

Memorandum

Date: May 19, 2026

To: Jeff Valeros and Steve Kowalewski, Contra Costa County

From: Julie Morgan, Fehr & Peers

Subject: Summary of SCC Regional Fee Program Purpose and Relationship to Current Projects

At your request, Fehr & Peers has reviewed several documents pertaining to the Southern Contra Costa Fee program, with particular attention to the Regional Fee portion of the program. The purpose of this review has been to understand the basic structure and purpose of the Regional Fee, and to provide observations about the context of the regional projects funded through the fee program and how that context has evolved over time.

The documents reviewed include:

- Development Program Report (DPR) for the Southern Contra Costa Fee Areas (August 1996)
- Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JEPA) Pertaining to Southern Contra Costa Fees for Traffic Mitigation by and between Contra Costa County, City of San Ramon, and Town of Danville (1996)
- Contra Costa County General Plan Transportation and Circulation Element (adopted in 2005 with a planning horizon year of 2020, and referred to here as the 2020 General Plan)
- Contra Costa County General Plan Transportation Element (adopted in 2024 with a planning horizon year of 2045, and referred to here as the 2045 General Plan)
- City of San Ramon General Plan 2040 (adopted in December 2023)
- Town of Danville 2030 General Plan (adopted in March 2013)

Purpose of Fee Program

The Southern Contra Costa (SCC) fee program was instituted in 1996 to provide funding for construction of major thoroughfare improvements in the southern Contra Costa area, which includes all of the City of San Ramon and the Town of Danville, as well as areas of unincorporated Contra Costa County near those two municipalities. The stated purpose of the program is to “improve the capacity and safety of the arterial and regional road network in Southern Contra Costa County through the establishment of a series of traffic mitigation fee ordinances” (DPR, page 2).

The DPR defined the relationship between new development in the southern Contra Costa area and the provision of community facilities necessary to serve that development, and used the County General Plan as the basis for determining those relationships (DPR, pages 4–5). More specifically, the

DPR outlined the development potential within the SCC area of benefit, the road network capacity improvements needed to serve that future development, and the estimated cost of those road network improvements, and then apportioned the fee responsibilities among future development categories relative to each development category's contribution to the future demand.

The specific focus of this memo is the portion of the SCC fee program called the SCC Regional Fee. The SCC Regional Fee is collected uniformly across all three jurisdictions in the SCC area of benefit and is wholly dedicated to improvements along the I-680 corridor in Contra Costa. The DPR includes the following projects in the Regional Fee Project List:

- I-680 auxiliary lanes from Bollinger Canyon Road to Diablo Road
- I-680/Alcosta Boulevard interchange
- I-680/Stone Valley Road interchange

At the time the DPR was prepared, the SCC Regional Fee was estimated to generate approximately \$11.5M, or about 22% of the total cost of those improvements (all dollar values presented in year 1996 dollars).

The DPR anticipated that circumstances would change and evolve over the time period that the SCC program would be in place. The document notes that the "road capacity improvement projects will be reviewed periodically to assess the impacts of: changing travel patterns; additional phases of development both within Dougherty Valley and outside of Dougherty Valley; the rate of development; and the adequacy of the estimated project costs", and allows that the SCC fee program may be updated as needed to address changing circumstances (DPR, page 5).

Contra Costa County General Plan Provisions

As noted above, the Contra Costa County General Plan served as a foundation for the information about development potential and roadway network needs that was used in the DPR. The County General Plan has been updated periodically during the time that the SCC fee program has been in place.

The 2020 General Plan acknowledged that Contra Costa County would likely continue to experience substantial population and economic growth and that there would be increasing demand for transportation facilities and services (Transportation and Circulation Element, pages 5-8 and 5-9). The 2020 General Plan identified several strategies for serving the increased demand; as it relates to Contra Costa's freeway system, the Plan recommended construction of HOV lanes and installation of ramp metering as two strategies to accommodate demand and manage the effects of congestion. The Plan also recommended that the County support a study of the I-680 freeway corridor for potential use by fixed-route transit (Policy 5-28), again with the goal of serving the increased demand for travel anticipated as a result of population and economic growth around the southern Contra Costa area.

More recently, the County conducted a comprehensive General Plan update and adopted the 2045 General Plan. The Transportation Element of the 2045 General Plan contains several policies and actions relevant to the southern Contra Costa area and to the SCC fee program, including:

TR-P1.1: Maintain an inclusive and orderly approach to interagency, interdepartmental, and stakeholder coordination on long-range capital planning and the design of specific transportation projects, including consultation with affected community and stakeholder organizations and appropriate commissions and committees.

TR-P1.5: Pursue federal, State, and regional funding to augment locally generated funds to construct and maintain transportation infrastructure.

TR-A1.2: Partner with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), neighboring and regional agencies, and stakeholders to explore and implement options for transportation system funding, including assessment districts, county service areas, impact fees, tax revenue, and other funding sources.

TR-A1.3: Continue updating the County's Area of Benefit impact fee programs as a mechanism to collect fair-share contributions from new development and fund needed transportation improvements.

TR-P2.6: Partner with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to better manage traffic operations on the State highway system in Contra Costa County through the application of ramp metering, construction of high-occupancy toll (HOT)/Express or other managed lanes, and other capacity-management techniques.

City of San Ramon General Plan Provisions

The City of San Ramon adopted its current General Plan, called General Plan 2040, in December 2023. The Traffic and Circulation Element of that plan provides "guidance and specific actions to ensure the continued safe and efficient operation of San Ramon's circulation system."

As noted in the Plan, regional improvements along I-680 are of particular relevance to the City. In the General Plan, the City emphasizes that I-680 is a regional multimodal corridor of crucial importance to the City's economy, linking major employment centers, retail areas, and residents to the broader Bay Area transportation network. The Plan notes that I-680 and its interchanges are increasingly congested, which affects both local mobility and economic competitiveness.

Section 5.2 of the General Plan addresses the City's participation in regional transportation planning efforts, particularly efforts coordinated with CCTA and neighboring jurisdictions, and specifically discusses the City's coordination with CCTA regarding improvements along I-680. As described in that section, the City supports CCTA efforts to provide congestion relief along I-680 through operational improvements at I-680/Bollinger Canyon Road, consideration of additional park-and-ride facilities, study of potential bus-on-shoulder improvements, and improved freeway operations through advanced technology.

Several of the relevant policy statements in the General Plan 2040 include:

Policy 5.2-G-1: Actively participate in local and regional transportation planning.

Policy 5.2-I-1: Continue to develop and implement Action Plans for Routes of Regional Significance, in cooperation with the Southwest Area Transportation Committee (SWAT), the

Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), and the Tri-Valley Transportation Council (TVTC).

Policy 5.2-I-2: Continue to implement the Tri-Valley Transportation Action Plan through participation in the Tri-Valley Transportation Council (TVTC).

Policy 5.2-I-3: Participate in programs to mitigate regional traffic congestion.

Policy 5.2-I-4: Ensure local jurisdiction consistency with the goals and policies of the Contra Costa Congestion Management Plan (CMP).

Policy 5.6-I-5: Encourage future transit uses within the I-680 corridor right-of-way and within the City of San Ramon.

Town of Danville General Plan Provisions

The Town of Danville adopted its General Plan in 2013, with Chapter 4 as the Mobility Element. That Element emphasizes that I-680 is the primary regional access corridor for Danville residents and businesses, and expresses that regional-scale infrastructure be accommodated in the freeway right-of-way. The document forecasts that I-680 will experience substantial increases in traffic volume over the planning horizon (Chapter 4, Figure 15), and notes that Town streets are often affected when incidents and congestion occurs on I-680 (pages 4.3-4.9). The Town's goals are to improve the management of traffic demand on I-680 and protect local streets from spillover effects, and to work with neighboring jurisdictions and Caltrans to improve traffic flow on I-680 (page 4.44).

Several of the relevant policy statements in the General Plan include:

Policy 11.03: Implement physical and operational improvements to improve the transportation system. Such improvements should be: (1) consistent with the need to preserve the character of residential streets and neighborhoods; (2) sensitive to the requirements of bicycles and pedestrians; and (3) consistent with the goal of encouraging alternative modes of travel, whenever feasible.

Policy 11.11: Support the use of technology to improve mobility within Danville.

Policy 13.04: Encourage ridesharing, car and vanpooling, infrastructure improvements (such as the Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride Lot) and services which jointly reduce the need to travel by single-occupant automobile.

Policy 16.01: Work with other agencies, including neighboring cities, Contra Costa County, TVTC, CCTA, SWAT, County Connection, Caltrans, and MTC on multi-jurisdictional transportation issues affecting Danville.

Policy 16.03: Work closely with the County and other involved agencies to ensure that the Interstate 680 right-of-way shall be the route for any future light rail or equivalent mass transit system. Any investment in fixed-route transit shall avoid adversely affecting the residential character of Danville's neighborhoods and Danville's street system.

Project Identification on I-680

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA), in collaboration with Caltrans, has conducted numerous studies and performance evaluations along the I-680 corridor during the time period that the SCC regional fee program has been in place. These have included the I-680 Transit Investment/Congestion Relief Options Study to evaluate a wide range of transit-related alternatives that could increase person throughput along the corridor, several studies about the operational and capacity effects of constructing new HOV lanes and of converting existing HOV lanes to Express Lanes, ramp metering studies, and design alternatives for some of the major interchanges along the I-680 corridor.

The most recent evaluation of the I-680 corridor has been undertaken through the “Innovate 680 Program”, a suite of projects designed to manage congestion and improve reliability through expanded travel options and data-driven technology solutions. Elements of the Innovate 680 Program include part-time transit lanes between San Ramon and Walnut Creek, completion of the northbound Express Lanes from Livorna Road through SR 24, shared mobility hubs (including one in San Ramon at Camino Ramon/Bishop Drive), coordinated adaptive ramp metering and traffic signals throughout the I-680 corridor and along nearby arterials, and other methods to address bottlenecks and improve efficiency.

Summary

The SCC fee program was intentionally designed to be adaptive over time, with the original 1996 DPR anticipating periodic updates to account for changing travel patterns, development levels, costs, and broader planning conditions, ensuring that funded projects remain aligned with evolving transportation needs as guided by the County’s General Plan and other planning efforts. The County General Plan continues to identify the need for managing capacity and safety along the State highway system in Contra Costa in response to changing population and economic conditions, and the General Plans of both the City of San Ramon and the Town of Danville support continued improvements along I-680 so that facility can continue to serve the mobility needs of local residents and businesses. Project identification along the I-680 corridor has progressed over time, with newer efforts such as the Innovate 680 Program and related studies introducing updated, multimodal, and technology-driven improvements that respond to current congestion and mobility challenges. The stated purpose of the Innovate 680 Program is aligned with the purpose of the SCC fee program, in that both programs focus on improving the capacity and safety of the arterial and regional road network in Southern Contra Costa County.

Please contact us with any questions.