



# Central Coast Coalition

*Moving California's Economy*

Tab 51

October 25, 2011

Bimla Rhinehart  
Executive Director  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS-52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: *2011 Statewide Transportation System Needs Assessment*

Dear Ms. Rhinehart:

The Executive Directors for the five Regional Transportation Planning Agencies in the Central Coast Coalition sincerely appreciate the efforts of the California Transportation Commission in taking the lead in preparing the *2011 Statewide Transportation System Needs Assessment*. Overall, the report does a thorough job in making the case for increased investment in transportation as being critical to our national economy. We would, however, like to make several requests for changes to assure that the document reflects the needs of all regions of the state.

1. Metro Mobility policies: We are very much opposed to the Metro Mobility proposal in Chapter 7 to shift federal CMAQ, STP and FTA funds away from smaller areas to major metro areas. We do not recall any discussion of this proposal at the many team meetings held to prepare this document, and it undercuts the key message that increased funding for transportation overall is needed, to meet this and other needs such as goods movement, interregional travel, and transit. We suggest this policy be replaced with a revised policy to "Seek an increase in dedicated funding for transportation indexed for inflationary increases".
2. Goods Movement: We appreciate the discussion and support of goods movement/freight needs and the need for a new funding source for those improvements. However, as a major producer of agriculture in California for export to the nation and world, the Central Coast should not be left off the goods movement maps. These interregional goods movement highways and rail lines need to be added to on the goods movement maps: US 101, SR 156/152 east of 101, SR 46 east of 101, and the UP coast mainline (mostly along 101) between San Jose and LA. In the goods movement section, evaluation criteria should not be limited to congestion relief and air quality benefits, but should also take into consideration economic benefit including the value of exports. Finally, it would be more beneficial for California to have new formula funds for goods movement investments rather than the proposed discretionary grant

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program in which revenues to our state can be limited and directed based on political considerations.

3. **Interregional Road Needs:** Just using Caltrans' modest list of interregional highways, which is really based on available funds, severely underestimates the interregional road improvement needs. Many interregional roads needing improvement, in fact, may not be labeled as "interregional" but certainly carry a large amount of travelers across county lines and from one region to another. We would request the opportunity to update this list to include all such projects.
4. **Project Listing for All Regions:** We object to the listing of projects only for the four major metropolitan areas. This listing leaves the impression that the other areas of the state do not have as critical transportation needs. Also, these lists often take on a life of their own and become the basis for future grant funding; it would be inequitable for projects in other parts of the state to be left off of what could become a future funding list. Furthermore, if this document is to be utilized at the federal level for making the case for more transportation funding, or with the voters, evidence of projects in each part of the state is important. We ask that the project lists for the Central Coast, and other areas of the state, be included in the appendix to make the document relevant to all regions of the state.
5. **Transit System Maintenance:** The transit system maintenance section overall seems thin. For example, in terms of regulatory mandates and system preservation, the cost of clean air mandates for transit vehicle conversions to cleaner technology should be addressed as well as the growing need to support the aging population and the increasing diversion of funds that are needed to ensure that systems are accessible to persons of all ages and abilities, pursuant to regulations set forth by the ADA and SB 375.
6. **System Management:** this section largely discusses certain regional programs rather than explore deficiencies, which occur particularly outside the major metropolitan areas. Areas that need increased investment include Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and traveler information (511) systems. Inadequate network capacity and security concerns are constraining ITS monitoring and traveler information statewide, but particularly outside the largest urbanized areas where networks are less robust. These deficiencies mean recent significant capital investments in monitoring stations are substantially underutilized and there are large gaps in traveler information. The lack of a statewide 511 system makes for a patchwork of programs that limit interregional traffic and transit information. Some smaller regions have no 511 system at all, or the system ends at county lines. Information is difficult to obtain for visitors to an area, or those traveling across regions.
7. **High Speed Rail:** Thank you for indicating the importance of connecting intercity rail and bus services to the planned high speed rail lines. The Gilroy station in Santa Clara County should be added as an important interregional hub for connecting bus and rail service. Commuter and local bus service should also be mentioned as providing that important "last mile" of service. (Also, as a footnote, this section could benefit from the replacement of several acronyms (IRP, HSR, CHSTP) with

familiar terms such as "interregional rail" and "high speed rail").

8. Project Delivery: Thank you for including a section on Accelerating Project Delivery and for mentioning environmental streamlining. These changes are important ways to increase the resources that can be spent on improving mobility. We suggest adding language to support the Federal Highway Administration's Every Day Counts effort as a program to expand and build upon.

As our initial statement indicated, this document is very valuable in explaining the needs on California's transportation system and we applaud those who put time and resources into gathering data and preparing the write-up. The document sets the stage for asking for increased investment in transportation. We strongly support this assessment with the minor changes as noted above, but request you replace Policy 4 "Create A Program Focused on Metro Mobility" by redirecting revenue from other areas of the state, with a New Policy "Increase Dedicated Funding for Transportation".

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Kemp".

Jim Kemp  
Chair, US 101 Central Coast Coalition