



American
Heart
Association.



SB 127: Complete Streets for Active Living

Author: Senator Scott Wiener

Co-Authors: Assemblymembers Bloom, Boehner Horvath, Chiu, Friedman, and Eduardo Garcia

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 \$4.2B 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 Strategic Management 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 16 for pedestrian risk, with 7,127 pedestrian deaths between 2008 and 2017.¹ 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 2019*. <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>

BILL SUMMARY

This bill:

1. Expands the definition of safety to reducing fatalities and injuries of vulnerable road users such as people walking and biking by State Highway Account funding priorities, the primary source of funds that flow to the SHOPP.
2. Requires that Caltrans explicitly include complete streets improvements in the Asset Management Plan, 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.
4. Establishes measures to keep Caltrans responsible for adherence to complete streets performance measures, and adds reporting requirements for accountability and transparency.
5. Allows for a variety of local stakeholders to be able to be involved and engaged in Project Development Teams for SHOPP projects to ensure Complete Streets elements are included in projects.
6. Equity and accountability is embedded into all aspects of this bill—from reporting requirements to greater community engagement requirements and emphasis on improving condition and performance of assets for all communities.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTACTS

Linda Khamoushian – Senior Policy Advocate
California Bicycle Coalition
linda@calbike.org | 916.668.9401

Esther Rivera – State Policy Manager
California Walks
esther@californiawalks.org | 916.926.3784

Jamie Morgan – Government Relations Director
American Heart Association/American Stroke Association
jamie.morgan@heart.org | 916.446.6505

Jonathan Matz – California Senior Policy Manager
Safe Routes to School National Partnership
jonathan@saferoutespartnership.org | 323.422.4948

David Azevedo – Senior Program Specialist
AARP
dazevedo@aarp.org | 626.585.2618