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April 7, 2024

Fran Inman
Chair
Los Angeles County Business Federation
6055 E. Washington Blvd. #1005
Commerce, CA 90040

Dear Chair Inman,

Thank you for your letter providing comment on the Draft Long Beach-East Los Angeles (LB-ELA) Corridor Mobility Investment Plan (CMIP). Even more importantly, thank you for your participation and leadership on the Task Force, helping us collectively find a path forward to investment in the LB-ELA/I-710 Corridor after the prior project failed to advance. The Los Angeles County Business Federation (BizFed) has been a steady partner for Metro in many endeavors, including this 31-month process to bring a comprehensive, multimodal, community-centered, and regionally significant CMIP forward to the Metro Board. We recognize and appreciate BizFed's support for the LB-ELA Corridor, particularly its central role in driving the regional economy by facilitating the safe, efficient movement of goods in a way that also reduces impacts to local communities in the Corridor and regional air quality.

The following are response to your comments provided in the letter:

Lomita Blvd./SR-47 Connector Project: Thank you for your support for this new project. This project is now added to the CMIP Modal Program for Arterial Roadways/Complete Streets and will be eligible for support for future grant funding.

Goods Movement Rail Study: The Metro Board has approved \$50 million for the Zero Emission Truck program that is part of the CMIP and included in its recommendations. This is the program that we believe is responsive to your request as it is focused on our efforts to meet our climate goals, deliver \$200 million in ZE infrastructure to support the deployment of ZE Heavy Duty trucks, and coordinate with the California Transportation Commission's SB 671 program. We appreciate our partnership with BizFed and others in the area on helping the CTC identify I-710 as a critical part of and priority for the SB 671 program, in particular.

As part of the overall strategy to reduce the number of heavy-duty trucks using the congested I-710 Freeway, Metro seeks to better utilize the Alameda Corridor to move more cargo through the LB-ELA Corridor. The Alameda Corridor is currently underutilized, operating at approximately 30%, due to policy, incentive, and other issues that make it at times more appealing to move cargo by truck that could otherwise be moved by train, despite the externalities to the LB-ELA Corridor communities, air quality, traffic congestion, and safety.

The Goods Movement Rail Study is intended to allow Metro, as a member of the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority, to work with our partners at the Ports, our Class I freight rail partners, the trucking industry, and the community to identify the policies, fiscal levers and incentives, strategy, advocacy, and implementation plan needed to better utilize the Alameda Corridor as part of the multimodal approach to moving goods and improving our economy while reducing community impacts in the LB-ELA Corridor.

This study is paired with a Freight Rail Electrification Pilot program that will focus on helping our partners transition the Alameda Corridor—and the movement of cargo by rail between the Ports and the downtown Intermodal rail yards—into a ZE Corridor. While Metro is prioritizing the study of electrification for the Corridor, we also understand that the technology that will ultimately be used to make the Alameda Corridor ZE in the future is not yet determined. The study will support Metro’s efforts to identify, understand, evaluate, and develop this technology as part of the planning work to be conducted upon approval of the CMIP.

The reason for the Alameda Corridor being identified in the CMIP as a target for ZE-conversion study and funding is due to the LB-ELA Corridor’s focus on infrastructure within its boundaries and the impacts associated with moving freight on the local communities. Metro as an agency seeks to partner also with the many stakeholders involved with the more regional approach to moving freight with ZE technology beyond the LB-ELA borders and beyond the limits of the CMIP.

Congestion Pricing and ZET Requirements: We agree that these proposals are not priorities for the CMIP, and they will be moved to the Modal Programs for future evaluation, with no commitment of funding or prioritization for development attached to them. BizFed’s concerns, along with similar concerns raised by other partners, will be attached to these items if they are ever to be evaluated in the future.

It is important to note that Metro does not have any official policy or planning priorities to look at congestion pricing on I-710. Neither our Traffic Reduction Study nor our ExpressLanes Strategic Plan identify I-710 as corridor for study or implementation.

Interchange Improvements: Thank you for your support for our I-710 Multimodal, Operational, Safety, and Access Investments for the Community (MOSAIC) program that seeks to improve the interchanges that connect our LB-ELA Corridor communities, businesses, and logistics facilities to I-710. Despite the limited funding available from Measures R and M in the CMIP, we are hopeful that this Investment Plan can set up a pipeline of projects to receive future state and federal funding to improve every interchange in the corridor in a manner that reflects the need to preserve our communities, improve mobility for all, and facilitate the safer movement of people and goods through the Corridor. BizFed’s support for this program will be noted in the CMIP record.

We appreciate your comments and look forward to receiving your support for the CMIP at the April 8, 2024, LB-ELA Corridor Task Force meeting. We will bring the CMIP to the Metro Board for consideration in the following weeks and look forward to continuing our partnership with BizFed to deliver on the many projects, programs, priorities, and promises recommended by the LB-ELA CMIP.

Please feel free to reach out to me (canom@metro.net) if you have any questions or comment.

With great appreciation,

Michael Cano

Michael Cano
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C: Chris Wilson, Senior Policy Manager