



Oakland Measure DD Community Coalition

15 May 2014

TO: California Transportation Commission

c/o Diane Tannenwald, Project Manager
City of Oakland
Oakland Public Works Department
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 4314
Oakland, CA 94612-2033

RE: Support for the City of Oakland's "Application to the California Transportation Commission for the Lake Merritt to San Francisco Bay Trail Gap Closure Project"

Members of the California Transportation Commission:

The Measure DD Community Coalition is a broad-based, citywide body of 100 or so representatives, sanctioned by the City Council. The Coalition is charged by the Council to oversee the progress of Measure DD funded projects; to monitor project expenses; and to serve as community soundboard to staff, administrators, community, and City Council for implementation of the general Measure DD program. Measure DD is the \$198 Million bond measure approved in 2002 by over 80% of voters for the purpose of improving Lake Merritt, the Lake Merritt Channel, its tributaries, and the parks and parklands adjacent to the Lake.

The DD Coalition is deeply interested in completion of the Bay Trail through Oakland, and is in active communication with relevant parties in attempt to accomplish that goal as completely, and as soon as possible. As current Facilitators of the Coalition, we write to encourage the California Transportation Commission to fund the "Lake Merritt to San Francisco Bay Trail Gap Closure Project." This "gap" is the crucial missing link for bicycles and pedestrians to safely traverse between the Bay Trail and portions completed and in process of the Lake Merritt trail systems.

The State and Region's concept of connecting the various paths around Lake Merritt to the Estuary is well conceived and has been included or referenced in various plans for decades. The City of Oakland is excited about moving forward with this much needed final project.

The massive I-880 corridor and the Union Pacific railroad tracks divide the two attractive and extensively utilized trail systems. Unfortunately, since it is the most direct route between Lake Merritt/Laney College and the waterfront, people trade their personal safety for expediency, dodging trains, large trucks and cars, to cross illegally from one side to the other.

With the Lake Merritt reconstruction complete; the 10th Street project well into construction; and the 7th Street project advancing in design, this is the very last gap that needs to be completed to finally connect the two trail systems.

In addition, the proposed bridge will allow local and regional users to safely connect to public transportation facilities, including BART, AC Transit, Amtrak Capitol Corridor, and the Alameda-Oakland Ferry. Students at Laney College and the Jack London Aquatic Center, together with other pedestrians and bicyclists, will be able to conveniently reach the development and activity areas of Brooklyn Basin, Jack London Square, and the proposed Lake Merritt BART Station Transit Village. A safe and well-designed ADA Accessible Class I Multi-Use Path that closes this gap in the city's bicycle and pedestrian systems will act as a destination and will draw local and regional users.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are questions or need for further clarification.

Dr Michael Udkow can be reached by telephone at 510-452-3632, or by email at:

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James E Vann can be reached by telephone at 510-763-0142, or by email at

< jamesevann@aol.com >

Sincerely,

The Measure DD Community Coalition

/s/ Dr Michael Udkow, Co-Facilitator

/s/ James E Vann, Co-Facilitator