



**STAFF REPORT**  
Board Meeting of March 23, 2022

**AGENDA ITEM:** 5-B

**PREPARED BY:** Patricia Taylor, Executive Director

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**SUBJECT:**

AB 285 Report – California Transportation Assessment

**Enclosure:** Yes

**Action:** Direct staff to prepare a comment letter addressed to the California Strategic Growth Council on the California Transportation Assessment (AB 285 Report) and encourage the local jurisdictions to submit a comment letter

**SUMMARY:**

The California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) has published the California Transportation Assessment (AB 285 Report) assessing how transportation planning and funding in California support long-term common goals, including building and maintaining a transportation system that advances the state's climate goals and meets the transportation needs of all Californians. The AB 285 report, written by academic researchers from the University of California Institute of Transportation Studies, analyzes state and regional transportation plans and institutions, funding allocations to various state, regional, and local transportation programs and funding sources, and the legal frameworks that govern how transportation funds are spent in California. In addition, the report identifies initial actions all levels of government and legislators can take to improve quality, sustainability, and equity of transportation in California. The report is available on the [SGC website](#).

Beginning in March 2022, the SGC will conduct stakeholder engagement to share findings and further develop policy recommendations and implementation actions. All stakeholder feedback and recommendations received through the engagement process will be submitted to the Legislature as a final summary.

**Ways to Get Involved:**

- **Public Webinar:** Join the California Strategic Growth Council on Wednesday, April 20th at 5:30 pm for a public workshop on the California Transportation Assessment findings and policy recommendations. [Register in advance](#).
- **Provide Feedback:** Members of the public are invited to submit their feedback by emailing [transportation@sgc.ca.gov](mailto:transportation@sgc.ca.gov).

- **Submit Questions via Email:** Those with questions or feedback regarding the California Transportation Assessment may also contact Egon Terplan, Senior Advisor for Economic Development and Transportation at [Egon.Terplan@sgc.ca.gov](mailto:Egon.Terplan@sgc.ca.gov).

Included in the package are the following documents:

1. California Transportation Assessment Report, pursuant to AB 285, February 18, 2022
2. Strategic Growth Council Staff Report on California Transportation Assessment (AB 285) Staff Report
3. Strategic Growth Council Presentation, pursuant to AB 285
4. State/MPO Working Group, February 18, 2022, Meeting Minutes

### **Staff Analysis and Concerns:**

#### Background:

In 2019, the California Legislature passed AB 285. AB 285 required the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) to submit a report to the legislature that focused on the California Transportation Plan (CTP 2050) as it relates to regional transportation plans (RTPs) and key state funding programs. Keep in mind, the CTP and the RTP/SCS are two very different plans. The CTP is visionary (not financially constrained), and the RTP/SCS is fiscally constrained (focused). Therefore, you are not comparing apples to apples.

At the end of February 2022, the SGC delivered the final AB 285 Report to the legislature (due date was January 31<sup>st</sup>). The report included findings and recommendations from both the SGC and their contracted UC research team, the University of California Institute of Transportation Studies. SGC is now beginning stakeholder engagement on the report findings and issue areas (as noted above). Although there is no official comment period or process schedule, SGC is accepting comments on the report and hopes to complete stakeholder engagement over the next couple of months (publishing the engagement summary in May). However, this report is already influencing conversation within the legislature (AB 2438 and AB 2237).

You can access the various reports here: [UC AB 285 Report and White Papers](#). Unfortunately, the reports include some inaccuracies. SGC is taking this information and focusing on the need to change outcomes in transportation. Here are a few concerning areas of focus:

1. Align existing funding programs with State goals: the report notes there is a gap between the vision for a more climate friendly and equitable transportation system and actions and infrastructure spending decisions. Their analysis concludes that funding still supports capacity highway projects and others that increase vehicle travel. *They propose that ALL transportation funding should align with state goals (CAPTI).*
2. Updating and better aligning among existing State and regional plans. CTP is not constrained and RTPs are constrained. CTPs address climate and RTPs can do a better job. *MPOs are not doing enough. Carrot and the stick.*

3. Re-evaluating project and program funding and reviewing the current transportation project pipeline. The report recommends re-evaluating projects that have been in the pipeline for some time and since times have changed, those projects should be redirected. *Therefore, they recommend shifting projects already in the pipeline to better align with current state priorities.*
4. Assessing the roles of State transportation institutions. Too many agencies...too complex---*recommending taking a closer look at the decision-making process and the institutions involved.*
5. Assessing MPO and local government roles and responsibilities. The report mentions that MPOs that have been given key responsibilities for meeting climate and equity goals do not necessarily have the appropriate levers to fulfill those responsibilities. *The report states that MPOs do not have land use authority...how should that be addressed?*

The above are 5 focus areas. There are many more that will be released with an additional report (not sure when). There will be a public workshop on AB 285 on Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 pm-7:30 pm.

**Link to April 20<sup>th</sup> Workshop and Additional Information:** [SGC AB 285 Workshop Link](#)

**Press Release on AB 285 Report:** [SGC AB 285 Report Press Release Link](#)

**Article:** This article is a bit concerning because it provides links at the beginning of the article to the various SB 1 programs that are administered by CTC. CTC is currently updating its guidelines on the various grant programs, mainly to align with CAPTI.

[NRDC Article Link](#)

**Here is another Article:** [Streetsblog Article Link](#)

The two Assemblymember Laura Friedman bills are [AB 2438](#) and [AB 2237](#).

**AB 2237 (Friedman):** This is the same bill that was introduced last year – AB 1147. Language in this bill addresses AB 285 Report (including requiring a fiscal analysis) but would also require local agencies to report to MPOs about how the SCS was implemented in each community.

**AB 2438 (Friedman):** This bill was developed from the AB 285 Report. The bill states, “**ALL** transportation projects funded at the local or state level shall align with the California Transportation Plan and the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI) by the Transportation Agency”.

MCTC staff will continue to monitor and report back any important information.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

No fiscal impact to the approved 2021-22 Overall Work Program and Budget.

