



**DATE:** December 11, 2017

**TO:** Transportation Authority of Marin Board of Commissioners

**FROM:** Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director

**SUBJECT:** EPAC Presentation and Authorization for Next Steps (Action) - Agenda Item No. 8

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

The TAM Board will receive a report about the Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee (EPAC) process and the EPAC recommendation to pursue a renewal of the ½-cent transportation sales tax measure in November 2018. Staff recommends that the Board accept the report, and authorize the Next Steps in the process, for staff to reach out to stakeholder groups, and cities and towns, briefing councils on the plan and authorize conducting a public opinion poll on the expenditure plan, to be conducted in the first quarter of 2018, and not to exceed \$35,000.

## **BACKGROUND**

In January 2017, the Transportation Authority of Marin began introducing the idea of renewing our transportation sales tax. Initial efforts to consider a sales tax cap increase were reset to provide briefings on what the sales tax for transportation currently funds. The TAM chair, Marin Transit staff and TAM staff conducted this series of briefings to our local city and town councils and the Marin County Board of Supervisors between February and May. In April 2017, a public opinion poll was conducted to gauge the public interest and to determine their priority transportation needs and willingness to consider a sales tax revenue measure, either an increase in sales tax or merely a renewal.

In June 2017, the TAM Board unanimously approved formation of an Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee to develop draft expenditure plans for both renewing the current ½-cent transportation sales tax and increasing it by ¼ cent. Although the current 20-year transportation sales tax, passed by voters in 2004, is not due to expire until 2024/25, there are advantages to renewing early:

- to reset what the ½-cent sales tax is being spent on, after 15 years of the current sales tax plan
- to continue a reliable stream of local revenue into the future
- to continue successful projects and programs, including the Safe Routes to Schools programs, local road maintenance and local transit
- to prevent cuts in the current Crossing Guard program
- to expand school-related transit and yellow bus programs
- to provide a local funding source to ensure the completion of key congestion relief projects including the Marin-Sonoma Narrows and the direct connection between northbound Highway 101 and eastbound I-580
- to leverage other regional, state and federal funding for needed transportation improvements.

**DISCUSSION**

The 2017 Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee consists of 24 residents, including Citizens’ Oversight Committee members, representing a diverse array of interests in Marin County. After TAM Board authorization June 1<sup>st</sup>, the committee met between June and December 2017 to receive education about the current ½-cent transportation sales tax, 2004’s Measure A, and to learn from a variety of agencies about current programs and unmet transportation needs. Educational presentations were provided from Marin Transit, Golden Gate Transit, Public Works Directors regarding local road and major roads, TAM staff regarding highway and interchange projects, Safe Routes to Schools program managers and County of Marin staff representing Bay Wave and C-Smart Vulnerability Assessments. The committee reviewed poll results, revenue projections and key principles including the three E’s, Economy, Environment and Equity. Note, TAM contracted with Rob Eyler and the Marin Economic Forum to provide revenue projections. The committee also received consistent updates on funding sources including new funding from Senate Bill 1, approved in April 2017, and potential funding from Regional Measure 3, likely to be on the ballot in June 2018. See attached for a Summary of Needs and Funding Sources, as presented to the committee. Note all meetings were open to the public and there was public comment throughout the process.

The committee worked closely together in both small groups and as a large group to develop and refine draft expenditure plans. The final meeting in November culminated with consensus on a Draft Expenditure Plan for renewing the ½-cent transportation sales tax and a separate plan to increase the sales tax by ¼-cent. The committee recommends pursuing renewal of the ½-cent transportation sales tax measure in November 2018.

The committee membership reflected a variety of community interests, noted below in the membership list. Although there were diverse interests, the committee reached consensus and demonstrated a strong commitment to building from the current successful measure and keeping the core structure. They recognized the changes in our transportation environment and the need to adjust how funds are being spent. They also acknowledged the rapidly changing landscape of transportation and mobility choices and so recommend having milestone review opportunities every 10 years to adjust plan elements to address future conditions.

<b><u>Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee Meeting Membership List</u></b>			
	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Alternate</b>
1	COC-Northern Planning	V-Anne Chernock	
2	COC-Central Planning	Joy Dahlgren	Jeffrey Olson
3	COC-Ross Valley Planning	Paul Roye	
4	COC-Southern Planning	Robert Burton	Jayni Allsep
5	COC-West Marin Planning Area	Scott Tye	
6	COC-Major Marin Employers	Peter Pelham	
7	COC-Environmental Organizations - Marin Conservation League	Kate Powers	Nancy Okada
8	COC-Bicycle and Pedestrian Group	Vince O'Brien	
9	COC-Marin County Paratransit Coordinating Council	Allan Bortel	Rocky Birdsey
10	COC-League of Women Voters	Kevin Hagerty	Kay Noguchi
11	COC-Taxpayer Group	Paul Premo	
12	North Bay Leadership Council	Cynthia Murray	
13	Chamber of Commerce Novato	Coy Smith	

14	Chamber of Commerce San Rafael	Joanne Webster	John Eells
15	Marin County Office of Education	Ken Lippi	Mike Grant
16	Student- College of Marin	Jon Horinek	
17	Transit Rider	Lisel Blash	
18	Marin Mobility Consortium - Seniors	Lynn Von der Werth	
19	Senior Living Resident/Pedestrian	Sue Beittel	
20	Equity/Marin City	Monique Brown	
21	Equity/Canal Neighborhood	Roberto Hernandez	
22	Labor Union/Building Trade Council	Javier Flores	
23	Bay Wave/Sea Level Rise/Innovation/Resilience	Bill Carney	Jerry Belletto
24	Safe Routes to School Representative	Debbie Alley	

A chart detailing the committee recommendations for the ½-cent and ¼-cent plans is attached. Primary goals of the ½-cent plan are to keep the core structure of the existing expenditure plan and expand much needed congestion relief programs. The current expenditure plan is successful and supported by the community. There was consensus to build from that success, maintain the categories and the top-line funding percentages.

- 7.5% Highway and Interchanges Improvements
- 26.5 % to Local Streets and Roads
- 11% to Safe Routes to Schools, Education, Infrastructure and Crossing Guards
- 55% to Local, Rural, Student and Special Needs Transit

The EPAC Proposal recommends a 30-year extension of the ½-cent sales tax to be placed on the ballot in November of 2018. All categories of funding address congestion relief. An extension does not propose any new taxes and generates a future funding stream for major highway investments that are not currently funded, including complementary funds for the Marin-Sonoma Narrows and the NB US-101 to EB I-580 direct connector. Future local funds can be advanced immediately to attract regional, state and federal funding. The proposal increases funding for local road improvements, senior mobility, school-related transit and yellow bus programs. The extension proposal would also provide more funding for Safe Routes to Schools education, Safe Pathways programs and crossing guards, avoiding the need to cut 26 crossing guards in the Fall of 2018. The proposal is forward thinking and provides seed funding for projects related to sea-level rise, innovative technologies and to support future mobility concepts for first/last mile solutions and peak hour demand management. The committee recognized the need to continue local funding for programs and projects not eligible for funds under either SB1 or the pending toll increase consideration by voters, RM3.

In addition to recognizing the importance of continuing this local funding source, the committee also recognized the current tax-sensitive climate. To protect and maintain the existing sales tax and associated programs, the committee did not think it was prudent to try to increase the tax. The committee developed a plan for a potential ¼-cent increase and acknowledges the need for additional transportation resources but did not recommend pursuing a ¾-cent measure at this time.

## NEXT STEPS

The expenditure plan is an important first step to provide education about the current measure and to receive community and stakeholder input about transportation needs and priorities. The EPAC developed a thoughtful draft expenditure plan that is a starting point to gather additional input from the TAM Board,

our Cities and Towns, the County, the public and interested stakeholders. TAM staff would plan to conduct educational briefings to local jurisdictions, stakeholder groups, the public, and receive their input. Additionally, a scientifically based public opinion poll would augment the baseline poll conducted in May 2017 and will help inform future decision making about placing an expenditure plan on the ballot, and what is included in that plan.

### **FISCAL IMPACTS**

The public opinion poll is anticipated to cost \$35,000. Funds are available from city/county dues paid to TAM as the county Congestion Management Agency, or CMA.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Recommend that the TAM Board accept the report from the Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee (EPAC), approve moving forward with educational briefings to local jurisdictions and approve conducting a scientifically based public opinion poll.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: DRAFT EPAC Transportation Expenditure Plan for 1/2-cent and 1/4-cent options

Attachment B: DRAFT EPAC Expenditure Plan Summary Sheets

Attachment C: DRAFT List of Transportation Needs and Funding Sources

Attachment D: Schedule of Likely Next Steps