



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

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April 26, 2024

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The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: SUPPORT INNOVATE 680 FOR MEGA PROGRAM (NATIONAL
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT ASSISTANCE) – Bay Area Regional Priority Project:
Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission – the San Francisco Bay Area's regional transportation planning, coordinating and financing agency – I am pleased to express my strong support for the Contra Costa Transportation Authority's (CCTA's) application to the United States Department of Transportation's Mega (National Infrastructure Project Assistance) Program for the Innovate 680 program. The grant will support projects that improve safety, smooth traffic, and increase access while aligning with federal, state, and local safety, equity, and emissions goals.

680 Forward is a top Bay Area priority for National Infrastructure Project Assistance (MEGA) funds, having received endorsement as a regional priority project through MTC's Bay Area Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Grant Strategy. MTC's priority list – developed in coordination with our transportation partners across the Bay Area's nine counties and more than two dozen transit operators serving the nearly eight million Bay Area residents – aligns top Bay Area transportation priorities with federal grant targets. This suite of regionally significant projects will help advance the Bay Area's ambitious Plan Bay Area 2050 goals to combat the climate crisis, deliver a well-connected, safe, and multimodal transportation network, and improve access to opportunity for all Bay Area residents.

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, three projects within *Innovate 680* have the greatest potential to provide immediate public benefit. Specific projects include three shared mobility hubs that support first and last mile connections to zero emission hydrogen

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

transit, coordinated adaptive ramp metering to reduce congestion on I-680; and completion of an express lane network. These key elements of Innovate 680 complement each other by strengthening regional multimodal connections and reducing barriers to alternative mode use.

Thank you for your consideration of this important project. If we can be of assistance on this or any other issue, please contact Theresa Romell, Director of Funding, Policy and Programs, at tromell@bayareametro.gov or 415-778-6672 or MTC's Washington, D.C. advocate Mark Dedrick at markd@summitstrategies.us or 202-638-2207.

Sincerely,



Andrew B. Fremier
Executive Director

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