
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 431 (Wilson) - Advanced Air Mobility Infrastructure Act

Version: May 27, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: June 22, 2026

Policy Vote: TRANS. 13 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Mark McKenzie

Bill Summary: AB 431 would require the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to coordinate with the Transportation Agency (CalSTA) to include “advanced air mobility” (AAM) in the next update to the California Transportation Plan (CTP). The bill would also require Caltrans, in coordination with specified state entities, to establish a statewide working group to facilitate collaboration in the development and implementation of AAM in California, as specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- Caltrans estimates ongoing costs of approximately \$215,000 annually for 1.0 PY of staff workload to meet the requirements of this bill, including establishing an expanded statewide working group, collaborating with and facilitating communication among participating entities, researching ongoing developments in the evolving AAM sector, and developing expanded AAM information for inclusion in the CTP. (Aeronautics Account)
- Staff estimates that CalSTA, the Energy Commission (CEC), the State Air Resources Board (CARB), the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), and the Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) would each incur minor to moderate ongoing costs to participate in activities related to the statewide working group. For example, LCI reports ongoing annual costs of approximately \$61,500 (General Fund) for a partial PY of staff time to support the work needed to participate in the statewide working group. Staff assumes a similar level of workload for each of the other participating entities, resulting in total costs in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars in the aggregate. (General Fund, various special funds)

Background: Existing law requires Caltrans to prepare a statewide, long-range transportation plan that describes the integrated multimodal transportation system necessary to meet specified greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. The CTP is updated every five years and 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 all of the following subject areas for the movement of people and freight: (1) mobility and accessibility; (2) integration and connectivity; (3) efficient system management and operation; (4) existing system preservation; (5) safety and security; (6) economic development, including productivity and efficiency; (7) environmental protection and quality of life; and (8) environmental justice.

Existing law establishes a Division of Aeronautics within Caltrans to foster and promote safety in aeronautics and establish only those regulations that are necessary so that persons may engage in aeronautics with the least possible restriction consistent with the safety and rights of others. The Division of Aeronautics is primarily involved in the siting, planning, and inspection of public-use airports in the state. Existing law requires Caltrans, in consultation with the transportation planning agencies, to prepare a California Aviation System Plan (CASP) with elements that address specified areas including planning and capital improvements. Caltrans must biennially update the 10-year capital improvement element, and update the remaining elements every five years for adoption by the California Transportation Commission.

The most recent CASP, completed in 2020, includes sections on both electric aircraft and Urban Air Mobility, which is also referenced as Advanced Air Mobility, or AAM. The report notes that aircraft manufacturers envision the use of electric aircraft to provide cost-effective intra-city, inter-city, and regional air travel in the nation's most congested areas, including Los Angeles and San Francisco. It further notes that financial and business opportunities exist, but there are significant technological, operational, and regulatory challenges including issues involving public perception and acceptance. The CASP 2020 report states that "despite the strides made by aircraft manufactures to develop viable aircraft, (AAM) challenges remain as neither the physical infrastructure (e.g., takeoff and landing infrastructure, power infrastructure, etc.) nor the regulatory and policy framework have been developed to address UAM operation in urban areas." The 2026 CASP is currently under development. In 2025, an advisory committee was established to support the 2026 CASP development, and a draft of the 2026 CASP is expected to be available for public comment in late 2026.

The enactment of SB 800 (Caballero), Chap. 416/2024, required Caltrans to establish the Advance Air Mobility and Aviation Electrification Advisory Panel to assess the feasibility and readiness of existing infrastructure, develop a three-year prioritized workplan that maps out medium-term state activities necessary to advance AAM services, and identify pathways for promoting equity of access to AAM infrastructure. AB 800 required Caltrans to submit a report to the Legislature by January 1, 2025 on the infrastructure feasibility and readiness study and the three-year prioritized workplan. In December of 2025, Caltrans released a draft report entitled *Advanced Air Mobility: Infrastructure Readiness and Three-Year Implementation Work Plan*, which includes specified action items necessary to advance AAM, and included the following conclusion:

Collaborations between agencies and industry stakeholders will be an ongoing effort to pursue AAM development and achieve the broader goals of zero emission aviation. California's existing multimodal infrastructure offers numerous opportunities to support initial AAM operations. Some of California's airport facilities may be equipped to support emerging aircraft, including conventional takeoff, short takeoff and landing, and vertical takeoff and landing. Besides mobility and accessibility benefits, AAM is expected to provide lower emissions and quieter operations compared with other current travel alternatives. It also raises equity-based considerations such as accessibility to services, environmental and socioeconomic effects on nearby communities. State and local agencies will need to consider FAA direction and guidance as they review and update relevant laws, procedures, and land use approvals to safely

implement AAM in their jurisdictions. More complex AAM operations and a broader AAM ecosystem will require collaboration among multiple state and local agencies to identify priorities, protect airspace and ground safety, navigate new site approvals, and address challenges associated with diverse funding sources for infrastructure maintenance and upgrades - including vertiport space and energy needs.

Proposed Law: AB 431, the Advanced Air Mobility Infrastructure Act, would require Caltrans to coordinate with specified entities and include AAM in the next update to the CTP and to establish a statewide working group to facilitate ongoing collaboration in the development and implementation of AAM. Specifically, this bill would:

- Define “Advanced Air Mobility” as an air transportation system primarily using electric aircraft to carry passengers, cargo, or provide services in an urban or regional setting, with a gross takeoff weight of 300 pounds or more.
- Specify that the bill only applies to electric aircraft, including aircraft with both vertical and conventional takeoff and landing capabilities, and powered-lift aircraft that satisfy either of the following criteria:
 - Have a gross weight of 300 pounds or more.
 - Can carry humans or an equivalent amount of cargo.
- Require Caltrans, in coordination with CalSTA, to include AAM in the next update to the CTP prepared after January 1, 2027.
- Require Caltrans, in coordination with CalSTA, CEC, CARB, GO-Biz, and LCI, to establish a statewide working group to facilitate ongoing collaboration among state agencies, local offices of emergency management, and industry stakeholders to explore California’s role as a leader in the development and implementation of AAM, supporting technology, and economic development, including job creation.
- Specify that the bill shall not be construed to:
 - Interfere with or suspend either: (1) the authority of the Federal Aviation Administration, or any other federal department or agency, or any other federal regulations, laws, or policies governing the operation of airports or air transportation; or (2) state zoning laws or regulation, as specified.
 - Limit or interfere with the jurisdiction, authority, rights, or responsibilities of any airport sponsor or operator with respect to the operation, maintenance, management, or capital development of any airport within the state.

Related Legislation: SB 800 (Caballero), Chap. 416/2023, required Caltrans to establish an Advanced Air Mobility, Zero-Emission, and Electrification Aviation Advisory Panel to assess the feasibility and readiness of existing infrastructure, the development of a 3-year prioritized workplan, and pathways for promoting equity of access to AAM infrastructure. The bill required Caltrans to submit a report to the Legislature regarding these issues by January 1, 2025.

Staff Comments: This bill would implement several of the action items and recommendations from the draft SB 800 report’s three-year implementation work plan. Specifically, the report recommended that Caltrans and CalSTA integrate AAM into a future CTP update, and that Caltrans, CalSTA, LCI, Go-Biz, CARB, and the CEC establish a statewide AAM forum for broad collaboration among state agencies, OEMs, industry stakeholders, and others to pursue the state’s ongoing efforts toward zero-

emission aviation, including AAM. The forum could work together to explore California's role as a leader in the development and implementation of AAM, supporting technology, and economic development, including job creation. In addition to creating a specific forum, the report recommends that CalSTA and Caltrans should promote participation in existing interagency efforts, such as the AAM Working Group, Multi-state Collaborative, the American Association of Airport Executives Operations Safety, Planning, and Emergency Management Committee, and other multi-agency efforts.

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