

TA

CORRESPONDENCE

as of 3-15-2024

From: [Board \(@smcta.com\)](mailto:Board (@smcta.com))
To: "Elaine Salinger"
Cc: April Chan; [Board \(@smcta.com\)](mailto:Board (@smcta.com)); [cacsecretary \(@smcta.com\)](mailto:cacsecretary (@smcta.com)); [Charpentier, Sean \[scharpentier@smcgov.org\]](mailto:Charpentier, Sean [scharpentier@smcgov.org]); ashiramizu@smcgov.org; dina.el-tawansy@dot.ca.gov; Josh Becker; Diane Papan
Subject: RE: Prioritize bike and pedestrian safety
Date: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 4:18:25 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Dear Ms. Salinger,

Thank you for contacting the Transportation Authority. A member of staff will be reaching out to you.

Jean Brook

Assistant District Secretary Executive Administration

San Mateo County Transit District
1250 San Carlos Avenue
San Carlos, CA 94070
Office: 650-508-6223
Cell: 650-703-1934
www.smctd.com

From: Elaine Salinger <esalinger@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2024 9:59 PM
To: April Chan <ChanA@samtrans.com>; Board (@smcta.com) <board@smcta.com>; cacsecretary [@smcta.com] <cacsecretary@smcta.com>; Charpentier, Sean [scharpentier@smcgov.org] <scharpentier@smcgov.org>; ashiramizu@smcgov.org; dina.el-tawansy@dot.ca.gov; Josh Becker <senator.becker@senate.ca.gov>; Diane Papan <assemblymember.papan@assembly.ca.gov>
Subject: Prioritize bike and pedestrian safety

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ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders.

Dear San Mateo County Transportation Officials,

Thank you for your service to the transportation needs of the citizens of San Mateo County. I serve as Chair of the San Mateo County Chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby (with 1090 members) and Chair of the County of San Mateo Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (although I am writing as an individual). I wanted to share with you an op-ed that I wrote in today's [San Mateo Daily Journal](#) (See below)

Per the article, my friend recently died while riding a bike, through no fault of his own. I am tired of seeing worthy safety projects not get funded. Safety advocates fight over tiny scraps of money. All of us use the roads, but funding overwhelmingly prioritizes transportation via car. For example, the San Mateo County Transportation Authority and C/CAG approved almost \$600 million to widen Highway 101 to "reduce congestion." But studies have shown that the

relief is temporary, at best, and the number of cars increases because it encourages more driving. Tragically, the 101 widening canceled the much needed and long-planned Holly Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge in San Carlos and the Hillsdale Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge in San Mateo.

Please let me know what you are doing to make it safe for people who want to leave their cars at home and get around on foot and bike. I would love to meet with you to discuss how we can all do better and prevent additional fatalities in our community. Thank you.

Elaine Salinger, SMC BPAC Chair and CCL Group Leader

San Mateo County Chapter

650-533-3539



Cyclists pay taxes too

- By Elaine Salinger

- 16 hrs ago

- [0](#)

Peter Grace was one of the smartest, friendliest people I have ever known. In December, a driver sideswiped him while he was riding his bike and killed him. Peter was such an experienced cyclist, but he was riding in San Rafael on a badly designed road and bike path. He died because of a lack of adequate physical separation between people on bikes and cars.

What's the solution? For every dollar spent on roads, we can and should have 5 or 10 cents spent on separated bike lanes and bike infrastructure. Cyclists pay transportation sales taxes too and deserve this.

The benefits? It will be safer for cyclists, and drivers will be happier

because they won't need to share the road. Traffic congestion will improve as more people leave their cars at home. Studies have found that mental health improves when we are outside, and property values always increase where there are bike lanes.

About 200 people attended Peter Grace's memorial. He had a lot of friends. If all of us asked state Sen. Josh Becker and assemblymembers Papan or Ting to write and vote for a law mandating that 5% of our road spending be spent on safety for those who bike, more people would ride, roads would be safer and less congested. How do you build political will for this legislation? By telling our legislators what we want so that more Peter Graces aren't killed. Readers, please email or call them today. It helps to repeat this two-minute action every week.

As the San Mateo County Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee chair, I am tired of seeing worthy safety projects not get funded. Safety advocates fight over tiny scraps of money. All of us use the roads, but funding overwhelmingly prioritizes cars. For example, the San Mateo County Transportation Authority approved almost \$600 million to widen Highway 101 to reduce congestion. But studies have shown that the relief is temporary and the number of cars increases because it encourages more driving. The 101 widening canceled the much-needed and long-planned Holly Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge in San Carlos and the Hillsdale Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge in San Mateo.

The Holly Street Bike and Pedestrian Bridge was ready for construction in 2019, but Caltrans prioritized the 101 widening project over the bike/pedestrian safety project. Without any feedback from the community, the project was abandoned. This is a shame because I know of six serious cyclist injuries on the existing overpass. Holly and 101 was identified as a San Mateo County Youth-Based High Injury Network and a highest safety priority area.

Holly is the only route to access the east side of 101 and the Bay Trail from San Carlos via bike or foot for several miles. Holly is also the main

route to access downtown businesses in San Carlos from the Bay Trail. Are you a business owner in San Carlos? Speak up.

San Mateo's Hillsdale Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge was identified as a priority in 2007. This has been the site of many serious crashes involving cyclists, including one fatality. And like Holly, Hillsdale is part of the Youth-Based High Injury Network due to frequent crashes involving kids. According to the city of San Mateo, the 101 widening "complicated" the design of the planned/bike pedestrian bridge and now the project is on indefinite hold.

Our prioritization of auto drivers' convenience and speed at the expense of the health and safety of those who leave their cars at home or live in polluted communities adjacent to our highways needs to change. Please email or call Becker and Papan or Ting to ask that they write and vote for legislation mandating a minimum of 5 or 10 cents for bike infrastructure for every dollar spent on our roads. To make this as easy as possible for you, here is their contact info:

Becker: <https://sd13.senate.ca.gov/contact> or call (650) 233-2724.

Papan: <https://a21.asmdc.org/contact> or call (650) 349-2200.

Ting: <https://a19.asmdc.org/contact-me> or call (415) 557-2312

Do this action every week and just say: Please write and vote for legislation mandating a minimum of 5 or 10 cents for bike and pedestrian infrastructure for every dollar spent on roads. Cyclists and pedestrians pay taxes and need this.

Elaine Salinger is a retired veterinarian living in San Mateo. She is the chair of the San Mateo County Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and leads the SMC chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby. The views expressed are her own.

From: [Giuliano](#)
To: [Board \(@smcta.com\)](mailto:Board (@smcta.com))
Subject: Comments about last meetings Item 10, Strategic Plan Workshop
Date: Monday, March 11, 2024 11:42:31 PM

You don't often get email from giuliano@carlini.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I hope you found the Strategic Plan Workshop engaging. The CAC did. Several long time members said it was one of their best meetings ever.

I was unable to stay to make these comments at the March 7 TA Meeting as I had another event I needed to attend.

Comments:

- Adding capacity can not relieve congestion. It simply induces demand leading to even worse congestion. Studies world wide overwhelmingly demonstrate this. As congestion relief is both a Measure A goal and a Measure W core principal, adding capacity and adding VMT can not be done without violating the goals and principals. They also increase GHGs, reduce safety, harm peoples health, harm the elderly and disabled, and reduce equity, all in contravention of the goals and principals.
- The only way to relieve congestion is to move car trips to mass transit and active transit modes. Thus these projects must be preferred. These projects also reduce GHGs, increase safety, improve public health, help the elderly and disabled, and increase equity.
- I often hear folks comment that we can't reallocate funds from highway to other buckets. But I simply do not hear folks asking to do so. They do ask for more to be spent on active transport. Nothing in [Measure A](#), the [2009 Expenditure Plan](#), or [Measure W](#) forbids spending highway funds on active transport elements that are part of a highway project. Measure W specifically permits this: *Eligible candidate projects can include bicycle and pedestrian components or facilities that are incorporated into and enhance safety for a larger highway or interchange project.* And Measure A and its associated expenditure plan are also explicit, as the bike/ped infrastructure bucket projects are all off highway overpasses, tunnels, and paths. Thus, on highway improvements must be paid for with highway funds.
- On the other hand, I don't ever hear folks mention that Measure W core principals require VMT reduction. They explicitly say so. And, yet we fund projects that increase VMT. Ditto for other core principals. Why do we fixate on bike/ped expenditures, and the fictional prohibition on spending any highway funds on them, when we freely spend funds on explicitly forbidden projects that will increase VMT and violate other core principals?
- I'm surprised that we tout Ralston stage 3 as a bike project. Project was \$1.5M, of which \$21K was for bike infrastructure. 0.2% That's not a bike project.

Please, as we work through this multi month project to develop a new strategic plan, the result needs to create policies to:

- Reject any/every project that adds capacity, VMT, or GHG. As called for in measure W core principals. Adding capacity makes congestion worse, not better. Studies conducted world wide overwhelmingly support this conclusion.
- Funds should instead be spent on road repairs and maintenance. And include active transport improvements, especially cycling improvements, when roads are repaired and maintained. As permitted by both Measures A and W.
- Require all Highway projects to allocate at least 10-20% of funds to cycling infrastructure, and another 10% on other safety elements. Or, some other significant percentage thresholds. Measure A goals and Measure W core principals can not be met without doing so.

Thank you,

giuliano

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Drive a bike a bit more often and cars a bit less. You'll be healthier and happier, and so will our world.

Reach out if you'd like to learn to cycle more safely ([LCI #7105](#)).

<https://bikesiliconvalley.org>

<https://www.peopleforbikes.org/news/your-bike-advocacy-playbook>