

CITY OF SAN MATEO
City Council Regular Meeting
May 5, 2025
7:00 PM



COUNCIL MEMBERS
Robert Newsom Jr., Mayor
Adam Loraine, Deputy Mayor
Nicole Fernandez
Danielle Cwirko-Godycki
Lisa Diaz Nash

AGENDA ITEM

12. Letter of Opposition to the Current U.S. 101/SR 92 Interchange Direct Connector Project Proposal – Approval

Authorize the Mayor to send a letter on behalf of the City Council to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Assemblymember Diane Papan, and State Senator Josh Becker, expressing the City of San Mateo's opposition to the current U.S. 101/SR 92 Interchange Direct Connector Project proposal. Authorize the Mayor to transmit a letter to the Mayor of the City of Foster City requesting consideration for co-signing the opposition letter.

CEQA: This opposition letter is not a project subject to CEQA, because it is an organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5).)



CITY OF SAN MATEO

City Hall
330 W. 20th Avenue
San Mateo CA 94403
www.cityofsanmateo.org

Agenda Report

Agenda Number: 12

Section Name: CONSENT CALENDAR

Account Number: 10-111:

File ID: 25-9908

TO: City Council
FROM: Alex Khojikian, City Manager
PREPARED BY: City Clerk's Office
MEETING DATE: May 05, 2025

SUBJECT:

Letter of Opposition to the Current U.S. 101/SR 92 Interchange Direct Connector Project Proposal - Approval

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the Mayor to send a letter on behalf of the City Council to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Assemblymember Diane Papan, and State Senator Josh Becker, expressing the City of San Mateo's opposition to the current U.S. 101/SR 92 Interchange Direct Connector Project proposal. Authorize the Mayor to transmit a letter to the Mayor of the City of Foster City requesting consideration for co-signing the opposition letter.

BACKGROUND:

On April 7, 2025, the City Council received an informational update on the US-101/SR-92 Direct Connector Project. Following the presentation, a subcommittee was formed consisting of Mayor Rob Newsom, Jr. and Council Member Danielle Cwirko-Godycki to draft a letter opposing the current project proposal.

The draft opposition letter (Attachment 1) is now presented to the City Council for approval. If approved, the letter will be sent to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Assemblymember Diane Papan, and State Senator Josh Becker.

The City Council also directed that a request be made to the City Council of Foster City to co-sign the opposition letter. A draft request letter (Attachment 2) is also provided for Council consideration and approval.

BUDGET IMPACT:

There is no budgetary impact associated with the approval and transmission of the attached letters.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

This opposition letter is not a project subject to CEQA, because it is an organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5).)

NOTICE PROVIDED

All meeting noticing requirements were met.

ATTACHMENTS

Att 1 – Letter of Opposition to the Current U.S. 101/SR 92 Interchange Direct Connector Project Proposal
Att 2 – Letter to the Mayor of Foster City

STAFF CONTACT

Martin McTaggart, City Clerk

mmctaggart@cityofsanmateo.org

(650) 522-7044



CITY OF SAN MATEO
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

330 W. 20th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403-1338
www.cityofsanmateo.org
(650) 522-7040

May 6, 2025

Dear U.S.,101 / SR 92 Interchange Direct Connector Project Sponsors:

We are writing to you today on behalf of the residents of the City of San Mateo to express concern with the current U.S. 101 / SR 92 Interchange Direct Connector Project, as currently proposed. While we know that reducing traffic congestion and improving the US 101 / SR 92 interchange is important to the long-term economic success of the City of San Mateo, San Mateo County and the wider Bay Area region, residents (250+) came out in force at our April 7 council meeting to request a modified approach.

As always, we greatly appreciate your efforts to improve transportation infrastructure across San Mateo County, and we look forward to partnering with you to balance local community concerns with ongoing regional needs. To help us find an effective and community-friendly path forward, we would like to share more information about the specific concerns raised by residents:

- **The potential use of eminent domain.**
The San Mateo City Council cannot support a project plan that includes eminent domain. Any project should be developed within the current footprint of the existing highways and should not lead the removal of a local park and up to 31 residential homes.
- **The inclusion of toll lanes in the project with surge pricing.**
While we recognize these lanes generate much-needed revenue for transportation authorities, the efficacy of these lanes to reduce congestion in high-traffic corridors is unclear. We also are concerned these lanes could exacerbate income inequality.
- **Potential impacts to bike and pedestrian lanes.**
We are unsure how this project could impact the City's current plans for East to West protected bike lanes & pedestrian ways in the 19th Ave corridor under SR 92.
- **A lack of clear and consistent communication with residents.**
When councilmembers initially engaged with residents of the 31 properties that could be impacted by eminent domain, not a single resident was aware of this project and how it could materially affect them. Communication and community engagement is key, and in this case, a gap in these areas explains much of the negative reaction to the project.
- **Cost and environmental impact.**
We understand the use of Regional, State and Federal funds is not always flexible and may be earmarked toward specific project types. However, it is unclear whether spending \$200 million or more to expand highways is the best use of taxpayer funds, especially as there may be more environmentally friendly ways to address congestion in this corridor. For example, we could explore strategic highway widening within the existing highway footprint that benefits those who live in the

cities of San Mateo and Foster City, rather than building toll lanes for East Bay Commuters, or implementing robust mass transit across the Bay on the SR 92 corridor.

For these reasons, the San Mateo City Council, in support of our community, is respectfully asking relevant transit and government authorities to seriously reconsider the US 101 / SR 92 Interchange Direct Connector Project as currently proposed.

We believe there are pathways for existing transportation funds to remain dedicated toward a project to ease congestion in this corridor, and we remain open to alternative proposals. As noted, we stand ready to work collaboratively toward solutions that benefit our residents.

Sincerely,

Robert Newsom Jr., Mayor on behalf of the City of San Mateo City Council
City of San Mateo



CITY OF SAN MATEO
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

330 W. 20th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403-1338
www.cityofsanmateo.org
(650) 522-7040

May 6, 2025

Mayor Stacy Jimenez
City Hall
610 Foster City Blvd.
Foster City, CA 94404

Dear Mayor Stacy Jimenez,

On behalf of the San Mateo City Council, I am reaching out to respectfully request that the Foster City City Council consider co-signing the enclosed letter regarding the U.S. 101/SR 92 Interchange Direct Connector Project.

As outlined in the letter, the project, as currently proposed, raises concerns about its potential impact on our residents, shared local infrastructure, and community resources. We believe a joint letter would underscore the importance of balancing regional transportation improvements with the needs and well-being of the San Mateo and Foster City communities.

We greatly value our strong partnership with Foster City and would appreciate your Council's consideration in co-signing this letter to advocate on behalf of our shared constituents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Newsom Jr., Mayor
City of San Mateo