



COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND COMMERCE  
  
COMMITTEE ON  
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0509

May 15, 2020

Mr. Scott Haggerty  
Chair  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
375 Beale Street, Suite 800  
San Francisco CA 94105-2066

**RE: Inclusion of the Valley Link, Altamont Corridor Vision Plan Phase 1, and ACE Rail Service Increase in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)**

Dear Chairman Haggerty,

I write to you to bring your attention to the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Authority's request to include the Valley Link, Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1, and ACE Rail Service Increase programs in MTC's RTP. Inclusion of the requested projects will help our megaregion create more housing, reduce congestion, and meet greenhouse gas reduction goals. It will also help create a better quality of life for our residents.

Through the Valley Link Project, the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Rail Authority is working to create near-term congestion relief for nearly 100,000 Bay Area workers who commute from homes in the Northern San Joaquin Valley. Traffic on this corridor is predicted to increase by 75% by 2040, and truck traffic is expected to increase by 58%. The project will connect San Joaquin Valley communities with the Dublin/Pleasanton BART station, and other points between, providing access via local transit to Tri-Valley jobs, and access via BART to employment as far away as Oakland and San Francisco. By 2040, it will provide an estimated 28,000 daily rides and result in a reduction of 99.4 million vehicle-miles traveled. It will also reduce annual greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 33,000 tons.

The Altamont Corridor Vision Phase 1 Improvement Program proposed by the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, the San Joaquins Joint Powers Authority, and the Tri-Valley – San Joaquin Valley Rail Authority will create an 8.6 mile passenger rail track, including 3.5 miles of tunnel, which will permit speeds of up to 125 miles per hour, reducing rail travel time by as much as 15 minutes, or a 30% reduction. This will make rail travel more attractive to those currently traveling in single-occupant vehicles on I-580. In addition, the attractiveness of rail transit that this new track will bring will likely result in higher demand for and construction of transit-oriented development in the areas served by the Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) and Valley Link, easing housing pressure on Bay Area communities.

Finally, the ACE Rail Service Increase program is focused on making the necessary improvements to enable ACE to expand to 10 daily round trips between the Northern San Joaquin Valley/Sacramento and San Jose. The ACE service carried over 1.5 million passengers in 2019 with only four daily round trips. Increasing the frequency of ACE service to Silicon Valley is key to improving the megaregional connection between the Bay Area and the Central Valley, reduces vehicle miles traveled in the Altamont Corridor, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and improves air quality in the region. Key improvements to facilitate 10 daily round trips will include expanding the Tamien layover facility, siding track expansion, grade crossing improvements, station improvements, maintenance facility expansion, and improvement for the Alviso Wetlands in the existing transportation right-of-way. Station improvements will include parking expansions at the Fremont and Vasco ACE stations, and additional station improvements at Downtown Livermore and in the Pleasanton area. Two new ACE trainsets will also be purchased to accommodate additional ACE trips.

Including these programs in MTC's RTP will help move people and goods within our megaregion more efficiently, reduce vehicle miles traveled, reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as other harmful pollutants, and help ease our housing shortage. More importantly, it will improve the quality of life for residents in the Bay Area and Northern San Joaquin Valley and create a path to a better future. I strongly support the requests before you, and I ask that you give them full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerry McNerney", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress