



July 2, 2025

The Honorable Scott Wiener
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 6510
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 445 (Wiener) Sustainable Transportation Projects: Permitting.
Notice of OPPOSITION *(As amended 6/30/2025)*

Dear Senator Wiener,

The League of California Cities regrettably must oppose SB 445 (as amended on June 30), which seeks to create a new state permitting scheme for local projects. While we share the goal of advancing sustainable transportation, the bill as written introduces sweeping and problematic changes that would significantly impair our ability to manage public infrastructure, ensure worker and public safety, and coordinate fairly across all critical infrastructure sectors.

SB 445 proposes expediting certain sustainable transportation projects by drastically altering approval and coordination processes. However, the timeframes imposed in the bill are highly prescriptive and impractical. They would require local agencies to respond within rigid, accelerated windows that do not reflect the complexity of infrastructure coordination, environmental review, and public engagement necessary for responsible project delivery.

The aggressive and arbitrary statutory timelines are complex and would only stymie the very collaboration between agencies and project applicants that the bill purports to bridge. Failure to meet notification and review deadlines would result in automatic default of a decision, potentially ignoring broader infrastructure impacts or unresolved technical issues. Further, the bill transfers key decision-making authority from local governments to external entities, including transit districts and the California State Transportation Agency (via an unknown arbitrator (whose decision is immune to any appeals process)). This shift would effectively sideline cities from infrastructure projects within their own jurisdictions. The result would be a near-total erosion of control over assets we are obligated to maintain and steward on behalf of our communities.

Most concerning, the bill appears to grant project proponents — public or private — total authority to move forward with projects that could significantly alter or relocate critical infrastructure such as water, wastewater, and power systems, within the public right of way, without meaningful consultation or resolution with the affected city. This undermines essential protections for worker safety, service continuity, and environmental integrity.



While Cal Cities supports sustainable transportation and climate goals, we cannot support legislation that sacrifices thoughtful planning, public safety, and equitable infrastructure prioritization in the name of speed. SB 445, in its current form, is unworkable and sets a dangerous precedent for undermining local authority and infrastructure integrity.

We urge you to reconsider this measure and work with local governments to craft solutions that balance the need for sustainable transportation improvements with the complex realities of infrastructure coordination and community impact.

For these reasons, Cal Cities regrettably must oppose **SB 445 and request that it become a two-year bill**. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Damon Conklin, Legislative Advocate, at DConklin@calcities.org

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Conklin", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Damon Conklin
Legislative Advocate

Cc: The Honorable Scott Wiener
The Honorable Members, Assembly Committee on Transportation
Farra Bracht, Chief Consultant, Assembly Transportation Committee
Daniel Ballon, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus