



Long Beach-East Los Angeles Corridor Mobility Improvement Plan

Phase 3: Multi-Modal Strategies, Projects, and Programs
Questions and Answers on the Revised List of Projects and Programs
February 7, 2023

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Long Beach-East Los Angeles Corridor Mobility Investment Plan

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Questions & Answers

Overview

Phase 3 of the Long Beach-East Los Angeles Corridor Plan was launched in September 2022 and is intended to compile a complete list of Projects & Programs to be considered for the Long Beach-East Los Angeles Corridor Mobility Investment Plan (LB-ELA CMIP). During the past several months, Task Force, Community Leadership Committee and Working Group Members, and the public provided input to the Metro Project Team on the most important Multimodal Strategies, Projects, and Programs to include in the LB-ELA CMIP. As part of that review, a number of questions have been raised about how the Initial Set of Projects and Programs will be evaluated in the next phase or next steps such as funding, prioritization, and implementation. The most frequently asked questions are answered below by the Metro Project Team for your information.

General Questions on Process

Q: How was the Initial List of Projects & Programs developed?

A: The Initial List of Projects & Programs was developed using multiple sources including:

The Task Force, its Committees and Working Groups, city, county, and agency representatives in the corridor, as well as many members of the Long Beach-East LA Corridor communities who provided a range of input at various public meetings, public workshops, and community engagement events.

- An online interactive mapping tool was provided enabling many stakeholders to provide their input on mobility improvements throughout the corridor.
- A survey was conducted where stakeholders selected mobility improvements that they would like to see in their communities and along the corridor.
- Previous studies and initiatives were referenced including, but not limited to, the Metro Long Range Transportation Plan, the SCAG (Southern California Association of Governments) Regional Transportation Plan, and the Metro 2028 Concept Plan.
- Various agencies and local jurisdictions participated, including but not limited to, the Caltrans Operations/Protection Program, Gateway Cities COG (Council of Governments) Complete Streets Plans, Livability Study, and Ad Hoc Committee, Metro Transit and Rail Departments, 14 cities and Unincorporated areas of the Corridor.

Q: What is the next phase of the Task Force Process?

A: The next phase “Evaluating Projects & Programs” includes:

- Develop criteria and performance measures that will be used to evaluate the projects and programs on the Revised Initial List.
- Request feedback from the Task Force, CLC, and Working Groups on the criteria and performance measures.
- Evaluate bundled projects by the criteria and performance measures.

Q: How will Metro respond to current funding opportunities?

A: Metro’s intent is to leverage existing Measure M and Measure R sales tax dollars to attract available state and federal funds. The Project Team will concurrently develop, maintain, and share a state and federal funding sources matrix with the Task Force, its Working Groups and Committees, as well as community members to understand funding opportunities on the horizon that can address the variety of projects to be evaluated for the Investment Plan.

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Q: Are there any projects outside the study that are on the Revised Initial List?

A: Yes. There are a few projects outside of the study area that provide critical connections or benefits to the LB-ELA Corridor. For example, the “Rail to River” Project which will improve connections between the Metro A Line (Blue) and the LA River path. is in the Revised initial list and is both inside as well as outside the Corridor. Another example is the Inland freight intermodal project in Barstow is on the Revised Initial List, and located outside the corridor. It would be a logistics and freight distribution hub inland away from the ports that would serve as the location to receive containers by freight rail through the Alameda Corridor, which is in our study area. One possible benefit to this facility is that it has the potential to alleviate some of the truck traffic in the LB-ELA Corridor through greater use of freight rail although this will need to be further explored. Yet another example, is a project that would grade separate a portion of the Blue Line as it approaches downtown Los Angeles. This improvement would help reduce travel times on this important transit line that predominantly serves the LB-ELA Corridor.

Q: How will Metro address funding opportunities on the horizon while the Investment Plan is in the development stage?

A: Metro is aware of the state and federal grant funding opportunities available for the next fiscal year and will inform the Task Force, CLC, and Working Groups which types of projects and programs could potentially qualify for this funding while the Investment Plan is being developed. Through the Task Force effort, it will be important to work to build consensus on any such projects to maximize the probability of obtaining grant funds both now and in the future as the Investment Plan is rolled out.

Q: Is there a timeline or status for the projects on the Revised Initial List?

A: In a few instances, the timeline and status information are available because they are further along in the development cycle and because this status is known by those who submitted information on the projects that are on the Initial List. In the next phase of the study (the evaluation phase), as we explore options to prioritize projects for the draft investment plan, Metro will seek to provide general timeline status (near/medium/long term).

Q: How will the project timeline and status be determined if it is not provided?

A: The current project status and a typical timeline for the projects will be estimated based on the time it takes to develop and implement of projects of similar scope. This assessment will occur during the evaluation phase.

Q: How will the project timeline and status timeline be provided for projects that have been grouped together into a program?

A: The project timeline and status for programs of projects that include multiple “-projects” may indicate the timeline for implementation of a typical “sub-project” rather than the entire set of projects. The projects in these programs would be developed and implemented by multiple jurisdictions over the course of several years based on available funding.

Q: Does the Revised Initial List address health and safety issues?

A: Many of the projects and programs included in the Initial List are intended to address health and safety as these were important goals identified by the Task Force and its related committees and working groups. It is envisioned that health and safety concerns will also be considered during the next phase of study – the evaluation and prioritization step.

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Q: What is Metro's role in projects on the Initial List?

A: Metro's role may vary from project to project, but may include funder, builder, planner, or supporter. Metro will work with the Cities and partner agencies to identify what the nexus is and how identified funds from various sources could be utilized for the different community and transportation programs described in the Initial List. Many projects will be managed by cities or by other agencies such as Caltrans, including important steps such as performing environmental studies, obtaining needed funding, design work, and overseeing construction and implementation. Decision-making processes for these projects will depend on the lead agency.

Evaluation Criteria

Q: How can we ensure that arterial roadway projects within surrounding cities do not cause displacement or harm?

A: The *potential* for project impacts such as displacement will be assessed to the best of our ability during the next phase of our study, which is the evaluation step. It is important to note that the analysis on right of way impacts and displacements is typically performed during the environmental phase of project development when the projects are physically defined and evaluated for environmental impacts. Therefore, we cannot guarantee any project outcomes at this early stage. Project approval cannot occur until completion of the environmental phase.

Q: How will the Evaluation Phase consider a project's benefits and impacts?

A: The project evaluation phase will consider the potential for benefits and impacts, including the potential for direct displacements, among other factors. The Vision, Guiding Principles of Equity and Sustainability, and the Goals will guide this process. Further discussions on evaluation criteria and methods will take place with the Task Force and the Committees over the next few months.

Q: What if the information available on a project is limited during the evaluation phase?

A: Many of the projects and programs included in the Initial List are at the very early planning stages, and will need to undergo further environmental approvals, design and development before they can be implemented. For projects with limited information available at the evaluation phase in our strategic planning for the Investment Plan, a rough risk assessment will need to be made as to the *potential* for certain benefits, costs, or impacts until more is known. It is envisioned that the Investment Plan will include a section on principles, procedures and considerations that must be considered as the various project sponsors work to design and implement the proposed improvements.

Q: How will the project evaluation phase treat projects that relate or contribute to broader patterns of neighborhood change?

A: While we can evaluate projects in our list based on their proposed improvements and direct impacts, indirect project impacts are challenging to predict and may depend on anti-displacement and neighborhood stabilization strategies in place at the city or county level. To help meet this need, our initial list includes two programs dedicated to supporting other agencies in passing Housing Stabilization and Economic Stabilization Policies (LB-ELA_0185 and LB- ELA_0136).

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Q: Are community programs more heavily weighted than other programs in the evaluation criteria?

A: Specific evaluation criteria (and weighting) have yet to be identified, but will with the assistance of the Task Force members, CLC members, and Working Group members. It is important to note that there must be a nexus between the programs that are funded through Measure M and Measure R and the criteria for how those transportation funds may be utilized. For programs where there is no clear transportation nexus, Metro will work with partners to identify sources of funding, and provide technical assistance, letters of support, and other forms of support. Some of the projects included in the Initial List, such as the Community Programs and the transportation programs, which are highlighted in blue, are essentially umbrella programs that are intended to deliver a number of different projects and improvements within the LB-ELA Corridor on an on-going basis over a period of several years.

Q: Would repair of past harms and investment in impacted communities be given more weight in the evaluation criteria than industry solutions that may already be funded by other entities?

A: The Task Force, CLC, and Working Groups will provide feedback on the draft evaluation criteria beginning in March. Since Equity is a central principle for this work, the intent to repair past harms and investment in impacted communities will be strongly considered. Therefore, during the evaluation process, we will look through the lens of equity to assess the benefits and impacts of all the projects in the Revised Initial List including industry-related solutions. The evaluation process will provide the metrics that could help us prioritize the Revised Initial List.

Air Quality

Q: Are there solutions to eliminate the pollution from the air from trucks/other vehicles?

A: Yes. Several projects include street tree and vegetation planting, which helps remove certain pollutants from the outdoor air. The project list also proposes several solutions to prevent air pollution and reduce exposure to air pollution. Additionally, the Zero Emission Truck Working Group is developing a plan to invest in Zero-Emission heavy duty truck technology to reduce tailpipe emissions from heavy duty trucks operating in the corridor.

Q: What is the best way to address air pollution?

A: The best way to address air pollution is through prevention - reducing the number of trips made by polluting vehicles and investing in technologies that reduce the amount of pollution produced by vehicles. Numerous projects on our initial list aim to advance these goals by improving conditions for clean modes of transportation such as walking, biking, and taking transit and supporting electrification of vehicles for goods movement, transit, and personal use.

Q: Once pollutants are released into the air, how can they be removed?

A: Once pollutants are released into the air, they are very difficult to remove from outdoor air. Our initial project list includes an I-710 Particulate Matter (PM) Reduction Pilot project, which would evaluate measures such as vegetation barriers, special pavement treatments, frequent street sweeping, deployment of air quality monitoring systems (LB-ELA_0157) to help address particulate matter. Several arterial roadway and active transportation projects also identify street tree/vegetation planting as a project element as these features help to provide natural filtration.

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Q: Can air filters be used to remove particulate matter from indoor air?

A: Yes. High-quality air filters can be used to remove particulate matter from indoor air. Our initial project list includes a Community Health Benefit Program (LB-ELA_0133) that would make available air filters and other such measures to reduce exposure to particulate matter for sensitive receptors such as schools and community facilities located close to I-710.

Freeways

Q: Are there projects in the Revised Initial List that support transitions from the I-710 Corridor to other freeways like the I-10 or the SR-60?

A: The Revised Initial List includes several I-710 interchange improvement projects, but none with I-10 or SR-60. I-10 is well outside the study area. Interchange improvements, such as the reconfiguration of the connectors between the I-710 and SR-60 as well as local ramps in the vicinity of East LA, were considered in previous project studies, but rejected due to adverse impacts such as the need for right-of-way and related displacements.

Q: What is the potential to shift truck trips to rail?

A: The Revised Initial List includes freight-related projects that explore options to improve the use of on-dock rail and their relative ability to shift some truck trips to rail by having cargo containers loaded directly onto rail from the cargo ships at each of the seaports. These will be looked at further during the evaluation phase.