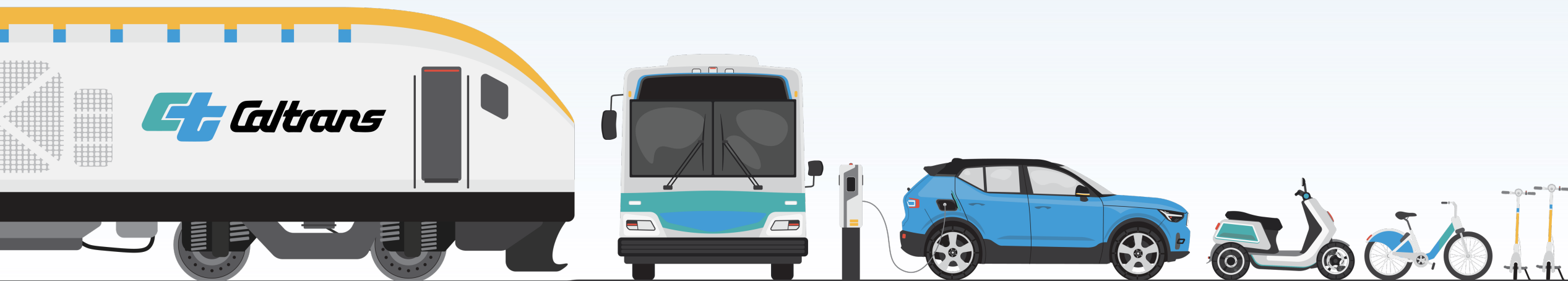




Caltrans Integrated Mobility

Connecting the dots on transportation innovation across California, the U.S., and the world.

January 7th, 2025





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Mobility Headlines

Transportation news from around
the globe



U.S. supreme court declines to hear challenge to CA emissions standards waiver, preserving CA's unique power for now...

December 16th 2024

California leads the U.S. in establishing policies that accelerate transportation electrification. In part, this is because of unique “preemption waivers” granted to California by the U.S. EPA starting in 1967. This provision allows state regulators to enforce emissions standards for vehicles stricter than those put in place by the Federal government, allowing California to make bold policy commitments like phasing out new gas vehicle sales by 2035.

California’s unique authority has drawn criticism from conservative voices, including the oil and gas industry, who appealed a lower court ruling earlier this year that upheld California’s rights. In declining to hear the full case, the Supreme Court has upheld the current status quo, though Trump is likely to bring additional challenges once he takes office, potentially repeating his repeal of the waiver during his first term in 2019.



Ho Chi Minh City opens its first subway line, celebrating end of years-long project and potential relief for crushing traffic.

December 23rd 2024

Ho Chi Minh City, the largest city in Vietnam, was among Asia's largest cities without a dedicated metro system. That was until this month, when locals gathered to celebrate the inaugural trip on the city's first \$1.7b metro line.

The project took nearly 20 years and suffered numerous setbacks and budget increases, from an initial planned opening in 2018. A significant portion of the costs were underwritten by the Japanese government.

Until the opening of Line 1, Ho Chi Minh's nearly 10 million residents relied only on the city's famously congested road network. The city's narrow streets are most navigated by motorbikes (there are nearly 9 motorbikes per 10 inhabitants), but increasing tourist traffic, trucking, and taxis have brought many streets to a consistent standstill.

The city plans for six additional lines, though funding from the central government remains uncertain.



A train pulls up to the platform at Suoi Tien station, the last stop of Line 1

Photographer: Maika Elan/Bloomberg

Sources: [Nikkei Asia](#) [Bloomberg](#)

Paris-Berlin high speed rail line opens to fanfare, though some question whether the 8hr route will unseat air travel.

December 24th 2024

French SNCF and German Deutsche Bahn have partnered to offer a new InterCity Express (ICE) service between Paris and Berlin, cutting nearly 5 hours off the current fastest train option for the cross-continental trip. The new daytime service will offer over 300,000 seats per year and utilizes existing tracks through Frankfurt and Strasbourg.

While the 8-hour ride is still longer than the air travel alternative, the French and German project sponsors are betting that enough Europeans now prioritize low-emission trips over travel time to make the route viable.

Across Europe, high speed rail travel has grown dramatically in recent years, and the EU has committed €5.4bn to help double passenger volumes from today by 2030. France has outlawed domestic flights that can be replaced by rail trips under 2.5 hours, and according to the executive director of the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), "there's currently more demand than there is supply," spurring ambitious rail construction throughout the EU.



Gare De L'Est Station, where the first train departed to Berlin.

Sources: [Le Monde](#) [The Gaurdian](#) [National Geographic](#)

Boston's MBTA says goodbye to "slow zones" in 2025 as agency completes ambitious track improvement program.

December 23rd 2024

For the first time in 20 years, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's entire T network is free of "slow zones," where train speeds are reduced due to track conditions in need of maintenance or repair.

Since late 2023 the authority has undertaken an all-hands effort to fast-track maintenance, removing over 220 individual areas of speed restriction and replacing over 250,000 feet of tracks. Thanks to the resulting speed increases, it's estimated that Bostonians will now save 2.4 million minutes of travel time every weekday. Every line is now running as fast or faster compared to 2023 before the program began, with some lines moving over 35% faster on average.

To celebrate reaching "awesome milestone" which will help the MBTA shift focus to proactive maintenance that avoids future slow zones, Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey gathered with MBTA staff and union representatives just before Christmas, sending off a festively decorated train to travel on the newly-unimpeded tracks.



Gov. Healey addresses the crowd at the ceremony on Dec. 23rd.

California E-Bike incentives program launches to 100k applications in 45 minutes.

December 20th, 2024

Long-awaited, the first installment of the California Air Resource Board's e-bike incentive program launched last month to subsidize purchases of e-bikes for income-qualified Californians.

The program launched in partnership with over 20 community-based organizations across the state, who are helping spread the word about incentives among California's diverse communities and supporting low-income individuals to submit applications.

Despite expected capacity for about 1500 vouchers in the first installment of \$3 million, the application portal received nearly 100,000 applications in the first 45 minutes. A spokesperson CARB noted that "the first round of the launch points to an incredible demand for alternative forms of transportation and a willingness to use cleaner mobility options," and added that the technical difficulties some applicants experienced due to surging volume would be addressed in future rounds. The program has so far been allocated \$31 million.

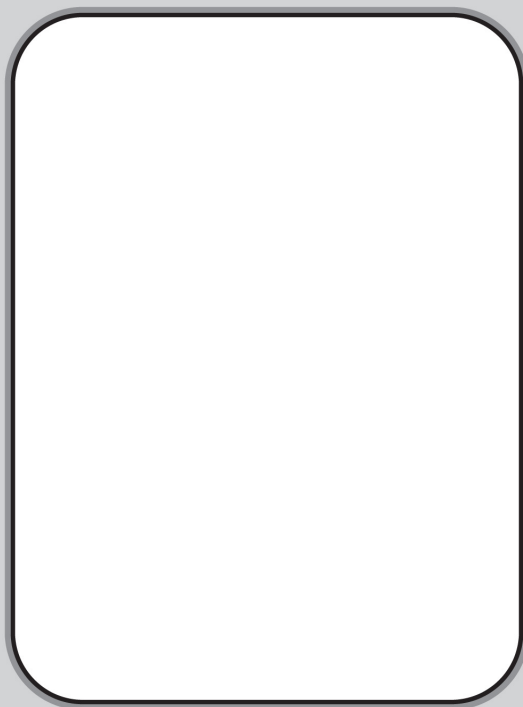


The first e-bike incentive application window OPENS on
December 18th at 6pm PST

**Up to
\$2,000**



EXIT



Questions, feedback, or have a topic you would like to know more about? Please reach out to isaac.sonnenfeldt@rebelgroup.com

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