

Supervisor Steve Kinsey and the
Transportation Authority of Marin Board
Marin County Civic Center
San Rafael, CA 94903



Protecting Marin Since 1934

June 23, 2011

Re: TAM gift of \$8 million to SMART

Dear Supervisor Kinsey and TAM Board Members:

The Marin Conservation League (MCL) is disappointed with the loss of \$8 million dollars of Marin's Transportation Planning and Operations funds that are being given to SMART to help close the funding gap on SMART's IOS.

Over the past several months TAM Staff has attempted to explain how and why Marin should make an \$8 million gift to SMART. Technically, the proposed method of payment does not appear to violate the Measure A Expenditure Plan but it certainly violates the spirit of the Plan. Regardless of the accounting gyrations, Marin Bike and Pedestrian projects will be reduced by \$1.5 million over time. Likewise Major Roads Projects will also be reduced by \$6.5 million over time.

There has been the issue of why Sonoma pays \$3 million while Marin pays \$8 million. The factors described in Staff reports suggest that Marin benefits in the ISO more than Sonoma. In reality Sonoma voters approved the system while Marin did not approve it. That argues that Sonoma should pay for the entire shortfall.

We suspect that the TAM Board would rather spend the millions in Marin but are pressured by MTC with the threat of withdrawing funds on other Marin projects. According to MTC, as reported in today's I.J., Marin's road are in sad shape.

MCL is also concerned is that this is not the only time that SMART will be asking for funds from the TAM and other agencies and cause disruption in the normal allocations of the RTP projects. Unless we change the rules on interagency swaps, MCL believes that the current \$8 million gift is just the beginning. One can foresee that SMART will have higher than expected construction costs and lower than expected revenue which will be worsened by the need to operate within the IOS. TAM should take steps to eliminate future fund transfers to SMART and SMART, which has its own sales tax source, should design a rail system that operates within its means.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Stompe".

Susan Stompe
President

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