

SENATE THIRD READING

SB 569 (Blakespear)

As Amended June 24, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Prohibits a local or regional agency from reverting a bikeway it constructs using moneys from the state General Fund to a nonactive transportation use or modifying it in manner that reduces the safety, accessibility, or mobility of nonmotorized users, to 20 years or its useful life, whichever is less.

Major Provisions

- 1) Defines active transportation as a use that encourages increased use of active transportation, such as walking and biking.
- 2) Prohibits a city, county, regional, or other local agency using moneys from the state General Fund, in whole or part, to construct a bikeway from reverting the bikeway to a non-active transportation use or modifying it in a manner that reduces the safety, accessibility, or mobility of nonmotorized users for a minimum of 20 years from the date of the allocation or its actual useful life, whichever is less.
- 3) Requires any modification to a bikeway to be consistent with an active transportation use and subjects it to both of the following:
 - a) A duly noticed public meeting to discuss an intent to modify a bikeway and;
 - b) A duly noticed public hearing where the final design of a modification is considered by a city, county, regional or other local agency.

COMMENTS

State funding for bike projects. The Active Transportation Program was created by SB 99 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 359, Statutes of 2013 to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation, such as walking and biking. The goals of the ATP include, but are not limited to, increasing the proportion of trips accomplished by walking and biking, increasing the safety and mobility of non-motorized users, and enhancing public health. SB 1, Chapter 5, Statutes of 2017, also known as the Road Repair and Accountability Act, directs \$100 million annually from the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account to the ATP, significantly augmenting the available funding for this popular program.

As of 2025, state programs like the ATP and other highway programs the California Department of Caltrans administers have funded as of 2025, over 2,800 miles of bikeways (approved, constructed or ready for construction) since as early as 2014. In addition to funding that flows through Caltrans, the state General Fund has also provided small allocations for specific projects. Cities and other local governments also invest their own funds in bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

Demand for non-vehicle alternatives continues to exceed available funding. As a result, ATP has been chronically over-subscribed. Program funding has fluctuated significantly but on average

available funding ranges from \$500-600 million a year from state and federal sources. According to the CTC, in its 7th and most recent cycle (2025), one of the most competitive since inception, it received 277 project applications from local, regional and tribal governments requesting \$2.5 billion in funding, about 15 times available funding, which was significantly lower than average.

Growing pains as bike infrastructure is more widely developed. As local governments have built more comprehensive bikeways, some have experienced challenges balancing competing demands for limited road space. Desktop models or studies during the design phase of bike projects may not reliably capture potential user conflicts or vehicle congestion as a result of road narrowing, converting lanes, or removing vehicle parking to accommodate bikeways. As a result, community opposition to new bike and pedestrian infrastructure can motivate local leaders to respond accordingly and in limited circumstances, this has resulted in the removal or downgrading (e.g., converting a separated bikeway to a shared or striped one) of a bikeway.

The author of this bill provided four examples to the committee where cities have downgraded bikeways (Vista, Culver City) or are considering downgrading them (Encinitas, San Mateo). For example, due to concerns that road narrowing and angled parking increased safety risks and vehicle congestion, including the inability of first responders to expeditiously travel along a corridor, the City of Encinitas recently approved designs that reduce the separation of a bikeway, reverting it from a Class IV to a Class II bikeway. The Vista City Council voted to remove recently installed berms separating bikeways from certain roadways citing safety risks to vehicles and bicyclists though the decision was disputed and not unanimous. Culver City converted a separated bikeway to a shared bike/bus lane. However, the City of San Mateo is no longer considering relocating or replacing a bikeway to restore parking spaces.

These examples, a small subset in the context of several thousand miles of bikeways approved or constructed in the past decade, highlight the challenges associated with developing bike infrastructure on existing roadways and the actual or perceived creation of unintended safety risks or conflicts between vehicles and cyclists. Changes to roadways may be met with opposition as local governments pursue alternatives to vehicles and consider mechanisms to increase the safety of nonmotorized alternatives. However, the growing pains some communities are experiencing may not persist as they learn how to develop active transportation infrastructure that balances competing roadway uses. Moreover, it takes time for users of the new facilities to adapt to new infrastructure.

Rules of the bikeway. Modeled after ATP requirements, this bill prohibits a local government, on a going forward basis, from converting a bikeway to a non-active transportation use for the lesser of 20 years or the useful life of a bikeway should they accept state General Fund monies to develop a bikeway.

This bill also prohibits the modification of a bikeway if it reduces the safety, accessibility, and mobility of nonmotorized users. This conditional prohibition is intended to accommodate changed circumstances or the ever-evolving nature of roadways that may need to be re-designed to adapt to things such as utility re-locations, emergency access, construction or intersection upgrades, and safety issues. In these circumstances, a modification must be consistent with an active transportation use and provide the same or similar level of safety, accessibility and mobility of nonmotorized users. For example, converting a protected bikeway or a portion of the bikeway to a less protected one could be offset with greater protection for bicyclists in other areas of the same bikeway corridor.

This bill requires a local government to consider a modification at a public hearing to maximize transparency. First, a local government must hold a public meeting to initially disclose its intent to modify a bikeway, inform the public of the need and justification for the modification, and invite public input. Adoption of the modification's final design must occur at a duly noticed public hearing.

According to the Author

"Protected bikeways physically separate cyclists from motor vehicle traffic, improving safety and increasing ridership. California law requires engineering assessments when local agencies build bikeways, but imposes no equivalent standard before one is removed or downgraded. Recent local decisions to remove bike infrastructure have raised serious safety concerns and in one case forced a city to repay \$435,000 in transportation funding."

Arguments in Support

California Bicycle Coalition states, "California communities are investing significant public dollars, staff time, and political will into safer streets. These investments help people bike, walk, and roll with more confidence, and they are especially important in communities where safe, affordable, and sustainable transportation choices have too often been delayed or underfunded. When state general funds are used to build a bikeway, the public should have confidence that the project will not be hastily reverted to a non-active transportation use or weakened in a way that reduces safety, accessibility, or mobility for nonmotorized users."

Arguments in Opposition

California Association of Bicycling Organizations states that, "The bill also prohibits an existing bikeway from being reverted to a nonactive transportation use or modified in a way that reduces safety, accessibility, or mobility. Because these are independent criteria, even minor changes—such as rerouting a Class III bike route to nearby streets—could trigger the bill despite no net loss of bicycle access. The requirement to determine whether a change reduces safety, accessibility, or mobility raises additional concerns. These judgments are often subjective and depend on professional engineering and planning expertise, yet the bill provides no clear standards or decision-maker. It is also unclear why bikeways should be uniquely locked in place for twenty years despite changing conditions and transportation needs."

FISCAL COMMENTS

Unknown.

VOTES

SENATE FLOOR: 38-0-2

YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNERney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ABS, ABST OR NV: Reyes, Wahab

ASM TRANSPORTATION: 13-2-1

YES: Wilson, Davies, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Carrillo, Harabedian, Hart, Jackson, Papan, Ransom, Rogers, Sharp-Collins, Ward

NO: Hoover, Macedo

ABS, ABST OR NV: Lackey

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