



January 13, 2022

Guy Preston
Executive Director
SCCRTC
523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Director Preston,

Ecology Action (EA) is requesting \$90,000 in Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds for FY 2022-2023 to support the Santa Cruz County Bike to Work and Bike/Walk to School (BTW/S) program which includes Fall/Spring Bike Transportation Campaigns for work (Bike to Work), school (Bike/Walk to School), May Bike Month, and Fall Bike Challenge on Love to Ride. The BTW program is one of the largest sustainable transportation campaigns in Santa Cruz County, providing critical opportunities to increase bike transportation, catalyze large scale behavior change, and provide bike encouragement to K-12 students and adults. These bike initiatives are needed more than ever as COVID-19 sparked a bike boom and this increased investment will help sustain the rise in biking as other forms of sustainable transportation have declined during the pandemic.

It has been five years since the RTC increased Ecology Action's TDA allocation as this request is a \$30,000 annual increase from the previous year's allocation. The \$90,000 request is less than one percent of the total TDA annual funding but supports a growing form of sustainable and healthy transportation. According to US Census data, Santa Cruz County's commute trips have the following mode share percentages – biking is 3%, public transit is 3%, and walking is 4.7%. The City of Santa Cruz mode share is 7.6% for biking, 7% for public transit, and 11% for walking. And the City of Watsonville is 1% for biking, 1.5% for transit, and 1.9% for walking. (US Census, American Community Survey, 5 year estimates 2015-2019)

This investment will allow Ecology Action to support the many current and soon-to-be bike improvements throughout the county including new sections of the Rail Trail in Santa Cruz and Watsonville, re-start and expansion of a county wide ebike share service, three new regional ebike rebate programs, and various local jurisdictions' bike infrastructure projects. Plus, future improvements such as two bike and pedestrian bridges over Highway One, Soquel Corridor bike improvements, and completion of more sections of the Rail Trail.

Ecology Action has been delivering popular inclusive encouragement bike programs for 35 years helping to foster the evolution of bike transportation in our coastal and mountain communities. We are well positioned to cultivate the accelerated adoption of bike transportation with greater access to quality ebikes and bike sharing schemes that are geared to underserved members of the county.

We will continue to use online platforms to strengthen our behavior change message, provide the social infrastructure for individuals and large employers alike to participate in a common challenge, and continue

to respond to the barriers community members face to riding more often like safe routes. We piloted our safe route group rides throughout the county in 2021 as part Bike Month and Biketober. These rides, combined with ongoing encouragement and incentivization to get out and ride more often for all trips creates a well-rounded approach to building confidence, skills, and inspiration to use biking for everyday transportation. We saw young kids just starting out to seniors looking for safe ways to get around, and many people in between. This social engagement makes biking an attractive form of transportation.

The Bike to Work program continues to leverage RTC funding with some \$50,000 in cash support and some \$25,000 of in-kind contributions from local businesses, public agencies, and volunteers. EA supplements RTC funding with state and regional funds where possible to meet the growing COVID-19 bike boom demands, especially for our bicycle transportation encouragement and safety education programs in the schools.

Ecology Action is sincerely grateful to the RTC for your continued support and for consideration of this \$90,000 allocation request for FY 22/23 to support our Bike to Work/School program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Piet Canin".

Piet Canin,
Strategic Development Director
Ecology Action



LIFT LINE

COMMUNITY BRIDGES
PUENTES DE LA COMUNIDAD 

September 22, 2021
Guy Preston, Executive Director
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
1523 Pacific Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Mr. Preston:

The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) and Community Bridges Lift Line hereby requests that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) approve an extension of its 2019 RTC decision, with minor amendment, related the allocation of the region's population shares (PUC 99313) of State Transit Assistance (STA) and SB1-transit State of Good Repair (SGR) funds to Community Bridges Lift Line and METRO through FY24/25.

At its September 5, 2019 meeting, the RTC approved METRO's proposal to allocate \$100,000 per year of the RTC's 99313 shares of FY19/20-FY21/22 STA funds to Community Bridges Lift Line and to pass through the balance of the RTC's share of STA and 100% of the region's SB1-transit SGR funds to METRO through FY21/22. The RTC's September 5, 2019 action also held in abeyance for three years a 2017 RTC policy that would have gradually reduced direct allocations of the RTC's population share (PUC 99313) of STA and SGR funds to METRO from 100% in FY18/19 to 85% in FY19/20, 80% in FY20/21, and 75% in FY21/22. The RTC's decision was made after METRO and Community Bridges Lift Line had discussed, and the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) agreed with the recommendation of METRO's proposal at its August 15, 2019 meeting. These funds have helped METRO and Community Bridges Lift Line save jobs and keep riders and front-line workers safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

METRO and Community Bridges Lift Line will continue to be devastated by the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, both in loss of ridership and loss of sales tax revenues. Over the next three years, METRO and Community Bridges Lift Line seek dependable formula-based funding to continue serve riders who rely on public transit to conduct essential business, access vital services, and play an indispensable role in Santa Cruz County's social and economic recovery from COVID-19. To that end, METRO and Community Bridges Lift Line hereby request the RTC:

- To allocate eight and four tenths percent per year of the RTC's population shares (PUC 99313) of FY22/23-FY24/25 STA funds to Community Bridges Lift Line and to pass through the balance of the RTC's FY22/23-FY24/25 STA and 100% of the region's population shares (PUC 99313) of FY22/23-FY24/25 SB1-transit SGR to METRO.

- To continue to hold in abeyance for three more years through FY24/25 a 2017 RTC decision that gradually reduces the allocations of the region's population shares (PUC 99313) of STA and SGR funds to METRO from 100% in FY18/19, 85% in FY19/20, 80% in FY20/21, and 75% in FY21/22.

This type of approach will help METRO and Community Bridges Lift Line better plan and program funds to meet their operating and capital needs. Without dependable funding, METRO and Community Bridges Lift Line may need to reduce service and potentially delay critical capital projects, impacting the freedom of mobility for individuals with disabilities; public transportation for health care workers and other safety personnel; and Medicaid recipients who receive medical transportation for kidney dialysis, cancer treatments, and other critical care.

Thank you for your consideration, and please let us know if we can provide additional information on how the pandemic continues to impact our operations.

Sincerely,



Alex Clifford
CEO/General Manager, METRO



Raymon Cancino
CEO, Community Bridges