

CA CAPITOL — TO — CAPITOL DC

TRANSPORTATION

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TRANSPORTATION FUNDING AND PRIORITIES

Business Nexus

The Sacramento Region's businesses run on major interstate freeways, passenger and cargo airports, freight and passenger rail lines, 43 miles of light rail, an inland port, transit systems, and human service transportation programs. As a fast-growing region of more than 2.6 million people - larger than 15 states - the Sacramento Region is critical to the national economy and has long embraced the dynamic needs for a multi-modal transportation system that balances freeway, street, rail, air, and transit to move goods, services, and people both inside the region and through it. Federal support to further strengthen the Sacramento Region's goods movement infrastructure will pay dividends in fostering economic growth.

Requested Action

Support federal funding for Sacramento Region priority projects which have strong local support and are critical to regional and national economic interests.

Brief Background

MegaRegion Working Group Priority Transportation Projects

Below are four of the Northern California Megaregion Working Group priority transportation projects that have a significant impact on the megaregion and the Sacramento Region. The Megaregion Working Group comprises elected officials who represent the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG), and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG). Together, the three Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) that form the working group represent 16 counties, 136 cities, and a population of nearly 11 million people. They are working together to tackle how people and goods move throughout the 16-county Northern California megaregion. The projects presented by SACOG cover three gateways where more than half of interregional travel occurs. The projects focus on relieving congestion by

2023 Capitol-to-Capitol

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CA CAPITOL — TO — CAPITOL DC

incorporating traffic management strategies such as carpool or toll lanes and increasing alternative travel options.

Projects include:

I-80 and U.S. 50 Yolo Express Lanes

Funding Needed: \$293 million

Reduce congestion, encourage carpooling, and improve freight movement by accommodating Express Lanes along both directions of I-80 from west of Davis through Yolo County to West El Camino in Sacramento and along both directions of U.S. 50 from I-80 in West Sacramento to I-5 in Sacramento. Express Lanes are HOV lanes that are free of charge for carpools, motorcycles, and other qualifying vehicles, but also available for use by solo drivers who opt to pay a toll that varies based on real-time traffic conditions. Construction could start as early as 2024.

ACE: Valley Rail Extension to Sacramento

Funding Needed: \$500 million

Provide an alternative to congestion on I-5 and Highway 99, deliver a connection from Sacramento and the northern San Joaquin Valley to High-Speed Rail at Merced, and serve disadvantaged communities with new passenger rail service from downtown Stockton to Sacramento's North Natomas area with other new stations at Lodi, Elk Grove, Sacramento City College, Midtown and Old North Sacramento. North Natomas would feature a connection to Sacramento International Airport as well as a maintenance/layover facility. ACE service could start as early as 2023: integration to High-Speed Rail interim service by 2028-29.

Capitol Corridor: Sacramento-Roseville Third Track

Funding Needed: \$68 million

Increase frequency of Capitol Corridor passenger rail service between Sacramento and Roseville without compromising freight operations or reliability by adding a third mainline track along eight miles of Union Pacific right-of-way in Placer County, build a new rail bridge over the American River and improving 11 existing bridges, and reconfigure the Roseville station and building a layover facility. Construction could start as early as 2024.

2023 Capitol-to-Capitol

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CA CAPITOL — TO — CAPITOL DC

I-5 Sacramento Express Lanes

Funding Needed: \$318 million

Reduce congestion, encourage carpooling, and improve freight movement by accommodating Express Lanes along both directions of I-5 from Sutterville Road south of Sacramento to the Yolo County line north of Sacramento. Express Lanes are HOV lanes that are free of charge for carpools, motorcycles, and other qualifying vehicles, but also available for use by solo drivers who opt to pay a toll that varies based on real-time traffic conditions. Construction could start as early as 2024.

Requested Action

Implement the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law thoughtfully while expeditiously implementing regulations and programs.

- To help regions and states complete projects in a timely manner and save valuable resources, the Administration should support communities by:
 - Increasing transparency of the competitive grant timelines (including approximate timing for when awards will be made), notices and process to allow better regional and local planning for projects.
 - Ensuring Federal oversight is commensurate to the amount of Federal funding.
 - Implementing the project delivery provisions in the BIL and providing increased flexibility on alternative project delivery methods, and integrated planning, project development, review, permitting, and environmental processes.
 - Ensuring consistency and minimize conflicting processes and performance measurement.
- The federal government can reward the Sacramento Region's innovative environmental stewardship and efforts to address climate change by:
 - Urging the Department of Transportation to create funding incentives for regional planning and projects that integrate land use and transportation. This can be accomplished by funding Sacramento Region grant applications for these efforts and allowing metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) to fund innovative climate strategies, like infill and low VMT projects, as part of any climate or resiliency programs in order to help build more affordable, resilient, and denser communities.
 - Investing federal dollars across agencies in the Sacramento Region's "Green Means Go" program that identifies important upgrades – like water, sewer and utilities – in existing communities that are essential to make infill development proposals from both the private sector and non-profit housing providers financially feasible.
 - Providing new funding to implement the objectives outlined in the National Blueprint for Transportation Decarbonization, including funding for innovative climate strategies that cross traditional Department siloes.

2023 Capitol-to-Capitol

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CA CAPITOL — TO — CAPITOL DC

- The Federal government should continue the commitment to funding all modes of transportation, particularly transit services which benefit both urban and rural communities.
 - We support a comprehensive approach to transportation infrastructure because reliable public transportation connects workers to jobs, reduces congestion, and meets climate goals. Sacramento, Placer, and Yolo counties operate expansive public and non-profit transit services serving students, seniors, and workers through a network of local and commuter bus services. A light-rail network within Sacramento County removes thousands of cars off congested roadways during commute hours. These highly used services connect to employment, as well as serving downtown Sacramento, Sacramento State, U.C. Davis, and the Sacramento International Airport. Our rural communities in El Dorado, Sutter, and Yuba counties have popular local and commuter bus services that offer access to employment and provide lifelines to critical medical services, and local non-profits throughout the region provide critical transportation to healthcare, mental health and developmental disability programs.

Brief Background

The Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce thanks Congress for the funding certainty and policy direction included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). BIL invests unprecedented funding in infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and transit. BIL also makes massive new investments in discretionary grants.

The competitive grant programs in BIL represent an important opportunity for the region to address longstanding priorities and projects. The transportation system of California's Sacramento region depends heavily on major Interstate, highway, rail, and regional transportation corridors to keep people and goods moving and to support a growing economy. Priority projects in these corridors have multi-jurisdictional support and provide regional congestion relief, goods movement, and economic development benefits. They support a balanced transportation system that integrates land use with market trends and an overall framework that provides connections between jurisdictions, maintains safety, and ensures efficient delivery of goods and services by autonomous, connected, electric, shared vehicles, and other broader mobility options.

Requested Action

Identify sustainable transportation funding sources.

Brief Background

The Federal gas tax, which funds the Federal Highway Trust Fund and includes both a Mass Transit Account and Highway Account, has not been increased since 1993. Over the last 25 years, inflation has greatly devalued those dollars, while the percentage of non-gasoline powered electric vehicles is rapidly increasing. We need to address the near-term transportation funding shortfalls by

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CA CAPITOL — TO — CAPITOL DC

increasing the federal gas tax while we research long-term solutions to provide a stable future funding source. The FHWA funded pilot projects in seven states to test alternative revenue ideas, and now is time for the federal government to act on a framework for all states to follow. California was a participant in these pilots, with several members of the Sacramento Metro Chamber as active participants.

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