

POLICY WATCH – September 2017

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As we end summer and begin fall, there is a certain something in the air. A new vitality or perhaps urgency to make things happen, to get serious, to take action. Whether it is what is happening on immigration, healthcare, housing, transportation, or climate change, there is a need to get involved and make your voice heard. We have learned in the last year that democracy is a participation sport and we all need to get off the bench.

In this issue, we look at new state legislation that affects transportation and housing. And we celebrate the bustling new SMART service and how the local transportation authorities are helping to make it even easier to use. We also invite you to join us to honor the Leaders of the North Bay on November 3rd - get your ticket soon before they sell out. And check out the invitations to the Climate Change – Zero Carbon event on October 3rd and the Family Business event on Oct. 10th. There's lots going on and lots of ways to participate!

Best,



Cynthia

North Bay Leadership Council Urges Governor to Sign SB 595 – Will Bring Millions of New Transportation Funding to Our Region

SB 595 (Beall) has cleared the State Legislature and awaits the Governor's signature. NBLC urges the Governor to sign this bill so that the Bay Area can move forward with much need transportation and transit improvements. The gridlock on North Bay transportation corridors is impacting the region's economic competitiveness.

This bill promises major investments across the region to ease traffic congestion, fix nagging highway bottlenecks and dramatically expand mass transit



services. The bill, which authorizes a regional ballot measure, Regional Measure 3 (RM3) in June 2018, which would raise bridge tolls up to \$3, which would be phased in. This would not affect the toll on the Golden Gate Bridge which is independent of the state bridge system. RM3 outlines a bold, balanced plan that focuses on making big fixes to the Bay Area's transportation system with the primary goals of reducing or eliminating some of the region's worst highway backups, getting cars off congested roads and highways and creating a modern, seamless public transit network that addresses overcrowding and better connects cities and employment hubs.

The bill requires voter approval of RM3. This is will be the first time that Sonoma County is included in this regional measure and as such, the first time that Sonoma County will receive money if the measure passes. The measure needs to receive a simple majority of the voters' approval (50% +1) to pass as it is considered a fee, not a tax. The majority will be from all the Bay Area voters, not by individual counties.

The bill includes unprecedented levels of public oversight and accountability to guarantee that all investments are made according to the RM3 overall plan, following two previous measures that voters have approved over the past 30 years. Specifically, RM3 would establish an independent oversight committee to review all investments, including making regular reports to the state Legislature, and create a new Inspector General position to serve as a watchdog for investments on BART.

Among the centerpiece projects included in the RM3 plan are:

- Adding express lanes along major highway corridors to move cars faster, including the Highway 101 Novato Narrows connecting Marin and Sonoma counties
- \$100 M to study the widening and raising of Hwy. 37
- Improving transit access in the Tri-Valley and North Bay areas
- Extending SMART service to Windsor and Healdsburg
- Funding for the new San Rafael Transit Center
- Funding for Improving the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge Access
- Increasing the BART fleet and completing an extension from the East Bay to Silicon Valley
- Improving key highway interchanges in Contra Costa County at Interstate 680 and Highway 4 and in San Mateo County along Highway 101 to ease traffic bottlenecks
- Extending Caltrain to connect with other regional mass transit systems in San Francisco
- Expanding regional water transit service to meet skyrocketing demand
- Accelerate planning for a second transbay rail crossing
- Reducing truck traffic that clogs highways and pollutes the air

RM3 also has a provision that if anyone travels over a second bridge in their trip. If so, they will receive a 50% discount for the toll payment on the second bridge.

RM3 would raise up to \$4.2 billion. The final amount of any toll increase included in RM3 will be decided in the coming months by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. It is expected to be on the June 2018 ballot. The Governor needs to sign or veto the bill by no later than October 15.

NBLC Endorses Denise Athas for Novato City Council



NBLC is proud to endorse Denise Athas for the Novato City Council. Athas has served ably for two terms and earned a third term in office. She has proven that she is balanced, not afraid to tackle the tough issues and a champion for good government. We appreciate

Athas' commitment to bringing jobs and workforce housing to Novato and look forward to seeing her build on her accomplishments in her next term.

Please remember to vote on November 7th!

SMART Trains – On Time and Full!

The long awaited SMART train service has begun and is living up to expectations, and in some cases, exceeding them! As reported in the Press Democrat, “The first three weeks of operation for the North Bay’s new commuter train showed the rail line has continued to attract weekend riders in far greater numbers than initially anticipated, while the concentration of passengers with bicycles is prompting SMART officials to ponder how they accommodate those commuters going forward.”



The PD said, “Trains carried nearly 53,000 passengers in the weeks after paid service began Aug. 26, well beyond the roughly 46,800 passengers the agency projected for that period, Farhad Mansourian, general manager of the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit agency said Wednesday. More than 15,600 of those riders were on weekends, Mansourian told SMART board, whose members reacted with clear surprise. The agency’s early projections foresaw just 300 daily riders on weekends.”

Another surprise was the number of people bringing their bicycles with them. SMART staff is guessing this is their way of dealing with the first and last mile of their commutes. But staff acknowledged that the competition for space between riders and bicycles is in need of a fix.

The PD also reported, “SMART’s revenue from passenger fares has totaled more than \$242,000, besting its projection of \$225,000 for the period, Mansourian told the board. The transit agency charged passengers discounted fares from Aug. 26 through Labor Day. “The ridership has met what we projected, the revenue has met what we were budgeting for,” Mansourian said. “So far so good.”

In related news, the PD said, “the Santa Rosa City Council approved a pilot shuttle program to run between the downtown core and the SMART station. The service is planned to start about mid-October and aims to serve train riders who park in city garages and those who wish to reach downtown from the train station. The council allocated up to \$141,000 for the shuttles through June 30, said Rachel Ede, acting deputy director for the city’s transit division. The contract with Dallas-based MV Transportation, which operates Santa Rosa Paratransit, allows for two one-year extensions.”

Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) Offers New Lyft Program, GETSMART17. Get \$5 off Lyft Line to/from SMART Stations in Marin.

Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) announced a partnership with Lyft and Whistlestop to provide discounted rides to passengers using Lyft’s ride sharing service, Lyft Line, to get to and from SMART Stations in Marin County. The promo code “GETSMART17” offering the \$5 discount.

The program is designed to support new SMART ridership and encourage shared mobility options in order to reduce congestion and pollution. Lyft Line is part of the rideshare company’s application that

matches passengers taking a similar route. The technology provides an effective, real-time way to encourage and enable carpooling for first and last-mile access to Marin's new fixed rail service. TAM has partnered with local nonprofit Whistlestop to ensure this program is available to all users, including providing rides with wheelchair accessible vehicles.

How It Works

To receive the up-to \$5 discount, participants must:

- Download the Lyft App and Register for an Account
- Use Lyft Line option on the Lyft app, allowing passengers on a similar route to share the ride
- Enter the promo code GETSMART17 to receive up-to \$5 credit on up to 40 trips a month
- For those without smart phones or those who need a wheelchair accessible vehicle, call Whistlestop at 415-454-0998 to arrange for your Lyft ride. Rides are encouraged to be scheduled in advance. Be sure to mention the GETSMART17 program
- Begin or end the ride at a SMART station in Marin County during the SMART hours of operations Monday through Friday
- Novato North Station
- Hamilton Station
- Marin Civic Center
- Downtown San Rafael
- Passenger must pay for the first \$2 of their Lyft Line ride, and TAM will cover the next \$5.

Housing Bills on the Way to the Governor for Signature



Liam Dillon writing in the LA Times (<http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-housing-legislation-deal-impact-20170915-story.html>) says, "The housing package consists of three measures: Senate Bills 2, 3 and 35. Under SB 2, those refinancing their homes or filing other real estate documents — aside from home and commercial property sales — will pay a starting fee of \$75 with a maximum of \$225 paid per transaction. The measure is expected to raise about \$250 million a year to finance the construction of affordable housing.

His article continues, "SB 3 places a bond measure on the November 2018 statewide ballot with \$3 billion set aside to also finance low-income development, and an additional \$1 billion for veterans' home loans. SB 35 would require cities and counties to limit environmental, planning and other reviews on land already zoned for a developer's proposed amount of housing."

Gov. Jerry Brown has said he will sign the three bills.

But will this housing bill package make a significant dent in the housing shortage? Most think not. Dillon says, "Growing housing costs have touched every part of California. The state's median home value of \$505,800 is more than 2½ times the national average, and nearly 2 million residents pay more than half their income on rent. Just this week, the U.S. Census bureau revealed that one in five Californians is living in poverty — the nation's highest rate — once accounting for housing and other costs of living."

In 2011, the legislature killed a valuable tool for creating new affordable housing, Redevelopment. Attempts have been made trying to replace this loss of revenue and this bill package is a successful try, albeit not as lucrative. Dillon says, "Even though lawmakers hailed Friday's votes as historic, the bills won't put much of a dent in California's affordability problems. The state will remain billions of dollars short

annually of the money needed to finance new homes for the neediest Californians, according to state and third-party estimates of the legislation. Similarly, tens of thousands of additional new homes will be needed each year simply to keep pace with population growth.”

The expanded prevailing wage and project labor agreement requirements within the housing bills package does not bode well for the actual construction of new housing. These demands will drive up construction costs and kill the ability to produce the much needed new homes. The infusion of new revenue will not be enough to override these additional costs. It makes you wonder if the legislators are really committed to housing their constituents.

Get Your Ticket to Leaders of the North Bay Awards Luncheon on November 3rd!

The 11th annual Leaders of the North Bay Awards Luncheon promises to be one of the best to date. NBLC is proud to have NPR radio star Maria Hinojosa as our keynote speaker on Latinos in the U.S. and to be honoring:

United We Stand (Community Building): Susan McQuaid, Marin Court Appointed Special Advocates

Paint the Community Green (Environmental Stewardship): Pepperwood

The Light Bulb Went On (Innovative/Entrepreneurial Spirit): Pat Harper, Keysight Technologies

Empowering the Latino Community: Teen Services Sonoma

From Red Tape to Red Carpet: Kimberly Carroll, Marin Housing Authority

Murray Legacy Leadership Award: Gary Giacomini

The luncheon is on November 3rd at the Hyatt Vineyard Creek, Santa Rosa. This event always sells out. For tickets or more information, go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2017-leaders-of-the-north-bay-awards-luncheon-tickets-37078390464>

Business Edge Breakfast Briefing – “Involving Family in Your Business Enterprise: Essential Do’s and Don’ts You Need to Know”

Details:

Tuesday, October 10, 2017 | 7:00 am– 9:00 am

Dominican University of California, Creekside Room - Caleruega Hall (Corner of Magnolia & Palm)
100 Magnolia Avenue, Dominican University, San Rafael, CA

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Emily Bouchard, *Principal*, Wealth Legacy Group

PANELISTS:

Barry Freidman, *CEO*, Friedman's Building Supplies
Patty Garbarino, *President & CEO*, Marin Sanitary Service
Jordan Shields, *Partner*, Arrow Benefits Group

For tickets or more information, go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/involving-family-in-your-business-enterprise-essential-dos-and-donts-you-need-to-know-tickets-37554472438>

Fight Climate Change -- Attend Draw Down Marin: For a Carbon Free Community

Introducing DRAWDOWN: MARIN, the launch of a bold countywide climate action campaign. Marin County has been a leader in addressing climate change, but everyone has a part to play to eliminate the root causes of global warming at this pivotal point in time. Join the conversation, as GreenBiz founder Joel Makower and Project Drawdown editor Paul Hawken discuss what's possible, with special guests Net-Zero Director Leah Seligmann and two Marin County students Cameron Evans and Milo Wetherall.

Learn what the County of Marin's Climate Action Plan is and find out what has been accomplished. Join local businesses and your neighbors to discover what actions we can take to reduce the causes of global warming in every community - and what part you can play to make Marin a Carbon Free Community. For further information about this event, go to: www.drawdown-marin.eventbrite.com and visit these websites to learn more about our speakers:

Joel Makower: <https://www.greenbiz.com/users/joel-makower>

Paul Hawken: <http://www.drawdown.org/staff/paul-hawken>

Leah Seligmann: <http://bteam.org/team/leah-seligmann/>

Details:

Tuesday, October 3, 2017

6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Marin Showcase Theater

10 Avenue of the Flags, San Rafael, CA 94901

Members in the News

Midstate Construction Completes The Oaks Apartments

Midstate Construction Corporation recently completed rehabilitation of The Oaks Apartments, a multi-family residential community in Walnut Creek, CA for developer EAH Housing.

Read more online at www.northbayleadership.org/news



Who We Are

Over twenty five years ago, business leaders founded the North Bay Leadership Council on a simple premise: We can accomplish more by working together. Today, the Council includes 54 leading employers in the North Bay. Our members represent a wide variety of businesses, non-profits and educational institutions, with a workforce in excess of 25,000. As business and civic leaders, our goal is to promote sound public policy, innovation and sustainability to make our region a better place to live and work. For more information: Call

707.283.0028 / E-mail info@northbayleadership.org

www.northbayleadership.org