



# MONTHLY SBCCOG TRANSPORTATION REPORT

COVERING January 2023

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SBCCOG Transportation Director

Metro received an allocation of just over \$1.1 billion for the following projects: Westside Purple Line Extension Section 1: \$313 million; Westside Purple Line Extension Section 2: \$250 million; Westside Purple Line Extension 3: \$250 million; and the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor Phase 1: \$250 million. In addition, the FTA allocated \$59.6 million in funding for the Westside Purple Line Extension Section 3, consistent with Section 165 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act.

### **US DOT Denies Federal Funding For I-105 Metro Express Lanes, West Santa Ana Branch**

Two transportation projects have been denied federal MEGA grant funding on January 10<sup>th</sup>. The denial impacts funding for the West Santa Ana Branch light rail line and Metro Express Lane expansion to the 105 freeway. LA Metro applied for \$400m for West Santa Ana Branch (WSAB) and \$45m for 105 ExpressLanes. The stated reasons for denying funding portend difficulty LA Metro may face seeking future federal grants: not cost-effective, not submitting a required analysis, and not having the capacity to carry out project.

### **NTSB Head Warns Of Risks Posed By Heavy EVs Colliding With Lighter Cars**

Jennifer Homendy, the head of the National Transportation Safety Board, expressed concern in a speech to the Transportation Research Board on January 11<sup>th</sup> about the safety risks that heavy electric vehicles pose if they collide with lighter vehicles. She noted that an electric GMC Hummer weighs about 9,000 pounds, with a battery pack that alone is 2,900 pounds (1,300 kilograms) — roughly the entire weight of a typical Honda Civic. Ford's F-150 Lightning EV pickup is 2,000 to 3,000 pounds (900 to 1,350 kilograms) heavier than the same model's combustion version. The Mustang Mach E electric SUV and the Volvo XC40 EV, she said, are roughly 33% heavier than their gasoline counterparts.

Some battery chemistries being developed have the potential to pack more energy into less mass. But for now, there's a mismatch in weight between EVs and smaller internal combustion vehicles. EVs also deliver instant power to their wheels, making them accelerate faster in most cases than most gas-powered cars, trucks and SUVs.

Michael Brooks, executive director of the nonprofit Center for Auto Safety is also concerned about the weight of EVs because buyers demand a range of 300 or more miles per charge, requiring the heavy batteries. In 2011, the National Bureau of Economic Research published a paper that said being hit by a vehicle with an added 1,000 pounds increases by 47% the probability of being killed in a crash.

Sales of new electric vehicles in the U.S. rose nearly 65% last year to 807,000 — about 5.8% of new vehicle sales. The Biden administration has set a goal of having EVs reach 50% of new vehicle sales by 2030 and is offering tax credits of up to \$7,500 to get there. The consulting firm LMC Automotive expects EVs to make up one-third of the new-vehicle market by 2030.

## **STATE**

### **CALSTA Awards Inglewood Transit Connector \$407 Million State TIRCP Grant**

The California State Transportation Agency announced on January 31<sup>st</sup> that the Inglewood Transit Connector (ITC) project has been granted \$407 million in TIRCP funds.

The ITC is a 1.6-mile automated transit system that will connect the Metro K (Crenshaw/LAX) Line Downtown Inglewood Station to the City’s sports and entertainment venues, and housing and commercial centers. With a station serving downtown Inglewood at Market Street, and two stations along Prairie Avenue, the ITC has been designed to provide rail transit service to the Kia Forum, Sofi Stadium and Hollywood Park, as well as Intuit Dome, which opens in 2024.

The \$407 million investment comes from the \$1.3 billion that was designated for projects in Southern California through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP). TIRCP is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantaged communities. The City and JPA are also working with the Federal Transit Agency to secure a Capital Investment Grant, which is necessary to fully fund the approximately \$1.5 billion infrastructure project. For more information, please visit [www.envisioninglewood.org](http://www.envisioninglewood.org).

### **Newsom’s Proposed FY 2023/24 Budget Reduces Transit Funding By \$2 Billion**

With California now looking at a \$22.5 billion budget deficit, Governor Newsom on January 10<sup>th</sup> proposed a 2023/24 state budget that would reduce the current \$7 billion transit infrastructure budget by \$2 billion over three years. The Governor is also calling for a \$200 million cut to bicycle and pedestrian programs and delaying \$350 million in funding to improve rail crossing safety from FY 2023/24 to FY 2025/26.

Most of his suggested cuts are in the climate investments and transportation budget that was increased last year when the California budget was flush. Specifically, the Transit and Intercity Rail Program (TIRCP), which is grant-based and funds things like the Inglewood Transit Connector project, will see a reduction of \$2 billion in future funding, and last year’s one-time boost for the Active Transportation Program (ATP), which funds projects that support biking and walking, will be reduced by half. However, Newsom proposes a bit of fiscal sleight of hand for the ATP program by noting that \$300 million of the ATP budget could be backfilled from state highway funds, and the remaining \$200 million could be shifted from future years of the current ATP Cycle 6 grant program.

The proposed cuts come at a difficult time for transit. Ridership and revenue plummeted during COVID, and has not yet recovered, while costs are increasing, fleet electrification is looming, and emergency federal funding is about to run out. Transit advocates are calling the budgetary challenges a “transit fiscal cliff”.

This is a first-draft budget, released in January to get discussions started. Governor Newsom will release a revised version in May that will reflect updated revenue estimates. If tax revenue this year or next comes in higher than estimated, or if unknown-as-yet federal investments are substantial, some of these budget shifts could be reversed.

### **Effective January 1<sup>st</sup> CARB Bans Diesel Buses and Large Diesel Trucks Made Before 2010**

The CARB rule, which was adopted in 2008, applies to pre-2010 diesel engines in vehicles that weigh at least 14,000 pounds. Those who keep the vehicle but have the engine replaced with an engine made 2010 or later are exempt from the rule.

The Air Resources Board has said 2010 and newer engines do a better job of filtering out harmful particulate matter. The agency estimates an estimated 200,000 vehicles have yet to comply with the rule, including roughly 70,000 big rig trucks, or about 10% of the commercial motor vehicles operating in the state. State regulators have said that while big rigs make up about 6% of vehicles registered in the state, they account for more than half of the pollution emitted from mobile sources.

To enforce the rule, the California Department of Motor Vehicles will deny registration for vehicles that are not in compliance. In addition, a CARB enforcement unit will audit fleets, do inspections, and issue citations if necessary. The agency is also working with the federal Environmental Protection Agency to help enforce the rule for vehicles coming from out of state.

### **New California Law Requires Drivers To Change Lanes When Passing Bicyclists**

For nearly a decade, California motorists have been required to maintain a distance of 3 feet when passing bicyclists. AB 1909, which took effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, requires drivers to change lanes, when possible, to provide more space to bicyclists as they pass.

The new law still requires motorists to maintain a 3-foot buffer between themselves and bicyclists when passing cyclists traveling in the same direction. However, if not enough space is available, drivers are now required to slow down and pass without endangering the bicyclist. Drivers have to consider other factors, such as road conditions and weather, when identifying appropriate times to pass if not enough space is available for the 3-foot gap.

Penalties may vary by county, but anyone who violates the law faces at least \$238 in fines and fees. If a bicyclist is injured, the total amount could be at least \$982.

## **REGION**

### **L. A. Metro Releases Draft EIR Released For C Line Extension To Torrance**

L. A. Metro has released a draft environmental impact report (DEIR) for an extension of the C (Green) Line to Torrance. The DEIR documents can be viewed at:

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/nn9qo1wix6ror76/AAAA4oiZBOcXvxmTmB1QthKWa/2023%20Draft%20EIR?dl=0&subfolder\\_nav\\_tracking=1](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/nn9qo1wix6ror76/AAAA4oiZBOcXvxmTmB1QthKWa/2023%20Draft%20EIR?dl=0&subfolder_nav_tracking=1) .

Metro will hold the following public meetings related to the C (Green) Line Extension DEIR:

#### **City of Lawndale**

Wednesday, February 15, 5:30–8:30pm  
Lawndale High School  
Centinela Valley Center for the Arts  
14901 S Inglewood Av, Lawndale 90260

#### **Virtual Meeting On Zoom**

Thursday, February 16, 11am–1pm  
to join, scan the QR code or visit  
Link: [bit.ly/cletdeirmtg](https://bit.ly/cletdeirmtg)  
Phone: 833.548.0282 (toll free)  
Meeting ID: 895 3678 6223

#### **City of Torrance**

Tuesday, February 21, 5–8pm  
Torrance Cultural Arts Center  
Toyota Meeting Hall  
3330 Civic Center Dr, Torrance 90503

#### **City of Redondo Beach**

Wednesday, February 22, 5–8pm  
Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center  
1935 Manhattan Beach Bl,  
Redondo Beach 90278

### **Weekend Public Hearing**

Saturday, February 25, 10am–1pm  
Lawndale High School  
Centinela Valley Center for the Arts  
14901 S Inglewood Av, Lawndale 90260

Public comments on the DEIR are being accepted through March 27<sup>th</sup>. During the review period, the public has an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR and attend virtual and in-person public hearings. Written comments can be submitted by email at [greenlineextension@metro.net](mailto:greenlineextension@metro.net) or by phone at 213.922.4004.

The DEIR evaluates three potential routes for the C Line extension and their environmental impacts. The project would add new stations near the South Bay Galleria and the Torrance Transit Center, with expected ridership ranging between 4,700 and 5,400 daily passengers.

The three alternatives being evaluated for the C Line extension are:

- **Metro ROW Elevated/At-Grade Alignment:** Follows the Metro ROW for the length of the Project from the existing Marine Station to the Torrance Transit Center, with an elevated segment, followed by an at-grade segment.
- **Trench Option:** Follows the Metro ROW for the length of the project, with below-grade trench segments between Inglewood Avenue and 182nd Street
- **Hawthorne Option:** Leaves the Metro ROW to run along Interstate 405, then turns onto Hawthorne Boulevard near 162nd Street to travel in the center median of the street before rejoining the Metro ROW south of 190th Street. The entire alignment is elevated.

## **FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL TRENDS / INNOVATION**

### **What Can Be Done To Reduce Traffic Deaths On Local Streets?**

The January 20<sup>th</sup> issue of The Essential California Newsletter featured an article offering solutions for reducing street crash deaths. Preliminary data show 312 people were killed in crashes on L.A. streets in 2022, with one person dying in traffic every 28 hours. Half of those victims were people fatally struck by cars while walking. More than 1,500 other road users were seriously injured in crashes last year.

Safety officials typically point to a combination of engineering, education and enforcement — known as the three E’s — as the model for saving lives. But with many communities across the nation experiencing decades-high traffic deaths, there’s been momentum to think beyond that traditional triangle in favor of a “safe system approach.” So what does a safe system approach look like? A main component is redesigning streets to be “self-enforcing” — building roadways that encourage slower, more attentive driving with features like:

- **Protected left turns** separate the time pedestrians have to cross a street from the time drivers turn through crosswalks.
- **Leading pedestrian intervals** give pedestrians a head start at intersections.
- **Raised crosswalks** make pedestrians more visible and signal drivers to slow down at crossings.
- **Protected bike lanes** provide people on bicycles a separate space to ride, decreasing interactions with drivers.

- **Daylighting intersections** improves visibility by prohibiting car parking near crosswalks and corners.
- **Curb extensions** force drivers to make wider, slower right turns at intersections.
- **Narrowing vehicle lanes** compels drivers to slow down.
- **Reducing speed limits** enables factoring in safety concerns and road design, not just considering current traffic speeds.
- **Automated speed cameras** can cite far more dangerous drivers than a traffic cop without bias. A state bill to create a school zone pilot program in a handful of California cities has so far failed to pass.
- **In-vehicle drunk-driving detection systems** could reduce traffic deaths by 30%.
- **Intelligent speed assistance systems** issue an in-vehicle alert to the driver and automatically slow down the vehicle when the driver exceeds local speed limits.