Transportation 2035 Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area

FINAL

April 2009

CHANGE IN MOTION

TRANSPORTATION 2035

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A Call for Change

All long-term plans are about change. There can be disagreement about precisely which changes the future will bring, or how fast they will occur, or what can and should be done about them — but no one doubts that conditions 25 or 30 years hence will be different than they are today. Change is a certainty, and to plan means to reckon with change.

> “This plan proposes crucial changes to the Bay Area’s transportation system.”

And all transportation plans are, by definition, about motion. Planners necessarily focus their attention on what is being transported (cargo or people), and by what means (by truck, car, bus, train, ferry, bicycle, or even by foot). But it is motion — the business of getting from here to there — that is the core concern of every transportation plan.

In these respects, this Transportation 2035 Plan for the San Francisco Bay Area is like other long-range transportation plans: It is about change and it is about motion. And if we had labeled the plan “Change and Motion,” it would be an accurate if unremarkable

description. But we call our plan “Change in Motion” — and what a difference a two-letter word can make.

Change in Motion

“Change in motion” gets at what is most distinctive about this transportation plan by managing to simultaneously convey several key ideas. First, it says that change is happening; it is “in motion.” Second, and most importantly, it suggests that motion (i.e., transportation) is changing, and that this plan is playing a role in

that change. Both these things are true. We are definitely living in a time of change, and this plan will bring changes to the Bay Area's transportation system. And both meanings are central to the structure and development of this plan. Further, this short phrase carries the sense that the overall change process is dynamic and ongoing, and it will unfold over time as we move forward. And this also is true.

Focusing on the first meaning, to say that change is "in motion" is to emphasize its immediacy. It is not a contingent or abstract aspect of a distant future. It is already under way. Indeed, to cite one key example, the buildup of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere is not only already happening, it has been happening for longer than we knew. And, to mention just two examples, a dizzying run-up in the price of oil and a stomach-churning economic downturn were significant changes that forced themselves on our attention in real time, as we were developing this plan. Other important changes, such as the graying of the Baby Boom generation, are imminent and will soon affect us.

In drawing up the Transportation 2035 Plan, we have been acutely aware of rapidly shifting conditions and policies, even as we cast our eyes to the far horizon and strive to fashion a vision and a strategy for the future. This lends the plan a note of urgency and inspires a readiness to take action against the root causes of problems like traffic congestion, for instance, and not just to ameliorate symptoms.

But most crucially, "change in motion" serves to clearly announce that the ways that residents travel around the Bay Area are changing, and that this plan will change them further. By means of its investment choices and adopted policies, the Transportation 2035 Plan aims to stimulate the use of public transit, increase the safety, utility and appeal of bicycling and walking, and reduce miles traveled and emissions by cars and trucks in the Bay Area while increasing the efficiency of the roadway and transit systems for all users.

> "Travel around the region will be different as a result of the steps taken in this plan."

Innovative approaches such as pricing of excess carpool-lane capacity on highways, a brand-new Transportation Climate Action Campaign to target greenhouse gases, a major public transit expansion program, a multipronged Freeway Performance Initiative to maximize throughput on existing highways, and an overall emphasis on measurable performance improvements are signal components of this plan. In these ways, the Transportation 2035 Plan attempts to influence or initiate a whole range of actual "changes in motion." Travel around the region will be different

as a result of the steps taken in this plan, and the changes will be to the Bay Area's benefit.

More than a tag line, "change in motion" thus succinctly captures what is distinctive about the Transportation 2035 Plan. As transportation planners, we are both coping with changes and trying to cause them. And these two processes are interrelated and interwoven in this plan. The plan itself is a catalog of changes which, taken in their entirety, we hope will lead to a future of greater mobility, reduced congestion, cleaner air and a better quality of life in the Bay Area. That is the direction we want change to be moving.

Choosing Change

Bay Area residents and newcomers live and work in this region because of its physical beauty, resilient economy, cultural and ethnic vibrancy, and quality of life. These gifts, whether bequeathed by Nature or fashioned by the hands of our neighbors and forebears, are now ours to protect and carry forward for new generations.

Today we stand at the proverbial fork in the road. We can continue to live off of our inheritance or establish a new legacy for generations yet to come. We can inspire, innovate and implement an integrated, efficient regional transportation system that bolsters

> "We must anticipate change, instigate change, and, most of all, we must succeed in putting change in motion."

our regional economy, safeguards our environment, and ensures social equity throughout our region. But to do so we must respond to the changing environment around us. We must anticipate change, instigate change, and, most of all, we must succeed in putting change in motion. We must also take chances and risk failures along the way. We ask you to join us in choosing change and choosing a better future for the Bay Area.