



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 47.

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MAY 27, 2021

Motion by:

DIRECTORS SOLIS, SANDOVAL, BUTTS, AND GARCETTI

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, and Garcetti that direct the Chief Executive Officer to:

1. Immediately cease 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, 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.