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August 28, 2015

Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas, Chairman  
Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Dear Chairman Ridley-Thomas:

Metro has requested that Councils of Governments in Los Angeles County submit a list of their priorities for a prospective sales tax measure by September 1, 2015. Much has changed since Measure R was enacted in 2008. The South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) has determined that submitting a priority list for the prospective sales tax measure would be significantly strengthened by updating and conforming policies and priorities in an updated Metro Long Range Transportation Plan, a re-structured Metro Call for Projects, and in an updated Measure R South Bay Highway Program Implementation Plan.

Toward that end, at the August 27, 2015 Board meeting, a comprehensive set of recommendations to address our broader concerns was adopted (see Attachment 1). In addition to the requested list of priorities, the recommendations include policy changes for the three major areas that the SBCCOG believes need to be conformed to strengthen and update current Measure R programs and to inform the design of a new sales tax measure.

You will see that the recommendations reflect the need for decision-making at the subregional level as well as flexibility in allowable spending. These recommendations are a reflection of two very significant facts: 1) Los Angeles County is too big for one size fits all strategies. The South Bay subregion alone is the size of Portland, Oregon and should be able to make decisions on its transportation within the subregion as well as its connectivity to the regional system; and 2) The sales tax proposal would commit funds to the year 2057 and possibly beyond. That is tantamount to the decision makers in 1975 committing funds for the transportation system of 2015. It goes without saying that no one could have predicted the changes that have taken place and are still continuing in the way we travel and our need for travel.

Additionally, one policy area has generated particular attention during the SBCCOG's deliberations: the integration of Complete Streets into the current Measure R sub-fund program. The federal, state and the Metro Board's interest in funding Complete Street elements is not currently reflected as an eligible use of Measure R Subfunds. Although the SBCCOG recommendations include inclusion of Complete Streets as an eligible use of future sales tax revenues, there has been a question as to the eligibility of using Measure R funds for complete

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street elements. We have heard different interpretations of Metro’s policy concerning whether or not Measure R funds are eligible for complete street project elements, but the fact is that we do not have any of these concerns in writing. Therefore, the SBCCOG Board is asking for written clarification of the current Metro Board policy regarding funding of “Complete Streets” highway project elements using Measure R funds.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations and sales tax priorities. We look forward to receiving clarification of current Metro policy regarding Complete Streets eligibility for use of Measure R funds.

Sincerely,

Jim Gazeley, SBCCOG Chair  
Mayor Pro Tem, Lomita

cc: SBCCOG Board Members and Alternates  
South Bay City Managers  
Metro Board Members and Alternates  
Phillip Washington, Chief Executive Officer