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Mayor Fangary, Mayor Pro Tem Massey and Councilmembers Armato, Duclos and Petty:

Re: Agenda Item #7A, City Council Meeting 9/27/16 - Legislative Update -
Measure "M"

I strongly urge the Council to endorse Measure "M," the regional transportation measure on the November 8, 2016 ballot.

Measure M advances the economic and environmental health of the greater Los Angeles region. It has been unanimously endorsed by the Los Angeles City Council and by the West Hollywood City Council, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, the Sierra Club Angeles Chapter, the Los Angeles League of Conservation Voters, and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, among others.

Manhattan Beach Councilmember Amy Howorth is one of the signatories for the ballot argument in favor of Measure M. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti personally appeared before the South Bay Cities COG (SBCCOG) to lobby for Measure M and to address their concerns. (His letter appears in the agenda packet.)

It would be great to add the City of Hermosa Beach to this list of Measure M supporters.

Measure M faces the high-hurdle of a two-thirds vote to pass. By speaking now, Hermosa Beach will gain tremendous visibility as a forward-thinking player in regional transportation decisionmaking. Such a positive, pro-active approach will strengthen our voice should we choose to work (as I hope we do) to ensure that L.A.'s regional transportation system serves Hermosa's residents and visitors.

This is the strategic approach adopted by the City of West Hollywood. It already seems to be paying off with increased attention to that city's priorities — many of which we share.

A. Analysis of Measure M

As the staff report indicates, Measure M's one-half cent sales tax increase will generate some \$860 million a year countywide. These revenues will be distributed as follows:

- (1) 35% **TRANSIT CAPITAL PROJECTS:** Construction of new regional transit lines (light rail, heavy rail, bus rapid transit).
- (2) 20% **LOCAL TRANSIT OPERATIONS:** Transportation subsidies to local transportation agencies including Beach Cities Transit, Torrance Transit, Big Blue Bus (Santa Monica) and the L.A. Dept. of Transportation for its Commuter Express lines.
- (3) 17% **LOCAL RETURN:** Direct payments to cities for local transportation expenses for road repairs, intersection improvements, traffic signal upgrades, etc. In 2040, the allocation will be increased from 17% to 20%.
- (4) 17% **HIGHWAY CAPITAL PROJECTS:** Construction of improvements to existing freeways, streets and highways (capital expenditure).
- (5) 5% **METRO RAIL OPERATIONS:** Additional funds to operate new regional transit lines.
- (6) 2% **TRANSIT MAINTENANCE:** Additional funds to maintain new regional transit lines.
- (7) 2% **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS:** Construction of first & last-mile bicycle & pedestrian connections to transit).
- (8) 2% **SENIOR / STUDENT / DISABLED SERVICES.**
100%

Detailed Analysis - Hermosa Beach Impacts

- (1) **TRANSIT CAPITAL PROJECTS (#1 above).**

- (a) **Green Line Light Rail Extension to Torrance.**

The staff report identifies one transit capital project that will benefit Hermosa Beach: the **Torrance Green Line** extension from its current terminus at the Marine Ave. station (located 3.2 miles from the Hermosa Beach City Hall) to the Torrance Regional Transportation Center, now under construction, and located on Crenshaw Blvd. near 208th Street. This will add 4 new light rail stations, including a station at the Redondo Beach Regional Transportation Center, located near Artesia & Inglewood Ave. (located 2.6 miles from the Hermosa Beach City Hall.)

Under current plans, construction on the Green Line extension will commence in 2025 and be completed in 2030, five years earlier than was promised when Measure A was approved in 2008.

There is a false narrative being circulated that the Green Line extension will not happen until 2045. I have spoken with persons (including some public officials), who have mentioned this 2045 date, but they've never been able to explain where it came from.

In his 9/2/16 letter (included in your agenda packet), Mayor Garcetti has committed "to working with the South Bay cities to explore ways on how to further accelerate the number of transit (e.g. Green Line extension to Torrance) and freeway projects (e.g. I-405)."

(b) **Crenshaw / LAX Light Rail Extension to Purple Line & to West Hollywood.**

In my view, Measure M's funding for the Crenshaw / LAX line and the LAX Airport Connector will benefit Hermosa Beach residents as much, if not more than the Green Line extension to Torrance.

When completed, the Crenshaw / LAX line will have the capacity to provide direct no-transfer service from the Marine Ave. & Artesia light rail stations to LAX, the Expo Line, the Purple Line (Wilshire Blvd. subway) and the Red Line (Hollywood & SF Valley).

These transit possibilities are transformative. Hermosa Beach travelers will have no-transfer light rail service from nearby light rail stations (closer than the San Diego Freeway) to job and entertainment centers in mid-Wilshire, Beverly Hills, the Beverly Center, West Hollywood and Hollywood. It also will provide convenient mass transit access to Westwood, USC, and Downtown Los Angeles.

Other than highly congested surface streets like La Cienega, La Brea, and Overland, there are no fast or convenient north-south connections between the South Bay and this part of the Westside.

The City of West Hollywood is moving heaven and earth to accelerate the completion date of the so-called Crenshaw Line northern extension within the first decade or so of the passage of Measure M. Metro CEO Phil Washington has committed to completing the EIR on this proposed light rail line by 2018.

We in the South Bay are at the other end of this line. We have as much interest in going north on the Crenshaw / LAX line as West Hollywood has in coming south.

(c) **Other Transit Capital Projects.**

This list is not inclusive of all the transit capital projects that will benefit Hermosans through Metro's emphasis upon connectivity.

96th St / LAX Station. Measure M will provide new funding for the 96th Street / LAX station and the multimodal transportation center at LAX which will connect to a people mover to remove cars, rental and hotel buses and such vehicles from the clogged World Way loop. Depending upon whether Measure M passes, the station could open anywhere from 2021 to 2023, if not sooner. The EIRs for both the 96th Street / LAX station and LAX's people mover system have now been completed.

Sepulveda Corridor Project. Measure M offers other proposed north-south transit projects that will serve the South Bay through Metro's planned 96th Street / LAX station. The Sepulveda Corridor Project will parallel the San Diego Freeway from the San Fernando Valley to 96th Street / LAX Station, and provide us with transit connections to West Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.¹

Lincoln Blvd. Transportation Corridor. A Lincoln Blvd. transit corridor will provide a new dedicated transit connection (whether by bus rapid transit or light rail) between the

¹ SBCCOG has criticized expenditures on the northern leg of this line, but the 1.8 million people who live in the San Fernando Valley (many of whom work in the South Bay) have been getting the short end of the stick, and have been enduring unbearable traffic commutes.

96th Street / LAX station and the Silicon Beach job centers in Playa Vista, Venice and Santa Monica.

Green Line-Metrolink Connection. Finally, the Green Line will be extended at its eastern terminus from Norwalk to Santa Fe Springs. This will allow us to access Metrolink, giving us service via Metrolink to Orange County, including Anaheim, Santa Ana, Irvine, Mission Viejo and San Clemente.

(2) **LOCAL TRANSIT CAPITAL OPERATIONS (#2 above).**

(a) **Beach Cities Transit.** BCT will receive new funding of **\$305,200** for 2018, and similar or higher increases for each year thereafter. This could be used for more frequent and efficient transportation connections within South Bay cities like Hermosa and Manhattan, as well as frequent shuttle service to the nearby light rail stations serving the Green Line and the Crenshaw / LAX lines. In this regard, BCT should attempt to emulate the highly successful DASH system which operates within the LA city.

(b) **LA Dept. of Transportation.** LADOT will receive new funding of **\$3.14 million** for 2018, and similar or higher increases for each year thereafter. Part of these revenues could be used to expand the Commuter Express services (Line 438) which LADOT runs between the South Bay and Downtown Los Angeles, or to extend such services to other parts of the region.

(3) **LOCAL RETURN FUNDING (#3 above):** Metro estimates that Hermosa Beach will receive an additional Local Return funding of **\$280,900** in 2018 if Measure M passes.

Measure M uses a population formula to provide the City of Hermosa Beach with new funds to repave streets, fix potholes and repair sidewalks. The local return share under Measure M is 17% starting in 2018, increasing to 20% by 2040. This is higher than the 15% currently permitted under Measure R.

As Mayor Garcetti stated in his 9/2/16 letter to SBCCOG, this local return funding constitutes secured funding, permitting Hermosa Beach to bond against it “to fix local streets and roads faster.”

(4) **HIGHWAY CAPITAL PROJECTS (#4 above).**

The staff report accurately discusses the highway capital projects within the South Bay which Measure M will fund.

(5) **ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS (#7 above).**

2% of all Measure M funds will be devoted to so-called first-mile / last mile programs to allow for **bicycle** and **pedestrian** connections to transit systems. As noted earlier, there currently is one light rail station (the Marine Ave. station) which is about 3 miles from the Hermosa Beach city hall. The new Artesia station will be even closer.

No one has focused upon the availability of these very substantial Measure M funds to further Hermosa Beach’s emphasis upon pedestrian and bicycle-friendly streets, but there are real opportunities here for a city that is as oriented to these healthy lifestyle choices as is Hermosa Beach. Could some of these funds be used in conjunction with the PCH / Aviation street improvement project?

(6) **SENIOR / STUDENT / DISABLED SERVICES (# 8, above).**

Metro currently provides affordable fares for seniors, students and disabled transit riders who depend upon public transit for their travel needs. Measure M provides a new revenue stream for these special users, which cannot be recaptured at the farebox. This is why Measure M is the first local ballot measure in the country ever to have been supported by AARP.

B. CRITIQUE OF THE SOUTH BAY CITIES COG LETTER

The agenda packet contains two letters from the SBCCOG detailing the reasons for its opposition to Measure M, a letter dated May 11, 2016 and a second letter dated July 1, 2016. The SBCCOG opposed Measure M by a vote of 9-0-6.

In addition, several South Bay cities (Carson, Torrance, Rancho Palos Verdes) joined other municipalities in filing a lawsuit against Metro regarding Measure M. The lawsuit was poorly reasoned, poorly timed and a waste of public funds. It went nowhere. Fortunately, neither Hermosa nor the SBCCOG joined in this ill-considered effort.

Why does the SBCCOG oppose Measure M? There appear to be three principal reasons.

(1) **“South Bay First” / “Travel Local”**

Cutting to the chase, the SBCCOG takes a “South Bay First” approach to regional transit funding — primarily for streets and highways. According to the SBCCOG, South Bay residents primarily travel within the South Bay, so that’s where our transit dollars should go.

“The connections within sub-regions are where most of the trips occur. Metro’s Mobility Matrix found that trips in the South Bay average 7 minutes. Findings for other subregions validated this metric as well. L .A. County residents are increasingly staying more within their sub-regions or, to a lesser extent, are going to the adjacent sub-regions.” (SBCCOG 5/11/16 Letter.)

In like fashion, Assemblyman David Hadley wrote a Daily Breeze July 5, 2016 op-ed article opposing Measure M, with this observation: “Yet more than 60 percent of all trips taken in the South Bay are local — they never leave the South Bay.”

Once one adopts this South Bay First focus on regional transportation, the solution to traffic congestion is simple: Stay home. Don’t leave the South Bay. Fix our roads here. Let others worry about gridlock. Not our problem.

Here is how SBCCOG puts it in government-ese:

“This reduction of regional vehicle miles travelled is the most cost effective and efficient solution to sustainable mobility.” (SBCCOG 5/11/16 Letter.)

“That is why SBCCOG strongly believes that the time has come for any new transportation measure to address local communities first.” (*Ibid.*)

“Local city streets will always be the foundation of transportation in urban areas.” (*Ibid.*)

I suggest that a more relevant statistic to consider is to ask how many people who live or visit Hermosa and our neighboring cities commute to/from areas outside the South Bay. What

percentage of people who come to work in Hermosa Beach or Manhattan or Torrance or Redondo or El Segundo drive from outside the South Bay?

A great many Hermosans, like other Southern Californians, don't have the luxury to decide where to live **and** where to work. We're lucky with one or the other, but not both.

The SBCCOG's 7-minute universe is not the real world. We take our jobs where we can find them. We suffer grueling commutes in traffic snarls that are among the worst in the nation. We may travel locally, not by choice, but by necessity, simply because the streets and highways outside the South Bay have become virtual parking lots.

The SBCCOG's "South Bay First" approach also fails to take into account the adverse environmental consequences of roads and highways, and long-distance commutes by motor vehicles. Pollution is a regional problem, requiring a regional solution.

Recent federal data shows that, for the first time in nearly 40 years, the major source for global warming-causing pollution during the past year comes, not from electric power or from industry, but from greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector. And here, a primary factor is single-occupant vehicle travel on roads and highways. See <http://www.uspirg.org/news/usp/new-federal-data-show-transportation-sector-now-largest-source-carbon-pollution-united>

The SBCCOG letters take the opposite approach: Spend more on roads, and do it sooner and faster.

"The Plan under-invests in streets that carry nearly all the trips, whether cars, trucks or bicycles." (SBCCOG 7/1/16 Letter.)

"All South Bay highway projects are delayed until 2040 setting up a Hobson's choice for our South Bay children and grandchildren who will need to decide whether they will increase Local Return to fix what remains of their crumbling streets or construct highway projects that are needed in the South Bay today that South Bay taxpayers will be paying for, but not able to use for the next 30 years." (*Ibid.*)

How can we be in favor of carbon neutrality on the one hand, and oppose Measure M on the other because it doesn't spend enough money on streets and highways?

We should take the balanced regional approach to transportation that Measure M affords. Given our commitment to green solutions, we should look at funding mechanisms that reduce our dependence on roads and motor vehicles both for travel within the South Bay and for travel to and from the South Bay.

Measure M offers the promise of increasing the choices available to commuters through fixed and dependable light and heavy rail travel options that avoid gridlock, reduce congestion and alleviate pollution.

(2) **"We're Not Getting Our Fair Share" / "Broken Promises."**

The SBCCOG, focusing solely upon the Local Return portion of the Measure M allocation formula, takes the position that the South Bay is not getting its fair share with the 17% Local Return in Measure M.

“The SBCCOG has consistently advocated that 25% of all tax revenues from the prospective measure be returned to the cities in the form of Local Return.” (SBCCOG 5/11/16 Letter.)

“Local jurisdictions cannot wait until 2040 for Local Return to rise from 17% to 20% of Measure [M] revenue. Local streets are crumbling” (SBCCOG 7/1/16 Letter.)

“Based on population, the South Bay share of regional projects in the Expenditure Plan should be more than 10.5%. However, the Expenditure Plan allocates less than 7% of its regional revenues for South Bay priorities.” (*Ibid.*)

There also appears to be a fair amount of hostility arising out of the perception that Metro and its predecessor agencies, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission and the Southern California Rapid Transit Agency have reneged on previous commitments.²

As a matter of practical politics, I fail to understand how defeating Measure M will help Hermosa to get more money, or how it will teach Metro a “lesson.”

It will take at least two years, if not longer, to get a new transit measure on the ballot, and the two-thirds vote hurdle will prove to be even more daunting in a non-Presidential election in the aftermath of a defeat in 2016. In the meantime, Hermosa Beach will have lost the benefit of \$280,900 in new revenue for each year in which the 17% Local Return is not available.

To whom are we teaching a “lesson”?

Moreover, as described in the first part of this letter, Measure M offers countless other benefits than the 17% local return. Beach Cities Transit stands to gain more than \$300,000 each year. And the exciting possibilities of the extension of the Crenshaw LAX lines down to Torrance and up to West Hollywood will become much less likely to come to fruition, as will the incredibly ambitious transit plans for new congestion-free approaches to LAX.

Measure M also offers immediate benefits to seniors, students and disabled residents through 2% set aside for such programs. Even Assemblyman Hadley touted these programs during his recent Transportation Town Hall, which I attended. That is why Measure M is the first local ballot measure that ever has been endorsed by AARP.

Finally, the SBCCOG’s unduly parochial approach to transit funding ignores the regional benefits in new jobs and increased mobility that Measure M will bring. We are part and parcel of the LA Basin. We need LA’s economy to be strong and vibrant in order for our local economy to be strong and vibrant as well.

The SBCCOG has other reasons for opposing Measure M based upon the population-based funding allocation formulations that may adversely affect job centers like El Segundo, with a small population base (13,000 residents) but a workforce population of nearly 100,000, or like Torrance, which because of its shopping malls and auto dealerships, generate a higher percentage of sales tax.

These objections do not apply to Hermosa Beach, and, in fact, may return the amount of our local return if funds are reallocated elsewhere.

² This is not true for Measure R in 2008. The 2008 Measure R transportation plan called for construction of the Green Line extension to commence as late as 2030 and to be completed by 2035. As previously noted, Measure M, if approved, will accelerate this construction by at least 5 years to 2025 and 2030. There are no “broken promises” here.

(3) “New Technologies (e.g. Google, Elon Musk) Will Solve All”

Many Measure M opponents castigate it as a horse-and-buggy solution to a world which is about to be populated by self-driving vehicles and by hyperloops.

Technology will play a critical role in the transportation systems of the future, but regrettably, there are no magic bullets.

I attended the LA Times transportation summit, “The Road Ahead” on February 29, 2016. It included U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx, Rob Lloyd, the CEO of Hyperloop Technologies, and Chris Urmson, the head of Google’s Self-Driving Project.

The takeaway: there is no panacea. Hyperloop’s Lloyd said the major impact for Hyperloop over the next decades will be in moving freight, not people. And John Markoff, the *New York Times* technology and transportation reporter, who was at the summit, said that self-driving vehicles have been overhyped as be-all and end-all transportation solutions — they clearly have an important role over the next decades, but cannot substitute for the need to move large masses of people quickly and efficiently.

Self-driving vehicles will aid regional transportation systems at one of their most vulnerable points: the so-called first-mile, last-mile connections to the regional transportation stations. They will be part of a balanced transportation system, and will work *with* mass transit, rather than as a *substitute* for mass transit.

C. CONCLUSION

Measure M offers real, viable regional transit solutions for Hermosa Beach.

Measure M dovetails with Hermosa Beach’s commitment to carbon neutrality, and our laudable efforts to increase our residents’ choices to encompass sensible, environmentally sensitive alternatives to the existing ways of doing things.

For better or worse, we are part of, and dependent upon, the greater Los Angeles region. We cannot simply build a wall around the South Bay. Unfortunately, myopia and localism have infused our previous approaches, and we are now suffering the dystopic consequences.

It’s time to change course. By endorsing Measure M now, Hermosa Beach will gain considerable attention for a selfless and farsighted regional vision. We previously demonstrated this by defeating Measure O, and we can build upon this well-deserved reputation by leveraging our support for Measure M as implementing decisions are being made.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of this very important ballot measure.

