



Planning, Policy  
and  
Programming

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**Project Title:**  
A Smart Growth Calculator

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**Task Manager:**  
Kayo Lao  
Associate Transportation Planner  
kayo.lao@dot.ca.gov

## A Smart Growth Calculator

To create a new online Smart Growth/Livability Calculator

### WHAT WAS THE NEED?

The primary purpose of this project is to build an online Smart Growth/Livability Calculator (Calculator) designed to help Californians meet Senate Bill 1 and California State University Transportation Consortium (CSUTC) objectives dealing with a variety of planning and design challenges related to our corridors, station areas, and streets. These efforts will be focused on building an easy to use online interface; creating new sub models on transportation and land use quality and their relationships to sustainability, livability and equity outcomes (including active travel behavior and ped/bike risk); and finally, providing policy selection guidance on how to implement beneficial strategies.

### WHAT WAS OUR GOAL?

A primary goal of this project will be to transition the Calculator into a higher performing online application. Redeveloping the Calculator using web technologies will allow for greater accessibility, improve the user interface, and add interactive mapping functions. Such improvements are to foster widespread adoption of the Calculator as a tool used by planners and practitioners.

### WHAT DID WE DO?

As part of the development of the Calculator, this research draws on literature and practical experience related to planning support tools (PSTs). The aim being to serve as a guidebook that agency staff can use for reference, synergizing planning insights from various data sources that had not previously been brought



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together in a practical frame. For illustration purposes, this report uses the [Smart Mobility Calculator](#), a novel online tool designed to make key data easily available for all stakeholders to make better decisions. For more information on this tool, please [click here](#).

## WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME?

The Smart Mobility Calculator is designed to complement policies to help a variety of agencies (Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Department of Transportation, and local land use authorities) achieve coordination and balance between transportation and land use at the corridor level. A major purpose of this research is to help agencies make better, more coordinated transportation and land use decisions. In summary, these frameworks and tools should be employed to:

1. Create context-sensitive and inclusive processes to help stakeholders and a community understand what it takes to become more sustainable, livable, and equitable;
2. Help understand what is important to measure and analyze in current conditions and future scenarios;
3. Screen, prioritize, and mediate policies in support of increasing a diverse and complementary set of opportunities for people to realize greater community sustainability, livability, and equity; and
4. The tools should be clear, intuitive, and relevant to the stakeholders using them.

## WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

Developing tools to support the coordination of land use and transportation planning has wide-ranging implications for the metro areas of California. The current online tool creates a visual landscape to identify areas for development that further state emissions reduction goals, as well as reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled and traffic stress on state highways. The goal of the Calculator is to not only visualize urban quality and vehicle travel metrics, but also to support decision making by adding scenario planning capabilities and policy suggestions to accomplish user-selected targets.

## LEARN MORE

<https://transweb.sjsu.edu/1805-Smart-Mobility-Corridors>

## IMAGE

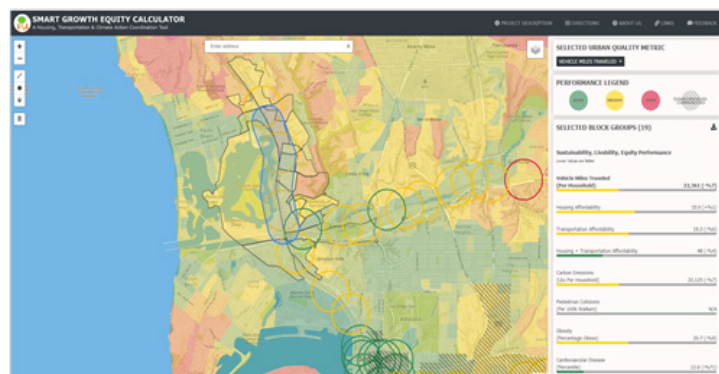


Image: A screenshot of the Smart Growth Calculator showing corridor/ line.

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