



MONTHLY SBCCOG TRANSPORTATION REPORT

COVERING AUGUST 2022

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SBCCOG Transportation Director

USDOT Awards \$139 Million For Electric Buses, Charging Infrastructure

On August 11th, USDOT awarded three major federal grants. Metro received a \$104 million federal grant for the purchase and deployment of 160 battery-electric buses as well as for the procurement and installation of on-route and depot charging stations. The funding enables Metro to support the transition to zero emission bus service on routes operating out of Metro's Divisions 9 (El Monte) and 18 (Carson) including the J Line (Silver) Bus Rapid Transit service. The grant also funds workforce training for the operation and maintenance of Metro's growing zero-emission bus fleet.

The Port of Los Angeles received a \$20 million federal grant for a four-lane, rail-roadway grade separation to eliminate a "significant truck access impediment" to the port.

Inglewood received a \$15 million federal grant for the Inglewood Transit Connector Project, aka the "Peplemover", connecting the nearly completed Metro Crenshaw/LAX Line to SoFi Stadium and other Inglewood Entertainment District facilities. About 160 local projects around the country will receive grants of as much as \$25 million. In most cases, this is not enough to fund the entire project, but will be helpful in moving them forward and allowing proponents to apply for matching funds for other sources. In California, eight projects will receive grants on this go-round, for a total of about \$120 million.

FHWA Expands "Backbone" EV Charging Program

FHWA added 249 new designations to its Alternative Fuel Corridor program, with those corridors now covering 85 percent of the National Highway System: roughly 190,000 miles out of the total NHS network of 222,000 miles. Under the new National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure formula program, those Alternative Fuel Corridors will serve as the "backbone" for the national EV charging network.

Bi-Partisan "Buy America" Drone Bill Introduced In U. S. Senate

A bipartisan group of senators introduced the Drone Infrastructure Inspection Grant Act on August 8th to increase the use of American-made drones to help inspect and maintain infrastructure projects across the country. The Senate bill comes after a similar version of the bill was introduced in the House in September 2021.

The bill would authorize \$100 million in competitive grants to use American-made drones to perform critical infrastructure, maintenance, or construction projects. Additionally, it would allow \$100 million in workforce grants, specifically for workforce training and education in an effort to prepare the next generation of workers in this sector. Government entities could use the grant funding to purchase drones, buy drone inspection systems and help the capabilities of the government's small unmanned aircraft system program. The grants in both programs would be allocated over two fiscal years.

FHWA To Issue Federal Rules For Reducing GHG Emissions

The Federal Highway Administration plans to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking that requires states and municipalities to track and reduce greenhouse gas or GHG emissions. The new rule would establish a flexible national framework for tracking state-by-state progress by adding a new GHG performance management measure to the existing national performance measures.

Under the proposed "flexible system", state departments of transportation and Metropolitan Planning Organizations would set their own declining targets for on-road greenhouse gas emissions from roadway

travel on the National Highway System. The proposed rules also require state DOTs and MPOs to report biennially on their progress in meeting the declining targets they establish, with FHWA tasked to assess significant progress toward achieving those targets.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) plans to analyze the proposed rulemaking more deeply including the potential impact of USDOT's proposed "percent change in tailpipe emissions." AASHTO also plans to use the 90-day regulatory comment period to have conversations between its members and FHWA about FHWA's legal authority to establish a new performance measure as well as how states and FHWA can best work together to reduce GHG emissions.

STATE

California To Ban The Sale Of New Gasoline-Powered Cars By 2035

On August 25th, California put into effect a sweeping plan to prohibit the sale of new gasoline-powered cars by 2035, a groundbreaking move that makes the state the only government in the world that mandates zero-emission vehicles.

The rule, issued by the California Air Resources Board, will require that 100 percent of all new cars sold in the state by 2035 be free of fossil fuel emissions, up from 12 percent today. It sets interim targets requiring that 35 percent of new passenger vehicles sold in the state by 2026 produce zero emissions. That would climb to 68 percent by 2030.

The restrictions are important because not only is California the largest auto market in the United States, but more than a dozen other states typically follow California's lead when setting their own auto emissions standards. The governments of Canada, Britain and at least nine other European countries — including France, Spain and Denmark — have set goals of phasing out the sale of new gasoline-powered vehicles between 2030 and 2040. But none have concrete mandates or regulations like the California rule.

The Alliance for Automotive Innovation, which represents large U.S. and foreign automakers, said California's new electric vehicle sale mandates would be "extremely challenging" to meet because they are directly linked to external factors like inflation, charging and fuel infrastructure, supply chains, labor, critical mineral availability and pricing, and the ongoing semiconductor shortage.

He said automakers wanted to see more electric vehicles on the roads, but called on the state and the federal government to do more to address issues such as the ability to mine critical minerals like lithium and cobalt in the United States, the affordability of electric vehicles and equitable access to fast charging.

California's Current EV Program Unlikely To Reach 2035 Gasless Goal

Affordable and efficient electric vehicles are critical to California's efforts to tackle climate change and clean up its polluted air by 2035. But the state's incentives and rebates for lower-income people who purchase electric cars have suffered from inconsistent and insufficient funding. And the subsidy challenges are being compounded by significant price hikes as the electric cars are in short supply.

New electric cars range in price from \$25,000 to \$180,000. Many models, including Ford's popular Mustang and F150 Lightning electric truck, are sold out, with long waiting lists. In addition, the state's charging network is woefully inadequate.

Since 2010, California has allocated more than \$1.84 billion to a hodgepodge of three programs: the Clean Cars 4 All Program, the Clean Vehicle Rebate Project and the Clean Vehicle Assistance Program, according to Air Resources Board data. Over those 12 years, about half a million Californians have received grants or rebates for buying cleaner cars or replacing older cars.

This year's funding for some of the programs ran out in April — the waitlists have been shut down because of the backlogs. And even for the rebates that are still available, EV prices are surging and electric cars are in short supply.

For many, a lack of charging infrastructure in their homes and communities is a big hurdle. About 1.2 million chargers will be needed for the 8 million zero-emission cars expected by 2030. State data shows that currently there are only about 80,000 with another 123,000 on the way — falling far short. In addition, most public charging stations are clustered in urban, coastal areas.

The troubled state subsidy programs raise a crucial question: How can California achieve its mandate that requires 100% of all new cars to be zero emissions when a large portion of the population can't buy them and there is no place to charge them?

Governor Newsom To Consider New Law To Decriminalize Jaywalking

An updated Freedom to Walk Act (AB 2147) was sent to the Governor on August 29th. The bill would prevent police from stopping jaywalkers, except in certain circumstances. A similar bill was vetoed by Gov. Newsom, who cited pedestrian safety in his veto message. Rather than repeal the state's jaywalking law, the new bill seeks to address the governor's concerns by allowing stops "only when a reasonably careful person would realize there is an immediate danger of a collision.

According to data from the California Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board, stops for jaywalking disproportionately target people of color and lower-income individuals. Bill supporters claim the bill could prevent such stops from escalating into greater confrontation with law enforcement, citing multiple cases in recent years that have resulted in the death or injury of someone accused of jaywalking.

Ca. Legislature Wants To Give Residents \$1,000 Not To Have A Car

On August 31st the California legislature passed a first-of-its-kind bill (SB 457) to reward low-income residents who live car-free with a \$1,000 refundable tax credit. Governor Gavin Newsom is expected to sign it.

The bill offers the tax credit to single-filers earning up to \$40,000 and joint-filers making up to \$60,000 who live without personal cars. And, because the tax credit is refundable, Golden State residents can claim the full amount even if they don't have \$1,000 in tax liability which provides them money for alternative forms of transportation."

REGION

Metro Previews Animated View Of Green Line To Torrance Options

A new video published to Metro's YouTube channel offers an animated simulation of all three options being considered for the proposed extension of the C (Green) Line from Redondo Beach to Torrance. The video can be viewed at: <https://la.urbanize.city/post/flythrough-video-previews-all-options-metros-c-line-extension-torrance> .

L.A. City 2024 Ballot Measure Would Add Bike Lanes, Bus Lanes, Other Street Safety Measures

Since 2015, L. A. City has installed only 3% of the projects spelled out in the 2015 Mobility Plan, which calls for bus lanes, bike lanes and other improvements on hundreds of miles of city streets. The Los Angeles City Council voted on August 24th to send a measure to the ballot to speed up the installation of bike routes, bus lanes and other transportation projects aimed at making the city safer and more welcoming for bicyclists, pedestrians and bus riders.

The initiative, planned for the 2024 ballot, would force city agencies to make those changes to some of L.A.'s busiest boulevards each time crews do major road work on those streets. Under the measure, the city would be required to implement those upgrades whenever at least one-eighth of a mile of those streets are repaved or receive other major improvements. Minor repairs, such as filling individual potholes, would not trigger installation of the new safety measures. The ballot measure would allow residents to sue the city if officials fail to install projects that are identified in the Mobility Plan. If approved by the voters, the measure could not be repealed by the council.

FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL TRENDS / INNOVATION

Telework Has Improved Government Workers Team Performance

Research released August 11th by Eagle Hill Consulting showed that, of the 1,001 workers in government agencies surveyed nationally in May, more than half say they telework, either in a fully remote (26%) or hybrid (24%) environment. Forty-six percent of the teleworkers report that team performance has improved since the beginning of the pandemic.

Nearly all (92%) of the respondents believe their manager trusts them to get the job done, and this high level of trust is consistent whether the work is remote, hybrid or in person. Besides trust, teamwork is strengthened by other familiar factors. For top team performance, government workers said they need clear goals and metrics, the ability to share information across the teams, and opportunities to define new ways of working together.