



## **2015-16 CEAC Policy & Legislative Priorities**

(Adopted by the CEAC Board of Directors January 28, 2015  
& Amended September 17, 2015)

The annual Policy and Legislative Priorities are best achieved through collaboration and shared responsibility. To achieve the following, CEAC, CSAC staff, and individual county staff must combine resources, including policy and technical knowledge and expertise to maximize our influence, efficacy, and successful outcomes.

### **State Priorities**

#### **Transportation**

1. Pursue additional funding to address local transportation needs. Cities and counties currently have \$7.8 billion in unmet annual funding needs for the maintenance and preservation of local streets and roads and related facilities. CSAC will continue to advocate for at least \$3 billion in new ongoing funding to be allocated to counties by formula with maximum flexibility for local transportation maintenance and improvements to roads and supporting infrastructure, including bridges and complete streets.
2. Support legislation to improve school zone safety. Work with coalition partners to support legislation that will promote safety for students travelling via active modes by allowing local governments to expand school zones based upon engineering studies and providing disincentives, including points on driver's licenses, for violation of traffic laws within school safety zones.
3. Transportation Tax Swap Clean-Up: New HUTA for OHV. Seek coalition to support the return of the new HUTA revenues attributable to Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) fuel sales to counties, cities, and the State as intended under the Transportation Tax Swap. This share of funds is approximately \$128 million annually statewide and approximately \$28 million for counties.
4. Transportation Tax Swap Implementation. Support transportation stakeholder coalition efforts to ensure Tax Swap is implemented according to existing law and original legislative intent. This may include a request to the Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLAC) for a state audit of the State Controller's Office and other necessary state departments and agencies or contracting with an outside consultant.
5. Return Weight Fee Revenues to Transportation. Work with transportation coalition partners to consider means of returning nearly \$1 billion in truck weight fee revenues to transportation purposes. Weight fees have been used to backfill general fund debt service payments for general obligation bonds since the Tax Swap. Restoring weight fee revenues to transportation through a phased-in approach and/or securing another source of revenue to pay for transportation related bond debt service will avoid imposing massive costs on the general fund at the expense of other county programs.

6. Secure Repayment of Outstanding Transportation Loans. Work with transportation coalition partners to ensure repayment of all transportation loans and transfers, estimated at nearly \$879 million. While all of the outstanding loans are owed to programs other than county streets and roads, ensuring that the state has fully repaid its outstanding obligations to transportation is an important precursor to efforts to bridge persistent transportation funding shortfalls with additional funding.
7. Increase Surface Transportation Program Funding Guarantees. Support efforts to increase the minimum Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding guarantees for smaller, rural counties. The current minimum STP guarantees are a legacy of the Federal Aid Urban/Federal Aid Secondary route designations formerly used to apportion federal transportation funding. While the designations are no longer used, counties with systems that were previously designated Federal Aid Secondary have not seen their STP minimum allocation increased since 1993. CEAC will support policies to ensure that STP minimum funding amounts for counties are indexed to increases in the overall STP funding available to the state.
8. Explore Road User Charge Policy Options. Work with CSAC to reexamine the association's position on mileage-based user charges as an eventual replacement for the gasoline excise tax. As improvements in the fuel efficiency of vehicles reduces gas tax revenue per mile travelled and inflation continues to erode the purchasing power of the excise tax revenues, alternatives to the gas tax are being seriously considered by transportation stakeholders. CEAC will study the policy implications of mileage based user fees and work with CSAC to develop positions on this method of taxation, which will be the focus of extensive study and a state pilot project over the next several years.
9. Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment. Continue working with the Needs Assessment Oversight Committee and consultant to publicize the 2014 biennial report and prepare for development of the 2016 report. Use the 2014 Report to continue to engage in education and advocacy in support of new revenues from transportation infrastructure. Collaborate and coordinate on the release of the Report and develop strategies to increase attention to all statewide efforts that highlight needs of the statewide transportation system. Continue to work with counties, cities, regional agencies, and Caltrans to secure funding for the needs assessment contract. Specifically focus on new elements of the 2014 Report including the availability of city-level data, and the revised release schedule to better convey the results of the study to the public and transportation decision-makers.

## **Land Use**

1. CEQA Streamlining – Infill. Support CEQA streamlining for infill projects including the infrastructure necessary to support that development, especially as opportunities present themselves in transportation special session.
2. Fund Infill Infrastructure. Support funding sources for infrastructure related to infill projects, including the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities grant program, that fall under applicable streamlining.
3. Cap and Trade. Support guidelines for the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities grant program, and other programs funded with cap and trade auction

proceeds, that ensure that counties are well-positioned to take advantage of these funding opportunities.

4. SB 743 Implementation. Work with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to ensure that the potential use of Vehicle Miles Travelled as a replacement metric for Level of Service for the purpose of CEQA transportation impacts analysis can be feasibly implemented by local governments. Support efforts to ensure that the new metric is applied in appropriate contexts and that funding and technical assistance are available to smooth the implementation process.

#### **Resource Recovery and Waste Management**

1. AB 341 & AB 1826 Implementation. Engage in CalRecycle and the Air Resources Board's process for implementing AB 341 which requires the State to achieve a waste diversion goal of 75% by 2020, and AB 1826 which creates an organic management program in California. Continue to advocate for resources for local governments to develop the necessary infrastructure to implement organics diversion programs.
2. Conversion Technology. Support legislative efforts to advance the development, design and implementation of conversion technologies.
3. Funding for solid waste recovery infrastructure. Alternative to AB 939 fees.

#### **Flood Control**

1. Disaster Funding. Support legislation that would amend Government Code Section 8690.6(b) to increase the amount on the unencumbered balance in the Disaster Response Emergency Operations Account.
2. Regulatory Agency Service Agreements. Support legislation that would allow and encourage state and federal regulatory agencies to offer service agreements with large-volume public entity or utility applicants and permittees to fund additional personnel or contractors needed for expeditious permit processing.
3. Stormwater Funding and Conservation/Lifeline Rates. Support an amendment to the State Constitution that would provide alternative procedures and requirements for funding water service and sewer service independent of any other procedures and requirements in the State Constitution for funding these services. Such an amendment would encompass stormwater and flood control services.
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#### **Surveyor**

1. Surveyor Monument Preservation. Support legislation that would simplify the collection of the Monument Preservation Fund Fee.

### **Federal Priorities**

#### **Transportation**

1. MAP 21 Reauthorization. Advocate on our top priorities for the reauthorization of MAP 21, which was set to expire on September 30, 2014, but which was subsequently extended through May 2015. Consistent with the new policies, advocate on behalf of California's transportation needs, especially the needs of the county road system during the new authorization of the federal surface transportation

funding act, including shoring up the Highway Trust Fund, dedicating funding for all local bridge projects, increased funding for safety programs, including funding and technical assistance for requirements of the National Highway Performance Program on the expanded NHS, and securing a CEQA for NEPA reciprocity Program.

2. Off Set Impacts from Federal Lands. Support continued federal funding to offset impacts to counties from federal lands, such as the Secure Rural Schools program.

### **Flood Control**

1. Clean Water Act. Support legislation that would amend Section 404 of the Clean Water Act to provide a narrow exemption for maintenance activities involving the removal of sediment, debris and vegetation from flood control channels and basins.