



Board Report

File #: 2019-0845, **File Type:** Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 5.

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 19, 2020

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO MOTION BY DIRECTORS BONIN, HAHN, GARCIA, AND NAJARIAN - ALIGNING HIGHWAY PROGRAMS WITH STATE EMISSIONS REDUCTION GOALS DATED OCTOBER 16, 2019

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE report responding to Board Motion by Directors Bonin, Hahn, Garcia and Najarian (Item 51 from Planning & Programming Committee on October 16, 2019) to assess effects of Governor's Executive Order 19-19 on Metro's highway program and steps needed to ensure eligibility for State funding.

ISSUE

Upon release of Governor's Executive Order 19-19, the Planning and Programming Committee directed staff to report back with:

- A. An assessment of how Metro's highway program will be affected by the Governor's Executive Order 19-19 (Attachment A);
- B. Steps that can be taken to align Metro's highway program with the Executive Order in order to ensure continued competitiveness for scarce State resources; and,
- C. Recommended revisions to local funding and project development rules and guidelines to ensure project eligibility, scoping, and selection criteria are consistent with State and regional planning goals.

BACKGROUND

Metro Highway Program, in collaboration with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the subregional authorities, and local jurisdictions, initiates, funds, and implements mobility/operational improvement projects on State highways and arterials in Los Angeles County. Metro provides funds through Proposition C25%, Measure R, Measure M, and State and federal grants where available. Measure R and M funds are allocated to highway improvement projects in accordance with the Expenditure Plans approved by the voters and the Metro Board of Directors. A

sample list of those projects is presented herewith as Attachment B.

Although several major freeway capacity enhancement projects had been pursued in the past, Metro Highway Programs has shifted direction to prioritize mobility/operational improvements on the existing system and minimize environmental, social, and property impacts of Metro-funded projects. This shift includes more detailed evaluation and validation of investments to ensure maximized regional mobility benefits of the completed projects.

DISCUSSION

The following is an assessment of the relationships between the items in the Executive Order 19-19 and the core functions and practices of Metro Highway department and discussion of potential opportunities to improve guidelines and rules in project identification, eligibility, determination, prioritization, and funding.

1. The Executive Order directs “...*every aspect of state government redouble its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change while building a sustainable, inclusive economy*”.

While the Executive Order 19-19 is directed specifically to three State agencies: Dept. of Finance, Transportation Agency/Dept. of Transportation, and Dept. of General Services, other transportation agencies such as LA Metro, should incorporate the intent of the Executive Order to implement reasonable, logical, and practical policies and practices that would prevent/minimize the adverse effects of climate change.

2. The order to the State Transportation Agency (Item 2) requires *leveraging \$5+ billion in its annual spending for construction, operation, and maintenance to help reverse trend of increased fuel consumption and reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the transportation sector*.

Discussions with California State Transportation Agency Secretary Kim indicate that the executive order is the beginning of a discussion regarding climate change and the role that the state’s transportation system investments can play in addressing climate change. The Executive Order does not supersede existing state law.

In Los Angeles County, traffic/congestion relief has been a major focus of the Measure R and Measure M ballot measures. Under those sales tax measures, the voters went to the extent of voting for specifically defined highway improvement projects to address traffic congestion. Metro will actively follow and participate in the development of State guidance regarding the implementation of the Executive Order to ensure State and local policies and actions are aligned.

Most of LA Metro’s projects on the State highway system improve operations and mobility and relieve congestion by correcting existing bottlenecks and design deficiencies that exacerbate congestion and result in traffic spillage onto the arterials, local streets, and neighborhoods. When implemented, these projects will help relieve highway congestion and minimize the

traffic spillage on local streets and neighborhoods.

Metro currently has a Green Streets policy that describes design features and policies to address the needs of all users of the county's roadways. This policy can be incorporated into Metro's state grant applications.

Furthermore, under Measure M, Metro assigned more funds, under the Highway Multi-Year Subregional programs, to active transportation projects and complete streets with the expectation of mode shift, reduction in automobile demand, congestion relief, and air quality improvements.

Item 2a (EO-19-19): *“Align the State’s climate goals with transportation spending on planning, programming, and mitigation to achieve the objectives of the State’s Climate Change Scoping Plan where feasible.”*

Metro Highways continues to partner with the State and local agencies to pursue development and implementation of operational improvement projects along the State highways and arterials in Los Angeles County. Operational improvement projects are identified based on validation of current deficiencies such as bottlenecks, design deficiencies, accident rates, and other factors resulting in “choke points”, traffic backups and spill overs/diversions to other roadways, compromised roadway safety, loss of lives, and economic losses, with a focus on minimizing the negative impacts of projects.

Item 2b (EO 19-19): *Reduce VMT by bringing homes to where the jobs are.*

VMT is largely escalated due to the longer distances between the origins and destinations of automobile trips. Patterns of residential and commercial development away from the major job/demand centers have been a major factor contributing to increase in VMT. It is important to note that the State plans to shift from using Level of Service to evaluate projects impacts and use VMT instead. Caltrans is expected to issue specific guidance on VMT reduction this year. Metro will incorporate the appropriate guidance in evaluating investments in transportation improvement projects.

Item 2c (EO 19-19). *Reduce congestion through innovative strategies to move people from cars to other modes of transportation.*

Metro codified its intentions to shift people from cars to other modes with the adoption of the Complete Streets policy in 2014. Since then, Metro has begun testing new concepts to encourage more ridesharing through the Microtransit and Mobility-on-Demand pilot programs. Pending successful pilots, staff will seek partnerships with the State to advance more investment to encourage the more use of these types of transportation modes. Also, through the NextGen bus study, Metro is leveraging the availability and capacity of the bus network to move more people in less space.

Item 2d (EO 19-19). *Fund transportation options that contribute to the overall health of*

Californians and reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as transit, walking, biking, and other active modes.

Metro is currently funding multiple transportation modes and will seek partnerships with the State to advance more investment to encourage the use of sustainable transportation modes.

In response to Motion 51:

A. An assessment of how Metro’s highway program will be affected by Governor’s Executive Order 19-19 (Attachment A);

Metro will continue to engage in dialogue and work with Caltrans as more specific guidance related to the EO 19-19 is developed. Metro does not anticipate any changes to the implementation of the specific projects identified in the sales tax measures currently in place, but there may be adjustments in how the projects are implemented depending on the guidance to be adopted.

B. Steps that can be taken to align Metro’s highway program with the Executive Order in order to ensure continued competitiveness for scarce State resources;

Metro Highway department, in collaboration with its State and local partner agencies, local communities, and with support and approval by the Board, will continue to identify and implement viable transportation project priorities that leverage State funding resources consistent with the goals, policies, directives and guidelines of Board policies, approved sales tax measures, and the appropriate directives set forth in the Executive Order.

C. Recommended revisions to local funding and project development rules and guidelines to ensure project eligibility, scoping, and selection criteria are consistent with State and regional planning goals.

Metro will consult with the State to develop guidance on the implementation of the Executive Order. Once guidance is developed and issued, Metro will review and incorporate the guidance into our own evaluation procedures and guidelines, as appropriate. Staff will update the Board on any changes to our own guidelines and procedures at that time.

Concurrent and related activities include the Board staff subcommittee assessing potential changes in the Metro Highway Program to align with Board policies and motions. The subcommittee will produce a report documenting any recommended changes. In addition, Metro is working with Board staff to evaluate changes as part of the 10-year Measure R transfer process.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

No immediate impact to the budget. Staff will evaluate guidance issued by the State to determine

future impacts to the budget.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Metro Highway Program's current and planned actions support all Metro Strategic Plan goals and are consistent with the intent of the Governor's Executive Order.

Goal 1, *"Providing high quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling"* by continuing to identify and improve the highway and arterial system deficiencies and "Hot Spots" to provide for better mobility and safer roadways for the users;

Goal 2: *"Deliver outstanding trip experience for all users of the transportation system"* by removing choke points, reducing delays and idling traffic;

Goal 3: *"Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity"* by reducing congestion, provide for more trip reliability, and easing countywide trips to major job centers and places of interest;

Goal 4: *"Transform LA County through regional collaboration and national leadership"* by close and productive collaboration with Caltrans, regional authorities, local jurisdictions, regulatory, resource, and permitting agencies to identify the best and most effective solutions to traffic congestion while minimizing impacts to the environment and communities; and

Goal 5: *"Provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy governance within the Metro organization"* by collaborating with other Metro functional units responsible for non-highway modes to collectively identify the most beneficial and functional mobility options that accurately address the transportation needs of the users within the environment/area of effect of each project for the best results leading to the highest levels of environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

N/A

NEXT STEPS

Staff will update the Board on the future changes in policies and procedures as those become available.

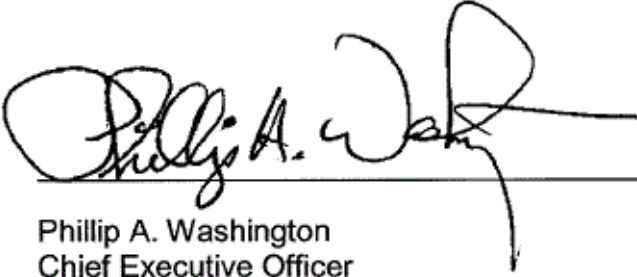
ATTACHMENT

Attachment A - Governor Executive Order 19-19

Attachment B - Highway Operational Improvement Projects Currently Pursued

Prepared by: Abdollah Ansari, Senior Executive Officer, (213) 922-4718
Bryan Pennington, Deputy Chief Program Management Officer (213) 922-7449

Reviewed by: Richard F. Clarke, Chief Program Management Officer, (213) 922-7557



Phillip A. Washington
Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

EXECUTIVE ORDER N-19-19

WHEREAS California is proof that a bold climate agenda is good for the economy, for workers, for health and for our future, as evidenced by our state having achieved record economic growth while reaching some of the strongest climate goals in the world; and

WHEREAS in the face of inaction on climate change from the federal government, California is a global leader in climate change mitigation efforts through bold climate goals and actions, as well as leadership in the US Climate Alliance and Under2 Coalition, using the state's power as the fifth largest economy in the world to drive positive action; and

WHEREAS California has ambitious and essential climate goals to transition to a healthier, more sustainable and more inclusive economy, including: reducing greenhouse gas emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030; providing 100 percent of the state's electricity from clean energy sources by 2045; reducing methane emissions and hydrofluorocarbon gases by 40 percent; and adding five million zero-emission vehicles to California's roads by 2030; and

WHEREAS California has made substantial, measurable progress on many of the goals enumerated above, but in recent years, direct tailpipe emission from cars, ships, diesel trains, airplanes, and other transportation sources have remained a stubborn driver of greenhouse gas emissions, totaling 40.1 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions statewide; and

WHEREAS the California Air Resources Board has a fifty-year history of leading the globe in addressing harmful pollution through innovative air pollution control standards, including the nation's first NOx emissions standards for motor vehicles; and

WHEREAS California's renewable energy targets have spurred innovation and private investment in new technologies with California leading the nation in clean technology patents and bringing in more than 50 percent of all clean energy investment in the nation; and

WHEREAS the state has made significant progress in lowering greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate risk in California's own state government operations and public schools; and

WHEREAS achieving California's climate goals will require concerted commitment and partnership by government, the private sector, and California residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and the statutes of the State of California, do hereby issue the following Order to become effective immediately to require that every aspect of state government redouble its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change while building a sustainable, inclusive economy.

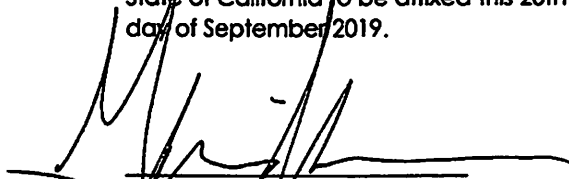
1. To leverage the state's \$700 billion investment portfolio to advance California's climate leadership, protect taxpayers, and support the creation of high-road jobs, the Department of Finance shall create a Climate Investment Framework.
 - a. The Framework shall include a proactive investment strategy for the state's pension funds that reflects the increased risks to the economy and physical environment due to climate change.
 - b. The Framework shall provide the timeline and criteria to shift investments to companies and industry sectors that have greater growth potential based on their focus of reducing carbon emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change, including but not limited to investments in carbon-neutral, carbon-negative, climate resilient, and clean energy technologies.
 - c. The Framework shall align with the fiduciary responsibilities of the California Public Employees' Retirement System, California State Teachers' Retirement System and the University of California Retirement Program.
 - d. The Department of Finance shall consult with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, and the California Department of Human Resources on the Framework.
2. The State Transportation Agency shall leverage the more than \$5 billion in annual state transportation spending for construction, operations, and maintenance to help reverse the trend of increased fuel consumption and reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with the transportation sector. To accomplish this, the State Transportation Agency, in consultation with the Department of Finance, shall:
 - a. Align the state's climate goals with transportation spending on planning, programming and mitigation to achieve the objectives of the state's Climate Change Scoping Plan, where feasible,
 - b. Reduce vehicle miles traveled by strategically directing discretionary transportation investments in support of housing production near available jobs and in accordance with the state's smart growth principles, as defined in Government Code section 65041.1, and taking public health into account,

- c. Reduce congestion through innovative strategies designed to encourage people to shift from cars to other modes of transportation,
 - d. Fund transportation options that contribute to the overall health of Californians and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as transit, walking, biking and other active modes, and
 - e. Mitigate increases in transportation costs for lower income Californians.
3. The Department of General Services shall leverage its management and ownership of the state's 19 million square feet in managed buildings, 51,000 vehicles and other physical assets and goods to minimize state government's carbon footprint. To accomplish this, the Department of General Services shall:
- a. Maximize reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, including harmful diesel emissions, from the state fleet,
 - b. Develop and implement sustainable purchasing policies across state agencies that prioritize the purchase of environmentally preferable goods such as more sustainable food and recycled materials, consistent with state climate policies,
 - c. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate risk from the state's owned and future-leased buildings,
 - d. Manage energy demand to maximize benefits to the grid, and
 - e. Promote zero-emission vehicle purchasing in state and local government fleets.
4. To accelerate progress towards California's goal of five million zero emissions vehicles sales by 2030, the California Air Resources Board shall:
- a. Develop new criteria for clean vehicle incentive programs to encourage manufacturers to produce clean, affordable cars,
 - b. Propose new strategies to increase demand in the primary and secondary markets for zero emissions vehicles, and
 - c. Consider strengthening existing or adopting new regulations to achieve the necessary greenhouse gas reductions from within the transportation sector.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that as soon as hereafter possible, this Order shall be filed with the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice shall be given to this Order.

This Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its departments, agencies, or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 20th day of September 2019.



GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

ALEX PADILLA
Secretary of State

Highway Operational Improvement Projects Currently Pursued

I-5 HOV Lanes and truck climbing lanes between SR-14 in Santa Clarita and Parker Road in Castaic

The project was approved by the Board, has passed the environmental process, completed final design, has received State grants for its validated purpose and need, is strongly supported by the North County JPA, the Golden State Gateway Coalition, and other entities, and will be in construction by early 2021. The project will improve roadway congestion created by suburban land use practices resulting in significant VMT and traffic destined to remote job centers and services. It also promotes carpooling and accommodates freight movement in the corridor.

SR-60/7th Avenue Interchange Improvements Project

Operational improvement by correcting design deficiencies at a local interchange/freeway off-ramp that currently result in traffic backing up onto the freeway mainline slowing the mainline flow. The accident rate at this interchange is 31% higher than the statewide average for comparable facilities. This project was studied and prioritized under the I-605 Hot Spots study and is supported by both the Gateway Cities COG and the San Gabriel Valley COG and approved by the Board.

SR-57/SR-60 Interchange Improvements Project

The project was approved by the Board, supported by the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments, Caltrans, and the cities of Diamond Bar and Industry and was included in the Measure M Expenditure Plan (Line Item 18). The project has received State grants, has environmental clearance, is currently in final design. The start of construction in the Measure M Expenditure Plan is 2025. Staff is pursuing State and federal grants to accelerate project delivery by early construction start in 2022. The project will correct geometric design deficiencies contributing to high number of traffic accidents, slow down, recurring congestion and lost time/productivity as well as interruption in freight movement. This location has one of the highest number of truck accidents (27 accidents per mile per year due to high weaving from one freeway to the other, its accident rate is 50% higher than the statewide average for comparable facilities and has been ranked fourth-worst truck bottleneck in the nation by the American Transportation Research Institute.

SR-71 Improvements Project

The project was approved by the Board and strongly supported by the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments and the City of Pomona and is one of Caltrans' highest priority projects. The project was included in the Measure M Expenditure Plan (Line Item 12) as a regional high priority project. It is environmentally cleared and will be constructed in 2 phases. Phase 1 between Mission and the south County Line is an expressway bottleneck

between the northerly segment (Freeway - between Mission and the I-10) and the freeway segment to the south in Orange County and will start construction in 2020. Phase 2 will include modifications to the northerly segment between Mission and I-10 and will follow when full funding is available.

SR-91 Improvement Projects

Several location-specific operational improvement projects along SR-91 identified and validated through extensive studies, promoted by the Gateway Cities Council of Governments, listed in the Measure M Expenditure Plan (Line Item 61), and collectively and individually approved by the Board. The projects are:

- SR-91, Central to Acacia: In environmental phase. Construction start is anticipated in 2024.
- SR-91, Atlantic to Cherry: In environmental phase with anticipated construction start in 2022.
- SR-91/I-605 Interchange Improvements: Is environmentally approved, in final design, and scheduled for construction in 2022

I-405 Improvement Projects

Proposed operational improvements along the most congested freeway in the nation. The I-405 provides access to the Los Angeles International Airport, Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, in provides countywide connectivity via I-5, I-210, SR-118, US-101, I-10, SR-91, I-105, I-110, I-710, SR-22, and SR-55.

The I-405 was identified as a major regional priority in the Measure M Expenditure Plan (Line Item 37). The South Bay Cities Council of Governments placed bulk of their funds in Measures R and M in highway investments but currently is proposing to repurpose their 2nd decade Measure R funds to non-highway projects.

The segment of the I-405 between I-10 and US-101 is prioritized for implementation of ExpressLanes. Extension of those lanes south of I-10 will maximize the effectiveness and operational benefits of the ELs. The Current active projects are:

- Crenshaw Interchange: This project was developed by Caltrans and has environmental and final design approvals. Construction is scheduled for 2021
- Auxiliary lane between El Segundo Blvd. and Artesia Blvd.
- Auxiliary lane between I-110 and Wilmington

I-605 “Hot Spots” Operational Improvement Projects

Several location-specific operational improvement projects along I-605 identified and validated through extensive studies, strongly supported by the Gateway Cities Council of Governments, listed in the Measure M Expenditure Plan (Line Item 61) and collectively and individually approved by the Board. Improvements at the I-605/I-10 interchange are listed as Line Item 33., Projects in the I-605 Corridor currently in progress are:

- I-605/South Street Interchange Improvements: significant back up at the

southbound off-ramp due to high traffic destined to the auto mall, a regional mall, the Cerritos Civic Center, and residential communities. Backup extends into the freeway mainline and impacts both I-605 and SR-91 interchange. Slow/stopped traffic approaching the South Street off-ramp poses high accident risk on the freeway.

- I-605/Beverly Interchange Improvements: The project will eliminate an existing short weaving distance between the loop on and off-ramps by replacing the current design with a diamond configuration. The project benefits include reducing weaving conflicts, thereby improving freeway operations and safety. Additionally, the project will include all directional movements at the S/B interchange, easing congestion at the intersections near the interchange. The project has environmental approval, is in final design, and scheduled for construction in 2021.
- I-605/Valley Blvd. Interchange Improvements: significant back up at the northbound off-ramp due to operational deficiencies which are forecasted to increase and exacerbate existing traffic conditions without planned improvements. The project will reduce congestion, improve traffic operations and mobility by increasing ramp storage, implementing minor geometric revisions, adding right-turn pockets and improving the signals. The project is in environmental phase with construction start anticipated in 2021.

SR-710 Mobility Improvement Projects

Metro Highway Department supported implementation of mobility improvement projects along the SR-710 gap between I-10 and I-210 to off-set the impacts of the current and future anticipated escalating traffic that was planned to be resolved by the completion of the freeway gap at much higher cost and impact. Development of the mobility improvement projects will start as early as the current Fiscal Year. Most of those projects will not have any environmental impacts. None of those projects will generate “new demand”. In fact, not implementing these projects will have further negative impacts on local streets and neighborhoods. Potential impacts of the larger projects will be fully mitigated.

I-710 Corridor and Early Action Projects

I-710 South Corridor Improvements are listed as Line Items 20 and 28 in the Measure M Expenditure Plan. Metro Highway Department, in collaboration with the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (GCCOG) has identified early action operational improvement projects that can be implemented incrementally along the corridor until there is support for major investment in improving the capacity of the I-710. The early action projects will be implemented within the current financial capacity and with no significant environmental impacts.

Other Metro Highway-based projects/programs:

Congestion Reduction/ExpressLanes:

Congestion reduction program strives to reduce congestion through dynamically pricing the roadway based on congestion and distance traveled to reduce delay and increase throughput (both vehicle and person) in underutilized HOV lanes. ExpressLanes rely on economic cues and operational improvements to manage demand on the roadways and

encourage carpooling, transit, and alternative transportation usage. As currently implemented in Los Angeles County, congestion reduction is designed to improve mobility by reducing idling and stop and go traffic resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The on-going efforts include:

- I-105 ExpressLanes: The project will convert HOV lanes between I-405 and I-605 to ExpressLanes enabling carpoolers to travel free of charge and SOVs to use the lanes for a toll. This project received Measure M funding, is in the environmental phase and has received tolling authority from the California Transportation Commission.
- I-10 HOV Conversion to ExpressLanes: This project, upon completion of an 11-mile gap in the I-10 HOV lanes, will convert those lanes to toll lanes to improve mobility along this corridor. Once completed, the lanes in Los Angeles County will connect to the ExpressLanes in San Bernardino County to accommodate the daily commute traffic between the two counties.
- I-405 Sepulveda Pass ExpressLanes: Currently beginning the environmental phase, this project aims to improve mobility through the heavily congested 10-mile segment of the I-405 between I-10 and US-101 with the goal of future extension along the I-405 corridor.
- Countywide Congestion Pricing Assessment Study: LA Metro began this two-year study in 2019 to assess the potential benefits of congestion pricing in Los Angeles County with the intent of reducing peak hour traffic congestion, promoting ridesharing, use of alternative modes of transportation, and ultimately improving the air quality and environmental quality in the LA basin.

Goods Movement

Movement of goods through the County depends on efficient performance of the freeways and other truck corridors. According to the Federal Highway Administration, Freight Analysis Framework (FAF) 4.5, 2019 report, 68% of the total 740.5 million tons of goods moved in the LA region is moved by trucks. This equates to 60% of the total value of \$1.7 billion.

Lack of capacity, deficient operation, and recurring and non-recurring congestion result in delayed and unreliable movement of goods with economic consequences. The land-based goods movement-related infrastructure in Southern California was built with reliance on strategic and progressive investment in roadways. Lack of investment in roadways without a well-planned alternative system to support timely and cost-effective movement of goods will have negative impacts on jobs, lives, and the economy of Southern California and the LA County. All proposed Metro-funded highway operational improvements on major freight routes consider improvements to accommodate movement of goods.

Other Contributions to Mobility Improvements

Metro Highways is working with Caltrans and local jurisdictions on development of “**Connected Corridors**” – a concept to combine the State highways and parallel local arterials with addition of ITS elements such as signal synchronization and electronic signage/message boards - to improve mobility along the State highways

without major highway widening and through active traffic management. This concept is presently being implemented on I-210.

Metro Highways also engaged with the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and the private sector in testing a “**Truck Platooning**” concept, in which, through on-board computer systems, trucks can be connected to operate as trains with minimum headways at constant speeds for improved efficiency and mobility. A pilot project was successfully conducted on I-710. Further development of the concept and identification of the appropriate corridors are in progress.