



STAFF REPORT
Board Meeting of May 19, 2021

AGENDA ITEM: 5-B

PREPARED BY: Dylan Stone, Principal Regional Planner

SUBJECT:

CalSTA DRAFT Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure – Comment Letter

Enclosure: Yes

Action: Authorize submission of comment letter to CalSTA

SUMMARY:

MCTC has reviewed the California State Transportation Agency’s (CalSTA) development of a Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI). The document will be open for comment until May 19, 2021. MCTC staff has written a comment letter on the DRAFT CAPTI to be submitted to CalSTA staff. The document can be viewed at the following web address: <https://calsta.ca.gov/subject-areas/climate-action-plan>

The CAPTI is a result of Governor Newsom’s Executive Orders on Climate Change (EO N-19-19 and EO N-79-20). The plan seeks to update the existing transportation investment framework using the principal foundations of these two executive orders as guides.

Executive Order N-79-20 directs investment towards new clean transportation options in urban, suburban, and rural settings for all Californians as well as for goods movement by:

- **Building towards an integrated, statewide rail and transit network**, centered around the existing California State Rail Plan that leverages the California Integrated Travel Program to provide seamless, affordable, multimodal travel options in all contexts, including suburban and rural settings, to all users.
- **Investing in networks of safe and accessible bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure**, particularly by closing gaps on portions of the State Highway System that intersect local active transportation and transit networks or serve as small town or rural main streets, with a focus on investments in low income and disadvantaged communities across the state.
- **Including investments in light, medium, and heavy-duty zero-emission-vehicle (ZEV) infrastructure** or supportive infrastructure as part of larger transportation projects. Support the innovation in and development of the ZEV market and help ensure ZEVs are accessible to all, particularly to those in more rural or remote communities.

Executive Order N-19-19 directs investment towards further adoption and use of these clean modes of transportation mentioned above by:

- **Reducing public health harms and maximizing benefits to disproportionately impacted disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and communities of color**, in urbanized and rural regions, and involve these communities early in decision-making. Investments should also avoid placing new or exacerbating existing substantial burdens on communities, even if unintentional.
- **Making safety improvements to reduce fatalities and severe injuries of all users towards zero** on our roadways and transit systems by focusing on context-appropriate speeds, prioritizing vulnerable user safety to support mode shift, designing roadways to accommodate for potential human error and injury tolerances, and ultimately implementing a safe systems approach.
- **Assessing physical climate risk** as standard practice for transportation infrastructure projects to enable informed decision making, especially in communities that are most vulnerable to climate risks.
- **Promoting projects that do not increase passenger vehicle travel**, particularly in congested urbanized settings where other mobility options can be provided and where projects are shown to induce significant auto travel. These projects should generally aim to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and not induce significant VMT growth. When addressing congestion, consider alternatives to highway capacity expansion, such as providing multimodal options in the corridor, employing pricing strategies, and using technology to optimize operations.
- **Promoting compact infill development while protecting residents and businesses from displacement** by supporting transportation projects that support housing for low-income residents near job centers, provide walkable communities, and address affordability to reduce the housing-transportation cost burden and reduce auto trips.
- **Developing a zero-emission freight transportation system** that avoids and mitigates environmental justice impacts, reduces criteria and toxic air pollutants, improves freight's economic competitiveness and efficiency, and integrates multi-modal design and planning into infrastructure development on freight corridors.
- **Protecting natural and working lands** from conversion to more intensified uses and enhance biodiversity by supporting local and regional conservation planning that focuses development where it already exists and align transportation investments with conservation priorities to reduce transportation's impact on the natural environment.

California State Agencies play a role in either scoping, recommending, or selecting projects in over \$5 billion of transportation infrastructure annually. The CAPTI seeks to update these program guidelines to strengthen their alignment with state climate goals. The following programs are key amongst these:

- Active Transportation Program (ATP)
- Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP)

- Local Partnership Program (LPP)
- Solutions for Congested Corridors (SCCP)
- State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP)
- Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP)
- Transit and Intercity Rail Capitol Program (TIRCP)

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact to the approved 2020-21 Overall Work Program and Budget.