

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: May 28, 2015

Reference No.: 4.12
Action

From: WILL KEMPTON
Executive Director

Subject: **COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT INTERREGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC PLAN**

ISSUE:

Should the Commission approve the comments recommended by staff in response to the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) draft Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP)?

Caltrans will provide a presentation on the ITSP at the May 28, 2015 CTC meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Commission direct staff to transmit the attached comment letter, in response to the draft ITSP, that encourages Caltrans to ensure a comprehensive plan and identify the methodology for selecting projects for inclusion in the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP).

BACKGROUND:

Caltrans prepared the first ITSP in 1998 in response to the passage of SB 45 (Kopp, 1997). SB 45 significantly restructured the STIP, requiring 25 percent of STIP funds be used for projects identified in an ITIP, and 75 percent of STIP funds be used for projects included in Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIP). Caltrans prepared an update to the ITSP in 2013, and the Commission commented on that update in a letter dated March 5, 2013. Since that time, Senate Bill (SB) 486 (DeSaulnier, 2014), was enacted requiring Caltrans to prepare and submit the ITSP to the Commission for approval by June 30, 2015.

As required by SB 486, the ITSP is to be directed at achieving a high functioning and balanced interregional transportation system as well as inform development of the ITIP for programming in the STIP. The ITSP should identify statewide priorities and the criteria to be used in selecting projects for funding.

Attachment

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CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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May 28, 2015

Mr. Malcolm Dougherty, Director
California Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 942873, MS-49
Sacramento, CA 94273-0001

Dear Mr. Dougherty,

The California Transportation Commission (Commission) considered the 2015 Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) public draft at its May 28, 2015 meeting. The Commission appreciates the opportunity to review this plan in draft given that Senate Bill (SB) 486 (2014, DeSaulnier) now requires the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to submit the ITSP to the Commission for approval by June 30, 2015.

Preparing a plan directed at achieving a high functioning and balanced interregional transportation system that meets the requirements of SB 486 is of great importance to California's future. The Commission commends Caltrans for the effort undertaken to update the ITSP. Preparing a plan that is action oriented and pragmatic, considering both the short and long term future, while presenting clear and concise policy guidance to address the key gaps in the current interregional transportation system to meet the mobility needs of both people and freight is of critical importance.

While the draft ITSP significantly expands the plan from the last ITSP prepared in 2013, the Commission recommends that connections to major seaports and commercial airports be included in the priority corridors to ensure a comprehensive plan. For example, the South Coast Corridor map and priority matrix do not include connections to the Los Angeles or Long Beach seaports.

The final ITSP will form the basis for projects included in the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP) submitted to the Commission for programming in the State

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Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The draft ITSP identifies eleven corridors as the highest priority for future investment decisions. However, the plan does not clearly explain how projects on those priority corridors will be selected for ITIP funding, and does not specify whether projects beyond the eleven priority corridors would be considered and recommended for ITIP funding. To eliminate confusion and ensure a clear nexus between the ITSP and ITIP programming priorities, the Commission recommends that the ITSP clearly identify the methodology for selecting projects for inclusion in the ITIP.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments prior to finalization of this important interregional transportation plan. Please contact Laurel Janssen, Commission Deputy Director, at laurel.janssen@dot.ca.gov or (916) 651-6143 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

WILL KEMPTON,
Executive Director

c: Commissioners, California Transportation Commission
Brian Kelly, California State Transportation Agency Secretary