

Lead the Way, California

A Transportation
Platform to Move
Us Forward

November 2018





We stand with you

The undersigned organizations urge Governor-elect Newsom to show swift leadership and focused perseverance on these actions. We stand by as ready and enthusiastic partners to help achieve these actions, as well as others that will bring about a more vibrant, equitable, and resilient California.



It's time for California to lead the way, with transportation that connects everyone to a brighter future. It's time to break free of the dependence on outdated, unhealthy technology — cars, freeways, and dirty freight — that is hurting our communities and our climate. California is leading the nation on climate goals, but our transportation system is dragging us backward. It's time to think bigger, to be bold, and to invest in solutions that bring our values to life.

This transportation platform offers clear steps for California's new administration to lead the way.

Vision

Every Californian — especially people of color and low-income people burdened by past and present transportation decisions — can live in a community where:

- It is convenient, dignified, and affordable to get around on public transit, on foot, by bike, or by scooter;
- Streets are shared public space — where people can safely and comfortably walk, sit, and talk — not just thoroughways for traffic;
- Everyone can find and stay in a home they can afford, close to good jobs, shops, healthcare, and schools;
- Surrounding farmland and natural lands are protected, helping to sequester carbon, provide climate resilience against wildfire risk, and replenish clean water reserves; and
- Accessible natural open spaces provide a variety of recreational opportunities where all people can lead healthy and active lives.

Actions

Prioritize Transportation That Moves California Forward

Page 4

Act to Meet the Greatest Needs First

Page 8

Champion Housing Justice for California's Communities

Page 10

Clean Up California's Air

Page 12

Recognize the True Value of California's Landscapes

Page 14



Prioritize Transportation That Moves California Forward

For too long, development in California was built on the assumption that everyone should own cars and drive everywhere. This assumption drove California right to the current crises of climate change and inequality. The transportation sector is California's biggest source of greenhouse gases, and emissions are on the rise. And when people have no choice but to drive, those without cars are deprived of access to opportunity. We can change this, and we must. We can bring balance to our transportation system and build communities for people rather than cars, to bring about a shift toward a sustainable future. This will alleviate congestion, reduce climate pollution, relieve transportation cost burden, improve public health, and allow people to spend more time with their families — not in traffic.

- **Put our money where our goals are: bring state transportation funding and policy into line with state goals for climate, equity, and public health.** This year, California spent only 19% of its transportation funds on public transit, while 81% went towards highways and roads. It's time to flip that equation. When we free up millions of dollars by stopping polluting projects, we can invest in a sustainable future.

- **Examine exactly how state transportation funds are spent and why.** Make transportation spending transparent and accountable, specifically the State Transportation Improvement (STIP) and State Highway Operation Protection (SHOPP) programs so these funds prioritize complete streets and safer communities for all Californians. Legislative obstacles may exist to shifting funding away from road and highway projects and toward sustainable transportation; identify those obstacles (e.g., State Constitution Article XIX), and pass legislation to remove them.
- **Evaluate projects using state climate, equity, and health goals, and condition state funding on project performance.** Use relevant performance measures, such as: reduction of vehicle miles traveled (VMT); improvement of transit service and other alternative modes of transportation such as vanpools in disadvantaged communities and to lower-income jobs; and increased safety of walking and biking. Hold projects accountable for “induced demand,” that is, causing more driving. Use state funds to incentivize projects that support sustainable modes like public transit, biking, and walking. End the use of state funding on roadway capacity projects, which increase climate pollution and car dependence.
- **Invest in sustainable transportation and help regions meet their greenhouse gas reduction goals.** Keep existing buses and trains running, expand high-quality bus service, and build miles of safe walking and bike routes. Use road maintenance funds (SHOPP) to make streets better for walking, biking, and transit; e.g., convert car lanes into sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit-only or high-occupancy travel lanes. Leave no place behind; invest in non-traditional transportation ideas like vanpools and ridesharing for rural areas — Green Raiteros and Van Y Vienen are two such community-led, culturally-informed EV ride-share initiatives — and everyone needs sidewalks.
- **Prepare for the future by transitioning California’s transportation funding away from regressive tax structures such as the gas tax.** Use congestion pricing and high-occupancy toll lanes to disincentivize solo driving. Establish tiered fee structures to avoid overburdening low-income families.
- **Invest in street greening with state transportation funds.** Trees and plants along roadways help protect people from poor air quality and climate change impacts, such as extreme heat, storms, and flooding. These are low-cost, long-term solutions.

- **Harness innovation in emerging mobility technologies, including autonomous vehicles (AVs), to reach our state goals for climate, equity, and public health.**

Make sure that private companies serve the public good to improve mobility for all. Use regulations to protect the safety and conviviality of streets, and set pricing to encourage sustainable behavior and redress economic inequity.

- **Ensure mobility services improve access for most in need.** Regulate Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Lyft and Uber, to set graduated TNC fees to provide discount multi-modal services for low-income passengers, seniors, fill in for sub-par transit service, and comply with legal accommodations requirements for people with disabilities.
- **Put people first on streets and sidewalks.** Reallocate street space from cars to bikes and micromobility to create more safe places to bike and scooter. Regulate mobility innovations such as scooter sharing and AVs, addressing parking, and sidewalk and curb space, to ensure they do not pose safety risks to people walking and biking.
- **Require AVs to prove that they see people, that they bear the burden of safety, and that they have no bias.** Before deployment, AVs must be able to fully see and safely understand and predict the behavior of people walking, biking, and using wheelchairs — without those people needing to do, wear, or own anything special. AV artificial intelligence must demonstrate cultural sensitivity and show that it is free of any bias or detrimental approach to people of color or with disabilities.
- **Require all AVs to help meet state goals.** All AVs should be electric, zero-emission, and part of a shared fleet under the jurisdiction of the PUC. Direct the PUC to regulate them to: meet VMT reduction targets, support growth management and sprawl containment, incentivize ride-pooling, and ensure accessibility and affordability for low-income riders and other marginalized people.
- **Start planning now for how to mitigate the labor impacts of AVs, as they will result in drivers losing their livelihoods.** Create replacement jobs for current TNC and transit drivers.

- **Set up good government and smart systems to address transportation and land use together.** Coordinate and hold entities at each level of government accountable for improving access and reducing emissions.

- **Create a task-force to develop a state Action Plan to improve access to opportunity and reduce emissions by shifting transportation and land use patterns.** Identify the timeline, responsible agencies, and performance indicators for each action.
- **Strengthen SB 375 by making local and regional transportation planning and spending more transparent and sustainable.** Require transparency and more public engagement in regions' year-by-year funding decisions. Help regions invest in sustainable transportation projects by bringing the local spending plans and sales tax expenditure plans of Congestion Management Agencies into line with state and regional climate and equity goals. Encourage regions to invest in seamless regional coordination of transit to improve access and environmental outcomes.
- **Hold regions accountable for doing all they can to implement their Sustainable Community Strategies per SB 375.** Identify which actions needed to meet a region's targets are within the region's authority, monitor the progress on those actions, and condition state funding on progress. Provide strong incentives to get local general plans into line with regional Sustainable Community Strategies.
- **Show state leadership in implementing CEQA reform per SB 743.** Direct Caltrans to analyze projects' impacts on VMT and establish a significance threshold of no net increase of VMT. Launch equity-focused VMT mitigation banks, an innovative strategy to reduce driving, fund sustainable transportation, and benefit disadvantaged communities.
- **Update the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to support state goals for climate, equity, and public health.** Update the mission and structure of the CTC so that state funds are raised and spent in ways that support these goals. Appoint commissioners who are equipped to understand equity issues and transportation justice; represent low-income communities from different geographies, including rural areas; and recognize the implications of different transportation funding decisions for public health and the climate.
- **Align the missions of state agencies in charge of transportation, climate, health, and housing.** Key agencies including Caltrans, the CTC, ARB, SGC, CDPH, and HCD should support each other in reducing car dependence. California Climate Investment programs offer a model; build on this for effective, cross-sector solutions.

Act to Meet the Greatest Needs First

Transportation decisions can harm or help. They can divide neighborhoods and burden communities with dirty air and dangerous streets — or they can open doors to opportunity and upward mobility. People in marginalized and disenfranchised communities suffer from pollution and poor health because of land use decisions putting heavy industry and freeways nearby, and often also lack good transit access, basic infrastructure like sidewalks, and safe crossings. We must address the vast inequities in California that disproportionately burden people of color and low-income communities, and do it in a way that shows value and respect for the state’s most vulnerable populations. As we make more opportunities available to more people, our communities and our state’s economy will flourish.

- **Redress inequity: get regions to invest first in safety and mobility for disadvantaged communities.** Use state authority to mandate that regions prioritize transportation spending to serve vulnerable populations, including those in unincorporated areas, for example with a set-aside like AB 1550. To do this, screening tools for state funding need to be updated to encompass mobility-specific inequities, in addition to correcting biases that make projects in urban areas more competitive than projects in rural areas. Overburdened communities have faced long-standing patterns of disinvestment and deserve relief, and better options. There should be no “wrong side of the tracks.” Substantially increasing spending on transit operating subsidies and reduced fares would both better meet the mobility needs of underserved residents and boost overall transit ridership.



- **Let the community decide: increase meaningful public engagement, participation, and decision-making, especially among low-income people and communities of color, in transportation investments.** This will ensure that transportation projects actually meet community needs. Use scoring criteria to incentivize robust public participation for transportation project development and planning. Support participatory budgeting at the local level so that residents can shape a set of community-driven priorities that actually get funded.
- **Support community-led transformation: expand programs like the “green zone” strategy in the state’s Transformative Climate Communities program.** These enable low-income community members to come together to lead the transformation of a pollution-burdened area into a healthy, thriving neighborhood. To be effective, these projects should remain community-driven through the entire process, including planning, programming and implementing.
- **Invest in people: leverage transportation funds for high-quality jobs and careers for low-income people and communities of color.** Use the state’s large transportation investments to expand workforce development and job access through targeted hiring policies, workforce training programs that serve people with barriers to employment, and partnerships with community-based organizations that provide wrap-around supportive services. Transportation investments offer an enormous opportunity to create quality local jobs, careers, and contracting opportunities for low-income people, people of color, women, and businesses they own. Expanding targeted local hire programs in this way can close inequality gaps and create opportunity for upward economic mobility.



Champion Housing Justice for California's Communities

Displacement is not just bad for people, it's bad for the climate. Low-income people are core transit riders that rely on — and sustain — public transportation networks, and when displaced from their neighborhoods, they tend to move to far-flung exurbs, where they are forced to drive long commutes. At the same time, the new higher-income residents moving in are much less likely to use transit. To stabilize communities, support sustainable transportation, and build community support for infill development and transit projects, strong, locally appropriate anti-displacement strategies are needed.

- **First, do no harm: require the implementation of anti-displacement policies for any transportation project receiving significant state investment.** Private development projects receiving state investment or benefiting from state policies, such as density enhancements for projects near transit, should avoid displacement of existing residents. The community should determine which strategies are needed to prevent displacement, and how to implement them. Strategies may include tenant protections; a no-net-loss requirement for affordable housing units; or inclusionary housing policies that actually produce not just fees but new affordable homes near transit. Displacement is likely to be an ongoing issue that requires ever-bolder actions with new tools.

- **Act to dismantle segregation: bring a “fair housing” lens to all investment decisions and housing policy.** This means both investing to meet local needs in disadvantaged communities and also, in areas with plentiful resources, acting to break down barriers to people of color. The recently passed AB 1771 and AB 686 call for actions to “address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, [and] transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity.” State agencies, boards and commissions must now take these actions, and in their oversight roles, they must ensure that regional agencies do as well.
- **Encourage equitable infill development to reduce the need to drive.** Act to enable people of all income levels to meet their needs and wants without having to travel as far, or drive as much. Our state’s affordable housing crisis is increasing the need to drive; we must build more affordable homes in existing communities.
 - **Fill the gap left by redevelopment with a program focused on bringing affordable homes, jobs, and essential services closer together — and well-served by transit.** The program should aim for jobs-housing fit — that is, making sure that homes are available near jobs that pay enough to make those homes affordable — and making sure that grocery stores, healthcare, and childcare are reachable without a car. This will require building significant numbers of new affordable homes near jobs, and vice versa. It will also require making sure low-income neighborhoods have plenty of high-quality career opportunities and amenities.
 - **Act boldly to build and preserve thousands of affordable homes where they are needed.** Work with housing and equity experts to design and quickly roll out solutions to our state’s grave housing crisis. Dramatically increase the production of affordable homes near jobs and transit — in ways that benefit rather than harm people in vulnerable communities. Include a range of innovative housing and transportation solutions that fit the unique communities that make up California, from rural to urban.

Clean Up California's Air

Thousands of people in California have an immediate need for healthier air, especially disproportionately burdened low-income communities of color. The transportation sector is now the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the state, and cars account for half of that pollution. Currently, the Central Valley and South Coast Air Districts are in severe non-attainment of federal air quality standards. In the South Coast Air District alone, the health costs of bad air are over \$21 billion. The freight sector is responsible for half of the local air pollution that causes respiratory illness, and zero-emission technology already exists for many types of vehicles. Everyone has the right to breathe clean air. Plus, for people to bike and walk, including to transit, they need clean air. Funding sources like the Volkswagen settlement are a current opportunity to invest equitably in those communities with the greatest need.

- **Act now to clean up the freight sector; prioritize areas with the heaviest, most polluting truck traffic.** Accelerate the development and implementation of California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards for zero-emission technologies in the heavy-duty sector. Zero-emission technologies already exist for many types of heavy-duty vehicles, but strategies are needed to accelerate their deployment.



- **Help everyone drive cleaner cars; expand programs that provide access for lower-income people to clean vehicles, especially when they are not well-served by transit.** Expand the Charge Ahead equity programs, including culturally sensitive and affordable electric vehicle (EV) car-share systems, the Clean Cars 4 All scrap-and-replace program, and low-income EV financing. Launch outreach to make EV rebates more accessible to low-income families and make information available to them at banks and dealerships where financing deals occur. Also make other clean and more affordable modes, such as electric bicycles, more accessible to lower-income residents.
- **Make EV charging infrastructure widely available; set equity metrics and require that regions invest in this regionwide, not only in wealthier areas, and also in rural areas.** This will help ensure that lower-wealth areas are not left out of the transition to clean vehicles.
- **Keep fighting for California's Clean Air Act authority and ramp up the Zero-Emission Vehicle standard.** California should be able to establish stronger-than-federal standards for air quality, and by 2040, all new cars sold should have zero tailpipe pollution.
- **Make all buses zero-emission by 2040.** Phase in purchase requirements for zero-emission buses — including transit, school, and private buses — to reach this goal.
- **Accelerate deployment of zero-emission cars.** California must enhance programs to accelerate deployment of light-duty cars, SUVs, and pick-ups as well as medium-duty vehicles.
- **Reduce carbon in fuels to support clean air and a healthy climate.** Use the Low Carbon Fuel Standard to clean up harmful fuels, and continue progress on better alternatives.



Recognize the True Value of California's Landscapes

Transportation decisions affect land use; they can help preserve the ecosystem services that California landscapes provide, such as carbon storage, groundwater recharge, flood protection, and protection from wildfires, which in turn make our communities more resilient. In addition, when transportation investments support more sustainable development patterns, people can meet their needs in daily life without as much driving.

- **Invest state funding in regional “greenprints,” which use big data to make clear the full value of natural and agricultural lands.** This should include the land’s value in terms of its carbon sequestration capacity, its groundwater recharge functionality, its ability to reduce the risk of flooding and wildfire hazard, and habitat connectivity. Making this information available before development decisions are made will help to curb sprawl and encourage smart growth. It should also steer where mitigation investments are made.

- **Factor in the climate impact of developing land: add carbon sequestration to the state's climate change Scoping Plan to meet California's net-zero carbon neutrality goal.** Establish a statewide methodology for determining the carbon sequestration capacity of different land covers through the regional greenprints process above. This data can then be used to establish a carbon inventory for the state, and evaluate the consequences of land development for meeting state climate goals.
- **Slow the loss of farmland and habitat, invest in conservation: set a state target for reducing the rate of farmland and habitat development, increase state investment in strategic land conservation.** These investments should be guided by the information provided by the greenprints on land's ecosystem services.
- **Create incentives for regions to adopt urban growth boundaries (UGBs).** For example, make UGB adoption an eligibility threshold for certain state funds to help contain growth, protect lands, and reduce carbon emissions. When implemented alongside anti-displacement strategies, UGBs can be an effective tool to guide smart growth and enhance equity.

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Let's do this