be in the middle of the lane, and the sharrows are painted there to remind everyone of this?

Sue Stanton, Castro Valley

**A** You just did. But I’ll happily expand on that. Sharrows are white arrow-like stripes that are often painted on streets when the travel lane is too narrow for a car and bike to ride side by side. In these situations, bicyclists may travel in the middle of the lane, whether there exists a sharrow or not.

However, drivers often don’t realize this, resulting in the bicyclist getting squeezed between the curb or parking lane and the moving car. Adding sharrows informs people where bikes should be riding for safety purposes: in the middle of the lane and outside the “door zone” of cars parked on-street.

**Q** For some time now, the housing developers on the north side of Highway 85 near Cottle Road have been using the sound walls to place marketing banners. I hate the idea of sound walls becoming billboards for commercial purposes. Why is Caltrans letting them get away with this?

Bob Steiner, San Jose

**A** Part of the sound wall is on private property, and the state allowed the developers to put up their banners.

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**[Highway 101/580 connector top priority, transportation officials say](#)**

**Mark Prado**

**Marin Independent Journal**

A connector in San Rafael from northbound Highway 101 to eastbound Interstate 580 aimed at unclogging commute traffic is one of the projects Marin transportation planners will include in a project wish list to a regional agency.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission — the Bay Area’s transportation planning agency — is considering a ballot measure in 2018 to raise tolls to pay for projects in the region.

The Transportation Authority of Marin Board of Directors voted Thursday to submit a list of projects they would like to fund if dollars become available.

The highest-profile project is the connector from northbound Highway 101 to eastbound I-580.

Drivers heading north on Highway 101 who want to get on the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge have two options — use East Sir Francis Drake Boulevard in Larkspur or the Bellam Boulevard offramp in San Rafael.

Both involve exiting the freeway and passing through city streets before getting onto I-580, and planners believe a connector will help evening northbound traffic.

“We are interested in the 580 connector because council members in our town believe that it will help alleviate the problems way down in Southern Marin,” said TAM chairwoman Stephanie Moulton-Peters of Mill Valley.

Just exactly what the connector would look like is up for debate.

The cheapest option at \$135 million would be a “low speed” plan following the existing Bellam Boulevard offramp. It would be no more than 32 feet tall. The sharp turn involved would limit speeds to between 25 and 35 mph.

The priciest at \$255 million is the “hillside” connector, which would veer off Highway 101 just past the Sir Francis Drake offramp and travel east above Marin Sanitary Service operations and the Pacific Gas and Electric Co. yard before merging onto eastbound I-580. Drivers would travel at highway speeds. Some bridges along the route would be up to 60 feet tall.

The Transportation Authority of Marin board decided to submit a range of costs between \$135 million and \$255 million without detailing a preferred alignment.

“This is a very strong, No. 1 public interest project from our survey,” said Dianne Steinhauser, executive director of the Transportation Authority of Marin, of the connector project.

Transportation Authority of Marin staff developed a set of “Tier One” projects. Aside from the connector, other projects on the list include: Bettini Transit Center relocation, \$25 million; Highway 101 Marin Sonoma Narrows carpool lane and multi-use path system, \$42 million to \$75 million; Highway 37 corridor project, \$20 million, with other funds from Sonoma, Napa and Solano counties.

Other projects — such as a bike and pedestrian program — have been looked at too, but have been lumped into a “Tier Two” category.

“The best strategy is to be as focused as you can be,” advised TAM board member and Marin Supervisor Damon Connolly, who is a member of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

If the Metropolitan Transportation Commission plan is approved by voters, a \$1 toll increase would raise \$127 million annually for transportation projects in Marin, Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Sonoma, Solano and San Francisco counties. A \$2 increase would generate \$254 million a year, and a \$3 hike, \$381 million annually.

“This is the first of several more discussions,” Steinhauser said. “We are so early in the process.”

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**[Bankrupt SF Yellow Cab up for sale](#)**

**Joe Fitzgerald Rodriguez**

**SF Examiner**

San Francisco's oldest cab company is for sale.

Yellow Cab Co-Op's bankruptcy trustee put the flailing cab company up for bid and has one prospective buyer — its smaller rival Citywide Taxi, according to bankruptcy court documents.

“The good news is the famous yellow scheme will continue to traverse San Francisco streets,” said Sam Singer, a spokesperson-at-large representing Yellow Cab's trustee, Randy Sugarman, who manages Yellow Cab's bankruptcy proceedings with the United States Bankruptcy Court, Northern District.

In the end, Yellow Cab may be sold for less than half the price of the average San Francisco home: \$400,000. If the purchase is approved by the court, the sale will become final April 30 and Citywide would assume Yellow Cab's millions of dollars of debt.

Yellow Cab's assets totaled \$8 million, and its liabilities totaled \$26 million, according to its bankruptcy filings.

“The cabs will continue to operate as Yellow cabs,” Singer said. “Citywide's management should at this time be familiarizing itself with Yellow operations in the coming weeks in order to have a smooth transition.”

That may come as good news to those who feared Yellow Cab would go the way of the Dodo bird after it declared bankruptcy in January 2016, which was first reported by the San Francisco Examiner.

That turmoil came in the midst of a shifting for-hire cab industry, as the rise of tech-infused ride-hails Uber and Lyft upend taxi companies nationwide.

While Yellow Cab struggled to fill shifts, Uber was reportedly valued at \$68 billion.

But Singer's assertion that Yellow Cab will keep on running also assumes Citywide will be the approved purchaser. The April 7 hearing date does not guarantee that purchase, however, because the hearing is also an auction.

While that means subsequent bids from other cab companies could disrupt Citywide's purchase plans, no other cab companies have stepped forward to bid on Yellow Cab, yet.

Citywide did not respond to requests for comment.

John Lazar, owner of the historic Luxor Cab Company, doesn't think Citywide's owner Chris Sweis would fold Yellow into Citywide. Likely, he said, it would be the reverse.

“I think he wants to keep the color,” Lazar said. “He wants people still calling ‘Yellow,’ still to get a ‘Yellow Cab,’ he'd be stupid not to. That phone number is everything.”

Among taxi industry professionals, color schemes — yellow for Yellow Cab, or white and blue for Luxor — are considered a strong brand to attract riders. Phone numbers, like Yellow Cab's iconic 415-333-3333, is easy for people to remember even after a night of drinking, Lazar said.

Many have speculated that Uber and Lyft ultimately led to Yellow Cab's demise, but taxi officials don't think it's that simple.

“The reason Yellow is going down I'd say is more because of their auto accidents, their liabilities,” said Lazar.

The bankruptcy filings indicate that may be true. One of Yellow Cab's largest creditors is Ida Fua, who was hit by a Yellow Cab at 60 mph and paralyzed on the left side of her body.

Fua won an \$8 million settlement in 2015, and that debt gave her much influence over the bankruptcy proceedings, court documents reveal.

Yellow Cab had a unique structure of self-insurance, forcing them to bear the burden of collision lawsuits, which taxi industry professionals said was the foundation of its financial burden. Yellow Cab collapsed under the weight of multiple million-dollar lawsuits, like Fua's.

"They thought they could handle insurance with no limits," Lazar said. "They got beat up in court."

The money owed to Fua loomed throughout the bankruptcy proceedings, even up to a point where creditors threatened further litigation of Yellow Cab for paying its shareholders — cabbies in the co-op — when they claim it should have been paying creditors.

This led to the sale of Yellow Cab's property at 1200 Mississippi St., meaning buyers of Yellow Cab will not be purchasing its location.

"In order to get [Yellow Cab] on the right track, the trustees called for a sale of the property," Singer confirmed to the Examiner. That property sale was approved in early February.

"As part of the negotiated settlement, they ended their litigation," Singer said. "The creditors got money, the property owners got money."

Though Yellow Cab's collision lawsuits drove it to the precipice, it was the surge of Uber and Lyft drivers on the roadways that pushed it over the edge, drivers said.

John Gould has driven a taxi since 1983, and drove for Yellow Cab until 1989.

While driving downtown Wednesday morning, he told the Examiner he felt it was impossible for the cab industry — which numbers only about 1,800 taxis in San Francisco — to compete with the 45,000 Uber and Lyft drivers who flood The City.

"The Uber and Lyft cars are saturating everything," he said.

Even before he drove a cab, he was in The City long enough to remember when Geary Boulevard downtown was two-way and San Francisco baseball fans rooted for the San Francisco Seals.

Once upon a time, Gould drove his taxi for the likes of Mayor Joe Alioto, TV anchor Tom Brokaw, and everyday San Franciscans to and fro. Now, fares are few and far between.

"The world is changing," he said. "I'm not bitter or anything, it's just life."

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## [Transportation deal taking shape between Jerry Brown, Democratic leaders](#)

**Jim Miller**

**Sacramento Bee**

Gov. Jerry Brown and Democratic legislative leaders are putting the final touches on legislation to raise several billion dollars for road maintenance and repairs, yet with no assurance that the measure will pass by a self-imposed April 6 deadline.

A package could become public as early as next week, Brian Kelly, Brown's transportation secretary, said Monday in Los Angeles, during one of several rallies organized by supporters around the state in recent days. "We're very close," he said.

Advocates for a road-funding package say California has fallen tens of billions of dollars behind in paying for road upkeep, goods movement and public transit. Inflation, low gas prices and increases in vehicle fuel efficiency have eroded the purchasing power of the state's gas tax, they say, and this winter's heavy rains have caused more than \$700 million in damage alone.

"It's only going to get worse if we don't address it now," Orville Thomas of the labor-business California Alliance for Jobs said Friday at a Fresno press conference by backers.

More than two years of hearings, private talks and supporters' advocacy have failed to produce a package. The Legislature's Republican caucuses object to raising fuel taxes and fees. Democrats achieved two-thirds super-majorities last fall, allowing them to increase taxes on their own, but such votes pose risks for lawmakers from swing districts.

"The Legislature's engaged at the detail level, and then pretty soon we've got to get to the political level, to get people to bite that bullet," Brown said in Washington, D.C. this week.

The total estimated revenue of any package, as well as its funding mix, remains unclear.

State Sen. Jim Beall, D-San Jose, and Assemblyman Jim Frazier, D-Oakley, who lead the Legislature's transportation panels, put forward separate bills that would generate an estimated \$6 billion annually. Brown's proposal would raise an estimated \$4.2 billion annually.

The bills by Frazier and Beall lean more heavily on higher fuel taxes. Brown's proposal includes smaller fuel tax increases, but raises more money from a \$65 "road improvement charge" – almost \$30 more than a \$38 registration fee increase in Assembly Bill 1 and Senate Bill 1.

Two funding sources increasingly seem to be off the table, according to multiple people familiar with the talks.

The two bills as well as Brown's January proposal included several hundred million dollars for public transit from the state's cap-and-trade program designed to curtail emissions of greenhouse gases. Yet a final package is unlikely to include the money. Last month's auction of pollution credits did poorly, highlighting the legal uncertainty surrounding the program's future.

Beall and Frazier's bills, meanwhile, would re-direct \$500 million generated by truck weight fees to the state highway account, and away from helping to pay debt service on voter-approved transportation borrowing. The state general fund would have to cover that cost, a shift the Brown administration has objected to.

Absent that revenue, the bills would generate about \$5 billion annually.

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

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**Sent:** Tuesday, March 28, 2017 4:33 PM  
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**Subject:** From VTA: March 28 Media Clips



## ***VTA Daily News Coverage for Tuesday, March 28, 2017***

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### **San Jose: Newly retired transit employee killed by VTA bus**

**Mark Gomez and Robert Salonga**

**San Jose Mercury News**

The Milpitas man found gravely injured Thursday in a gutter off First Street was a recently retired light rail dispatcher and his former employer says he was killed in an accident involving a Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority bus.

Benny Cheung, 60, recently retired from transit agency after working for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority for 37 years, according to Stacey Hendler Ross, a VTA spokeswoman. Cheung was honored in February by the VTA board for his decades of service.

“It’s so horrible to think about,” Hendler Ross said. “He just left our agency after 37 years, and this happens. The irony is tragic. The whole situation is tragic. It’s cut deep with a lot of employees here.”

Prior to this newspaper obtaining an internal memo Tuesday, neither VTA nor San Jose police had released any information suggesting Cheung’s death involved a city bus. Monday, the day VTA sent its internal memo to employees, San Jose police indicated there was nothing new to publicly release.

Hours after the incident, word of Cheung’s death and the involvement of a VTA bus circulated among workers, according to one VTA employee who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Tuesday, Hendler Ross confirmed the memo was sent to employees but referred all questions regarding the incident to San Jose police, the primary agency investigating the death. After being

informed about the VTA memo, police declined to corroborate the new account of events but also did not rule it out, and said the “investigation is ongoing.”

“We’re looking at all possibilities and that is certainly one of the possibilities we’re focusing on,” Sgt. Enrique Garcia said.

The memo, written by Rufus Frances, director of system safety and security for VTA, stated that “preliminary evidence in the ongoing investigation indicates Mr. Cheung had just de-boarded the VTA bus involved in this tragic accident.”

“Our hearts go out to Mr. Cheung’s family, friends and former coworkers,” Frances wrote.

Grief counselors are being made available to staff, Hendler Ross said.

On the night of the accident, the driver of the bus involved in the accident was taken off duty. The driver is on administrative leave pending the outcome of required drug screening tests per VTA’s compliance of a Federal Transit Administration regulation regarding post incident protocol, VTA spokeswoman Linh Hoang said.

Other questions, including how quickly VTA officials and police knew about the possibility Cheung’s death involved a bus, or whether the driver was aware of the accident, remain unanswered by the agencies.

The death was discovered March 23 after police received a 911 call about a body in the road at 7:50 p.m. When officers arrived, they located Cheung, who was pronounced deceased at the scene. Though there was no bus or other vehicle at the site, San Jose police initially believed Cheung has been hit by a motor vehicle.

As of Tuesday morning, the Santa Clara County coroner’s office has not yet officially determined a cause of death.

Anyone with information about the case can contact the San Jose Police Department’s Traffic Investigation Unit at 408-277-4654.

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## **Recently Retired Light Rail Dispatcher Hit, Killed By Bus In San Jose**

**Mark Nero**

**Campbell Patch**

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CA -- A retired light-rail dispatcher for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority was killed by a VTA bus near San Jose’s Japantown on Thursday evening, VTA officials said.

Milpitas resident Benny Cheung, 60, had recently retired after 37 years with the transit agency when he was killed on March 23. The VTA board honored him for his service in February, according to VTA spokeswoman Linh Hoang.

"We are mourning the loss of Benny Cheung," Hoang said. "Our hearts go out to Mr. Cheung's family, friends and former co-workers."

The VTA has placed the bus operator who hit Cheung on administrative leave, where he's expected to remain until drug-testing results are finalized, part of VTA protocol in collisions.

San Jose police investigators believe Cheung had just gotten off of a bus at North First Street and Hawthorne Way when he was hit around 7:50 p.m., Hoang said. Police then responded to a report of a man lying in the roadway.

Officers found Cheung unconscious and not breathing with serious injuries. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

The only VTA bus that travels down North First Street is Line 66, which extends from Kaiser Permanente San Jose Medical Center through downtown San Jose to Dixon Road in Milpitas.

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## How California can hit housing and greenhouse emission goals

**Richard Scheinin**

**San Jose Mercury News**

A statewide turn toward denser, "infill" residential housing near jobs and public transit would allow California to meet its ever-growing housing needs and climate goals for emissions reduction by 2030, a new study says.

Such a shift toward developing compact, primarily multi-family dwellings would help stanch the sprawling suburban growth that necessitates long commutes to job hubs, and would even provide modest economic benefits to homeowners and renters, the study finds. The analysis is by UC Berkeley's Center for Housing Innovation and Center for Law, Energy and the Environment (CLEE), in conjunction with the San Francisco-based public policy group Next 10.

"We can grow in a sustainable way that also helps people with their pocketbooks," said Ethan Elkind, director of CLEE's climate program. He said the study, titled "Right Type, Right Place" — shorthand for putting the right kinds of new residential development in the right places — upends "doom and gloom" predictions by the real estate and housing industry that a sustained infill program would create an economic drag on the state and its residents.

A shift toward infill housing, to be built within three miles of rail stations, would help avert at least 1.79 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually, according to the report. That's the equivalent of eliminating emissions from 378,108 passenger vehicles, or not burning more than 201 million gallons of gasoline annually, the report says.

Newly legislated state goals call for reducing emissions from a projected 431 million metric tons in 2020 to 260 million metric tons by 2030.

If the shift to development in areas ripe for infill housing were to occur immediately, it would mean the construction of more than 63,000 new units in San Francisco by 2030, as opposed to 37,000 units if current development patterns persist and developers build sufficient housing to meet projected statewide population growth.

In Oakland, the report finds, more than 23,000 units would be built, as opposed to 5,000. The report does not include a specific projection for San Jose or the Peninsula. As for economic savings, the report projects a \$26 monthly savings for renters and a \$13 monthly savings for homeowners as a result of concerted development of compact housing near jobs and transit. Those savings would accrue from reductions in utility and transportation costs, as well as the cost of rent or mortgages, according to the study.

“It’s not a huge savings — it’s almost a wash,” said Elkind. “Still, people come out ahead. Even building in more expensive markets, you’re providing economic benefits for the people who live there. And there are huge quality-of-life benefits. You’re allowing people to live close to jobs and services; somebody is no longer having to commute in from a place like Tracy, for example. They could live in Santa Clara.”

Of course, for the infill shift to happen, there would first need to be a significant shift in public policy — and overcoming the objections of homeowners who value traditional neighborhoods filled with single-family homes.

The report’s numerous policy recommendations suggest that local governments should relax zoning laws to promote multi-family land use, reduce parking requirements and shorten permitting timelines for planning and construction.

At the state level, the report recommends creating a program based on one in Massachusetts that lets developers override local regulatory barriers to affordable housing production in towns and cities that fail to meet regional targets for such housing. It also suggests establishing a regional tax-sharing system that would extend benefits to municipalities that meet regional housing goals.

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## **Roadshow: Does anyone still drive to relax?**

**Gary Richards**

**San Jose Mercury News**

**Q** What happened to good drivers and the love of driving?

**Gregg Dye**

*San Jose*

**A** Let’s see. Horrendous commutes, cellphone yakkers, tailgaters, road boulders, red-light scofflaws, carpool cheats, Darth Vaders making wild lane changes and those who never use their blinkers.

Back to you, Gregg.

**Q** These days it seems most people use their cars for the sole purpose of transport and necessity. Are they really cars anymore or communication centers and living rooms on wheels?

There's a detachment one experiences with modern cars. They are designed to be driven with the windows closed tight. They are comfortable, quiet and very fast. If you're not paying attention it's very easy to hit 85 without knowing it.

I'm 60, so call me a relic, an environmental disaster or what you will, but I still love to drive my carbureted, rear-wheel drive, five-speed, rusty old 1980 Corolla and four-on-the-floor 1984 Dodge van with no power steering. Every now and then I spot a driver like me and we exchange smiles while listening to our motors purr with the windows down. Gregg Dye

**A** At least there is some reason to smile. When my daughter was born in 1984, the birth took 29 hours of unmedicated labor. While an exhausted Jan and baby Anne slept, I told Grandma Dorothy that she and I needed a nice drive to relax. She was out from Iowa to help but California freeways were not her idea of relaxation.

She offered a concerned laugh, and off we went up Interstate 280 on The World's Most Beautiful Freeway to Woodside. The drive was great and that story remains in our family.

Anyone else still love to get behind the wheel to chill out? More teens are putting off getting a license until age 20, so maybe the passion for driving is fading.

**Q** I was traveling around California and the rest of the United States recently, and I have never seen freeways as dirty as those in the South Bay and on the Peninsula. What's the explanation for this?

When I moved here in 1987, there was a sign on I-280 that proclaimed it "The World's Most Beautiful Freeway." No more. Where does all the roadside crap come from?

Barry Press

**A** That sign came down a few years ago. Recycling trucks, open-bed pickups and litterbugs are the main culprits on 280.

Does this mean 280 is no longer a good place to enjoy a relaxing cruise on the freeway?

**Q** Have you heard any rumors about upgrades coming to the Fair Oaks Avenue overcrossing at Highway 101 in Sunnyvale? There are three new structures being built around that intersection and traffic is already a mess. Seems like a lot of pain in the near future.

Tim Suth, *Sunnyvale*

**A** There are no planned improvements at this time. However, the city will explore the possibility of modifying the freeway ramps and widening the bridge over 101.

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## **Lyft and Uber rates surge to unbelievable prices after BART stoppage**

**Douglas Zimmerman**

**SF Gate**

Thousands of BART passengers were stranded Monday morning after a power line fell near the West Oakland tracks and suspended Transbay Tube service. Many commuters who turned to ride-sharing apps Uber or Lyft to attempt to get to work on time faced outrageous surge pricing.

According to posts on social media, a ride from Oakland to downtown San Francisco was estimated to cost between \$60 and \$110. The surge also impacted the cheaper ride-sharing options, such as Lyft Line — with one estimate at \$85 from an SFGATE review of prices.

Many commuters took out their frustration against the ride-sharing companies online, posting screen grabs of the costs.

For comparison, by 10 a.m., after BART trains started moving again and the morning commute began to wind down, Uber quoted a price from Oakland 12th Street City Center to Montgomery BART of a normal \$10.11 for a pool or \$20.22 for an UberX.

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## UPDATE: BART service restored

**[Laura Dudnick](#)**

**SF Examiner**

BART service has resumed between San Francisco and the East Bay Monday morning after a power line fell across the tracks near the West Oakland station, shutting down train service during the morning commute.

The incident began around 8:20 a.m. and prompted the closure of the West Oakland station as Oakland fire and PG&E crews responded to the downed line, BART spokesperson Chris Filippi said.

Exactly an hour later, at 9:20 a.m., BART officials wrote on Twitter that train service was being restored and the West Oakland station had reopened.

While the BART service was down, passengers had to get off of trains and find alternate means of transportation, either by bus, ferry or private vehicle. Alameda-Contra Costa Transit was honoring BART tickets during the disruption.

BART officials said to expect major residual delays systemwide while service returned to its regular schedule Monday.

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## BART Warm Springs Broadcast Reports

[KGO](#)

[KTVU](#)

[KNTV](#)

Conserve paper. Think before you print.

**From:** Board Secretary

**Sent:** Thursday, March 30, 2017 12:33 PM

**To:** VTA Board of Directors

**Subject:** VTA Information: Board of Directors Regular Meeting Agenda Packet - April 6, 2017

**VTA Board of Directors:**

You may access your VTA Board of Directors Agenda Packet for the **April 6, 2017, Regular Meeting** on our website [here](#).

Also attached is the approved 2017 VTA Board of Directors Regular and Workshop Meetings Schedule for your reference.

We would like to thank you for your support of VTA's Sustainability Program to **"GO GREEN"** by subscribing electronically to the packets.

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)



Conserve paper. Think before you print.

**From:** Board Secretary

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 29, 2017 5:17 PM

**To:** VTA Board of Directors

**Subject:** Governor Brown, Senate President pro Tempore and Assembly Speaker Announce Landmark Road Repair and Transportation Investment Package

This afternoon, Gov. Jerry Brown, Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de Leon and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon announced that they had reached an agreement on a state transportation funding package that proposes to generate approximately \$5 billion a year in new revenues for state highways, local streets/road, goods movement, public transit, and bicycle/pedestrian facilities. It is expected that this agreement will be amended into SB 1 (Beall) later this week. The Governor and the two legislative leaders are pushing to have the Assembly and Senate vote on the package by April 6. It will require a two-thirds majority vote in both chambers to be approved.

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Office of Governor  
**Edmund G. Brown Jr.**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Governor's Press Office

Wednesday, March 29, 2017

(916) 445-4571

## **Governor Brown, Senate President pro Tempore and Assembly Speaker Announce Landmark Road Repair and Transportation Investment Package**

SACRAMENTO – Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon today joined labor, business and local leaders to announce a landmark transportation investment to fix our roads, freeways and bridges in communities across California and put more dollars toward transit and safety. The \$5 billion-a-year program will cost most drivers less than \$10 a month and comes with strict new accountability provisions to ensure funds can only be spent on transportation.

“California has a massive backlog of broken infrastructure that has been neglected far too long,” said Governor Brown. “Fixing the roads will not get cheaper by waiting – or ignoring the problem. This is a smart plan that will improve the quality of life in California.”

“We can’t afford to keep kicking the can down the road. Californians are tired of the constant traffic jams and crumbling roads, and they expect us to find solutions,” said Senate President pro Tempore de León. “These critical investments will keep our state moving and economy growing. I look forward to getting this deal through the Legislature and onto the Governor’s desk next week.”

“We have a solution before us and we have a choice before us,” said Assembly Speaker Rendon. “We can choose to do nothing, and see more deterioration, more time lost in traffic, and more damage to cars, or we can choose to advance this compromise solution that fixes California’s broken transportation system in a way where drivers will actually end up paying less for a better quality of life.”

California has not increased the gas tax in 23 years. Since then, California’s population has grown by eight million, with millions more cars and trucks on our roads. Californians also drive more than 350 billion miles a year— more than any other state – yet road and transit investments have not kept pace with this growth.

Each California driver spends approximately \$700 per year in [extra vehicle repairs](#) caused by rough roads. If California does not make investments to fix the roads now, it will cost eight times more to replace later.

The legislation, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, SB 1 (Beall), invests \$52.4 billion over the next decade – split equally between state and local investments:

**Fix Local Streets and Transportation Infrastructure (50 percent):**

- \$15 billion in “Fix-It-First” local road repairs, including fixing potholes
- \$7.5 billion to improve local public transportation
- \$2 billion to support local “self-help” communities that are making their own investments in transportation improvements
- \$1 billion to improve infrastructure that promotes walking and bicycling
- \$825 million for the State Transportation Improvement Program local contribution
- \$250 million in local transportation planning grants.

**Fix State Highways and Transportation Infrastructure (50 percent):**

- \$15 billion in “Fix-it-First” highway repairs, including smoother pavement
- \$4 billion in bridge and culvert repairs
- \$3 billion to improve trade corridors
- \$2.5 billion to reduce congestion on major commute corridors
- \$1.4 billion in other transportation investments, including \$275 million for highway and intercity-transit improvements.

**Ensure Taxpayer Dollars Are Spent Properly with Strong Accountability Measures:**

- Constitutional amendment to prohibit spending the funds on anything but transportation
- Inspector General to ensure Caltrans and any entities receiving state transportation funds spend taxpayer dollars efficiently, effectively and in compliance with state and federal requirements
- Provision that empowers the California Transportation Commission to hold state and local government accountable for making the transportation improvements they commit to delivering
- Authorization for the California Transportation Commission to review and allocate Caltrans funding and staffing for highway maintenance to ensure those levels are reasonable and responsible
- Authorization for Caltrans to complete earlier mitigation of environmental impacts from construction, a policy that will reduce costs and delays while protecting natural resources.

Guided by the principles set forth by [President Ronald Reagan](#) when he increased the federal gas tax in 1982, this transportation investment package is funded by everyone who uses our roads and highways:

- \$7.3 billion by increasing diesel excise tax 20 cents
- \$3.5 billion by increasing diesel sales tax to 5.75 percent

- \$24.4 billion by increasing gasoline excise tax 12 cents
- \$16.3 billion from an annual transportation improvement fee based on a vehicle's value
- \$200 million from an annual \$100 Zero Emission Vehicle fee commencing in 2020.
- \$706 million in General Fund loan repayments.

Leadership in both the Senate and the Assembly expect the measure to be voted on by Thursday, April 6, 2017.

###

**Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.**

State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

**From:** Board Secretary  
**Sent:** Friday, March 31, 2017 1:36 PM  
**To:** VTA Board of Directors  
**Subject:** From VTA: March 30-31 Media Clips



## *VTA Daily News Coverage for March 30-31, 2017*

1. [VTA 237 Express Lanes Broadcast Coverage](#) KCBS
2. [Campbell: Light-rail train hits, kills pedestrian](#) San Jose Mercury News
3. [Pedestrian Killed By VTA Light Rail Train In Campbell](#) CBS
4. [Broadcast Coverage of the VTA Accident](#) KGO KPIX KTVU KSTS
5. [Roadshow: BART bathrooms to reopen with new 'secure' layout](#) San Jose Mercury News
6. [Fremont: Irvington BART site to be re-evaluated for almost \\$3 million](#) East Bay Times
7. [Downtown businesses worried about BART's San Jose subway construction](#) Silicon Valley Biz Journal
8. [Bay Area traffic called emergency in poll: 'Never been this bad'](#) San Jose Mercury News
9. [Businesses interests hold first-of-its-kind meeting with SF to stop traffic congestion](#) SF Examiner
10. [Bluegogo to pull its bikes off SF streets](#) SF Examiner
11. [Transportation/BART Funding/Gas Tax Broadcast Coverage](#) KQED KTVU KCBS KGO
12. [San Jose: Light-rail train hits pedestrian](#) San Jose Mercury News
13. [Why the silence on Benny Cheung's death?](#) San Jose Mercury News
14. [Roadshow: When a honk leads to road rage](#) San Jose Mercury News
15. [The fix at Poplar/101 is only a half-cure at this point](#) San Jose Mercury News
16. [High Speed Rail Coverage](#) KNTV
17. [What you need to know about California's road-repair bill](#) San Jose Mercury News
18. [Pothole relief? California deal includes tax hike, electric car fee](#) San Jose Mercury News
19. [Bay Area Transportation Leaders Hail New State Funding Proposal](#) San Jose Mercury News
20. [Bay Area's high prices, traffic could spur exodus](#) SF Gate
21. [Dublin Sends BART Message It Wants 2nd Parking Structure](#) The Independent
22. [Lyft just came out with its biggest innovation yet: buses](#) Mashable

[VTA 237 Express Lanes Broadcast Coverage](#)  
[KCBS](#)

[Campbell: Light-rail train hits, kills pedestrian](#)  
Jason Green

## **San Jose Mercury News**

A male pedestrian was hit and killed by a light-rail train Thursday in Campbell, authorities said. The collision was reported at about 2:45 p.m. at Railway and Campbell avenues, at the east edge of Campbell's downtown, said Linh Hoang, a spokeswoman for the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority.

The train was traveling at about 50 mph to the Winchester stop when it hit the male pedestrian, Hoang said. Witnesses reported that safety equipment, including crossing guard arms, was functioning at the intersection.

There were no immediate reports of any injuries among the 30 to 35 passengers on the train.

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office and the Campbell Police Department are investigating the fatality, Hoang said. Light-rail service was disrupted as a result of the collision. A bus bridge was put in place to shuttle passengers to affected stops.

Additional details about the collision were not immediately available. Three pedestrians have been struck, two of them fatally, by VTA vehicles in the past week.

Benny Cheung died after stepping off a bus at 1st Street and Hawthorne Way in San Jose on March 23, according to an internal memo written by Rufus Frances, director of system safety and security for VTA.

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## **[Pedestrian Killed By VTA Light Rail Train In Campbell](#)**

### **CBS SF**

Transit officials said a man was killed when a light rail train hit him Thursday afternoon in downtown Campbell. Firefighters and paramedics were dispatched at 2:43 p.m. to a report of the collision near East Campbell Avenue and Civic Center Drive, Capt. Bill Murphy said.

The man was walking east on East Campbell Avenue and was hit by a Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority light rail vehicle as he was walking across the tracks toward South Bascom Avenue, VTA spokeswoman Linh Hoang said.

The death could be a suicide, Hoang said, because the crossing gates were down, warning lights were flashing and warning bells were ringing.

The light rail train was traveling at about 50 mph in a 55 mph zone. Hoang said the train operator and witnesses reported seeing the man walk onto the tracks in front of the train.

VTA officials are asking people to avoid the area. East Campbell Avenue near Civic Center Drive is currently closed.

Transit officials have set up a bus bridge around the affected area until an investigation is complete. The 30 to 35 people on board the train were deboarded and buses are taking passengers from the Winchester station to the Bascom station, Hoang said.

Santa Clara County sheriff's deputies will be investigating the collision.

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[Broadcast Coverage of the VTA Accident](#)

[KTVU](#) [KGO](#), [KPIX](#), [KSTS](#)

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[Roadshow: BART bathrooms to reopen with new 'secure' layout](#)

**Gary Richards**

**San Jose Mercury News**

**Q** The only upgrade BART needs is to reopen its bathrooms. Some low-IQ TSA type got the “underground” stations closed, as if a terrorist would use the bathroom to wreak havoc rather than the platforms where people are.

I often shop in, see movies, eat meals in the Mission district in San Francisco, which is why I have had to learn to backtrack out to the Glen Park station to use the bathroom before returning home.

By the way, on Saturday I went for a ride to the new Warm Springs line, as I have on the first day of revenue service of every segment of the system starting in 1972.

**David Vartanoff, Oakland**

**A** While 35 BART stations have bathrooms open to the public, 10 underground stations have bathrooms that have been closed since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. There is a project to reconfigure the bathrooms in two stations — Powell Street in San Francisco and 19th Street in Oakland — to meet security concerns, then reopen them.

Other stations with closed bathrooms are Embarcadero, Montgomery, Civic Center, 16th Street and 24th Street Mission in San Francisco and, in the East Bay, the Lake Merritt, 12th Street and downtown Berkeley ones.

**Q** I'm curious about the new solar panels installed to cover much of the parking lots at the Lafayette BART station. Great idea to not only capture the power of the sun but provide shade for cars during the hot summers.

Will the solar energy power the trains or station, or something else? What is the expected power generation per month or year, i.e., equivalent of how many homes' electricity?

**Donna Taylor, Pleasant Hill**

**A** The solar panels at Lafayette will be used to power the station. Excess solar generated beyond what is used at the station will be exported onto the PG&E grid for use at other BART stations nearby.

The solar panels are expected to generate over 1,600,000 kWh of energy during their first year of operation. That's about as much energy as 233 California homes use in a year.

The Warm Springs station in Fremont has solar panels on both the station roof and canopies in the parking lots. And the Berryessa station in San Jose will have solar panels at the top of the parking garage.

**Q** With the enormous expansion planned for Valley Fair shopping center and the opening of the Apple space ship, why is the second phase of BART going to parallel the Caltrain tracks up to the Santa Clara

Caltrain station from the Diridon station in San Jose and not those other areas? I think trains up or under Stevens Creek Boulevard to Valley Fair and then to the Apple dish area in Cupertino would fill a huge need for mass transit in a region that badly needs it.

And as a Tesla employee who has relocated to Oakland from Mountain View, I am extremely excited about the new Warm Springs station near the Tesla factory.

**Matthew Aldridge, Oakland**

**A** There will be a BART maintenance yard at the end of the line in Santa Clara across from Caltrain, which is one reason why trains will run through downtown San Jose. But there are no plans to run BART to Valley Fair or to the new Apple campus.

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## [Fremont: Irvington BART site to be re-evaluated for almost \\$3 million](#)

**Joseph Geha**

**East Bay Times**

The Fremont City Council last week agreed to spend more than \$2.5 million in Alameda County Measure BB sales tax funds to re-evaluate an environmental impact report prepared 13 years ago for the planned Irvington BART station.

According to a city staff report, the environmental document needs to be “reanalyzed to understand how changes that have occurred since that time might impact the current design” of the Irvington station and the use of some private land being considered for development nearby.

Plans call for the station to be built at the southwest corner of Washington Boulevard and Osgood Road, about halfway between the newly opened Warm Springs/South Fremont station and the Fremont station. It is estimated to cost \$136 million, according to a scoping study done last year, and could open by 2024. About \$120 million in Measure BB money has been earmarked for the station’s planning and construction, including this re-evaluation.

Hans Larsen, Fremont’s public works director, said when plans for the Irvington station were originally evaluated as part of the BART Warm Springs extension, the time was very different.

The Irvington station was envisioned as a stop that would serve commuters traveling to and from destinations and job centers to the north, such as Oakland and San Francisco. Now that BART is expanding to San Jose, the number of people expected to use the Irvington station and the direction they will travel is changing, he said.

Larsen said it was assumed back then that many people would drive to the BART station. Today, he said, BART and Fremont must account for people who walk, bike, ride a bus or use a ride-booking service such as Uber when determining how much parking may be required.

Some property owners around the station area “are in a state of limbo” about what to expect and the re-evaluation should clarify which pieces of land will be needed for the station, Larsen added.

Urban Planning Partners was chosen to create a “station site plan, station area plan and updated environmental impact report” for an estimated \$1.9 million, plus up to \$200,000 for contingencies.

To cover BART staff costs for the re-evaluation, \$560,000 in Measure BB money also has been allocated.

Fremont is spending \$200,000 of city money to pay for its own staff expenses, bringing the total cost of the site re-evaluation to \$2.86 million.

- Larsen said completing this new environmental clearance will allow the city and BART to request more of the earmarked \$120 million in Measure BB money to begin buying land and creating a final design for the station.

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[Downtown businesses worried about BART's San Jose subway construction](#)

**Jody Meacham**

**Silicon Valley Business Journal**

High-speed rail, often criticized for taking too long to get up and running, is moving too fast for San Jose's downtown businesses and residents.

- San Jose City Councilmembers Raul Peralez and Devora Davis — whose districts adjoin on a line that roughly lies along the Caltrain (and future high-speed rail) tracks through Diridon Station — told the California High-Speed Rail Authority on Thursday they'd like more time to understand and explain to their constituents why the authority no longer is studying an underground station at Diridon like the one BART intends there.

- California High-Speed Rail Authority

- Both railroads are scheduled to begin service at Diridon inside a decade. The conversation came at a three-hour Council study session dealing with those projects plus Caltrain's electrification.

- High-speed rail and BART each are trying to submit their final environmental documents for federal approval this year to meet their construction schedules.

- "The community is going to be divided on one of the two solutions (aerial and at-grade)," Peralez said. "That puts me in a position where I really have to be able to explain to them and I have to understand why we came to this final decision and conclusion."

- Earlier: Why downtown businesses are worried about BART's San Jose subway construction

- Ben Tripousis, the Northern California regional director for the high-speed rail project, said the authority ceased consideration of the underground station alternative — preferred by most businesses and residents — because the Federal Railroad Administration, which must approve the rail system's environmental plans, said it would not support it.

- "At 15 percent design, it was clear to our federal partners that that practicability level [required for approval] couldn't be achieved with a mined underground station," he said.

- Jeff Morales, high-speed rail's CEO, said the authority believes its planned outreach activities, which were increased by seven meetings this fall after a meeting with city officials, could accomplish Peralez's goal. "If we need to do more, we'll certainly work with you on that," he said.

- Scott Knies, head of the San Jose Downtown Association, said it has always been high-speed rail's plan to build an aerial station at Diridon and that the city could force it underground if it tried, avoiding the creation of a structural barrier on the west side of downtown.

-

“We’re sleeping,” Knies said. “We need to start punching our own weight. High-speed rail needs San Jose more than San Jose needs high-speed rail.”

-  
Nuria Fernandez, general manager of the Valley Transportation Authority, which is charged with extending BART downtown in a subway in the same time frame as high-speed rail’s arrival, told the Council that a comparative analysis of two tunneling options is nearing completion that could radically affect how much disruption the project does along Santa Clara Street, which would please downtown businesses.

-  
VTA began studying a large single-bore tunnel concept late in the planning process following its introduction on a new subway line in Barcelona, Spain. Because of the large diameter of the single-bore tunnel, in which inbound and outbound lines are stacked atop one another, stations along the route can also be contained within the single tube, which is bored by a tunneling machine.

-  
That means the stations don’t require surface digging like those for conventional twin-bore tunnels. They would also be bored but the stations would be housed in underground boxes dug from above.

-  
“It is important to understand that even though there is no history in the United States of a single bore construction for rail, that should not deter us from looking at single bore for rail,” Fernandez said. “Silicon Valley is known for innovation and we should be leading. We’re doing so very cautiously. We’ve done all the necessary studies. It is a methodology that we believe brings a lot of benefits.”

-  
VTA’s board is scheduled to make a decision on the tunnel method this summer.

-  
But another VTA decision has left the San Jose Sharks angry. A parking garage originally planned for the BART station at Diridon, which is adjacent to the SAP Center where the hockey team plays, has been omitted from its plans.

-  
That doesn’t mean there won’t be a new parking garage, however.

-  
“When we make decisions on federal projects, we need to look at what sort of investments we make and the value that comes back,” said Leyla Hedayat of the Kimley-Horn engineering consulting firm in charge of planning and programming VTA’s BART project. “When we looked at parking in this environmental phase and we looked at the number of riders that would be generated by a parking garage solely dedicated to BART, it was nominal. At the same time, we also needed to look at the undertaking [in the context of] Diridon’s larger project. We fully believe that there is a parking component in the Diridon area. We just feel that it needs to be considered as part of a program and all the transit entities considered holistically.”

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[Bay Area traffic called emergency in poll: ‘Never been this bad’](#)

**George Avalos**

**San Jose Mercury News**

The Bay Area’s traffic woes are so severe that more than two-thirds of the region’s residents surveyed in a new poll are demanding a major investment to fix the mess — even if that means stomaching higher taxes.

Traffic snarls have become so brutal and frequent that residents view the problem as an emergency that requires drastic solutions, according to a Bay Area Council 2017 poll, released Friday. The council is a business-sponsored, public policy advocacy organization.

“People are really at their wit’s end in terms of dealing with transportation and traffic problems in the Bay Area,” said Michael Cunningham, senior vice president for public policy with the council. “Every time our economy gets good, traffic gets bad. But traffic has never been this bad.”

The problem is severe enough that 70 percent of respondents demanded a “major regional investment” to improve Bay Area commutes, “even if it means raising taxes,” the poll revealed.

That level of support for investing in ways to reduce traffic is encouraging for the Bay Area Council, which may eventually push for higher taxes in the region to address traffic. The poll percentage suggests there might be enough support to surpass the two-thirds voter-approval threshold for boosting various types of taxes.

“I absolutely believe that people in the Bay Area accept that transportation and traffic are real challenges and are willing to put up funds,” said Stephen Levy, an economist and director of the Palo Alto-based Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy. “The Bay Area has been a very generous community when it comes to transportation funding.”

The percentage of those polled who believe it’s harder to travel around the Bay Area has grown in recent years. An estimated 60 percent felt that way in the new poll. That’s up from 54 percent in last year’s survey, 37 percent in 2015 and 25 percent in 2014.

“This is a growing problem. It’s terrible,” said Chuck Dougherty, a retiree who lives in San Jose. “It’s always bumper to bumper, stop and go, taking an hour and a half to get someplace that should really only take 20 minutes. That adds so much time you spend idling in traffic in your car, and creates so much pollution.”

Only 7 percent of those surveyed in the latest poll said they believe it’s actually easier to get around the Bay Area than in the past.

“There is no cavalry we can call on to save us,” said Jim Wunderman, president of the Bay Area Council. “It is time to take matters into our own hands.”

Yet even though people are infuriated by the region’s traffic, 81 percent of those surveyed said they are driving alone at least two to three times a week, for any purpose, including work, school, or running errands. That’s up from 79 percent in 2016.

The council polled 1,000 residents across nine Bay Area counties in late January for its latest annual survey. Those counties were Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Mateo, San Francisco, Marin, Sonoma, Napa and Solano.

Sales-tax measures have been used frequently to finance transportation and transit improvements in the Bay Area. Yet because several Bay Area and neighboring counties have recently imposed new sales taxes, Levy said it might not be as easy to persuade people to increase taxes so soon.

Although the Bay Area Council acknowledged it may eventually push for higher taxes to address traffic in the region, its top priority today is supporting a plan by Gov. Jerry Brown to fix

California's roads and bridges, Cunningham said. The governor's proposal would increase gasoline taxes and vehicle fees in order to raise \$52 billion over 10 years, the largest such increase in state history.

"Right now, we are entirely focused on getting the state Legislature to pass this measure," Cunningham said. "But once that is done, we are informed by this poll that a huge majority in the Bay Area want a big solution.

We will go back to leaders in the Bay Area to see if the timing is right."

Of the residents surveyed, 55 percent said they worried about the general cost of living in the Bay Area while 41 percent picked traffic as a big concern and 39 percent chose housing. The region's problems have become so severe that 40 percent of the region's residents said they want to move away in the next few years, a marked increase from the 33 percent who said in the 2016 poll that they wanted to flee the area.

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## [Businesses interests hold first-of-its-kind meeting with SF to stop traffic congestion](#)

**[Joe Fitzgerald Rodriguez](#)**

**SF Examiner**

The denizens of downtown have had it: Traffic congestion has got to go.

To that end, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce pitched to San Francisco a first-of-its-kind meeting with downtown interests and transportation planners in the hopes of tackling congestion in concert.

The idea was sparked by similar meetings convened by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency to curb congestion during last year's Super Bowl City, which proved to be a positive collaboration, said Dee Dee Workman, vice president of public policy at the chamber.

Even though the SFMTA often meets with neighborhood groups to signal transit changes, Workman said downtown has so many disparate groups that it can be tough to corral them all.

"Downtown is kind of its own animal," she said. "I don't think there was, or has been, a focal point for them to do outreach."

Downtown congestion is reaching historic highs. Transportation analytics firm Inrix ranked the San Francisco Bay Area with the third worst traffic congestion during peak travel times in the U.S. Bob Pishue, a senior economist at Inrix, said that includes downtown too.

"For our traffic scorecard, we didn't just look at highways but city streets," Pishue told the San Francisco Examiner. "During the peak periods on city streets, not highways or major arterials, we saw 23.4 percent of travel was congested, the highest of any city we looked at."

That's a daily reality for Workman and the two dozen downtown groups that plan to meet with the SFMTA.

But more than just a community kvetch, the meeting is a call to action for The City. Workman said congestion doesn't merely stymie commuters, businesses and residents in the Financial District, South of Market and Market Street areas, but ripples across neighborhoods.

"There's gridlock all the time," said Workman. "We want to talk to the [SF]MTA about what's happening to the streets of San Francisco and how they're approaching public transportation planning."

Juliana Bunim, vice president of strategic communications at the chamber, emphasized the SFMTA has been

"really responsive and supportive."

Paul Rose, a spokesperson for the SFMTA, said the agency and the San Francisco Police Department coordinate on rush-hour traffic enforcement and traffic management by deploying officers, and SFMTA parking control officers enforce "blocking the box" violations at key intersections near the Bay Bridge and AT&T Park.

"As San Francisco's transportation agency, we are charged with improving all modes of transportation, including driving," Rose said. "We know there has been an increased demand on San Francisco streets and that is why we are working with our partners to explore additional traffic solutions to make it easier and smoother to get around The City."

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## **[Bluegogo to pull its bikes off SF streets](#)**

**[Joe Fitzgerald Rodriguez](#)**

**SF Examiner**

Bikeshare company Bluegogo is cycling off into the sunset, at least for now.

Open questions about what permits Bluegogo needs to rent its bikes from parking spaces have prompted the company to pull all of its bikes from San Francisco, the company said.

"By end of day [Friday], our bikes will be removed from the rented parking spaces in San Francisco," Lindsay Stevens, a spokesperson for Bluegogo, said Thursday. She confirmed all of their bikes will be off The City's streets.

"We're still here," she added, and said the company is "prioritizing fulfilling all requests" San Francisco has made for permits in order to operate.

Chinese-based company Bluegogo drew sharp rebuke from city leaders when they were first rumored to be dropping thousands of bikes on city streets earlier this year, which would replicate its business model in China.

Instead of littering bikes on sidewalks, however, in San Francisco customers can unlock a bike via cell phone app at any station and ride it to another station.

Bluegogo was heavily lobbied against within city government by a rival bikeshare company, Motivate, whose Bay Area Bikeshare program is backed by Ford Motor Company.

The company also drew much ire from city officials, even before the rubber from their bikes hit the road. Stevens confirmed a man who played a key role in Bluegogo's entry into San Francisco, Vice President of US Operations Ilya Movshovitch, is no longer with the company.

This month the Board of Supervisors approved new laws to regulate stationless bikeshare companies like Bluegogo crafted by Supervisor Aaron Peskin, including a new permit for bikeshares and administrative fines.

Bluegogo also faced administrative fines and possible police enforcement after violating zoning laws under the purview of the San Francisco Planning Department, which told Bluegogo it could not rent bikes from parking spaces not zoned for retail uses.

The second half of the new rules for bikeshare permits recently passed by the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency and were recently approved by the Board of Supervisors. This new permit process may be Bluegogo's opportunity to bring its bikes back on the road in San Francisco.

Chris Cassidy, a spokesperson for the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, said bikesharing has potential to "revolutionise how people navigate our streets."

"We're excited to realize that potential," he said, but "encourage regulators not to grant bike share companies any exceptions to the rules while they work out their plans."

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[San Jose: Light-rail train hits pedestrian](#)

**Jason Green**

**San Jose Mercury News**

SAN JOSE — A pedestrian was hospitalized Wednesday night after being struck by a light-rail train in downtown San Jose, authorities said.

The collision was reported about 6 p.m. at the Santa Clara station near Santa Clara and Second streets. The southbound train was pulling into the station when it hit the pedestrian, who was walking on the platform, said Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority spokeswoman Linh Hoang.

The pedestrian was transported to a hospital. An update on the person's condition was not immediately available.

No injuries were reported among the train's two-dozen passengers.

Service through the area was disrupted as a result of the collision, and a bus bridge is currently in place between the Convention Center and Civic Center stations, Hoang said.

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## Why the silence on Benny Cheung's death?

**Scott Herhold**

**San Jose Mercury News**

The four-minute-plus Facebook video last December was one of the standard takes at a retirement party. The retiree was a trim man in a dark baseball hat with an understated way of talking as he twirled his beer glass. His buddies provided most of the sound.

“How do you feel, Benny?” asked one of them. “Grateful,” he said. Then, moving closer to the camera, he said, “Thank you for VTA. They were very generous.”

When someone demanded to know the plans of the 60-year-old retiree after nearly 38 years with the agency, he said, “I’ll be doing the Turkey Trot every year from now on.”

In that, Benny L. Cheung, light-rail dispatcher, Milpitas resident, and fan of DJ Pollyfonika, was tragically wrong. Cheung was killed last Thursday evening at First Street and Hawthorne Way in San Jose, in an accident that apparently involved a Valley Transportation Authority bus.

All that was sad and savagely ironic. But for four-and-a-half days, the truth of the incident was masked from the public. San Jose cops weren’t saying anything. VTA wasn’t saying anything. Until Tuesday morning, the case was a “whodunit” to the public, a possible hit-and-run.

It wasn’t until an internal VTA memo to employees was leaked to the Mercury News that the real who and what of this case emerged.

VTA’s director of system safety and security, Rufus Frances, said in that Monday memo that “preliminary evidence in the ongoing investigation indicates Mr. Cheung had just deboarded the VTA bus involved in this tragic accident.” Put another way, it looks like the bus ran over him.

So the VTA, whose new motto is “Solutions that Move You,” apparently claimed the life of one of its own, a man who had given them nearly four decades of service.

Yet no one in authority really thought that was worth noting publicly. Sure, send a memo to employees. People liked Benny. Wouldn’t want him forgotten. But tell the public? God forbid.

This is getting to be a habit with the VTA. Nearly a year ago, when one of its buses ran over a 72-year-old man named Ron Thompson in south San Jose, the agency initially insisted that it had evidence the bus was not responsible.

On Cheung’s death, a spokeswoman for VTA, Stacey Hendler Ross, told me, “We knew that a bus may have been involved. But we didn’t know exactly what happened.” Even then, she said, it wasn’t the VTA’s role to release information in an ongoing police investigation.

San Jose police Chief Eddie Garcia said investigators passed on updating the case because they were not absolutely certain what they had. The call came in as a hit-and-run, he said, and police did not focus on the bus until they recovered evidence from its wheel well.

“We have a good idea, we have a good direction, we feel confident,” he told me. “But for us to say 100 percent that it was the bus would be tough.”

Incidentally, the chief declined to describe the wheel-well evidence. When I asked whether the driver was aware that the bus had run over Cheung, Garcia did not answer directly. “If this bus did run the victim over, we have to investigate that,” he said. “And we have to go step by step.”

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The bus driver was taken off duty on the night of the accident. That driver is now on leave pending the outcome of required drug screening tests.

You can appreciate the chief’s caution: Investigations like this are rarely easy. And cops should be careful not to say something that later is shown to be untrue.

But particularly once the VTA has released a memo on the case to its staff, the same information should be shared publicly. What’s missing in this story is an understanding of who pays the freight in this situation.

Who pays the salaries of the VTA driver and its public relations people? The public. Who pays for the buses? The public. Who pays the cops? The public. Who will pay the death settlement, if there is one? The public.

You’d think that same public deserves an idea of what happened. Declining to be open about Benny Cheung’s death raises the specter of a cover-up — or the supposition that the VTA doesn’t want to hurt ridership. That might be unfair. But what’s clear is that the cops and VTA should have moved themselves to find a better solution.

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## **[Roadshow: When a honk leads to road rage](#)**

**Gary Richards**

**San Jose Mercury News**

**Q** I know you don’t encourage the use of the horn, but it is unfortunately necessary and I have started paying attention to how often I use it. Before, a few months ago, I maybe used the horn once every few days.

**Arian Sarris**

**A** And now?

**Q** I use it probably five to 10 times A DAY! About 90 percent of the time it’s because some jerk at the stop light is looking down — at their phone. It is amazingly common. And it’s getting worse every day!

**Arian Sarris**

**A** A light tap on the horn can be OK, but blasting away on the horn frequently is not an approved Roadshow driving habit. Why? Road rage.

**Q** I was entering a shopping plaza and as I was entering, a guy blasted by and I honked. He honked back and continued to act inappropriately (slowing and hitting his brakes).

He continued this, then parked in a handicapped spot where he sat and waited. I, unfortunately, had to cross his path to get to the store and he yelled about how he did not have a stop sign. I brushed that off, not worth the argument.

### **Walter Mayed**

**A** One honk can lead to another and rising tempers. But you did right to walk away.

**Q** One night I was on Benton Street, waiting to cross San Tomas Expressway in Santa Clara, when I pulled up behind a vehicle. There were a couple of cars in front, all waiting to cross the intersection. At that intersection there is a “keep clear” sign, so I complied.

The left-turn arrow turned green and the potatohead in the car in front of me decided he wanted to go that way instead. He dropped his car into reverse and, before I had time to react, had reversed into me and took off. Of course I went after him, and a block later he pulled over.

### **Eddie Chandler**

**A** No, no, no. Don't go speeding after Mr. Potato Head. Fortunately this dispute ended calmly, but it might not have.

**Q** My wife was heading to Interstate 280 in downtown San Jose, apparently going too slow for the driver behind her. As he zoomed around her on the ramp, she honked at him. He slammed on his brakes and only her quick action prevented a collision.

### **Tom Bates**

**A** According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, confrontations between drivers are becoming more common. You can try to steer clear of them by following these tips.

- Don't tailgate.
- Use your horn only when needed to get another driver's attention to prevent an accident.
- Don't block the passing (left) lane or obstruct the flow of traffic, even if going the speed limit. Allow faster traffic to pass.
- Ignore gestures.
- Avoid eye contact with aggressive drivers as this can be seen as confrontational. Try to keep any encounter impersonal.
- Resist the urge to react. Don't confront an upset driver and never pull off the road to settle things unless in an accident.
- If trapped in traffic or at a red light and feel threatened, do not open your door or roll down your window if the other driver approaches you. Keep your doors locked, call 911 and honk loudly for help.

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### **[The fix at Poplar/101 is only a half-cure at this point](#)**

#### **John Horgan**

#### **San Jose Mercury News**

For years, there has been ongoing planning to make southbound access on and off Highway 101 at Poplar Avenue in San Mateo safer. It only made good sense.

The original configuration was a perfect storm; it was an accident waiting to happen by anyone's definition. That's because the disjointed setup permitted left-turns (and even cross-traffic) across the path of vehicles entering or exiting the freeway.

The intersection includes North Amphlett Boulevard. So, actually, there are three arteries converging at that location.

Last year, Caltrans created what most of us thought would be a better alternative there. Left-turn access eastbound from Poplar was halted by a barrier.

But what about left-turn access onto North Amphlett for vehicles exiting the freeway? That arrangement has remained in place; there is even a nifty, new, separate lane for it. Which means that cars, trucks, buses, motorcycles, etc. continue to blow right past traffic preparing to enter the freeway via Poplar.

So, in that dangerous case, nothing has really changed. The new construction has become a half-cure.

There is one ironic piece of possible helpful news, however. The San Mateo office of the Department of Motor Vehicles is located less than a block to the south.

So, if necessary, accident reports, auto salvage issues and other concerns emanating from the nearby intersection can be readily addressed.

But the operating advice at that site, for now, is pretty simple: Keep your head on a swivel. You can't be sure when the next southbound motorist will aim his ride to the left as it whizzes off the freeway.

Critters on loose

Meanwhile, in the wide, wide, wonderful world of wacky wildlife (one of our favorite topics), a fresh phenomenon has been spotted in a variety of locations along the Peninsula lately.

Yep, wild turkeys have been seen cavorting in a number of neighborhoods. They have been noted from South San Francisco to Belmont, according to a variety of helpful sources who pay attention to such matters.

The big birds, who can be aggressive in some cases, aren't known to be terribly nervous around people so a degree of caution would be advised when approaching them.

Come to think about it, perhaps these fresh avian faces could help us out by frightening off at least some of the annoying Canadian geese who regularly visit this territory, soiling their landing zones with their own particular brand of noisome digestive leavings in the process.

Well, we can hope.

Raffle underway

The San Mateo Rotary Club's annual raffle to help to finance its ambitious college scholarship program for worthy students in that community is underway.

Tickets cost \$100 each and they are available for purchase online at [www.sanmateorotary.org](http://www.sanmateorotary.org).

For more than a generation, the club, founded in 1924, has handed out financial awards to students who attend San Mateo schools, amounting to \$1 million in total so far.

Raffle winners will be drawn at 5:30 p.m. on April 20 at Boston Private Bank in San Mateo. The grand prize is \$15,000; second and third prizes are \$1,000 and \$500 respectively.

For more information, you can consult the club's website. With 160 members, the San Mateo club is the largest Rotary organization between Novato and Mountain View.

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## [High Speed Rail Coverage](#)

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## [What you need to know about California's road-repair bill](#)

**Katy Murphy**

**San Jose Mercury News**

*Here is how Gov. Jerry Brown and top Democrats in Sacramento propose raising and spending \$52.4 billion over the next decade to fix California's roads:*

### **HOW THE MONEY WOULD BE RAISED**

\$24.4 billion by **increasing the gasoline excise tax 12 cents a gallon**

\$200 million from an **annual \$100 fee on zero emission vehicles** beginning in 2020

\$7.3 billion by **increasing the diesel excise tax by 20 cents a gallon**

\$3.5 billion by **increasing the sales tax on diesel fuel to 5.75 percent**

\$16.3 billion from an **annual "transportation improvement fee"** based on a vehicle's value

\$706 million in **General Fund loan repayments**

### **HOW THE MONEY WOULD BE SPENT LOCALLY**

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### **HOW THE MONEY WOULD BE SPENT LOCALLY**

**\$15 billion** in "Fix-It-First" local road repairs such as fixing potholes

**\$7.5 billion** to improve local public transportation

**\$2 billion** to support local “self-help” communities that are making their own investments in transportation improvements

**\$1 billion** to improve infrastructure that promotes walking and bicycling

**\$825 million** for the State Transportation Improvement Program local contribution

**\$250 million** in local transportation planning grants

#### **HOW THE MONEY WOULD BE SPENT STATEWIDE**

**\$15 billion** in “Fix-it-First” highway repairs, including smoother pavement

**\$4 billion** in bridge and culvert repairs

**\$3 billion** to improve trade corridors

**\$2.5 billion** to reduce congestion on major commute corridors

**\$1.4 billion** in other transportation investments, including \$275 million for highway and intercity-transit improvements.

Source: Governor’s Office

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### **[Pothole relief? California deal includes tax hike, electric car fee](#)**

**Katy Murphy**

**San Jose Mercury News**

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Jerry Brown and top Democratic lawmakers on Wednesday announced a major deal aimed at repairing California’s crumbling roads and bridges by raising fuel taxes, hiking vehicle registration fees and for the first time charging electric car owners a yearly fee.

The unveiling of the proposal to raise \$5 billion annually through a 12-cent-per-gallon gas tax, a \$100 annual fee on electric vehicles and other new taxes and fees follows years of debate over how to fund a transportation upgrade. The cost of backlogged repairs has ballooned to \$59 billion for state highways and \$78 billion for local roads, estimates Sen. Jim Beall — a San Jose Democrat who is carrying a road-repair bill.

“This is like fixing the roof on your house,” said Brown, standing on the east steps of the Capitol before a backdrop of Democratic legislators and construction workers in hard hats. “If you don’t fix the leak, your furniture will be ruined. Your rug will be destroyed. The wood will rot.”

But the hard-fought deal must now be approved by the Legislature with a two-thirds vote in each house. It is shaping up to be the first real test of how far the Democrats are able to leverage the new legislative supermajority they gained after the November election.

If no Republicans vote for it, the measure would need all 27 Senate Democrats and 54 out of 55 Democrats in the Assembly to vote “yes.” And GOP leaders, left out of the talks, have already come out swinging against the tax and fee increases, saying they will hurt low- and middle-income Californians.

Brown himself conceded at the news conference that “nothing is assured here. Nothing’s in the bag.”

Previous efforts to raise the state gas tax — now at about 28 cents per gallon — have failed, but transportation officials and millions of drivers throughout the state are watching the latest push closely. Many are hoping for a breakthrough this time, in a nonelection year — and after the February evacuation of communities near Oroville Dam exposed the risks of neglecting the state’s aging infrastructure.

“Each year as we don’t deal with it, it gets larger and larger,” Randy Iwasaki, executive director of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, said of the repair backlog.

The governor’s office says the average motorist would see their taxes and fees rise by less than \$10 a month, or under \$120 annually. Beall estimates that someone who drives 12,000 miles per year in a car that’s “not expensive” and gets 27 miles to the gallon would pay \$78 more a year — \$53 more at the pump plus a \$25 registration fee for less-expensive vehicles. The maximum fee — for vehicles worth over \$60,000 — would be \$175, but 85 percent of car owners would pay \$50 or less.

In addition to state highway and bridge repairs, the proposal would spend \$7.5 billion over the next decade on local public transportation projects and another \$1 billion on infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists — investments cheered by BART board President Rebecca Saltzman. If it passes, she said, it “will be a constant and reliable anchor for the region at a time when many of our most important institutions feel adrift, financially and otherwise.”

The agreement includes oversight from an inspector general and a constitutional amendment to ensure the money is spent on transportation and not diverted to other state priorities. If it passes, California will join a growing number of states, including Colorado, Washington and Virginia, that have levied fees on electric cars. That fee wouldn’t kick in until 2020.

California has not raised its gas tax in 23 years, according to the governor’s office, and proponents say the shortfall is obvious to anyone who drives in the state.

The funding “is needed in the worst way in San Jose,” said Jim Ortbal, the city’s director of transportation. A quarter of the city’s roads have fallen into poor condition, he said, because San Jose doesn’t have adequate funding to keep them up.

Ray Ruiz, a bail bondsman who traverses the Bay Area in his Toyota Camry, said the roads are so bad he has actually taken to wearing mouth guards on unfamiliar streets to protect his tongue — a safety precaution he adopted after one excruciating clash with a pothole “that was more like a trench.” Ruiz estimates he drives roughly 250 miles per day, so he knows he will pay more than the average Californian if the tax is hiked, but he supports the idea anyway.

“The way the roads are now, I’m afraid to drive,” he said. “I have a daughter who drives, and I worry about her driving with the road conditions the way they are.”

The deal hammered out by the governor’s office, leaders of the Senate and Assembly, Beall and Assemblyman Jim Frazier, D-Oakley, will be plunked into Beall’s Senate Bill 1, which has already cleared three Senate committees.

The governor's office and the Legislature have set a deadline of April 6 for approving the deal, before the Legislature adjourns for a weeklong spring recess — and before state budget negotiations consume the Capitol. Beall said it will be heard by the Senate Appropriations committee on Monday.

Cities and counties, labor unions and business groups have formed the Fix Our Roads Coalition to promote legislation to fix roads and bridges. Coalition leaders argue that the state needs to create an adequate funding stream to maintain roads, funded mainly by drivers, so that costly and dangerous backlogs don't pile up in the first place.

"Raising additional revenues for transportation will not be an easy vote when the time comes," said California Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Allan Zaremberg in a statement Wednesday, "but doing nothing will only ensure deterioration in the system necessary to move people and goods."

Assembly Republicans — who say the state should better manage the car-related tax revenue it already has — went on the offensive Wednesday, posting a video critical of the Democrats' proposal.

The GOP caucus has advanced its own proposal, carried by Assemblyman Vince Fong, R-Bakersfield. Assembly Bill 496 would pay for road repairs without raising taxes by redirecting billions of dollars from such sources as vehicle sales taxes and truck-weight fees to road repairs.

"Every dollar that is paid by the motorists should go to transportation," Fong said.

But Brown characterized the Democrats' proposal as a responsible, common-sense measure. "The only choice is: Do we borrow from the next generation, or do we really belly up to the bar and say 'Here's what it costs, and we're going to pay it.'"

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## **[Bay Area Transportation Leaders Hail New State Funding Proposal](#)**

### **PR Newswire**

SAN FRANCISCO, March 29, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Chair Jake Mackenzie and Commission Vice Chair Scott Haggerty today applauded the funding package unveiled by Gov. Brown, state Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León and state Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon. The package, if approved by the Legislature, would mark the largest transportation investment in state history, directing some \$5 billion annually to help restore California's local streets and roads, state highways and bridges to a state of good repair; improve public transit; reduce congestion in major commute corridors; establish programs for upgrading key freight routes; and promote active transportation with new projects for bicycle and pedestrian travel. These improvements would be financed through a combination of higher taxes on gasoline and diesel fuel as well as an increase in vehicle license fees.

"This is what real leadership looks like," said Mackenzie, who also serves as Rohnert Park Mayor, noting that 23 years have passed since the state government last increased funding for

transportation. "The state has kicked the can down the proverbial road for a full generation, during which time some of our rural roads have started returning to gravel. The governor, Senate and Assembly leaders and State Transportation Agency secretary Brian Kelly all had a lot of heavy lifting to do, and they've done it. Now we'll see if our crumbling pavement, crawling traffic and corroding transit infrastructure will spur the rest of our legislators to do some heavy lifting of their own."

Haggerty, an Alameda County Supervisor who has served as an MTC Commissioner since 2000, praised the funding package for its scope, its accountability and its economic impact. "It guarantees funding for local needs like street and road repairs and transit service as well as for state highways. It provides a new program to help goods movement in places like the I-880/I-238/I-580 corridor between the Port of Oakland and the Central Valley. And it prevents the Legislature from diverting the funds for non-transportation purposes. That's a recipe for creating thousands of good construction jobs and sustaining long-term growth."

Formally known as the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, the funding package is expected to generate \$52.4 billion for transportation investment over the next decade. This includes:

\$24.4 billion by increasing the state excise tax on gasoline by 12 cents per gallon;

\$16.3 billion from an annual vehicle license fee based on vehicle value;

\$7.3 billion by increasing the state excise tax on diesel fuel by 20 cents per gallon;

\$3.5 billion by increasing the sales tax on diesel fuel to 5.75 percent;

\$706 million through repayments from the state General Fund; and

\$200 million from an annual \$100 Zero Emission Vehicle fee that would start in 2020.

These funds would be split 50/50 between a "Fix Local Streets and Transportation Infrastructure" element and a "Fix State Highways and Transportation Infrastructure" component. The 10-year forecast for the local funding portion includes:

\$15 billion for local street and road repairs;

\$7.5 billion for public transit improvements;

\$2 billion to support "self-help" counties in which voters have approved dedicated transportation sales taxes. (These include all Bay Area counties except Solano);

\$1 billion to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure;

\$825 million for local contribution to State Transportation Improvement Program; and

\$250 million for local transportation planning grants.

Revenue projections for Bay Area cities and counties through the "Fix Local Streets" component will be posted shortly on the MTC website at [www.mtc.ca.gov](http://www.mtc.ca.gov). Ten-year projections for the state portion of the funding package include:

\$15 billion for highway repairs;

\$4 billion to repair bridges and culverts;

\$3 billion to improve freight-movement corridors;

\$2.5 billion to reduce congestion in major commute corridors; and

\$1.4 billion for other projects.

MTC is the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

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### [Bay Area's high prices, traffic could spur exodus](#)

**Bob Egelko**

**SF Gate**

An increasing number of Bay Area residents are planning to move out of the area, or at least considering it, primarily because of housing prices, the rising cost of living and traffic, according to a new poll.

The survey of a randomly selected group of 1,000 registered voters from the nine counties, released Thursday, found that 19 percent "strongly agreed," and another 21 percent "somewhat agreed," with a statement that they were likely to move out of the Bay Area in the next few years. Forty-six percent of the respondents disagreed, either strongly or somewhat, and the rest said they didn't know.

Thirty percent of those 18 to 24 strongly agreed that they were likely to leave, compared with 13 percent of those 65 and older, the poll reported. African Americans and Latinos, renters, and those who spent 45 percent or more of their income on housing also stood out as likely to consider moving, the poll results showed.

Geographically, residents of Santa Clara and Solano counties were the most likely to say they were considering relocation, and residents of Marin and Sonoma counties were the least likely.

The same survey a year ago found that 13 percent strongly agreed that they were likely to move and 21 percent somewhat agreed.

Pollsters asked residents what they see as the most serious problems facing the Bay Area. The most frequent answer was the cost of living, mentioned by 25 percent of respondents, followed by housing at 17 percent, traffic at 13 percent, and poverty or income inequality at 9 percent. Similar results were reported in last year's survey.

The poll was sponsored by the business-backed Bay Area Council. Its president, Jim Wunderman, said the results support the group's call for more housing and fewer restrictions on development.

“Until we get serious about building the housing we need, we’re going to continue seeing our region drained of the young and diverse talent that has helped make the Bay Area an economic powerhouse,” he said in a statement. “We know what the solutions are — streamline local approval and reduce fees and regulatory costs — we just need the political will.”

The cost of living, which respondents rated the most serious problem, is closely related to housing, Wunderman said. “The Bay Area is more expensive than other places, but the cost of housing is particularly out of whack,” he said.

The median price paid for new and existing homes and condos in the Bay Area was \$662,000 in February, a 7.6 percent increase over last year, according to a newly released report.

New census figures found that population growth in the area has slowed and that three counties — Santa Clara, San Mateo and Marin — lost more people than they gained in the 12-month period that ended in June.

The poll was conducted online from Jan. 24 through Feb. 1. It had a 3.1 percentage point margin of error.

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## **[Dublin Sends BART Message It Wants 2nd Parking Structure](#)**

**Ron McNicoll**

**The Independent**

Dublin city councilmembers took a close look at the BART board's decision “to pause” a promised net addition of 540 parking spaces at the East Dublin station. The council made it clear to BART director John McPartland that they “strongly support” building the facility.

McPartland, the Valley's BART director, gave a presentation about the status of the planned six-story parking structure addition at the March 21 Dublin council meeting.

BART directors at their Feb. 9 meeting blocked a staff recommendation to move ahead with the project. Instead, they will wait until a regular board meeting in May to make a decision. It is not certain that directors will approve the parking structure, since they are having staff research options that they say might ease parking woes at the station without spending as much money.

McPartland joined the other eight directors in approving the 90-day delay. In addition, directors said they want a specific financing plan before committing to building the structure.

Funding of \$8.6 million for design and environmental review has been identified. BART would share cost of the \$28.5 million construction with the Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). BART staff will talk to the other two agencies to see how much each agency would agree to pay as their share.

If the project were approved, it would take three to five years to build it, said McPartland. At the BART meeting, directors formed a list of alternatives that could be considered. They included new surface parking, on-street parking near the station, automated stacked parking, a satellite parking lot, and dedicated or shared parking with business and municipal lots.

More multi-modal access was suggested, in line with newly adopted BART policy for station access. It includes bike lockers and/or a bike station, improved transit access, and increased car pooling. Transit-oriented development (TOD) also was mentioned as a way to put more transit riders within walking distance of BART.

Councilmembers said that some or all of the alternatives may be good, but with the growth projected for the Valley, there still needs to be a garage.

Further, even if more cars can be subtracted from the freeways, whether by riding bikes to BART, or taking carpools, it still will be necessary to get cars off the road, and that could be accomplished with a parking structure.

McPartland commented to the city council about the alternatives being studied by BART. About new surface parking, McPartland said, "I already know the answer to that one."

McPartland got a further answer from City Manager Chris Foss, who said he will draft a letter to the BART real estate division. He will say that it would not be appropriate to have BART parking on private property, including county-owned land that is part of the East Dublin specific plan. Council members agreed.

On-street parking "is also a non-starter," McPartland said. However, a satellite lot is being considered by ACTC one-half mile from the station.

In a move to boost carpooling, a new phone app pilot program called Scoop began operating late in January at the Dublin/Pleasanton station. An interested driver contacts potential riders through the app, commits to a morning pickup, and can park in a specially reserved space for the pilot. There are about 40 participants so far. If it were successful, it will move to other BART stations, said McPartland.

Councilmembers expressed frustration about the years-long waiting list for residents to obtain paid parking permits at the BART stations. There is a waiting list of 3368 people competing for 140 monthly permits at the eastside station, said BART spokesperson Jim Allison. In the Dublin/Pleasanton station, there are 3188 on the list hoping for one of the 601 permits allowed to the station.

There are 129 parking spaces at Dublin/Pleasanton for anyone to use after 10 a.m. on a first-come, first-served basis, if they were not filled up by 10 a.m.

Paid permits cost \$105 per month. Daily first-come, first-served parking is \$3 per day. BART has bike lockers, and also bike stations at several big city locations. Bike stations offer free valet parking, 24-hour controlled access, repairs, sales, classes and events. The savings are evident, said directors. A bicycle locker costs BART \$3400 per bike, and a car space is \$68,000.

BART director Nick Josefowitz said at the BART meeting that the stark contrast between the two costs was the reason for delaying approval for building the structure, and looking at various alternatives.

Dublin councilmembers made it clear that they think that multi-modal access alone won't solve the problem.

"Cars are not going away," said Councilmember Melissa Hernandez-Strah.

Standing at the audience podium, McPartland said, "I couldn't agree with you more. Here's where we have a split board. In San Francisco there are stations with no parking."

Debora Allen, a director representing a suburban edge area in Contra Costa County, spoke up about what she thought the board was doing politically at the meeting. She spoke directly to construction union workers in the audience who said they support building the structure. Allen said, "My fellow directors are using the cost of construction to support not going ahead."

Melissa Hernandez-Strah asked McPartland what he thinks will happen in May. He said the board will see if it can solve the parking problem without building the structure. "If we can't, we will take a vote (to build it). I'm confident that it will pass."

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## [Lyft just came out with its biggest innovation yet: buses](#)

**Emma Hinchliffe**

**Mashable**

Lyft is truly an innovator of transportation.

The ride-hailing app is testing a new service in San Francisco and Chicago called Shuttle. Like the name suggests, Shuttle is basically a bus.

Lyft users in those two cities can request a Lyft Line like they normally would, and then see the option to switch to a Shuttle if they are near one of the preset Shuttle routes. Those routes have preset pickup and dropoff points, like, again, a bus.

Shuttle will only be available during weekday commuter hours, from 6:30 to 10 a.m. and 4 to 8 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

The cost of a Shuttle ride is fixed, according to the time and distance of the route.

Shuttle service will operate within Lyft Line, Lyft's ride-pooling service. Lyft won't yet say when the service will roll out to other cities and customers.

SEE ALSO: Lyft already met its 2017 goal to expand to 100 new cities

The startup Chariot tried something similar in San Francisco and Austin. And Uber is experimenting with a commute option in D.C.'s suburbs.

"Lyft Line is the future of rideshare, and we often test new features that we believe will have positive impact on our passengers' transportation options," Lyft said through a spokesperson. "We look forward to feedback on Shuttle from the Lyft community; we see a number of commuting use cases that this mode will make easier."

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

**From:** Board Secretary  
**Sent:** Friday, March 31, 2017 4:18 PM  
**To:** VTA Board of Directors  
**Subject:** VTA Information: Ridership Memo for February 2017

**VTA Board of Directors:**

Attached is a memorandum from Chief Operating Officer Inez Evans regarding VTA ridership for February 2017.

Thank you.

Office of the Board Secretary  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
3331 N. First Street  
San Jose, CA 95134  
408.321.5680  
[board.secretary@vta.org](mailto:board.secretary@vta.org)



Conserve paper. Think before you print.

**TO:** VTA Board of Directors

**THROUGH:** Nuria I. Fernandez  
General Manager/CEO

**FROM:** Inez Evans  
Chief Operating Officer

**DATE:** March 31, 2017

**SUBJECT:** VTA Ridership for February 2017

February 2017 total monthly system ridership for bus and light rail was 2,804,500, a decrease of 16.7% over February 2016. February 2017 had 20 weekdays, one less than February 2016 (21 weekdays). Core bus routes showed a 13.0% decrease in average weekday bus ridership. Community bus routes recorded a 9% decrease. Forty-seven of the 69 bus routes (68%) did not meet the weekday standards as defined in the Transit Service Plan.

There were no Levi's events in February 2017 compared to February 2016 which had the Super Bowl 50 weekend. About 18,950 riders rode the system then for the Carolina Panthers versus the Denver Broncos game, at least 15% more than a typical Sunday. February 2017 recorded about 17 times more rainfall than February 2016. February 2017 had one less weekday than February 2016 contributing to the overall decrease. The top 5 core routes and light rail stations that had the most declines on an average weekday are shown in the table below:

**Average Weekday**

<b>Route</b>	<b>February-2017</b>	<b>February-2016</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
22	11,233	12,948	(1,715)	-13.2%
23	6,867	7,732	(865)	-11.2%
25	5,883	6,728	(845)	-12.6%
522	5,658	6,467	(809)	-12.5%
66	5,187	5,889	(702)	-11.9%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34,828</b>	<b>39,764</b>	<b>(4,936)</b>	<b>-12.4%</b>
<b>Station</b>	<b>February-2017</b>	<b>February-2016</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
SANTA CLARA STATION	1,719	2,175	(456)	-21.0%
SAN ANTONIO STATION	2,076	2,444	(368)	-15.1%
TASMAN STATION	1,757	2,101	(344)	-16.4%
GREAT MALL STATION	991	1,310	(319)	-24.4%
CIVIC CENTER STATION	1,046	1,251	(205)	-16.4%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,589</b>	<b>9,281</b>	<b>(1,692)</b>	<b>-18.2%</b>

February 2017 total monthly ridership showed a 0.7% decrease compared to January 2017. Ridership change from January to February typically averages +7.0%.

The ridership data is in trend with fare revenues.

<b>Ridership</b>	<b>February-2017</b>	<b>February-2016</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>January-2017</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Bus	2,149,088	2,542,359	-15.5%	2,148,947	0.0%
Light Rail	655,412	825,010	-20.6%	674,439	-2.8%
System	2,804,500	3,367,369	-16.7%	2,823,386	-0.7%

**From:** Board Secretary

**Sent:** Friday, March 31, 2017 4:36 PM

**To:** VTA Board of Directors

**Subject:** Governor Brown, Senate President pro Tempore and Assembly Speaker Announce Landmark Road Repair and Transportation Investment Package

VTA Board of Directors:

Gov. Jerry Brown, Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de Leon and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon announced that they had reached an agreement on a state transportation funding package that proposes to generate approximately \$5 billion a year in new revenues for state highways, local streets/road, goods movement, public transit, and bicycle/pedestrian facilities. It is expected that this agreement will be amended into SB 1 (Beall) later this week. The Governor and the two legislative leaders are pushing to have the Assembly and Senate vote on the package by April 6. It will require a two-thirds majority vote in both chambers to be approved.

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Office of Governor  
**Edmund G. Brown Jr.**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Governor's Press Office

Wednesday, March 29, 2017

(916) 445-4571

## **Governor Brown, Senate President pro Tempore and Assembly Speaker Announce Landmark Road Repair and Transportation Investment Package**

SACRAMENTO – Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon today joined labor, business and local leaders to announce a landmark transportation investment to fix our roads, freeways and bridges in communities across California and put more dollars toward transit and safety. The \$5 billion-a-year program will cost most drivers less than \$10 a month and comes with strict new accountability provisions to ensure funds can only be spent on transportation.

“California has a massive backlog of broken infrastructure that has been neglected far too long,” said Governor Brown. “Fixing the roads will not get cheaper by waiting – or ignoring the problem. This is a smart plan that will improve the quality of life in California.”

“We can’t afford to keep kicking the can down the road. Californians are tired of the constant traffic jams and crumbling roads, and they expect us to find solutions,” said Senate President pro Tempore de León. “These critical investments will keep our state moving and economy growing. I look forward to getting this deal through the Legislature and onto the Governor’s desk next week.”

“We have a solution before us and we have a choice before us,” said Assembly Speaker Rendon. “We can choose to do nothing, and see more deterioration, more time lost in traffic, and more damage to cars, or we can choose to advance this compromise solution that fixes California’s broken transportation system in a way where drivers will actually end up paying less for a better quality of life.”

California has not increased the gas tax in 23 years. Since then, California’s population has grown by eight million, with millions more cars and trucks on our roads. Californians also drive more than 350 billion miles a year– more than any other state – yet road and transit investments have not kept pace with this growth.

Each California driver spends approximately \$700 per year in [extra vehicle repairs](#) caused by rough roads. If California does not make investments to fix the roads now, it will cost eight times more to replace later.

The legislation, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, SB 1 (Beall), invests \$52.4 billion over the next decade – split equally between state and local investments:

**Fix Local Streets and Transportation Infrastructure (50 percent):**

- \$15 billion in “Fix-It-First” local road repairs, including fixing potholes
- \$7.5 billion to improve local public transportation
- \$2 billion to support local “self-help” communities that are making their own investments in transportation improvements
- \$1 billion to improve infrastructure that promotes walking and bicycling
- \$825 million for the State Transportation Improvement Program local contribution
- \$250 million in local transportation planning grants.

**Fix State Highways and Transportation Infrastructure (50 percent):**

- \$15 billion in “Fix-it-First” highway repairs, including smoother pavement
- \$4 billion in bridge and culvert repairs
- \$3 billion to improve trade corridors
- \$2.5 billion to reduce congestion on major commute corridors
- \$1.4 billion in other transportation investments, including \$275 million for highway and intercity-transit improvements.

**Ensure Taxpayer Dollars Are Spent Properly with Strong Accountability Measures:**

- Constitutional amendment to prohibit spending the funds on anything but transportation
- Inspector General to ensure Caltrans and any entities receiving state transportation funds spend taxpayer dollars efficiently, effectively and in compliance with state and federal requirements
- Provision that empowers the California Transportation Commission to hold state and local government accountable for making the transportation improvements they commit to delivering

- Authorization for the California Transportation Commission to review and allocate Caltrans funding and staffing for highway maintenance to ensure those levels are reasonable and responsible
- Authorization for Caltrans to complete earlier mitigation of environmental impacts from construction, a policy that will reduce costs and delays while protecting natural resources.

Guided by the principles set forth by [President Ronald Reagan](#) when he increased the federal gas tax in 1982, this transportation investment package is funded by everyone who uses our roads and highways:

- \$7.3 billion by increasing diesel excise tax 20 cents
- \$3.5 billion by increasing diesel sales tax to 5.75 percent
- \$24.4 billion by increasing gasoline excise tax 12 cents
- \$16.3 billion from an annual transportation improvement fee based on a vehicle's value
- \$200 million from an annual \$100 Zero Emission Vehicle fee commencing in 2020.
- \$706 million in General Fund loan repayments.

Leadership in both the Senate and the Assembly expect the measure to be voted on by Thursday, April 6, 2017.

###

**Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.**

State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814

[Forward](#)

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Conserve paper. Think before you print.

**From:** Board Secretary

**Sent:** Friday, March 31, 2017 5:22 PM

**To:** VTA Board of Directors

**Subject:** VTA Correspondence: Support Letters for AB 28 (Frazier) and SB 1 (Beall); Comments on Tamien Station Joint Development and Clipper Program

**VTA Board of Directors:**

We are forwarding you the following:

<b>From</b>	<b>Topic</b>
VTA	Letters of Support for AB 28 (Frazier) and SB 1 (Beall)
SV@Home	Comments regarding Tamien Station Joint Development
Members of the Public	Comments regarding Clipper Program

Thank you.

Office of the Board Secretary  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
3331 N. First Street  
San Jose, CA 95134  
408.321.5680  
[board.secretary@vta.org](mailto:board.secretary@vta.org)



Conserve paper. Think before you print.

March 21, 2017

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) supports AB 28 (Frazier) and respectfully requests that you sign this bill into law. AB 28 re-enacts statutory provisions that would permit Caltrans to continue to participate in a federal program that allows states to assume the responsibilities of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As you know, these provisions expired on January 1, 2017.

In 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) established the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program as a way to expedite the delivery of transportation projects without a lessening of environmental protection. Under this program, which was renamed the NEPA Assignment Program in a subsequent federal surface transportation authorization bill, California was designated as one of five states that were eligible to apply to the U.S. Department of Transportation to assume the responsibilities of FHWA under NEPA. To participate in this program, the eligible states were required to accept the financial costs associated with the delegated authority, as well as assume full liability for lawsuits filed under NEPA in federal court by waiving, on a limited basis, their sovereign immunity under the Eleventh Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

In 2006, AB 1039 (Nunez) was enacted into law to provide the necessary statutory authority for Caltrans to participate in the NEPA Assignment Program. Among other things, this bill granted Caltrans a limited waiver of its Eleventh Amendment protection in order to allow the department to be sued in federal court, as well as to defend legal challenges brought against a NEPA document. AB 1039 was scheduled to sunset on January 1, 2009. However, subsequent bills extended its provisions until January 1, 2017.

With the limited waiver in place, Caltrans entered into a memorandum of understanding with FHWA and began participating in the NEPA Assignment Program effective July 1, 2007. As a result, Caltrans assumed the role of lead agency for federal environmental reviews for transportation projects that previously would have gone through FHWA. Since 2007, Caltrans has provided a series of reports to the Legislature showing that the department has been able to realize significant time and cost savings for transportation projects as a result of its participation in the NEPA Assignment Program.

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.  
Support for AB 28 (Frazier)  
March 21, 2017  
Page Two

Unfortunately, with Caltrans' limited waiver of sovereign immunity coming to an end on January 1 of this year, the department is no longer able to participate in the NEPA Assignment Program and, therefore, is in the process of transferring this responsibility back to FHWA. This situation almost certainly will increase environmental document processing times for California transportation projects.

AB 28 would solve this problem by reauthorizing Caltrans, until January 1, 2020, to consent to the jurisdiction of the federal courts with regard to NEPA lawsuits, which would allow the department to continue to participate in the NEPA Assignment Program for another three years.

We respectfully seek your support for AB 28. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Bruins, Chairperson  
Board of Directors  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

March 31, 2017

The Honorable Ricardo Lara, Chairperson  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol, Room 2206  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chairperson Lara:

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) respectfully requests your support for SB 1 (Beall) when this bill comes before the Senate Appropriations Committee for a vote. This comprehensive and well-thought-out measure would raise new revenues to address various transportation funding needs, as well as put in place a number of important transportation policy reforms. Roughly two years in the making, SB 1 reflects a compromise that recently emerged from a series of intense and productive negotiations occurring over the past two weeks.

As you know, there has been considerable discussion about transportation funding ever since the Governor highlighted in his FY 2016 budget that California has a shortfall of \$59 billion for maintenance and rehabilitation work on the state highway system over the next 10 years. For local streets and roads, the gap over the same period has been estimated at \$78 billion. Without immediate legislative action to address these funding shortfalls, pavement conditions will deteriorate at a faster rate, resulting in increased costs to the state and cities/counties, as well as impacts to public safety and California's economic competitiveness.

Similarly, public transit is facing significant funding shortfalls. According to a needs assessment commissioned by the California Transit Association, the state's public transit systems face a \$72 billion funding gap over the next 10 years, \$39 billion of which relates to deferred maintenance, vehicle replacement and facility rehabilitation. Left unaddressed, these shortfalls will degrade the quality, frequency and reliability of public transit service, depressing ridership and limiting access for people who rely on our bus and rail systems for their mobility needs.

VTA believes SB 1 is an important piece of legislation for the following reasons. First, it would generate new revenues through a variety of sources to:

- Close the funding gaps for state highway and local roadway maintenance and rehabilitation.
- Repair and rehabilitate state highway bridges and culverts.
- Improve mobility in key goods movement corridors.
- Provide additional investments in public transit and intercity/commuter rail.
- Supplement existing resources for active transportation, including improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Advance mobility, environmental and community access improvements within highly congested travel corridors throughout the state.
- Reward communities that are investing local resources in their transportation systems.

The Honorable Ricardo Lara  
Support for SB 1 (Beall)  
March 31, 2017  
Page Two

Second, SB 1 tackles a number of lingering and troublesome challenges that have been plaguing transportation funding for years. Specifically, the bill would:

- Fix the volatility of the variable gasoline excise tax, which, in recent years, has resulted in large decreases in funding for the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), and local streets/roads.
- End the erosion of purchasing power of both the gasoline and diesel excise taxes by indexing them to the Consumer Price Index.
- Ensure the repayment of all outstanding loans owed by the General Fund to various transportation accounts, and invest this money in public transit, the SHOPP, local streets/roads, and local/regional climate change adaptation planning.

Finally, SB 1 includes several key policy reforms, such as:

- Creating an Independent Office of Audits and Investigation to ensure that Caltrans and entities receiving state or federal transportation funds from the department are expending those dollars efficiently, effectively, economically, and in compliance with applicable state and federal requirements.
- Establishing an Advance Mitigation Program to improve the success and effectiveness of actions implemented to mitigate the environmental impacts of future transportation projects.
- Strengthening the California Transportation Commission's oversight of Caltrans with regard to the expenditure of SHOPP funding.

SB 1 is an extremely important bill for California's transportation infrastructure, as well as for the state's future. Therefore, we respectfully seek your support for this legislation. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Bruins, Chairperson  
Board of Directors  
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

**From:** Pilar Lorenzana  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 29, 2017 9:46 AM  
**To:** Board Secretary  
**Cc:** Thielen, Jessie; Leslye Corsiglia; Golem, Ron  
**Subject:** Re: Tamien Joint Development  
**Importance:** High

Dear Chair Bruins,

We were very pleased with the VTA Board's decision last April to adopt a strong and progressive Affordable Housing Policy (AHP) governing the disposition of VTA-owned land, which adopted a system-wide 35% affordability goal for VTA land and a 20% per-project requirement, and are excited to see VTA properties moving forward toward development.

To that end, we respectfully submit the attached letter regarding the Tamien Joint Development Site. We request that this letter be made part of the public record regarding future VTA Board of Director's discussion on this issue.

Sincerely,

Pilar Lorenzana  
Deputy Director  
SV@Home  
Office: (510) 255-1253

**Leadership Board**

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*Hispanic Foundation  
of Silicon Valley*

Janice Jensen, Vice Chair  
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Andrea Osgood  
*Eden Housing*

Kelly Snider  
*Kelly Snider Consulting*

Jennifer Van Every  
*The Van Every Group*

**Staff**

Leslye Corsiglia  
*Executive Director*

**TRANSMITTED VIA EMAIL**

March 24, 2017

The Honorable Jeannie Bruins  
Mayor of Los Altos and Chair of the VTA  
Board of Directors  
3331 N. First Street  
San Jose, CA 95134

Dear Chair Bruins,

**Re: Tamien Joint Development**

We were very pleased with the VTA Board's decision last April to adopt a strong and progressive Affordable Housing Policy (AHP) governing the disposition of VTA-owned land, which adopted a system-wide 35% affordability goal for VTA land and a 20% per-project requirement, and are excited to see VTA properties moving forward toward development.

The first project planned under the new AHP is the Tamien Station Joint development, a 440-unit mixed use project right on the CalTrain and light rail lines in San Jose. We have concerns that the proposed project has only 20% affordability—the minimum number possible under the adopted AHP—and encourage the VTA Board to work with the selected developer to increase the number of affordable units.

There are a number of ways that costs can be reduced to increase affordability, including the following:

1. Reconsider the parking requirement. Having nearly 1,500 spaces at a major transit center seems high. If there are alternatives that can reduce the parking needed—like shared parking with the housing and transit uses—the project costs can be significantly reduced. This can result in more units and more affordability.
2. Consider a different financial structure that keeps more VTA contribution in the project. Affordable housing development needs subsidy from a variety of sources, and reducing the land costs would enable more affordability.
3. Work with the City of San Jose to include a density bonus that could add affordable units to the project. It may be too late in the process, but if it is possible to add density, that too can make more affordability feasible.
4. Consider more deeply affordable units that can qualify for Measure A funds.

We have concerns that, if projects move forward with only the minimum affordability, there is a great possibility that the VTA will fall far short of its 35% system-wide goal.

Honorable Jeannie Bruins and members of the VTA Board of Directors

Re: Tamien Station

March 24, 2017

Page 2 of 2

We base this concern on other situations. The most immediate example is with the North San Jose Development Plan, which had a 20% affordability setaside. So many market-rate developments were approved in advance of affordable housing proposals that hitting this target became mathematically impossible. As a result, only 5% of the units in Phase 1 of the NSJ Plan were affordable.

To this end, we recommend that, should the Tamien project ultimately include only 20% affordability, that the Board prioritize approval of an 100% affordable development when the next land opportunity is ready to move forward.

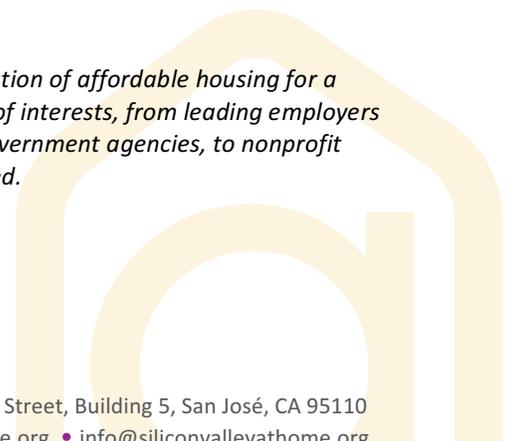
We sincerely appreciate the opportunity to provide comments today, and are happy to respond to any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Leslye Corsiglia  
Executive Director

*SV@Home is a housing policy and advocacy organization that is driving the creation of affordable housing for a more vibrant and equitable Silicon Valley. SV@Home represents a broad range of interests, from leading employers who drive the Bay Area economy, to labor and service organizations, to local government agencies, to nonprofit and for-profit developers who provide housing and services to those most in need.*



-----Original Message-----

From: Test Test

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 1:05 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

To customize this letter, describe the transit services you use, and the reasons you want to see more seamless and/or more equitable transit fares.

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

Test Test

Bethesda, MD

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-----Original Message-----

From: Adina Levin

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 1:07 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,

Adina Levin  
Menlo Park, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: Steve Pepple

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 3:12 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

Steve Pepple

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: Thorisa Yap

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:02 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

To customize this letter, describe the transit services you use, and the reasons you want to see more seamless and/or more equitable transit fares.

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

Thorisa Yap  
Cupertino, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: Kristin Tieche

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:03 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

Kristin Tieche  
San Francisco, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: David Shearn

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:03 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

To customize this letter, describe the transit services you use, and the reasons you want to see more seamless and/or more equitable transit fares.

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

David Shearn  
San Francisco, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: Amie Ashton

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:05 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Clipper Update and Means-Based Fare Study - YES!

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes.

We are in Silicon Valley! I refuse to believe we cannot do better.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration.

Amie Ashton, Palo Alto

Amie Ashton  
Palo Alto, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: Chenxia Liu

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:08 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

I'm a big fan of transit! BART, Muni, Caltrain, AC Transit - I use it all :) (I'm even looking forward to using the SMART trains when they open!) I almost always try to avoid using rideshare like Lyft or Uber when possible, even if they're comparable in price and shorter in transit time. I think transit is incredibly important part of cities, and I'd like to see it better integrated, to encourage others to use it more as well. If I need to Bart, and then Muni, it will take longer than taking a rideshare - it seems ridiculous that sometimes it costs more too!

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

Chenxia Liu  
Berkeley, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: Jame Ervin

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:16 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

I did the initial beta in 2001, and things have changed a lot since then - but the clipper technology hasn't necessarily kept up.

You have noticed that "ride-sharing" is becoming more and more common. For many users the easy payments and simple tracking of the status of your ride makes it pretty compelling. But most ride-sharing users use transit as well. We have also seen lots of new kinds of transit, systems like Chariot and bike share. All of these options are more customer friendly than what we have now.

And we are still using a model of payment that isn't customer friendly, and our agencies are hurting. We expect Clipper users to understand that one pool of money is flexible, another pool of money is designated for monthly pass. Some systems offer day passes. Some don't. Some have transfers. Other's don't.

Plan your trip wrong, and you can easily spend \$15 one way. If I want to take transit to San Mateo, from Oakland, it costs \$12-13 each way. And takes 3 agencies.

We have too many agencies, too many fare models, and it is too complicated. And this leads to more congested roads, because it is easier to drive or take Lyft over figuring out all of the agency fare structures.

We all know we have a lot of growing pains right now, and we have a shared responsibility to create transportation options and make it convenient to use the systems we have. The fare structure on Clipper is a key component. The fare structure should be fair, equitable and logical.

I urge you to:

\* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares

\* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares

\* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional “insurance fund” to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jame Ervin

Jame Ervin  
Oakland

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-----Original Message-----

From: Rupert Clayton

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:34 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

Dear Ed Reiskin and other Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

\* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares

\* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares

\* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,

Rupert Clayton

Rupert Clayton  
San Francisco, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: David Lehr

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:48 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

I have been fortunate enough to rely on almost exclusively on public transportation to get around in the Bay Area.

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares

- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares

- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

David Lehr  
San Francisco, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: Diane Bailey

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 4:55 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

Thank you for working to update the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

I wish the Clipper program could prioritize fare streamlining, and collaborate across agencies to address concerns about any one agency losing a bit of incremental revenue (or the risk of that occurring). The agencies should pool some resources to create a fund that can make up any minor losses in revenue to an agency as a result of streamlining. Such a fund could also support equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

We all agree that fare streamlining is the right thing to do, so let's move forward to address these challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Ensure that the region's agencies work together on a strategy to streamline fares;
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares as quickly as possible; and
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Please consider addressing the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

Diane Bailey  
Belmont, CA

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-----Original Message-----

From: Leslie Stepanek

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 5:05 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

To customize this letter, describe the transit services you use, and the reasons you want to see more seamless and/or more equitable transit fares.

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

Leslie Stepanek  
Sunnyv

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-----Original Message-----

From: Nicholas Fowler

Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 5:11 PM

To: Board Secretary

Subject: Please direct Clipper update and Means-Based Fare study to consider streamlined fares

To customize this letter, describe the transit services you use, and the reasons you want to see more seamless and/or more equitable transit fares.

Dear Transit Board Members and Executives,

As you know well, the region is updating the aging and obsolete Clipper system, with a goal to be more adaptable to the needs of transit users and agencies, and to keep up with evolving payment methods and transportation modes. Meanwhile, the region is considering ways to improve equitable access to transit as part of the MTC Means-based Fare study.

Unfortunately so far, the Clipper program has deferred consideration of fare streamlining, because it is a challenge to collaborate across agencies, and because agencies have concerns that any given agency might lose incremental revenue. As a result, the MTC Means-based program also recommends against equity solutions involving fare streamlining.

Executives and board members often agree that fare streamlining right thing to do - but have refrained to move forward considering the challenges.

I urge you to:

- \* Overcome the inertia and do the right thing - resolve for the region's agencies to work together on a strategy to streamline fares
- \* Direct the Clipper 2.0 project to pursue seamless fares
- \* Direct the MTC Means-Based fare project to reconsider fare streamlining solutions, as part of a roadmap toward more equitable access to transit.

Address the concerns that some agencies may lose incremental revenue, by supporting a regional "insurance fund" to backstop the budgets of individual agencies that may see financial impacts, even though overall ridership is likely to increase. Regional Measure 3 may be an appropriate fit for this purpose, since transbay trips often involve more than one transit agency.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Signature,

Nicholas Fowler  
San Francisco, CA