

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: March 16-17, 2016

Reference No.: 4.20
Action

From: WILL KEMPTON
Executive Director

Subject: **COMMENTS TO THE DRAFT CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2014**

ISSUE:

Should the Commission provide comments in response to the February 2016 final draft California Transportation Plan (CTP) 2040 prepared by Caltrans?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Commission approve the attached letter for transmittal to Caltrans in response to the February 29, 2016 draft CTP 2040. In summary, the comments address the following:

1. The CTP primarily focuses on reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. While this was the focus of SB 391 (2009), other existing Federal and State statewide plan requirements focus on broader transportation planning areas such as: mobility and accessibility; connectivity; safety and security; and economic development. Commission staff recommends that Caltrans more clearly identify these Federal and State requirements for the development of a statewide transportation plan.
2. To facilitate understanding of how the policy framework of the CTP is implemented, the “Guiding Transportation Policy” section of the Preface should acknowledge the unconstrained nature of the CTP, the statutory limitation prohibiting the inclusion of projects, and explain how the statewide plan interacts with Regional Transportation Plans/Sustainable Community Strategies (RTP/SCS).
3. Minor impacts on the California economy are expected resulting from reduced congestion and improved travel conditions over the CTP planning period. For the next iteration of the CTP, Commission staff recommends that Caltrans continue to refine the economic modeling tools and data available and ensure that necessary strategies are incorporated to support robust economic growth through 2040 and beyond.
4. Technology should be a key component of the transportation system “vision” for 2040. Policy recommendations associated with the implementation of this new technology should be included in all applicable sections of the CTP 2040 and as data sources become available, the GHG

emissions reduction potential associated with the deployment of vehicle to vehicle (V2V) and autonomous vehicle (AV) technology should be considered in future iterations of the plan. In addition, the CTP should aggregate regional information from RTP/SCSs regarding the deployment of V2V and AV technology and infrastructure to illustrate statewide implications and policy considerations if possible.

BACKGROUND:

Pursuant to federal regulation (23 CFR Section 450.214) and state statute (Government Code Sections 14000.6 and 65071 [et al]), Caltrans is required to prepare a statewide long-range transportation plan.

In 2009, SB 391 (2009, Liu) expanded the statutory requirements of the CTP. Specifically, SB 391 directed Caltrans to complete the CTP 2040 by December 31, 2015; and prepare an update every five years thereafter. SB 391 further specified that Caltrans must address how the state will achieve maximum feasible greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions in order to attain a statewide reduction of GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050; taking into consideration the use of alternative fuels, new vehicle technology, tailpipe emission reductions, expansion of public transit, and active transportation.

At its May 2015 meeting, the Commission considered the March 2015 draft of the CTP. At that time, the Commission offered the following comments: 1) ensure consideration of economic impacts; 2) address current and planned efforts to reduce GHG emissions; 3) revise how “road user charge” was discussed in the document; 4) quantify the costs and identify the funding sources to implement the GHG emission reduction strategies; and; 5) acknowledge that road projects that may increase capacity must be strategically planned to address population growth.

Caltrans provided a subsequent update of the CTP development progress at the October 2015 Commission meeting. On December 4, 2015, CalSTA Secretary Brian Kelly sent a letter to the Legislature and the Commission stating that additional time was needed to refine the CTP and the revised CTP would be completed and ready for approval by March 31, 2016.

In the final draft CTP 2040 dated February 29, 2016, CalSTA and Caltrans have re-written portions of the document particularly Chapter 3 (Modeling Theoretical Transportation Scenarios) and Chapter 4 (Achieving Success). Overall, the current version of the CTP took a higher level approach compared to the prior version.

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March ___, 2016

Mr. Malcolm Dougherty
Director, California Department of Transportation
1120 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Director Dougherty,

The California Transportation Commission (Commission) considered the final draft of the California Transportation Plan 2040 (CTP) at its March 16 – 17, 2016 meeting. While we have been concerned about the delayed release of this document, the Commission commends the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and other stakeholders for their extensive efforts in responding to landmark legislation impacting how the state must plan for the future of transportation. The Commission appreciates that Caltrans addressed many of the comments we provided last June regarding the prior draft version of the CTP.

The CTP must plan for multimodal integration of the state's transportation system through 2040 while meeting many objectives, including greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) reduction and other environmental goals, promoting economic vitality, and improving mobility and accessibility for all Californians. The Commission recognizes the complexity and challenges of balancing environmental goals with economic and mobility needs, particularly in a state as large and diverse as California.

Pursuant to SB 486 (DeSaulnier, 2013), the Commission looks forward to working with Caltrans on the development of CTP Guidelines to promote conveyance of the full spectrum of State and Federal requirements for the CTP planning process and plan content. The Commission looks forward to adopting the CTP Guidelines to inform the next iteration of the CTP due in five years. The Commission acknowledges that there is limited ability to further amend this document given the short time frame to finalize the plan. . With the exception of our first comment regarding the clarity of the CTP recommendations, the majority of our comments are primarily intended to inform the development of the CTP Guidelines.

Clarity of CTP Recommendations

The Commission suggests that Caltrans review the policy recommendations in Chapter 4 to ensure they are understandable to a majority of the readers. Some examples of the unclear policy recommendations include:

Goal 2, Policy 1 (page 98) – *“Explore alternatives to traditional transportation funding to support maintenance of the existing system and operational improvements, and professional capacity to develop transformational projects that shift the existing transportation footprint and performance.”* An explanation of the meaning of “professional capacity, existing footprint and performance” should be provided.

Goal 3, Policy 3 (page 103) – *“Support efforts to implement a road pricing strategy with consideration of accounting for equity impacts contingent upon capacity to simultaneously improve transit services.”* Clarification should be provided as to whether the recommendation is intended to support a road charge only if a designated portion of the funds is dedicated to transit.

State and Federal Requirements

To promote a healthy economy, environmental stewardship, and quality of life, the plan must acknowledge and balance all statewide goals and objectives. As required by Senate Bill (SB) 391 (Liu, 2009), the CTP focuses on methods to reduce statewide transportation related GHG emissions. However, objectives related to ensuring mobility, connectivity, and economic development as required by California Government Code Sections 65071 (et seq.) and Federal regulation (i.e. 23 CFR Section 450.214 and 23 USC Section 135) are not as clearly articulated in the plan.

CTP Implementation

To facilitate understanding of how the policy framework of the CTP is implemented, the “Guiding Transportation Policy” section of the Preface should discuss the unconstrained nature of the CTP, specify the statutory limitation prohibiting the inclusion of projects, and explain how the statewide plan interacts with Regional Transportation Plans/Sustainable Community Strategies (RTP/SCS). Additionally, while the modal plans are listed in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 should discuss how those modal plans could be applied in the context of the entire statewide transportation network. For example, the State Highway System section in Chapter 2 would benefit from discussion of the Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP).

Economic Impacts

The CTP 2040 is the first long-range, statewide planning document to consider the economic impacts of implementing the strategies outlined in the plan. The overview provided in Chapter 3 and detailed in Appendix 7 is helpful to identify the scope of the analysis and the modeling tools available. For the next iteration of the CTP, the Commission recommends that Caltrans continue to refine the economic modeling tools and data available and ensure that necessary strategies are incorporated to support robust economic growth through 2040 and beyond.

Mr. Malcolm Dougherty
March _____, 2016

Technology and Innovation – Connected and Autonomous Vehicles

Technology should be a key component of the transportation system vision for 2040. The discussion of innovative technology in the “Opportunities and Challenges” section of Chapter 2 is important given the recent efforts underway within State government to develop regulations for the operation of autonomous vehicles on public roadways. The deployment of connected (V2V) and autonomous (AV) vehicles represents an important emerging area of transportation operations policy that should be highlighted in the CTP 2040 document and future iterations of the plan. Policy recommendations associated with the implementation of this new technology should be included in all applicable sections, and as data sources become available, the GHG emissions reduction potential associated with the deployment of V2V and AV technology should be considered in future iterations of the plan. Additionally it would be helpful if the CTP aggregated regional information from RTP/SCS’s regarding the deployment of V2V and AV technology and infrastructure to illustrate the statewide implications and policy considerations.

The CTP 2040 references Governor Brown’s goal to reduce petroleum use by up to 50 percent by 2030 with targets for 1.5 million Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV) in California by 2025. The CTP 2040 states that California is poised to meet these goals with over 160,000 ZEVs on California’s roads today. However, without more aggressive action, the Commission is concerned that achieving the goal of 1.5 million ZEVs in California by 2025 will not be met. As a result, the CTP 2040 should also refer to the anticipated release of the Governor’s updated Zero Emission Action Plan and call for greater investment in visible, convenient electric vehicle charging facilities adjacent to state routes and other key strategic locations as an immediate measure to support this important environmental objective.

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide comments for consideration. If you have any questions please contact Garth Hopkins, Deputy Director, at (916) 653-3148.

Sincerely,

BOB ALVARADO
Chair

cc: Commissioners, California Transportation Commission
Brian Kelly, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency
Kome Ajise, Caltrans Chief Deputy Director