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December 4, 2024

Ms. Tanisha Taylor, Executive Director
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, MS 52
Sacramento, CA 95815

Dear Ms. Taylor,

I write regarding Action Item 4.6 at the December 5-6, 2024 Commission meeting: proposed adoption of the 2024 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) Guidelines.

I appreciate that the proposed guidelines have been updated since their presentation at the October 17-18 Commission meeting to include references to SB 960, the landmark Complete Streets law I authored and Governor Newsom signed into law earlier this year. SB 960 sets various requirements on Caltrans with respect to complete streets facilities – including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit priority facilities – when implementing the SHOPP. Various provisions of SB 960 go into effect on January 1, 2025. It is important that the 2024 guidelines cite code sections added or amended by SB 960 that relate to the SHOPP or related planning documents, such as the State Highway System Management Plan (SHSMP) or the Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP), given the January 1, 2025 effective date.

Proposed amendments to guidelines sections 10, 18, and 57 note that Caltrans must comply with newly added Government Code (GOV) 14526.8, as well as amended Streets and Highways Code (SHC) 164.6 and GOV 14526.6. These sections set various public engagement, transparency, governance, investment, and reporting requirements for SHOPP project development, while clarifying SHSMP and TAMP complete streets requirements. While the guidelines note that Caltrans must comply with the cited code sections, they do not provide guidance as to how the department shall comply (other than citing the text of the statute). Additional engagement with Caltrans and the Commission will be necessary to clarify how the department interprets and plans to implement these key provisions, among others. An agenda item regarding SB 960 implementation at a future commission meeting – with Caltrans present – would be advisable in order to obtain this clarity.

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Areas for further discussion related to the SHOPP include, but are not limited to, clarifying when and in which document the 4-year SHOPP complete streets investment targets required by SB 960 are to be set, whether or not the department's director plans to delegate their authority to approve exceptions to its complete streets design guidance, and if so, what stakeholder consultation process the department shall engage in to set guidance for those approvals.

Effective and rapid SB 960 implementation is critical at a time of increasing climate emissions, financial pressure on public transportation systems, and rising traffic deaths. Thank you for your consideration of these guidelines, and I look forward to continued engagement with the Commission and department on effectively implementing all of SB 960's provisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Wiener". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott Wiener
Senator, 11th District