



For Immediate Release  
June 22, 2017

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## **After State Gas Tax Increased to Repair Roads, Poll Shows California Voters Want Safer Streets for All and Alternatives to Driving**

**Sacramento, CA** – A new statewide poll reveals that 8 in 10 California voters believe state and local transportation departments need to change the way they build streets and roads to make it safe for everyone of all ages and abilities to get around, whether they usually drive, walk, bike, or use public transportation.

Commissioned by the California Bicycle Coalition, this poll found that Californians across the state and across all major political and demographic groups support building “complete streets”—roads with safe sidewalks, visible crosswalks, and protected bike lanes—that are safe places for everyone and not strictly thoroughfares for driving. The poll was conducted by David Binder Research and funded in part by a grant from Voices for Healthy Kids, an initiative of the American Heart Association and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation working to make each day healthier for all children by ensuring that the places where children live, learn, and play make it easy and enjoyable for them to eat healthy foods and be active.

Likely voters were surveyed on the heels of the passage of Senate Bill 1, the first gas tax increase in California in twenty years, which will invest tens of billions in taxpayer dollars over the next decade in building and repairing roads. Caltrans and local city and county transportation departments will decide over the coming months which roads to fix first with the new gas tax revenue, and whether they will fix those roads to be complete streets that are safe for youth and families, older adults, and others that either can't afford to drive or choose to walk and bike.

**The survey revealed that public opinion strongly supports state and local transportation departments building complete streets, even accounting for the potential cost to taxpayers.**

“Our survey shows that California families want to be able to safely walk and bike in their neighborhoods and strongly support transportation agencies redesigning our streets. Nearly two-thirds of people said they would bike more often, highest among younger voters and Latinos, if they had protected bike lanes on streets in their neighborhoods that made them feel less threatened by traffic,” said **Jeanie Ward-Waller, Policy Director for the California Bicycle Coalition**. “Transportation officials are decades behind acknowledging this shifting demand and investing taxpayer dollars as much in alternatives to driving as we have invested in making it easier to drive.”

Voters decisively support building complete streets because they improve the quality-of-life in our neighborhoods by:

- Providing safer routes for children to walk or bike to school or parks;
- Increasing local business sales and jobs by creating more attractive streets to walk and bike for shopping;
- Promoting healthy neighborhoods that enable youth and families to be more active in their daily lives and reduce their health care costs;
- Reducing traffic in neighborhoods by allowing people to walk and bike more for work, shopping, and entertainment; and
- Saving low- and moderate-income families money by providing them more affordable transportation options like walking and biking.

**In addition, nearly half of California voters support investment in alternatives to driving—such as public transportation, walking, and bicycling—as an equal or higher priority than improving freeways and roads.**

48 percent say they are *equally or more* supportive of investing in alternatives to driving than they are of investing in freeways; compared to 49 percent that support improving and widening roads and freeways over alternatives to driving. In fact, even for Californians who rely on driving as their primary mode of travel, more than 2 in 5 support investing as much or more transportation funding in alternatives to driving, and the support jumps to 3 in 5 among respondents that have to commute between 20-30 miles a day.

“It’s no surprise to us that a large majority of Californians—80 percent in all—believe that complete streets are a critical part of creating safe routes for children to walk or bike to school and parks,” said **Marty Martinez, Northern California Policy Manager for the Safe Routes to School National Partnership**. “The research shows that when more kids are able to walk and bike to school and in daily life, they are healthier and do better in school. Now it’s time to put our transportation dollars to work to create safe, healthy communities to benefit all Californians.”

“The billions of dollars our state already spends each year on highways cannot continue to be used to divide communities and ignore our residents who are walking and bicycling for their everyday needs. A strong complete streets policy is a smart, cost-effective approach for leveraging our state’s transportation dollars to ensure that Californians can safely walk and bicycle where they need to go,” said **Tony Dang, Executive Director of California Walks**.

“As a neurologist, I often encourage moderate exercise to my patients after a stroke to prevent a recurrent stroke.” said **Dr. Alan Shatzel, Board President at the American Heart Association, Sacramento Division**. “However, they also need spaces to have the ability to go out for walks and to feel safe while doing so. This poll underscores the need to invest more in complete streets to promote physical activity and foster a healthy lifestyle.”

*The California Bicycle Coalition (CalBike) is California’s state-level bicycle advocacy organization, working to enable more people to ride bicycles for healthier, safer, and more prosperous communities for all. Learn more about CalBike at [www.calbike.org](http://www.calbike.org).*

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## Key findings:

- A large majority of California voters support complete streets. 78 percent believe that state and local transportation departments need to change the way they build streets and roads – to make it safe for all users (drivers, people who walk, people who bicycle, etc.). A majority (53%) say they *strongly* support, and there is consistent support across major subgroups.
- Voters support building complete streets for several reasons: to provide safer streets for children to walk and bike, and to stimulate local business sales and job creation along streets that are attractive for walking and biking.
- Nearly half of respondents support investment in alternatives to driving--public transportation, walking, and bicycling--as an equal or higher priority to improving freeways and roads - 48 percent are *equally or more* supportive of investing in alternatives to driving such as public transportation and making it easier to walk and bike as they are of investing in improving freeways; compared to 49 percent that support improving and widening roads and freeways over alternatives to driving.
- Even people who rely on driving as their primary mode of travel support investing as much or more transportation funding in alternatives to driving, especially respondents that have to commute between 20-30 miles a day - Support for alternatives to driving as an equal or greater priority for investment to roads and freeways is only slightly lower (43%) among the 76 percent of voters that use their car as a primary method of travel, and jumps up to 61% for people who have to commute 20-30 miles per day.
- Voters want better bicycling conditions. Two-thirds of voters (67%) agree that “their city government should do more to encourage bicycling.”
- Bicycling is commonplace in California. One in five men (20%) and 13% of women bike every week, and a majority have ridden a bike in the past year.



## Executive Summary: Complete Streets

### Survey: 600 Likely Voters (Margin of Error: ±4.0)

### Conducted: May 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## Summary

There is very strong voter support for a Complete Streets policy that would change the way the state and local transportation departments build streets and roads. Voters strongly support a policy that gives children safer routes to walk or bike, leads to more sales and jobs at small neighborhood businesses through safe and attractive streets, saves moderate and low-income residents money by providing affordable transportation options, improves public health, and makes biking and walking safer for people of all ages.

And, perhaps surprising many policy-makers in the state, Californians are relatively divided on whether to prioritize transportation dollars for alternatives to driving or to improve and widen freeways and roads.

## Voters Support Complete Streets Policy

A strong 78% of voters support the Complete Streets policy on the initial ask, with a *majority* saying they **strongly support** the policy.

Only 16% of voters are in opposition, with the remaining 6% unsure.

Complete Streets is a policy that would change the way that state and local transportation departments build streets and roads. Instead of designing just for cars and trucks, they would design and build streets that are safe for all users – which would mean more sidewalks, better crosswalks, and protected bike lanes.

Voters across the political spectrum support this policy: 88% of Democrats, 63% of Republicans and 78% of Independents.

Voters were then provided a series of factual details of the bill, and arguments both in support and in opposition. The arguments in opposition were less convincing than the arguments in support. Specifically, the following statements about the Complete Streets policy stood out as being very convincing to wide swaths of voters:

- ✓ The Complete Streets policy will help give children safer routes to walk or bike to school and to parks.
- ✓ The Complete Streets policy will lead to more jobs at small local neighborhood businesses. Studies show that when streets are attractive and safe for biking and walking, local businesses have more sales.
- ✓ The Complete Streets policy will help moderate and low-income residents save money by giving them more affordable transportation options.
- ✓ The Complete Streets policy will help improve public health because more people will walk and bike. This will reduce health care costs associated with chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes.
- ✓ The Complete Streets policy will make biking and walking safer and more appealing to people of all ages, resulting in many fewer trips by automobile for work, shopping and entertainment. This will mean less traffic on the roads for everyone.



## Voters Support Alternatives to Driving

California voters equally prefer alternatives to driving such as public transportation and making it easier to bike and walk to places (48%) with those who say the priority for transportation dollars should only go to improving and widening roads and freeways (49%). Voters typically respond positively to the use of the word “improve”, and this is reflected in the question, yet nearly as many voters still choose to prioritize alternatives to driving.

Most Californian voters still report relying on driving as their primary mode of travel, but among this group 43% prioritize alternatives to driving. And nearly half (47%) of those who commute more than 20 miles a day place a priority on alternatives to driving.

## Methodology

The surveys were conducted among registered voters in California by land line and cell phone, with 41% of interviews completed by cell phone. Voters were pre-selected to have voted in November 2016, voted in November 2012 and November 2014, or have registered since November 2016.

**FINAL RESULTS: California Likely Voter Survey**

**Sample Size:** 600

**Margin of Error:** ±4.0%

**Interview Dates:** May 15-18, 2017

**Select:** Registered voters in California who voted in November 2016 or registered since November 2016, or who voted in 11/12 and 11/14.



David Binder Research

**SECTION 1. SCREENING**

1. First, have I reached you today on a cell phone or a landline?

CELL PHONE	41
LAND LINE	59

**IF CELL PHONE:**

2. Are you in a safe place where you can take a survey over your cell phone?

YES	100
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3. Do you think things in California are going in the right direction, or are things off on the wrong track?

RIGHT DIRECTION	46
WRONG TRACK	44
DON'T KNOW	10



## SECTION 2. TRANSIT AND BICYCLING STATEMENTS

4. Which of the following do you think should be a higher priority for the use of transportation dollars in California?

Alternatives to driving such as public transportation and making it easier to walk and bike to places  
OR

Improving and widening freeways and roads

**IF CHOICE:** Do you feel that way strongly, or just somewhat?

ALTERNATIVES, STRONGLY	30	→ 43%
ALTERNATIVES, SOMEWHAT	13	
FREEWAYS/ROADS, SOMEWHAT	14	→ 49%
FREEWAYS, ROAD, STRONGLY	35	
NEITHER (VOL)	1	
EQUAL (VOL)	5	
DON'T KNOW	2	

5. **FROM PEOPLE FOR BIKES SURVEY:** Overall, how is bicycling in your city or town... Would you say it is... ROTATE... good OR poor... READ LAST: or is average?

**IF GOOD OR POOR:** Is that extremely GOOD/POOR, or just somewhat?

EXTREMELY GOOD	11	→ 31%
SOMEWHAT GOOD	20	
AVERAGE	39	
SOMEWHAT POOR	15	→ 25%
EXTREMELY POOR	10	
DON'T KNOW	5	

Now I am going to read some statements people make about transportation and biking. For each statement I read, please tell me if you agree or disagree with the statement.

**IF AGREE AND DISAGREE:** Is that strongly, or just somewhat?

		AGREE		DISAGREE		Don't Know	SUMMARY	
		Strongly	Some-what	Some-what	Strongly		Agree	Disagree
6.	My city has become a better place to ride a bike.	18	36	18	20	8	54	38
7.	Bicycling is good for my city.	57	28	5	7	3	85	12
8.	People like me bicycle in my city	23	27	18	28	3	50	46
9.	Bicycling is a legitimate form of transportation.	60	27	6	7	<1	87	13
10.	My city's government should do more to encourage bicycling.	40	27	12	16	5	67	28
11.	The city or town's leadership supports more bicycling.	19	30	15	14	22	49	29

## SECTION 3. COMPLETE STREETS BILL

12. Now let me tell you about a proposal in California.

Complete Streets is a policy that would change the way that state and local transportation departments build streets and roads. Instead of designing just for cars and trucks, they would design and build streets that are safe for all users – which would mean more sidewalks, better crosswalks, and protected bike lanes.

Would you support or oppose a Complete Streets policy?

**IF SUPPORT OR OPPOSE:** Is that strongly SUPPORT/OPPOSE or just somewhat?

STRONGLY SUPPORT	53	
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	25	→ 78%
SOMEWHAT OPPOSE	5	
STRONGLY OPPOSE	11	→ 16%
DON'T KNOW	6	

Now I'm going to read you arguments made by supporters and opponents of the Complete Streets policy.

### RANDOMIZE NEXT TWO BATTERIES

First/Next, I'm going to read you some statements made by supporters of the Complete Streets policy. For each statement, please tell me if the statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or not at all convincing at getting you to support the Complete Streets policy. If you think the statement is false, just say so.

SUPPORTER STATEMENTS		Very	Some -what	Not Very	Not At All	False	PNTS
13.	<b>[JOBS, CLEAN]</b> SPLIT A: The Complete Streets policy will lead to more jobs at small local neighborhood businesses.	17	29	23	17	11	3
14.	<b>[JOBS, WITH JUSTIFICATION]</b> SPLIT B: The Complete Streets policy will lead to more jobs at small local neighborhood businesses. Studies show that when streets are attractive and safe for biking and walking, local businesses have more sales.	33	38	13	8	7	1
15.	<b>[SAFETY]</b> The Complete Streets policy will result in fewer crashes, injuries, and fatalities for all road users.	23	34	17	12	11	3
16.	<b>[CHILDREN]</b> The Complete Streets policy will help give children safer routes to walk or bike to school and to parks.	45	35	7	7	4	2
17.	<b>[AFFORDABILITY, LOW-INCOME ONLY]</b> SPLIT A: The Complete Streets policy will help low-income residents save money by giving them more affordable transportation options.	32	25	18	13	9	3
18.	<b>[AFFORDABILITY, LOW AND MODERATE INCOME]</b> SPLIT B: The Complete Streets policy will help moderate and low-income residents save money by giving them more affordable transportation options.	31	37	14	10	8	<1



SUPPORTER STATEMENTS		Very	Some -what	Not Very	Not At All	False	PNTS
19.	<b>[HEALTH]</b> The Complete Streets policy will help improve public health because more people will walk and bike. This will reduce health care costs associated with chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes.	29	36	13	11	10	1
20.	<b>[TRAFFIC]</b> The Complete Streets policy will make biking and walking safer and more appealing to people of all ages, resulting in many fewer trips by automobile for work, shopping and entertainment. This will mean less traffic on the roads for everyone.	27	39	14	10	9	1
21.	<b>[GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY]</b> A Complete Streets policy increases accountability for our local and state transportation departments for how they spend our taxpayer dollars, by requiring them to maintain and improve our streets more cost-effectively.	23	38	17	10	9	3

First/Next, I'm going to read you some statements made by opponents of the Complete Streets policy. For each statement, please tell me if the statement is very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or not at all convincing at getting you to oppose the Complete Streets policy. If you think the statement is false, just say so.

OPPONENTS STATEMENTS		Very	Some -what	Not Very	Not At All	False	PNTS
22.	<b>[COST]</b> A Complete Streets policy will require improvements to bike lanes and pedestrian access on every construction project in the state, costing taxpayers millions.	25	31	23	14	6	1
23.	<b>[TRAFFIC]</b> A Complete Streets policy will increase traffic congestion by mandating that traffic lanes be considered for removal and replaced by bike lanes, even in areas where cyclists and pedestrians rarely travel, such as highway on-ramps and off-ramps.	20	26	25	14	13	2
24.	<b>[EXCESSIVE]</b> A Complete Streets policy is excessive, and a one-size-fits all policy for the entire state just doesn't make sense. Even rural counties would be expected to build bike lanes on every stretch of road.	27	28	19	14	10	2

25. Now that you have heard more, would you support or oppose a Complete Streets policy?

**IF REQUESTED, RE-READ DESCRIPTION:**

Complete Streets is a policy that would change the way the state and local transportation department builds streets and roads. Instead of designing just for cars and trucks, they would design and build streets that are safe for all users – which would mean more sidewalks, better crosswalks, and protected bike lanes.

**IF SUPPORT OR OPPOSE:** Is that strongly SUPPORT/OPPOSE or just somewhat?

STRONGLY SUPPORT	35	→ 63%
SOMEWHAT SUPPORT	28	
SOMEWHAT OPPOSE	12	→ 31%
STRONGLY OPPOSE	19	
DON'T KNOW	6	

**ASK SUMMARY**

	SUPPORT	OPPOSE	DON'T KNOW	NET SUPPORT
Q12. ASK 1: Initial Ask	78	16	6	+62
Q25. ASK 2: After Arguments	63	31	6	+32
<b>CHANGE</b>	<b>-15</b>	<b>+15</b>	<b>+0</b>	<b>-30</b>

## SECTION 4. TRANSIT USAGE

And now some questions about your methods of transportation.

In the past 12 months, have you taken at least one trip by the following methods of travel? You can just say yes or no.

METHOD		YES	NO	UNSURE
26.	Drive alone in own vehicle	89	11	<1
27.	Walk	81	19	<1
28.	Public Transportation	46	54	<1
29.	Taxi, carpool, car share or rideshare services	52	47	1
30.	Bicycle	35	65	0
31.	Public transportation in combination with walking or biking	44	55	1

32. Which of the following is your primary method of traveling in your city?

Drive alone in own vehicle	76
Walk	6
Public Transportation	4
Taxi, carpool, car share or rideshare services	9
Bicycle	2
Walk or Bike to public transportation	2
DON'T KNOW (DO NOT READ)	1

Please tell if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements.

		AGREE		DISAGREE		Don't Know	SUMMARY	
		Strongly	Some-what	Some-what	Strongly		Agree	Disagree
33.	I can safely travel by bicycle in my city.	25	34	16	21	4	<b>59</b>	<b>37</b>
34.	I can safely walk in my city.	49	31	10	10	<1	<b>80</b>	<b>20</b>
35.	I can get to places quickly and conveniently by bicycle.	20	27	20	29	4	<b>47</b>	<b>49</b>
36.	It is easy to combine bicycling and public transit.	20	31	19	19	11	<b>51</b>	<b>38</b>

There are a number of reasons why people do not ride a bike more. I'm now going to read a few statements about reasons people might bike more. For each I read, please tell me if it would make you more likely to ride a bike in your neighborhood, or if it would make no difference?

**IF MORE LIKELY:** Is that much more likely to ride a bike, or just somewhat?

		Much More Likely	Somewhat More Likely	Makes No Difference	Don't Know	TOTAL MORE LIKELY
37.	Feeling less threatened by cars while biking	36	24	38	2	60
38.	More bike lanes along my route	30	23	46	1	53
39.	If places I needed to go were not as far	36	27	35	2	63
40.	Able to take my bike on transit at all times	27	22	49	2	49
41.	Feeling less worried about my bike getting stolen	25	24	49	2	49
42.	If it were easy to pedal because the bike had an electric motor that did some of the work	22	22	55	1	44
43.	Feeling less worried that the police will pull me over	11	12	74	3	23

44. Do you or do any members of your household own a bicycle?

**IF YES:** Is that yourself, or someone else in your household, or both?

YES, SELF ONLY	14	
YES, HOUSEHOLD MEMBER ONLY	16	→ 73%
YES, BOTH SELF AND HOUSEHOLD	43	
NOBODY IN HOUSEHOLD	27	
DON'T KNOW	0	

45. How often do you ride a bicycle? (READ CHOICES.)

Daily	3
More than once a week	13
A few times a month	15
Once a month or less	27
Never	41
DON'T KNOW	1

46. Would you like to ride a bicycle more frequently than you do now?

**IF YES:** Would you like to ride much more, or a little more?

YES, MUCH MORE	33	→ 63%
YES, A LITTLE MORE	30	
NO	36	
DON'T KNOW	1	

## SECTION 5. DEMOGRAPHICS

Thank you for your patience. Now some last few questions about yourself for statistical purposes.

47. First, what is your age?

**IF PREFER NOT TO SAY:** Can you tell us approximately how old you are?

UNDER 30	14
30-39	14
40-49	16
50-64	26
65+	27
PREFER NOT TO SAY	3

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48. How many miles, on average, do you travel – roundtrip – for your daily commute, or do you work from home?

Less than 10 Miles	13
10-19 Miles	14
20-29 Miles	13
30-49 Miles	14
50+ Miles	12
WORK FROM HOME/ NO COMMUTE	16
RETIRED	10
DON'T KNOW / REFUSE:	8

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49. Which of the following ethnic groups describes you? You can stop me when I've read your group.

White or Caucasian	56
Black or African American	4
Latino, Hispanic, or Mexican American	24
Chinese	3
Filipino	2
Vietnamese	<1
Other Asian or Pacific Islander	5
Native American	<1
Mixed Race	3
Other (SPECIFY: _____)	1
PREFER NOT TO SAY	2

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### IF NOT SELF-IDENTIFIED LATINO

50. And are you of Hispanic or Latino descent? (n=487)

YES	6
NO	91
PREFER NOT TO SAY	3

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51. Do you currently own the home or apartment where you live, do you rent, do you live with family, or do you not have stable housing?

OWN	61
RENT	26
FAMILY	11
NO STABLE HOUSING	1
PREFER NOT TO SAY	1

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52. Please stop me when I read the category that best describes your total annual household income before taxes for the year 2016.

Under \$25,000	11
\$25,000 to just under \$50,000	17
\$50,000 to just under \$75,000	17
\$75,000 to just under \$100,000	15
\$100,000 to just under \$250,000	21
\$250,000 or more	7
DON'T KNOW	2
PREFER NOT TO SAY	10

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That's all the questions I have. Thank you for your time.

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53. RECORD GENDER:

FEMALE	53
MALE	47

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54. RECORD PARTY:

DEMOCRAT	46
REPUBLICAN	30
NO PARTY PREFERENCE	20
MINOR PARTY	4

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