

March 18, 2021

Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of the United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Support of Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant application for completion of the Santa Barbara U.S. 101 Multimodal Corridor Project.

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing on behalf of Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District in support of SBCAG's INFRA program grant application to complete funding for the Santa Barbara U.S. 101 Multimodal Corridor project. This project is in the final phase of a more than 15-year effort to provide multiple transportation benefits on U.S. 101 to reduce congestion, improve quality of life, support interregional goods movement, foster environmental sustainability, increase safety and multimodal access, benefit underserved communities, and create access to jobs.

The Santa Barbara U.S. 101 Multimodal Corridor project will bring many benefits. I am especially supportive of the following components:

- **Encourages mode shift.** The project will close a gap on U.S. 101 by adding a peak-hour carpool lane in each direction to connect existing, designated carpool lanes on both ends of the project. It relieves congestion while encouraging more efficient higher-occupancy trips, including express bus services between Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Related corridor improvements also include improved commuter rail service from Los Angeles and Ventura, coastal trail enhancements, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Infrastructure that supports alternative transportation and active transportation options as alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips results in improvements to air quality.
- **Supports strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants.** The more opportunities that exist for Santa Barbara County residents and workers to choose alternatives to using single-occupancy vehicles, the more benefits can be realized for local air quality. This project will address that through carpool/vanpool incentives, reduced idling due to unnecessary congestion, improved travel time reliability, and increased multiple active-transportation options.

- **Benefits Underserved Communities in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.** The completion of the project will address various underrepresented and low-income community needs. With the carpool lane addition, low-income households relying on carpooling and bus transit will benefit from anticipated travel time savings. These include the low-income communities in the cities of Santa Barbara and Carpinteria, as well as disadvantaged communities in the cities of Ventura and Oxnard in Ventura County. This will provide reliable options for accessing jobs as well as education, social services, and health services offered between the two regions.

SBCAG is committing substantial local funding to complete the final phase of the corridor project using Measure A, a Santa Barbara County transportation sales tax measure. The corridor is the highest regional transportation priority in Santa Barbara County. Collectively, non-federal sources represent nearly 80% of the total project cost, demonstrating a strong local contribution. While there has been significant local and state investment in the project to date, partnership with the federal government is critical to help complete this final phase.

I believe the Santa Barbara U.S. 101 Multimodal Corridor project makes a significant impact for residents and businesses in Santa Barbara County, Central Coast region, State of California, and the nation. The inclusion of components that encourage multi-modal transportation options, especially for underserved communities, will benefit our air quality. For these reasons, I support SBCAG's INFRA program grant application and urge your full consideration of this project.

Sincerely,



Aeron Arlin Genet
Director and Air Pollution Control Officer

cc: Santa Barbara County Federal Legislative Delegation
Marjie Kim, Executive Director, SBCAG
Sarkes Khachek, Director of Programming, SBCAG
Lauren Bianchi Klemann, Government Affairs/Public Information Manager, SBCAG