

California Transportation Assessment



The California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) will assess transportation planning and funding in California pursuant to [AB 285 \(Friedman, Chapter 605, Statutes of 2019\)](#) and deliver its findings to the Legislature in 2022

The primary purpose of transportation is to improve access to jobs, health care, education, entertainment, and other services. As Californians, we also envision a transportation system that advances racial and economic justice, improves public and environmental health, and strengthens communities, while also being safe, resilient, and universally accessible.¹ We expect our transportation investments to help meet long-term goals, including supporting reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and vehicle miles traveled (VMT).²

This broad vision of transportation is critical, both to mend historic and ongoing harms to communities caused by transportation decisions³ as well as to reduce climate impacts resulting from transportation emissions. Yet, despite the dedicated work and advocacy of many, and the billions of dollars spent annually on operations, maintenance, and expansion, California's transportation system does not yet live up to this equitable and sustainable vision.

The State Legislature has 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.

BACKGROUND

California has adopted ambitious goals to reduce GHG emissions,⁴ and meeting these commitments requires reductions in per capita VMT as well as cleaner fuels and vehicles.⁵ Actions taken to reduce GHG and VMT must also support other State priorities, including those outlined in the 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.⁶ 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 spending decisions result in a transportation system that fails to meet everyone's needs. This report will explore the gaps and alignments between the visions put forth in State and regional plans and the transportation projects that we collectively build, maintain, and operate.

1 [California Transportation Plan 2050](#)

2 For State planning priorities, see [Government Code Section 65041.1](#)

3 [CTC Racial Equity Statement](#)

4 [SB 32 \(Pavley, Chapter 249, Statutes of 2016\)](#)

5 [California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan](#)

6 [2018 Progress Report: California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act](#)

LEGISLATIVE MANDATE: WHY IS SGC CONDUCTING THIS ASSESSMENT?

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

HOW WILL SGC CONDUCT THIS ASSESSMENT?

A team of researchers from the UC Institute of Transportation Studies (UC ITS) is producing 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 will focus on institutional structure, State plans, regional plans, funding programs, and legal issues. SGC will share draft findings in Fall 2021 and deliver a report to the State Legislature in early 2022. SGC will coordinate across key State agencies and engage with external stakeholders throughout the process.

HOW DOES THIS REPORT RELATE TO OTHER AGENCY EFFORTS?

SGC will leverage concurrent initiatives across the state in the production of this transportation assessment.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE (CAPTI)

CAPTI is a policy document intended to shape specific spending decisions regarding State transportation funds. The AB 285 report will provide a broader assessment of the overall transportation planning and funding landscape in California.

CALIFORNIA SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND CLIMATE PROTECTION ACT PROGRESS REPORT (SB 150 REPORT)

The AB 285 report will differ from the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) SB 150 report in that it will focus primarily on transportation planning and funding decisions and will not focus on related issues such as the role of local and regional land use decisions in shaping growth patterns and overall travel demand.

CONTACT

Egon Terplan

Egon.Terplan@sgc.ca.gov

Senior Advisor for Economic Development & Transportation