Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority
One Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA

File #: 2026-0017, **File Type:** Oral Report / Presentation **Agenda Number:**

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
JANUARY 15, 2026

SUBJECT: EASTBOUND 91 ATLANTIC TO CHERRY SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

ACTION: ORAL REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE an oral report from staff regarding the current status of the Eastbound 91 Atlantic to Cherry Safety Improvements project.

ISSUE

The Eastbound 91 Atlantic to Cherry Safety Improvements Project (Project) is 1.4-mile project that improves the operations and safety of the corridor by elimination of the lane reduction at the gore of the SB I-710 to eastbound SR-91 connector and the reconfiguration of the eastbound on-ramp from Atlantic Avenue and the eastbound off-ramp to Cherry Avenue. The improvements also include an additional eastbound auxiliary lane from Atlantic Avenue to Cherry Avenue by reconfiguring Atlantic Avenue Undercrossing, Myrtle Avenue Undercrossing, Orange Avenue Undercrossing, and Walnut Avenue Undercrossing. All of these improvements provide operational and safety improvements that would reduce truck congestion and increase safety on the heavily used freight corridor.

The specific improvements chosen were informed by an analysis of mainline and ramp collision history, performed by Caltrans Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System. For the area within this Project, total accident rates range from 30% to 73% higher than the total statewide average accident rate, and fatality rates in this area exceed statewide averages by 35%, all highlighting the need for these safety-critical improvements. Data associated with these accidents show that accidents were indicative of ramp and auxiliary lane congestion due to weaving patterns and/or existing ramp and intersection geometry. The safety improvements to the SR-91 Corridor are expected to avoid one fatality, 366 injuries, and 646 crashes over the 20-year study period.

This oral report will include an update on the current status of the project, including Metro's coordination with the City of Long Beach and stakeholders, the status of the previously awarded construction contract, and an update on timelines for project completion.

EQUITY PLATFORM

The Project is located within an Equity Focus Community (EFC) of the City of Long Beach and

adjacent to the EFCs of Cities of Compton and Paramount. The Project will significantly improve traffic safety for the region and surrounding communities while also implementing Complete Streets elements, ADA features, and other community benefits such as landscaping and lighting improvements. The term “Complete Streets” describes a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, users and operators of public transit, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, seniors, children, motorists, users of green modes, and movers of commercial goods. The California Department of Transportation defines a Complete Street as “a transportation facility that is planned, designed, operated, and maintained to provide safe mobility for all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and motorists appropriate to the function and context of the facility.” This project adheres to this high-level policy direction that helps redefine how transportation agencies approach streets and highways so that the default outcome is a transportation system that balances the needs of all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. Through continued and incremental changes in capital projects, the street network gradually becomes safer and more accessible for travelers of all ages and abilities.

The Project will employ a robust community engagement program with the goals of building awareness, sharing project information, identifying key issues and concerns important to the public, elected officials, and government agencies and integrating public feedback into the project during the construction phase. The Project area has a meaningfully greater racial minority population than that of Los Angeles County. The Project area has a Hispanic or Latino population greater than 50 percent of the total population, and the percentage of total minority populations ranges between 76 and 97 percent. Based on the demographic data, outreach materials (i.e., fact sheets, letters, flyers, newspaper ads) will be translated into Spanish as needed.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro’s significant investment in rail and bus transit.* Metro’s Board-adopted VMT reduction targets align with California’s statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

While the agency remains committed to reducing VMT through transit and multimodal investments, some projects may induce or increase personal vehicle travel. However, these individual projects aim to ensure the efficient and safe movement of people and goods.

This Board item is expected to increase VMT in LA County, as it includes an investment focused on safety that may also produce additional vehicle trips because of increasing the roadway capacity on currently congested portions of Eastbound 91. Although this item may not directly contribute to the achievement of the Board-adopted VMT Reduction Targets, the VMT Targets were developed to account for the cumulative effect of a suite of programs and projects within the Metro region, which individually may induce or increase VMT. Additionally, Metro has a voter-approved mandate to deliver multimodal projects that enhance mobility while ensuring the efficient and safe movement of people and goods.

This project is exempt from CEQA VMT mitigation requirements.

*Based on population estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans' Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.

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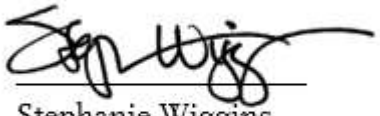
Reviewed by: Timothy P. Lindholm, Chief Program Management Officer, (213) 922-7297



Stephanie Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

We're building a safer drive on the 91.

SR-91 Eastbound Atlantic Av to Cherry Av Safety Improvements Project

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: JANUARY 15, 2026

Metro

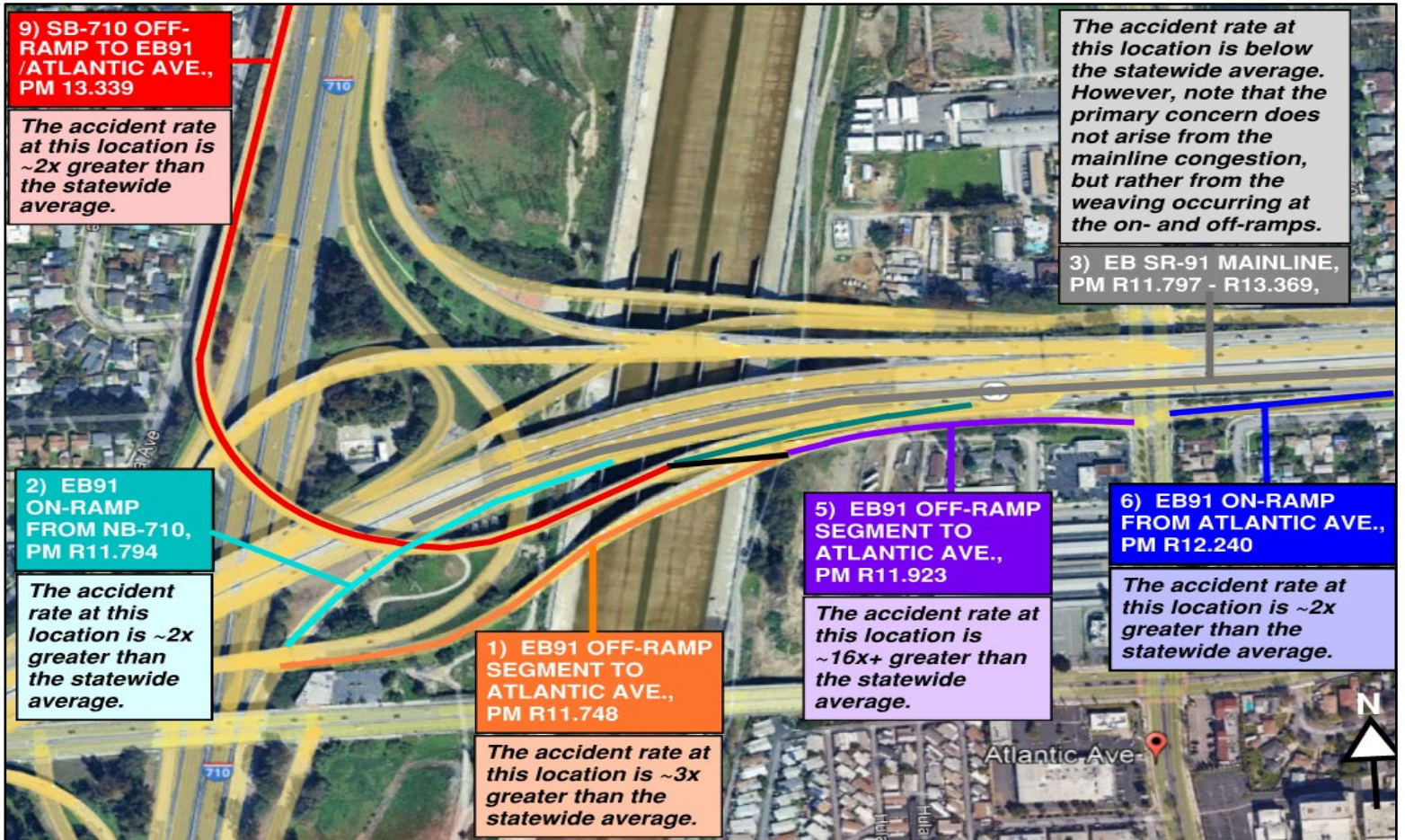
Project Scope/Details

- From SB I-710 to EB SR-91 between Atlantic Ave and Cherry Ave
- 1.4-mile project limits (restriping) includes a 0.86-mile auxiliary lane between Atlantic Ave and Cherry Ave
- Total Life-of-Project Budget: $174.2 Million
- Funded by local Measure R, Trade Corridor Enhancement Program state funding, and Surface Transportation Block Grant federal funding

This Project is to Address Existing Safety Concerns

- Historical safety data for the project limits and surrounding areas were reviewed and analyzed
  - Trends and patterns related to traffic accidents, injuries, and fatalities were identified.
  - **High-risk areas were pinpointed** to evaluate the effectiveness of current safety measures and identify and design roadway improvements to reduce accidents and enhance overall driver and pedestrian safety.
- Safety data was analyzed for the following time periods:
  - January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018 (Environmental Document)
  - January 1, 2019 to June 30, 2024 (Follow up analysis)
    - Follow up analysis indicated that **accident rates have increased**
- Total accident rates range from 30% to 73% higher than the total statewide average accident rate, and fatality rates in this area exceed statewide averages by 35%

Crash Data Post Mile Map Graphic 1



Crash Data Post Mile Map Graphic 2

SR-91 EB Improvements
Atlantic to Cherry

Project Specific Safety Improvements

- Auxiliary lane allows more length for traffic to weave (change lanes) entering and exiting SR-91:
  - Reduces delays caused by crashes
  - Lower traffic density reduces the likelihood of crashes
  - Given high truck volumes, safety benefits also reduce more severe accidents involving cars and trucks.
- HOV lane access area is increased in length:
  - Provides traffic more length to weave in and out of the HOV
- Geometric improvements increase sight distances and improve safety
- Pavement delineation, signage, and lighting upgraded to current standards
- Lengthening storage on the Atlantic on-ramp provides additional space and reduces vehicles backing up onto Atlantic Avenue:
  - Provides safety benefits by reducing blocking of emergency vehicles and preserving response times

Metro Mitigation Efforts

> Previously included air filtration and tree mitigations, project staging, and accommodations for Hamilton Loop (grading and irrigation)

> Additional Noise & Vibration Monitoring locations to address Community Concerns

- Proactive Monitoring by Metro Team
- Noise Monitoring App for Immediate Notifications
- Noise Monitoring before, during, and after construction (added)

> Hamilton Loop Project Coordination with the City of Long Beach has started and is ongoing

> LED Lighting to immediately address identified safety and security concerns

> Community Enhancements: Lighting, graffiti, trash, and maintenance

> Restricting Work on Sunday and Weekends (Except in Emergencies or Pre-approved)

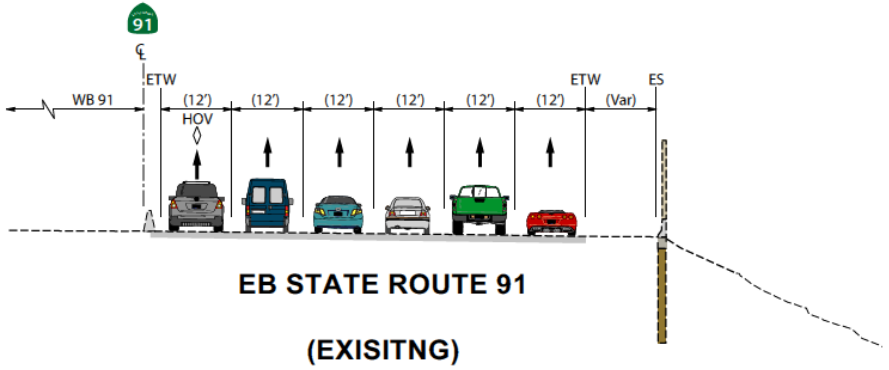
Community and Stakeholder Engagement

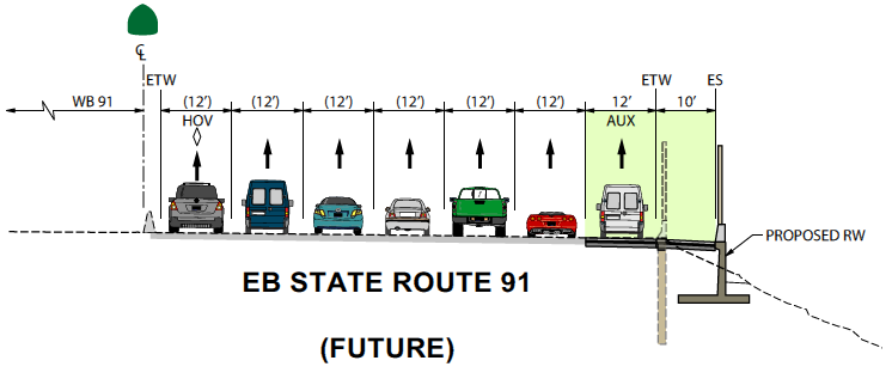
- **Early planning & trust infrastructure**: Plain-language rollout plan, stakeholder mapping, and CBO onboarding led by The Edmond Group, with oversight from Metro.
- **City alignment & issue response**: CD9/City weekly meetings, Good Neighbor Agreement, rapid response protocols during construction, and escalation tracking.
- **Multilingual communications & digital alerts**: Updated project materials, FAQs and construction updates, website/Nextdoor support, real-time opt-ins.
- **High-visibility field outreach & early activations**: Door-to-door and sensitive receptor outreach, and participation in D9 community events
- **Partnerships with Community and Youth:** City-led Hamilton Loop Roadshow, collaboration with Jordan High School Advanced Manufacturing, Construction and Engineering (ACE) Academy – college/career exploration, tours, job shadowing, and LA/OC Building Trades non-profit coordinated Job Fair.
- **CBO-led delivery & local storytelling**: Trusted community partners (ex: Central Cha, Cambodia Town, YMCA, and Boys & Girls Club), local vendors, workforce pathways, youth-forward storytelling

BONE YARD SLIDES

Auxiliary Lane Cross Section

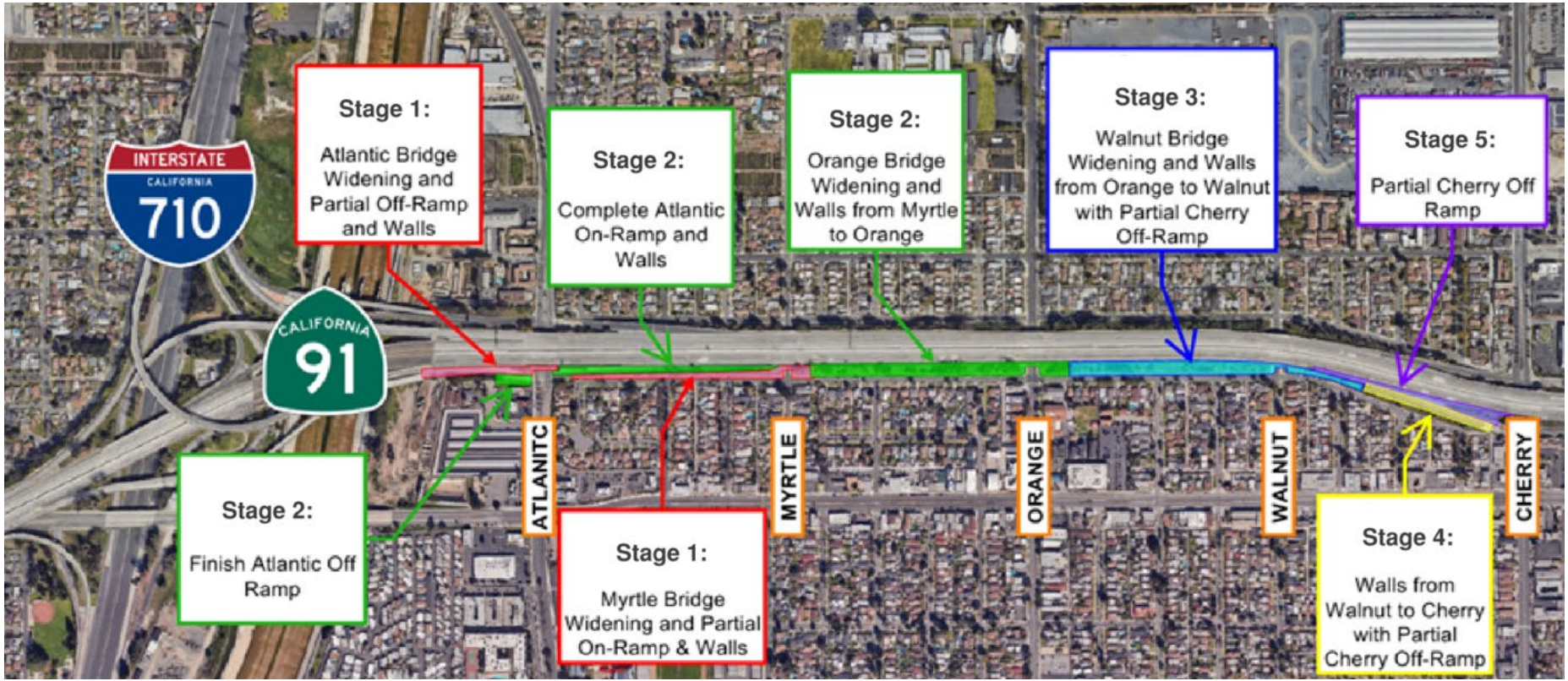
- The project adds a 0.86-mile EB auxiliary lane between Atlantic Av and Cherry Av
- There will not be any additional thru lanes
- The shoulder will be standardized





Section east of Myrtle before the Cherry Off ramp

Project Staging



SR-91 EB LOP/FUNDING (millions)

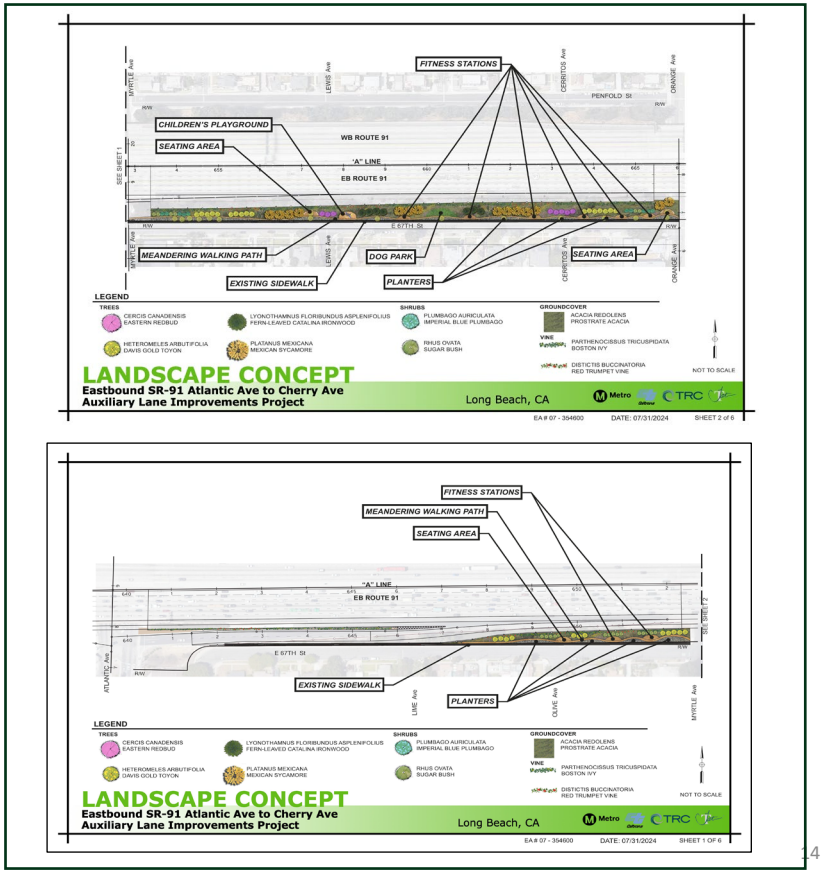
SR-91 EB Improvements
Atlantic to Cherry

SR-91 EB LOP	**$174 M**
Cost Spent to Date (Approximated)	
Flatiron West In. – Contractor Cost to Date	$5.16 M
Flatiron West Inc. – Contractor Suspension Cost (From July 2024 through December 2025)	$2.82 M
Flatiron West Inc. – Contractor Delay & Termination Claim	$20.9 M
Arcadis USA Inc. – CMSS Cost to Date	$4.49 M
Arcadis USA In – CMSS to Close Contract	$0.96 M
TRC & Others – DSDC & Other Cost to Date	$2.0 M
LA Metro – Cost to Date	$2.34 M
LA Metro – Cost to Close Contract	$0.36 M
Sunk Cost to Date (Design/PS&E $8M & Flirtation's $0.75M)	$8.75 M
Total Estimated Termination Costs	**$47.78 M**
Grants/Funds to be Returned	
TCEP Funds	$48.3 M
STBG Funds	$24.3 M
Total Grants/Funds to be Returned	**$72.6 M**
Funds Remaining and Returning to GCCOG/Measure R	**$ 53.62 M**

Noise & Vibration Monitoring Overview

Design Evolution - Addressing Community Concerns

- Metro and the City of Long Beach coordinated to integrate elements of the Hamilton Loop Project into this project.
- Metro increased the depth of the retaining wall to facilitate the implementation of the Hamilton Loop Project.
- On-going coordination with City staff ensured landscaping would be compatible with the Hamilton Loop Project.
  - This included adding irrigation lines to support the Hamilton Loop Project's landscaping.



Noise Evaluation – Addressing Community Concerns

> Noise Study Report completed Sept 2020 using readings from August 2019 (pre-pandemic)

> Noise Abatement Decisions Report in October 2020 (documents the appropriate abatement)

> New soundwall will be two feet taller – 12-14 ft

> New rubberized asphalt pavement of the Atlantic ramps and Cherry off-ramp will reduce noise

> 4-stage construction to mitigate noise and minimize construction impacts to the community

> Study found existing levels of traffic will continue to lead to an increase in noise levels

- Existing noise levels range between 56 dB to 65 dB (study conducted August 2019 at 9 locations in close proximity of the freeway)
- With No Build noise levels are forecasted to range between 64 dB to 72 dB by year 2045

Air Filtration/Tree Planting Coordination – Addressing Community Concerns

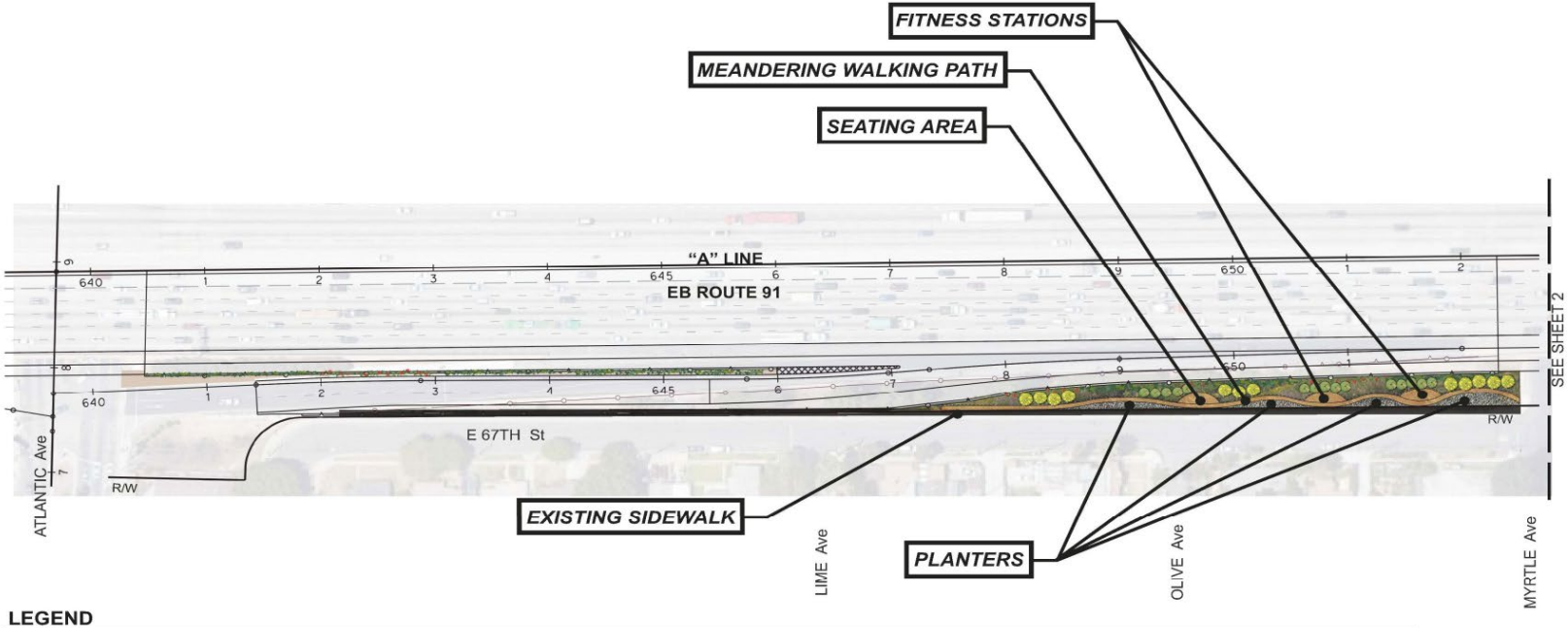
> In response to feedback from local residents and Board Report Motion File #2022-0024 Directors Hahn, Mitchell, and Dutra:
  - **Secured $1,000,000** in funding to install **air filtration** units for homes and businesses located within 750 feet of the SR-91 Atlantic to Cherry EB Aux Lane Project.
  - Additionally, **funding** was allocated for at least **a two-to-one replacement for all 174 trees** being removed, which would mean at least 348 replacement trees to be provided as part of the Project.

> Metro staff coordinated the procurement and delivery of air filtration units, along with two replacement filters (per resident) to the City of Long Beach beginning in June 2024.
  - **Distribution efforts by the City have been ongoing** with a total of 584 units distributed to date. A total of 1,093 air filtration units will be procured and distributed as part of these efforts. The City hosted another distribution event on March 22nd.

> Metro staff entered into a Funding Agreement (FA) with the City of Long Beach to fund the tree replacement as well as to provide air filtration outreach support costs for the City of Long Beach.
  - As of March 2024, all funds allocated for the tree replacement effort have been distributed to the City.

Hamilton Loop Project – Landscape Concept

SR-91 EB Improvements
Atlantic to Cherry

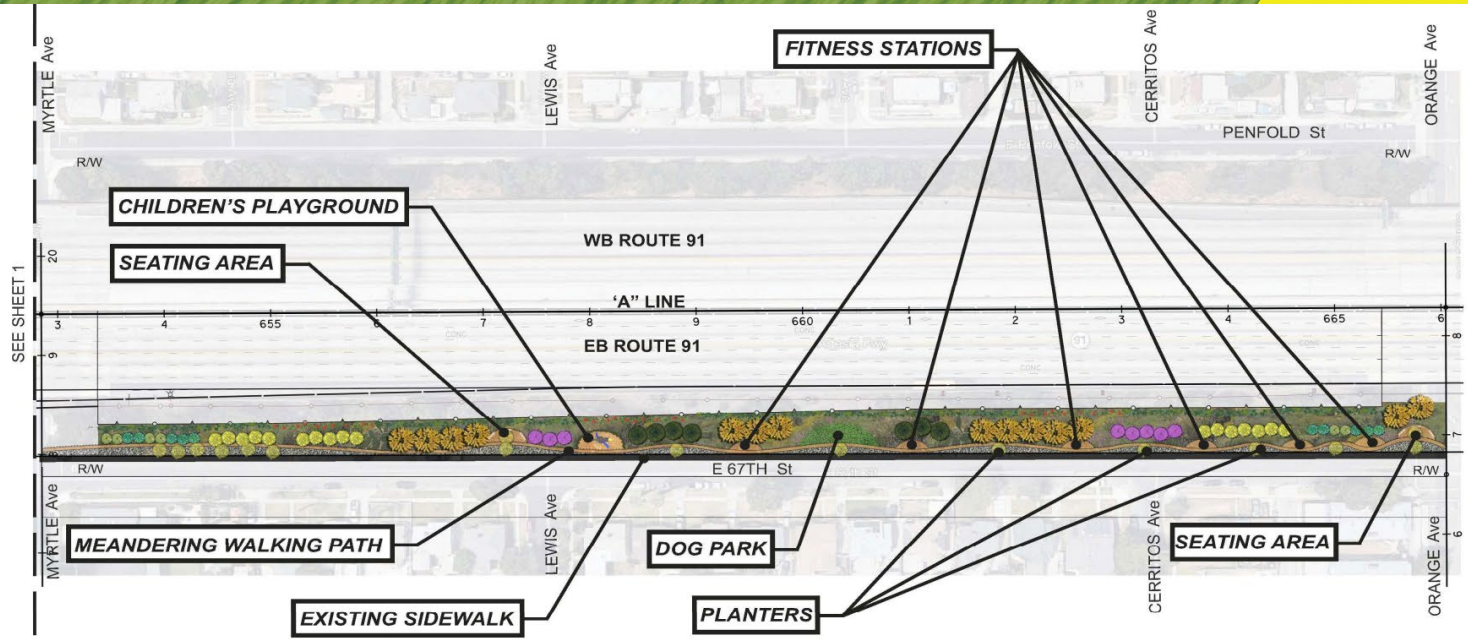


LANDSCAPE CONCEPT

Eastbound SR-91 Atlantic Ave to Cherry Ave
Auxiliary Lane Improvements Project

Long Beach, CA

Hamilton Loop Project – Landscape Concept



LEGEND

TREES
- CERCIS CANADENSIS — EASTERN REDBUD
- LYONOTHAMNUS FLORIBUNDUS ASPLENIFOLIUS — FERN-LEAVED CATALINA IRONWOOD
- HETEROMELES ARBUTIFOLIA — DAVIS GOLD TOYON
- PLATANUS MEXICANA — MEXICAN SYCAMORE

SHRUBS
- PLUMBAGO AURICULATA — IMPERIAL BLUE PLUMBAGO
- RHUS OVATA — SUGAR BUSH

GROUNDCOVER
- ACACIA REDOLENS — PROSTRATE ACACIA

VINE
- PARTHENOCISSUS TRICUSPIDATA — BOSTON IVY
- DISTICTIS BUCCINATORIA — RED TRUMPET VINE

NOT TO SCALE

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT

Eastbound SR-91 Atlantic Ave to Cherry Ave
Auxiliary Lane Improvements Project

Long Beach, CA