

Commissioner Leticia Gonzalez- Chair
Commissioner Cecelia Gallegos, Vice Chair
Commissioner Waseem Ahmed
Commissioner Robert Poythress
Commissioner Jose Rodriquez
Commissioner David Rogers

February 21, 2024

You want Measure T to be renewed. We want Measure T to be renewed. But first, some important changes are needed. Considering the amount of work to be done, and the high cost of failure, we recommend you defer the proposal for a special election in 2025, in order to get it right.

We ask you to consider three critical components for a quality Measure T 2024... accountability, content, and structure.

Accountability comes via the Citizens Oversight Committee whose broad purpose is to ensure tax receipts are spent reasonably, and spent as promised to voters. **Content** is essentially the Investment Plan and Implementing Guidelines. **Structure** is the Board makeup, the decision makers, and leadership of the overall program.

It's like a 3-legged stool. If one leg is missing or weak, the stool fails. Accountability and Content are being partially addressed, although in an unacceptable top-down fashion through the Steering Committee. Structure is being ignored. In fact, the Steering Committee is prohibited from addressing Structure. That is the weak leg and will lead to failure of the stool, and failure of the renewal.

The claim that the structure is controlled by state regulations is only partly true. In a winding path through state codes, we end up with Government Code Section 29535 where it says only that county supervisors are to appoint members to the two transportation boards. By a county resolution, a restriction was added. Cities followed suit. It is time to challenge the 50-year-old Madera County resolution that limited that membership to only Madera County Supervisors.

The membership of these two Boards --which amounts to the 6 of you-- represents a very small area of the county--mostly west of Highway 99. It is a major flaw that there is no representation east of that boundary, an area that contains a little over 50% of county-wide roads. Further, 4 of you represent roughly Madera city--2 from the city council and 2 from the County overlay--covering an area with only 200 miles of roads. This must change!

However, the structural flaws we cite go far beyond concern about representation, based on roadway miles, usage, and condition. There is an over-arching need for the two transportation boards to be expanded to include citizens. It can happen with a new Madera County resolution. Since 3 of you represent a majority of the Board of Supervisors, that shouldn't be too difficult.

If these changes are made, Measure T renewal stands a far better chance of passing. But there is an urgency here. Without action in the next two months, 2024 Measure T will go the way of 2022 Measure T. These electoral failures cost taxpayers millions of dollars. You will be responsible for that waste of money and the waste of our good will reflected in this appeal.

The time to act is now.

Regards,
Dan Metz
On behalf of Sierra Citizens and Madera Oversight Coalition