

**Board Report**

File #: 2022-0552, **File Type:** Policy**Agenda Number:** 13.

**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 14, 2022****SUBJECT: I-405 COMPREHENSIVE MULTIMODAL CORRIDOR PLAN (CMCP)****ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION****RECOMMENDATION**

CONSIDER adoption of the I-405 Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan (Attachment A).

ISSUE

Metro must prepare and adopt a qualifying Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan (CMCP) as a prerequisite to compete for and secure a portion of the \$250 million in state funding made available annually through the Senate Bill (SB) 1 Solutions for Congested Corridors Program (SCCP). The next two-year funding cycle valued at \$500 million will initiate a call for projects in Fall 2022. The Draft I-405 CMCP was released in May 2022 for a 31-day public review and comment period. Staff have updated the final I-405 CMCP based on feedback received and are seeking Board adoption of the I-405 CMCP in order to have a qualifying plan in time for the upcoming 2022 SCCP funding cycle.

BACKGROUND**Requirements for a CMCP**

SB 1 stipulated that projects funded by the SCCP be included in a qualifying CMCP. In December 2018, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) developed guidelines to direct and specify what is required for CMCPs to qualify as eligible planning documents. CMCP Guidelines are designed to be flexible and context-specific. At a minimum, a CMCP must meet the statutory requirements in the Streets and Highways Code (SHC) to:

1. Be designed to reduce congestion in highly traveled corridors by providing more transportation choices for residents, commuters, and visitors to the area of the corridor while preserving the character of the local community and creating opportunities for neighborhood enhancement projects. [SHC 2391]
2. Reflect a comprehensive approach to addressing congestion and quality-of-life issues within the affected corridor through investment in transportation and related environmental solutions. [SHC 2392]
3. Be developed in collaboration with state, regional, and local partners. [SHC 2392]

4. Evaluate the following criteria as applicable [SHC 2394]

- Safety
- Congestion
- Accessibility
- Economic Development and Job Creation and Retention
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction
- Efficient Land Use

5. Be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Regional Transportation Plan [SHC 2393].

In addition to these statutory criteria, all SCCP applications will need to include the CTC's CMCP checklist in order to demonstrate that the qualifying CMCP overwhelmingly satisfies several elements and considerations such as the discussion of travel options for all modes within the corridor; recommendations for multimodal improvements; implementation timeline for short, medium, and long-term projects; and demonstration of stakeholder engagement in the CMCP's development. The full checklist is included in Attachment B.

DISCUSSION

I-405 CMCP Overview

The I-405 CMCP is anchored by the full 48 miles of the I-405 highway in LA County, but the Plan's multimodal approach requires a more expansive study area that extends three miles in every direction of the I-405 freeway. The Plan meets and exceeds the statutory requirements for a qualifying CMCP by presenting a holistic corridor vision with clear improvement strategies that represent and align with Metro's established policies to help advance our progress on the Plan's five goals to improve mobility and accessibility, advance equity, support economic vitality, achieve sustainability and enhance safety for the communities within the study area.

The CMCP consists of five key elements:

- a corridor assessment that examines the conditions, challenges and needs of the corridor's multimodal transportation system and communities
- defined plan goals that integrate and build on goals established by Metro and the state
- a comprehensive list of multimodal projects for the corridor planned by Metro, Caltrans, and other local partners
- a project evaluation that assesses projects against the CMCP goals as well as the criteria for SCCP; and

- improvement strategies that identify near-, mid-, and long-term actions that will guide the plan's implementation upon adoption.

The intent of the CMCP is to provide Metro and our partners with a near-term roadmap to guide the collaboration, delivery, and implementation of projects that will achieve the multiple objectives of the CMCP and improve and better integrate the shared-use, multimodal transportation system in the I-405 Corridor area.

SCCP Grant Considerations Informed by the CMCP

The Plan is a qualifying document that will support the eligibility of shovel-ready and competitive candidates for SCCP for multiple cycles of funding (Cycles 3, 4 and 5). Project competitiveness and readiness considerations are informed by the CMCP's project evaluation and tiering. Projects were tiered based on their alignment with CMCP goals and project readiness factors. Top-tier projects are those that best and most broadly support the five goal areas of the CMCP and can satisfy numerous project readiness factors. Tier 1 and Tier 2A address CMCP goals broadly; however, Tier 1 projects are more near-term and, therefore, likely to be eligible for SCCP compared to Tier 2A. Tier 2B and 3 are not as comprehensive in their benefits but may deliver on one or two of the SCCP goals. Tier 2B projects are more-timely, while Tier 3 projects are not. Metro will only consider Tier 1 and 2B projects for Solutions for Congested Corridors. Tier 2B projects will only be pursued if projects can be packaged or satisfactorily augmented to deliver a more complete suite of benefits. Metro will assess Tier 1 and 2B projects for each funding cycle using the Board-adopted Evaluative Criteria Framework to make eligibility and strategic grant determinations for the current grant funding cycle.

To the extent that the CMCP's goals mirror the criteria and objectives of other state and federal funding opportunities, the Plan and evaluation will help Metro and partners identify corridor projects that could be competitive for other funding opportunities.

Project Advancement through the CMCP

The CMCP does not directly advance projects or make specific project scope and delivery determinations. Metro, as the preparer of the CMCP, is required to identify the various modal improvements planned for the corridor area by Metro and other partner agencies, whether those projects are in concept, under study, in design, or in implementation. Metro's adoption of the CMCP is neither an endorsement of nor a commitment to the full list of projects included in the CMCP.

All projects included in the CMCP project list are subject to independent project development processes led by the project implementing agency such as Metro, Caltrans or local jurisdictions. Inclusion in the CMCP does not negate, override, or prejudice these independent project development processes. Any final determinations on individual project scope elements, technologies, and alignments will be guided by stakeholder input during that phase. Additionally, for those Metro-delivered projects, all will be developed in accordance with Metro's Equity Platform and other policies. Further, all highway improvements Metro plans, funds, and implements will be developed and considered through the board-adopted Multimodal Highway Investment Objectives policy, which will further inform what projects will be submitted for discretionary grant opportunities.

As projects undergo the planning, analyses, and stakeholder engagement activities, projects included

in the CMCP will become more defined in scope, benefits, schedule, and cost. As Metro and partners advance projects through these development phases, a project's tier could shift. Staff will update the project list and evaluation every two years in parallel with the SB 1 SCCP funding cycle.

Plan Outreach

Stakeholder engagement and feedback received throughout plan development shaped the I-405 CMCP. Stakeholders from 87 different agencies and organizations were involved in the development of this plan, including corridor partners, community-based organizations (CBOs), Councils of Governments (COGs), local jurisdictions, transit agencies, private sector stakeholders, and others. Various engagement activities generated input and feedback including the project's advisory committee comprised of key corridor stakeholders; focus group discussions and stakeholder interviews with local CBOs, municipal transit agencies, academic institutions and regional transportation facilities; a bilingual public survey targeting transit users, pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers along the corridor; discussions and briefings with corridor stakeholders; as well as two virtual public community meetings and public comment submissions. Feedback generated through these stakeholder engagement activities helped ground truth the understanding of corridor challenges and needs, identify multimodal projects in the corridor area, define corridor goals, formulate the project evaluation methodology, align evaluation metrics to the goals, and inform and guide the proposed improvement strategies. A stakeholder engagement summary can be found in Attachment A.

I-405 CMCP Public Comment Period

In May 2022, staff released the draft I-405 CMCP for a 31-day public comment period to gather community feedback and input to help inform the final I-405 CMCP. Metro hosted two virtual community meetings on Wednesday, May 25, 2022, and Wednesday, June 1, 2022. The meetings reviewed details of the I-405 CMCP and answered questions from the public regarding the plan. Spanish translation was provided at both meetings.

Staff took a multilayered approach to notify the public of the virtual public meetings and provide opportunities to engage with and comment on the CMCP. Staff conducted a phone and text campaign reaching over 88,000 landline and mobile phones within Equity Focus Communities (EFCs) to inform residents about the virtual community meetings and the Plan. An official press release was issued to alert local media and posts were included on Metro's The Source and El Pasajero blogs. Both virtual community meetings were promoted through social media advertising campaigns and email campaigns. Lastly, a social media/newsletter toolkit was developed and distributed to local partners to help spread the word about the meetings and draft CMCP. As a result, Metro received over 115 public comment submissions during the public comment period, which were further disaggregated by comment components into a total of 344 comments. Additionally, approximately 160 members of the public attended a public meeting to learn more about the CMCP. All comments received were considered and responded to, with many comments leading to updates and refinements to the Final I-405 CMCP (see Appendix C of Attachment A).

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Adoption of the CMCP does not have an immediate safety impact to the Metro System. However,

through plan implementation, the CMCP will support projects that enhance the safety for all modes in the I-405 Corridor area.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Adoption of the CMCP would have a positive financial impact to the agency as the CMCP would allow Metro to compete for state discretionary funding that requires an adopted CMCP to be in place for projects to be considered eligible for seeking and securing SCCP funding. SCCP is an important discretionary funding source for Metro, and the 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the accompanying Long Range Transportation Plan Financial Forecast assume approximately \$65 million annually in SCCP grant funding over the planning horizon to ensure the delivery of Measures R and M.

Impact to Budget

No impact to Metro's budget is anticipated as a result of Board adoption of this item.

EQUITY PLATFORM

The CMCP delivers on Metro's Equity Platform pillar to "Define and Measure." Specifically, the plan examines corridor conditions as it relates to the Equity Focus Communities (EFCs) within the corridor, and more broadly considers the travel reaching the corridor from EFCs throughout Los Angeles County. Further, the plan explicitly outlines "Advancing Equity" as a core goal to guide the CMCP and support project evaluation. The CMCP evaluates projects based on their potential equity benefits such as expanding access to multimodal mobility options within EFCs and improving infrastructure that specifically serves EFC trips, reducing health impacts of transportation investments within EFCs, and lowering household transportation costs. All projects, strategies, and initiatives included in this plan were evaluated based on their ability to support this goal. For projects in Tiers 1, 83 percent received a high equity score, with 17 percent receiving a medium-high score. On the equity assessment, 20 percent of Tier 2B projects were high to medium-high, 37 percent were medium, and 43 percent had a non or neutral score. Tier 2B projects will only be pursued as a package of projects or if appropriate augmentation can be done to deliver a greater equity benefit. In addition to guiding the evaluation with equity considerations, the planning process for the CMCP resulted in a focused implementation strategy around reducing racial and economic disparities in transportation benefits and burden.

The CMCP's analysis was conducted using the 2019 EFC definition. In May 2022, the Board adopted an updated 2022 EFC index. The Office of Equity and Race instructed that, given the significant analysis performed using the prior methodology, the Plan should proceed with a commitment to updating the plan using the 2022 EFC as soon as possible. Staff will update the CMCP using the 2022 EFC in 2023.

Equity was integrated into the CMCP itself as well as the processes for developing the plan, including outreach. Early in the plan's development, corridor community-based organizations (CBOs) along the

corridor were invited to engage through the project's advisory committee and dedicated CBO focus group discussions. These processes helped ground-truth the challenges in the corridor and identify mobility priorities these CBOs would like to see addressed. The stakeholder engagement plan and outreach budget were established prior to the adoption of the CBO Partnering Strategy. All future CMCP activities will be conducted in accordance with the CBO Partnering Strategy Policy.

In April 2022, a bilingual (English and Spanish) public survey was conducted to inform the plan and gather information corridor challenges and transportation priorities from the perspective of transit riders, pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers along the corridor. To promote the survey, in-person transit intercept outreach was conducted at eight high-traffic transit stops and stations throughout the corridor, with half of these locations in corridor EFCs. Approximately 30% of the 428 completed surveys were provided in Spanish. Additionally, in parallel with the release of the Draft I-405 CMCP in May 2022, a bilingual StoryMap site was launched to provide an overview of the CMCP in an effort to allow the public alternative ways to become familiar with the plan outside of the larger, more technical document.

The two virtual public meetings held during the Draft Plan's release were conducted in both English and Spanish. The public received advanced notification of the meetings through the project's stakeholder database and geotargeted social media advertisements within the study area. Further, an added notification layer was employed specifically to reach Equity Focus Communities by geotargeting 88,000 landlines and mobile phones, informing recipients of the Plan and the opportunity to learn more through the virtual community meetings. For this outreach, 51,548 bilingual MMS text messages were sent, and 35,509 bilingual robocalls were made to landlines. Approximately 160 members of the public joined the meeting as a result of the various notification methods, including the robocalling and messaging campaign.

Response and comments received through the survey and public comment period were instructive in updates to the CMCP, including additional project considerations and strengthening the improvement strategies, particularly around equity and serving high-needs communities.

Some issues may be beyond the purview of Metro, such as mitigating displacement impacts, but the plan encourages lead agencies and jurisdictions to consider equity impacts to marginalized communities and implement harm reduction strategies in all projects and programs. As the CMCP is a first step for qualifying and prioritizing projects for SCCP grant funding, centering the plan around equity and evaluating projects against equity criteria supports Metro's ability to integrate equity considerations into our grant-seeking efforts.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The I-405 CMCP provides a more holistic and multimodal approach to addressing the needs of the I-405 Corridor area and outlines improving the corridor's multimodal transportation system with an emphasis on equity and sustainability for the communities that live around and depend on the I-405 Corridor. This approach supports Metro's efforts to "enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity" (#3). Additionally, through the CMCP's identification of multimodal solutions for the highly congested I-405 Corridor area the Plan strives to provide "high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling" (#1). These multimodal solutions also expand the connectivity between and viability of a broader menu of transportation options to "deliver

outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system” (#2).

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could choose to delay approval of or not to approve the I-405 CMCP. Not approving the CMCP in a timely manner would compromise Metro’s ability to position projects to compete for funding in Cycle 3 of the SCCP discretionary grant program.

NEXT STEPS

Upon board adoption, staff will assess the CMCP’s Tier 1 and Tier 2B projects using the Evaluative Criteria Framework to identify individual projects and/or packages of projects that align with Metro’s strategic grant decisions-making parameters and satisfy SCCP cycle-specific eligibility and timeliness factors.

Additionally, the CMCP will require regular updates and maintenance to ensure it continues to be aligned with Metro and State policies. Additionally, the project tiering will be updated every two years to make sure the project list is timely and reflects the latest project status. In 2023 Staff will update the Plan with the 2022 EFC tool and assessment.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Final I-405 CMCP

Attachment B - California Transportation Commission’s CMCP Checklist

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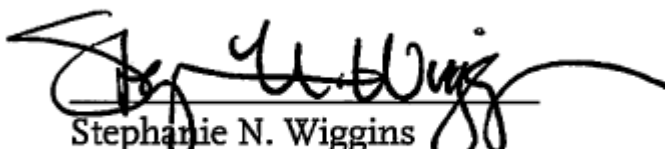
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