



# **Solano Transportation Authority** **2012 Legislative Priorities and Platform**

*(Adopted by the STA Board 12/14/11)*

## **LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

1. Pursue federal funding for the following priority projects and programs:
  - Roadway/Highway:
    - Tier 1:
      - I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange
      - Jepson Parkway
    - Tier 2:
      - I-80 Westbound Truck Scales
      - I-80 Express Lanes
  - Transit Centers:
    - Tier 1:
      - Fairfield Transportation Center Expansion
      - Vallejo Transit Center at Curtola and Lemon, Phase 1
      - Vacaville Transit Center, Phase 2
    - Tier 2:
      - Fairfield/Vacaville Multimodal Train Station, Phase 2
      - Vallejo Transit Center (Downtown) Parking Structure
      - Dixon Intermodal Station
- Climate Change/Alternative Fuels
- Safe Routes to School
- Mobility Management
2. Monitor and support, as appropriate, legislative proposals to increase funding for transportation infrastructure, operations and maintenance in Solano County.
3. Seek/sponsor legislation in support of initiatives that increase the overall funding levels for transportation priorities in Solano County.
4. Support legislation that encourages public private partnerships and provides low cost financing for transportation projects.
5. Sponsor legislation that makes needed technical corrections to the statute enacted pursuant to the Solano Transportation Authority's (STA) 2009 sponsored bill providing eligibility for the STA to directly claim the share of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds available to cities in the county and the county, up to 2.7%, and authorizing the STA to claim State Transit Assistance program funds directly from MTC.
6. Oppose efforts to reduce or divert funding from transportation projects.
7. Support initiatives to pursue the 55% voter threshold for county transportation infrastructure measures.
8. Support establishment of regional Express Lanes network with assurance that revenues collected for the use of Express Lanes are spent to improve operations and mobility for the corridor in which they originate.

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9. Monitor and participate in the implementation of state climate change legislation, including the California Global Warming Solutions Act and SB 375. Participate in the development of the Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), and ensure that locally-beneficial projects and programs are contained in the SCS. Support the funding and development of a program to support transportation needs for agricultural and open space lands as part of the SCS.
10. Monitor proposals and, where appropriate, support efforts to exempt projects funded by local voter-approved funding mechanisms from the provisions of SB 375 (Steinberg).
11. Support efforts to protect and preserve funding in the Public Transportation Account (PTA).
12. Support federal and state legislation framed by California Consensus Principles (Item XIII, Attachment A), and that provides funding for movement of goods along corridors (i.e. I-80, SR 12, Capitol Corridor) and facilities (i.e., Cordelia Truck Scales).
13. Oppose efforts to eliminate the federal Transportation Enhancement (TE) Funding program and support maintaining current levels of TE funding for transportation projects in Solano County.

### LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

#### *I. Alternative Modes (Bicycles, HOV, Livable Communities, Ridesharing)*

1. Support legislation promoting bicycling and bicycle facilities as a commuter option.
2. Support legislation providing land use incentives in connection with rail and multimodal transit stations – Transit Oriented Development.
3. Support legislation and regional policy that provide qualified Commuter Carpools and Vanpools with reduced tolls on toll facilities as an incentive to encourage and promote ridesharing.
4. Support legislation that increases employers' opportunities to offer commuter incentives.
5. Support legislative and regulatory efforts to ensure that projects from Solano County cities are eligible for federal, state and regional funding of Transportation Oriented Development (Transit Oriented Development) projects. Ensure that development and transit standards for TOD projects can be reasonably met by developing suburban communities.
6. Support establishment of regional Express Lanes network with assurance that revenues collected for the use of Express Lanes are spent to improve operations and mobility for the corridor in which they originate. (*Priority #8*)

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### **II. Climate Change/Air Quality**

1. Monitor implementation of federal attainment plans for pollutants in the Bay Area and Sacramento air basins, including ozone and particulate matter attainment plans. Work with MTC and SACOG to ensure consistent review of projects in the two air basins.
2. Monitor and participate in the implementation of state climate change legislation, including the California Global Warming Solutions Act and SB 375. Participate in the development of the Bay Area Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), and ensure that locally-beneficial projects and programs are contained in the SCS. Support the funding and development of a program to support transportation needs for agricultural and open space lands as part of the SCS. (*Priority #9*)
3. Monitor proposals and, where appropriate, support efforts to exempt projects funded by local voter-approved funding mechanisms from the provisions of SB 375 (Steinberg). (*Priority #10*)
4. Support legislation, which ensures that any fees imposed to reduce vehicle miles traveled, or to control mobile source emissions, are used to support transportation programs that provide congestion relief or benefit air quality.
5. Support legislation providing infrastructure for low, ultra-low and zero emission vehicles.
6. Support policies that improve and streamline the environmental review process.
7. Support legislation that allows for air emission standards appropriate for infill development linked to transit centers and/or in designated Priority Development Areas. Allow standards that tolerate higher levels of particulates and other air pollutants in exchange for allowing development supported by transit that reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
8. Monitor energy policies and alternative fuel legislation or regulation that may affect fleet vehicle requirements for mandated use of alternative fuels.
9. Support legislation to provide funding for innovative, intelligent/advanced transportation and air quality programs, which relieve congestion, improve air quality and enhance economic development.
10. Support legislation to finance cost effective conversion of public transit fleets to alternative fuels and/or to retrofit existing fleets with latest emission technologies.
11. Support income tax benefits or incentives that encourage use of alternative fuel vehicles, vanpools and public transit without reducing existing transportation or air quality funding levels.
12. Support federal climate change legislation that provides funding from, and any revenue generated by, emission dis-incentives or fuel tax increases (e.g. cap and trade programs) to local transportation agencies for transportation purposes.

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### IV. Employee Relations

1. Monitor legislation and regulations affecting labor relations, employee rights, benefits, and working conditions. Preserve a balance between the needs of the employees and the resources of public employers that have a legal fiduciary responsibility to taxpayers.
2. Monitor any legislation affecting workers compensation that impacts employee benefits, control of costs, and, in particular, changes that affect self-insured employers.
3. Monitor legislation affecting the liability of public entities, particularly in personal injury or other civil wrong legal actions.

### V. Environmental

1. Monitor legislation and regulatory proposals related to management of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, including those that would impact existing and proposed transportation facilities such as State Route 12 and State Route 113.
2. Monitor sea-level rise and climate change in relation to existing and proposed transportation facilities in Solano County.
3. Monitor proposals to designate new species as threatened or endangered under either the federal or state Endangered Species Acts. Monitor proposals to designate new "critical habitat" in areas that will impact existing and proposed transportation facilities.
4. Monitor the establishment of environmental impact mitigation banks to ensure that they do not restrict reasonably-foreseeable transportation improvements.
5. Monitor legislation and regulations that would impose requirements on highway construction to contain stormwater runoff.

### VI. Ferry

1. Protect the existing source of operating and capital support for Vallejo Baylink ferry service, most specifically the Bridge Tolls-Northern Bridge Group "1st and 2nd dollar" revenues which do not jeopardize transit operating funds for Vallejo Transit bus operations.
2. Support efforts to ensure appropriate levels of service directly between Vallejo and San Francisco.
3. Monitor surface transportation authorization legislation to ensure adequate funding for ferry capital projects.

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### VII. Funding

1. Protect Solano County's statutory portions of the state highway and transit funding programs.
2. Seek a fair share for Solano County of any federal and state discretionary funding made available for transportation grants, programs and projects.
3. Sponsor legislation that makes needed technical corrections to the statute enacted pursuant to the Solano Transportation Authority's (STA) 2009 sponsored bill providing eligibility for the STA to directly claim the share of Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds available to cities in the county and the county, up to 2.7%, and authorizing the STA to claim State Transit Assistance program funds directly from MTC. *(Priority #5)*
4. Protect State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds from use for purposes other than those covered in SB 45 of 1997 (Chapter 622) reforming transportation planning and programming, and support timely allocation of new STIP funds.
5. Support state budget and California Transportation Commission allocation to fully fund projects for Solano County included in the State Transportation Improvement Program and the Comprehensive Transportation Plans of the county.
6. Support efforts to protect and preserve funding in the Public Transportation Account (PTA). *(Priority #11)*
7. Seek/sponsor legislation in support of initiatives that increase the overall funding levels for transportation priorities in Solano County. *(Priority #3)*
8. Support legislation that encourages public private partnerships and provides low cost financing for transportation projects in Solano County. *(Priority #4)*
9. Support measures to restore local government's property tax revenues used for general fund purposes, including road rehabilitation and maintenance.
10. Support legislation to secure adequate budget appropriations for highway, bus, rail, air quality and mobility programs in Solano County.
11. Support initiatives to pursue the 55% or lower voter threshold for county transportation infrastructure measures. *(Priority #7)*
12. Ensure that fees collected for the use of Express Lanes are spent to improve operations and mobility for the corridor in which they originate. *(Priority #8)*
13. Support federal and state legislation framed by California Consensus Principles (Item #XIII, Attachment A) that provides funding for movement of goods along corridors (i.e. I-80, SR 12, Capitol Corridor) and facilities (i.e., Cordelia Truck Scales). *(Priority #12)*

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14. Support efforts to quickly enact legislation that reauthorizes the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), and provides a fair share return of funding to California.
15. Support efforts to reauthorize federal transportation policy and funding as framed by California Consensus Principles (Item XIII, Attachment A), focusing efforts on securing funding for high priority regional transportation projects.
16. Oppose efforts to eliminate the federal Transportation Enhancement (TE) Funding program and support maintaining current levels of TE funding for transportation projects in Solano County. *(Priority # 13)*
17. Support legislation or the development of administrative policies to allow a program credit for local funds spent on accelerating STIP projects through right-of-way purchases, or environmental and engineering consultant efforts.
18. Support or seek legislation to assure a dedicated source of funding, other than the State Highway Account for local streets and roads maintenance and repairs, and for transit operations.
19. Monitor the distribution of State and regional transportation demand management funding.
20. Monitor any new bridge toll proposals, support the implementation of projects funded by bridge tolls in and/or benefitting Solano County.
21. Oppose any proposal that could reduce Solano County's opportunity to receive transportation funds, including diversion of state transportation revenues for other purposes. Fund sources include, but are not limited to, State Highway Account (SHA), Public Transportation Account (PTA), and Transportation Development Act (TDA) and any local ballot initiative raising transportation revenues. *(Priority #6)*
22. Support legislation that encourages multiple stakeholders from multiple disciplines to collaborate with regard to the application for and the awarding of Safe Routes to School grants.

### *VIII. Project Delivery*

1. Monitor legislation to encourage the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency to reform administrative procedures to expedite federal review and reduce delays in payments to local agencies and their contractors for transportation project development, right-of-way and construction activities.
2. Support legislation and/or administrative reforms to enhance Caltrans project delivery, such as simultaneous Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and engineering studies, design-build authority, and a reasonable level of contracting out of appropriate activities to the private sector.
3. Support legislation and/or administrative reforms that result in cost and/or time savings to environmental clearance processes for transportation projects.

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4. Continue to streamline federal application/reporting/monitoring requirements to ensure efficiency and usefulness of data collected and eliminate unnecessary and/or duplicative requirements.
5. Support legislation that encourages public private partnerships and provides streamlined and economical delivery of transportation projects in Solano County.  
*(Priority #4)*

### IX. Rail

1. In partnership with other counties located along Capitol Corridor, seek expanded state commitment for funding passenger rail service, whether state or locally administered.
2. Support legislation and/or budgetary actions to assure a fair share of State revenues of intercity rail (provided by Capitol Corridor) funding for Northern California and Solano County.
3. Seek legislation to assure that dedicated state intercity rail funding is allocated to the regions administering each portion of the system and assure that funding is distributed on an equitable basis.
4. Seek funds for the expansion of intercity, and development of regional and commuter rail service connecting Solano County to the Bay Area and Sacramento regions.
5. Monitor the implementation of the High Speed Rail project.
6. Support efforts to fully connect Capitol Corridor trains to the California High Speed Rail system, and ensure access to state and federal high speed rail funds for the Capitol Corridor.
7. Oppose legislation that would prohibit Amtrak from providing federal funds for any state-supported Intercity Passenger Rail corridor services.

### X. Safety

1. Monitor legislation or administrative procedures to streamline the process for local agencies to receive funds for road and levee repair and other flood protection.
2. Monitor implementation of the Safety Enhancement-Double Fine Zone designation on SR 12 from I-80 in Solano County to I-5 in San Joaquin County, as authorized by AB 112 (Wolk).
3. Support legislation to adequately fund replacement of at-grade railroad crossings with grade-separated crossings.
4. Support legislation to further fund Safe Routes to School and Safe Routes to Transit programs in Solano County.

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### XI. Transit

1. Protect funding levels for transit by opposing state funding source reduction without substitution of comparable revenue.
2. Support income tax credit to employers for subsidizing employee transit passes.
3. Support tax benefits and/or incentives for programs to promote the use of public transit.
4. In partnership with other transit agencies, seek strategies to assure public transit receives a fair share of funding for welfare-to-work social services care, and other community-based programs.
5. Monitor efforts to change Federal requirements and regulations regarding the use of federal transit funds for transit operations for rural, small and large Urbanized Areas (UZAs).
6. Support efforts that would minimize the impact of any consolidations of UZAs on Solano County transit agencies.
7. In addition to new bridge tolls, work with MTC to generate new regional transit revenues to support the ongoing operating and capital needs of transit services, including bus, ferry and rail.
8. In partnership with other affected agencies and local governments seek additional funding for paratransit operations, including service for persons with disabilities and senior citizens.

### XII. Movement of Goods

1. Monitor and support initiatives that augment planning and funding for movement of goods via maritime-related transportation, including the dredging of channels, port locations and freight shipment.
2. Support efforts to mitigate the impacts of additional maritime goods movement on surface transportation facilities.
3. Monitor and support initiatives that augment planning and funding for movement of goods via rail involvement.
4. Monitor and support initiatives that augment planning and funding for movement of goods via aviation.
5. Monitor proposals to co-locate freight and/or passenger air facilities at Travis Air Force Base (TAFB), and to ensure that adequate highway and surface street access is provided if such facilities are located at TAFB.
6. Monitor legislation to establish a national freight policy and fund freight-related projects.



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### XIII. Federal New Authorization Policy

The National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission presented a report outlining a new long-term strategic transportation vision to guide transportation policymaking at the national level. The Solano Transportation Authority supports the principles contained in the Commission's "Transportation for Tomorrow," released in January 2008, specifically as summarized below:

#### Recommended Objectives for Reform:

- Increased Public and Private Investment
- Federal Government a Full Partner
- A New Beginning

#### Major Changes Necessary to Accomplish Objectives:

1. The federal program should be performance-driven, outcome-based, generally mode-neutral, and refocused to pursue objective of genuine national interest. The 108 existing surface transportation programs in SAFETEA-LU and related laws should be replaced with the following 10 new federal programs:
  - Rebuilding America – state of good repair
  - Global Competitiveness – gateways and goods movement
  - Metropolitan Mobility – regions greater than 1 million population
  - Connecting America – connections to smaller cities and towns
  - Intercity Passenger Rail and Water Transit – new regional networks in high-growth corridors
  - Highway Safety – incentives to save lives
  - Environmental Stewardship – both human and natural environments
  - Energy Security – development of alternative transportation fuels
  - Federal Lands – providing public access on federal property
  - Research and Development – a coherent national research program

National, state and regional officials and other stakeholders would establish performance standards, develop detailed plans for achievement, and develop detailed cost estimates to create a national surface transportation strategic plan. Only projects called for in the plan would be eligible for federal funding.

2. Congress should establish an independent National Surface Transportation Commission (NASTRAC), modeled after aspects of the Postal Regulatory Commission, the Base Closure and Realignment Commission, and state public utility commissions to perform two principal planning and financial functions:
  - a. Oversee various aspects of the development of the outcome-based performance standards.
  - b. Establish a federal share to finance the plan and recommend an increase in the federal fuel tax to fund that share.
3. Project delivery must be reformed by retaining all current environmental safeguards, but significantly shortening the time it takes to complete reviews and obtain permits.

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4. Major revenue reform is necessary:
  - a. All levels of government and the private sector must contribute their appropriate shares.
  - b. User financing must be implemented.
  - c. Budgetary protections for the Highway Trust Fund must be put in place.
  - d. Legislation must be passed to keep the Highway Account of the Highway Trust Fund solvent and prevent highway investment from falling below the levels guaranteed in SAFETEA-LU.

### Between 2010 and 2025:

- a. Federal fuel tax should be raised and indexed to the construction cost index.
- b. Federal user-based fees (such as freight fees for goods movement, dedication of a portion of existing customs duties, ticket taxes for passenger rail improvements) should be implemented to help address the funding shortfall.
- c. Congress needs to remove certain barriers to tolling and congestion pricing by modifying the current federal prohibition against tolling on the Interstate System to allow:
  - i. Tolling to fund new capacity, with pricing flexibility to manage its performance.
  - ii. Congestion pricing in metropolitan areas with populations greater than 1 million.
- d. Congress should encourage the use of public-private partnerships to attract additional private investment to the surface transportation system.
- e. State and local governments need to raise motor fuel, motor vehicle, and other related user fees.

### Post-2025:

- a. A vehicle miles traveled (VMT) fee should be implemented.