

September 22, 2017

Transportation Authority of Marin
Attn: Derek McGill, Planning Manager
900 Fifth Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901

RE: Transportation Authority of Marin's 2017 Draft Strategic Vision Plan

Dear Derek:

The Marin Conservation League (MCL) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the draft report for TAM's Strategic Vision Plan. The Plan includes substantial information, data and trends on transit and transportation issues facing the county, currently and into the future, as well as current and future costs and potential sources of funding. We recognize that projections have been under development for the past few years and that TAM strives to balance the needs of a variety of modes and users while addressing the challenges to reducing congestion.

MCL supports TAM's Mission Statement that identifies creating "an efficient and effective system that promotes mobility and accessibility... to all users". However, we disagree that the first listed guiding principle and the one that seems to have the largest emphasis in the Draft should be centered on supporting economic vitality.

From our view, overarching environmental issues and trends will impact much of what TAM will be facing in the future and they will have a powerful influence on TAM's opportunities and decision making. The fact that global warming will foreseeably continue to worsen should be stated up front in the plan. It is critical that TAM emphasize adaptation solutions to sea level rise and to more frequent and larger storm events. TAM should also prioritize mitigation of greenhouse gases (GHGs) as an overall planning objective equal to that of reducing traffic congestion, given that transportation and traffic account for more than 60% of Marin's total GHG production. Planning for these important overarching trends will benefit not only the environment, but both equity and economy too.

Though the words "sea level rise", "greenhouse gas emissions", "resiliency" and "clean technology vehicles" show up sporadically in the draft, they are not mentioned with any context until pages 66 and 67. The Environmental Strategy section on page 67 should mention the broad environmental damage from greenhouse gas emission and pollutants on humans, trees, animals, plants, and the ocean. While it mentions sea level rise, it does not do so in its relationship to GHGs. TAM's Environmental Strategy needs to recognize the critical need to reduce greenhouse gasses for the environment and the future of our planet.

The paragraph about electric vehicles offering a significant opportunity to reduce GHGs should be emphasized. TAM should prioritize infrastructure that charges EVs fast, (in a short amount of time), and EV programs that encourage location of charging stations at workplaces and multi-unit residential developments, as well as in public spaces. Electric buses and striving for all-electric routes or electric bus rapid transit routes are promising possibilities to explore.

MCL appreciates that TAM promotes projects that required carefully implemented environmental protection, such as the Sir Francis Drake project through Samuel P Taylor State Park. And we are grateful for programs like the successful Safe Routes to Schools program and incentives to use transit and van pools as means to reduce single occupant auto use and thereby reduce congestion, pollution and GHG emissions, incrementally. TAM's support of improvements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure has done the same.

Making "it convenient, easy, and safe to travel in Marin County" is a valued vision. However, how this vision is translated into monitored outcomes is important for Marin's school populations, in particular. This as priority, could significantly reduce congestion, along with accompanying GHGs, during morning and afternoon commutes. TAM's vision for Marin should include improved solutions for more seamless coordination, communication and alternative transportation options for school early-start and afterschool programs, varied school day start times, and school bus or transit demand.

Attention to a few editing issues in the draft document could improve and add clarification for readers:

- Clarifying that the \$10 vehicle registration fee approved by voters doesn't sunset, (page 71).
- Figure 3 (page 22) is confusing. When unincorporated Marin County jobs are included, the total does not add up to 98,100 jobs, as stated.
- Figure 7 (page 26) should clarify whether bikes are calculated as part of "walk" or "other".
- The graphic on page 38 states 50 school districts participate in Safe Routes to School, it should state 50 schools.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft Strategic Vision Plan. MCL encourages TAM to think and act boldly, and proactively, to address the needs and challenges ahead. With improved recognition of the environment as a critical component for transportation planning and investment, MCL would readily support TAM's 2017 Strategic Vision Plan.

Sincerely,



Kate Powers
President