

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

December 12, 2016

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee

FROM: Steve Lantz, SBCCOG Transportation Director

RE: SBCCOG Transportation Update – December 2016

Adherence to Strategic Plan:

Goal A: Environment, Transportation and Economic Development. Facilitate, implement and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay.

FEDERAL

Nearly 70% Of Transit Measures In Nov. 8th General Elections Across Nation Were Approved

Public transportation across the United States was a major winner in the November 8th election as 33 of the 48 local and state-wide public transit measures up for a vote were approved; a passage rate of 69%, based on unofficial results in 280 measures. According to the American Public Transportation Association, the 49 ballot measures totaling nearly \$200 billion that were voted on were the largest in history.

The largest measure in the country, Los Angeles County's Measure M, was passed with 69% approval. The forever tax will generate more than \$120 billion over the next four decades. A \$3.5 billion bond measure was approved by 70% for Bay Area Rapid Transit rehabilitation and modernization. In addition, a half-cent sales tax proposal for 30 years to provide \$3 billion in funding for Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority projects, passed with 71% approval. In San Diego, Measure A, an initiative that would have raised \$7.5 billion for public transit, did not reach the required two-thirds majority, but did win a 57% approval. A Ventura County half-cent transportation sales tax measure that would have raised \$3.3 billion over 30 years also was defeated falling about 10 percent short of the two-thirds voter approval threshold needed to win passage. Ventura County voters in 2004 decisively rejected a similar measure, 59 percent to 41 percent.

Voters in the Seattle area approved a half-cent sales tax and new property tax measure that will generate \$53.8 billion to build more than four new Sound Transit light rail lines, extend 8 lines, and expand the capacity of Sounder commuter rail stations by 2041. Atlanta voters approved a half-cent sales tax increase to raise \$ 2.5 billion over 40 years to fund rail and bus improvements to Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority's system. Voters in Illinois and New Jersey passed transportation tax “lockbox” measures to prohibit state lawmakers from diverting

transportation user fee revenue to non-transportation uses. Maine approved a statewide transportation bond issue for \$100 million and Rhode Island voters approved \$70 million in bonds for port investment. In Missouri, a statewide initiative to increase the state's cigarette tax to raise an estimated \$100 million annually for transportation investments failed.

FHWA issues Flexible Roadway Design Guide to Safely Incorporate Complete Street Elements

The Federal Highway Administration released a new design guide on November 30th to assist states, local governments, transit agencies, and others to understand the flexibility they have in designing highways and other roads to safely accommodate all road users – including bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders.

The guide – *Achieving Multimodal Networks: Applying Design Flexibility and Reducing Conflicts* – builds on the work FHWA has done both internally and with industry groups like the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO). Part 1 of *Achieving Multimodal Networks* makes clear that flexibility is not only allowed but encouraged under existing guidelines, pointing to FHWA's own guidance on the subject as well as references to works from AASHTO, NACTO, and others in the field. Part 2 provides specific, practical guidance as to how to achieve multimodal design in real-world scenarios. The guide also includes case studies from real transportation projects that include everything from bike lanes to enhanced sidewalks and bus stops.

Elaine Chao Nominated as U. S. Transportation Secretary

President-Elect Donald Trump announced on November 29th that Elaine Chao will be U. S. Transportation Secretary. She previously held a Cabinet post as Labor Secretary from 2001 to 2009. Before serving as Labor Secretary, Chao ran the United Way of America, was director of the Peace Corps, and served as deputy Treasury Secretary. She also served as a director at Northwest Airlines and was a former director at Parsons, the international construction company. Chao is married to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky).

Chao will face challenges on multiple fronts, including how to regulate self-driving cars, how to deal with growing numbers of vehicle recalls, and how to modernize the nation's air traffic control system. But her most high profile role in the new administration could be in helping rebuild the nation's infrastructure if Trump follows through on his promise to invest \$1 trillion in bridges, roads and airports.

Trump's Transition Team Outlines Broad-brush Infrastructure Investment Approach

President-elect [Donald Trump](#) has announced ambitious plans for a massive infrastructure package. If the plan were to be implemented as Trump envisions it, the principal federal role in infrastructure projects would rely on public-private partnerships using private financing more than public investments. The proposal would offer \$137 billion in federal tax credits to private investors who want to back transportation projects, which the blueprint says would enable up to \$1 trillion worth of infrastructure investment over 10 years. The innovative financing option would serve as a critical supplement to existing financing programs, public-private partnerships, Build America Bonds, and other federal funding approaches.

Concern is already being expressed that private investors would only fund projects that have tolls or user fees that can recoup investment costs. Therefore, critical infrastructure needs like repairing aging pipes, deepening ports or fixing existing roads and bridges without tolls might be neglected under Trump's plan. The Congressional Budget Office says only 14 highway projects have been completed using PPPs with private financing.

The Trump administration is also exploring a national infrastructure bank which has long been [favored by Democrats](#) but gone nowhere under a GOP-led Congress. Republican leaders in Congress also continue to push to fund infrastructure investments by taxing corporate earnings that are stored abroad once that money returns to the U.S., a process called repatriation.

FHWA Designates 55 Initial Routes In A Federal Alternative Fuel / Electric Charging Network

The Federal Highway Administration on November 3rd unveiled an initial list of 55 highway routes that will serve as the basis for a national network of "alternative fuel" corridors spanning 35 states, along with signage that state departments of transportation can use to highlight them.

The network is nearly 85,000 miles long and includes 48 electric vehicle charging corridors. More miles will be added in the future to accommodate electric, hydrogen, propane and natural gas vehicles as additional fueling and charging stations are built. The FHWA said routes where alternative fuel stations are currently in operation are designated as "sign-ready," and authorities can install new signs telling drivers where they can find fuel for their vehicle. The signs are similar to those that currently alert drivers to gas stations, food and lodging.

STATE

No Deal As California Legislature Closes 18-month Special Session To Pay For Road Repairs

California is struggling with a backlog of road repairs and other transportation needs that exceeds \$137 billion. According to a 2015 estimate, there is a shortfall over the next decade of \$59 billion to adequately maintain existing state highways plus another \$78 billion to maintain and rebuild local roads and bridges.

The state's gas tax is supposed to pay for road work on state highways, but officials say it's become an outmoded and unreliable funding source as fuel prices fluctuate and more drivers switch to hybrids or alternative-powered vehicles. The special session automatically ended on November 30th when the current two-year session of the Legislature officially ended. But lawmakers left talks on a multi-billion transportation plan [in limbo](#) since adjourning in August. Gov. Jerry Brown called the special session in mid-2015 to tackle the backlog. State Senator Jim Beall and Assemblyman Jim Frazier sponsored joint legislation that would have raised \$7.4 billion annually for transportation by boosting the gas tax 17 cents a gallon, raising vehicle registration fees by \$38 annually and imposing a \$165 yearly fee on zero-emission vehicles. But the plan failed to gain traction due to Republican opposition to raising the state gas tax as part of the package. In addition, Republicans insisted the California Department of Transportation is bloated and must become more efficient, and they sought relaxation of labor and environmental

regulations. Democratic leaders have said that raising taxes to address the backlog will be a priority in the 2017-18 legislative session. That may be somewhat easier to achieve now that Democrats have a supermajority in both the California Senate and Assembly.

CTC Approves 11 Active Transportation Program projects in L. A. County; None In The South Bay

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) released its [staff recommendations](#) for which projects should be funded by the California Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 3, including 11 in Los Angeles County requesting over \$25 million in ATP funding. No projects were funded in the South Bay.

The ATP consists of three components: the statewide component (50% of the funds), the small urban & rural component (10% of the funds), and the large Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) component (40% of the funds). Projects located within the boundaries of a large MPO not selected in the statewide component will be considered for funding through the MPO component. Large MPOs, including SCAG, will submit their programming recommendations to the Commission by January 27, 2017 and will be presented at the March 15-16, 2017 Commission meeting.

All projects included in the statewide recommendations benefit disadvantaged communities based on the definitions set forth in the 2017 Active Transportation Program Guidelines. Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Project applicants recommended for funding in the statewide portion of the 2017 Active Transportation Program may, by December 30, submit supplemental application material for 2017-18 funding from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund.

The statewide recommendation highlights for Los Angeles County from ATP Cycle 3 include:

- 11 of the 70 projects submitted from Los Angeles County jurisdictions were recommended to be awarded \$25.3 million in funding from the statewide program. More projects from Los Angeles County will be awarded funding from the regional program administered by SCAG.
- All of Los Angeles County's successful applications were for projects that benefit disadvantaged communities.
- Five Los Angeles County jurisdictions applied for planning grants; one was recommended for funding.
- Nine Los Angeles County jurisdictions applied for non-infrastructure (education and encouragement) grants. None were recommended for funding.

REGION

L. A. City Council Approves 30-year \$1.4 Billion Sidewalk Repair Program

The Los Angeles City Council approved a \$1.4 billion comprehensive sidewalk repair program on November 30th that will include rebates for home and business owners to fix their sidewalks. The 30-year program, dubbed Safe Sidewalks LA, will provide rebates for home and business owners to fix their sidewalks in the first three years. Starting December 1st, the public can apply for a rebate. Rebates are capped for the first three years at \$2,000 for homeowners and \$4,000 for business owners. Each sidewalk requiring repair will be inspected and a rebate amount will be

pre-calculated for that home or business owner. Sidewalk repairs certified by the city are covered by the city for 20 years.

After the rebate program concludes, the city will continue to inspect, repair and warranty sidewalks throughout Los Angeles. Priority will be given to areas that have received significant complaints and areas open to the public that have special access and mobility issues, such as healthcare providers and employers.

Edward Humes is Concerned with Measure M's Lack of Innovation

L. A. Times Columnist Patt Morrison interviewed Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Edward Humes on November 10th about his views on Measure M. Humes has commented on transit issues in his book "Door to Door: The Magnificent, Maddening, Mysterious World of Transportation," and he's concerned that "Measure M money being spent on transit's future may not be taking that actual future into account."

His initial assessment is that Measure M "really looks like something that could have been drawn up in 1980. It's kind of old thinking about transportation. It's offering the promise of fixing traffic and helping put an end to the soul-crushing traffic we face here in the greater Los Angeles area. And I just don't think it's going to do that. A significant portion of it are the old solutions of adding lanes and expanding limited access roads. We've spent huge amounts of money trying to get out of it that way, and then you have the rail that that we've already built that has had no measurable impact upon congestion."

Humes likes some of the Measure M projects such as the zero-emissions freight corridor on the 710 Freeway to bring the goods out of the port complex without flooding the surrounding communities with emissions. But he doesn't see transformative planning like ride sharing services, automation, and driverless cars. "There's all sorts of carrots and sticks that a municipality, a county or both can offer employers. In an age when we all have smartphones, you don't need a lot of new infrastructure. We already have apps that tell us when we need to leave to get there on time, based on distance and traffic. It would be inconsequential to create an app that could layer in, OK, how can we stagger some of those departure times for most workers so that they avoid creating congestion? It would be so much more affordable a way than building miles and miles of very expensive freeway and road surfaces to eliminate traffic jams."

Hume would also turn carpool lanes into big-rig lanes or rapid bus lanes with automated navigation systems that would let the trucks or buses act like trains. He also thinks that it "wouldn't be entirely a bad thing if we became a little more localized here. I think I read in the Los Angeles City's Mobility 2035 Plan that, of all the trips people take in Los Angeles, half the trips we take on any given day are under three miles. And yet 85% or 90% of those short trips we will do in a car. So there's many trips we take that we really don't need to get into our cars for, but we've just gotten into the habit of doing so. That contributes to traffic jams as much as anything else."

If he could build a transportation system from scratch, Hume would envision a plan where that first mile-last mile problem is eliminated by automation. "You take your public transit card or account or smartphone app and to call for a shared van or some other short-range electric vehicle

that would pick you up and drop you off at the mass transit station and off you'd be whisked to wherever you needed to go, if you were going to work or leaving town or whatever. And you would have the option of having a similar accommodation on the other end, where maybe it'd be a bike share, or pedestrian access to the transit between where you get off and where you need to end up — all of that could be part of a single app, a single payment system, a single fare, that would really be transformative in terms of reducing car traffic and reducing emissions, making our system more efficient and more affordable. We're talking about shared fleets of vehicles rather than individual car ownership at that point. That's a big ask right now, but that's the kind of thing that we should be planning for the future."

Perhaps his most ambitious vision is to find ways to take those short trips on foot. "Americans — not just Californians but Americans — walk less than almost any other people on Earth..."; "Other than the Amish, we don't even walk enough to be healthy."

UC Riverside Awarded \$3.2 Million to Develop More Fuel Efficient and Connected Smart Buses

An engineering team at U. C. Riverside has been awarded \$2.8 million from the U.S. Department of Energy's Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) to reduce the energy consumption of future vehicles by using connectivity and vehicle automation. The U.C. Riverside team includes partners from Oak Ridge National Laboratory, US Hybrid, and the Riverside Transit Agency.

The team will design, develop, and test a new powertrain system for natural gas-fueled plug-in hybrid electric buses. This system will use emerging connected vehicle applications like predictive approach and departure, efficient adaptive cruise control, and optimized stopping and accelerating from stop signs and bus stops to improve energy efficiency. Using information from traffic signals and surrounding vehicles, the team will improve the powertrain operation by intelligently managing combustion engine output, electric motor output, and battery state of charge in this hybrid application.

L. A. Panel Envisions A Realistic City of Tomorrow Mobility Ecosystem

Prior to the LA Auto Show in November, [Automobility LA](#) convened established and nascent industry leaders to elaborate on their vision of an urban transportation future cultivated by public and private cooperation. The program featured Ford Motors President and CEO Mark Fields, Los Angeles City Chief Sustainability Officer [Matt Petersen](#), and Chariot co-founder and CEO Ali Vahabzadeh. Some takeaways:

- Ford is partnering to bring fully autonomous vehicles to life—with no steering wheel, no gas pedal, and no brake pedal—starting in 2021, for use in ride-sharing and ride-hailing services through fleet programs similar to longtime partnerships with cities' vehicles for police, rescue, and taxis. Beginning next year, Ford will be directly engaging with city leaders, tech visionaries, urban planners, designers, and local communities—bringing public and private together through a collaboration with Michael Bloomberg and a coalition of mayors worldwide. They will be discussing how the public and private sector can work together to help create that city of tomorrow.

The business opportunity alone is huge. The traditional auto industry is trillions of dollars around the world. If you open that up to transportation services, it's more than double that. Ford, as well

as a lot of their competitors, have zero of that so Ford is looking at consumer trends 10-20 years out.

- The City of Los Angeles has created its first ever [*Sustainable City plan*](#), in which the city set targets for 2017, 2025, and 2035 for how to improve communities. As an example, the city is committed to leading investments in EV car- share for disadvantaged communities—the first in the world, which L. A. will be rolling out next year. The city has also increased publicly available EV-charging stations to 1,200 currently with a goal of installing 1,500, the most of any city in America. Other goals include doing more in terms of mobility, to reduce per capita VMT and increase mode-share and mode-shift. Working with Ford and other automakers is critical to that future.
- Chariot was launched in San Francisco in 2014 as a crowdsource solution to commuting from residential neighborhoods to work districts like Downtown and South San Francisco. The firm quickly learned that one in five of their riders were taking Chariot as a first-and-last-mile solution to a transit hub, like the ferry or Caltrain. As a result Chariot determined that its services can't—and probably shouldn't—replace trunk lines and commuter rail, but should refocus on getting people to feed into trunk lines, whether it's bus, ferry, train, or even highways.