

Metro

Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority
One Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA



Board Report

File #: 2021-0368, File Type: Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 47.

REVISED
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MAY 27, 2021

Motion by:

DIRECTORS SOLIS, SANDOVAL, BUTTS, GARCETTI, AND MITCHELL

710 South Corridor Project

In March of 2018, the Metro Board of Directors approved Motion 5.2 which adopted Alternative 5C as the Locally Preferred Alternative for the 710 South Corridor Project Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). The Motion also directed staff to implement an Early Action Program that would quickly deliver safety, mobility, and air quality benefits to the region, and to “re-evaluate and re-validate the remaining elements of Alternative 5C” upon completion of the Early Action Program. The Early Action Program includes a slew of projects throughout the 710 South Corridor such as streets and interchange improvements, active transportation facilities, the Clean Truck Program, and the Community Health Benefit Program. These Early Action Program improvements were required for completion before any mainline freeway work began.

Since approval of Motion 5.2, Metro staff has worked towards completion of the EIR/EIS. However, in just the last few weeks, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) opined that a particulate matter hot-spot analysis would be required for the 710 South Corridor Project’s EIR/EIS transportation conformity determination. Without this hot-spot analysis, the EPA cannot determine whether or not the Project is a project of air quality concern and a record of decision cannot be issued for the EIR/EIS. Additionally, at a recent meeting of the California Transportation Commission, Caltrans Director Toks Omishakin stated that Caltrans would “put an absolute pause on this project in the format that it’s currently in,” explaining that the Project does not align with the current trajectory of California’s transportation policy.

The issues raised by our federal and state partners suggest the need to re-think the Project scope and undertake a holistic, equity-based examination of the Project to ensure Metro’s investments do not disproportionately impact communities of color, inadvertently worsen induced demand, or work against existing greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals. There are elements currently included in the EIR/EIS that support local and state transportation goals and should move forward as individual projects separate from any mainline improvements to the 710 South Corridor.

SUBJECT: 710 SOUTH CORRIDOR PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Directors Solis, Sandoval, Butts, Garcetti, and Mitchell that direct the Chief Executive Officer to:

1. Immediately ~~cease~~ suspend further work to advance the current 710 South Corridor Project EIR/EIS;
2. Evaluate all improvements included in the EIR/EIS that can be advanced separately from mainline 710 South infrastructure improvements including, but not limited to, projects related to active transportation, operational improvements, clean truck infrastructure, and community health;
3. Identify additional locally-supported projects that can be advanced to enhance mobility along the 710 South Corridor and complement the non-freeway projects mentioned above, including but not limited to the West Santa Ana Branch, the LA River/Rio Hondo Confluence Station, LA River Master Plan, Rail to River, and the Atlantic Boulevard Bus Rapid Transit;
4. Collaborate with corridor cities, local stakeholders, community based organizations, the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and the Gateway Council of Governments to conduct outreach and develop a funding plan in order to advance a revised Early Action Program that includes projects identified in Directives 2 and 3. The revised Early Action Program should emphasize shovel ready projects and prioritize partnerships with labor to advance Metro's Project Labor Agreement and Construction Careers Policy;
5. Report back on all directives in September 2021.



Board Report

File #: 2021-0365, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 48.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MAY 27, 2021

Motion by:

DIRECTORS HAHN, SOLIS, BUTTS, AND DUTRA

I-710 South Corridor Project

Metro, the California Transportation Agency (Caltrans), and the corridor cities have studied the I-710 South Corridor Project for over a decade, with goals of reducing goods movement congestion and improving air quality and mobility for communities along the corridor.

The Project is a high priority for goods movement, as the I-710 directly links the broader region with the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, which combined account for 40% of the nation's imports.

Three years ago, the Metro Board approved Alternative 5C as the Locally Preferred Alternative, at an estimated cost of \$6 billion. The Board also voted to limit property impacts, ensure local hiring priorities, and prioritize an Early Action Program. Further, Motion 5.1 doubled the size of the Zero Emissions Truck program to \$200 million and called for a Zero Emissions truck lane. Once the Board approved the Project, staff sought Federal environmental clearance in order to be eligible for Federal funding.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in a letter dated March 25, 2021 and addressed to Metro CEO Phil Washington and Caltrans District 7 Director Tony Tavares, stated that "a PM [Particulate Matter] hot-spot analysis is necessary for the project's transportation conformity determination." That analysis has not yet been conducted for this Project, and the Project cannot receive Federal funding until a hot-spot analysis is conducted and meets Federal requirements.

At the California Transportation Commission's May 12, 2021 meeting, Caltrans Director Toks Omishakin stated "I don't see how we can move forward with the I-710 South Corridor Project in its current format" and that the Metro Board "may have to take another vote on this particular project."

Without Federal and State support and funding for the I-710 South Corridor Project in its current form, there is insufficient funding to proceed with Alternative 5C as approved by the Board. However, the status of the project and Metro's and Caltrans' recommended approach for addressing the ongoing goods movement, air quality, and mobility needs along this corridor remains unclear.

SUBJECT: I-710 SOUTH CORRIDOR PROJECT

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Directors Hahn, Solis, Butts, and Dutra that the Board direct the Chief Executive Officer to report back to the Board in July 2021 on:

1. Why the EPA concluded the project does not meet conformity requirements and why Caltrans Director Toks Omishakin stated that Caltrans cannot support the Project “in its current format”;
2. Identify what elements of the Project can either be moved forward or modified in order to get State and Federal support, including but not limited to: price-managed freeway lanes, zero emissions-only truck lanes, short- and long-haul rail, Atlantic Avenue bus rapid transit, Metrolink capital and service improvements, and State and Federal funding for near-zero and zero-emissions goods movement investments earmarked for the I-710 South Corridor;
3. If inclusion of some or all of the elements in Directive 2 above will be enough to get State and Federal support for the Project or if it needs to be reimagined entirely; and,
4. A plan for re-engaging cities and stakeholders along the corridor.