

AB 285 – California Transportation Plan (Friedman)

Status: Chaptered 10/08/2019

Summary: Under existing law, Caltrans is required to prepare the California Transportation Plan, which looks at the movement of goods and people and how the state will achieve greenhouse gas emission goals. This bill would require Caltrans to address in the California Transportation Plan how statewide greenhouse gas emission goals will be reduced by 2030 with carbon neutrality by 2045.

AB 285 directs the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) to submit a [report](#) to the Legislature that includes the following:

- An overview of the California Transportation Plan (CTP) 2050
- An overview of all regional Sustainable Communities Strategies and any alternative planning strategies, as needed
- An assessment of how the implementation of the CTP and regional plans “will influence the configuration of the statewide integrated multimodal transportation system”
- A “review of the potential impacts and opportunities for coordination” of key state funding programs” to be conducted in consultation with the administering agencies
- Recommendations for improving these programs and other relevant transportation funding programs to better align the programs to meet long-term common goals, including the goals outlined in the CTP

Strategic Growth Council Report Key Findings:

- Century of investments in streets and highways designed for go anywhere access and speed; resulted in convenient transportation system for auto-owners, urban sprawl, and auto-dependency
- There is a disjointedness between city, county, regional, and statewide transportation, and climate action plans which makes it challenging to understand and implement
- State plans are visionary and not fiscally constrained
- Regional plans rely too heavily on ZEV, increased transit service resulting in slow change
- MPOs have limited authority and resources to incentivize or to mandate that their key plan elements get implemented
 - SB 375 relies on MPOs to coordinate transportation and land use at a regional scale
 - To achieve SB 375 targets, the MPOs rely on land use policy changes not yet adopted by many localities and which veer away from current local general plans and zoning ordinances.
 - The MPOs do not control land use policymaking, which is the prerogative of local governments.

- Complex institutional structure for transportation in California makes it difficult to figure out who is responsible for delivering performance outcomes
- Financing is heavily focused on streets and highways
 - State of good repair, new lane miles
 - Many projects in the pipeline do not address specifically key CTP goals
 - AB 285 programs represent ~2% of total transportation funds
- Many existing funding programs have the legal flexibility to adjust spending to meet California's shared policy priorities

Recommendations in Report:

- Use the Report findings as a roadmap for future legislation
- Align transportation funding to sustainability performance
 - Direct state dollars only to VMT-reducing projects
 - Focus MPO plans on funding VMT-reducing projects
 - Use discretionary funds to incentivize local actions that comport with state goals.
 - Use new federal infrastructure funds in ways that assure that climate and equity goals are met
- Help MPOs implement transit and active transport strategies
- Adopt and support pricing strategies to reduce driving and provide funds for alternatives
- Ensure that localities perform on land use tied to RTP/SCS goals
- Update, organize, and streamline state plans. Evaluate a fiscally constrained alternative.
- Reevaluate projects in the pipeline and prioritize those that match state goals and explicitly reduce greenhouse gasses. Revise or reconsider projects that create barriers to goal attainment.
- Enable MPOs to implement their SCS by providing them with the tools needed to implement plans
- Clarify the roles of state agencies and transportation responsibilities to increase transparency and efficacy.

What's Next?

Assembly Member Laura Friedman serves as the Chair of the Assembly Transportation Committee and has introduced a number of bills that have some relationship to the AB 285 Report including [AB-2237](#) which could require local agencies to report to MPOs about how the SCS is implemented in each jurisdiction and [AB-2438](#) which could require all transportation projects funded at the local or state level to align with the California Transportation Plan (CTP) and the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI). Many agencies and communities are concerned at this top-down approach and the impact it could have on planned local, regional, and state transportation projects.