Federal Legislative Platform
2017-2018
The San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) serves as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for the largest geographical county in the nation. Covering approximately 20,000 sq. miles and serving approximately 2 million residents, the Board of Directors is comprised of representatives from San Bernardino County’s 24 cities and five supervisorial districts. In addition to the cooperative regional planning and expansion of an efficient multi-modal transportation system countywide, the SBCTA supports freeway construction projects, regional and local road improvements, train and bus transportation, railroad crossings, call boxes, ridesharing, congestion management efforts, and long-term planning studies. As a Self-Help County agency, the SBCTA administers Measure I funding, a voter-approved half-cent sales tax dedicated for transportation planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance in San Bernardino County.

This legislative platform serves as the basis to proactively engage in policy and legislative initiatives that will enable the SBCTA to deliver projects and programs that meet the needs of our region. This document also guides staff recommendations to the Board of Directors on federal legislative, regulatory, and administrative matters that are anticipated to be addressed in the upcoming legislative session.

**FUNDING**

Seek the highest level of federal transportation dollars to California and San Bernardino County for SBCTA projects and programs including, but not limited to interstate highways; transit capital and operations in order to help meet federal environmental goals; intercity commuter rail; goods movement; intelligent transportation systems and new technologies that maximize existing infrastructure; safety, maintenance, and operations funding for all modes; and regional airport ground access and development needs.

**Support Efforts To:**

» Develop regional consensus building efforts for potential new funding strategies for transportation.

» Expand the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program.

» Expand Build America Bonds and America Fast Forward programs to help states and localities pursue needed capital for infrastructure.

» Protect current transportation revenues, additional flexibility for existing revenues, and an accelerated national investment in infrastructure.

» Maintain the principle that transportation-based revenue should be reserved only for transportation purposes.

» Re-establish Congressional intent and 29 years of Federal Aviation Administration’s interpretation that state and local sales tax measures of general application are not the same as aviation fuel excise taxes and the states and localities should be able to use those revenues as they have determined based on state and local statute.

**Oppose Efforts To:**

» Eliminate or erode contract authority for the Highway Trust Fund without identifying a new dedicated, sustainable revenue source of an equal or greater amount.

» Reduce transportation programs in order to meet deficit reduction goals or fund other projects and programs.
FREIGHT

The SBCTA will continue to bring awareness to the relationship between the County’s logistics sector and the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach as well as the importance of San Bernardino County as a goods movement gateway to the United States. The SBCTA will advocate for equitable funding for trade corridors, gateways, intermodal connectors, and freight facilities in San Bernardino County.

Support Efforts To:

› Increase federal investment in goods movement infrastructure and policies that properly recognize Southern California and San Bernardino County’s role as the nation’s premier containerized freight gateway.
› Increase targeted funding for goods movement projects of national significance that are beyond the funding capacity of local and state transportation programs and budgets (e.g. dedicated exclusive clean truck lanes).
› Increase any federal goods movement program funded at a level that is commensurate with national needs and ensure that such funds are protected from diversion for other uses through the designation of a trust fund.
› Effectively and strategically use goods movement investments to address the more critical freight bottlenecks that have profound impacts on the nation’s economy.
› Protect revenues generated by any fee that is levied on freight and specifically designated to fund projects that mitigate congestion, air quality, and community impacts directly associated with the movement of freight.
› Include the SBCTA in any governance structure dealing with revenue collected from freight moved through San Bernardino County.
› Reduce road damage from heavy trucks by reduced axle loading rather than an exclusive focus on gross vehicle weight.
› Increase national dialogue on freight policy and its focus on improving the performance of the freight network and advocate for improving Southern California’s freight strategy.
› Recognize the importance of Southern California’s freight strategy.

Oppose Efforts To:

› Allow triple-trailers in urbanized areas of San Bernardino County because of safety concerns with the exception of border cities and/or bump stations, or dedicated truck lanes (e.g. Barstow/Needles).

MULTIMODAL

The SBCTA’s growing transit, rail, and active transportation programs strive to enhance sustainability for San Bernardino County communities and stakeholders. These mobility options focus on implementing a dynamic regional growth vision based on the principles of livability, prosperity, and sustainability.

Support Efforts To:

› Develop reforms that will accelerate project procurement, promote flexibility and innovation in financing, and respect local control.
› Expand use of design-build project delivery for federally funded highway and surface transportation projects.
› Streamline federal reporting/monitoring requirements to reduce project delivery times without eliminating critical oversight mechanisms.
› Protect the authority for regional transportation entities to implement pricing measures on federal-aid highways if desired for that region.
› Protect local options to privatize various aspects of transportation that would maximize available federal funding (e.g. P3s).
› Create measures that would provide regional flexibility in meeting the operational requirements for high occupancy vehicle lanes.
MULTIMODAL

(continued)

> Develop policies that keep our rail systems safe and increase federal investment in commuter rail services.
> Delegate the California Department of Transportation the ability to review and approve local and state projects pursuant to NEPA.
> Increase federal funding programs for Positive Train Control (PTC) and rail safety programs and include eligibility to seek reimbursements for past expenditures on systems in operation.
> Change and/or exempt level boarding access requirements for existing commuter rail systems.
> Develop policies that recognize the importance and financial commitments to commuter rail and transit connectivity.
> Include San Bernardino County projects in the New and Small Starts programs.
> Ensure the greatest commuter tax benefits possible to incentivize the use of transit options.
> Expand eligible uses for federal transit funds to provide maximum flexibility to local agencies for fund capital and operations needs.
> Advocate for investment in San Bernardino County rail connectivity including future services to Ontario Airport.

QUALITY OF LIFE

The San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG) will continue to support a number of regional matters important to the future of San Bernardino County, by working with our Congressional Delegation to strengthen the region’s advocacy on transportation, environment, energy, economy, and health.

Support Efforts To:

> Create utility planning and upgrades of electrical infrastructure to support fleet conversion and possible rail electrification programs.
> Protect funding sources for congestion relief and pollution reduction related to the transportation sector.
> Secure funds to facilitate the conversion of public sector fleets to alternative fuels to meet local, state, and federal fleet conversion mandates, and provide for the replacement of aging alternative fuel fleets.
> Create tax benefits and/or incentives for private sector transportation demand management programs and alternative fuel programs.
> Increase the amount and proportion of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds received by the State of California and ensure that the funds flow to county transportation commissions.

> Streamline environmental revisions that remove duplication of state and federal processes when state regulations and environmental protections exceed federal requirements.
> Postpone federal air quality standard deadlines in the South Coast Basin in order to allow for a more realistic implementation timeframe given the current forecast of available technology and funding options. Or, remove the penalty of lost Federal transportation funding resulting from issues (e.g. heavy duty truck and train emissions) not addressed by Federal regulations.
> Increase Council of Governments development and funding.
> Incentivize, attract, retain, and grow businesses as well as employment opportunities in San Bernardino County.
> Collaborate with public and private sector stakeholders on policy and funding matters that enhance economic development and quality of life in the Inland Empire region.
> Establish policies and priorities for the use of existing utility facilities and require city/county review of any additional uses.

Oppose Efforts To:

> Create additional review and process requirements that delay projects and increase costs while achieving little to no additional environmental benefits.