

Broadband Colocation Is Possible, But It's Complicated

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NOV 16 / BY KAYLA NICK-KEARNEY

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AB 1549, which Caltrans **began following** in January 2018, requires Caltrans to **inform companies** who **could collaborate** with the department in broadband installation.

While one representative for each of Caltrans' 12 districts has been designated as the communicator for companies wanting to work with Caltrans, there are more jurisdictions involved in conduit rollout.

Companies can use an encroachment permit to work with Caltrans.

Chris Schmidt, chief for the division of transportation planning, told the council companies will see more opportunities at the local level.

The department's site also **highlights** future **projects** so companies can approach Caltrans for permits.

"The ones that we deal a lot with have an easier time because they work with us all the time, they know what the expectations are," Schmidt said.

But those expectations expand to other public entities.

Caltrans has been working with the California Public Utilities Commission to find out where conduit is needed.

The Transportation Commission is creating transportation corridor planning guidelines and Caltrans is incorporating that into a guidebook on how to prioritize corridor investments.

And while Schmidt wants long-term planning, early conversations about costs are also important.

"We do need to talk when we do these partnering opportunities, what the funding circumstance is, who's paying for what elements," Schmidt said.

By Kayla Nick-Kearney

Kayla Nick-Kearney is a staff writer for Techwire.