

Kathryn Dienst

Richmond CA



Date: July 18, 2015

Ashley Nguyen, Project Manager
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
101 Eight Street
Oakland CA 94607

info@mtc.ca.gov

RE: Richmond San Rafael Bridge Access Improvement Project and Point Molate Trail Connector

Dear Ashley Nguyen and Commission:

The Bay Trail highly influenced my decision to move to Richmond, whose Bay Trail section has world-class views. By connecting shoreline parks (Chavez, Point Isabel, Marina Bay, Miller Knox, Point Molate, Point Pinole) it is a phenomenal regional resource for many activities, including biking, walking, viewing birds, boating events, and joining communities. We strongly endorse improvements to Point Molate, and the San Rafael Bridge connection to Marin.

My husband and I were entering retirement and seeking an active lifestyle that included the ability to walk or bike daily, without having to drive a great distance; the Bay Trail in our neighborhood closed the deal. We use the Bay Trail daily, appreciating the exercise that it gives us, but also it has built community. Any time of the day, we meet neighbors walking their dogs, taking their kids for a bike ride or viewing the bay. Some of our neighbors use the Bay Trail to commute to their workplaces, directly or combined with a BART ride. It is both recreation and an essential travel corridor.

The Bay Trail also provides a regional connection. We often meet bikers from Berkeley and other East Bay cities. As I am writing this, seven bikers have ridden past, who probably belong to a bike club. We have met bikers from San Francisco, who arrived in the East Bay by BART.

But we also have met bike riders from as far away as Sacramento, who have combined bike trails and Amtrak for a weekend adventure. There is nothing like this in California, and we should continue to expand bike/mass transit connections to Marin, to combine with a network of bike paths and an active biking community. It would also connect Richmond to the Larkspur ferry (and I can envision biking to Larkspur, ferry riding to SF, and returning by BART).

I am eager to ride my bike over the San Rafael Bridge to Marin. A safe crossing to Point Molate is an integral part of this. Please, please move this project along while I am young enough to take advantage of it!