

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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REGIONAL MEASURE 2 BENEFITS SOLANO TRAFFIC PROJECTS

FAIRFIELD - Bay Area voters will have the opportunity to address regional mobility issues when Regional Measure 2, the Regional Traffic Relief Plan, appears on the March 2, 2004 ballot in seven of the nine Bay Area Counties including Solano County. The plan would be funded through a \$1 toll increase on the Bay Area's seven state-owned toll bridges, and is expected to raise approximately \$125 million annually to address congestion relief and enhance the convenience and reliability of public transit options in the vicinity of bridge corridors.

The Regional Traffic Relief Plan in Measure 2 will contribute funds toward improving several freeway bottlenecks, including the I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange (\$100 million). The Plan also includes \$28 million for the Vallejo Station, \$20 million for Solano County Express Bus Intermodal Facilities, \$25 million for Capitol Corridor Improvements for the new Fairfield/Vacaville Rail Station and the third main track in Fairfield and Suisun City, competitive grant funding for Park and Ride Lots, infrastructure improvements and new buses for Vallejo and Fairfield/Suisun Transit, and annual operating funds for the Vallejo Ferry and Express Bus services.

Regional Measure 2 will direct 100% of new toll revenues to pay for traffic relieving transportation options. These funds can only be used for specific projects identified in Measure 2 cannot be siphoned off by the state.

For more information on Regional Measure 2, contact Daryl Halls, Executive Director, Solano Transportation Authority at (707) 424-6075, or solanoplan@sta-snci.com.



Regional Measure 2

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do we need Measure 2?

Bay Area traffic congestion is in a crisis and is expected to increase by 250% over the next 20 years. State and local funds combined with current bridge toll revenues and transit fees cannot raise the money necessary to create the world-class transportation network the Bay Area and Solano County need to make a difference in reducing traffic congestion and planning for the future. Measure 2 directs 100% of new toll revenues to create more traffic relieving transportation options.

2. What is Regional Measure 2?

Registered voters in the seven of the nine Bay Area counties (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Solano) will determine whether to add a 3rd dollar to the Bridge tolls on seven state-owned bridges. The success of the measure requires a simple majority vote of the combined votes in all seven counties.

3. How much will toll increase?

A \$1 surcharge on the existing toll. For autos and two-axle trucks, the current toll of \$2 will go up to \$3. The toll increase would affect the seven state-owned bridges, but not the Golden Gate Bridge.

4. How much will the \$1 surcharge generate?

The toll increase will generate approximately \$125 million annually.

5. When is the election?

March 2, 2004.

6. When will Measure 2 go into effect?

If approved by the voters in the specified seven Bay Area counties on March 2, 2004, Measure 2 would take effect on July 1, 2004

7. Who will vote on Measure 2?

On March 2, 2004, registered voters in the Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Solano counties will vote on Measure 2. Measure 2 requires a simple majority vote of the total votes in all counties.

8. How will Measure 2 reduce the Bay Area's enormous traffic problem?

Measure 2 will help make improvements to notorious Bay Area freeway bottlenecks, like the I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange. By improving access to public transit and making connections between transit providers throughout the Bay Area seamless and more convenient, the number of commuters who will be able to use transit instead of driving will dramatically increase.

9. What projects are included in the expenditure plan?

The expenditure plan – also known as the Regional Traffic Relief Plan – includes a variety of projects addressing the following major goals (1) traffic bottleneck relief in the bridge corridors, (2) new public transit in bridge corridors, and (3) seamless and safe transit connections. If approved by the voters, the plan will provide funding for Bay Area and Solano County projects. Specific Solano County projects are:

- I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange - **\$100 million**
- Vallejo Intermodal Station - **\$28 million**
- Solano County Express Bus Intermodal Facilities - **\$20 million**
 - Fairfield Transportation Center (Phase 3)
 - Curtola Transportation Center (Vallejo)
 - Benicia Intermodal Station
 - Vacaville Transportation Center
- Capitol Corridor Improvements - **\$25 million**
 - New Fairfield/Vacaville Rail Station
 - Funding for third main track in Fairfield and Suisun City
- Regional Express Bus Capital Grant Competitive Program for park and ride lots, infrastructure improvements and buses for Vallejo and Fairfield/Suisun Transit...among others - **\$1.6 million**
- Expanded Vallejo Ferry Service - **\$2.2 million**
- Annual Operating Funds – **\$6.1 million**
 - Vallejo Ferry
 - Fairfield/Suisun Transit
 - Vallejo Transit

10. Why are only seven counties voting?

Following the precedence of Regional Measure 1 in 1988, only those counties that have a bridge landing within their boundaries shall vote on the measure.

11. Why does the toll increase require only a majority vote and not a two-thirds vote as required for sales tax measures?

The toll increase is a user fee and not a tax, and is therefore subject to a simple majority rather than the two-thirds requirement for taxes. This is because the projects funded by the toll – improve transit services and freeway bottleneck improvements in the bridge corridors – have a clear connection with the source of the new revenue (the bridge toll).

12. Who will allocate the toll revenue?

As the transportation planning, coordinating and financing agency of the nine-county Bay Area, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) will allocate the toll revenue. The Bay Area Toll Authority, a separate legal entity from MTC but with the same oversight board of elected officials, will be responsible for issuing bonds and for submitting updates on the Regional Traffic Relief Plan to the state legislature.

13. Can Measure 2 money be taken by the state to fund other programs or backfill the deficit?

No. Under Measure 2, the toll funds will be used for the benefit of the toll payers, by relieving bridge corridors of traffic congestion and improving transit options in the bridge corridors. The money can't be used for any other purposes.

14. How were the projects in Regional Measure 2 chosen?

In 2002, the California Legislature initiated hearings on the subject of Bay Area traffic congestion. The Senate Select Committee on Bay Area Transportation reviewed traffic forecasts, such as an anticipated 40 percent increase in transbay travel by 2025, and determined that new investment in the bridge corridors, particularly new transit options, was needed, along with a new revenue source. The Committee also determined that greater coordination between the existing transit systems was needed. The Committee concluded that a toll increase was the most appropriate funding mechanism and formed a public advisory committee to develop an expenditure plan.

The advisory committee consisted of representatives of transportation agencies from throughout the Bay Area, including transit operators and Caltrans, businesses, environmental, and social equity organizations. The committee met on 15 occasions from June through December 2002 to hear project sponsors present ideas for providing new transit options and congestion relief in the bridge corridors. Individual projects were discussed and evaluated by the group based on performance measures, including

- Proximity to bridge corridors
- Impact on congestion
- Number of new transit riders generated
- Cost-effectiveness
- Transit connectivity
- Project readiness
- Sustainability
- Environmental impacts
- Land-use opportunities

15. What is the existing \$2 toll used for?

The first \$1, referred to as the "base toll" is used to fund projects approved by the voters in 1988, as part of Regional Measure 1. This revenue funds a variety of bridge and transit improvements in progress throughout the Bay Area, including a new span on the Benicia-Martinez Bridge and replacement of the Carquinez Bridge, widening of the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge, BART extensions to Pittsburg-Bay Point and Dublin-Pleasanton, and improvements to CalTrain and Muni among others.

The second dollar, increased by the Legislature in 1998, known as the “seismic dollar,” is fully dedicated to seismic retrofit of five of the Bay Area’s seven state owned toll bridges (Benicia-Martinez, Carquinez, Richmond-San Rafael, San Francisco Bay Bridge, San Mateo-Hayward). The two remaining and newest bridges, Antioch and Dumbarton, were evaluated in the early 1990s by Caltrans engineers, who concluded at that time that retrofit was unnecessary.

16. How can I find out more information about RM 2?

Contact Solano Transportation Authority at 707.424.6075, by e-mail at staplan@sta-snci.com. You can also contact the Metropolitan Transportation Commission at 510.464.7889.