

RTP Discussion at TAM--10/12/15

Unless you really understand transportation, it won't be evident that this agenda item is the very biggest decision that TAM gets to make. The message of the staff report is "let's keep doing what we've always done. There's nothing to see here, just approve it and move along."

The report doesn't acknowledge that the RTP submission is where TAM commits to a strategic direction. Without a completed strategic plan, you've had no training or staff support to prepare you to make a strategic decision.

Highway performance is at near-crisis levels. Mobility is severely impaired. Yet you are being offered more of the same. When traffic keeps getting worse, perhaps the cause is a defective strategy guiding transportation investment. If you want to serve your constituents by making things work better, a thoughtful reconsideration of strategy is needed.

San Francisco led the freeway revolt back in the 60s. Why shouldn't Marin lead the sustainable transportation movement?

I have a series of ideas to improve things. They require TAM to get assertive: pay CHP to enforce the HOV lane, demand that Caltrans expand the hours of HOV operation. Demand that Caltrans open the third lane on the Richmond Bridge.

End Marin's support for more highway widening north of Novato, recognizing that the demands of climate change require that we shift substantial numbers of solo drivers to SMART, which will begin operations next year.

And finally, the last thing Sir Francis Drake Blvd. needs is a parking structure at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, because it will attract more cars. Golden Gate can't possibly mitigate the increased traffic. Please take it off the list and tell GGT to provide more bus service. Use money that staff wants to spend on highway widening to pay for bus operations instead. All it takes is a funds swap.

Your constituents expect you to make their lives better. The staff recommendation won't do that.

I invite you to come to the Marin Coalition lunch on November 4 to hear me discuss these ideas in more detail with your Chair.