

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 19, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We write to express our strong support of Contra Costa Transportation Authority's (CCTA's) application for Mega Grant funding, also known as the National Infrastructure Project Assistance program.

CCTA's 680 Forward proposal takes a holistic approach to addressing congestion, improving safety, and increasing access for all transportation users along Interstate 680 (I-680), a backbone corridor for the Bay Area. 680 Forward is the only project in the Bay Area competing for Mega Grant (large) funding that has been endorsed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the metropolitan planning organization for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. CCTA is seeking approximately \$395 million, 42% of the total project cost of \$944.4 million, to move I-680 forward while aligning with federal, state, and local safety, equity, and emissions goals.

I-680 is one of the major north-south corridors in the San Francisco Bay Area and has been one of the top five most congested corridors for the last ten years.¹ The corridor experiences significant delays and inconsistent flow of traffic in both directions, and these delays are expected to continue in the foreseeable future. Expanding and widening I-680 is an expensive option, and building additional rail service in the Corridor would cost billions of dollars. Neither option is financially feasible nor would adequately address these congestion problems.

To address these challenges, 680 Forward includes a suite of projects including transit improvements, active transportation projects, congestion relief strategies, and innovative concepts to modernize mobility along the corridor. These components include zero-emission express bus (ZEB) service, shared mobility hubs, transit bus-on-shoulder lanes, bicycle and pedestrian overcrossings, completing the express lane network, I-680/State Route 4 (SR-4) interchange improvements, technology tools to encourage better integrated mobility across different modes of transportation, and new mobility options for the elderly and differently-abled populations.

¹ <https://mtc.ca.gov/tools-resources/vital-signs>

We are told that these combined projects will have significant environmental, equity, and economic benefits. They are also responsive to local interest: A recent behavioral study revealed that 68% of corridor residents would like to drive less and would like to see more transit options.² Reducing congestion, investing in transit, transitioning to alternative fueling, and improving non-motorized transportation options are all expected to positively mitigate climate change. Improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, developing mobility hubs, and investing in affordable transit are intended to create a more socially equitable community and give disadvantaged community members more transportation access. We understand that economic benefits will be seen by making job centers along the corridor more accessible, especially for those travelling from disadvantaged communities.

CCTA has a proven track record of success in the innovative transportation space and partnering with the federal government. If awarded, 680 Forward would build off of the I-680 Mobility-on-Demand project that was awarded \$8 million through the Department of Transportation's Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMTD) initiative and the \$7.5 million awarded in 2019 through DOT's Automated Driving Systems (ADS) grant.

We support the 680 Forward application because it exemplifies the goals DOT looks to achieve through awarding Mega Grant funding, including improving safety, strengthening the economy, bolstering social equity, and positively addressing climate change. Thank you and we respectfully request you to give this application your full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

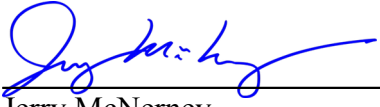


Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress

² <https://ccta.net/projects/innovate-680/>



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress