



Revolutionizing Regional Planning We Can Turn the Tide on Car-Centered Development

Law Creates Opportunity for Transportation and Land Use Reform

Thanks to SB 375, California's major regions were assigned transportation-related emission reduction targets for 2020 and 2035. These regions must now work to meet those targets by integrating transportation, land use, and housing planning into one "Sustainable Communities Strategy". What this means is that the same state where the car culture was born in the 1950's could usher in an era in which world-class transportation and walkable communities become the norm, not the exception. That's because if regions *actually* do everything possible to meet emissions targets in their Sustainable Communities Strategies, they will have to make huge changes in how transportation funds are spent and where development happens.

But that's only if the regions really look at different options for land use patterns, transportation investments, and supportive policies – and are willing to make tough choices that may not be politically popular.

TransForm Pushes the Bay Area to be Bold and Set a High Bar

Our first goal is to ensure that when the Bay Area adopts its Sustainable Communities Strategy in 2013, it sets the bar for other regions. (The Bay Area's Regional Transportation Plan, which has been central to our advocacy work since our founding, is being folded into the Sustainable Communities Strategy.) This spring, we launched a major organizing effort as a result.

First, like we have always done with the Regional Transportation Plan, we brought together an incredibly diverse range of organizations to develop a detailed, shared platform on the projects and policies we want to see in the Sustainable Communities Strategy. We worked especially closely with Greenbelt Alliance on this process, which is now the centerpiece of our advocacy work. We're already gaining traction on the proposal in the platform to create rewards for cities that do the most to accommodate more housing near transit for people of all incomes.

We've also been a lead partner in *You Choose Bay Area*, a fantastic effort led by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation to get people in all nine Bay Area counties actively engaged in the decisions

surrounding the Sustainable Communities Strategy. Some Tea Party supporters decided to use these public workshops as an opportunity to air their grievances about a range of topics, which was interesting! But the vast majority of people who came spoke out for the things that support a future with affordable, abundant public transportation and walkable, bikable communities – overwhelming the Tea Party members and setting the tone for the entire planning process. We will build on these sentiments in our grassroots organizing over the next year.

We have also been working closely with Public Advocates and Urban Habitat to push the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to ensure that this planning process addresses a fundamental need: that the Bay Area’s low-income workers should be able to live near their jobs. Specifically, we want MTC to do a “scenario” (a version of the Sustainable Communities Strategy) that maximizes social equity benefits. We want them to determine what it will *really* take to ensure low-income people can get to jobs, services, and schools without a car – plus improve air quality and bike/ped infrastructure in low-income neighborhoods.

At a meeting last month and after testimonies from bus riders, faith leaders, and local youth, MTC agreed to modify one of the scenarios to allocate more affordable housing to job-rich, transit-connected cities. We’ll build on successes like this one as we continue working to make the Bay Area’s Sustainable Communities Strategy revolutionary.

Bringing Big Wins to Other Regions

Of course, we don’t just want the Bay Area to be the only region that’s changing how transportation planning and funding happens. We want every region in California to harness the opportunity SB 375 creates to turn the tide on sprawl and redefine transportation in terms of sustainability and access for all. As such, we’ve been bringing what we’ve learned and won to other regions.

Over the past year, we’ve been working intensively with San Diego advocates to move the region away from their historic approach of massive road expansions. We helped them craft a series of recommendations for their Sustainable Communities Strategy and now some of these are being funded by the \$800 million saved in reducing the Interstate 5 widening from 6 lanes to 4 lanes. Hundreds of millions of dollars will improve bike/ped safety near transit and expand an incentive program for transit-oriented development (two ideas exported straight from the Bay Area!). We’re also bringing this kind of thinking to Southern California and the Central Valley through the incredible work of ClimatePlan, a coalition of environmental, social justice, and public health organizations from across California that want to change how the state plans for future growth. TransForm co-founded, fiscally sponsors, and provides programmatic support for ClimatePlan.

Meet Manolo González-Estay, Our New Policy and Campaign Powerhouse

We are thrilled to welcome our new Transportation Policy Director, Manolo González-Estay, who will lead TransForm’s efforts on the Sustainable Communities Strategy. We are confident his incredible skills, experience, and passion will give incredible momentum to this critical effort.

Before joining TransForm this month, Manolo gave trainings on public participation and Title VI/civil rights issues as part of the National Transit Institute (NTI). Before NTI, Manolo spent nearly 10 years as a transportation consultant and working on political campaigns in Denver, Colorado. This included work on public involvement and environmental justice for one of the new rail corridors in Denver and several statewide initiative campaigns. Manolo also taught Spanish to now-President Obama.





State Public Transportation Funding in Crisis Our Presence in Sacramento is Yielding Solutions

Public Transportation Has Been the Piggy Bank for State's Budget Woes

Over the past decade, billions of state dollars marked for California's public transportation have been redirected for other uses. Last year, \$1 billion alone was redirected. You can see the impacts everywhere: service cuts, fare increases, and too many neglected buses and trains. For those who depend on public transportation – like low-income people, seniors, and people with disabilities – getting around is harder than ever.

Our Bold New Campaign Demands That Decision Makers *Invest in Transit*

In response, TransForm launched a bold new campaign called *Invest in Transit* based out of our satellite Sacramento office. This campaign is building a powerful statewide movement of health advocates, environmental groups, labor unions, business leaders, and transit riders (especially those most impacted by cuts) to demand that our leaders invest in transit.

More than 30 diverse groups have already signed on as partners, including: the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Natural Resources Defense Council, Move LA, Move San Diego, BART, VTA, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 302, California Transit Association, Smart Growth America, Coalition for Clean Air, Healthy Communities Network California, Coalition on Regional Equity, and United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County.

The campaign is focused on two goals. The first is protecting and expanding designated state funding for public transportation. Happily, and thanks to a lot of great partners, we successfully protected the \$300 million for public transportation agencies in this year's budget from being redirected. But those funds are inadequate. We must expand funding in future years to ensure transit runs safely and sufficiently meets the needs of a rapidly growing population. We will expand this effort in 2012 and beyond by adding a range of strategies to put pressure on our leaders, like statewide lobby days at the Capitol and increased media outreach.

Secondly, we want local and regional entities to have more authority to establish and manage their own funding sources for public transportation. State funding isn't going to be enough to maintain our current system, much less build the system we need for the future. If cities and regions want to ask voters to approve new fees to fund public transportation, they should have that freedom so they can invest in transit. We're working behind the scenes in the Capitol right now to get traction on new legislation that would make this possible.



The Federal Transportation Bill Protecting Funds for Walking, Biking, and Public Transportation

House's Latest Draft Bill is Devastating

A new federal transportation bill has been in the works for nearly two years now. But in those two years, things have changed a lot in Washington: enough that it wasn't entirely shocking when House Transportation Committee Chair Congressman Mica released an outline of the House version of the bill that would cut *all* dedicated funding for bicycling, walking, and intercity rail capital projects – plus reduced overall transportation spending by a devastating 30%.

This approach is unacceptable in an era where our transit systems, roads, and bridges are literally falling apart, plus the fact that 12% of trips are made on foot and bicycle. We have been working closely with the national Transportation For America campaign to send a message about just how critical transportation funding is for our economy and quality of life with the ultimate target of California's own Senator Boxer, chair of the Senate Transportation Committee.

Building Support Statewide Yields Promising Results from Senator Boxer

Senator Boxer supports walking, biking, and public transportation funding... but has also wanted to deliver a bipartisan bill from the Senate. We have been building incredible support from Californians for the Senator to push for as bold of a bill as she can. We've co-released reports with Transportation For America on the state of America's bridges and how our senior population will increasingly be trapped without better public transportation, which received media coverage across California. We have had a constant stream of emails and calls to the Senator from constituents for many months now.

Most importantly, we have been turning out business and health leaders at key hearings plus arranging meetings between Senator Boxer's staff and community stakeholders to ensure she is hearing from a range of perspectives. We also brought our message to Washington as part of a national convening and advocacy day (see photo of TransForm's executive director Stuart Cohen with the California Transportation For America organizers and partners from Move San Diego and Greenbelt Alliance).

Efforts Will Continue as Debate Plays Out in Washington

Thankfully, Senator Boxer has been listening and is actively pushing for a bill that's very different from Congressman Mica's. Although a complete Senate version of the transportation bill hasn't been released yet, the details so far indicate maintaining current levels of funding (including for bicycling, walking, and intercity rail capital projects). However, given the showdown regarding the debt ceiling, it is possible that the transportation bill will be where the next big clash happens. We will continue to keep the pressure on during this critical phase.