

## Another last-minute hurdle, another win for the Connector

You might think that the City of Oakland would have no problem saying "yes, please!" to hundreds of millions of dollars of construction at no cost to the city, creating thousands of good (and sorely needed) jobs, and a legacy transportation improvement project that links its airport to BART. You might think that, but you'd be wrong.

At this week's Oakland City Council meeting, three Councilmembers proposed that the city officially oppose construction of the Oakland Airport Connector. Though the City of Oakland is neither funding nor delivering the project, opponents hoped that the carefully crafted funding package – involving contributions from numerous agencies running from the Port of Oakland all the way up to the federal government – would fall apart if Oakland came out in opposition.

The Bay Area Council, in a strongly worded letter to members of the Oakland City Council, advised that opposition would be a grave disservice to the citizens of Oakland and the Bay Area; it suggested that, rather than adopting a resolution in opposition of the project, the City Council should instead "adopt a resolution of strong support for the project, the jobs that it will bring, and the mobility benefits that it will deliver." And, in fact, that is exactly what happened, with Councilmember Ignacio De La Fuente offering the resolution and a majority of Councilmembers supporting. We would like to thank Councilmember De La Fuente for standing up for the project, and Councilmember Larry Reid deserves credit for his years of work to build support and drive the project forward. Thanks as well to the many Bay Area Council members who sent letters of support to the City Council.

Meanwhile, back in the real world, four highly qualified teams have submitted bids to build and operate the project. To avoid tainting the process, BART is unable to reveal any information about the four bids, but keep in mind that recent transportation construction projects have been coming in well below estimates (45 percent below, in the case of the BART Warm Springs extension). BART will soon announce the winner, and we hope to see significant cost savings.

## Video of the Week

Bay Area Council Chairman Emeritus Lenny Mendonca recently delivered this moving speech on why he supports a Constitutional Convention at the Orange County Constitutional Convention Town Hall meeting in Irvine. ([Part I](#) | [Part II](#))



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