

## Public Comment on Draft Plan Bay Area

Zack Subin [REDACTED]

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To: info@planbayarea.org <info@planbayarea.org>

**\*External Email\***

Members of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission Plan Bay Area 2050 Team,

We need to dramatically reduce car-dependence in order to meet our climate goals. RMI research (<https://rmi.org/what-is-needed-to-meet-us-climate-commitments/>) shows we need to reduce VMT by 20% per capita around the country by 2030. In vibrant urban metropolises like the Bay Area, we can do better. That means a dramatic shift from business as usual, not tinkering around the edges of a system that exorbitantly subsidizes driving over other transportation modes.

I would like to submit the following comments on the Draft Plan Bay Area.

1. No freeway or highway expansion. The draft plan calls for 450 miles of new freeway lanes by 2050, at a cost of \$20bn, including in urban areas like San Francisco. Almost half of this cost is hidden in the Express Lane program, which will primarily encourage new auto trips by expanding freeway capacity. Plan Bay Area's own analysis shows that building freeway lanes results in more congestion and higher emissions than if they were not built. This makes sense, as ample studies show that adding more lane-miles means more driving: <https://rmi.org/if-you-build-it-the-cars-and-the-pollution-will-come/>.
2. Create Express Lanes out of existing lanes. Instead of building new freeway lanes, we should create a network of free-flowing traffic lanes by converting existing general purpose lanes to Express Lanes. This will generate revenue, reduce emissions, and improve transit service, without the added congestion and emissions that come from building new freeway lanes.
3. Remove freeways instead of building more of them. It's time to remove urban freeways that cause high rates of asthma, covid vulnerability, and other public health impacts in communities of color, and don't even serve a compelling transportation need. Freeway removal was not even studied in Plan Bay Area, so we don't know how much these projects would improve congestion and emissions. Plan Bay Area should study proposed freeway removal projects, such as the I-280 spur and the Central Freeway in San Francisco, and I-980 in Oakland.

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