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Jack P. Broadbent
EXECUTIVE OFFICER/APCO

Connect with the
Bay Area Air District:



August 13, 2020

Ms. Therese McMillan
Executive Director
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066

RE: Plan Bay Area 2050 – Reducing VMT and GHGs

Dear Ms. McMillan:

As the development of Plan Bay Area 2050 enters its final stages, I want to extend my appreciation to the staff at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission for their thoughtful effort to develop a balanced regional transportation and housing plan; a plan responsive to the human and environmental needs of our changing region. I particularly applaud MTC's continuing efforts to address our region's racial and social inequities by improving access to affordable housing and integrated, coordinated transportation.

Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the Bay Area, as well as the largest source of most air pollutants. One of the critical outcomes of Plan Bay Area 2050 is to lower the Bay Area's GHG emissions from the use of motor vehicles in line with targets set by the California Air Resources Board. The technical assessment of the current mix of strategies and investments in the draft Plan shows our region falling short of the State's targets, thus impeding our progress to achieve regional and state GHG reduction goals. This also means that Bay Area residents will be exposed to higher levels of harmful air pollutants than they would under a plan that met the GHG goals. Our ongoing engagement with local communities under the AB 617 process re-affirms that reducing automobile use and emissions is critical to improving local air quality and health.

Air District staff supports MTC's initial steps to address the shortfall through policies to increase telework and the cost of driving, among other strategies. But as noted by MTC staff at the recent community events and Commission meetings, more is needed. Recent events suggest additional opportunities to move forward.

Among the responses to the of the upheavel caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen many companies and other employers shift many employees to remote work. Numerous local communities have installed low-cost walking and bicycle infrastructure to accommodate safe travel by local residents. Transit agencies are beginning the difficult recovery of their critical services, and are rethinking how best to deliver coordinated, affordable transportation while moving away from a peak-period dominant trip pattern. Plan Bay Area 2050 can and should work to support these positive changes, enhance them wherever possible, and ensure they succeed in reducing auto travel and emissions.

Plan Bay Area 2050 is a vitally important element of the region's climate and air quality efforts. The Air District stands ready to work with you, and I look forward to discussing with you how we can work together to continue the region's progress in reducing GHGs and air pollution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack P. Broadbent". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jack" being the most prominent.

Jack P. Broadbent
Executive Officer/APCO

JB:GN

cc: BAAQMD Board Members
Mr. Richard Corey, California Air Resources Board