

Caltrans Transit Policy

Josh Pulverman, Chief, Office of Transit Planning
Division of Mass Transportation



Caltrans Key Policies

Director's Policy 36

Road Safety

Sets a vision to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries on California's roadways by 2050. This vision includes eliminating race, age, ability, and mode-based disparities in road safety outcomes.

Director's Policy 37

Complete Streets

"All transportation projects funded or overseen by Caltrans will provide comfortable, convenient, and connected Complete Streets facilities for people walking, biking, and taking transit or passenger rail unless an exception is documented and approved."

NEW Director's Policy

Transit

Provides Department-wide direction for Caltrans transit activities. Commits Caltrans to construct and improve transit infrastructure on the State Highway System (SHS). Commits to partnering with transit agencies to develop and implement projects that impact or improve transit on the SHS and to lead innovation of transit data and technology that improves planning and operational analysis.

Director's Policy DP-40 Overview

Purpose

- Elevate and integrate public transit within the State Highway System (SHS) to support climate, equity, safety, health, and community goals.
- Align with DP-37 (Complete Streets) DP-36 (Road Safety), and statewide safety and sustainability directives.

Core Commitments

- Incorporate transit priority facilities (e.g. transit-only lanes, queue jumps, signal priority) into SHS where feasible.
- Strengthen collaboration with transit agencies, local governments, tribes, advocacy groups, and underserved communities.
- Use data and technology partnerships to improve transit planning and performance analysis.

Intended Outcomes

- Improve access to transit and identify SHS transit infrastructure needs through District Transit Plans.
- Greater multimodal integration between transit, rail, walking and biking.

Key Definitions

- Transit Priority Facilities: Infrastructure enabling faster, more reliable bus and transit operations.
- Transit-Supportive Facilities: Ped/bike access, multimodal connections, and infrastructure supporting transit stops.
- Underserved Communities: Census blocks meeting low-income or tribal land criteria per SB 960 and Caltrans.

DP-40 Transit Policy Goals

- ✓ Facilitate faster & more efficient transit.
- ✓ Build transit priority infrastructure on the SHS.
- ✓ Build transit supportive facilities on the SHS.
- ✓ Increase transit planning.
- ✓ Develop data to support planning and project delivery.



Next Steps – Transit Implementation Plan

Action	Completion Date
Mobility Hub guidance	Published
Managed Lanes guidance and Bus-on-Shoulder guidance	Under development
*Release of Transit Policy	February 2 nd , 2026
Focus Groups	March – April 2026
Transit Implementation Plan	Fall 2026
*Project Intake Process/Report	Early 2027
*Transit Guidance with Performance Metrics	Early 2027
District Transit Plans	Winter 2027
*Transit Priority Design Guidance	Summer 2028

*Indicates an item related to SB 960.



Transit Policy Mentions of Equity

Section 1 of SB 960 states:

- (e) The Department of Transportation adopted Director’s Policy 37 (DP-37) in 2021 to establish the department’s “organizational priority to encourage and maximize walking, biking, transit, and passenger rail as a strategy to not only meet state climate, health, equity, and environmental goals but also to foster socially and economically vibrant, thriving, and resilient communities. To achieve this vision, [the department] will maximize the use of design flexibility to provide context-sensitive solutions and networks for travelers of all ages and abilities.”

From

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB960

- (h) Making buses faster and more reliable addresses inequities embedded in the current transit system. When transit is given priority on California’s roadways, buses are even more well-suited to deliver many more people to destinations in a less stressful, less polluting, and less costly manner than private vehicles.

From

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB960

Underserved Communities

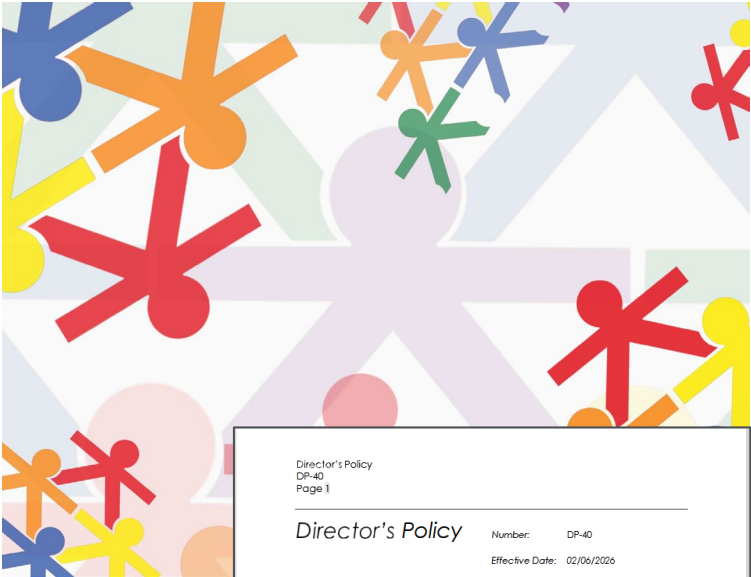
Legislative Requirements

SB 960 directs Caltrans to establish a definition of “underserved communities” for the purpose of inclusive engagement during the planning and delivery of projects with complete streets facilities funded by the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP).

Caltrans Definition (as defined in Caltrans Director’s Policy 40)

Caltrans defines “Underserved Communities” within the context of SB 960 and the Caltrans Equity Index (EQI) as census blocks meeting either of the following criteria:

- Low-income status: Census blocks with a median household income at or below 80% of the statewide median household income, OR a median household income at or below the county low-income limit established by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.
- Tribal Land Status: Census block within or touching Tribal land, as identified in the SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities definition.



Director's Policy
DP-40
Page 1

Director's Policy Number: DP-40
Effective Date: 02/06/2026
Supersedes: N/A
Responsible Program: Transit and Rail Programs / Planning and Modal Programs / Project Delivery / Maintenance and Operations / Asset Management / Sustainability

Title Transit
Policy

Public transit provides vital mobility to many Californians daily, central to powering our state's society and economy. As outlined in the Director's Complete Streets Policy DP-37, it is California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) organizational priority to encourage and maximize transit as a strategy to not only meet state climate, health, equity, and environmental outcomes but also to foster socially and economically vibrant, thriving, and resilient communities. Furthermore, public transit use results in significant safety benefits for all road users and aid California to achieve its goal of eliminating fatalities and serious injuries, as outlined in Director's Road Safety Policy DP-36 and the Secretary's Policy 01-25 on Road Safety.

To this end, Caltrans supports, and, to the extent feasible and practicable, incorporates transit priority facilities within the State Highway System (SHS).

Caltrans partners with local agencies, Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPA's) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) to plan, build, and maintain Caltrans transit priority facilities and transit supportive infrastructure on the SHS to the extent feasible and practicable using available and eligible funding.

Caltrans will establish metrics for transit that strengthen Caltrans' ability to evaluate and measure the performance of and need for transit on the SHS.

"Improving lives and communities through transportation."



Focus Group Workshops



Project delivery &
Implementation Plan



Transit design



Infrastructure & funding



Performance metrics



Equity



Maintenance



Permits

Focus Group Meetings – Equity



- Community engagement playbook
- Equity work at Caltrans
- Equity considerations for transit
- Ability to provide real-time information in rural areas



Caltrans Transit Advisory Committee



- 20 external members
- Goals
 - Input and recommendations on Caltrans guidance and policies
 - Provide community-based perspective on transit related challenges or opportunities
 - Advise on data collection and best practices to identify and meet transit needs
- Call for applicants due April 30, 2026
- First meeting TBD Q2 2026

Questions?

Josh Pulverman

Chief, Office of Transit Planning

Josh.pulverman@dot.ca.gov

office.of.transit.planning@dot.ca.gov

