



Complete Streets for Active Living Author: Senator Scott Weiner

BACKGROUND

Caltrans owns and maintains 50,000 lane-miles of the state highway system through the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), which is funded with \$2.4B annually. Caltrans adopted Deputy Directive 64 in 2008 and updated it in 2014 to require the Department to consider complete streets in all phases of design, delivery, construction, and rehabilitation on all projects. Caltrans adopted a Strategic Management Plan 2015-2020 that includes goals to triple bicycling and double walking by 2020. The Caltrans Strategic Management Plan 2015-2020 also includes goals to include complete streets improvements on an increasing number of projects between the years 2015-2020. Despite these policies, Caltrans does not prioritize complete streets. This bill aims to allocate sufficient funding to implement and achieve the goals of the Plan, and include performance measures and reporting requirements related to complete streets for Caltrans. Such a policy will incentivize Caltrans to create complete pedestrian and bikeway networks throughout California and prioritize complete streets so that our roads are accessible and safe for all users.

ISSUE

Many surface streets in cities, towns and suburbs that carry local traffic, (such as Van Ness, Lombard, and 19th Ave in San Francisco) also operate as state highways. Because they are meant to carry traffic quickly through cities, they do not always include sidewalks or bicycle facilities that make it safe to walk and bike along them. At the same time, walking and bicycling trips have doubled between 2000-2012 and constitute nearly 20 percent of all trips in California based on the National Household Travel Survey. A Smart Growth America study found that California as a state ranks at number 17 for pedestrian risk, with 6,616 pedestrian deaths between 2005 and 2014.¹ The report states there has been an increased risk for California pedestrians in the last two years.

Caltrans still prioritizes throughput of car and truck traffic above all other users, such as people on foot attempting to cross the street to access homes and businesses, people bicycling in the corridor, or people riding the bus. Creating complete streets is rarely if ever considered and not prioritized on major rehabilitation and maintenance projects on these roads even though repaving and repairing them is the ideal, most cost-effective time to make complete streets upgrades. Such efforts will ensure that our roads are safer for everyone, including children needing safe routes to school, the elderly and the disabled. Additionally, by creating complete streets, pedestrians and bicyclists are encouraged to lead more active lives by walking and biking in safe passageways. Caltrans should prioritize accessibility and efficiency improvements to move people (not cars).

¹ Smart Growth America, *Dangerous By Design 2016*. <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/dangerous-by-design-2016/>

BILL SUMMARY

This bill:

1. Changes the order of priorities on the use of State Highway Account funds, the primary source of funds that flow to the SHOPP by prioritizing accessibility improvements for all users of the transportation system to reduce vehicle miles traveled and promote public health. This replaces operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of the state highway as number one priority for Caltrans.
2. Requires that Caltrans explicitly include complete streets improvements in the Asset Management Plan process currently underway, to be completed by 2020, which sets out a new process for managing SHOPP projects, with performance measures and reporting requirements.
3. Adds language to the Government Code defining a process for how complete streets should be incorporated into SHOPP projects through robust engagement with communities and local governments, and provides an opt-out clause where necessary. Caltrans must incorporate this process by Jan. 1 2020.
4. Submits that Until January 1, 2020, or by a time when Caltrans can demonstrate that it is adhering to the new complete streets guidelines, 3% of SHOPP funds from the Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account shall be used only for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
5. Establishes a Division of Active Transportation within Caltrans to be responsible for adherence to complete streets performance measures.
6. Provides guidance to the Highway Design Manual for choosing appropriate bikeway facilities on roadways of particular size and speed.

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