



MONTHLY SBCCOG TRANSPORTATION REPORT

A summary of recent federal, state, regional and local
developments and trends in transportation

COVERING SEPTEMBER 2025

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Federal

Trump's Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy Unveils New Plan to Fast-Track Advanced Air Mobility Vehicles

U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy announced a new pilot program within the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to accelerate the deployment of advanced air mobility (AAM) vehicles. These new technologies have the potential to transform aviation, including expanding connectivity to rural American communities, reducing road congestion in urban areas, and enhancing emergency services or medical transport.

The pilot program, known as the Electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing Integration Pilot Program (eIPP), will form public-private partnerships with State and local government entities and private sector companies to develop new frameworks and regulations for enabling safe operations.

The eIPP will include at least five pilot projects. It will run for three years after the first project becomes operational. Envisioned eIPP operations include piloted and unmanned approaches to:

- Short-range air taxis
- Longer-range, fixed wing flights
- Cargo
- Logistics and supply serving emergency management, medical transport or off-shore energy facilities
- Increasing automation safety

Additional Information:

As part of the eIPP, the FAA is seeking participants for a public-private partnership program to demonstrate the viability of new AAM technologies including electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft in ways that deliver new benefits to the American public.

Applicants must be a State, local, tribal or territorial government with a U.S.-based private sector partner or partners.

Participants will use piloted, optionally piloted, or unmanned AAM aircraft that will generally be over 1,320 lbs. and may be capable of carrying passengers. Participants will also include technologies enabling safe integration of these aircraft into the national airspace system.

Source: <https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/trumps-transportation-secretary-sean-p-duffy-unveils-new-plan-fast-track-advanced-air>

State

California electric-vehicle drivers will lose carpool lane privileges

A popular perk for California drivers of electric and low-emission cars is coming to an end.

Beginning Oct. 1, motorists with a Clean Air Vehicle decal will no longer be able to drive solo in carpool lanes because the program was not extended by the federal government, according to the California Department of Motor Vehicles.

The carpool benefit was promoted as a cost-effective incentive to encourage Californians to buy clean and zero-emission vehicles. More than a million motorists have applied for the decal since it became available more than two decades ago. There are roughly a half million vehicles in California with active decals, allowing them to use the carpool lane alone. Last month, the DMV stopped issuing new decals and warned that the program could be ending.

Extending the program would have required approval from Congress and President Trump.

California is one of 13 states offering the benefit. Vehicles that qualified included fuel-cell electric, natural gas or plug-in electric cars.

Last year, Governor Newsom signed a bill that extended California's decal program until 2027, but the state will no longer be able to continue it without federal authority, the governor's office said. According to the California Energy Commission, 25% of new cars sold in the state are zero-emission vehicles.

Source: <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-09-10/california-ev-drivers-will-lose-carpool-lane-privileges>

Region

LA Metro Releases Final Environmental Impact Report for C Line Extension to Torrance

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) released the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the C Line Extension to Torrance, marking a major milestone in the project. Expanding rail service deeper into the South Bay, from the Metro K Line's Redondo Beach (Marine) station to the planned Torrance Transit Center station, the project would provide faster and more reliable connections while giving riders a 19-minute trip from Torrance to LAX. The project is funded in part by the voter-approved Measures R and M. While there are other funding sources as well, there is a gap in projected cost vs. committed funding.

Construction could start as early as 2027, and the extension is estimated to open in 2036.

The FEIR reflects input from more than 2,000 public comments and includes design refinements, clarifications and corrections. Metro also released updated cost estimates and a report about the real estate acquisitions that would be required to complete the project.

All of these materials are available on a website designed to make the FEIR easier to navigate. It includes frequently asked questions and a short video to help the public review the report and understand the next steps.

In May 2024, the Metro Board approved the proposed route, the Hybrid Alternative, also known as the Locally Preferred Alternative, to follow Metro's existing Harbor Subdivision right-of-way. It combines elevated, at-grade (street level) and trench (below street level) sections. At key crossings, such as 170th Street and 182nd Street, the tracks will be placed below roadways in trenches to improve safety, reduce noise and avoid traffic delays for pedestrians and motorists.

Metro also has proposed improvements to an existing freight line to create a safer, quieter rail corridor. By making use of Metro-owned right-of-way, the route minimizes the impact to local property while balancing cost efficiency and community concerns.

The extension will allow riders to travel to Inglewood entertainment venues, including SoFi Stadium, the YouTube Theater, the Kia Forum, Intuit Dome, LAX and downtown Los Angeles with convenient transfers to Metro's growing rail system serving Santa Monica, East Los Angeles and beyond. The alignment would extend the line approximately 4.5 miles from Redondo Beach (Marine) Station to the Torrance Transit Center and includes two new stations serving Redondo Beach and Torrance. Once in operation, the extension would support more than 11,500 daily trips, attract up to 1.49 million new riders annually and reduce vehicle miles traveled on local roads by nearly 19.5 million miles each year.

By 2045, jobs in the South Bay are projected to grow nearly twice as fast as the population, while congestion could increase by almost 30 percent. The C Line Extension to Torrance offers a cost-effective way to add capacity, ease traffic and strengthen the region's economy.

The Metro Board of Directors is expected to consider certification of the FEIR and project approval this fall. If approved, Metro will move forward with design and engineering, First/Last Mile planning with cities and preparations for construction.

Since 2021, Metro has engaged South Bay communities through public meetings, virtual briefings, and local events. As the project advances, community outreach will continue through pop-ups and other engagement activities.

Source: <https://www.metro.net/about/la-metro-releases-final-environmental-impact-report-for-c-line-extension-to-torrance/>

LA Metro's A Line Extension to Pomona Now Operational

LA Metro has officially opened the A Line Extension, a 9.1-mile light rail section connecting Glendora to Pomona. The extension adds four new stations—Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, and Pomona North—improving transit access for communities across the San Gabriel Valley.

The project aims to strengthen connectivity between residential neighborhoods, educational institutions, recreational areas, and regional parks. It also provides a direct transfer point to Metrolink at Pomona Station, facilitating smoother travel between the Inland Empire and the Foothill Cities corridor.

The A Line Extension is expected to support local economic growth, reduce traffic congestion along major corridors, and provide environmentally friendly alternatives to car travel. The project also incorporates modern amenities at each station, including accessible platforms, bicycle parking, and safety features to enhance the passenger experience.

Service on the extended line is now fully operational, with trains running according to the regular A Line schedule. The A Line is the world's longest modern light rail line, now stretching 57.6 miles (92.7 km). It serves 48 stations, running east–west from Pomona to Pasadena and then north–south from Pasadena to Long Beach, providing extensive connectivity across Los Angeles County.

Source: <https://railway-news.com/la-metros-a-line-extension-to-pomona-now-operational/>

Trends

Arc and Curtin Maritime electrify Ports of LA and Long Beach with \$160 million contract

One of the largest fleets of electric tugboats will begin operating in the next few years thanks to a key partnership between startup Arc Boats and Curtin Maritime. The two companies signed a \$160 million agreement to build eight hybrid vessels that will redefine operating standards at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

The tugboats to be developed in this collaboration will be equipped with hybrid-electric propulsion systems capable of generating more than 4,000 horsepower, backed by 6 megawatt-hour batteries. This configuration will enable high-level performance in complex port maneuvers, with a significant reduction in emissions and operating costs.

The first four tugboats will be in operation before the end of 2027. Once assembled by the Snow & Company shipyard in Seattle, the vessels will be deployed at the Western Hemisphere's busiest port complex, which handles about one-third of the country's maritime cargo.

The deployment aligns with zero-emission goals for the next decade, positioning this partnership as a strategic piece in the energy transition of U.S. port infrastructure.

Source: <https://inspenet.com/en/noticias/arc-and-curtin-maritime-electrify-ports-with-160-million-contract/>