



November 15th, 2021

The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: California Transportation Commission Appointments

Dear Governor Newsom:

Thank you for your leadership and direction with Executive Order N-19-19. We are pleased that this landmark order resulted in the final form of the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) being adopted by CalSTA this past July. We appreciate your taking these initial bold steps to ensure that our state’s transportation policies better reflect our climate, equity, and sustainability goals and mandates.

But much more work remains to be done – especially for our most vulnerable and marginalized low-income communities and communities of color, as they remain negatively impacted by transportation decisions, many made by the CTC, that fail to address the community impacts of expansions of highway capacity. Moreover, it is clear that the CTC must do much better to align transportation spending and our climate goals. Although some recent appointees have begun to align the CTC with your vision of transforming the transportation sector, it is vital that all future appointees are fully committed to that vision of a clean, safe and affordable 21st century transportation system that serves all Californians. Your appointment authority plays an essential role in meeting your commitments to decrease both carbon pollution and inequity.

CAPTI is the bold transportation policy change we need, and we commend CalSTA for their leadership in creating this framework. If implemented, CAPTI can shift transportation spending and bolster climate resiliency, improve public health, increase connectivity and prioritize equity. For this policy shift to take place, we need strong leaders at the Commission to ensure this vision is not undermined. We have the ability to set California on the right track when it comes to climate-changing emissions from the transportation sector. We can't do it without Commissioners that understand the nexus between the climate crisis and transportation policies.

Without a community-engaged and innovative CTC, California will fail at meeting its vital climate, social equity, and public health goals. The CTC continues to need more leaders who can speak from and for communities that are experiencing the dire consequences of direct and indirect harms the transportation sector has caused and its negative social costs. The CTC needs all of its leaders to understand the tremendous benefits of multi-modal transportation and the needs of Californians without access to automobiles, who rely on transit, walking and biking.

California needs commissioners with the following values and experience in order to meet the state's climate, equity, and health goals:

- Strong commitment to mobility justice¹ and improving our transportation system for low-income communities and communities of color, including access, mobility, and transportation-based pollution burden;
- Strong understanding of air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emission impacts, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction strategies, and the connections among transportation, land use and housing;
- Deep understanding of the needs of core transit-dependent populations, and the benefits of multi-modal transportation including walking and biking;
- Knowledge of the impacts of limited transportation options and long commute times, especially as they relate to socio-economic factors and social mobility.¹

We strongly urge you to take this opportunity to help the state meet our state goals by adding more commissioners with these qualifications. To this end, we are recommending thirteen individuals (please see attached as Appendix A, 2021 CTC Commissioner Candidates).

All thirteen individuals have applied online using the Appointments Application; we urge you to learn more about each of them and we offer any supplementary support you might need to get to know them and what they would bring to the CTC. We endorse these individuals for their wide-ranging transportation expertise — specifically those areas mentioned above that focus on environmental and transportation justice, public health, and sustainable modes of transportation, and the intersection of all those areas with workforce development.

The legacy of one of your signature climate initiatives, CAPTI, depends on the full support of the California Transportation Commission. Your appointment authority on the CTC can continue to provide significant leadership on climate change, air quality, and social, economic, and

¹ Transportation justice entails an affordable, accessible, sustainable, clean, efficient, and safe transportation system that provides the greatest mobility and safety benefits and other co-benefits to our most vulnerable residents, while protecting them from harm. It requires that a fair share of transportation funding be set aside to meet the needs that underserved and overburdened communities identify as priorities, and that transportation investments generally avoid harming those communities.

environmental justice. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. We look forward to contributing our experience and expertise to this very important process.

Sincerely,



Julia Randolph
Policy and Outreach Associate, Coalition for
Clean Air



Jonathan Matz
California Senior Policy Manager, Safe
Routes Partnership



Nailah Pope-Harden
Executive Director, Climate Plan



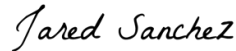
Carter Rubin
Mobility and Climate Advocate, NRDC



Richard Marcantonio
Managing Attorney, Public Advocates



Matt Baker
Policy Director, Planning and Conservation
League



Jared Sanchez
Senior Policy Advocate, California Bicycle
Coalition



David Diaz MPH
Executive Director, ActiveSGV



Melissa Romero
Legislative Affairs Manager, California
Environmental Voters

Cc:

Morgan Carvajal, Chief Deputy Appointments Secretary, Office of Governor
Luis Larios, Deputy Appointments Secretary, Office of Governor
Ronda Paschal, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor
Cathryn Rivera-Hernandez, Appointments Secretary, Office of the Governor
Lauren Sanchez, Senior Advisor for Climate, Office of Governor
Mark Tollefson, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor
David Kim, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA)
Elissa Konove, Undersecretary, CalSTA
Darwin Moosavi, Deputy Secretary, Environmental Policy & Housing Coordination, CalSTA

Appendix A. 2021-2022 CTC Commissioner Candidates

Jim Araby

Director of Strategic Campaigns, United Food & Commercial Workers Local 5 (UFCW 5)

Application ID #86755

James Araby is the Director of Strategic Campaigns for UFCW local 5, a 30,000-member union based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Mr. Araby works across Northern California to build political power for UFCW members, who work in the grocery, retail, retail drug, cannabis, and agricultural industries. In addition to his political work, Mr. Araby leads UFCW 5's organizing department. In 2019 UFCW 5 was able to organize 500 new members into the union.

Mr. Araby serves on the advisory board at the UC-Berkeley Labor Center, is an appointee on California's Interagency Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (IACA) and is a former board chair for CORO Northern California. He currently participates in local advocacy work on the MTC as they think through the redesign of public transportation to support working people. As he continues this work, he is interested in getting more involved in transportation as he recognizes it is not only about the people who build the infrastructure and operate it, but it is those who are most dependent on it.

Before joining UFCW 5, Mr. Araby was the Executive Director of UFCW Western States Council, where he helped lead coalitions in California to pass first in the nation laws on: paid-sick days, banning plastic bags, worker retention in the grocery industry and regulating medical cannabis.

Marlon G. Boarnet

Professor and Chair, University of Southern California

Application ID #78374

Marlon Boarnet is Professor of Public Policy and Chair of the Department of Urban Planning and Spatial Analysis in the Sol Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California. The department's degree programs include one of the nation's oldest and largest Master of Urban Planning degrees, a new online Executive Master of Urban Planning degree, the undergraduate B.S. in Urban Studies and Planning, and the department participates in the school's Ph.D. degrees in Urban Planning and Development and in Public Policy and Management. Boarnet is also president of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, the scholarly association of university planning departments and faculty members in the United States. Prior to becoming department chair in 2016, he served as Vice Dean for Academic Affairs in USC's Price School from 2014 through 2015. Boarnet served as Director of Graduate Programs in Urban Planning and Development at USC Price from 2012 through 2015, and was chair of the Department of Policy, Planning, and Design at UC-Irvine from 2003 through 2006. Boarnet's research focuses on land use and transportation, links between land use and travel behavior and associated implications for public health and greenhouse gas emissions, urban growth patterns, and the economic impacts of transportation infrastructure. He is a fellow of the Weimer School of the Homer Hoyt Institute for Real Estate, and he is a fellow of the Regional Science Association International. Boarnet has advised California state agencies on greenhouse gas emission reduction in the transport sector, the World Bank on transportation access as a poverty reduction tool, and numerous public and private entities. He has been principal investigator on over three million dollars of funded research, supported by agencies

that include the U.S. and California Departments of Transportation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the California Policy Research Center, the California Air Resources Board, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Boarnet's academic web page is:
<https://priceschool.usc.edu/people/marlon-boarnet/> .

Demi Espinoza

California Desert Program Manager, National Parks Conservation Association

Application ID #82583

Ms. Espinoza would bring to the Commission unparalleled experience in working with marginalized communities to identify and advocate for sustainable transportation investments and policies that further racial, economic and environmental justice. Ms. Espinoza grew up in the City of Riverside in Southern California, which carries the burden of poor air and water quality, lack of green space and poverty (her home ranks in the 93rd percentile of toxic pollution). Ms. Espinoza's lived experience with environmental inequities drives her approach to policy, namely to center equity from the most vulnerable communities and landscapes.

As the Senior Equity & Policy Manager for the Safe Routes Partnership, Ms. Espinoza coordinated strategies to improve policies with transportation commissions and government planning agencies across the Southern California region, comprising more than 19 million people. She provided grant writing assistance for transportation funding for local jurisdictions to secure needed transportation funding for disadvantaged communities. She also managed three Active Transportation Working Groups, in Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. And served as a member of the Los Angeles Vision Zero Alliance. A highlight of this work was the community-led transportation safety campaign she led to bring resources for infrastructure to a rural community. Muscoy: A Safe Routes to School Story, provides a visual account of this participatory planning process, and earned the 1st place award in the planning category for the Southern California Association of Governments' regional StoryMap competition.

Ms. Espinoza's lived experiences, professional transportation achievements, and deep commitment to and analysis around equity make her an ideal candidate for appointment to the Transportation Commission. Her intimate experience with the Inland Empire's transportation challenges, from congested highway corridors to bottleneck freight networks, as well as a lack of reliable transit networks and lack of safe routes to school programming. As a commissioner, she will prioritize policy solutions for inadequate transit networks, freight-related transportation challenges, and improving safe routes to school/safe routes to parks programming.

Susan Handy

Director, National Center for Sustainable Transportation

Professor, UC Davis

Application ID #83926

Susan Handy is a Distinguished Professor of Environmental Science and Policy and Director of the National Center for Sustainable Transportation at the University of California, Davis, where she also chairs the graduate program in Transportation Technology and Policy. Her research focuses on travel behavior and transportation planning. Recent projects examine bicycling as a mode of transportation and strategies for reducing automobile dependence.

<https://ncst.ucdavis.edu/people/susan-handy>

Mark Kyle

Attorney at Law, Representing Labor Unions, Individuals, Non-profits, and Electeds

Application ID #: application already on file

Mark Kyle currently practices labor, political, election, and campaign finance law on behalf of labor unions, nonprofits, and individuals. Formerly the political director for the largest building and construction trades local in North America—Operating Engineers Local Union No. 3—he worked extensively on infrastructure and transportation issues (e.g. regional transportation funding, heavy and highway construction, light rail, and High Speed Rail) in California, Nevada and Utah. He has also served as the Chief of Staff for the California Labor Federation, the Undersecretary for the California Secretary of State, as well as positions in the California State Assembly, and for several other labor unions. Mark works on climate mitigation and adaptation infrastructure projects at the local, regional, and state level to bring organized labor fully into the fold of aggressive climate action.

James Lindsay

International Vice President, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)

Application ID #86807

Throughout his long, successful career serving organized labor, Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) International Vice President (IVP) James Lindsay has advanced the needs and goals of working men, women, and families, including ATU’s 13,000 members in California. With his commitment to the aims and agenda of CAPTI, IVP Lindsay can expand on his long-time service on behalf of clean, reliable, affordable, and safe public transportation aimed at the very real needs of the economically strapped and often overlooked members of low-income and majority-people of color communities in California.

As a 31-year member of ATU Local 1277 (representing the transit workers at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority), Lindsay has deep experience with meeting the transportation needs of transit riders while promoting the dignity and safety of the frontline workers who move our cities.

Jim was elected to leadership roles in ATU Local 1277, serving as its president from 2012-2015.

In 2013, Lindsay became President of the ATU’s California Conference Board, representing 13,000 members across the state and working closely with the legislature and state agencies on behalf of their needs and goals. At the same time, he served as Vice President of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, representing over 800,000 members, and Vice President of the California State Federation of Labor, the voice of 2.1 million working men and women. Lindsay was elected an ATU IVP in 2015, a position he currently holds, with jurisdiction over a major part of the Western United States.

Monique Lopez
Founder + Social Justice Planner, Pueblo Planning
Application ID #78552

Monique G. López is a Social Justice Planner and founder of Pueblo Planning, an anti-racist values-driven participatory planning and design firm that intentionally engages and includes communities that are often left out of the planning process and those most vulnerable to the impacts of planning decisions. This includes Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), LGBTQ, unhoused, and other communities that experience marginalization. Monique utilizes storytelling and participatory artmaking to engage communities in the planning process in order to dismantle unjust systems and co-develop equitable communities.

For the past 15 years, Monique has been a social justice planner and policy advocate working on transportation justice, environmental justice, and public space access projects, plans, policies, and designs. Specifically, Monique has worked in partnership with communities to co-create meaningful change by defeating polluting industries, stopping freeway expansion and co-developing with the community sustainable alternatives, developing popular education materials to advance justice-centered movement demands, and challenging and changing planning methodology and practice to center the stories and solutions of BIPOC and other communities that experience marginalization. Monique also brings this justice-centered approach and practice into the classroom as a lecturer at San Diego State University, Antioch University, Pitzer College, and Cal Poly Pomona.

Dr. Adonia E. Lugo
Interim Chair & Teaching Faculty of Urban Sustainability, Antioch University
Application ID #82761

Cultural anthropologist Adonia E. Lugo, PhD is the chair of the Urban Sustainability Department at Antioch University Los Angeles. She was born and raised in traditional and unceded Acjachemen territory and now lives and works in traditional and unceded Tongva territory. Professor Lugo began investigating sustainable mobility, race, and space during her graduate studies at UC Irvine, when she co-created CicLAvia and the organization today known as People for Mobility Justice in Los Angeles. In addition to her role at Antioch LA, Professor Lugo is an urban anthropologist with Pueblo Planning, a core organizer of The Untokening, and a co-founder of the Mobility Justice Research Network.

Melanie Jamileh Prasad, Esq.
California Director, Jobs to Move America
Application ID #86762

Melanie Jamileh Prasad is the California Director of the national strategic research and policy center, [Jobs to Move America](#) (JMA), and an attorney part of its in-house counsel team. At JMA, Melanie led the negotiation and signing of a community benefits agreement (CBA) with electric bus manufacturer, Proterra, and the renewal of a CBA with electric bus manufacturer, BYD, both of which included commitments to targeted hiring and training for communities facing barriers to employment. She has written and advised on inclusive procurement policies and legislation regarding public transportation and manufacturing contracts.

Prior to working at JMA, Melanie worked as an attorney for Legal Services of CNY, representing low-income clients on issues such as eviction defense, language access, and employment discrimination. In addition, Melanie spent four years working as an organizer working alongside labor, environmental, and community organizations for issues such as access to democracy, just transitions, and a living wage. She has a dual bachelor's in Political Science and French from the University of Rochester, and a J.D. from the University of Buffalo, School of Law.

Andres Ramirez
Executive Director, People for Mobility Justice
Application ID #86749

Andres Ramirez - has over 12 years of experience advocating for Equity in DACs through community organizing and policy advocacy. Andres has diverse policy expertise and a keen understanding of strengths and needs of DACs. He most recently served as Policy Director at Pacoima Beautiful and previously served as a board member for PMJ. He serves on the LA County Metropolitan Transit Authority's Policy Advisory Council, the Public Utilities Commission Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group, and the Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) advisory council.

Ramirez was born and raised in Southeast Los Angeles as a first-generation child to Salvadoran immigrant parents. Ramirez has spent the last twelve years organizing and movement building in every corner of Los Angeles County. He has led multiple advocacy and organizing efforts assuring that land use, transportation, housing, and environmental policies are developed and implemented equitably. Some of the successful efforts he has led include: Free Lots Angeles, CicLAvia South LA, CicLAvia Southeast Cities, Crenshaw Street Beats (Great Streets), and the methane leak mitigation at Valley

Dr. Mojgan (Mo) Sami, PhD
Assistant Professor of Health Equity, California State University Fullerton
Application ID #80219

Mojgan (Mo) Sami, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Health Equity at California State University Fullerton. She studies the nexus between urban planning, public health, and climate justice. Her most recent research project is focused on the ways that the built environment impacts health outcomes and disparities in Orange County. She is often working with community organizations as an academic ally for mobility justice and health equity. She previously served as the Vice President of the Board of Directors of California Walks, an organization dedicated to creating mobility spaces for people of all ages and abilities. Prior to her academic career, Dr. Sami worked in global health and development, including positions at the World Health Organization and the World Bank. She was an advisory member of the Health and Environment committee in the Special Program for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) at the World Health Organization until 2020, and currently serves on a special global working group for Planetary Health with the International Union for Public Health and

Education (IUHPE), and advises the International Environment Forum on health equity and justice. She is also a diversity, equity and inclusion advisor for the American Heart Association.

Dr. Destiny Thomas
Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Thrivance Group
Application ID #78326

Dr. Destiny Thomas is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Thrivance Group. An Anthropologist Planner from Oakland, CA, Dr. Thomas, has 6 years of experience working in a Project Manager capacity within government agencies. These roles include Caltrans (Environmental Planner) and the City of Los Angeles (Transportation Planner). In addition to this, Dr. Thomas has 8 years of experience leading key advancements in racial equity initiatives across the state by way of community organizing, policy writing, and non-profit management in communities that have been most impacted by racial inequities. Areas of interest include: racial equity, implementing the "dignity-infused community engagement" methodology, anti-displacement studies, healing environmental and infrastructural trauma, and bolstering agency and voice in marginalized communities within municipal planning processes. In 2020, Dr. Thomas launched a culturally rooted, trauma-informed enterprise geared toward building capacity for these values within municipal agencies, direct service providers, and advocacy organizations.

Dr. Thomas earned a BA in Political Science from Fisk University in 2006, an MPA with an emphasis in Public Health and Non-Profit Management from Tennessee State University in 2008, and a PhD in Social and Cultural Anthropology from the California Institute of Integral Studies in 2016. She is also a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.

John Yi
Executive Director, Los Angeles Walks
Application ID# 165208

Mr. Yi has served as Executive Director of Los Angeles' principal pedestrian advocacy organization since 2019. He also currently serves on the Board of the Korean American Democratic Committee, as an Assembly Delegate and on the California Democratic Party's LGBTQ Caucus.

As Executive Director of Los Angeles Walks, Mr. Yi leads an organization that Trains and mobilizes people to advocate for safe, accessible, and equitable walking environments in LA; promotes walking and pedestrian infrastructure in Los Angeles; educates local policymakers concerning the rights and needs of pedestrians of all abilities; partners with community groups to reimagine public space and fosters the development of safe and vibrant walking environments for all people. He would bring to the Commission a unique background of working directly with communities most impacted by historical transportation disinvestment to secure safer conditions for walking.