California Statewide Local Streets & Roads Needs Assessment 2021

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the 2020 California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment Report about? Why is it important?

- The goal of this report is to educate the public and policy- and decision-makers at all levels of government about the infrastructure investments needed to provide California with a seamless, safe, and efficient multi-modal transportation system.
- It presents future funding needs to maintain California's local streets, roads, bridges, sidewalks, and other essential transportation components in a safe condition.
- The findings can be used to develop solutions that address our critical infrastructure needs. The report discusses the economic and public-safety impacts of delaying local street and road maintenance, which can help decision-makers understand trade-offs when contemplating policy and funding decisions.

What are the key findings of the 2020 report?

- The most significant finding of the 2020 Report is that Senate Bill (SB) 1 has accomplished its first goal – it has arrested the historical deterioration of the local transportation network; the average condition of pavements has improved slightly from 65 to 66 (as rated on the Pavement Condition Index, a scale of zero [failed] to 100 [excellent]).
- SB 1 has also enabled cities and counties to make life-saving safety improvements; expand pedestrian, bicycle and transit access and opportunities; and reduce the funding shortfall.
- However, bridges are still aging – at current funding levels, local bridges will need to be in service for more than 200 years, or 3 times their intended lifespan.
- The needs of the local transportation infrastructure are estimated at $118.7 billion over the next 10 years. With SB 1, the funding available is $54.7 billion, resulting in a shortfall of $64 billion.

How large is the transportation network?

- Cities and counties maintain more than 144,000 centerline miles of local streets and roads. This represents 85 percent of the state's road network.
- Cities and counties also own and maintain 12,300 bridges – almost half of the bridges in California.

Why is the local street and bridge network important?

- Local streets and bridges hold the state's entire transportation network together. From the moment we open our front door to drive to work, bike to school, or walk to the bus stop, we depend on safe, reliable local streets and roads.
- Police, fire, and emergency medical services require safe, reliable roads to respond quickly to emergencies. A few minutes delay can be a matter of life and death.
- California is a leader in the fight against global warming. Cities and counties are doing their part to build livable communities that provide multi-modal transportation options to walk, bike, and take transit to move around. This reduces stress on our local roads, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and promotes public health benefits of an active lifestyle.

FAQs

- The local street and road system is critical to California's economy. The "last mile" that every package travels from rail, airports, and seaports occurs on the local system. A functioning, well-maintained local network promotes economic sustainability and vitality.
- Investing in infrastructure creates good-paying jobs and contributes to stable communities.

What is SB 1 and why is it important?

- In April 2017, the California State Legislature and Governor Jerry Brown agreed on a bipartisan, long-term, robust and multi-modal transportation funding solution to help close the funding gap and repair and improve the state's transportation system. SB 1 – the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 – generates over $5 billion annually for state highways, local streets and roads, bridges, transit systems, active transportation and key freight and trade corridors.
- Cities and counties receive $1.5 billion annually; this means $15 billion over the next 10 years in additional revenue for local agencies to repair and replace aging bridges, address safety issues, and repair and maintain streets and roads.

Is SB 1 enough to address the funding shortfall?

- SB 1 was intended as a first step to arrest and stabilize the historical deterioration in local roads and bridges. Although it is a significant source of new revenues, it will not completely bridge the gap.
- The needs of the local transportation infrastructure are estimated at $118.7 billion over the next 10 years. With SB 1, the funding available is $54.7 billion, resulting in a shortfall of $64 billion.

Who participated in this study?

- 426 of California's 482 cities and 58 counties participated in this study, and their responses provided data on more than 143,000 centerline-miles of local streets and roads. This represents 99.9 percent of the total local street network!

Who contributed financially to this study?

- Appendix A of the 2020 report lists the agencies who contributed financially to this study. They include:
  - 57 out of 58 counties
  - 320 out of 482 cities
  - 37 of 48 California's regional transportation planning agencies

Are state highways included in this study?

- No. Only the local transportation system is included in this study. This system includes more than 143,000 centerline miles of roads owned and maintained by cities and counties.

FAQs

Are other modes of transportation included?

- Yes. The study also includes facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians. The pavement component of this report also contemplates other transportation modes that use roadways, such as buses, taxis, and heavy trucks.

What are the essential transportation components?

- The local transportation system isn't just roads and bridges. All modes of transportation are included, such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Also, safety components such as traffic signals, signs, streetlights, and stormwater facilities are included in this study.

Where are the worst countywide pavement conditions?

- Tuolumne, Mendocino, Lake, San Benito, Madera, Sierra, Shasta, Tehama, Amador and Calaveras (in order of condition).

Where are the best countywide pavement conditions?

- Orange, San Francisco, San Bernardino, Plumas, Contra Costa, San Diego, Santa Clara, Riverside, San Mateo and Ventura (in order of condition).

Why is there a funding shortfall?

- An aging infrastructure, rising construction costs, and new regulatory requirements all contribute to the shortfall. In addition, the purchasing power of existing revenue streams such as the gas tax is declining. Budget constraints have precluded much-needed maintenance. Other factors such as heavier vehicles; better vehicle fuel-efficiency; increasing traffic; and the need to accommodate alternative modes of transportation like buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians, place increased demands on roads even as funding continues to decline.

Who should I contact for more information?

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