



Board Report

File #: 2026-0253, File Type: Project

Agenda Number: 8.

PLANNING & PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
MAY 20, 2026

SUBJECT: STATE ROUTE 71 (SR-71) NORTH PROJECT DESIGN FUNDING GAP

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION

CONSIDER:

- A. APPROVING the programming of \$5,750,000 in Measure M funds to support design activities for SR-71 North; and
- B. AUTHORIZING the Chief Executive Officer or their designee to execute and/or amend all necessary programming documents and project agreements for the SR-71 North design activities.

ISSUE

The Measure M Expenditure plan allocates \$248,557,000 for the SR-71 Gap north and south improvements. Caltrans recently reported a design funding gap of \$5,750,000 for the SR-71 North project, largely due to additional railroad coordination efforts. Only \$300,000 of the \$10,000,000 that was transferred to the project for design work in 2024 remains unexpended, and according to Caltrans, there are no State fund sources available to close the current design funding gap.

Board approval is needed to transfer an additional \$5,750,000 in Measure M funds to SR-71 North to close the design funding gap.

BACKGROUND

The SR-71 corridor is a regional highway facility that crosses parts of Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties, and connects to major east-west freight corridors (I-10 and SR-60) that serve as inland passageways for interregional travel and goods movement between San Diego and the eastern portion of Los Angeles County. The corridor experiences higher than Statewide average collision and fatality rates, largely attributed to at-grade intersections and congestion-related incidents. The SR-71 Gap Closure Project (Attachment A) is a Caltrans-led project that adds a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, mixed-flow lane, and intermittent auxiliary lanes along the corridor between I-10 and the San Bernardino County line in the City of Pomona, as well as reconstructs two narrow railroad overhead structures, upgrades a pedestrian overcrossing/bridge, and constructs retaining walls and soundwalls.

As noted in Attachment A, the SR-71 Gap Closure Project limit extends from I-10 to Rio Rancho Road, just south of the Los Angeles/San Bernardino County line. In 2019, Caltrans and Metro split the SR-71 Gap Closure Project into two phases - SR-71 South (Phase 1) and SR-71 North (Phase 2) - to prevent previously programmed funds from lapsing and to allow work to move forward while additional coordination with Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) continued. The two phases complete the planned improvements along SR-71 in Los Angeles County. SR-71 South project limits extend from Mission Boulevard to the Los Angeles/San Bernardino County line. SR-71 North project limits extend from I-10 to Mission Boulevard in Los Angeles County.

At its November 2019 meeting, the Board approved programming \$105,072,000 in Measure M funds for the [SR-71 Gap Closure Project Construction, Phase 1 <https://boardagendas.metro.net/board-report/2019-0703/>](https://boardagendas.metro.net/board-report/2019-0703/) (SR-71 South), leaving the remainder of funds (\$143,485,000) available for the delivery of SR-71 North. Construction of SR-71 South was substantially completed on October 31, 2025, with only punch list items and plant establishment work remaining.

In November 2022, Caltrans suspended design work on SR-71 North because of a \$10,000,000 funding gap. At its June 2024 meeting, the Board approved transferring \$10,000,000 in Measure M funds for the [State Route 71 \(SR-71\) Gap Closure North Segment Project \(Phase 2\), Design <https://boardagendas.metro.net/board-report/2024-0406/>](https://boardagendas.metro.net/board-report/2024-0406/). This action allowed Caltrans to resume design work and to prepare the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) package for construction of SR-71 North.

In 2025, SR-71 North was awarded \$80,000,000 in Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP) funds for the construction phase. The total funds available for construction of SR-71 North is \$259,000,000. Attachment B shows the fund sources and budget for the SR-71 Gap north and south improvements.

Once constructed, SR-71 North will complete the last phase of corridor improvements, resulting in more than 15 miles of HOV lanes connecting Los Angeles County to Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. The project also includes safety upgrades such as a seismically sound pedestrian overcrossing to connect communities and provide better access for cyclists, rollers, and pedestrians, and reconstructed railroad bridges with crash walls that are up to current standards.

DISCUSSION

SR-71 North is currently at the 95% design level review. If funding is approved to complete design, the Project will be Ready to List (RTL) in December 2026 for construction in July 2027. Caltrans previously reported a construction cost estimate of \$259,000,000 based on a planning level estimate. The current construction cost estimate for SR-71 North is \$284,000,000. In February 2026, Metro submitted a Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant application for \$25,000,000 to close the construction funding gap.

In February 2026, Caltrans reported that SR-71 North design costs had increased due to additional railroad coordination and work required, expanded scopes, and updated staffing rates. UPRR introduced new reviewers and updated design requirements that resulted in significant revisions to bridge design and related work (roadway profile, earthwork, and retaining walls), additional design work, and multiple review cycles. Additionally, the City of Pomona requested aesthetic

enhancements, and the design scope was expanded to include relocation plans for water and sewer lines owned by Los Angeles County and the City of Pomona.

These updates have resulted in a funding gap of \$5,750,000 needed to complete the project design phase. Pausing design work could further delay construction of SR-71 North and jeopardize the \$80 million in TCEP funds that are programmed in fiscal year (FY) 2026-27, as well as impact Caltrans' ability to reach RTL status by the end of the year. Moreover, pausing the project would halt the ongoing railroad coordination efforts, creating additional risk to the schedule and budget.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Approval of staff recommendations has no known adverse impact on the safety of Metro's patrons, employees, and/or users of the facility. Caltrans and local agency safety standards will be adhered to during the preparation of the PS&E package for construction of SR-71 North.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

If approved, this action authorizes the programming of \$5,750,000 in Measure M funds for SR- 71 North design activities.

The Measure M Ordinance authorizes the use of contingency sub funds for inflation adjustments on eligible projects like SR-71 North, where less than two-thirds of the 2015-dollar allocation will be expended prior to FY 2027. Therefore, consistent with the provisions in the Ordinance, the source of the additional Measure M funding being applied to SR-71 North is the existing Measure M allocation inflation allowance. Also, the increase in available funding relative to the prior funds reported to be available for SR-71 North is primarily due to revised cash flow timing, which shifts a greater share of project expenses from FY 2028-30 to FY 2029-31. In addition, the sequencing of the other grant fund sources awarded to SR-71 North allows Measure M expenditures to be deferred, further increasing the inflation-adjusted value of the remaining Measure M funds to provide the additional \$5,750,000 needed to close the design funding gap.

Impact to Budget

The FY 2026 budget for SR-71 North is \$6,800,000 in the Complete Streets and Highways Program under Cost Center 0442, Project 475007, Task 5.3.100. Staff will continue to monitor project expenses. The proposed FY2027 budget for SR-71 North includes \$2,230,000.

The source of funds for the staff recommendation is Measure M Highway Construction Capital (17%). These funds are not eligible for bus and rail operations.

Since this is a multi-year project, the Chief Planning Officer will be responsible for budgeting the costs in future fiscal years.

EQUITY PLATFORM

SR-71 North is adjacent to Equity Focus Communities (EFC) in Pomona that have raised concerns

regarding existing operational deficiencies, the desire to beautify the project area, the number of collisions, funding and the schedule for the proposed improvements, existing traffic on Ninth Street, soundproofing, access to the Philips Ranch area, property acquisitions, frontage road access, construction detours, and keeping Philips Drive open.

Upgrading the SR-71 expressway to a full access-controlled facility along with implementing other SR-71 North improvements will address the concerns raised by the communities in Pomona. The proposed SR-71 North improvements include providing soundwalls to reduce noise in communities along the corridor; new landscaping and tree plantings to elevate the corridor aesthetics and beautify the project area; a new HOV lane to promote greater use of bus, vanpool, and carpool usage as an alternative to solo driving; a new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant and seismically sound pedestrian overcrossing to connect communities and provide better and safer access for cyclists, rollers, and pedestrians; and reconstructed railroad bridges with crash walls that are up to current standards, accommodate future track expansion, and enable increased use of double-stacking of railcars to facilitate more efficient goods movement.

Community Engagement & Outreach

It is general practice for Caltrans, in coordination with the local jurisdictions, to determine community engagement processes specific to each type of transportation improvement. This coordination is aligned with the Caltrans Race & Equity Action Plan to address systemic racial inequities that exist within the transportation sector.

Since the inception of the SR-71 Gap Closure Project, project teams and project partners have engaged Pomona and the surrounding communities to inform them of the project development process. Community needs were identified through various channels, including town hall and virtual meetings, public workshops, surveys, focus groups, and advisory committees. There were three public hearings and eight town hall and informational meetings. The meetings were attended by over 1,000 residents from Pomona and neighboring communities, and over 200 comments were received regarding the proposed alternatives, project design elements, and the schedule. Substantial community engagement resulted in the inclusion of the new multimodal, ADA compliant pedestrian overcrossing, as well as soundwalls and frontage roads to minimize potential project impacts, landscaping, and the preservation of flora.

Other outreach efforts for SR-71 improvements included meetings with resource agencies (United States Environmental Protection Agency, South Coast Air Quality Management District, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, County of Los Angeles Fire Department), project stakeholders (the cities of Pomona, Chino, and Chino Hills and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)), and other stakeholders (Cal Poly Pomona, Auto Club of Southern California). Caltrans provided notices in Spanish and Chinese newspapers about upcoming SR-71 community meetings; interpreters as well as special accommodations (sign language interpreter, accessible seating, project information in alternate formats, etc.) were available at the meetings, when requested, and the Caltrans and Metro websites were used to post SR-71 project information

Community Engagement & Outreach During Construction

Throughout the construction phase for SR-71 South, Caltrans' outreach efforts consisted of sending press releases to cities, communities, elected officials, and multiple media outlets (talk radio, cable

news) and social media platforms (X/Twitter, Instagram) to Caltrans District 7 stakeholders reaching Los Angeles and Ventura counties. Specific notices regarding construction work and/or tours were made available in multiple languages (English, Spanish, Chinese) based on the impacted communities. In addition, Caltrans uses fixed and portable changeable message signs to report lane, ramp and/or local road closures; and QuikMap, a digital application, to provide real-time traffic information (including road closures) for motorists traversing to and through project areas impacted by construction activities. Caltrans also provides updates that are posted on Caltrans and Metro websites about active construction sites.

The same level of community engagement and outreach during construction is expected for SR-71 North. In addition, Caltrans' Public Affairs department will provide timely responses to constituent inquiries.

Furthermore, Caltrans will provide continued access to local traffic information when feasible, particularly for emergency service vehicles. A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be prepared to ensure continued access for emergency service vehicles, and copies of the TMP will be forwarded to the appropriate affected businesses and agencies.

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. Although some individual projects 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. Further, the individual projects aim to ensure the efficient and safe movement of people and goods.

SR-71 North will likely increase VMT in Los Angeles County as it involves constructing one additional mixed flow lane for approximately 2 miles in each direction that encourages driving alone. One additional HOV lane that extends from Mission Boulevard north to the I-10 freeway will also be constructed to close the gap in the HOV system, provide mobility options, and promote increased carpool, vanpool, and bus transit usage along the SR-71 corridor.

This safety and mobility improvements project along the SR-71 corridor is identified in the voter Measure M Expenditure Plan and was cleared environmentally decades ago, prior to the California Environmental Quality Act VMT analyses requirement.

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

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The SR-71 corridor improvements support the following Metro Vision 2028 Strategic Plan Goals:

1. Provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling.
2. Transform LA County through regional collaboration.

Also, the following Multimodal Highway Investment Objectives are fulfilled:

1. Advancing the mobility needs of people and goods within Los Angeles County by developing projects and programs that support traffic mobility and enhanced safety, economic vitality, equitable impacts, access to opportunity, regional sustainability; and resiliency for affected local communities and the region.
2. Ensure that local and regional investment in Los Angeles County's highway system - particularly the implementation of Measures R and M priorities - is considered within the context of a countywide multimodal, integrated planning vision that reflects a holistic approach to meeting the needs of local communities, reducing disparities, creating a safer and well-maintained transportation system, and fostering greater regional mobility and access to opportunities.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may choose to defer or not program Measure M funds to SR-71 North for design activities. This alternative is not recommended because it would further delay completing the implementation of the SR-71 Gap Closure Project (a Measure M project) in its entirety and stop short of completing the last phase of the corridor improvements (SR-71 North); jeopardize the \$80 million TCEP grant award; stall ongoing railroad coordination efforts (including plans to reconstruct two old and narrow seismically deficient railroad bridges) as well as the replacement of a non-ADA compliant pedestrian bridge;- and not address the safety concerns raised by the community.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of these recommendations, Caltrans will be notified of the Board's decision. Staff will work with Caltrans to update the SR-71 North programming documents and agreements, in addition to working with Caltrans on the requisite project agreements for the construction phase of the project.

Caltrans will continue to provide quarterly updates to the Metro Measure M Independent Taxpayer Oversight Committee and the Construction Committee on the SR-71 North and South projects.

ATTACHMENT

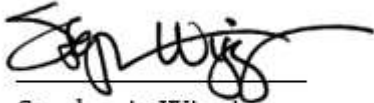
Attachment A - SR-71 Gap Closure Project Map

Attachment B - SR-71 Gap Closure Project Funding and Expenditure Plan

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SR-71 Gap Closure Project Map

(I-10 to San Bernardino County Line)



SR-71 Gap Closure Funding & Expenditure Plan

(\$ in millions)	Prior Budget (2024)	Proposed Change	Revised Budget	Prior Years	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
USE OF FUNDS / PHASES										
PAED (Both Segments)	4.05	-	4.05	4.05	-	-	-	-	-	-
PS&E (South - Includes Design and ROW)	26.45	-	26.45	22.21	3.00	1.24	-	-	-	-
Construction (South - Includes Support and Capital)	148.10	-	148.10	109.88	20.00	17.21	1.00	-	-	-
South Segment Subtotal	178.59	-	178.59	136.14	23.00	18.45	1.00	-	-	-
PS&E (North - Includes Design and ROW) ⁽¹⁾	50.40	5.75	56.15	27.91	16.80	10.04	1.40	-	-	-
Construction (North - Includes Support and Capital)	259.00	-	259.00	-	-	-	28.40	88.60	88.60	53.40
North Segment Subtotal	309.40	5.75	315.15	27.91	16.80	10.04	29.80	88.60	88.60	53.40
TOTAL USES	487.99	5.75	493.74	164.05	39.80	28.49	30.80	88.60	88.60	53.40
SOURCES OF FUNDS										
Federal Revenue										
Federal Repurpose Funds ⁽²⁾	58.05	-	58.05	41.21	9.80	7.04	-	-	-	-
Federal Revenue Subtotal	58.05	-	58.05	41.21	9.80	7.04	-	-	-	-
Local Revenue										
Measure M - Highway Construction (17%) (South) ⁽³⁾	105.07	-	105.07	78.50	14.14	11.47	0.97			
Measure M - Highway Construction (17%) (North) ⁽⁴⁾	189.00	5.75	194.75	0.15	10.00	4.16	20.73	61.20	53.60	44.90
Local Revenue Subtotal	294.07	5.75	299.82	78.65	24.14	15.63	21.70	61.20	53.60	44.90
State Revenue										
Traffic Congestion Relief Program Funds (TCRP)	11.26	-	11.26	11.26	-	-	-	-	-	-
SB1 - Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP)	123.03	-	123.03	31.34	5.86	5.83	9.10	27.40	35.00	8.50
Regional Improvement Program Funds (RIP)	1.59	-	1.59	1.59						
State Revenue Subtotal	135.87	-	135.87	44.19	5.86	5.83	9.10	27.40	35.00	8.50
TOTAL SOURCES	487.99	5.75	493.74	164.05	39.80	28.49	30.80	88.60	88.60	53.40

(1) The additional budget amount of \$5.75 million is for design expenses needed in FY27.

(2) Several federal grants were combined and repurposed for SR-71 in the 2016 Earmark repurpose fund.

(3) Measure M funding of \$248.557 million (2015\$) was allocated for the Project in the Measure M Expenditure Plan. The Board approved programming \$105,072,000 in Measure M funds for the South Segment Construction (Nov 2019)

(4) Measure M funding of \$143.485 million, inclusive of inflation adjustments from Contingency Funds