

May 19, 2021

Dear Chair Allen and TPB Board members:

You have the opportunity to create a better Visualize 2045, not next time, but now. The region's residents and future generations are counting on you, and climate science says that we can't delay anymore. At last week's COG Board meeting, **TPB Director Kanti Srikanth said in regard to climate change and Visualize 2045 that "Every option needs to be pursued as expeditiously as possible to attain our 2030 goal."** We agree.

193 of the 199 public comments submitted to TPB ask for sustainable and equitable transportation investments that prioritize non-auto modes, including land use and demand management strategies. This is consistent with the COG Voices of the Region survey.

Please note these two key findings in today's presentation on **TPB's Climate Change Study Phase 1 Report:**

- **"At the regional and local levels, the studies show that land use policies that bring housing and jobs closer together and closer to transit reduce both GHG emissions and vehicle travel. Travel demand policies such as teleworking are also effective at reducing GHG emissions and vehicle travel and are also cost-effective."** and that **"In contrast to most of the vehicle-related strategies, many of these policy actions can be implemented in a shorter timeframe contributing to critical near-term GHG reductions."**
- The memo notes the promise of the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI), and we agree. However, the TCI Program will only reduce on-road emissions by 7% by 2032. TCI clearly states that substantial reductions depend on jurisdictions, including MPO's like TPB, adopting "complementary policies."

Given Director Srikanth's statement that every option needs to be expeditiously pursued, we are stunned by the staff response to the public comments -- that the proposed project list with \$40 billion in highway and road expansion projects is generally consistent with and advances TPB's climate and equity goals, and that it is not as relevant to regional climate efforts.

That is simply not possible. Road expansion fuels more driving and spread out development and diverts billions of dollars from investing in transit and TOD to reduce emissions and address the region's racial and economic inequity.

TPB's own studies show we can avoid much proposed highway expansion if the region adopts effective travel and greenhouse gas reduction strategies, which are travel demand and land use policies that focus jobs and housing in walkable areas near transit, and expanding transit investments.

Thank you.

Stewart Schwartz
Executive Director

Bill Pugh
Senior Policy Fellow