State 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 state legislative, regulatory, and administrative matters that are anticipated to be addressed in the upcoming legislative session.

STATE FOCUS

The SBCTA will advocate that innovative financing opportunities remain available for county transportation commissions to leverage local dollars, accelerate construction and job creation, as well as provide mobility options for the traveling public.

Support Efforts To:

> Maintain and protect transportation and transit funding as approved under the gas tax swap and as protected under Proposition 22.
> Revise California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to streamline the environmental review process and avoid costly duplicative steps while maintaining critical environmental protections.
> Fully fund the CTC budget allocations for projects in San Bernardino County included in the STIP, State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), bond programs, and the Measure I Expenditure Plan.
> Implement the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act in an equitable manner at established funding levels.
> Enact state policies that assure timely allocation of transportation revenue and allow for regions to advance projects with local funds as needed.
> Expand existing innovative project delivery methods (e.g. design-build, construction manager/general contractor) for a broad variety of projects including highways, transit, and local streets and roads.
> Ensure projects selected for alternative delivery mechanisms are based on locally driven alternatives and do not require state approval when funded primarily by local funds.
> Streamline the state review process and improve timelines for project approvals.
> Use Cap and Trade revenues to implement the AB 32 regulatory program and Sustainable Communities Strategies as required under SB 375 to reduce GHG emission.
> Secure the independence of the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee, and the protection of AB 2766 funding.
> Employ the Trade Corridor Improvement Fund (TCIF) framework for the distribution of FAST Act formula freight funding without specific carve-outs.
> Change California law to lower the threshold for voter approval of transportation related levies from 2/3 to 55%.

Oppose Efforts To:

> Impose state requirements without the consent of the local agency for the expenditure of locally raised revenues.
> Allow specific vehicle classes to have unrestricted access to carpool or toll facilities.
> Divert transportation revenues for non-transportation purposes.
> Link existing transportation funding sources to the achievement of AB 32 objectives.
> Rely on regional transportation agencies to raise revenue for transportation or planning purposes.
> Unreasonably increase the administrative fees levied by the Board of Equalization for the collection and administration of county transportation sales tax measures.
> Require additional CEQA review and process requirements that delay projects and increase costs.
> Reduce the SBCTA’s discretion in allocating Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds.
CORE ISSUES

State funding for projects supported by local voter-approved transportation sales tax measures is critical to providing funding for innovative, intelligent/advanced transportation, goods movement, demand management, active transportation, and air quality programs which relieve congestion, improve air quality, and enhance economic development. The SBCTA will advocate for stable State funding, indexed for population growth, to support transportation projects in San Bernardino County.

Support Efforts To:

> Ensure the SBCTA has decision making authority over transportation projects that are constructed and operated in San Bernardino County.
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> Create appropriate grant guidelines and funding determinations reflective of each region for evaluating greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts and mitigation programs.
>
> Preserve local flexibility in the administration of programs and services.
>
> Prioritize funding for projects supported by voter-approved transportation local sales tax measures.
>
> Recognize/reward the investment in the state’s transportation system made by self-help counties and incentivize counties without a voter-approved tax measure for transportation to become “self-help” counties.
>
> Incentivize public-private partnerships (P3s) in the development of transportation improvements.
>
> Distribute additional transportation funds to a broad array of projects that are geographically balanced rather than focus exclusively on a limited set of specified projects.
>
> Restore State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding lost by the SBCTA when the California Transportation Commission (CTC) cut $754 million from the STIP to address declining fuel tax revenue.

Oppose Efforts To:

> Threaten the timely delivery of the Measure I Expenditure Plan or interfere with the Authority’s ability to administer any Measure I programs and services.
>
> Reduce the SBCTA’s ability to efficiently and effectively contract for goods and services.
>
> Shift local funding to interregional and statewide needs, or the possible restructuring of the STIP allocation process to shift funds away from local agencies.
>
> Impose additional mandates beyond those already in existence, on lead agencies using alternative project delivery mechanisms.
>
> Place transit investments in San Bernardino County that are not done in consultation with the SBCTA.

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 24 cities and five Supervisorial districts to strengthen the region’s advocacy on transportation, environment, energy, economy, and health.

Support Efforts To:

> Fund Council of Governments development.
>
> Incentivize, attract, retain, and grow businesses as well as employment opportunities in San Bernardino County.
>
> Protect Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing.
>
> Encourage the Federal Housing Finance Administration (FHFA) to develop guidelines for PACE financing on federally guaranteed mortgages similar to guidelines recently adopted by the Veterans Administration and FHA.
>
> Provide refueling/recharging infrastructure for alternative fuel or electric vehicles (EVs).
>
> Revise the Affordable Housing Sustainable Communities (AHSC) guidelines to provide opportunity for San Bernardino County to compete for Cap and Trade funding.
>
> Assist local governments with meeting regional GHG reduction goals including, and not limited to, grants, incentive funding, and economic development tools that support transit oriented development.
>
> Develop cost effective, technologically feasible conversion and replacement of public transit fleets to alternative fuels and EVs.
>
> Fund utility planning and upgrades to electrical infrastructure in support of fleet conversion and possible rail electrification programs.
>
> Set a max on regional project selection capabilities for Active Transportation Projects.
>
> Fund Freeway Service Patrol, ride-sharing, and call boxes, consistent with the level of growth and utilization.
>
> Provide program guidance and funding for Safe Medicine Disposal.
>
> 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 use of existing utility facilities and require city/county review of additional uses.
FREIGHT

The SBCTA will continue to bring awareness of 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:

- Reduce freight-related impacts to San Bernardino County, including a particular focus on impacts to our disadvantaged communities.
- Reduce road damage from heavy trucks by reduced axle loading rather than an exclusive focus on gross vehicle weight.
- Generate additional revenue streams to assist with freight movement investment; we simply don’t want to disadvantage our region and county.

Oppose Efforts To:

- Prioritize and select goods movement projects not maintained at the local level.
- Allow triple-trailers in urbanized areas of San Bernardino County except border cities (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:

- Extend the California Department of Transportation’s pilot program which allows states to perform the federal government's responsibility for reviewing and approving projects pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- Participate in studies of market-based pricing measures to relieve traffic congestion, improve air quality and/or fund transportation alternatives.
- Encourage the State Transportation Agency to develop a mechanism for reporting on the performance of the new agency and the quality of the state and local project delivery programs and services.
- Ensure strong state transit operations funding as a vital service that improves mobility and helps meet federal and state mandates.
- Ensure appropriate funding for a growing bus and rail system in Southern California with equitable distribution of funds and flexibility in the administration of the programs.
- Develop state funding for commuter rail operations and Positive Train Control (PTC).
- Facilitate, or remove obstacles to transit oriented development near rail and bus rapid transit stations.
- Ensure that the SBCTA has a role in the planning of all transportation modes and routes serving San Bernardino County.
- Incentivize ridesharing and/or reimbursement for transit passes.
- Ensure appropriate funding levels from state sources to support transit operations that help to achieve AB 32 and SB 375 goals.
- Advocate for investment in San Bernardino County rail connectivity, including future services to Ontario Airport.

Oppose Efforts To:

- Require increased service levels unless they are agreed to by the transit operator or have appropriate funding.
- Mandate that the SBCTA fund or operate specific transportation projects in San Bernardino County.
- Revise bus axle weight standards that will impact transit providers from procuring cost efficient coaches.
- Threaten the viability of the SBCTA's Measure I Transit Program by requiring uncontrolled expenditures on an individual project or group of projects.
- Implement a zero emission bus (ZEB) mandate that would impose undue financial or operational burden on transit systems.