



AGENDA REPORT

City Council

DATE:	October 25, 2022
TO:	Mayor Butt and Members of the City Council
FROM:	Demnlus Johnson III, Councilmember
Subject:	Environmental Justice Issues Pertaining to Richmond San Rafael Bridge Traffic Congestion
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	There is no financial impact related to this item.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	None
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	Solutions are needed to address environmental justice problems associated with the Richmond San Rafael Bridge
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	ADOPT a resolution in support of addressing environmental justice issues pertaining to the Richmond San Rafael Bridge traffic congestion – Councilmember Demnlus Johnson III (510-620-6568).

DISCUSSION:

The City of Richmond supports a new third lane on the lower deck for drivers coming from Marin on the Richmond San Rafael Bridge, as well as the new bike lane on the top deck as part of a four (4)-year pilot program. While a bike lane is a vital component of the Richmond San Rafael Bridge, it has come with unintended consequences.

The bike lane eliminated the shoulder on the top deck, making it impossible for cars to move out of traffic if they break down for any reason. The result is traffic backing up on

the freeway, particularly during the morning commute, into Richmond neighborhoods. The traffic congestion results in increased particle matter pollution into Richmond neighborhoods, particularly lower income neighborhoods that are already disproportionately impacted by air emissions.

We support bikes as an alternative to cars, but not at the expense of our community's health and well-being. Studies of air pollution in Richmond have shown that one of the primary sources of particulate matter emissions that affects residents' health, comes from the freeway. This traffic congestion has made it even worse for our communities.

Air emission studies conducted by Ramboll through [Groundwork Richmond](https://linktr.ee/groundworkrichmond) shows clear impacts on Richmond neighborhoods around Interstate 580 with particular problems during the am peak. <https://linktr.ee/groundworkrichmond>

The Richmond and Marin Coalition for Transportation Justice was formed, made up of neighborhood council leaders, community leaders, the NAACP, labor unions, service workers and commuters, in both Richmond and Marin, who are tired of dealing with the additional traffic congestion and resulting environmental pollution in Richmond's disproportionately impacted neighborhoods.

Richmond City Council respectfully requests that the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) help find a solution to this environmental justice problem by doing the following:

1. Hold a public hearing of the Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) on the 4-year Bike Path pilot program, with a particular focus on air quality issues associated with traffic congestion on the Bridge;
2. Add to the 4-year Bike Path pilot study an analysis of air quality emissions and associated health impacts as a result of increased traffic congestion on Interstate 580 and in Richmond neighborhoods; and
3. Pursue funding for additional bridge improvements, including but not limited to a second bike path on the lower deck with a moveable barrier, to alleviate traffic congestion on Interstate 580 and in Richmond neighborhoods.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – Resolution