

How the Long Beach-East LA Corridor Multimodal Investment Plan aligns with and advances CalSTA's Core Four Priorities

The Long Beach-East LA Corridor Mobility Investment Plan (LB-ELA CMIP, or Investment Plan) is the result of Metro's two-and-a-half year effort to develop a community-centered, regionally significant, balanced multimodal transportation investment plan that results from robust community and stakeholder engagement and equity-focused planning. The CMIP provides a roadmap for Metro to invest \$743 million in local transportation sales tax dollars in priority transportation and community projects and programs, modal programs that allow for additional project development, and equity-focused technical assistance to provide a comprehensive planning and investment approach for the LB-ELA Corridor communities impacted by the construction and operation of Interstate 710 between the San Pedro Bay Ports and East Los Angeles. The CMIP can be accessed here: www.lb-ela-cmip.com

Central to the development of the LB-ELA CMIP is the foundational values identified by two advisory bodies created by Metro to help develop the plan: the LB-ELA Corridor Task Force, comprising community advocates, freight industry, air quality experts, business, labor, elected officials, and academic leaders, and the Community Leadership Committee, comprising residents from impacted communities who participated in the development of the Investment Plan and ground-truthed recommendations and proposals. These groups met every month to help the Metro team develop the CMIP, and provided the following Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles used to lead Metro's work in creating the Investment Plan:

| Vision | |
|--|---|
| An equitable, shared LB-ELA Corridor transportation system that provides safe, quality multimodal options for moving people and goods that will foster clean air (zero emissions), healthy and sustainable communities, and economic empowerment for all residents, communities, and users in the Corridor. | |
| Guiding Principles | |
| Equity | Sustainability |
| A commitment to (1) strive to rectify past harms; (2) provide fair and just access to opportunities; and (3) eliminate disparities in project processes, outcomes, and community results. The plan seeks to elevate and engrain the principle of Equity across all goals, objectives, strategies, and actions through a framework of Procedural, Distributive, Structural, and Restorative Equity, and by prioritizing an accessible and representative participation process for communities most impacted by the I-710. | Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. A commitment to sustainability to satisfy and improve basic social, health, and economic needs/conditions, both present and future, and the responsible use and stewardship of the environment, all while maintaining or improving the well-being of the environment on which life depends. |

Goals



CalSTA Core Four Priorities

The California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) has adopted Safety, Equity, Climate Action, and Economic Prosperity as its four principles—the Core Four priorities—that guide the agency in delivering the services, programs, and support every Californian needs to succeed and thrive. The Core Four priorities speak to the complexity of needs, burdens, and challenges found in California and drive innovative, comprehensive, and aligned planning, policy, and funding recommendations to address, advance, and enhance these four priority policy areas.

Nowhere in California is the need for the Core Four priorities more evident than in the Long Beach-East LA (LB-ELA) Corridor, which comprises 18 cities and multiple LA County unincorporated communities adjacent to Interstate 710 (I-710) between the San Pedro Bay Ports and State Route 60. These communities have been negatively impacted over generations by policy decisions that include redlining and discriminatory lending practices before I-710 was constructed, that were split apart and bulldozed during the construction of I-710, and that now deal with chronic conditions of accidents, urban heat island effects and lack of shade and tree canopy, unemployment and lower incomes, and poor health at elevated rates in what is known as the “Diesel Death Zone” due to the tens of thousands of diesel trucks that travel along I-710 and through the corridor daily to serve the Ports, intermodal rail yards, logistics hubs, warehouses, and transloading facilities located within the corridor.

The prior I-710 South Corridor Project, designed to accommodate a growing population and containers handled by the Ports of LA and Long Beach, included the widening of the freeway to add general purpose and truck lanes. This project would have displaced over 400 residents in some of the county's most vulnerable communities and add additional air quality impacts as the result of additional passenger and heavy-duty truck traffic, which would generate greenhouse gases and diesel particulate matter, affecting the climate and public health of the LB-ELA Corridor. After US EPA indicated concerns in 2021 about the project's ability to meet air quality conformity standards to receive a Record of Decision, the project quickly lost support, starting with then-Caltrans Director Omishakin indicating on May 12, 2021, that Caltrans wanted to "put an absolute pause on this project in the format that it's currently in." The Metro Board acted later that month to suspend the advancement of the project's environmental process and to develop the new approach to multimodal investment in the Corridor that created the foundation for the LB-ELA CMIP to be developed through a process featuring community engagement, participation, and centering.

Three years later, Metro staff returned to the Board with the proposed LB-ELA CMIP that represents a balanced, comprehensive, multimodal, community-centered, and regionally significant transportation investment plan that addresses the challenges raised by community and Task Force stakeholders and advances the Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles of the CMIP.

In contrast to the prior I-710 South Corridor Project, the LB-ELA CMIP results in no widening of the I-710 freeway and no displacement of residents. **What follows is a review of how the LB-ELA CMIP responds to, advances, and illuminates each of the Core Four priorities – and demonstrates that a major highway corridor planning process in the most complicated and equity-challenged part of the state can result in a plan that is fully aligned with CalSTA's vision for transportation investment and community improvement in California.**

Core Four Priority – Safety

Safety is one of the Seven Goals defined by the Corridor Task Force to guide the development of the investment plan. Specifically, the goal is "Make all modes of travel safer". As stated, the CMIP evaluated all proposed projects and programs to ascertain their performance on several safety metrics and those having the highest safety benefits were considered for inclusion in the Investment Plan. This applies to not only motor vehicles (cars and trucks), but also pedestrians, bicycles, and transit users.

To improve safety, LA Metro will take several strategic steps in the Investment Plan to create a safer transportation system. The Investment Plan looks at ways to include bicycles and pedestrians along major streets and minimize conflict with cars and trucks for safer travel options. Recommended projects in the CMIP include the I-710 Multimodal, Operational, Safety, and Access Improvements for the Community (MOSAIC) Program (see table 1), which comprises a bundle of local interchanges and ramp improvements that will focus on creating a safer user experience getting on and off the freeway, as well as safer multimodal travel on the freeway bridges that span I-710 and the LA River.

The MOSAIC program will focus on the following elements:

- **Multimodal** - Improve freeway overcrossings so that they provide multimodal benefits and "reconnect LB-ELA Corridor communities" separated by the freeway and river – safer pedestrian/bicycle crossings, improved reliability and effectiveness of bus/transit, improved arterial traffic flow to reduce accidents and pedestrian/bicycle conflicts.
- **Operational** - Safety-focused auxiliary lanes that provide transition zones for cars and trucks to merge on and off the freeway more safely at locations with greater numbers of accidents than a simple ramp design can address: Safety for residents/users at local access points.
- **Safety** - Provide safer conditions for all users of the freeway and local interchanges, especially community members accessing the freeway. Reduced conflicts for cars, trucks getting on and off the freeway: improved on and off ramps, transition zones, turn radius, traffic signal controls.
- **Access** – Greater access to bus service, pedestrian/bicycle paths, and personal mobility leading to greater access to communities, education, healthcare, and other economic opportunities. Safer local access to the freeway system.
- **Community** – For many people living in the LB-ELA Corridor, their daily travel includes getting on and off I-710 at the nearest local interchange to their community, school, job, healthcare facility, or place to shop, recreate, or visit family. Community residents seek safer on- and off-ramps, signalization, and safer merging and transition zones given the intensity of truck traffic and congestion on I-710 and the local interchanges. Additionally, community members feel disconnected from communities and opportunities across I-710 and the LA River and feel vulnerable walking or bicycling across the bridges that span the freeway and river, or unsatisfied with the bus transit experience on the overcrossings. The I-710 MOSAIC Program investments seek to improve both experiences—getting on and off the freeway and crossing over the freeway—to improve the quality of life for local community members.

Table 1
I-710 MOSAIC Program

| MOSAIC Program Project Concepts | Leveraged Target for Investment (\$M) | Investment Plan Funding Recommendation (\$M) |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| 14 project concepts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-710/Willow Interchange Improvements • I-710/Del Amo Interchange Improvements • I-710/Long Beach Blvd. Interchange Improvements • I-710/Alondra Interchange Improvements & Modification of SB I-710 to SR-91 Connectors • I-710/Imperial Interchange Improvements • I-710/Firestone Interchange Improvements • I-710/Florence Interchange Improvements • I-710 Auxiliary Lanes (Willow to Wardlow) • I-710 / I-405 Connector Project Improvements • I-710/I-105 Connector Project Improvements • I-710 Auxiliary Lanes (Del Amo Blvd to Long Beach Blvd) • I-710/Anaheim Interchange Improvement • I-710/PCH Interchange Improvement • I-710/Wardlow Interchange Improvement | \$612.00 | \$153.60 |

The CMIP will recommend a variety of projects to enhance safety, including:

- **Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS):** Our plan uses state of the art technology for real-time traffic monitoring and management, including adaptive traffic signals that smooth out traffic flow, variable message signs for real time traffic updates and warnings about conditions ahead.
- **Modernized Interchanges:** Our plan reconfigures and upgrades a few, select freeway interchanges to improve freeway operations and safety for community members to access I-710 at local interchanges. These projects will also include safe pathways for bicycles and pedestrian to cross over the I-710, reconnecting communities and neighborhoods. The candidate interchanges will be evaluated and prioritized by Metro based on community input to determine which 2-3 projects would proceed to the environmental analysis phase.
- **Enhanced Lighting:** Our plan improves lighting along the freeway and arterial roads and at bus stops to increase visibility and personal security at night.
- **Expanded Bike and Pedestrian Paths:** Many cities have bike and pedestrian routes, but they do not always connect across city boundaries. The Investment Plan identified where the gaps are. It recommends bicycle routes that close those gaps and connect routes between cities and across community boundaries, improving safety and connectivity.
- **Improved Transit Access:** Our plan enhances bus stops and transit facilities, making it safer and more convenient for residents to access public transportation.
- **Complete Street Corridor Investments:** This plan also funds complete street corridor improvements along major arterial roadways that cross multiple jurisdictions, with a focus on safety improvements for pedestrian, bicycle, and other users of the facility (see table 2).
- **Safer Bus Stops and Shelters:** The Investment Plan will allocate funding to implement or upgrade bus stops and shelters in the most vulnerable and equity-focused communities to support safer access to the bus system for residents (see table 3).

Implementing these strategies will benefit communities by reducing traffic accidents, including truck involved accidents and vehicle involved bicycle/pedestrian accidents, improving safety at bus stops, and support safer pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists to travel through the LB-ELA Corridor.

Table 2

Complete Street Corridor Investments

| Project Name | Leveraged Target for Investment (\$M) | Investment Plan Funding Recommendation (\$M) |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Complete Street Corridor: Alondra Blvd | \$45.00 | \$9.00 |
| Complete Street Corridor: Atlantic Blvd | \$457.22 | \$68.58 |
| Complete Street Corridor: Florence Ave | \$124.46 | \$24.89 |
| Complete Street Corridor: Long Beach Blvd* | \$1.50 | \$0.75 |
| Complete Street Corridor: Slauson Ave | \$18.00 | \$3.60 |

*Initial recommendation is for planning and development work. Additional funds available for implementation from Modal Program funds.

Table 3

Bus Stop Investments

| Project Name | Leveraged Target for Investment (\$M) | Investment Plan Funding Recommendation (\$M) |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Bus Stop Improvement Projects/Programs | \$38.00 | \$19.00 |

Core Four Priority – Climate

To improve air quality and combat the effects of climate change in the LB-ELA Corridor, LA Metro will invest in and support a comprehensive set of strategies focused on reducing vehicle emissions, promoting cleaner modes of transportation, and implementing environmental mitigation measures. Sample projects include:

- **Zero-Emission Freight:** The Investment Plan will accelerate the transition to and encourage the adoption of zero emission trucks for freight movement, particularly for operations connecting the ports to distribution centers and intermodal yards, in collaboration with the Port’s Clean Air Action Plan and to meet Advanced Clean Fleet Regulations (see Table 4).
- **A Zero-Emission, at-capacity Alameda Corridor:** The Investment Plan supports the greater utilization of the Alameda Corridor as a key component of the multimodal freight transportation system moving cargo through the LB-ELA Corridor. Metro seeks to develop policies and collaborative approaches to incentivizing additional usage of the Alameda Corridor along with supporting the transition of the facility to zero-emission technology (see Table 4).
- **Bike and Pedestrian Infrastructure:** We have a plan to develop and fund new and improved bike lanes, walking paths, and pedestrian bridges to encourage walking and cycling, reducing the reliance on motor vehicles.
- **Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS):** The Investment Plan will implement ITS solutions to optimize traffic flow and reduce congestion- related emissions. This includes real-time traffic monitoring and adaptive traffic signal control systems.
- **Urban Greening:** We have a plan to plant trees and vegetation along the freeway and in surrounding areas to absorb pollutants and provide cooling (see Table 5).
- **Community Health Programs:** We have a plan to develop health monitoring and support programs for communities affected by freeway pollution, including air quality monitoring and public health interventions (see Table 6).
- **Infrastructure for Electric Vehicles (EVs):** The Investment Plan will expand the availability of auto EV charging stations along the corridor to encourage the adoption of electric cars (see Table 6).
- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** We have a plan to continue to engage with community groups, environmental organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that air quality improvement efforts are aligned with community needs and priorities.

Our plan supports transitions to cleaner transportation options that will significantly reduce pollutants, benefiting respiratory health. Implementing these strategies requires a multifaceted approach involving investment in infrastructure, policy changes, community engagement, and collaboration with other agencies and organizations.

Table 4
Goods Movement Projects

| Goods Movement | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Name | Leveraged Target for Investment (\$M) | Investment Plan Funding Recommendation (\$M) |
| Freight Rail Electrification Pilot Project | \$50.00 | \$10.00 |
| Goods Movement Freight Rail Study | \$10.00 | \$2.00 |
| Zero Emission Truck Program | \$200.00 | \$50.00 |

Table 5
Urban Greening Community Program

| Urban Greening | | |
|---|---|--------------------|
| Name | Project Description | Type |
| LB-ELA Corridor “Urban Greening” Initiative | <p>Under this initiative, proposed projects implemented through the LB-ELA Corridor Investment Plan must consider context sensitive solutions as part of the project design as well as “urban greening” elements that foster environmental resilience. These “urban greening” elements may include items such as: provision of green space/greenbelts; parklets; tree planting; community gardens and community farms; drought tolerant planting; habitat restoration and connectivity; stormwater capture/flood diversion/water management projects; brownfield remediation, natural trail restoration, and green infrastructure, among other.</p> <p>Through the LB-ELA Urban Greening Initiative, project proponents may also partner with other localities, non-profit organizations, or communities to plan, design, and implement “green” projects that demonstrate that they provide publicly accessible open-space and ecosystem benefits such as urban heat island reduction within the LB-ELA Corridor.</p> | Community Programs |

Table 6.
Community Health, Air Quality, and Sustainability Community Programs

| Community Health, Air Quality and Sustainability | | |
|--|--|--------------------|
| Name | Project Description | Type |
| LB-ELA Corridor Community Health Benefit Program | <p>Under this program, funding would be made available to implement air quality projects to reduce exposure to air pollution as well as health education and screening programs in areas adversely affected by existing and proposed transportation infrastructure projects. The LB-ELA Community Health Benefit Program would serve the communities within the LB-ELA Corridor Study Area. This program would provide subsidy funding to implement projects and outreach activities to improve air quality and public health, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Air Quality Projects for Schools and Community Facilities: air filtration, HVAC upgrades, replacement/sealing of windows and doors, vegetation barriers or buffer landscaping. - Health Education and Screening: community health screening and diagnosis, health education, training for community health workers, outreach programs. | Community Programs |
| Zero Emission Infrastructure for Autos | <p>Work with local jurisdictions (Cities, County of Los Angeles), public agencies, and private-public partners to develop and site additional charging stations for zero-emissions vehicles within the LB-ELA Corridor.</p> <p>Provide grant writing assistance to help secure funding. In addition, provide technical support to share best practices such as: identification of incentives and/or policy requirements for new development.</p> | Community Programs |
| Bus Electrification Projects | <p>Seek incentives to accelerate the deployment of zero-emission (ZE) vehicles within the LB-ELA Corridor. Projects could include bus electrification (public transit buses, school buses) as well as ZE charging infrastructure. Provide technical and grant writing assistance to define and develop potential projects.</p> | Community Programs |
| Air Quality Monitoring Stations | <p>Add four, new air quality monitoring stations within the LB-ELA Study Area. Sites to be identified in cooperation with the South Coast Air Quality Management District.</p> | Community Programs |

Core Four Priority – Equity

Central to the creation of the LB-ELA CMIP is the Guiding Principle of Equity, which governed the process and shaped the outcomes of the Investment Plan. Metro established a clear focus on equity with the CMIP's Charter, which set the foundation for a collaborative and community-centered approach to building consensus by establishing a clear decision-making process with roles for Task Force, Community Leadership Committee (CLC), and working group participants. The CLC ensured impacted residents had a seat at the table and direct access to staff to provide lived experience, ground-truth proposals, and provide direction on policy and programming decision, and vote on recommendations. The LB-ELA CMIP offers a compelling precedent and example for the inclusion and centering of equity in comprehensive multimodal corridor planning, particularly for lower income, disadvantaged, and/or minority communities that are directly impacted by the deteriorated air quality, public health, mobility, safety, economic opportunity, and environmental protections due to their proximity to I-710.

In addition to this structure, several of Metro's equity tools were used throughout the development of the CMIP to further demonstrate and actualize equity commitments:

- The Advisory Body Compensation Policy created the conditions for the sustained participation of 26 members in the CLC over more than the past two years.
- The Community Based Organization Partnering Strategy bolstered engagement at critical public outreach phases.
- The Equity Planning and Evaluation Tool, piloted in this process and integrated into the Equity Working Group proceedings, served as a guiding tool for the process, particularly in the consideration of equity in existing conditions analysis, evaluation criteria and methodologies, and connection of project outcomes to community results.

The effects of these efforts are reflected throughout the CMIP and its investment recommendations, as follows:

- The Background (Chapter 1) and Existing Conditions (Chapter 3) acknowledge the historical inequities that have persisted into the present, resulting in harms ranging from worsened health impacts to more limited access to opportunities.
- The Corridor Vision, Goals, and Guiding Principles (Chapter 4) and Multimodal Strategies, Projects, and Programs (Chapter 5) uplift and identify community-centered solutions to directly address the needs voiced by stakeholders.
- The Evaluation process (Chapter 6) reflects the priorities of Task Force and CLC Members through the consideration of Concern Criteria, Community Input Consideration Flags, and 22 Equity Criteria, used to identify Equity Flags.
- The Funding Strategy (Chapter 7) and Recommendations (Chapter 8) demonstrate the shift from a freeway-only project to a comprehensive, multimodal, and collaborative investment strategy. Particularly, the commitment of \$40 million to the Community Programs Catalyst Fund and \$40 million to the START-UP Fund (a combined 10.7% of all Measure R and M funds available) is a direct result of the advocacy and engagement of community-based organizations and the CLC.

Core Four Priority – Economic Opportunity and Prosperity

The communities in the LB-ELA Corridor, particularly the Equity Focus Communities, experience a higher rate of poverty and unemployment rate than the rest of LA County. To create economic opportunity and prosperity for the LB-ELA Corridor communities and LA County, LA Metro will implement a variety of strategies aimed at economic development, equitable access to transportation, workforce development, and community revitalization. LA Metro is considering several approaches with its selected priorities in the Investment Plan:

- **Enhanced Transit Services:** Our plan expands and improves public transit options to ensure reliable, frequent, and affordable connections to job centers, educational institutions, and essential services.
- **Local Hiring Policies:** Adopt local hiring policies for Metro projects to prioritize employment opportunities for residents of communities along the LB-ELA Corridor (see Table 7).
- **Support Small Businesses:** Facilitate the growth of small businesses by improving access to customers and their communities.
- **Training and Education Programs:** Metro will partner with educational institutions, trade unions, and community organizations to offer training programs in high-demand fields, including green jobs related to goods movement, transit, and other infrastructure projects (see Table 7).
- **Transit Workforce Initiatives:** Our plan supports developing initiatives aimed at recruiting and training residents for careers in the transit industry, including roles in operations, maintenance, and administration (see Table 7).
- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)/Transit-Oriented Communities (TOC):** Promote and incentivize the development of affordable housing within transit- oriented developments to ensure that residents have access to affordable living options near transit to create communities that can rely on quality transit opportunities for mobility (see Table 7).
- **Public Space Improvements:** Our plan invests in the beautification and functionality of public spaces, including parks, community centers, and libraries, to improve quality of life and foster community pride (see Table 7).
- **Infrastructure Upgrades:** The Investment Plan supports infrastructure upgrades that enhance safety, accessibility, and sustainability, such as street lighting, pedestrian pathways, and green infrastructure.
- **Community Engagement:** Our plan supports continuing active engagement with communities along the LB-ELA Corridor to ensure that planning and project implementation reflect their needs and aspirations.
- **Equity-Focused Planning:** Our plan implements an equity-focused planning framework to guide investments and ensure that they equitably benefit historically underserved and marginalized communities.
- **Health Indicators:** Our plan looks at health indicators in our project assessments to improve our understanding of their potential effects on community health, to mitigate negative impacts. Our plan invests in environmental mitigation projects, such as air quality improvement and noise reduction, to address historical environmental injustices in corridor communities (see Table 7).
- **Economic Opportunities:** Improved transportation infrastructure can boost local businesses and attract new investment to the area around the subregion is safer and easier.

Our plan enhances mobility, supports economic growth, and improves the overall quality of life for residents in the LB-ELA Corridor by ensuring that the benefit of transportation and infrastructure investments are shared equitably, leading to greater opportunity and prosperity for (need to finish sentence) all communities involved.

Table 7

Community Programs Initiated by the \$40 Million Catalyst Fund in the Investment Plan

| Working Group Topic Area | Community Programs Initiated by the \$40 Million Catalyst Fund |
|---|---|
| Air Quality/ Community Health / Environment | Bus Electrification Projects |
| | LB-ELA Corridor Community Health Benefit Program |
| | Zero-Emission Infrastructure for Autos |
| | Air Quality Monitoring Stations |
| | LB-ELA Corridor Energy Reduction/Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Reduction Program |
| | LB-ELA Corridor “Urban Greening” Initiative |
| | Public Art/Aesthetics |
| Housing Stabilization/ Land Use | WSAB Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Implementation Plan and Program (TOD SIP) |
| | Transit-Oriented Communities/Land Use |
| | Homeless Programs |
| | Housing Stabilization Policies |
| Job Creation/ Work Opportunities | Vocational Educational Programs |
| | Targeted Hire Programs |
| | Employment/Recruitment Initiatives |
| | Economic Stabilization Policies |