South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Infrastructure Working Group (IWG)

AGENDA

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

12:00 pm – 1:30 p.m.

NOTE: The meeting will be conducted via Zoom

ACCESSING THE MEETING:

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcrcO6upzspHdILDIY9r5zxqSncedtZY9ew

Future IWG meetings are scheduled to be held:

April 14, 2021
May 12, 2021
June 9, 2021

12:00 p.m.  **February 10, 2021 IWG Meeting Notes Approval** (Attachment A)

12:02 p.m.  **Agency & Other Update Reports**
- SBCCOG – Program update – Jacki Bacharach
- LA County DPW – South Bay Traffic Forum – Update
- Caltrans District 7 South Bay Projects – Update
- L. A. Metro - Updates
  - L. A. Metro Board Actions - Update
  - Metro TAC & Streets and Freeway Subcommittee Actions / TAC Representatives
  - C (Green) Line to Torrance EIR Update & Draft SBCCOG Comment letter – (Attachment B)

12:15 p.m.  **Update on Measure R and Measure M Metro Budget Requests**

12:25 p.m.  **SCAG Smart Cities Innovation Grants – Parking Management**
(https://scag.ca.gov/post/smart-cities-mobility-innovations)

12:35 p.m.  **Spotlight Presentation: SBCCOG Local Travel Network** – Aaron Baum, SBCCOG

1:10 p.m.  **COVID-19 Roundtable Discussion**

1:20 p.m.  **March SBCCOG Transportation Update** (Attachment C)

1:25 p.m.  **3-Month Look Ahead** (Attachment D)

1:30 p.m.  **Announcements / Adjournment**

**NOTE:** To include an item on the April 14th agenda, e-mail to lantzsh10@gmail.com

By April 6th, 2021.
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Infrastructure Working Group Meeting Notes – February 10, 2021 (Held via Zoom)

Attendees: Chair Ted Semaan (Redondo Beach); Elias Sassoon (El Segundo); Julian Lee (Lawndale); Erik Zandvliet (Manhattan Beach); Andrew Winje, Jesse Reyes & Michael Klein (Redondo Beach); Steve Finton & Joey Garcia (Torrance); Daritza Gonzalez & Luke Klipp (Supervisor Hahn); Jacki Bacharach, Steve Lantz & David Leger (SBCCOG); Sarah Horn (Caltrans); William Johnson & John Ickis (LACDPW); Maria Rosales & Will Chen (LACSD); Isidro Panuco & Mark Dierking (Metro); Carlos Ortiz (Advantec); Anissa Voyiatzes (Ardurra); Steven Anderson (DEA); Alan Clelland (DKS); Rawad Hani (Caltrans); William Johnson & John Ickis (LACDPW); Jacki Bacharach, Steve Lantz & David Leger (SBCCOG); Sarah Horn (Caltrans); William Johnson & John Ickis (LACDPW); Maria Rosales & Will Chen (LACSD); Isidro Panuco & Mark Dierking (Metro); Carlos Ortiz (Advantec); Anissa Voyiatzes (Ardurra); Steven Anderson (DEA); Alan Clelland (DKS); Rawad Hani (Gentec Solutions); Wayne Richardson (HDR); Sri Chakravarthy (Kimley-Horn); Myriam Fruasto & Paul Martin (Mark Thomas); Monica Killen & Michael Ip (MNS Engineers); Diego Cadena (WKE)

I. Self-Introductions and Approval of January 13, 2021 IWG Meeting Notes – Chair Ted Semaan called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm. The January 13, 2021 meeting notes were approved without objection.

II. Agency & Other Update Reports
A. SBCCOG: Ms. Bacharach reported that SBCCOG is working with Supervisor Hahn’s office to study L. A. County Health Department and Service Planning Area (SPA) boundaries to determine if there are opportunities to provide local cities more autonomy and/or improve communications between the cities within a SPA. The SBCCOG is also preparing comments on the LAWA ATMP EIR that seek further analysis of traffic impacts and mitigations coming from the South, air traffic regionalization, and the timing of Terminal 9 opening. She also reported that the SBCCOG is finalizing education modules for city staff on homeless issues and resources, including “myth vs. fact” commentary on many common perceptions. At the February Board meeting, there will be presentations on the SBCCOG’s Local Travel Network report, the mid-year budget update, and the C (Green) Line extension to Torrance. The SBCCOG is also asking cities to provide a list of any other potential municipal sites for connection to the South Bay Fiber Network by February 28th. Finally, Ms. Bacharach announced that the 2021 General Assembly will be taking place virtually on March 18th.

B. South Bay Traffic Forum (LACDPW): Mr. Ickis reported updates on the various County ITS and TSSP projects taking place in the South Bay. The detailed updates are included in a written report available here: https://www.southbaycities.org/sites/default/files/infrastructure/HANDOUT_ITS%20%26%20TSSP%20status%20February%202021%20Final.pdf

C. Caltrans District 7: no report given.

D. LA Metro
   1) LA Metro Board: Mr. Dierking reported that the C (Green) Line is currently in the 45-day scoping period, with two virtual meetings scheduled for February 24th and 27th. Comments are due by March 15th. There will be an agency-only scoping meeting on February 23rd at 10 a.m.
   2) Metro TAC & Streets and Freeway Subcommittee: No report for the Metro TAC. Mr. Semaan asked that others consider volunteering to serve as the TAC representative as Mr. Marquez must step away due to staffing shortages at Carson. If you are interested in serving, please contact David Leger. Mr. Zandvliet reported that the Streets and Freeways subcommittee was presented updates on the C (Green) Line, Metro’s Micro Transit pilot project, and the NextGen Bus Plan. Mr. Zandvliet noted that Metro reported high ratings from riders using the micro transit pilot.

III. SBCCOG Measure M Metro Budget Request
Mr. Lantz reported on the Measure R and M Metro Budget Requests, providing an overview of the work by SBCCOG over the last couple months. There are a handful of projects that requested additional funding, along with two requests for new projects. Mr. Lantz noted that the SBCCOG Transportation Committee has already recommended Board approval but asked the IWG to re-affirm the items in the packet. The requests will be considered by the SBCCOG Board on February 25, 2021.

MOTION by Mr. Semaan, seconded by Mr. Zandvliet, to REAFFIRM the Measure R and M Metro Budget Requests. No objection.

IV. Future IWG Spotlight Presentation Topics Survey Results
Mr. Leger reported that the highest responses were for project management best practices, roadway/infrastructure engineering topics, and additional subregional/multi-jurisdictional projects. The respondents also noted a desire for
occasional city/agency-only meetings. SBCCOG staff will leave the survey open to allow for more responses.

V. Spotlight Presentation: SB 1383 Organic Waste Reduction Targets
Ms. Rosales and Mr. Chen provided the group a presentation on LA County Sanitation Districts’ organic waste treatment program that can help cities meet SB 1383 organic waste reduction targets by diverting food waste into the LACSD system. Through a complex process, LACSD converts food waste into natural gas that can be used to fuel CNG vehicles.
For more detail, the presentation is available online here: https://www.southbaycities.org/sites/default/files/infrastructure/PRESENTATION_Food%20Waste%202020.pdf

VI. February 2021 SBCCOG Transportation Update – Received and filed.

VII. Three-Month Look Ahead – Received and filed.
Mr. Panuco reported that Metro is working on a sustainable transportation planning grant that will create a mitigation program to aid in the transition from Level of Service CEQA requirements to Vehicle Miles Travelled CEQA requirements. He requested letters of support. If Metro is awarded the grant, they would like to come back to present more information on the proposed VMT program metrics approach to project selection and evaluation.

VIII. Announcements & Adjournment
Chair Semaan adjourned the meeting at 1:08 p.m. until March 10th, 2021 (public meeting). To include an item on the agenda, please email Steve Lantz (lantzsh10@gmail.com) by March 2, 2021.
March 9, 2021

Dolores Roybal Saltarelli  
Project Manager  
Los Angeles Metro  
One Gateway Plaza  
Mail Stop: 99-22-4  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Subject: C (Green) Line Extension EIR Scoping Comments

Dear Ms. Roybal Saltarelli:

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) welcomes the initiation of the Environmental Impact Report preparation process for the extension of the C (Green) Line to Torrance project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This vital step will keep the project among Metro’s highest rail development priorities as the region prepares for the 2028 Olympics and Paralympic Games and to ensure the Metro Board will meet its commitment to open the line well before the Measure M expenditure plan 2033 deadline.

We understand the EIR analysis will evaluate two routes and several profile alternatives between the existing Redondo Beach Marine Station and the under-construction Torrance Transit Center.

The SBCCOG looks forward to providing our thoughts on the project alternates once the Draft EIR is completed and prior to Metro’s selection of the Locally Preferred Alternative. However, we are sensitive to a wide range of community concerns that have been raised during previous studies about impacts and mitigations on both routes.

To provide the most comprehensive analysis of options, mitigations and costs, we urge Metro to include all feasible profiles in the Draft EIR for environmentally sensitive segments on both alignments. While it may result in a more complex document, it will help ensure the Final EIR can be prepared without the need for a Supplemental EIR and without delaying design and construction of the project.

The SBCCOG also requests Metro to evaluate the circulation and access to the two stations being evaluated for each alignment. We strongly support inclusion of a properly-sized parking structure in the C (Green) Line project EIR at the Torrance Transit Center since this station will become the new C (Green) Line terminal station for the foreseeable future.
We are also requesting Metro to include evaluation of a non-pedestrian connection between the Galleria station on the Hawthorne Boulevard route and the existing Redondo Transit Center, which are approximately 2/3 mile apart. Because this is an unacceptable walking distance, the C (Green Line) EIR should include a Metro bus, shuttle, or other non-pedestrian connection in the project scope.

South of 190th Street, the two light rail route alternatives merge into a single alignment to reach the Torrance Transit Center. SBCCOG is very concerned with how the Metro-owned right-of-way will be shared by freight tracks and the light rail double track. We urge Metro to start negotiating now to establish the parameters of a solution that ensures Metro’s ability to add light rail double tracks while continuing to share Metro’s right of way with the railroads which must have access to their customers in the segment and must store empty rail cars in the vicinity of the San Pedro ports.

SBCCOG, Metro, and local communities have been working on this project for more than a decade. The SBCCOG looks forward to continued involvement in the project development process to assist Metro to plan, design and deliver this important project. We urge Metro to fully evaluate the options, impacts and mitigations in the project’s first formal EIR so that an accurate project scope and costs can be estimated and the project can proceed into design and construction without further delay.

Thank you for considering our scoping comments.

Sincerely,

Olivia Valentine
Chair, South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Mayor Pro Tem, City of Hawthorne

c.c.: SBCCOG Board of Directors
              L. A. Metro Board of Directors
March 1, 2021

TO: SBCCOG Board of Directors  
    SBCCOG Transit Operators Working Group – 3/4/21 meeting  
    SBCCOG Transportation Committee – 3/8/21 meeting  
    SBCCOG Infrastructure Working Group – 3/10/21 meeting

FROM: Steve Lantz, SBCCOG Transportation Director

RE: SBCCOG Transportation Update Covering February 2021

Adherence to Strategic Plan:
Goal A: Environment, Transportation and Economic Development. Facilitate, implement and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay.

Federal

House Rescue Bill Includes $30 Billion for Transit
The $1.9 Trillion American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (H.R. 1319) that was approved and sent to the Senate on February 26th by a vote of 219-212 includes $30 billion for transit agencies across the nation. L. A. Metro expects to receive more than $975 million through the formulas in the bill. The bill is expected have a bumpier road in the Senate.

The American Public Transit Association (APTA) has been seeking $39.3 billion on top of the $39 billion that has been provided for pandemic-related operating deficits in the two previous relief acts in 2020. H. R. 1319 contains more than $30 billion for the transit industry through urbanized and rural formula funding, planning grants, operating assistance grants and grants to qualifying projects in the federal Capital Improvement Grants (CIG) Program.

Administration Rules Out Federal Gas Tax Increase To Replenish The Highway Trust Fund
The federal debate over how to pay for a massive infrastructure bill began on February 15th when President Biden met with Congressional leaders to discuss his proposed $1.9 trillion infrastructure bill. On the agenda was a discussion of raising federal gas taxes. Federal transportation investments are supposed to be funded by federal gas taxes deposited into the Federal Highway Trust Fund. However, the Trust Fund has required $140 billion in transfers from Federal general fund revenue since 2008.

Democrats have shown significantly more interest than Republicans in raising transportation taxes to meet environmental and racial-justice goals. The Senate Public Works Committee unanimously adopted a five-year highway package in 2019 that would have boosted overall highway spending by more than a quarter, while dedicating some $10 billion to battle climate change and streamlining the approval process for federally-funded projects. But Republicans killed a companion House bill last year which forced Congress to extend the current highway law through October 2021. Now that Democrats control the Senate, they are expected to use their previous bill as the starting point for a new round of discussions.
Major auto makers plan to stop producing gas-powered vehicles by 2035. The Biden Administration has set a goal to have 500,000 electric charging stations across the country by 2030. The shift to electric vehicles will require lawmakers at the federal and state level to re-design the Trust Fund and look for other sustainable transportation revenue sources. In the meantime, Some supporters of a gas tax increase also want to index the gas tax to keep up with inflation, but the Biden Administration removed a gas tax increase as an option. The last attempt to pass a five-year highway bill with a gas tax increase never received a floor vote in the Senate,

**LA Metro Seeks Federal Funds for Fareless System Initiative Pilot Program in Infrastructure Bill**

The L. A. Metro Board is considering embarking on an initiative conceived by CEO Phil Washington to enable low-income riders and K-12 students to ride Metro buses and trains without paying a fare. If approved in March, the initiative would begin with an 18-month pilot program that is estimated to cost more than $300 million in forgone revenue and increased operating costs.

Since 75% of Metro’s riders are low income or students, and anticipating Board approval, CEO Washington sent a letter to the Congressional Delegation on February 15th seeking federal funding for the Metro Fareless System Initiative. The letter points out that the request is consistent with the Biden Administration's Justice40 Initiative in which 40% of benefits from certain Federal investments (including the President’s January 27th Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad) would flow to disadvantaged communities.

**Transportation Agencies Wrestle With New Federal Mask Mandate**

A new federal order requires passengers to wear masks “while boarding, disembarking, and traveling on any conveyance into or within the United States,” as well as “at any transportation hub that provides transportation within the United States.” People with disabilities who cannot wear masks are exempt, and face coverings can be removed while eating, drinking, taking medication and going through security screenings.

Transit advocates welcomed the backing of a presidential order to push mask usage. However, transit agencies are grappling with enforcement protocols and staffing requirements. Many are concerned with the new risks for transit operators who already have reported increasing verbal and occasional physical attacks. L. A. Metro has decided to add ambassadors, increase transit security and partner with social service agencies to remove non-compliant riders from the system. Metro believes new mask and homeless fare enforcement programs are essential to recovering ridership lost during the COVID 19 pandemic, but the initiatives will cost up to $100 million. Metro and other systems in L. A. County already have stepped up outreach in the form of announcements to get the message across to riders that the policy is a federal mandate.

**E-BIKE Act Would Provide 30% Federal Tax Credit For Electric Bicycle Purchases**

Federal legislation introduced on February 9th would create a federal tax incentive for the purchase of electric bicycles in the US. Advocates seek to provide electric bikes the same federal incentive already available for electric cars and motorcycles.

The bill would offer a 30% tax credit of up to $1,500 for buying an electric bicycle. To qualify, the electric bicycle would have to be priced below $8,000. Only one tax credit would be applied during a three-year period, but couples filing jointly could apply for two tax credits in three years to cover two e-bike purchases. Electric bicycles ranging in price from $1,000 to $3,500 are being marketed as low-cost, commute and delivery options to address climate change.
**House Republicans Propose Nationwide Ban On Municipal Broadband Networks**

House Republicans unveiled a plan on February 19th to "boost" broadband connectivity and competition. Republicans call it the CONNECT Act, for "Communities Overregulating Networks Need Economic Competition Today."

One of the key planks is prohibiting states and cities from building or expanding their own broadband networks. The bill says that "a State or political subdivision thereof may not provide or offer for sale to the public, a telecommunications provider, or to a commercial provider of broadband Internet access service, retail or wholesale broadband Internet access service. The bill has an exception that would allow existing government networks to continue in cities and towns without substantial broadband competition. States or municipalities that already offer Internet service may continue to do so if "there is no more than one other commercial provider of broadband Internet access that provides competition for that service in a particular area."

The bill is reminiscent of laws in nearly 20 states that restrict the building of municipal networks. But it has no realistic chance of passage in the Democratic-controlled House. Democrats have tried to eliminate restrictions on community broadband networks over the years. House Democrats last year proposed legislation that would overturn state laws that prevent the growth of municipal broadband.

**FCC Offers COVID 19-Related Broadband Service Discounts For Eligible Households**

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued rules on February 25th for its new $3.2 billion broadband subsidy program which will provide eligible households with discounts of up to $50 a month for broadband services (up to $75 per month for households on tribal lands). It also will provide a one-time discount of up to $100 on a computer or tablet for eligible households.

The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program is open to households that participate in an existing low-income or pandemic relief program offered by a broadband provider; Lifeline subscribers, including those that are on Medicaid or accept SNAP benefits; households with kids receiving free and reduced-price lunch or school breakfast; Pell grant recipients; and those who have lost jobs and seen their income reduced in the last year.

FCC's Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) will administer the program with service providers, as they do with Lifeline and other subsidy programs.

See the FCC Fact Sheet at: [https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-370355A1.pdf](https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-370355A1.pdf)

**Region**

**Metro Considers Congestion Pricing For DTLA, I-10 Freeway, Santa Monica Mountains**

L. A. Metro is in the process of conducting a two-year Traffic Reduction Study, which considers managing traffic through congestion pricing and providing more transportation options. At its February 25th meeting, The Metro Board considered four congestion pricing pilot projects that could be implemented beginning in 2025.

The pilot projects would use cordon or corridor pricing strategies to target congestion between Downtown L. A. and the San Fernando Valley, on the I-10 freeway between the I-405 and I-5 freeways, and in an area surrounding Downtown. In the corridor pricing concept travelers would be charged based on distance traveled similar to current ExpressLanes. However, all freeway lanes would be included in the tolling concept. A concept known as cordon pricing would be used to charge a fee to enter the L. A.
Central Business District. Metro staff will spend the next several years refining and environmentally clearing the concepts.

Board members expressed concerns about potential economic impacts on small and disadvantaged businesses, how delivery trucks would be handled, and the need to improve transit service options before the pilot projects begin. Staff committed that revenue generated through congestion pricing would be reinvested into the communities which surround the pilot areas, potentially going toward improved transit service, incentives for carpooling, and active transportation infrastructure.

**Trends**

**Post-COVID-19, Transit Agencies May Shift To Metrics Other Than Ridership And Fare Revenue**

For generations transit operators have been funded based on formulae that include ridership and fare revenue in addition to their service costs. The pandemic has required transit leaders to shift their service to continue to serve essential worker trips due to dramatically lower ridership, scarce fare revenues and staff shortages. Unfortunately, recovery is being framed by the old metrics of ridership and revenue growth.

However, the new focus on providing reliable service for essential riders provides transit operators and funding agencies an opportunity to focus on a new metric for usefulness: transit access. The new focus could significantly change the way transit subsidies are allocated.

An agency’s success could be evaluated based on its service reliability and the share of jobs reachable for a given population within a given trip time, such as 60 minutes door-to-door. A transit agency would then be motivated to focus on reducing travel times in comparison to alternate modes.

This concept of access can also help transit agency leaders plan how to ramp back up when the pandemic ends. “There is a chance to build back better,” says Rogoff, using one of President Joe Biden’s favorite catchphrases. “Transit riders in various communities will expect their service to return. Agencies will have less money while they face these expectations to resume service.”

Some agencies have already signaled a greater focus on access. As an example, when the transit operator in Santa Clara County, California implemented an access-focused service restructuring in 2019, ridership immediately rose 4%. Over the last decade, Seattle adopted a goal of maximizing the number of households within a 10-minute walk of 10-minute frequency transit service, and the city subsequently posted the fastest transit ridership growth in the nation. L. A. Metro is pursuing a similar strategy with its NextGen Study and Fareless System Initiative by using new travel and fare payment data bases of current and prospective riders to more accurately tailor service changes that match trip origins and destination data and to provide transit priority on freeways and streets.

With transit ridership likely to recover slowly after the pandemic recedes, critics of public transportation spending may cite lower passenger counts as a justification to reduce funding, which could push transit into a death spiral. By emphasizing the importance of access, agencies hope to untether policy debates from ridership numbers. With newly appointed U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg already talking about how transit can unlock opportunity for those who are struggling, the language of access could provide the best framework for transit advocates to press their case.
Demand For Electric Cars Stuck In Neutral
California and the federal government agree they need to set ambitious climate goals, and major automakers are increasingly betting that the future of their business lies with electric cars. But consumers aren’t there yet.

Despite growing momentum for a national shift toward cleaner cars, fewer than 1% of vehicles on the nation’s roads are electric. Americans are buying so many gas-guzzling sport utility vehicles and pickup trucks that they had in effect canceled emissions reductions from every electric vehicle in the United States.

This divide between the reality of America’s auto market and what the federal government and some automakers hope it will become is certain to create dilemmas for the Biden administration as it sets out to negotiate a new set of fuel economy standards.

Biden is expected to replace the weaker tailpipe emissions standards put in place by the Trump administration with new regulations modeled on California’s voluntary agreement with five automakers. Under the state’s rules, car companies would be required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by nearly 4% each year.

At stake is President Biden’s ability to deliver on his promise of eliminating greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 to prevent the worst effects of climate change. Calculating backward, most environmentalists say the only way to meet that goal is to mandate all new cars be emissions-free by 2035.

But federal and California regulators, as well as major car companies, are already looking ahead to the next set of standards that would apply to cars built after model year 2026. Finalizing rules that would apply to cars built after model year 2026 could take two years and prove the ultimate test of whether the administration is able to rein in the nation’s greenhouse gas emissions.

China, meanwhile, has mandated that 40% of all new cars must be electric by 2030, threatening to bar slow-to-adapt automakers from the world’s largest automobile market.

U. S. car manufacturers are expected to ask the Biden administration to require only small emissions improvements over the next decade so they can devote their resources to introducing dozens of new electric models. This would allow them to continue selling their most profitable and highest-emitting SUVs and pickups while gas is inexpensive and most consumers aren’t concerned with fuel efficiency.

To make up for the additional planet-warming emissions from gas-burning vehicles, electric car sales would have to increase fivefold.

Fake Commutes Break Up Days Spent Working From Home
There’s a new commuting trend for those who work from home: Not-A-Commuting. Not-a-commuters mornings start like many. They leave home. Stop off for a cup of coffee or tea, then head to their job site at home for another day of working remotely.

Their justification? By working online at home using Zoom through a computer screen., there are times when they realize they haven’t left the house in five days. So every few days they start the morning with a walk or an errand to clear their head and make the a conscious work/life segmentation.
# SBCCOG 3-Month Look Ahead

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<td><strong>4 or 8. Transit Operators Working Group Meeting</strong>&lt;br&gt;9. Metro South Bay Service Council Meeting&lt;br&gt;12. SBCCOG Transportation Committee Meeting&lt;br&gt;12. SBCCOG Steering Committee Meeting&lt;br&gt;14. IWG Meeting&lt;br&gt;22. Metro Board Meeting&lt;br&gt;22. SBCCOG Board Meeting</td>
<td><strong>6. Transit Operators Working Group Meeting</strong>&lt;br&gt;10. SBCCOG Transportation Committee Meeting&lt;br&gt;10. SBCCOG Steering Committee Meeting&lt;br&gt;12. IWG Meeting&lt;br&gt;14. Metro South Bay Service Council Meeting&lt;br&gt;27. Metro Board Meeting&lt;br&gt;27. SBCCOG Board Meeting</td>
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