

Proposition 1B Implementation

Proposition 1B, approved in the November 2006 election, authorized over \$19 B in bonds for transportation improvements. The process to select specific projects has begun. One goal of the Legislature was to follow the traditional criteria-based transportation planning process. Most selections will be made by the California Transportation Commission (CTC). Regional planning agencies have already submitted requests to the CTC for funding from the Corridor Mobility Fund.

On January 22, 2007 the Legislative Analyst Office (<http://www.lao.ca.gov/>) issued a report with their guidelines for spending the bond funds. It stresses the need for projects with long-term benefits. It notes that the desire to distribute funds quickly should be balanced with practical considerations. Bond spending will have a modest effect on the overall state economy. Limits on staff, materials, and the readiness of high-quality projects will require spending over multiple years. The Governor's proposed budget for FY 2007-2008 proposes appropriating \$7.6 B of these funds.

On January 15, 2007 Governor's Goods Movement Action Plan was published. It recommends projects for the Proposition 1B Trade Corridors Improvement Fund Program and selection criteria to the CTC. Four major trade corridors are identified in California: Bay Area, Central Valley, Los Angeles/Inland Empire, and San Diego Border.

The following amounts were recommended for trade corridor bond funding projects for the LA/Inland Empire: SR-47 Heim Bridge, \$111 M; 1710 SR-1 to Anaheim St, \$60 M; Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement, \$160 M; Burlington Northern RR Near Dock Yard, \$40 M; Union Pacific RR Near Dock Yard, \$20 M; Alameda Corridor East Grade Separations, \$691 M; RR System Velocity Improvements, \$422 m; Colton RR Grade Crossing, \$56 M; SR-14 Truck Lanes, \$12 M. The Governor's Infrastructure Plan was scheduled for publication in January, but will now be issued in March 2007.

Pending Legislation

The following are some of the more interesting traffic-related bills introduced in the current session. Most bills have not been enacted.

AB 60, as introduced, Nava. Vehicles: bicycles.

This bill would recast provisions as to overtaking a bicycle by requiring the driver of a motor vehicle overtaking a bicycle to pass to the left at a safe distance, at a minimum clearance of 3 feet, without interfering with the safe operation of the overtaken bicycle. This bill would additionally allow a person to drive a vehicle in a designated 2-way left-turn lane when overtaking and passing a bicycle.

AB 23, as introduced, Ma. Department of Transportation: Marked Crosswalk: control Signal. The bill would require Caltrans to place and maintain an official control signal that emits a count down pedestrian display at a marked pedestrian crosswalk if that crosswalk crosses a state highway and is within 2,000 feet of a school grounds or a senior citizen center.

SB 16, as introduced, Florez. Railroads: rail crossings.

This bill would require the Public Utilities Commission to order that a public-rail grade crossing be equipped with automatic gates, if the commission determines a public-rail grade crossing collision, would likely have not occurred if the crossing had been equipped with automatic gates, or the injury or damages to person or property from the collision would have been substantially reduced with automatic gates.

SB 67, as introduced, Perata. Vehicles: speed contests and reckless driving.

This bill, would allow a peace officer to seize a motor vehicle used for reckless driving in an offstreet parking facility, or an exhibition of speed on a highway. The impounding agency must release the vehicle to the registered owner prior to the conclusion of the 30 day impoundment period if the owner was neither the driver nor a passenger in the vehicle at the time of the violation or was unaware of the violation.

Regulatory Law - South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Versus EPA

Environmental Protection Agency rules for forcing state cleanups of smog don't meet Clean Air Act requirements, a three-judge panel ruled on Dec 22, 2006 in a suit brought by SCAQMD, environmental groups and some Eastern states. EPA had proposed a 17 year timeline for reducing smog. EPA must revise the rule.