

Date of Hearing: April 28, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Lori D. Wilson, Chair

AB 1343 (Gallagher) – As Amended April 21, 2025

SUBJECT: Local alternative transportation improvement program: Feather River crossing

SUMMARY: Authorizes the development of a local alternative transportation improvement program (LATIP) in Sutter and Yuba counties. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Authorizes the City of Yuba City and the Counties of Sutter and Yuba, acting jointly with a transportation planning agency, to develop and file with the California Transportation Commission (CTC) a LATIP that addresses transportation problems and opportunities in the area that was to be served by the planned state facilities.
- 2) Directs the proceeds from the sale of properties previously purchased for the state-planned project, less any needed reimbursements and costs to sell the properties, to be allocated by the CTC to fund regional priorities.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Allows the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to acquire any real property that it considers necessary for state highway purposes. (Streets and Highways Code Section (SHC) 104)
- 2) Allows Caltrans, whenever it determines that any real property acquired by the state for highway purposes is no longer necessary for those purposes, to sell or exchange it in the manner and upon terms, standards, and conditions established by CTC. (SHC 118)
- 3) Requires Caltrans, to the greatest extent possible, to offer to sell or exchange excess real property within one year from the date that it determines the property is excess. (SHC 118.6)
- 4) Generally requires state and local agencies, prior to disposing of excess lands, first to offer property for sale or lease to local public agencies for public purposes. (SHC 118.6)
- 5) Directs the proceeds from the sale of excess property to be deposited first to the State Highway Account and then transferred to the Transportation Debt Service Fund to pay debt service on general obligation transportation bonds. (SHC 104.6)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: Caltrans purchased 138 acres of property in the 1990's, valued at roughly \$7 million at the time of purchase to construct planned state transportation facilities to cross the Feather River. The state project was proposed to be built at Bogue Road and would have crossed the river to connect to the Feather River Parkway. Subsequently, Caltrans started the environmental review process for the project but never completed it. An initial value analysis study indicated the cost of the crossing was exceptionally high due to the need to raise the roadway out of the floodplain so that it would provide continuous access during flood events. As a result of this study, Caltrans shelved the project and the project has languished since. Caltrans

has determined that most of the property previously purchased for the original project is excess and is holding on to the properties in anticipation of the local agencies needing them for a locally developed Feather River crossing project. This bill would facilitate a Feather River crossing project Yuba City and Yuba and Sutter Counties are proposing to replace the project that Caltrans is no longer pursuing.

This bill authorizes the development of a LATIP in Sutter and Yuba counties. Regional transportation agencies and local governments typically develop and implement a LATIP in collaboration with the CTC. These programs often align with regional transportation plans and address regional needs. They can fund a wide range of projects including alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle use such as transit and bike lanes.

Like the Feather River bridge project, there are other projects in the state that Caltrans has considered, yet ultimately they have similarly languished and left property unused for decades. To remedy one of these projects, SB 1711 (Holmdahl), Chapter 799, Statutes of 1982 was passed to allow local transportation authorities to develop LATIP including the State Route (SR) 238 Hayward Bypass project. SB 1711 required local transportation authorities to submit an alternative plan to CTC by January 1, 1986, after which the commission was barred from approving any alternative plan. SB 296 (Lockyer), Chapter 494, Statutes of 1985, extended the deadline to January 1, 1988. Both these deadlines went unmet and SB 509 (Figueroa), Chapter 611, Statutes of 2004, established a new deadline of January 1, 2010.

AB 1462 (Torrico), Chapter 619, Statutes of 2005, added SR 84 to provisions providing for a LATIP in Alameda County. SB 791 (Corbett), Chapter 705, Statutes of 2008, authorized the use of revenues from sales of excess properties for projects in the LATIP that are also in the local voter-approved transportation sales tax measure, subject to approval by Caltrans. Ultimately, the CTC rescinded the adopted SR 238 freeway adoption, thereby closing the books on that state project.

This bill authorizes a LATIP for the Feather River crossing, much like the previously authorized LATIP process to replace the stalled SR 238 Hayward Bypass project. Furthermore, this bill authorizes the Caltrans' excess property to be sold and the proceeds to be directed to the fund regional priorities

According to the author, “In the 1990’s, the California Department of Transportation purchased several properties in Yuba and Sutter counties as right-of-way (ROW) in order to build a third bridge across the Feather River. Currently, there are two other crossings. One is the Twin Cities Memorial Bridge, and the other is on the Feather River Bridge at Colusa Avenue. These crossings are less than a mile apart, and leave much of the southern part of the cities underserved. Unfortunately, due to lack of funding, Caltrans is no longer pursuing the bridge project and is planning on selling the ROW properties as excess property. AB 1343 would allow Yuba City and Yuba/Sutter counties to keep funds from the sale of properties that the Department of Transportation originally acquired in order to do a feasibility study on a new location for the third bridge.”

In support, Yuba City writes, “Unfortunately, due to lack of funding, Caltrans is no longer pursuing the bridge project and is planning to sell the ROW properties as excess property. Under current law, proceeds from the sale of excess property are returned to the State Highway Account. AB 1343 would allow Yuba City and Yuba and Sutter Counties to develop and file with the California Transportation Commission, an alternative to the state bridge project that is no longer being pursued.”

Previous legislation. AB 810 (Gallagher of 2017) was identical to this bill. *This bill was vetoed by Governor Brown because of the bill's General Fund impact.*

AB 2730 (Alejo of 2016) was identical to this bill, and would have directed proceeds from the sale of property in Monterey County to other highway projects in the State Highway 101 corridor in Monterey County. *This bill was vetoed by Governor Brown because of the bill's General Fund impact.*

SB 416 (Liu), Chapter 468, Statutes of 2013, directed the revenue from the sale of surplus properties in the SR 710 corridor in Los Angeles County to local transportation improvements.

SB 791 (Corbett), Chapter 705, Statutes of 2008, authorized the use of revenues from sales of excess properties for projects in the LATIP.

AB 1462 (Torrico), Chapter 619, Statutes of 2005, added SR 84 to provisions providing for the LATIP in Alameda County.

SB 509 (Figueroa), Chapter 611, Statutes of 2004, revived the LATIP process and established a new deadline of January 1, 2010.

SB 296 (Lockyer), Chapter 494, Statutes of 1985, extended the deadline to submit the LATIP to January 1, 1988.

SB 1711 (Holmdahl), Chapter 799, Statutes of 1982, allowed local transportation authorities to develop a LATIP for the SR 238 project by January 1, 1986.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Yuba City

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Julia Kingsley / TRANS. / (916) 319-2093