



### **Transportation Funding**

- **Protect Transportation Funding:** Preserve funding for transportation projects, support protection of transportation funding resources, maximize funding for Santa Cruz County transportation projects, and preserve regional discretion and priority-setting.
  - Stable, formula funding is essential for addressing the backlog of transportation infrastructure repairs and improvements in Santa Cruz County. **Support protection of all current and future taxes and fees and other transportation funds** (including Highway Users Tax Account (HUTA), Transportation Development Act (TDA), State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Active Transportation Program (ATP), and other funds) from elimination or diversion to other State programs, General Fund loans, general obligation bond debt service, or to other non-transportation purposes.
  - Seek improvements at the Board of Equalization/California Department of Tax and Fee Administration to ensure that distribution of sales taxes on online sales do not negatively impact TDA-LTF and local sales tax measure revenues.
  - Capturing Sales Tax from Internet Sales: In June 2018, the Supreme Court ruled in *South Dakota v. Wayfair* that internet retailers can be required to collect sales taxes even in states where they have no physical presence if a seller's gross revenue exceeds a reasonable threshold of value or quantity. The decision was hailed as a victory for brick-and-mortar businesses and for states that have expressed concern about losing out on tax revenue as internet sales comprise an increasingly larger share of all sales. The State Legislature has recently begun to explore next steps to implement this ruling through informational hearings. Ensure legislative and regulatory efforts to conform state law to this ruling increase transportation funding from local-option sales taxes (METRO and Measure D) and TDA funding across Santa Cruz County, as well as County of Santa Cruz and city resources.
  - Oppose proposals that could tie transportation fund availability, especially HUTA to local jurisdictions, to non-transportation and development projects.
- **Ensure Fair Distribution of Funding:**
  - Ensure state and federal funds are made available for projects in Santa Cruz County, are distributed equitably, and are not disproportionately distributed to large regions. Ensure competitive programs make funding reasonably available for multi-modal projects in Santa Cruz County that address local and regional priorities.
  - **Local Role:** Ensure a strong role for regional and local agencies in planning and determining transportation investment priorities. Support legislation that respects local authority, protecting or expanding local decision-making in programming expenditures of transportation

funds, rather than the State making top-down funding decisions that are not community-based. Project and increase direct funding to regions through both federal and state programs; and reinforce and build upon the structure of SB45 that provides regions a strong voice in the programming of state funds.

- **State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP):** Ensure equitable programming and allocation of STIP funds.
- **“Disadvantaged Communities” Definition:** Broaden the definition of “disadvantaged communities” (DACs) in order to ensure that projects that benefit low-income and other transportation disadvantaged residents of Santa Cruz County are not excluded from funding opportunities that support sustainable communities, transportation choices, and investments in alternative modes of transportation.
- **Increase Funding for All Transportation Modes:** Support measures that increase funding for and support implementation of transportation projects in Santa Cruz County, including funds for ongoing system maintenance, congestion reduction, safety, complete streets, active transportation bike, pedestrian, transit projects, transit-oriented development, and specialized transportation for seniors and people with disabilities in Santa Cruz County.
  - **New funding systems:** Phase in new funding systems which are tied to system use, rather than fuel consumption or fuel prices. May include new user fees, such as a Road User Charge or Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) fee and other alternative funding mechanisms.
  - **Expand local revenue-raising opportunities** and innovative financing options to address the significant backlog of transportation needs. Provide locals with the ability to supplement and leverage state funding for investments that protect state and local transportation assets
    - **Expand the authority of the RTC and local entities to increase taxes and fees** for transportation projects, such as new gas taxes, vehicle registration fees, property-tax financing, infrastructure financing districts.
    - Support clarifying amendment to Government Code Section 65089.20 that will give RTPAs equal treatment with Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) to seek voter approval for a local vehicle registration fee. *(SB83 cleanup)*
    - **Lower Vote Threshold:** Support efforts to amend the California constitution to lower the voter threshold for local transportation funding measures, such as local sales tax or vehicle registration fee ballot measures, from the 2/3 supermajority to a simple majority or 55% vote.
  - **Active Transportation Program (ATP):** Increase ATP funding and ensure potential reforms to the Active Transportation Program (ATP) do not reduce the proportion available for Santa Cruz County agencies to compete for, including funds to the competitive statewide, small urban and rural funding pots.
  - **Cap & Trade:**
    - Increase percent of Cap & Trade revenues allocated to transportation projects and programs that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Santa Cruz County.
    - Support increases in Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) appropriations



- Support policy changes to the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program (AHSC) that increase funding opportunities for projects in Santa Cruz County
- Ensure continued funding for low and zero emission transit deployment. Ensure regulatory and legislative requirements related to transit electrification provide flexibility, consider cost and available technology, and do not place an undue burden on transit agencies.
- **Support options to replace the loss of redevelopment funding**, to support economic development and affordable housing consistent with sustainable community strategies.
- **Increase and Preserve Funding for Priority Projects in Santa Cruz County:**
  - Projects on Highway 1
  - Local Street and Roadway Preservation
  - Transit projects
  - Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line
  - Bicycle and Pedestrian facilities, including the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST)
  - Soquel Avenue-Freedom Boulevard Corridor
- **Transportation Development Act (TDA):**
  - Monitor potential modifications to the TDA, including fare-box recovery requirements, and ensure funding for transit, planning, administrative, and other TDA purposes in Santa Cruz County are not reduced. Oppose efforts that would reduce TDA funds which are essential for RTC administration and planning.

## **Project Implementation**

- **Streamlining & Expediting Project Delivery:** Support administrative and/or legislative efforts to streamline funding applications, simplify program administration and other efforts that modernize and accelerate project delivery.
  - Support the development of greater efficiencies of transportation program implementation, including eliminating any unnecessary, overly burdensome and/or duplicative mandates.
  - Opportunities to expedite transportation project delivery may include increasing contracting and financing options, increased flexibility in early allocation of programmed funds and initiating reimbursable work with local funds in advance of CTC allocation of all projects, efforts that expedite the Caltrans design review process, opportunities to expedite locally-sponsored projects on the state highway system, and increase in encroachment permit limits.
  - Support delegation of National Environmental Policy Act review and fund allocation responsibilities to Caltrans, environmental streamlining measures for bike, pedestrian, transit, and infrastructure preservation within existing public rights of way, and other measures that expedite project delivery.
- **Advanced Mitigation:** Support implementation of “advanced mitigation” environmental programs, including approving up-front environmental mitigation funding for projects, such as the Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing.
- **FAST Act Implementation:** Support legislation and administrative strategies to implement the FAST federal authorization bill, in a way that ensures the best possible outcome for transportation projects in Santa Cruz County.



- **SHOPP Program:** Support Caltrans' efforts to provide more outreach regarding State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) projects and to include measurable targets for improving the state highway system. Support clarification of existing laws to permit the expenditure of SHOPP funds for operational projects on state highways.

Support inclusion of complete streets within SHOPP projects, as appropriate, but especially in areas where state highways serve as main streets, such as Highway 9 and Highway 152 in Santa Cruz County.

- **Encroachments**  
Support legislation that clarifies the authority under which rail property owners may remove, or by notice may require the removal of encroachments.
- **Active Transportation Facilities:**  
Support modification to rules, regulations, and government codes that will make roadways more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly, including laws associated with sharing the road; ensuring complete streets components (e.g. accessible pedestrian signals) are considered during the design of all projects; increasing funds for pedestrian and bicycle safety countermeasures; providing additional direction and consistency for accessible pedestrian design.
- **Land Use/Housing/Transportation Coordination:** Encourage new developments to incentivize active transportation and bus use. Ensure SB743 (Steinberg, 2013) implementation supports infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and expedites transportation project delivery.
- **Administrative:** Allow advance payment of programmed funds, in order to expedite project delivery and resolve cash flow challenges faced especially by small regional agencies.
- **Unfunded Mandates:** Oppose unfunded mandates and seek funding for mandates imposed in recent years. Require new regulatory proposals to include an estimate of the cost and impact such proposals will have in the delivery of California's transportation program.
- **Commuter Programs:** Expand statutory authority for regions statewide to adopt and implement a regional commuter benefits ordinance similar to the successful program in the Bay Area.
- **Safety:** Support legislation and programs that improve transportation safety for all users and support programs aimed at eliminating all traffic-related serious injuries and fatalities. Support proposals to increase enforcement and support modification of traffic laws to better protect pedestrians and bicyclists, including proposals to authorize automated speed enforcement on a pilot program basis, proposals that would allow local jurisdictions to reduce speed limits on both local roads and state highways and work with state representatives and the Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force to modify the California Vehicle Code to allow for prima facie 25 mph on state highways that function as main streets, and modifications to vehicle code to allow vehicles to cross a double-yellow line when passing cyclists. Support commercial driver, bus driver, motorist, bicyclist, safe routes to schools training and education programs which reduce collisions.
- **Shared Mobility Systems:** Support policies that enable technological innovations to improve mobility, while protecting the public's interest. Monitor legislation and regulations related to shared mobility, such as transportation network companies and real-time carpooling, to ensure



that mobility benefits are maximized, and access to critical data for transportation and land-use planning and operational purposes is assured. Support measures that allow for local control and regulation of shared mobility systems such as scooters, bikes, and other fleets.

- **Connected and Autonomous Vehicles:** Monitor and engage in legislation and regulations to facilitate deployment of connected vehicles and autonomous vehicles. Oppose federal efforts to preempt local authority over the use of autonomous vehicles in their communities. In partnership with California cities and counties, transit agencies, the business community, and other transportation organizations, engage in regulatory and legislative efforts related to connected and autonomous vehicles with the goal of accelerating their safety, mobility, environmental, equity and economic benefits. Similar to the “shared mobility” strategy, support access to critical data for transportation and land use planning and operational purposes.
- **Electrification** of vehicle fleets: Support funding and coordination, including policy, planning, and infrastructure, for vehicle electrification. Support reduced utility pricing for public transit electric vehicle fleets.

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**Santa Cruz County  
Regional Transportation Commission  
2019 FEDERAL Legislative Program**

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- **Priority Projects:** Seek and preserve funding for priority transportation projects and programs in Santa Cruz County, including:
  - Projects on Highway 1
  - Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line
  - Transit operations and capital projects
  - Local street and roadway preservation
  - Bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network (MBSST/Rail Trail)
  - 511 implementation
- **Stabilize and Increase Funding.**
  - **Increase funding levels** for all modes to bring transportation infrastructure up to a good state of repair and meet growing transportation needs in Santa Cruz County. Support increase and index of federal fuel taxes that are available for projects in Santa Cruz County.
  - **Infrastructure Initiative:** Ensure any new infrastructure funding initiative increases transportation investments for projects in Santa Cruz County, including funding for the existing Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) programs and formula fund programs. The federal investment in an infrastructure package should adhere to the traditional match requirements, so as not to disadvantage projects in Santa Cruz County from accessing those funds. The initiative should include a significant investment of **new** federal funds for transportation, stabilize the Highway Trust Fund and not be offset by reductions to other federal programs serving Santa Cruz County residents.
  - **BUILD:** Maintain the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD, formerly TIGER) grant program at or above current levels.
  - **Develop new funding mechanisms** that ensure the financial integrity of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) and Mass Transportation Account. Without any new sources of dedicated revenue, the HTF would need an infusion of over \$100 billion from the General Fund simply to fund highway and transit programs at their current levels from 2021 through 2025.
  - **Innovative Financing:** Ensure proposals for public-private partnerships and innovative financing are favorable for project implementation in Santa Cruz County.
  - **Defend fiscal year 2019 and 2020 appropriations.** Ensure that Congress appropriates funding consistent with amounts authorized in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.
  - **Oppose rescissions or arbitrary cuts** that could reduce funding for transportation projects in Santa Cruz County.
  - **Support transparent congressionally-directed spending** (earmarks) to allow for Congressional support of priority projects in Santa Cruz County
  - Oppose efforts to withhold federal funds from jurisdictions not in compliance with federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement law, or from "sanctuary" jurisdictions.
- **Disaster Recovery:** Work with local and state partners to ensure federal government provides sufficient emergency relief appropriations and federal agency resources to support rebuilding and recovery efforts.





- **Protect and expand transportation fringe benefits.** Reinstate the commuter benefit, which was eliminated under the tax reform bill. In addition, advocate for expanding pre-tax transportation fringe benefit eligibility to include shared mobility options, such as bike-share and shared ride carpool services.
- **Streamline Project Delivery:** Support regulations to streamline and integrate federal project delivery requirements for project planning, development, review, permitting, and environmental processes in order to reduce project costs and delays.
- Oppose **unfunded mandates** and support legislation that provides funding for past mandates.
- **Transportation Act Implementation and Reauthorization**
  - Support legislation and administrative strategies to implement the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act or "FAST Act" federal authorization bill, in a way that ensures the best possible outcome for transportation projects in Santa Cruz County. Ensure that U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) implementation of MAP-21 and FAST Act rules and regulations do not have a negative impact on local projects and programs.
  - **Active Transportation:** Support continued funding for pedestrian and bicycle projects
  - **Transit:** Support increased funding for transit, continued and accelerated growth of the Small Transit Intensive Cities Program (STIC), funding for acquisition of transit capital (Bus and Bus Facilities, and Low and No Emissions Bus Programs), and increase funds for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) implementation, state of good repair, and other transit programs.
  - **Reauthorization:** As Congress begins discussions on reauthorization of the FAST Act, which expires in 2020, support increases to programs that provide funds for projects in Santa Cruz County.
- **Performance Measures:** Support development of appropriate performance measures which are consistent with RTC approved goals, policies, and targets and which recognize data limitations of many regions. Support open collaboration, data sharing and funding to successfully implement state and federal performance-based planning and management requirements.
- **Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Support development of new funding programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, expand eligibility for CMAQ and other funding programs to Santa Cruz County. Support funding and coordination of vehicle electrification planning and infrastructure.
- **Climate Change and Resiliency:** Strengthen federal partnership to support resiliency and climate change preparedness and efforts that could support local efforts to improve resiliency, respond to new or worsening environmental hazards and meet regional climate goals.
- **Autonomous Vehicles:** Oppose federal efforts to preempt local authority to regulate the use of autonomous vehicles in their communities.

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