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January 24, 2019

The Honorable Jake Mackenzie, Chair  
Bay Area Toll Authority  
375 Beale Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Chair Mackenzie:

Marin has been the beneficiary of significant investment by the Bay Area Toll Authority in the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge corridor. The opening of the Third Lane Eastbound, as a shoulder-running lane on the lower deck, has greatly improved traffic conditions in Marin, benefitting multiple counties. TAM and our member jurisdictions are very grateful for that investment.

The Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) appreciates the ongoing efforts of the Bay Area Toll Authority to open a multi-use pathway on the Richmond San Rafael Bridge Westbound. While TAM recognizes the multi-use path, scheduled to open in the next few months, is an important link in the Bay Trail system, TAM requests that consideration continue to be given to addressing traffic congestion in Contra Costa and across the bridge caused by motorists entering Marin. In that regard, the prudent investment in the moveable barrier system being placed on the westbound upper deck could allow the shoulder area to be jointly operated as a barrier-protected multi-use path and a third lane for traffic during the morning commute. Our goal is not to pit single occupancy vehicles against bikes. We remain open to ideas like increased transit and carpools to maximize mobility and reduce congestion.

TAM appreciates that the Bay Area Toll Authority, BATA, made the investment to study this important concept of a multi-use pathway jointly operated with a third vehicle lane. Our Marin workers are continuing to experience daily delays coming across the bridge, delays that are expected to increase to 27 minutes or more by the year 2020.

While the BATA draft study exhibits permanent long-term solutions, TAM believes short-term solutions to benefit Marin workers and East Bay residents should also be considered. In that regard, TAM looks forward to supporting elements of BATA's "Richmond Bridge Forward," a suite of options for bridge users to consider utilizing, to aid in congestion relief and reduce emissions. TAM will be incorporating elements into our newly launched "Marin Commutes" program, a large suite of Transportation Demand Management, TDM, options Marin has been dedicated to investing in and implementing. We are concerned that carpools, vanpools and transit will elicit little interest, unless an upper deck lane with a travel time advantage, is considered.

TAM believes that joint usage of the shoulder lane by both vehicles and bicyclists should be pursued, the moveable barrier system making that option feasible. In that regard, TAM is coordinating closely with Caltrans on a detailed structural loading analysis of the bridge, and detailed traffic analysis of potential traffic impacts in Marin. BATA has considered a 4-year pilot as the suitable longevity of a multi-use-pathway-only utilization of the upper deck shoulder area. TAM requests an assessment period of **6 months** be considered instead. Studies of the structure and of traffic should be completed within the first six months of pathway operation, followed by a review and evaluation of options for operating the corridor.

The record unemployment in Marin County has Marin County employers stating that problems hiring and retaining employees is of great concern. The need to address the commute of employees coming from the East Bay is growing daily. We are concerned that a relatively small number of users of the multi-use path may adversely affect the ability of Marin workers to meet their employment obligations. Many of our teachers, safety workers such as police and fire, and other workers depend on the Bridge daily to get to work on time.

TAM continues in our dedication to making this corridor operate as effectively as possible for all users. Supervisor Damon Connolly, our Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Bay Area Toll Authority Commissioner, and I are available to discuss this further with the BATA leadership and assist in moving these ideas forward.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Moulton-Peters  
TAM Chair