



## Board Report

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**File #:** 2021-0564, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response

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### PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 17, 2021

**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO MOTION 17 - MODERNIZING THE METRO HIGHWAY PROGRAM**

**ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

RECEIVE AND FILE report on the status of the Highway Modernization Program actions.

#### **ISSUE**

This Receive and File report responds to Motion 17 authored by Directors Butts and Garcetti titled Modernizing the Metro Highway Program, which directed staff to report back on the 19 recommendations (Attachment A) developed by the Ad-Hoc Board Deputies Highway Department Subcommittee.

#### **BACKGROUND**

At its June 2021 meeting, the Board approved Motion 17: Modernizing the Metro Highway Program. The Motion (Attachment B) directed staff to report back on a plan of action on the 19 recommendations included in the June 2020 Board motion (Attachment C) (File #2020-0412) to be followed in development of all future highway projects.

#### **DISCUSSION**

In line with the organizational realignment announced by the CEO, Metro's Highway Program and the Grants Management Department, which now report to the Chief Planning Officer, developed this report. Planning & Development staff, consulted and coordinated with Environmental Compliance and Sustainability Department staff (ECSD) and Planning's Goods Movement, Transportation Demand Management (TDM), Active Transportation and Complete Streets units. This report provides activity history and plans of action in response to each of the 19 recommendations with the indication of whether the actions are currently in place or will be added to the efforts in development of Highway improvement projects.

The motion packaged specific requirements in three categories where Metro Highway Programs was recognized as Planner, Funder, and Leader. As Planner, Metro Highway Programs was directed to consider and include, to the extent possible, multimodal improvements during the development of

future Highway Projects. The Motion required that these multimodal improvements consider and support the region's mobility needs and support safe, sustainable, and equitable transportation improvements. Broad multi-modal expertise engagement to consider these types of improvements was recommended.

These requirements and recommendations are currently in place through multi-department coordination when developing highway improvement projects. As projects are being developed, accommodations for all users, whether they walk, bike, roll, take transit or drive are considered when warranted and their benefits are confirmed. These improvements include construction of missing sidewalks, curb ramps, bike lanes, bike refuge areas, pedestrian push buttons, and other project elements. Proposed highway improvement projects will also consider transit service-related work, including the preservation of right of way and allocation of roadway space. Local agencies within the area of effect of highway improvement projects are included on the project development teams. Their input and their relevant projects that can be merged with the proposed project are considered. Examples include inclusion of crosswalk renewals and/or additions, improved pedestrian access, advanced stop lines, leading pedestrian intervals, pedestrian push buttons and cycle detectors, turn lanes at an intersection, and similar projects. Highway staff will expand and improve these practices where possible.

The second outlined area was where Metro was identified as funder. This relates to the multimodality and the updated Measure R and M Guidelines. The revised guidelines (File 2021-0291) were presented to the Board and adopted in June 2021. The updated guidelines allow certain highway funds to consider and accommodate active transportation, transit and TDM projects (either as a component of a highway improvement project, or as stand-alone project) that have "validation of need, defined and documented transportation improvement objectives, and will have performance-based measurable benefits". Inclusion and implementation of the eligible expanded work elements in highway improvement projects will allow for the use of Measure R and M subregional funds as well as available external grant funds.

The third outlined area was where Metro's role was identified as a leader. These recommendations outlined partnering with federal, state, local government and regulatory agencies to shape best practices in highway planning. Metro Highway and Planning teams meet monthly with Caltrans senior management and with FHWA representatives on an as-needed basis to discuss emerging regulations, project specific issues and areas to collaborate. Among the broad range of topics discussed are funding opportunities through various state and federal sources and implementation of SB743, Governor's Executive Orders, and other regulations applicable to the State Highway System improvements. Updates will be provided to the Board and our broader stakeholders on relevant efforts and success in securing state and federal support for Metro's projects.

As stated earlier in this report, representatives of local agencies within the area of effect of the highway improvement projects are engaged at those projects' planning/scoping stages. Local complimentary projects such as pedestrian, bicycle, signal, and safety improvements will be included in the scope of highway projects. If the local agency has funds for those improvements, those funds will be merged into the project.

## **EQUITY PLATFORM**

As we continue this work, highway investments will aim to provide mobility options for all, including those with the greatest mobility needs. Multi-modal considerations are evaluated and applied to projects in the planning process when viable and warranted. Through multimodal consideration in the development of highway improvement projects, unique mobility needs and potential impacts to the surrounding community, including EFCs and marginalized or vulnerable users, can be identified and validated for consideration and either incorporated in the highway project being developed, or considered for implementation as standalone modal projects.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

Recommendation supports strategic plan goals # 1: Provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling, by developing multimodal highway improvements; goal #3: Enhance communities and lives through mobility; and goal #4: Transform LA County through regional collaboration and national leadership.

### **NEXT STEPS**

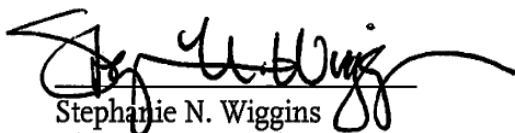
As the Highway department in Planning and Development undertake new projects or as countywide plans are developed, cross-functional collaboration between Highway Programs, Goods Movement, TDM, Active Transportation, Complete Streets units, and others will occur on these efforts. Accomplishments will be reported to the Board.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Highway Subcommittee Recommendation and Responses  
Attachment B - Motion 17  
Attachment C - Motion 8

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