

Investment in the I-710 South Corridor: From "No Build" to a New Vision

Background: I-710 South Corridor Project

- > March 2018 – Metro Board of Directors adopts Alternative 5C as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) on 3/1/18
 - Motion 5.1 – Funding and ZE Technology Evaluation as part of Phased-in ZE Truck Program
 - Motion 5.2 – Development of Early Action Program (EAP)
 - Candidate projects are to be considered under parameters set forth by Board to limit impacts on local communities
 - Candidate projects to be identified with Gateway Cities COG (never formalized)

- > May 2021 – New Board Direction provided due to EPA requirement of a hotspot analysis for air quality conformity determination, concerns about community and environmental impacts, and equity and climate change policy considerations.
 - Suspend work on the Final Environmental Document
 - Re-evaluate project elements to meet policy objectives
 - Re-engage communities and corridor stakeholders to develop a new vision that is multimodal and sensitive to community needs – a process which became the 710 Task Force
 - Re-evaluate EAP candidate projects through new process

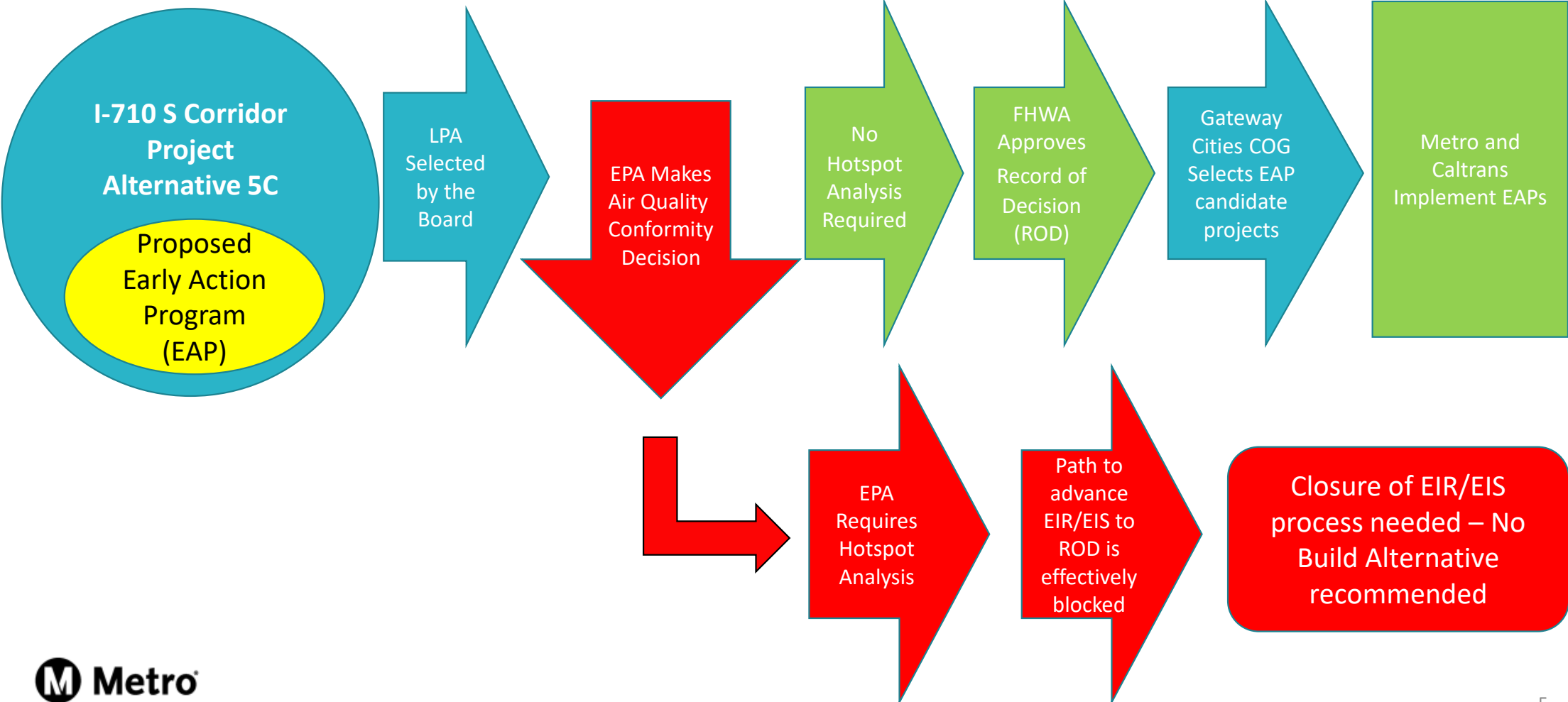
Background - 710 Task Force

- > Created to re-engage impacted communities in a new process more aligned with current Board, State, and Federal priorities
 - EPA has met with community groups and supports this process
 - Caltrans declared that it no longer supports the prior EIR scope and wants to see a new approach to better engage and address concerns from the communities in the project development.
 - Need to develop a multimodal approach to investment in the communities and transportation options within the corridor.

- > Metro and Caltrans have asked the Task Force to develop the overall vision and goals for the I-710 South Corridor and create an Investment Plan, including implementation strategies, to report to the Metro Board for consideration in early 2023

I-710 South Corridor Project: Why the No Build Alternative is Needed

Original Pathway to Implement LPA 5C Early Action Projects under EIR/EIS



No Build Alternative – Rationale

Considerations:

- The two build alternatives (5C and 7) found in the suspended environmental document face insurmountable policy issues and regulatory barriers - as currently constituted, the I-710 South Corridor Project will not meet federal air quality conformity requirements and, consequently, will not receive a ROD.
- The Board has suspended all further work to advance Alternative 5C.
- The Board has provided direction to receive a new set of recommendations from the 710 Task Force in place of Alternative 5C
- The displacement of people and businesses in disadvantaged, minority communities through widening the I-710 South freeway as part of Alternative 5C runs contrary to current Board, state, and federal sentiment.

No Build Alternative – Rationale

Selecting the No Build Alternative:

- Responsive to the Board's concerns related to community, property, equity, and environmental/air quality impacts.
- Brings proper closure to the now-suspended I-710 South Corridor Project environmental process
- Opens the opportunity for the 710 Task Force to develop the I-710 South Corridor Investment Plan (710 IP)

Metro and Caltrans can then focus on:

- Working with community leaders to develop a more robust and inclusive community engagement strategy and Task Force infrastructure to support public input into the development of the 710 IP
- Generating more sustainable, equitable, and multimodal transportation projects and programs to move people and goods through the corridor and improve quality of life for impacted members of corridor communities.
- Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), greenhouse gases and diesel particulate matter in the corridor as a result of the implementation of the 710 IP

No Build Alternative – Implications

Implications

- All previously considered EAP candidate projects are nullified
- Any previously considered improvements will have a chance to be considered through 710 Task Force process, if consistent with the Task Force-approved Vision, Goals and Multimodal Strategies
- Any projects/programs recommended by the 710 Task Force and ultimately approved by the Metro Board will need to be evaluated through a new environmental process
- EAPs that are already approved and environmentally cleared (e.g., Shoemaker Bridge, ICM, 710 Soundwalls) will not be affected by this decision

Other I-710 S. Corridor Related Projects And Near-Term Funding Opportunities

Near Term Opportunities

- Other projects related to the I-710 S. Corridor (not part of Alt. 5C) can and will advance
- Task Force member organizations concurrently developing projects for implementation
 - POLA/POLB initiatives
 - METTRANS/SELA Collaborative micro-mobility pilot program
 - Local community projects (First/Last Mile, Active Transportation, etc.)
- Gateway Cities 710 Ad Hoc Committee recommendations
 - To be presented to the Task Force in June 2022
 - To be evaluated and incorporated as part of the 710 IP
- SB1 and BIL (near-term) opportunities/coordination

Next Steps

- Work with Caltrans to complete the necessary documentation (6-8 months)
- Coordination with regional, state, and federal agencies to finalize the No Build determination and collaboration/support on I-710 South Corridor Investment Plan
- Return to the Board in June with:
 - Update on Task Force progress
 - Recommendations for near- and long-term strategies, projects and programs
 - Request for additional funds to support the Task Force efforts
- Incorporate Gateway Cities COG recommendations into 710 Task Force work
- Continue to lead the 710 Task Force to develop an I-710 South Corridor Investment Plan to implement the prioritized projects
- Task Force outcomes will be presented to the Board in early 2023