

Date: June 28, 2022

Subject: California Transportation Assessment (AB 285): Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Update

Reporting Period: February 2022 – June 2022

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Summary

The California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) was directed by the Legislature to assess transportation planning and funding in California pursuant to AB 285 (Friedman, Chapter 605, Statutes of 2019). SGC contracted with University of California Institute of Transportation Studies (UC ITS) to draft a report that was delivered to the Legislature in February 2022. Since that time, Staff have met with and heard from hundreds of stakeholders across California about the report's findings and recommendations. In summer 2022, Staff will release a final report summarizing what we heard during the outreach process. That summary report will close out SGC's work on AB 285. The summary report will highlight eight topic areas and potential actions that were raised by stakeholders during the outreach process (and described below).

Background

California has adopted ambitious goals to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and meeting these commitments requires reductions in per capita vehicles miles traveled (VMT) as well as cleaner fuels and vehicles. Actions taken to reduce GHG and VMT must also support other State priorities, including those outlined in California Transportation Plan: safety, climate, equity, accessibility, quality of life and public health, economy, environment, and infrastructure.

Despite the establishment of specific commitments and targets in state and regional plans, California and its regions are not on track to meet their climate targets. Additionally, historically disadvantaged communities, including low-income communities and communities of color, face significant transportation burdens and have insufficient access to reliable and affordable transportation options. The combination of State and regional transportation planning and funding decisions results in a transportation system that does not meet everyone's needs. The AB 285 process has explored the gap between the visions put forth in State and regional plans and the specific program and project funding. AB 285 has been an opportunity to take a deep dive into the structure of transportation decision-making across multiple levels of government and identify opportunities to realize an integrated multimodal transportation system that meets priority goals and better serves the needs of the residents of California.

Mandate

The State Legislature directed the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) to produce an assessment of the transportation planning and funding activities at the state and regional levels while exploring options for improved alignment of funding programs to better meet long-term common goals, including reductions in GHG and VMT.

AB 285 (Friedman, Chapter 605, Statutes of 2019) requires that SGC publish a report that includes:

- An overview of the California Transportation Plan (CTP) and all regional Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCSs)
- An assessment of how CTP and regional plan implementation will affect the statewide integrated multimodal transportation system
- A review of the potential impacts and opportunities for coordination of key state funding programs including recommendations for improvement to better align with long-term common goals, including the goals outlined in the CTP

Process

To meet the legislative mandate, Strategic Growth Council hired a team of researchers at the University of California Institute of Transportation Studies (UC ITS) to produce five working papers assessing which aspects of our transportation planning and funding systems move us towards and away from achieving our shared goals. The five papers focused on institutional structure, State plans, regional plans, funding programs, and legal issues. SGC coordinated across key State agencies and engaged with external stakeholders throughout the process.

SGC delivered a report to the State Legislature in early 2022.

In the February 2022 SGC Council Meeting, SGC received direction from The Council to continue the stakeholder engagement process. While separate from the Legislative Mandate, SGC convened numerous governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to reflect on the key findings of the final report.

Stakeholder Engagement Summary

During the Spring of 2022, SGC staff led an outreach and engagement process that included public workshops, individual meetings, presentations and discussions with external organizations, an online survey, comment letters and public comments, and a series of focus groups. That process included feedback from hundreds of stakeholders representing a diverse range of perspectives and regions throughout California.

Focus Groups and Works Group

SGC hosted numerous working sessions and were invited to present to a variety of organizations on AB 285. These included the following:

- [SPUR Public Forum](#)
- Special meeting of the San Joaquin Valley Policy Council
- State / MPO Work Group
- State Interagency Work Groups (Housing & Transportation)
- Special meeting of the State's Regional Transportation Planning Authorities (RTPA)
- California Transit Association (CTA) Executive Committee
- Climate Action Campaign

- A series of seven focus groups with government, NGO, and private sector stakeholders

Public webinar

SGC hosted a public webinar on AB 285 in April 2022. 112 people registered to attend the meeting.

Public Survey

The AB 285 stakeholder engagement process included a widely distributed public survey. From the sixty-five survey responses, we received thirty-eight private individual responses, 9 responses from advocacy/non-profit organizations, fifteen responses from government, and 1 other response. Additionally, twenty-eight respondents were from cities/towns, 5 from counties, and 5 from the city/county-San Francisco.

The cities and town represented included Atascadero, Berkeley, Buena Park, Burbank, El Cerrito, Fresno, Huntington Beach, Los Angeles, Mountain View, Oakland, Oxnard, Redding, Rohnert Park, Sacramento, San Mateo, Santa Rosa, and Ventura.

Public Comment Letters

SGC solicited any feedback or comments from the public following the release of the California Transportation Assessment. We received 8 comment letters sharing insights on the report, as well as recommendations for consideration. The public comment letters are available upon request. The comment letters came from the following organizations:

- California Association of Council of Governments,
- California Transit Association,
- Madera County Transportation Commission,
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission,
- Riverside Transportation Commission,
- Sacramento Area Council of Governments,
- Southern California Association of Governments,
- Tulare County Association of Governments, and
- A coalition letter from a variety of advocacy groups including Climate Resolve; Safe Routes Partnership California; California Bicycle Coalition; Climate Action Campaign; SPUR; ClimatePlan; California Walks; Coalition for Clean Air; TransForm; Center for Climate Change & Health; Seamless Bay Area; and 350 BayArea Action.

Public State Agency Meetings

SGC presented updates on AB 285 in five public meetings.

- Two [Joint Meetings of the California Air Resources Board, California Transportation Commission, and California Department of Housing and Community Development](#) in November 2021 and April 2022.
- Three [SGC Council Meetings](#) on November 2021, February 2022, and June 2022



Discussion Questions

1. What are your reactions to and takeaways from the material presented here?
2. Are there any particular actions raised by stakeholders that your agency is already working on or implementing?
3. Which of the issues and potential actions raised by stakeholders align with your agency's priorities?

