
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anthony Portantino, Chair
2021 - 2022 Regular Session

AB 1147 (Friedman) - Regional transportation plan: Active Transportation Program

Version: August 16, 2021

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 23, 2021

Policy Vote: E.Q. 5 - 2, TRANS. 11 - 4

Mandate: Yes

Consultant: Mark McKenzie

Bill Summary: AB 1147 would make numerous substantive changes to the required elements of metropolitan planning organizations' (MPOs') regional transportation plans (RTPs) to ensure effective implementation of sustainable communities strategies (SGSs) and alternative planning strategies (APSSs), as specified. The bill would also require the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop a guidance document to provide best practices for establishing "15-minute communities," as defined, and require Caltrans to develop a bicycle highway pilot program, as specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) estimates costs of approximately \$377,000 in 2022-23 for 2.0 PY of temporary staff to develop a 15-minute community guidance document, and for the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) to manage the extended report on the California Transportation Plan (CTP). In addition, the SGC would incur approximately \$240,000 in one-time consulting costs to assist with the supplemental assessments required as part of the updated report. (General Fund)
- The Department of Transportation (Caltrans) estimates costs in the range of \$75,000 to \$150,000 for 0.5 to 1.0 PY of staff time to prepare a bicycle highway pilot program proposal. Caltrans would incur additional administrative costs to implement a bicycle highway pilot program, although the bill does not explicitly require implementation. (State Highway Account)
- Unknown, potentially significant cost pressures for Caltrans to implement a bicycle highway pilot project, including planning, design, and construction of networks of bicycle highways in two of California's major metropolitan areas, as specified. (various special funds, federal funds, local funds, General Fund)
- Unknown, potentially significant local mandate costs for cities and counties to report specified information to metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) regarding actions taken to implement the sustainable communities strategy (SCS) and identified barriers to further implementation. Local costs could be reimbursable from the state General Fund, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates. (General Fund)
- The California Transportation Commission (CTC) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) both report minor and absorbable costs related to specified duties in the bill. (special funds)

Background: Existing federal law requires any urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000 to establish an MPO that, among other things, is responsible to ensure that regional transportation planning is cohesive across local jurisdictions. Existing state law requires the 18 MPOs and 26 regional transportation planning agencies (RTPAs) to prepare and adopt long-range regional transportation plans (RTPs) that achieve a coordinated and balanced regional transportation system, including, but not limited to, mass transportation, highway, railroad, maritime, bicycle, pedestrian, goods movement, and aviation facilities and services. Existing law authorizes a transportation planning agency with a population that exceeds 200,000 persons to use as part of that policy element, among others, measures of means of travel, including the percentage share of all trips made by single occupant vehicles, multiple occupant vehicles, carpools, public transit, walking, and bicycling, as specified.

Existing law, as enacted by SB 375 (Steinberg), Chap. 728/2008, coordinates transportation and land use planning to help achieve the state's climate action goals by requiring CARB to set regional targets for GHG emissions reductions from passenger vehicle use. In 2010, CARB established targets for 2020 and 2035 for each region at a percent reduction of passenger vehicle GHG emissions per person from 2005 levels. CARB updates the regional GHG emission reduction targets every eight years, consistent with each MPO's timeframe for updating its RTP, as specified. SB 375 also requires each MPO to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of its RTP that demonstrates how the region will meet its emissions reduction targets through land use, housing, and transportation strategies. CARB must review the adopted SCS to confirm that it will meet the regional GHG targets. A regional transportation agency would be required to prepare an alternative planning strategy (APS), if the SCS is unable to reduce GHG emissions sufficiently to achieve the specified targets.

Existing law requires Caltrans to update the California Transportation Plan (CTP) by December 31, 2015, and every five years thereafter, that describes the integrated multimodal transportation system necessary to meet specified GHG emission reduction targets. The plan must include a policy element that describes state policies and system performance objectives, a strategies element that synthesizes the regional transportation plans' concepts and strategies, and a recommendations element that includes economic forecasts and recommendations to achieve the plan's objectives. The CTP must consider specified subject areas for the movement of people and freight. Existing law requires Caltrans to coordinate with the CTC, the Strategic Growth Council, CARB, the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, and specified local and regional entities when drafting the CTP. The CTC must review recommendations in updates to the CTP, prepare specific action-oriented and pragmatic recommendations for transportation system improvements, and submit a report with those recommendations one year after each CTP update.

Existing law requires the Strategic Growth Council (SGC), by January 31, 2022, to complete an overview of the California Transportation Plan and all SCSs and APSs, an assessment of how implementation of the California Transportation Plan, SCSs, and APSs will influence the configuration of the statewide integrated multimodal transportation system, and a review of the potential impacts and opportunities for coordination of specified funding programs.

Existing law establishes the Active Transportation Program (ATP), which consolidates the following federal and state transportation programs into a single program: the Transportation Alternatives Program; Bicycle Transportation Account; and State Safe Routes to School. The ATP aims to increase the number of bicycling and walking trips, increase safety and mobility for bicyclists and pedestrians, reduce greenhouse gas emissions through active transportation, enhance public health, and provide benefits to disadvantaged communities. Approximately \$100 million is currently available each year to fund the ATP.

Proposed Law: AB 1147 would do the following:

SGC Report Update

- Extend the deadline for the SGC report on the CTP from January 31, 2022 to July 1, 2023, and expand the report to include the following:
 - A discussion and analysis of the differences between the CTP and the SCS/APS, including the fiscal constraints and fiscal eligibility, and how those differences affect implementation and integration.
 - A description of key state agencies', MPOs', regional transportation planning agencies', and local governments' assessment of barriers to the achievement of state and regional GHG emissions reduction targets related to the CTP and all SCSs/APSs.
 - A summary of strategies that reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) contained in the CTP and SCSs/APSs, an analysis of the impacts of VMT reduction strategies on air quality, equity, public health, economic activity, and employment, and recommendations to reduce barriers and unintended consequences when pursuing strategies to reduce VMT.
 - Recommendations for actions at the state, regional, and local levels to achieve state and regional GHG emission reduction targets related to the CTP and all SCSs/APSs, including the necessary tools that are still needed.
 - Include the Regional Early Action Planning Grants Program of 2021 among the funding programs reviewed for potential impacts and opportunities for coordination.
- Require the SGC to convene key state agencies, MPOs, RTPAs, and local governments to assist in completing the report, as specified.

CARB Report Update

- Require the CARB report assessing progress made by each MPO in meeting regional GHG emission reduction targets to include the following additional information:
 - The progress made on relevant recommendations related to the successful implementation of the SCS included in the report prepared by the SGC.
 - The difference, if any, between GHG emission reduction targets and the total needed reduction identified in the most recent Scoping Plan, and identification of public entities that could make contributions to achieving those reductions, and an assessment of the progress toward achieving those reductions.
- Require consultation with the CTC in developing the report, as specified.
- Authorize CARB to request data necessary to develop the report, and require MPOs, the CTC, and affected stakeholders to provide the requested data, to the extent feasible.

General RTP requirements

- Specify that the outreach efforts related to the development of an SCS must include outreach to disadvantaged communities and low-income households to encourage comments and active participation.
- Authorize the MPO to request a consultation with the governing body of a city or county to discuss actions the local agency may take to assist in meeting GHG reduction targets, if the MPO concludes that a local agency's land use decisions and transportation projects will interfere with the achievement of those targets, as specified. The results of the consultation must be reported to the MPO's governing body and made available on the MPO's website.
- Require the financial element of the RTP to include specified costs for projects that directly support low-income households and communities among the categories of projects that are proposed for development during the 20-year life of the plan.

City and County Reports

- Require each city and county within a region, within one year of CARB accepting a region's SCS or APS, to submit a report to the MPO that does both of the following:
 - Describes the specified actions taken by the city or county to implement, and that are consistent with, its region's SCS or APS.
 - Identifies barriers to further implementation of the region's SCS or APS, as specified.
- Require each region's MPO to establish reporting guidelines consistent with its SCS or APS in consultation with local agencies while considering any local data requested in the reporting guidelines.
- Require each city and county to make the report available on its website.

15-minute community

- Define a "15-minute community" as a portion of a city or unincorporated county where every resident has access to specified essential services within a 15-minute bicycle ride or public transit ride.
- Require OPR, by July 1, 2023 and in order to support the planning and development of sustainable communities, to develop a guidance document to provide best practices for establishing a 15-minute community, including existing opportunities for securing state grant funding for the development of a 15-minute community, in consultation with the Department of Housing and Community Development, CTC, and the SGC.
- Require OPR to publish the guidance on its website.

Bicycle Highway Pilot Program

- Require Caltrans, by January 1, 2023, to submit a proposal for the development, including selection, of sites for a pilot program establishing branded networks of bicycle highways that are numbered and signed within two major metropolitan areas in different regions of the state.
- Require the pilot to restrict the use of the network to bicyclists, and ensure it contains intermittent entrances and exits, serves trips of five miles or more, and supports higher speed travel of up to 25 miles per hour.
- Require Caltrans to select sites based on regional support, connectivity to other bike routes, and potential to maximize active transportation benefits.

- Require Caltrans to submit the proposal, including selected sites, to the CTC for review and comment, including making recommendations for potential funding sources.
- Require Caltrans to report, by July 1, 2026, to the relevant policy committees of the Legislature on the status of that pilot project and additional recommendations for further bicycle highway networks.

Related Legislation: AB 285 (Friedman, Chapter 605, Statutes of 2019) Required the state's transportation plans to incorporate efforts to meet SB 32 and SCS targets.

SB 127 (Wiener), which was vetoed in 2019, would have redirected highway rehabilitation funds to prioritize the building of facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, as specified.

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